

Ukraine's drones hit major Russian refinery 800 miles from border

KYIV, Aug 13 (AP)

UKRAINIAN drones struck a major refinery deep inside Russia, military officials said.

The fourth in three days in Kyiv's monthslong campaign to choke Moscow's vital oil sector. The attacks have dented Russia's refining capacity, bringing shortages at gas stations. Kyiv officials say the onslaught seeks to compel Russian President Vladimir Putin to seek a peace deal. There is no sign that strategy is working. Ukraine's General Staff said its forces struck the Gazprom Neftekhim Salavat oil refining and petrochemical complex in Russia's republic of Bashkortostan overnight, causing a fire at the facility.

India's total goods and services exports post 13.3 pc growth to cross \$80 billion in July

NEW DELHI, Aug 13 (IANS)

INDIA'S total exports of merchandise and services for July this year clocked a double digit growth of 13.31 per cent at \$80.14 billion, compared to the same month of the previous year, according to data released by the Commerce Ministry on Thursday. The total imports of merchandise and services also rose by 15.83 per cent at \$95.16 billion during the month, compared to July 2025.

India's merchandise exports during July this year increased to \$44.24 billion from \$36.98 billion in the same month of the previous year, the data showed.

The major drivers of merchandise exports growth in July



include petroleum products, electronic goods, engineering goods, chemicals and textiles including handloom products.

Petroleum products exports increased by 67.64 per cent to \$6.92 billion, while electronic goods shipments increased by 57.4 per cent to \$5.92 billion during the month compared to July 2025. Similarly, engineering goods exports increased by 17.71 per

cent to \$12.24 billion during the month while organic and inorganic chemicals exports increased by 14.39 per cent to \$2.8 billion. The labour-intensive textile segment comprising cotton yarn, fabrics, made-ups and handloom products recorded an 8.4 per cent increase in exports to \$1.02 billion in July this year, compared to the same month of the previous year. The estimated

value of services export for July 2026 is \$35.89 billion, as compared to \$33.74 billion in the same month last year, while the estimated value of services imports for the month is \$18.94 billion, as compared to \$17.30 billion in July 2025. The Country's total exports of merchandise and services during April-July of the current financial year are estimated at \$316.42 billion, which represents a 13.16 per cent growth from the corresponding figure of \$279.63 billion in the same four-month period of 2025-26.

The cumulative value of merchandise exports during April-July 2026-27 was \$173.78 billion, up 17.04 per cent from \$48.48 billion during the same period of the previous financial year.

Only one bill saw debate in Monsoon Session: Rijiju

'Congress solely responsible for unfairly disrupting the proceeding in both the Houses'



NEW DELHI, Aug 13 (PTI)

PARLIAMENTARY Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju on Thursday blamed the Congress for "unfairly disrupting" House proceedings during the Monsoon Session and said it was for the first time in the country that the Opposition was "running away" from debate when the Government wanted discussion.

Addressing a press conference after both Houses of Parliament adjourned sine die, Rijiju said the Government was not happy with the level of discussions in Parliament as it has seen very poor productivity.

Productivity in Lok Sabha was 19 per cent, and in Rajya Sabha 39 per cent, he said.

"For the first time, we have

seen the Opposition running away from debate in Parliament when the Government wanted discussions. Congress is solely responsible for unfairly disrupting the proceedings," he said.

The Minister said 12 bills were passed during the Monsoon Session, but sadly only one saw discussions in both Houses.

The Monsoon Session, which

started on July 20, has seen prolonged disruptions in both Houses. The Opposition protests initially started over the NEET paper leak and alleged embezzlement of donations at the Ram temple in Ayodhya.

It later pressed for a discussion on the police action against students protesting over the NEET paper leak and also

demanding the presence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah in the House, and their statements.

To break the logjam, the Government on Monday offered a debate on the NEET paper leak and related issues and a reply by Shah, but it was rejected by the Congress.

A similar attempt was made on Wednesday too, but failed as the principal Opposition party Congress turned down the proposal again, with Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi asserting that the youth want to know who ordered that the "protesting students be shot at" with pellet guns.

He said the Opposition was not interested in listening to Shah's "imagination and lecture" in Parliament. If Shah ordered that the students be shot at, he is culpable, and if he did not, he is incompetent, Gandhi said. "In both cases, he should resign," the Congress leader said.

Monsoon Session fell victim to 'one leader's ego': Prasad

NEW DELHI, Aug 13 (PTI)

THE BJP on Thursday accused Congress leader Rahul Gandhi of repeatedly changing goalposts on discussions in Parliament and alleged that the Monsoon Session had fallen victim to "one leader's ego, indiscipline and insolence".

The party also alleged that hundreds of crores of rupees of taxpayers' money were wasted due to Gandhi's "arrogance and

obstinacy".

