

# Tariffs essential to protect national security: Trump

WASHINGTON, Jan 7 (IANS)

US PRESIDENT Donald Trump defended the aggressive use of tariffs, saying trade penalties are essential to protect US national security and for correcting decades of economic imbalances with both allies and adversaries.

"I'm imposing on you a tariff 42 times more expensive than what I'm asking for you in return," Trump said while recounting conversations with foreign leaders. "This is for medical security."

Trump singled out China while explaining his approach. "You can either have a 25 per cent tariff added on to you, like I did with China on fentanyl," he said. "I put a 20 per cent penalty tax on China and it's drying up because the tax is far more than fentanyl."

He said tariffs were already generating significant revenue.

"We're going to have over \$650 billion poured into our country or coming in shortly because of tariffs," Trump said.

Trump said tariff enforcement uncovered tens of billions in previously uncollected funds. "We were missing \$39 billion, not million, plus \$39 billion," he said. "We've taken in \$650 billion or shortcoming."

He framed trade policy as inseparable from defence readiness. "We have national security because of tariffs," Trump said, adding that the issue was headed to the Supreme Court.

Trump also tied tariffs to drug pricing negotiations, claiming US pressure forced foreign Governments to reconsider prescription drug costs. "France was



told that the pill will go from \$10 to \$30," he said.

He said pharmaceutical firms ultimately complied. "The drug companies, I made a deal with them," Trump said. "The nations were a bigger

problem than drug companies." Trump argued that previous administrations subsidised the world. "We were subsidising the entire world," he said. "That's just one of the many things we were giving."

The President dismissed skepticism about the policy's effectiveness. "If you have the right President, it's good," Trump said. Tariffs have been a central pillar of Trump's economic strategy. The policy has drawn legal challenges and debate over executive authority, with courts examining whether tariffs can be justified under national security statutes.

# Indian Army continues restoration work in cyclone-hit Sri Lanka

COLOMBO, Jan 7 (IANS)

AS PART of Operation Sagar Bandhu, the Indian Army's Engineer Task Force is working relentlessly to restore B-492, which connects Kandy in the Central Province to Badulla in Sri Lanka's Uva Province, which was severely affected due to cyclone Ditwah.

In a video posted by the Indian Army on X, a schoolgirl said, "We are really grateful to you for the service you have done for us, especially coming all the way from India. Due to the damaged bridge, we had no way of crossing over to this side. We are so thankful to all of you for coming and doing this for us. Thank you very much for the assistance you have provided." While sharing the video and image on X, the army stated, "The Indian Army's Engineer Task Force is relentlessly restoring critical road connectivity on the vital B-492, linking Kandy in the Central Province with Badulla in the Uva Province of Sri Lanka, which was severely affected by Cyclone Ditwah."



"Through the swift construction of Bailey bridges at KM 15 and KM 21, the Task Force has reconnected communities, reduced travel time and strengthened bonds with the people of Sri Lanka," it added.

In November last year, India launched Operation Sagar Bandhu, as the First Responder in the immediate aftermath of the devastating Cyclone Ditwah, to provide urgent Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief

(HADR) support to Sri Lanka.

Cyclone Ditwah triggered widespread flooding, landslides and large-scale infrastructure damage across Sri Lanka, overwhelming the country's disaster-response mechanisms. Indian Navy ships INS Vikrant and INS Udayagiri were among the first to respond to the emergency. Both warships were already present in Sri Lankan waters to mark the Sri Lankan Navy's 75th anniversary.

# China bans exports of goods used in military to Japan

BEIJING, Jan 7 (AP)

CHINA on Tuesday banned exports of dual-use goods that can serve military purposes to Japan, a move that comes at time of heightened tensions between the two countries over Taiwan, a self-ruled island Beijing claims as its sovereign territory.

The Chinese commerce ministry said in a statement that exports of such items, which can serve both civilian and military purposes, to Japanese military users and all other end-users that could help enhance Japanese military power are prohibited.

Any individual or organisation that violates the rule by transferring or providing these made-in-China products to Japanese groups and people would face legal consequences, regardless

of where they are from, it said.

The notice did not identify or describe specific items, but some exports — particularly in the technology sectors such as drones and navigation systems — could be adapted for military use.

Masaaki Kanai, the Japanese Foreign Ministry's head of Asia Oceanian affairs, "strongly protested" to Chinese deputy consul Shi Yong, according to a statement from the Japanese ministry. Kanai said a measure exclusively targeting Japan that deviates from international practice is unacceptable and demanded it be retracted.

Relations between Japan and China worsened late last year after Japan's Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi said its military could get involved if China were to take action against Taiwan.

In December, Japan said Chinese military aircraft locked radar on its fighter jets even though there was a safe distance between them. Tokyo is barreling forward with efforts to significantly boost its military capabilities to stand up to China's growing threats by doubling annual arms spending. Last week, China launched large-scale military drills around Taiwan for two days to warn against what it calls separatist and external forces. At that time, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi slammed both Japan and Taiwan's "pro-independence forces." Wang said Japan's current leaders openly challenge China's territorial sovereignty and the postwar international order. Japan was defeated in WWII by the US and its allies.

