

4 States sign pact to resolve pending Narmada Project issues

NEW DELHI, July 7 (PTI)

FOUR States bordering the Narmada river, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Rajasthan, and Maharashtra on Tuesday reached an agreement in the presence of Union Home Minister Amit Shah regarding the resolution of decades-old issues on displacement and land compensation within the Narmada Project, officials said.

Officials noted that the long-standing dispute concerning the displacement and land compensation of people in flood-prone areas of the Narmada River Project has now been resolved.

All States involved in the agreement agreed to an amicable settlement of the dispute under the leadership and guidance of the Home Minister, officials said.

Recently, significant progress has also been made in resolving long-standing water-sharing issues between states, such as those concerning the Kishau Dam project in Himachal Pradesh and the water dispute between Rajasthan and Haryana, they said.

On June 29, Rajasthan and Haryana signed an agreement for the construction and implementation of the Yamuna Water Project, resolving a nearly three-decade-old issue.

Additionally, on June 16, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, and Rajasthan agreed to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for the implementation of the Kishau Multipurpose Project to rejuvenate the Yamuna river.

'FTAs to help boost exports of leather goods, footwear to USD 14 bn by 2030'

NEW DELHI, July 7 (PTI)

THE Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) finalised by India will create significant opportunities for the leather goods and footwear sector, helping boost exports to USD 14 billion by 2030, CLE has said. Council for Leather Exports (CLE) Chairman Ramesh Kumar Juneja said that they are eagerly waiting for a trade pact with the US, as it is India's largest export destination. A successful conclusion of India-US agreement will secure preferential access for the sector over competing nations, he said.

The FTAs with regions such as the European Union, UK, New Zealand will define the next chapter of growth for the industry, he said. "Our industry aims to make optimum use of these emerging opportunities and reach an export target of USD 14 billion by 2030, as part of an overall industry turnover target of USD 50

billion," Juneja said. He added that trade agreements with UAE, Oman, Mauritius, Australia, EFTA with Switzerland, Norway, Iceland and Lichtenstein have all aided the domestic exporters.

The sector has recorded positive growth in exports to several key markets, including the UAE, the Netherlands, Australia, Korea, Russia, and Japan. India's leather and footwear exports stood at USD 4.75 billion in the last fiscal, with Tamil Nadu accounting for USD 1.59 billion, or nearly 37 per cent, of the country's exports from the sector.

Women make up over 40 per cent of the state's workforce in the industry. "Our industry's own five-year plan is to generate employment for an additional 2.2 million people while reaching a total turnover of USD 50 billion by 2030," Juneja said, adding that these FTAs now place the sector on equal or better footing than the global competitors.

India partners with 35 nations for critical minerals

NEW DELHI, July 7 (IANS)

INDIA has significantly expanded its global outreach to secure supplies of critical minerals and strengthen semiconductor supply chains, signing partnerships with 24 countries while holding negotiations with 11 others over the past two years.

The initiative forms part of the Government's broader strategy to reduce dependence on concentrated supply sources and ensure long-term access to minerals essential for clean energy, electric vehicles (EVs), advanced manufacturing, defence, and semiconductor production.

According to the Ministry of Mines, India has developed a

strategic network spanning North America, Europe, Africa, West Asia, Central Asia, Southeast Asia, and Australia.

The approach extends beyond sourcing raw materials and includes cooperation in mineral exploration, mining, processing, technology transfer, investment, and resilient supply chains.

India has already established cooperation frameworks with countries including the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, Germany, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Japan, Australia, Brazil, Argentina, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ghana, Namibia, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Israel, Vietnam, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Malawi, and Russia.

Indian envoy meets China's Vice FM

BEIJING, July 7 (PTI)

INDIAN Ambassador to China Vikram Doraiswami held his “introductory” meeting with China’s Vice Foreign Minister Hua Chunying and exchanged views on further expanding bilateral cooperation in trade, economy, and people-to-people exchanges.

Ambassador Doraiswami held his introductory meeting with Hua Chunying, Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs of China, on Monday, the Indian Embassy in Beijing said in a post on X on Tuesday.

“Both sides agreed to strengthen efforts to fully implement the vision of the leaders of the two countries for stable and mutually beneficial relations that deliver tangible benefits to the peoples of both countries,” it said.

NATO announces billions in arms deals to appease Trump as he arrives for summit

ANKARA, July 7 (AP)

PRESIDENT Donald Trump arrived in Ankara on Tuesday afternoon for the NATO summit, as the transatlantic military alliance was announcing billions in arms deals in an attempt to appease the mercurial US leader.

Trump was expected to head first to the presidential compound of Turkish leader Recep Tayyip Erdogan, a close ally who is hosting this year's gathering.

Just before Air Force One touched down in Ankara, NATO showcased a series of military projects worth billions of dollars - an investment that the alliance's secretary-general, Mark Rutte, called "money well spent."