Addressing a press conference, senior BJP leader and MP Ravi Shankar Prasad alleged that the Opposition did not allow Parliament to function despite the Government's readiness for discussions. Calling Gandhi irresponsible and "immature", Prasad accused him of lacking political propriety.

"I would like to repeat that Rahul Gandhi is irresponsible.

Rahul Gandhi is yet to mature as a leader in the politics of the country. Rahul Gandhi is delinquent. And Rahul Gandhi has a great sense of arrogance and entitlement," he said.

"The Parliament's Monsoon Session has fallen victim to one leader's ego, indiscipline and insolence," he added. He said that Gandhi and the Opposition kept changing the goalposts during the entire Monsoon Session.

Parl passes Mines and Minerals Amendment Bill

NEW DELHI, Aug 13 (PTI)

THE Parliament passed the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Amendment Bill, 2026, which seeks to restrict States' powers to levy taxes on mineral rights and mineral-bearing lands.

The bill will become a law after receiving the President's assent. Replying to the debate in the Upper House, Mines Minister G Kitten Reedy said the legislation does not seek to interfere with the autonomy or revenue rights of States, but aims to ensure uniform mineral rates across the country. Reedy said the Centre was seeking to regulate major minerals such as coal, limestone, iron ore, copper and manganese.

Fresh clash erupts along Assam-Arunachal border

NORTH LAKHIMPUR (Assam), Aug 13 (PTI)

A FRESH clash erupted between protesters from Assam and Arunachal Pradesh in Dhemaji district on Thursday, forcing the police from the neighbouring state to fire in the air to control the mob even as the indefinite economic blockade against the Himalayan state entered its second day.

The Takam Mising Porin Kebang (TMPK), the apex student organisation of Assam's Mising community, and other local groups on Wednesday launched an indefinite economic blockade against Arunachal Pradesh in protest against the alleged firing in which 12 indigenous people from Assam were injured.

"When the blockade was going on, some people from Arunachal Pradesh indulged in stone pelt-ing on protesters from Assam and some persons sustained minor injuries. This led to a scuffle between the two sides," an official said.

The incident took place at Likabali entry point in Silapathar in Dhemaji district of Assam, he added. "Then we saw that police from Arunachal fired three

rounds in the air to control the mob on their side," the Assam Government official said.

At least 12 people from Assam were injured on Monday after alleged firing by miscreants from Arunachal Pradesh along the inter-state border in Dhemaji district over land encroachment issues. Along with TMPK, other local social groups like Mising Mimag Kebang (MMK) and Takam Mising Mahila Kebang (TMMK) are supporting the blockade and stopped all vehicles, barring emergency and school transportation, from coming or going to Arunachal Pradesh at the entry points.

The organisations are demanding an early resolution of the Assam-Arunachal Pradesh border dispute, action against the "miscreants" who had fired two days ago and an end to alleged encroachment on Assam land.

As part of the agitation, protesters blocked key entry points along the inter-state border, including roads at Dwarmukh-Banderdewa, Ruksin and Silapathar in Dhemaji, Banderdewa in Lakhimpur, Solengi in Gohpur and Pabhoi in Biswanath.

Delaware joins 3 other US States to proclaim Aug 15, 2026 as 'India Day'

NEW YORK, Aug 13 (PTI)

STATES across the US are issuing special proclamations to commemorate August 15, 2026, as 'India Day' to mark the country's independence, highlighting its heritage, diversity as growing contributions of its diaspora to the American fabric. Delaware is the latest US state, after New York, New Jersey and Massachusetts, to issue a proclamation on the occasion of India's Independence day, declaring August 15, 2026, as 'India Day'.

The proclamation, signed by

Delaware Governor Matthew Meyer, notes that the US state is "strengthened" by the many cultures and traditions represented throughout its communities, including the growing Indian American community whose presence has helped shape the character of the State.

"Delawareans of Indian heritage have enriched our State through their work, leadership, and service in communities across Delaware, contributing to our shared prosperity and creating opportunities for future generations," it said.

"India's history is rooted in a remarkable diversity of languages, traditions, faiths, and customs, and generations of Indian Americans have carried these traditions forward while building lives and communities in the United States."

The proclamation notes that 'India Day' offers an opportunity to honour India's independence, celebrate the heritage and achievements of Delaware's Indian American community, and recognise the lasting connections between the communities and the people of India.

Through the proclamation, Meyer encouraged all citizens to celebrate India Day, recognise the contributions of Delaware's Indian American community, and "honour the enduring ties between our communities and the people of India." Every year, flag-hoisting ceremonies at the Indian Embassy in Washington, as well as at consulates and the Indian mission to the UN, parades, cultural performances, and special events are held on August 15 across US States and cities to mark India's Independence Day.