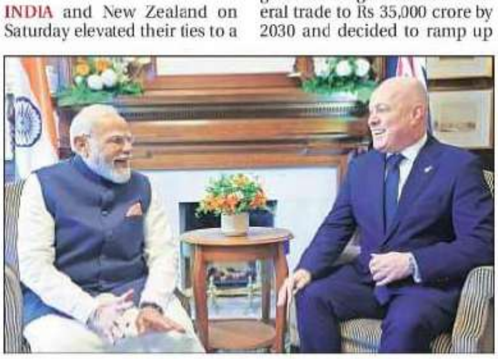
# India, NZ now strategic partners

## Set Rs 35,000 cr trade target by 2030

AUCKLAND, July 11 (PTI)

**INDIA** and New Zealand on Saturday elevated their ties to a strategic partnership, set a target of doubling their annual bilateral trade to Rs 35,000 crore by 2030 and decided to ramp up maritime security ties, as Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Kiwi counterpart Christopher Luxon vowed to work towards a peaceful Indo-Pacific.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi during a meeting with New Zealand Prime Minister Christopher Luxon, in New Zealand. (PTI)

The talks between the two leaders yielded 18 concrete outcomes, including 10 agreements. Key among them were a four-year roadmap to expand overall relations alongside three crucial pacts aimed at boosting hydrographic data sharing, facilitating mutual naval logistics and framing enhanced maritime engagement in the Indo-Pacific.

Read Editorial
**DOTS, CONNECTED**
on page 8

Expanding bilateral trade through the early implementation of the free trade deal was

*(Contd on page 5)*

## India–NZ free trade pact to inject 'depth and dynamism' into economic ties: Modi

AUCKLAND, July 11 (PTI)

**THE** landmark India-New Zealand free trade agreement would add depth and dynamism to the bilateral economic ties and open new opportunities for market access, investment and talent mobility, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Saturday. In an interaction with a select group of CEOs and business leaders, PM Modi emphasised that the two nations' shared democratic values, diversity, and commitment to sustainable development provide a robust foundation for an ambitious, forward-looking economic partnership.

The Prime Minister made the remarks shortly after holding wide-ranging talks with his New Zealand counterpart Christopher Luxon that produced 18 key outcomes including elevation of the bilateral relations to the level of strategic partnership.

*(Contd on page 5)*


PM Modi and New Zealand PM Christopher Luxon during the India-New Zealand business event, in New Zealand. (PTI)

INS Mahendragiri during its commissioning ceremony, in Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh. (PTI)

# 'INS Mahendragiri to strengthen India's maritime reach, bolster eastern seaboard'

VISAKHAPATNAM, July 11 (IANS)

AS INS Mahendragiri was commissioned into the Indian Navy on Saturday, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said the indigenous stealth frigate would further enhance the strength of India's eastern seaboard, expand the country's blue-water capabilities, and reinforce its strategic presence across the Indian Ocean Region.

The Indian Navy formally inducted INS Mahendragiri, the sixth indigenous stealth frigate built under Project 17A, during a commissioning ceremony held in Visakhapatnam.

Addressing the event, Defence Minister Singh said, "It is a beautiful coincidence that this commissioning is being done in Andhra Pradesh's Visakhapatnam. Visakhapatnam is not only the headquarters of the Eastern Naval Command but also one of the strongest pillars of India's maritime power. Andhra Pradesh is a land of pride and valour. Even today, Andhra Pradesh upholds its legacy; it has today emerged as a defence and aerospace manufacturing powerhouse."

Highlighting the progress of the Project 17A programme, the Defence Minister said, "INS Mahendragiri is the sixth Project 17A indigenous stealth frigate. The first of this class, INS Nilgiri, was commissioned by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in January 2025. In August 2025, INS Udaygiri and INS Himgiri were commissioned together. In April 2026, INS Taragiri was commissioned in Visakhapatnam. In June, INS Dunagiri was commissioned by the Prime Minister in Kolkata, and today this sixth ship, INS Mahendragiri, is being inducted into our Navy."

