

# Trump may visit India next year, says Rubio

WASHINGTON, June 27 (IANS)

SENIOR officials in US President Donald Trump's administration have outlined an ambitious roadmap for expanding India-US ties, signalling that Washington is working towards a Presidential visit to India early next year, expects to conclude a bilateral trade agreement in the coming weeks or months, and sees New Delhi as one of its closest strategic partners.

In separate exclusive interviews with IANS at the White House, US Secretary of State Marco Rubio and US Ambassador to India Sergio Gor described the relationship as stronger than ever, highlighting growing cooperation in trade, defence, energy, critical technologies and the Indo-Pacific.

Rubio said the administration was working towards Trump's visit to India next year.

"I look forward to returning myself before the end of the year

and setting up a presidential visit in the early parts of next year," he said. Asked if the visit would take place next year, Rubio replied: "We're hoping. That's what we're working towards sometime early next year to have the President come."

The Secretary of State also expressed optimism about the ongoing trade negotiations.

"We're hoping to finalise a trade deal. We're on the last inches of getting it done, and it's very positive," Rubio said. Gor echoed that assessment, saying negotiators were now focused on completing the agreement.

"There's a handful of issues that remain," he said. "A lot of it now is on the language that ultimately both sides will sign."

"We're confident that over the next few weeks, over the next few months, it'll get done." Both officials underscored the importance of the personal relationship between Trump and Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

# Coast Guard commissions indigenous fast patrol vessel ICGS Akshay in Goa

PANAJI, June 27 (PTI)

THE Indian Coast Guard on Saturday commissioned ICGS Akshay, a new-generation fast patrol vessel built by Goa Shipyard Limited, to strengthen maritime security, search and rescue operations and coastal surveillance.

The indigenous ship was formally inducted into service at Goa Shipyard Limited in Vasco in the presence of senior Coast Guard officials and government dignitaries.

Designed and constructed by Goa Shipyard Limited, the vessel has been built under the Centre's 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' and 'Make in India' initiatives, showcasing the country's indigenous shipbuilding capabilities.

The vessel, named "Akshay",

meaning "indestructible", symbolises the Coast Guard's commitment to safeguarding the

patrol vessel will undertake a wide range of missions, including maritime law enforcement,



country's maritime interests and ensuring safe, secure and clean seas, an official statement said.

As per the statement, the fast

coastal security, search and rescue operations, marine environmental protection and assistance to mariners in distress.

It will be commanded by Commandant (Junior Grade) Deepak Choubey.

The commissioning of ICGS Akshay is part of the Coast Guard's ongoing fleet modernisation programme aimed at enhancing maritime safety, security and environmental protection across India's vast coastline, the statement said.

Additional Secretary (Personnel), Department of Expenditure, Ministry of Finance, Parama Sen, Indian Coast Guard Region (West) Commander, Inspector General Bhasham Sharma, Deputy Director General (HRD), Inspector General Jyotindra Singh, senior Central and state government officials, and representatives of Goa Shipyard Limited were present on the occasion.

# 2 ULFA(I) militants tasked with killing people in Tinsukia held: Assam Police

TINSUKIA, June 27 (PTI)

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TWO militants of the proscribed ULFA(I) were arrested with arms and ammunition in Assam's Tinsukia district on Saturday, with a top official saying that they were tasked with killing people in Tinsukia town.

The operation was carried out in Jagun by a team of Assam police with the help of central security agencies based on intelligence reports, Tinsukia Senior Superintendent of Police Mayank Kumar said.

# India mastered cryogenic engine technology once denied to it: ISRO chief Narayanan

BENGALURU, June 27 (PTI)

INDIA has mastered the cryogenic engine technology once denied to it, ISRO Chairman V Narayanan said on Saturday.

He said the country is preparing for the first uncrewed Gaganyaan mission, advancing Chandrayaan-4, a lunar sample return mission, and Chandrayaan-5, a joint long-duration mission with Japan involving a heavier rover.

Delivering the 17th Air Chief Marshal L M Katre Memorial Lecture at the HAL Management Academy under the aegis of the Air Force Association, Karnataka Branch, Narayanan outlined India's progress in space tech-

nology and its roadmap towards establishing an Indian space station by 2035 and landing an

Indian astronaut on the Moon by 2040.

"We have developed a cryo-

genic rocket engine, the technology which was denied to India," Narayanan said.

