

Israel, Hamas agree for peace

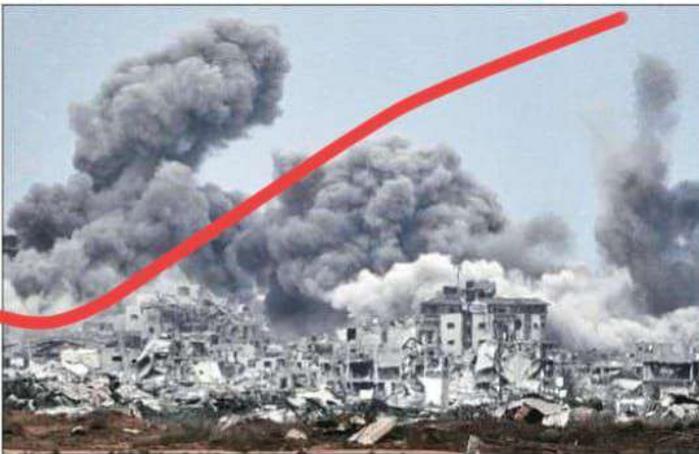
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PRIME Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday congratulated US President Donald Trump on the success of his Gaza peace plan, during a phone conversation. "Spoke to my friend, President Trump and congratulated him on the success of the historic Gaza peace plan," Modi said on X.

"Also reviewed the good progress achieved in trade negotiations. Agreed to stay in close touch over the coming weeks," he said.

Modi spoke to Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and congratulated him too.

In a post on X, Modi said he reaffirmed that terrorism in

any form or manifestation is unacceptable anywhere in the world. Modi welcomed the agreement on the first phase of Trump's peace plan for West Asia, under which Israel and

Hamas have decided to pause fighting in Gaza. Modi said the agreement was also a reflection of the strong leadership of Netanyahu.

"We welcome the agreement. This is also a reflection of the strong leadership of PM Netanyahu," Modi said.

"We hope the release of hostages and enhanced humanitarian assistance to the people of Gaza will bring respite to them and pave the way for lasting peace," he said.



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told The Associated Press, while (Contd on page 5)

India, Aus ink 3 defence pacts

NEW DELHI, Oct 9 (PTI)

INDIA and Australia on Thursday signed three key pacts including one on information sharing, to further expand their bilateral defence and military ties following "productive" talks between Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and his Australian counterpart Richard Marles in Canberra.

Singh, currently on a two-day visit to Australia, also met Prime Minister Anthony Albanese and Foreign Minister Penny Wong, broadly focusing on imparting more dynamism to the relations.

The two defence ministers affirmed the importance of enhancing cooperation with regional partners to help maintain a free, open, peaceful and



Defence Minister Rajnath Singh (centre) with Australia Prime Minister Anthony Albanese (left) and Defence Minister Richard Marles (right) during a meeting, in Canberra, Australia. (PTI)

prosperous Indo-Pacific, underscoring their strong support for freedom of navigation and overflight and unimpeded trade in the region. The resolve came against the backdrop of China's increasing military assertiveness in the strategic waters. Besides the agreement on information sharing, the two sides firmed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) that will provide for cooperation on submarine search and another on establishment of a framework for joint staff talks.

The Singh-Marles meeting marked five years of the India-Australia comprehensive strategic partnership, with both sides reaffirming their shared commitment to deepening defence cooperation across a wide

(Contd on page 5)

Afghan Foreign Minister Muttaqi arrives in Delhi

NEW DELHI, Oct 9 (PTI)

AFGHAN Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi landed in the national capital on Thursday, in the first high-level trip from Kabul after the Taliban seized power following the collapse of the Ashraf Ghani Government over four years back.



Muttaqi will hold extensive talks with External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and National Security Advisor Ajit Doval during his six-day trip to India, people familiar with the matter said.

“Warm welcome to Afghan Foreign Minister, Mawlawi Amir Khan Muttaqi on his arrival in New Delhi,” External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said on social media.

“We look forward to engaging discussions with him on bilateral relations and regional issues,” he said.

The Mumbai Moment: A 'BRISK' new dawn for India-UK ties

■ By Brijesh Singh (IPS)

IN the bustling financial capital of Mumbai, a palpable sense of anticipation is building as UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer spends his second day in the city. All eyes are fixed on the grand finale of the Global Fintech Fest, where, in a powerful demonstration of a burgeoning and renewed alliance, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Prime Minister Starmer will together deliver keynote addresses. This joint appearance is far more than a diplomatic formality; it culminates decades of evolving cooperation and embodies a pivotal new chapter in the centuries-old relationship between India and the United Kingdom.

