

# Israel's army to advance preparations for first phase of Trump's peace plan

In response to the Gaza peace plan, Hamas agreed to release all Israeli hostages, whether dead or alive. The group also agreed to hand over the Gaza administration to an independent Palestinian technocrats' body "based on Palestinian national consensus and Arab and Islamic support."



Israeli army vehicle manoeuvring at a position in the vicinity of the Jordanian Field Hospital in Gaza City on Friday. (AP/PTI)

no forces have been removed from the strip. This announcement came hours after Trump ordered Israel to stop bombing Gaza once Hamas said it had accepted some elements of his plan. Trump welcomed the Hamas statement, saying: "I believe they are ready for a lasting PEACE." Trump appears keen to deliver on pledges to end the war and return dozens of hostages ahead of the second anniversary of the attack on Tuesday. His proposal unveiled earlier this week has widespread international support and was also endorsed by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

On Friday, Netanyahu's office said Israel was committed to ending the war that began when Hamas attacked Israel on October 7, 2023, without addressing potential gaps with the militant group. Netanyahu has come

under increasing pressure from the international community and Trump to end the conflict. The official told the AP that Netanyahu put out the rare late-night statement on the sabbath saying that Israel has started to prepare for Trump's plan due to pressure from the US administration. The official also said that a negotiating team was getting ready to travel, but there was no date specified.

A senior Egyptian official says talks are underway for the release of hostages, as well as hundreds of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli detention. The official, who is involved in the ceasefire negotiations, also said Arab mediators are preparing for a comprehensive dialogue among Palestinians. The talks are aimed at unifying the Palestinian position towards Gaza's future.

On Saturday, the Palestinian

## PM Modi welcomes President Trump's leadership on Gaza peace efforts

NEW DELHI, Oct 4 (PTI)

INDIA welcomes US President Donald Trump's leadership as peace efforts in Gaza make decisive progress, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Saturday.

Modi referred to the indications of the release of Israeli hostages by Hamas and said it marks a significant step forward in efforts to restore peace in the region.

He said on X, "India will continue to strongly support all efforts towards a durable and just peace."

TEL Aviv, Oct 4 (AP)

ISRAEL'S army said Saturday that it would advance preparations for the first phase of US President Donald Trump's plan to end the war in Gaza and return all the remaining hostages, after Hamas said it accepted parts of the deal while others still needed to be negotiated.

The army said it was instructed by Israel's leaders to "advance readiness" for the implementation of the plan. An official who was not authorised to speak to the media on the record said that Israel has moved to a defensive-only position in Gaza and will not actively strike. The official said

Islamic Jihad, the second most powerful militant group in Gaza, said it accepted Hamas' response to the Trump plan. The group had previously rejected the proposal days earlier. Yet, despite the momentum, a lot of questions remain. Under the plan, Hamas would release the remaining 48 hostages — around 20 of them believed to be alive — within three days. It would also give up power and disarm.

# US Govt shutdown: Trump aims to cut funds of Democratic states



■ By **Joey Cappelletti**

WASHINGTON, Oct 4 (AP)

PRESIDENT Donald Trump has embraced the federal shutdown as an “unprecedented opportunity” to slash spending and shrink Government, but new rounds of targeted spending cuts from the White House aimed at Democratic states and priorities are raising concerns among Republicans that they may be at risk of ceding their political advantage.

Republicans in Congress believe they hold the upper hand in four-day-old stalemate, as Democrats voted against measures to keep the Government open because they want to attach additional policy measures. But the sweeping cuts to home-state projects — and the threat of mass federal firings — have some in the GOP worried the White House may be going too far and potentially give

Democrats a way out of their tight spot.

“This is certainly the most moral high ground Republicans have had in a moment like this that I can recall, and I just don’t like squandering that political capital when you have that kind of high ground,” GOP Senator Kevin Cramer of North Dakota told reporters this week.

As hopes faded Friday for a quick end to the shutdown — with Democrats holding firm in a key Senate vote — the White House signalled more layoffs and agency cuts could follow. Trump shared a video Thursday night portraying budget director Russ Vought as the grim reaper. The cuts are raising fresh questions about whether voters want a Government that uses discretionary power to punish political opponents — and whether Republicans may face electoral consequences for the White House’s actions.

“There’s the political ramifications that could cause backlash,” Cramer said in another interview. “It makes everything going forward more difficult for us.” Since the shutdown began, Trump has moved to cancel USD 7.6 billion in clean energy grants across 16 States, all of which voted for Democrat Kamala Harris in last year’s presidential election. On Friday, the administration announced an additional USD 2 billion cut, this time to a major public transit project in Chicago.

# 'India, EU must seal FTA to boost trade and investment ties amid US tariff hike'

NEW DELHI, Oct 4 (IANS)

EUROPEAN Union's Ambassador to India, Herve Delphin, said on Saturday that India and the EU should use the free trade agreement (FTA) to increase bilateral trade and investment at a time when "some countries" are raising tariffs or otherwise closing their markets, in an oblique reference to the US.