# Locked & loaded: Trump says a thousand missiles aimed at Iran

DUBAI, July 11(AP)

**US PRESIDENT** Donald Trump threatened Iran on Saturday after the funeral of Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei saw open calls for his killing, further underlining the tensions gripping the Middle East as an interim deal to end the war buckles under repeated crossfire in the region.

Trump made the comments on his Truth Social after senior US officials demanded that Iran make a public statement saying the Strait of Hormuz is open and that ships crossing the vital corridor won't be attacked any longer.

So far, Tehran has not done so, instead insisting that the route remain under its control and that it be allowed to charge ships moving through it, upending decades of precedent that consider the strait an international waterway.

*(Contd on page 5)*

# Commerce Secretary calls for predictable policy to achieve $150 billion electronics exports

NEW DELHI, July 11 (IANS)

COMMERCE Secretary Rajesh Agrawal has said that India's policy framework must provide the predictability and stability required for global value chains to expand their presence in the country.

The global electronics industry is increasingly driven by these value chains, he said at Chintan Shivir organised here by the Department of Commerce, to develop policy recommendations for strengthening India's electronics manufacturing and export competitiveness.

He observed that policy approaches for production aimed at the domestic market may differ from those needed to promote export-oriented manufacturing.

He further stated that the Chintan Shivir had been convened to facilitate constructive dialogue and develop tangible, balanced, equitable and actionable policy recommendations while strengthening.

India's position as a globally competitive electronics manufacturing and export hub.The event brought together senior Government officials, industry leaders, policy experts and stakeholders to deliberate on "India's evolving electronics manufacturing landscape and strategies to strengthen the country's global competitiveness." The Chintan Shivir featured presentations on India's roadmap to achieving $150 billion in electronics exports by 2030 and on strengthening the country's semiconductor and electronics components ecosystem.

Presentations outlined sector opportunities across smartphones, servers, specialty electronics and components. The sessions laid the foundation for detailed deliberations on policy priorities required to accelerate long-term growth and enhance export competitiveness.

Participants emphasised the importance of integrating MSMEs into global value chains, which account for nearly 90 per cent of global electronics trade, to enable them to scale as suppliers to large manufacturers.

# 'India must strengthen certification, buyer networks to take full advantage of FTA with UK'

NEW DELHI, July 11 (PTI)

THE India-UK free trade agreement opens market access but does not automatically translate into higher exports, and the country must strengthen standards, certification, logistics and buyer linkages to realise its full benefits, economic think tank GTRI said on Saturday. The India-UK Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) will come into force from July 15.

"Without parallel work on standards, certification, logistics, regulatory approvals and buyer networks, much of the opportunity will remain on paper. The agreement opens the door; India must now convert access into exports," the Global Trade Research Initiative (GTRI) said. Citing example, GTRI Founder Ajay Srivastava said while food exporters need better testing, traceability and compliance with UK sanitary and phytosanitary rules; machinery and electronics firms need certification, technology and stronger buyer links.

Similarly automobile exporters must meet rules-of-origin and technical requirements; and the garment, leather and footwear producers should move quickly to turn tariff savings into orders before competitors adjust.

"The biggest gains are likely where three conditions come together: India has strong export capacity, the UK has substantial demand and CETA removes a meaningful tariff disadvantage. That points most clearly to garments, textiles, leather, footwear, processed foods, seafood and selected farm products," he said.

According to the think tank's analysis, the strongest prospects are in labour-intensive goods, processed foods, seafood, automobiles and selected manufactures. Steel, petroleum and alcohol are less likely to gain significantly. In 2025, the UK imported USD 928.9 billion of goods from the world but only USD 15.2 billion from India.India's share of UK imports was just 1.6 per cent. Britain, meanwhile, bought only 3.4 per cent of India's USD 445 billion global exports. He said that low market share alone does not signal a big opportunity.