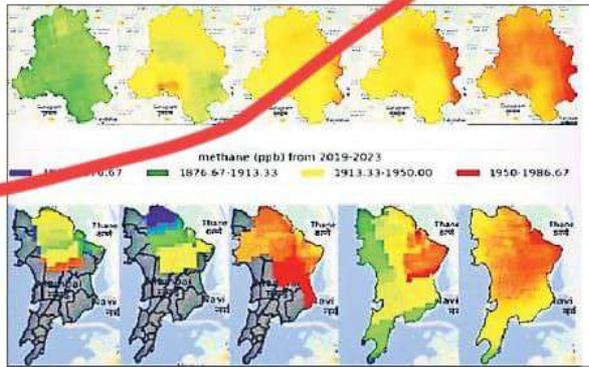


# IIT study shows CO<sub>2</sub>, methane levels rising in Delhi, Mumbai

NEW DELHI, Oct 15 (IANS)

CARBON dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) and methane (CH<sub>4</sub>) -- greenhouse gases (GHG) -- are rising over Delhi and Mumbai over the last few years, according to a study led by the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Bombay, on Wednesday.

The study comes as Delhi is again experiencing 'poor' air quality with an air quality index (AQI) of 201. On Tuesday, the AQI stood at 211. Delhi AQI is expected to reach 346, categorised as



very poor, by Friday evening.

Mumbai also saw a dip in air quality after the monsoon withdrawal. Last week, the city's overall AQI averaged 153, based on readings from 25 of the 30 continuous air quality monitoring stations in the city.

Using remote sensing data, IIT B researchers Prof. Manoranjan Sahu and Adarsh Alagade measured GHG such as carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) and methane (CH<sub>4</sub>) in metro cities such as Mumbai and Delhi. They demonstrated that GHG levels in both cities are

on the rise and that they show seasonal and spatial variations. Further, the researchers also developed city-specific statistical models to forecast the level of GHGs. "By identifying trends and hotspots, satellite-based monitoring gives policymakers evidence to target the worst sources -- for instance, prioritising landfill gas capture, traffic management in high-emission corridors, or industrial emissions enforcement -- and to evaluate the real-world impact of policies over time," said Sahu.

# Indians on Moon: PM set 2040 as mission deadline: ISRO chief

■ By Namita Tewari  
RANCHI, Oct 15 (PTI)

ISRO chairman V Narayanan on Wednesday said the space agency has set a target of landing Indians on the Moon by 2040, while its maiden human spaceflight mission 'Gaganyaan' is on track for launch in 2027.

Narayanan said a slew of ambitious space projects and sector reforms were currently underway, including a national space station by 2035, and three uncrewed 'Gaganyaan' missions by 2026, with the first one that includes a half-humanoid robot 'Vyommitra', targeted for December 2025.

"Prime Minister Narendra



Modi has given a guideline for an indigenous crewed lunar mission by 2040, under which we have to land our own citizens on the Moon and bring them back safely. A Venus Orbiter Mission (VOM) has also been approved to study the planet," Narayanan said in an exclusive interview with PTI.

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) chief said

the Bharatiya Antriksh Station (BAS) is expected to come up by 2035, and initial modules in space are expected as early as 2027.

He was here to attend the 35th convocation ceremony of Ranchi-based Birla Institute of Technology (BIT) Mesra as the chief guest.

"There are a lot of developments in 'Gaganyaan'. We are planning some more experiments. Before the crewed mission, we are planning three uncrewed missions. 'Vyommitra' is going to fly on that in December this year. Two more uncrewed missions will take place next year. Crewed 'Gaganyaan' mission would be possible by 2027 first quarter," Narayanan added.

# India, EU trade pact talks in last leg: Commerce Secy

NEW DELHI, Oct 15 (PTI)

THE negotiations between India and the European Union on the proposed free trade agreement are progressing "very well" and have reached the last leg, a senior Government official said on Wednesday. The two sides concluded their 14th round of negotiations in Brussels last week, but some Indian officials have stayed back to conclude talks on Rules of Origin (ROO), Commerce Secretary Rajesh Agrawal told reporters here.

"We are in the last leg of negotiations. The last leg is the most arduous leg of negotiations because these are the toughest things that are decided at the end. Progress in the last round has been very positive," he said. The 'Rules of Origin' (ROO) provision prescribes minimal processing that

should happen in the FTA (free trade agreement) country so that the final manufactured product may be called originating goods in that country.

