

# Rajnath dedicates 125 BRO projects to nation



Defence Minister Rajnath Singh dedicated 125 border infrastructure projects of Border Roads Organisation (BRO) in Leh. (PTI)

LEH, Dec 7 (PTI)

**DEFENCE** Minister Rajnath Singh dedicated 125 newly-completed projects of Border Roads Organisation to the nation from Leh on Sunday, calling them a “vivid example” of Government’s

commitment to bolstering India’s border infrastructure.

These strategically significant projects -- built at a cost of Rs 5,000 crore and spread across the Union Territories of Ladakh and Jammu and Kashmir, and seven States including Arunachal

## Defence production hits Rs 1.51 lakh cr, exports near Rs 24,000 crore: Rajnath

LEH, Dec 7 (PTI)

**DEFENCE** Minister Rajnath Singh on Sunday said India’s defence production has risen from Rs 46,000 crore in 2014 to a record Rs 1.51 lakh crore and the country that was import-dependent has emerged as a producer-exporter.

He said India once lacked a robust system to manufacture arms and equipment domestically but has witnessed a paradigm shift due to sustained efforts over the last decade.

“Due to our hard work in the last 10 years, our defence production, which was approximately Rs 46,000 crore in 2014, has now grown to a record Rs 1.51 lakh crore. “Our defence exports, which were less than Rs 1,000 crore 10 years ago, have now reached nearly Rs 24,000 crore,” Singh said.

Pradesh, Sikkim, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Rajasthan, West Bengal and Mizoram -- consisted of 28 roads, 93 bridges and four miscellaneous others. The event marked

the largest single-day and highest-value inauguration in the history of the Border Roads Organisation (BRO).

Ladakh Lieutenant Governor  
(Contd on page 5)

# Farmers benefitting from our 2 soybean, snow pea varieties, says scientist of ICAR Ranchi

RANCHI, Dec 7 (PTI)

TWO soybean and snow pea varieties developed by the ICAR-Research Complex here are rapidly gaining acceptance among farmers and earning recognition at national and international levels for their taste and high nutritional value, a scientist said.

These improved varieties are the result of continuous research conducted over nearly three decades at the centre located in Ranchi's Plandu, Horticulture and Vegetable Science's principal scientist R S Pan said.

"Soybean variety 'Swarna Vasundhara' and snow pea variety 'Swarna Tripti' have gained nationwide recognition. Their popularity among farmers is steadily rising," he said.

The soybean variety was introduced in Jharkhand and other

states to provide nutritional and livelihood security among the farmers. "Based on the recommendation of the Central Sub-Committee on Crop Standards, Notification and Release of Varieties for Horticultural Crops, the variety is now being supplied to farmers in 14 States," Pan said.

Farmers gave a positive response to the soybean variety in Jharkhand, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Karnataka, West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Himachal Pradesh and Chhattisgarh, he said.

'Swarna Vasundhara' has now become a widely recognised

identity of Jharkhand, the scientist said, adding that its promotion aligns with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's appeal for India to achieve self-sufficiency in pulses.

The main objective behind developing this soybean variety was to address nutritional deficiencies across all age groups, he said. "The original germplasm of the soybean was imported from the World Vegetable Centre, Taiwan, and later improved through selection and experimental cultivation in Ranchi. And it is a source of proteins, carbohydrates, lipids, essential fatty acids and minerals," Pan said.

Additionally, it also contains isoflavones, which are anti-cancer compounds, and is beneficial for people suffering from osteoporosis (knee pain) and heart-related ailments, he said.



# PM expressed gratitude to Armed Forces

NEW DELHI, Dec 7 (PTI)

PRIME Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday expressed deep gratitude to the Armed Forces for protecting the nation with unwavering courage.

"On Armed Forces Flag Day, we express our deepest gratitude to the bravemen and women who protect our nation with unwavering courage," he said in a post on X. The Prime Minister also made a contribution to the Armed Forces Flag Day Fund.

"Their discipline, resolve and spirit shield our people and strengthen our nation. Their commitment stands as a powerful example of duty, discipline and devotion to our nation," the Prime Minister said, making an appeal to the people to contribute to the Armed Forces Flag Day fund.

**CM YOGI UNVEILS FLAG PIN, SOUVENIR:** UTTAR Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Sunday marked Armed Forces Flag Day by unveiling a specially designed 'Flag Pin' and 'Souvenir' at his official residence

## ARMED FORCES FLAG DAY



Prime Minister Narendra Modi receives a badge on the occasion of the Armed Forces Flag Day. (PTI)

in Lucknow.