# Goyal holds talks with Liechtenstein Dy PM on cementing economic ties

NEW DELHI, Jan 7 (IANS)

COMMERCE and Industry Ministry Piyush Goyal on Wednesday held a meeting with Sabine Monauni, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Liechtenstein, on strengthening economic ties between the two countries.

"We discussed opportunities for trade expansion, innovation and clean technology, and explored



ways to deepen our mutually beneficial ties, especially after the operationalisation of the India-EFTA TEPA," Goyal said in a post on X social media platform.

"Emphasised the unique partnership, where India brings talent, scale and demand, and Liechtenstein contributes high-

Union Minister Piyush Goyal with Sabine Monauni, Deputy Prime Minister of Liechtenstein. (PTI)

value manufacturing and specialised engineering, offers significant scope to accelerate trade, investment, and technology flows," the Minister added.

The India-European Free Trade Association (EFTA) Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement (TEPA) will officially become operational on October 1, with the formation bloc comprising Switzerland, Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein.

# ISRO to launch PSLV-C62 on 12th

BENGALURU Jan 7 (PTI)

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**INDIAN** Space Research Organisation is gearing up for its first launch of the New Year with the PSLV-C62 mission on January 12 from Sriharikota in Andhra Pradesh.

According to an ISRO official, the primary payload of the mission is the EOS-N1, an imaging satellite built for strategic purposes by the Defence Research and Development Organisation.

“The Launch of PSLV-C62 Mission is scheduled on 12 January 2026 at 10:17 hrs IST from First Launch Pad (FLP), SDSC SHAR, Sriharikota,” ISRO said in a post on ‘X’.

The rocket will also carry a small probe device, Kestrel Initial Demonstrator (KID), developed by a Spanish-based startup, and will remain attached to the PS-4 stage, they said.

# India concerned

## Need to prioritise safety, well-being of Venezuelans: EAM

LUXEMBOURG, Jan 7 (IANS)

**EXTERNAL** Affairs Minister (EAM) S Jaishankar has said that India is concerned over the recent developments in Venezuela following the US “capture” of President Nicolas Maduro.

The EAM urged all parties involved to prioritise the safety and well-being of the Venezuelan people amid the ongoing crisis.



“We are concerned at the developments, but we would really urge all the parties involved to now sit down and sort of come to a position which is in the interest of the well-being and the safety of the people of Venezuela,” EAM Jaishankar said at an event in Luxembourg.

He underlined that India’s primary concern is ensuring that the Venezuelan people emerge well from the crisis, noting the long history of good bilateral relations.

“At the end of the day, that is our concern, that we would want Venezuela, the country with whom over many, many years we’ve had very good relations, and people to come out well from whatever is the direction of events,” he added.

# Trump wants to buy Greenland rather than to seize it: Rubio

WASHINGTON, Jan 7 (IANS)

**SECRETARY** of State Marco Rubio has told US lawmakers that President Donald Trump aims to acquire Greenland through negotiations with Denmark, and that recent tough rhetoric from the White House does not signal an imminent US military move, according to a 'Wall Street Journal' report.

Rubio made the remarks during a closed-door briefing with congressional leaders, where he sought to downplay concerns that the Trump administration was preparing to use force to take control of the Arctic island, people familiar with the discussion told the Journal.

According to the report, Rubio said the administration's objective is to pressure Denmark into negotiations over Greenland's future, rather than to seize the territory militarily. The comments come amid increasingly forceful public statements by



Rubio arrives for a closed-door briefing with congressional leaders, where he sought to downplay concerns that Trump administration was preparing to use force to take control of the Greenland. (AP)

Trump and senior aides, who have refused to rule out the use of force.

The White House has repeatedly framed Greenland as a

national security priority. White Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt said Trump believes acquiring Greenland is vital for US national security and for deterring rivals

in the Arctic, adding that the President is considering "a range of options" to pursue that goal.

Trump has argued that US control of the island would help counter Russian and Chinese influence in the Arctic and secure access to critical minerals.

Rubio's briefing followed questions from Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer about whether the administration was considering military action not only in Greenland, but also in other places such as Mexico. Rubio's comments appeared aimed at calming those fears, the report said.

However, the administration has sent mixed signals. Stephen Miller, one of Trump's closest advisors, said in a television interview that he would not rule out military action over Greenland, remarking that "nobody's going to fight the United States militarily over the future of Greenland."

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## US seizes 2 sanctioned oil tankers linked to Venezuela

WASHINGTON, Jan 7 (AP)

**THE** United States has seized two sanctioned oil tankers linked to Venezuela in back-to-back actions in the North Atlantic and the Caribbean, officials said on Wednesday.

US European Command announced the seizure of the

merchant vessel Bella I for "violations of US sanctions" in a social media post. The US had been pursuing the tanker since last month after it tried to evade a US blockade on sanctioned oil vessels around Venezuela.

Then, Secretary of Homeland Security Kristi Noem revealed that US forces also took control

of the tanker Sophia in the Caribbean. Noem said in a social media post both ships were "either last docked in Venezuela or en route to it."

Noem said that both ships are part of a large "ghost fleet" of sanctioned vessels that carry oil from Russia, Iran and Venezuela in defiance of

Western sanctions, mostly to customers in Asia.

The Trump administration is "selectively" removing sanctions to enable the shipping and sale of Venezuelan oil to markets worldwide, according to an outline of the policies published on Wednesday by the Energy

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