An energised Rutte was speaking to Government Ministers and defence industry officials at a forum billed as NATO's "big reveal," to the thrum of techno music and a slick video display. NATO as an organisation does not own any weapons - these are the property of the 32 member countries - but it does have a fleet of 14 AWACS early warning radar surveillance planes that are about 50 years old, along with some newer surveillance drones.

A deal to replace the aging planes was

announced Tuesday. Swedish manufacturer Saab will be supplying up to 10 new GlobalEye surveillance aircraft for a 10-nation consortium, Swedish Prime Minister Ulf Kristersson announced. "It's a moment of great pride," he said, noting that the twin-engine aircraft would be "made within the alliance for all the alliance."

Some of the projects will be paid for with funds from a system of cheap loans for defence purposes set up by the European Union, comprising up to \$170 billion raised on capital markets. "We need to ensure that we are translating our economic might into military capabilities, putting the cash to work from defence plans to drones, from money to missiles and interceptors," Rutte said.

Trump has branded NATO a "paper tiger" that would cease to function without American arms and leadership. At the forum on Tuesday, Michael Duffy, a US undersecretary of defence, said "the reality is that we need production increases across the board."

"We will be looking to increase our exports to those who are looking to buy our equipment, and we'll also be looking to partner with the expansion of production capacity here in Europe," he said.

Jaishankar, Bahrain's Deputy PM discuss ties



EAM S Jaishankar during a meeting with Bahrain's Deputy Prime Minister Khalid bin Abdulla Al Khalifa. (PTI)

MANAMA, July 7 (IANS)

EXTERNAL Affairs Minister (EAM) S Jaishankar held a meeting with Bahrain's Deputy Prime Minister Khalid bin Abdulla Al Khalifa on Tuesday, discussing strengthening bilateral cooperation across various sectors.

"A pleasure to meet Deputy Prime Minister of Bahrain H E Khalid bin Abdulla Al Khalifa on Tuesday morning. Discussed taking forward our bilateral cooperation across various sectors. Also exchanged views on the regional situation," EAM Jaishankar posted on X.

He expressed gratitude to Bahrain King for ensuring the safety and well-being of the Indian community in Bahrain.

"Honoured to have an audience with HM King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa of Bahrain. Also privileged to meet HRH Crown

Prince and PM Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa at the audience. Conveyed warm personal greetings of President Droupadi Murmu and PM Narendra Modi. Deeply value His Majesty's continued guidance for advancing the India-Bahrain partnership. Thanked him for ensuring the safety and well-being of the Indian diaspora in Bahrain," EAM Jaishankar said. He also interacted with members of Indian community in Bahrain and heard their experiences and suggestions for deepening bilateral ties.

"Pleased to interact with members of Indian community in Bahrain. They have made deep contributions to the Bahraini society and have served as a living bridge between India and Bahrain. Listened to their experiences and suggestions for deepening India-Bahrain partnership," the EAM wrote on X.

India to supply BrahMos missiles to Indonesia

India, Indonesia sign health, education pacts; IIM Bangalore to open campus in East Java

JAKARTA, July 7 (PTI)

SUPPLYING BrahMos and Astra missiles to Indonesia, boosting maritime security, and strengthening critical mineral supply chains emerged as the key outcomes of Tuesday's talks between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Prabowo Subianto.

The two sides inked nearly a dozen agreements to significantly shore up two-way cooperation in a range of areas including critical minerals, technology, food security, medicines and maritime security.

Modi landed in Jakarta on Monday to a red-carpet welcome in the first leg of his three-nation tour to strengthen trade and security cooperation under the framework of the India-Indonesia Comprehensive Strategic Partnership of 2018.

World will witness history in making when 140 crore people of India and Indonesia's 29 crore people march together, says PM Modi

With both sides aiming to bolster their defence ties,

Indonesia decided to import India's air-to-air BrahMos missiles following the weapon's success during Operation Sindur in 2021. The BrahMos missile deal with Indonesia came after India inked

similar pacts with Vietnam and the Philippines. The exact number of missiles to be supplied to Indonesia is not immediately known. To strengthen the critical mineral supply chain, India

decided to invest in the manufacturing of steel, nickel and rare earth permanent magnets in Indonesia.

"In today's era, the supply chain resilience of technology holds

great significance. An important agreement was reached to further strengthen the supply chain in the sectors of critical minerals and steel," Modi said.

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Prime Minister Narendra Modi during a meeting with Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto, in Jakarta. National Security Advisor Ajit Doval, Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri and others are also seen. (PTI)

PM Modi conferred with Indonesia's highest honour 'Bintang Adipurna'

JAKARTA, July 7 (PTI)

PRIME Minister Narendra Modi was on Tuesday conferred with Indonesia's highest honour 'Bintang Adipurna' of the Republic of Indonesia' medal for his role in strengthening the ties between both the countries. Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto presented the medal to Modi.

With this recognition, Prime Minister Modi has now received



35 international honours from countries across Asia, Europe, (Contd on page 5)