The ceremony was dedicated to honouring the supreme sacrifices of India's soldiers and reaffirming the nation's commitment to the welfare of Armed Forces personnel and their families. CM Yogi in a post wrote, "Heartfelt

greetings on 'Armed Forces Flag Day' to the valiant soldiers of the Indian Army, who are perpetually engaged in national defence! Let us all resolve to express our gratitude towards the courage, dedication, and sense of duty of our brave soldiers and become

## Contribute to welfare of soldiers: Rajnath

NEW DELHI, Dec 7 (IANS)

DEFENCE Minister Rajnath Singh on Sunday extended greetings to the Indian Armed Forces on the occasion of their Flag Day and lauded their valour and sacrifices for the country.

Since 1949, December 7 has been observed as the Armed Forces Flag Day throughout the country to honour the martyrs and soldiers who valiantly fought and continue to fight to safeguard the country's honour.

This day is celebrated to express national solidarity and raise funds for the welfare of war-disabled soldiers, Veer Naris, and their dependents through donations.

In a post on X, Rajnath Singh said, "On Armed Forces Flag Day, I salute the valour and sacrifices of our Armed Forces. Their courage safeguards our nation, and their selfless service reminds us of a debt we can never repay. I urge everyone to contribute generously to the Armed

participants in their welfare, Jai Hind!" Earlier in the day, the Chief Minister had also posted a similar message on X, offering his congratulations and best wishes. He wrote, "Heartfelt congrat-

ulations and best wishes to the brave soldiers of the country's Armed Forces and their families on the occasion of 'Armed Forces Flag Day'. Salutations to all the soldiers of the Armed Forces who,

with indomitable courage, valour, and heroism, perform their duties and sacrifice everything for the unity, integrity, and protection of the borders of the country. Jai Hind!"



Defence Minister Rajnath Singh receives a badge on Armed Forces Flag Day, in New Delhi. (PTI)

Forces Flag Day Fund. Your support honours their dedication and strengthens those who protect us."

# Senior Trump official begins 5-day visit to India

NEW DELHI, Dec 7 (PTI)

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ALLISON Hooker, the US Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, is on a five-day visit to India from Sunday to advance bilateral strategic and economic ties.

Hooker's trip to New Delhi and Bengaluru comes amid increasing strain in ties between the two countries after Washington slapped a whopping 50 per cent tariff on Indian goods, including 25 per cent levies for India's procurement of Russian crude oil.

The US embassy said Under Secretary Hooker's visit marks another step forward in advancing President Donald Trump's priorities for a strong US-India partnership and a free and open Indo-Pacific.

Hooker's December 7-11 visit is aimed at advancing the US-India strategic partnership.

# US warns of China's 'historic' military buildup, signals implications for India

WASHINGTON, Dec 7 (IANS)

THE United States has issued a sharp warning about China's accelerating military expansion, calling Beijing's defence buildup "historic" and underscoring the need to urgently strengthen America's defence industrial base — a development with direct implications for India's security calculus in the Indo-Pacific.

At the Reagan National Defense Forum, the US Secretary of War, Pete Hegseth, said Washington is "obviously well aware of their historic military buildup. It's right in front of us," pointing to China's rapid naval growth, its expanding nuclear arsenal, and its deepening military cooperation with Russia.

The moderator noted that China now has "the world's largest navy" and is rapidly modernising its nuclear forces. For every eight warships Beijing

builds, the United States produces fewer than two. Chinese shipbuilding capacity, he said, is "230% greater than the United States's capability."

Responding to that assessment, the Secretary said the correct US response was internal reform and accelerated production: "The most important thing we can do is look inward and increase our urgency of ensuring we rebuild our defence industrial base in the arsenal of freedom." He added that the Trump Administration has already undertaken "an entire acquisitions requirements and foreign military sales overhaul. Not a reform, not a tinkering... This is a complete game change in how we deliver systems to the battle. We have to, we don't have time."

He said the objective was to "be able to feel the best as quickly as possible," underscoring the administration's view that

America must restore its defence production capacity at scale and at speed to deter China's expanding footprint.

While the Secretary did not directly reference India, his remarks align closely with New Delhi's strategic view of China's rising military power, particularly in the maritime domain. India has been monitoring Beijing's expanding naval presence in the Indian Ocean, its militarisation of the South China Sea, and its deepening military ties with Pakistan — all areas where stronger US preparedness could help stabilise the regional balance. The Secretary also emphasised that the United States is approaching this challenge prudently but decisively: "We see it, we're aware, but we're also prudent in how we approach it, which is the way the president has approached it. And we'll do the same."

# Iran backs SCO anti-terror cooperation: Senior diplomat

TEHRAN, Dec 7 (IANS)

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IRAN supports the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation's (SCO) counter-terrorism plans and cooperation efforts, a senior Iranian diplomat has said.

Mehrdad Kiaei, director general for SCO and BRICS Affairs at Iran's Foreign Ministry, made the remarks during a meeting with Ularbek Sharsheev, head of the SCO Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS), on the sidelines of a joint anti-terror exercise, the ministry said in a statement on Saturday. Kiaei highlighted the central role of the SCO and RATS in Iran's foreign policy, calling RATS a "window into the region's future security architecture."