"That (ROO) is one area where a lot of work needs to be done. So we have left the team there. It was planned to have the negotiations for two weeks at a stretch to see that we can make substantial progress," Agrawal said.

He added that the dates for the next round of negotiations have not been finalised yet, but discussions are on as there are some

issues for which both sides need to be engaged on a continuous basis. "Instead of waiting for a round, there are engagements that are going between the two sides virtually also," he said adding "negotiations are progressing very well. Chances are that it may get closed by December".



# In boost to Oly hopes, Ahmedabad certain to host '30 C'wealth Games

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The Commonwealth Games 2030 will be held in India as the executive board of the Games' global governing body confirmed Wednesday that it has recommended Ahmedabad (Amdavad) to host the centenary edition. This announcement precedes the formal host city declaration scheduled for Nov 26 during Commonwealth Sport's general assembly meeting in Glasgow.

The 2030 Games will be the second time that India will

## 'DAY OF PRIDE'

➤ India vying for Olympic and Paralympic Games in 2036, with IOC set to decide the host city in 2027

➤ IOA sent 'letter of intent' to IOC in Nov 2024. India currently in 'continuous dialogue process' with IOC

➤ Union home minister Amit Shah described it as a day of immense pride for India

host the multisport event, following 2010 in New Delhi. The decision came after a two-way contest between Ahmedabad and Nigeria's capital Abuja.

The African nation missed out for the second time on staging the Games. Nigeria had also submitted a bid in 2014.

"The Games would not only showcase India's world-class sporting and event capabilities, but also play a meaningful role in our national journey towards Viksit Bharat 2047. We see the 2030 Games as a powerful opportunity to inspire our youth, strengthen international partnerships and contribute to a shared future across the Commonwealth," IOA chief PT Usha said.

▶ **Continued on P 10**

# Af & Pak agree to 48-hour ceasefire

**Islamabad:** Pakistan said on Wednesday that it has agreed to a 48-hour ceasefire with Afghanistan following days of violence that have killed dozens of people on both sides of the border.

Pakistan's foreign ministry said the ceasefire was at Afghanistan's request. Moments later, the Taliban gov't's chief spokesman, Zabihullah Mujahid, said the truce was at "the insistence" of the Pakistani side. His social media post on X did not mention a 48-hour timeframe. All Afghan forces have been instructed to observe the ceasefire "as long as no one violates it," Mujahid added.

Pakistan accuses Afghanistan of harbouring armed groups, a charge rejected by the country's Taliban rulers. Pakistan is grappling with militant attacks that have increased since 2021, when the Taliban seized power in Afghanistan. Earlier Wednesday, before the ceasefire



A Taliban fighter at the Af-Pak border at Spin Boldak in Kandahar province

announcement, Pakistan said its troops killed dozens of Afghan security forces and militants in overnight fighting. The clashes had stopped briefly on Sunday following appeals from Saudi Arabia and Qatar.

Pakistani forces said they had repelled "unprovoked" assaults, but denied targeting civilians after the Taliban gov't said more than a dozen were killed and over 100 others wounded when Pakistan targeted sites in a border area of Afghanistan's southern Kandahar province. Mujahid said earlier

that Pakistan used light and heavy weapons in assaults on Spin Boldak in Kandahar.

Afghan forces returned fire and killed several Pakistani soldiers, seized military posts and captured weapons including tanks, Mujahid added. Pakistan's army also targeted militant hideouts in the Afghan capital, two Pakistani security officials said Wednesday. People in the Pakistani border town of Chaman reported mortars falling near villages and some families were seen evacuating early Wednesday. AP

# Trump warns will stop buying cooking oil from China; Beijing says no winners in trade war

**Beijing:** China said on Wednesday that trade wars had “no winners”, after US President Donald Trump warned that the US could stop buying cooking oil from the country. Trump issued the threat Tuesday after slamming Beijing’s halt of US soybean purchases as an “economically hostile act”. “We are considering terminating business with China having to do with Cooking Oil, and other elements of Trade, as retribution,” Trump said on his Truth Social platform.