Addressing the second annual general meeting of the Federation of European Business in India (FEBI) here, the Ambassador said, "The FTA can open new opportunities for EU and Indian businesses and create conditions to significantly increase our bilateral trade and

investment. While some countries are raising tariffs or otherwise closing their markets, we should use the FTA to diversify trade, hedge against uncertainties and strengthen our supply chains."

He highlighted that EU President Ursula von der Leyen and PM Modi set the objective to conclude the FTA by the end of this year. The negotiating teams are working hard to deliver it but it's fair to say the negotiations are challenging and important issues remain to be solved, he added.

"The EU was and is still ready

to conclude on a meaningful package. We look forward to the next round and further negotiations towards a mutually beneficial deal," Delphin said.

He further stated that alongside the FTA, the EU and India are negotiating an Investment Protection Agreement. The agreement aims to create a predictable, secure and transparent environment for EU and Indian investors, thus helping to generate the higher levels of FDI needed for the Indian economy.

"The cases for the FTA and for an Investment Protection

Agreement are stronger than ever. Our economies are complementary and offer each other scale," he observed.

The ambassador further stated that while the FTA and Investment Agreements can be the game changer, there is more in the EU-India economic relations. The Joint Communication released by the European Commission and the High Representative Kaja Kallas two weeks ago, is a policy document which sets out our vision for the EU-India relations and our policy offer for India, namely on a new EU-India Strategic Agenda.

Among the five pillars, most of them connect to the economy and business, he pointed out.



# India, Bhutan hold talks on trade, connectivity ties

THIMPHU, Oct 4 (PTI)

FOREIGN Secretary Vikram Misri held wide-ranging talks with Bhutan's Prime Minister Tshering Tobgay during which they discussed bilateral ties including trade and connectivity.

Misri visited Bhutan on Friday, according to the Indian embassy here. His visit came after an inter-governmental Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed earlier this week for the establishment of railway links between India and Bhutan.

During his visit, Misri had an audience with Bhutan King Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck, and called on Prime Minister Tobgay and Foreign Minister D N Dhungyel.

"In keeping with the tradition of regular high-level exchanges, Foreign Secretary Shri Vikram Misri visited Bhutan on 3 October 2025 for discussions encom-



Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri meets Bhutan's Prime Minister Tshering Tobgay in Bhutan.

(PTI)

passing the entire gamut of special and multifaceted bilateral partnership," the Indian embassy said in an X post.

In a social media post, Prime Minister Tobgay said that he was "pleased" to meet Misri and the two discussed "a range of mutual interests, including connectivity, hydropower, people-to-people relations, and trade and commerce between Bhutan and India." Misri's visit comes after the Bhutanese foreign secretary Aum Pema Choden visited India earlier this week.

The two foreign secretaries held consultations on Monday during which they reviewed the "full spectrum of the bilateral engagements", according to the Ministry of External Affairs.

During the Bhutanese foreign secretary's visit, the MoU for the establishment of railway links between the two nations was signed.

# Doval holds 6th India-Brazil Strategic Dialogue with Lula's top advisor

NEW DELHI, Oct 4 (ANI)

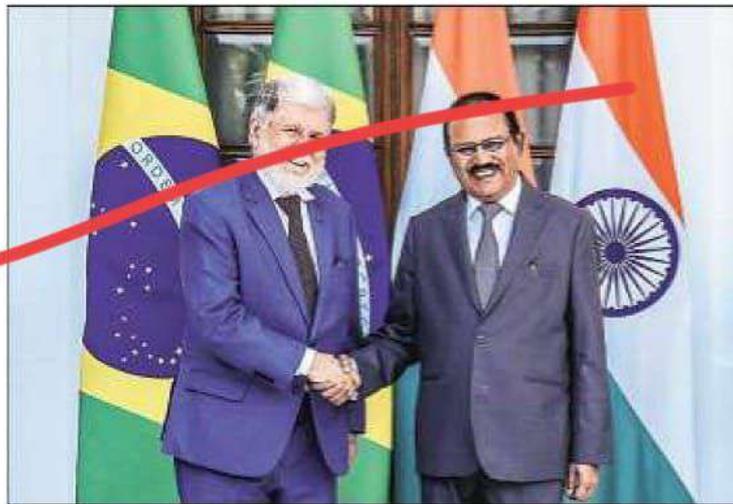
NATIONAL Security Adviser (NSA) Ajit Doval met Celso Luis Nunes Amorim, Special Advisor to the President of Brazil, in New Delhi on Friday for the 6th edition of the India-Brazil Strategic Dialogue.

The meeting brought together senior officials from both countries to deepen cooperation across multiple sectors and review the progress of their Strategic Partnership.