He explained that India had transformed technology denial into technological leadership by developing three cryogenic propulsion systems and setting multiple world records in the process.

Narayanan said the first uncrewed Gaganyaan mission was the immediate focus before India proceeds with crewed spaceflight.

"We are now working on the first uncrewed mission this year. Then once we review the result, we'll come back to the crewed mission," he said during the lecture.

## Jayan appointed Director of ISRO's Liquid Propulsion Systems Centre

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, June 27 (PTI)

EMINENT aerospace engineer N Jayan has been appointed as the new director of the LPSC, one of the premier centres of the ISRO.

Jayan has played a key role in advancing the country's propulsion technologies through various leadership

positions in the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), an official statement issued on Saturday said.

Before being posted as LPSC Director, he served as Associate Director of the Centre, Project Director of the Cryogenic Stage Project, and Project Director of the Next Generation Launch Vehicle (NGLV) Project at the Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre

# PM Modi reaches Seychelles

## HANDS OVER 'MADE IN INDIA' PATROL VESSEL



Prime Minister Narendra Modi with Seychelles President Patrick Heminie and others during the handing-over ceremony of a fast patrol vessel with cars and ambulances at the Coast Guard Base in Victoria, Seychelles on Saturday. (PTI)

VICTORIA, June 27 (PTI)

**PRIME** Minister Narendra Modi arrived in Seychelles on Saturday on a three-day official visit, where he handed over a 'Made in India' fast patrol vessel to their coast guard, reaffirming New Delhi's commitment to strengthening the archipelagic nation's maritime security capabilities.

"The transfer of the Fast Patrol Vessel Lesparw to the Seychelles Coast Guard marks another important milestone in the growing India-Seychelles partnership in defence and maritime security," Modi posted on X. He further said, "It is also the latest in a series of capability-building initiatives that reflect India's steady

fast commitment to supporting the security priorities of Seychelles."

During this visit, Modi will hold talks with President Patrick Herminie and attend the golden jubilee celebrations of the National Day of Seychelles as the Guest of Honour. Upon arrival at the Seychelles International Airport, Modi was given a grand welcome by Herminie and a high-level delegation.

The Prime Minister also received a ceremonial Guard of Honour. "Seychelles is a valued maritime partner and a close friend in the Indian Ocean. Looking forward to a productive visit aimed at further strengthening our longstanding ties

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## India deserves permanent seat at UNSC given its population, global role: Seychelles Minister

VICTORIA, June 27 (ANI)

**SEYCHELLES** Foreign Minister Barry Faure on Saturday backed India's candidature for a permanent seat at the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), saying New Delhi deserves a place at the global body's top decision-making forum given its population, international role and contributions to peace and security, particularly in maritime security.

Speaking to ANI ahead of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's arrival in the East African island nation as part of his

two-day state visit, Faure said the current global order and international institutions need reforms to better reflect contemporary realities, with greater representation for countries and regions that remain underrepresented.

"The global order established in 1945 needs reform. International institutions must better reflect today's realities. There is a strong need for more balanced representation, particularly for countries like India and regions like Africa, which currently lack permanent representation in key global institutions," he said.

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# Iranian drones attack Bahrain, ship is struck in strait after US attacks Iran

DUBAI, June 27 (AP)

**IRAN** launched a drone assault targeting Bahrain while a ship in the Strait of Hormuz separately came under attack Saturday, likely Tehran's response to overnight airstrikes by the United States.

The attacks across the Persian Gulf show the danger of the Iran war again spinning out of control, even after Iran and the US reached an interim deal to try to agree on a final accord to end the conflict.

The US had launched its airstrikes in response to an Iranian drone attack on a ship



trying to get out of the strait on Thursday, continuing a string of attacks that have shaken the uneasy ceasefire in the war.

Meanwhile, a multinational maritime body overseen by the US Navy said Saturday that it would expand a route near Oman

in the strait to allow for both inbound and outbound traffic - likely setting up a new flashpoint with Tehran.

Bahrain condemns Iran's drone attack. That Iran targeted Bahrain was likely not coincidental. The kingdom has been one of the strongest critics of Iran and is home to the US Navy's 5th Fleet. It just hosted US Secretary of State Marco Rubio for a meeting of the Gulf Cooperation Council's foreign ministers, which ended with a call for an end to Iran's attacks and for the strait to be completely open.

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