The year 2025 marks a decisive and historic turning point, elevating a connection that spans centuries into a formal "Comprehensive Strategic Partnership." Guided by the ambitious "India-UK Vision 2035," a shared blueprint for mutual growth and prosperity, this realignment is cemented by a strong political will bridging both nations.

Starmer's visit to India, reciprocating PM Modi's trip to the UK in July, has infused this partnership with fresh momentum. It promises substantial, tangible benefits for citizens of both countries. The address scheduled on October 10 is set to be a defining moment - spotlighting the incredible potential of this partnership on one of the world's most influential financial technology stages.

For PM Narendra Modi this moment affirms India's emergence as a global powerhouse. PM Modi's efforts, from championing economic reforms at home to engaging with global democratic partners, have laid the foundation for this renewed chapter with the UK.

The foundation for these highly anticipated Mumbai announcements was laid earlier this year with the signing of the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) on July 24.

The agreement promises to eliminate tariffs on 99% of Indian goods entering the UK market. This includes traditional Indian textiles, leather goods, agricultural exports, and automotive components. Beyond the numbers, this deal aims to create jobs, foster innovation, and boost prosperity across sectors.

The figures are significant. Bilateral trade is projected to increase by £25.5 billion annually, up from the current £43 billion. More crucially, it could add £5.1 billion to India's annual GDP

a free, open, and stable region.

This vision was vividly demonstrated in the recent naval exercise 'Kankar 2025,' featuring India's own INS Vikrant and the UK's HMS Prince of Wales operating in synchrony. Complemented by an aerial defence exercise with the Indian Air Force, the cooperation exemplifies tri-service coordination, a rarity that marks the depth of this partnership. Furthermore, the July 2025 Defence Industrial Roadmap charts a paradigm shift from buyer-seller dynamics to



UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi in Mumbai during his first visit to the country.

over time. Behind these numbers lie the hopes of millions of Indians expanding their reach to global markets. The agreement also promises streamlined customs processes for goods clearance within 48 hours, slashing the red tape that small and medium enterprises often face.

Often quoted by PM Modi in his policy speeches, the mantra of "ease of doing business" finds renewed relevance here, as the agreement supports not only large enterprises but particularly the small and medium-sized businesses that anchor India's economic fabric.

Bipartisan UK support for the deal ensures political stability, signaling the partnership's longevity beyond electoral cycles.

The partnership reaches beyond economics into defence and security - a cornerstone of the Vision 2035 roadmap. With the Indo-Pacific emerging as a hotbed of strategic importance, the two nations share a vision for

co-development and joint manufacturing. Aligned with PM Modi's vision of 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat' (self-reliant India), this roadmap focuses on technology transfers, joint research, and expanding India's domestic defence manufacturing capabilities. It heralds a future where India plays a leading role in global defence innovation and strategic autonomy, while also creating a significant number of high-skilled jobs.

Beyond strategic accords, the enduring "living bridge" of people-to-people connections is the partnership's heart. The Indian diaspora in the UK, forming 2.6% of its population and owning over 65,000 businesses, cements this invaluable socio-economic bond.

The mutual recognition of higher education qualifications, reaffirmed in 2025, eliminates barriers faced by Indian students and professionals, boosting talent mobility and fostering educational exchange. This is vital

in a globalizing world where skills and knowledge transcend borders.

Vision 2035's educational outreach is further exemplified by the University of Southampton's Gurugram campus, launched in June 2025. This initiative nurtures global talent and marks a forward-thinking educational collaboration. Complementing this is the India-UK "Green Skills" partnership, which develops youth capabilities in renewable energy, sustainable agriculture, and environmental resilience - ensuring preparedness for future global challenges.

The partnership's future-oriented focus is technology and innovation, exemplified at the Global Fintech Fest. With over 800 speakers from more than 100 countries, the fest offers an ideal platform for PM Modi and Starmer's vision.

Through the "Technology Security Initiative," the two countries emphasize joint ventures in telecommunications, artificial intelligence, and securing critical supply chains for semiconductors and minerals. Building resilient, cutting-edge technology systems is now central to safeguarding national security and fostering economic growth.

In his many speeches on climate and innovation, PM Modi has articulated a vision where economic growth and sustainability go hand in hand. This bilateral partnership reflects that vision, making it a beacon for global cooperation. As PM Modi and Starmer mentioned in their addresses that, their joint message will symbolize a mature partnership grounded in shared values and mutual benefit.