Ambassador Amorim, who led a delegation of senior Brazilian Government officials and advisors, discussed with NSA Doval the follow-up on issues agreed under the five pillars of cooperation identified during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's State Visit to Brazil in July this year.

According to the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), "The dialogue was an opportunity to review ongoing progress in the Strategic Partnership, including in diverse areas such as defence and security; energy, rare earths and critical minerals; and health

## FOCUS ON DEFENCE, ENERGY, RARE EARTH



National Security Advisor Ajit Doval with Special Advisor to President of Brazil Celso Amorim during a meeting, in New Delhi.

(PTI)

and pharmaceuticals."

The discussions also touched on global issues and cooperation in multilateral platforms such as BRICS, IBSA, and the upcoming COP-30 climate con-

ference, which Brazil will host in November.

The MEA statement added, "Both sides agreed to carry forward the work to implement the vision laid down by Prime

Minister Shri Narendra Modi and President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva." The India-Brazil Strategic Dialogue serves as a high-level mechanism to steer bilateral relations, ensuring that the priorities of both Governments are implemented through regular consultations.

External Minister S Jaishankar also met Brazil's envoy in the national capital.

Sharing details of the meeting in a post on X, he wrote, "A pleasure meeting Amb. Celso Amorim, Special Advisor to President of Brazil, today in New Delhi. Had a useful exchange on the current global scenario and on opportunities for deepening our strategic cooperation."

Linking to the forthcoming climate summit, President-designate of COP30 and former Brazilian Ambassador to India, Andre Aranha Correa do Lago, has highlighted India's crucial role in the global climate discussions, noting the country's unique position as both an industrially advanced nation and a developing economy.

# Cyclone Shakhti churns up Arabian Sea off Guj coast

NEW DELHI, Oct 4 (PTI)

CYCLONE Shakhti, the first cyclonic storm of the post-monsoon season in the Arabian Sea, is churning up the sea, packing a wind speed of 100 kmph and gusting, officials said on Saturday.

Shakhti, which has intensified into a severe cyclonic storm, was moving further into the Arabian Sea and lay centred about 420 km away from Dwarka in Gujarat, the weather office said.

It is likely to move west-southwestwards and reach the northwest and adjoining west-central Arabian Sea by Sunday, the IMD said.

Under the influence of the cyclonic storm, sea conditions are likely to be rough to very rough along and off the Gujarat-North Maharashtra coast and the Pakistan coast until Sunday.

The weather office has warned fishermen not to venture into the northwest Arabian Sea, adjoining areas of the northeast Arabian Sea, central Arabian Sea and along and off the Gujarat-north Maharashtra coasts until Tuesday.

## MISSION SUDARSHAN CHAKRA

# India buys high-firing air defence guns

■ By Ajit Dubey

NEW DELHI, Oct 4 (ANI)

**I**N a step towards providing protection to population centres and centres of faith close to the border with Pakistan, the Indian Army has issued a tender to buy six AK-630 30mm guns from a State-owned firm, which is being seen as one of the pillars of the Mission Sudarshan Chakra.

The tender for buying the air defence system has been issued as part of lessons learnt during Operation Sindoor, where the Pakistan Army carried out direct attacks on civilians and religious buildings in Jammu and Kashmir and Punjab.

Mission Sudarshan Chakra is India's plan to create a comprehensive, multi-layered, indigenous security shield by 2035, integrating surveillance, cyber security, and air defence systems to protect key installations from various enemy attacks.

Launched on India's Independence Day in 2025 by Prime Minister Narendra Modi,



the mission aims to provide both a defensive barrier and a potential offensive capability, aligning with the Aatmanirbhar Bharat initiative to enhance self-reliance in defence technology.

Army chief Gen Upendra Dwivedi on Friday had warned

Pakistan against terrorist activities in India and asserted that India would not show any restraint in Operation Sindoor 2.0. "Indian Army Air Defence has floated an RFP for the procurement of six AK630 Air Defence Gun Systems\* with

Advanced Weapon and Equipment India Ltd (AWEIL). The system sought is a 30mm multi-barrel mobile air defence gun system with a high rate of fire," defence officials told ANI.

The gun system will be mounted on a trailer and towed by a high mobility vehicle.

"AK630 will be utilised to thwart the threat from URAM (Unmanned Aerial Vehicles, Rocket, Artillery and Mortar) and will be used for the protection of key population centres and Centres of Faith\* in close proximity to the international border and Line of Control, they said. The Gun systems will have a range of up to 4km\* with a cyclic rate of fire of up to 3000 rounds per minute.

The system will also form one of the essential pillars of the Sudarshan Chakra shield being developed and will be \*integrated in the overall air defence architecture. The Indian Army's Army Air Defence played a key role in thwarting Pakistani aerial attacks using drones and aircraft.