Beijing imposed fresh controls on the export of rare earth technologies and other items last week, leading Trump to warn Friday that he would roll out an additional 100% tariff on the country’s goods. China’s foreign ministry on Wednesday said trade disputes were “not in the interests of any party”. “The two sides should resolve relevant issues through consultation,” spokesman Lin Jian said. AFP



AP

## US officials urge China to back down

**T**op US officials on Wednesday blasted China’s major expansion of rare earth export controls as a threat to global supply chains, but said Beijing could still change course. US trade representative Jamieson Greer told a presser that China’s new export restrictions were a “global supply-chain power grab” and the US and its allies would not accept the restrictions, but he and treasury secretary Scott Bessent stressed that Washington did not want to escalate the conflict. As of last night, Trump was still expecting to meet with Chinese President Xi in South Korea later this month, Bessent said. REUTERS

# Trump tries to dismantle Brics again, opening another battle front with India

## Delhi To Assume Brics Presidency From Jan 1

Chidanand Rajghatta | TNN

Washington: US President Donald Trump took another wild swipe at the 20-nation Brics organisation, which India will chair in 2026, claiming "everyone is dropping out" of the formation after he warned that their exports to America would be tariffed if they challenged the US dollar's status as a global reserve currency.

The MAGA supremo returned to a familiar peeve at a bilateral meeting with Argentina President Javier Milei on Tuesday, alleging that "Brics was an attack on the dollar," and he had told potential members that if they "want to play that game," he would tariff their products coming to the US. "I told anybody who wants to be in Brics, that's fine, but we're going to put tariffs on your nation. Everybody dropped out. They're all dropping out of Brics," he claimed.

No country has dropped out of Brics, which now has 20 countries — including 10 associate members — from the foun-



Trump said on Tuesday that Washington's \$20 billion bailout for Argentina comes with strings attached — namely, that the ruling party of his ally, Argentine President Javier Milei, must prevail in the country's legislative elections this month. 'If he wins, we're staying with him, and if he doesn't win, we're gone,' Trump told reporters at the White House

ding four (Brazil, Russia, India, and China) in 2009, with South Africa joining a year later. Egypt, Iran, Ethiopia, and UAE joined as full members in 2024 and Indonesia in 2025, bringing the full members strength to 10.

After Brics introduced a new category called "Partner Countries" at its 2024 summit to integrate prospective members, 10 other countries have been officially designated as Brics Partner Countries as of Jan 1, 2025: Belarus, Bolivia, Cuba, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Nigeria, Thailand, Uganda, Uzbekistan and Vietnam.

Saudi Arabia is the only country that has demurred so far. Invited to join effective Jan 1,

2024, it has not yet formally confirmed its full membership and is still reportedly considering the matter. Both Pakistan and Bangladesh have applied to be members and their applications are said to be under consideration with support from China and Russia, and reservations from India.

Argentina, under the govt of former President Alberto Fernandez, formally submitted an application for Brics membership in 2022, but following his election in late 2023, President Milei, a Trump pal and a self-declared self-declared anarcho-capitalist who favours closer ties and alignment with the US, sent a letter to

Brics leaders formally declined the invitation.

Among other putdowns, Milei disclaimed dealing with "communist countries" such as China, and said Argentina was unwilling to be burdened by the political agendas of other member nations — although that has not prevented him from selling soybeans to China while begging the US for a bailout at the same time even as American farmers are sitting on their massive soy surplus.

With his country on the brink of economic disaster, Milei is in Washington this week to receive a \$20 billion handout and pledge fealty to Trump, who has warned the lolly won't be forthcoming if Argentines don't vote for his surrogate in the upcoming election.

Trump's effort to dismantle Brics puts New Delhi at odds with him on one more front, with India set to assume the Brics presidency on Jan 1, 2026. India's agenda for the organisation during its presidency includes a "People-Centric and Humanity-First Approach," prioritising the concerns and interests of developing nations front and center with issues such as global health and climate justice, terms that are anathema to MAGA's America First outlook.

## India paying for oil in yuan, but percentage small: Russia dy PM

India is mainly paying in roubles for Russian oil, but has started payments in the Chinese currency yuan, Russia's deputy PM Alexander Novak said on Wednesday. "I am aware that such payments have started. I believe the percentage is small at present because payments are largely made in roubles," Novak was quoted as saying by state-run TASS news agency. According to earlier reports, India was mainly making payments for Russian oil in Indian rupees. PTI

## Spain faces US' tariff threat over refusal to boost Nato def spending

President Trump on Tuesday threatened trade penalties, including tariffs, against Spain, saying he is unhappy with its refusal to raise defence spending to 5% and calling the move disrespectful to Nato. "I'm very unhappy with Spain. They're the only country that didn't raise their number up to 5%..." Trump told reporters. "I was thinking of giving them trade punishment through tariffs..." he added. REUTERS