Together, India and the UK stand ready to deliver prosperity, enhance security, and uphold the foundations of a stable and open global order. Their renewed alliance promises to shape not just the future of their peoples but also the course of international relations in the decades to come.

(The author is Principal Secretary and Director General, DGIPR).

GUEST COLUMN

19 US lawmakers urge Trump to 'reset and repair' ties with India

WASHINGTON, Oct 9 (IANS)

NINETEEN US LAWMAKERS on Wednesday wrote a letter to President Donald Trump urging him to "reset and repair" India-US "critical partnership." The letter was co-signed by several prominent Democratic leaders, including Deborah Ross, Ro Khanna, Brad Sherman, Sydney Kamlager-Dove, Raja Krishnamoorthi, and Pramila Jayapal. Notably, no Republican lawmakers signed it.

The Congress members warned that the US President's recent tariff hikes, which raised duties on Indian goods to as high as 50 per cent, have undermined

relations with India and hurt both American consumers and manufacturers. "We write as Members of Congress representing districts with large, vibrant Indian-

American communities that maintain strong familial, cultural, and economic ties to India. Recent actions by your administration have strained relations with the world's largest democracy, creating negative consequences for both countries. We urge you to take immediate steps



to reset and repair this critical partnership," they noted.

The lawmakers called on Trump to "review" his tariff policy and continue

"dialogue with the Indian leadership," stressing that the path forward "demands recalibration, not confrontation."

It further added that the 50 per cent tariffs have raised "prices for American consumers" and damaged "the intricate supply chains that American companies

depend on to bring products to market."

They termed the India-US trading partnership as "exceptionally important" that supports "hundreds of thousands of jobs in both countries."

"American manufacturers depend on India for key inputs in sectors from semiconductors to health care, energy and more. American firms investing in India also gain access to one of the fastest-growing consumer markets in the world, while Indian companies have invested billions of dollars here in America, helping to create new jobs and opportunities in the communities we represent."

India, UK natural partners: PM Modi

MUMBAI, Oct 9 (PTI)

INDIA and the UK are "natural partners" and their growing ties stand as an important pillar of global stability and economic progress at a time the world is witnessing uncertainty, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Thursday.

Modi made the remarks after his wide-ranging talks with British Prime Minister Keir Starmer.

In his media statement, PM Modi said the historic India-UK Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement inked in July will reduce import costs between the two countries, create new employment opportunities, boost trade, and benefit industries and consumers on both sides.

"India and the UK are natural partners. Our relationship is built on the shared values of democracy, freedom, and the rule of law," he said.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi during a meeting with his British counterpart Keir Starmer, in Mumbai. (PTI)

"In today's time of global uncertainty, our growing partnership stands as an important pillar of global stability and economic progress," he added.

The two leaders also shared views on the Indo-Pacific, peace and stability in West Asia, and the ongoing conflict in Ukraine.

"On the issues of the Ukraine conflict and Gaza, India supports all efforts to restore peace through dialogue and diplomacy. We are fully committed to enhancing maritime security cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region," Modi said. The Prime Minister said India's dynamism and the UK's expertise have together created a "unique synergy". "Our partnership is trustworthy, and driven by talent and technology. And today, as PM Starmer and I stand together on this stage, it is a clear reaffirmation of our shared commitment

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Partnership aims ambitious India-UK Vision 2035: Starmer

MUMBAI, Oct 9 (IANS)

UNITED Kingdom (UK) Prime Minister Keir Starmer said on Thursday that the partnership between the two countries is perfectly suited to achieve the ambitious India-UK Vision 2035 roadmap, and steps are being taken to elevate bilateral ties over the coming decade.

In his statement after meeting with PM Narendra Modi at Raj Bhavan here, he stated, "We signed a major trade deal with India in July - the best secured by any country -- but the story doesn't stop there. It's not just a

piece of paper; it's a launchpad for growth. This partnership today, we're turbocharging trade and investment flows, with opportunities in AI, quantum computing, biotechnology, critical minerals, and more."

"The Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) is expected to boost bilateral trade by £25.5 billion annually, lift UK GDP by £4.8 billion, and create thousands of jobs -- particularly in sectors like Scotch whisky exports, which could reach £1 billion a year to India alone," he said.

He added that mutual trust in values like democracy,

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HUGE DRAW
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