

US plans to pay USD 850 mn of USD 5 bn it owes UN

WASHINGTON, Aug 22 (AP)

THE US Government has notified Congress of its plans to pay USD 850 million of the several billion it owes to the United Nations, the largest payment the Trump administration would make to the world body since it demanded sweeping reforms in exchange for continued support as its largest donor.

The State Department laid out its plans to transfer USD 725 million as part of its dues to the regular UN budget and USD 125 million toward UN peacekeeping operations in Haiti and the Democratic Republic of Congo, according to notifications sent to lawmakers this month and obtained by The Associated Press.

The US is behind on about USD 5 billion in dues related to its UN membership, with more than USD 2 billion owed toward the regular budget and USD 3 billion for peacekeeping operations, the

United Nations says.

In February, the Trump administration made a single payment of USD 160 million shortly after UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres warned that the institution was facing “imminent financial collapse” unless its financial rules were overhauled or all 193 member nations paid their dues, a message clearly directed at the United States.

President Donald Trump and his allies have spent the past year and a half demanding drastic changes across the UN, alarming many humanitarian workers and leading to severe reductions in programs and services.

Trump has publicly called out the world body for not living up to its potential. His administration did not pay anything to the United Nations in 2025, and it has withdrawn from UN organizations, including the World Health Organisation and the cultural agency UNESCO, while pulling funding from dozens of others.

EAM Jaishankar, Greek FM discuss bilateral issues before UNGA meeting

ATHENS/NEW DELHI, Aug 22
(IANS)

EXTERNAL Affairs Minister (EAM) S Jaishankar on Saturday held a telephonic conversation with his Greek counterpart, Giorgos Gerapetritis, during which the two sides discussed current geopolitical developments and agreed to stay in touch.

Following the talks, EAM took to X and posted: "Always nice to speak with FM Giorgos Gerapetritis of Greece. Discussed current developments and agreed to remain in touch."

The conversation took place amid deepening bilateral cooperation between India and Greece across several sectors.

"FM George Gerapetritis held a telephone conversation today with India's FM Dr S Jaishankar. They discussed bilateral and

regional issues. FM Gerapetritis invited his counterpart to visit Greece, and they agreed to meet in NYC on the sidelines of UNGA," the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs posted on X after the call.

Last month, India's Ambassador to Greece, Ravi Shankar, met Lt. Gen. Demosthenes Grigoriadis, Chief of Hellenic Air Force General Staff, and discussed the ongoing initiatives of cooperation between the two Air Forces.

According to the Indian Embassy in Greece, India's participation in INIOCHOS - a major annual multinational air combat training exercise hosted by the Hellenic Air Force - and Greece's participation in Tarang Shakti - the Indian Air Force's (IAF) largest biennial multinational air combat exercise - have fostered mutual understanding and partner-

ships.

"Ambassador Ravi Shankar met Lt Gen Mr. Demosthenes Grigoriadis, Chief of Hellenic Air Force General Staff. He discussed the ongoing initiatives of cooperation between our two Air Forces. India's participation in INIOCHOS and Greece's in Tarang Shakti has fostered mutual understanding and partnerships," the Embassy wrote on X.

In June, India and Greece reiterated their commitment to fight against cross-border terrorism during the Foreign Office Consultations held in New Delhi.

"14th Round of India-Greece Foreign Office Consultations were held in New Delhi on 05 June 2026, co-chaired by Ambassador Sibi George, Secretary (West) and Ambassador Andreas Fryganas, Director General for Political Affairs," the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) wrote on X.

Indian oil supply pact to shield Mauritius from price volatility, ensure energy security: Govt

■ This is the first long-term supply agreement concluded by an Indian PSU oil marketing company outside South Asia in recent years



NEW DELHI, Aug 22 (IANS)

THE five-year agreement between Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL) and the State Trading Corporation (STC) of Mauritius is an assured long-term supply commitment to Mauritius, providing the country with security of supplies and shielding it from price volatility, the Government said on Saturday.

This is the first long-term supply agreement concluded by an Indian PSU oil marketing company outside South Asia in recent years.

The long-term pact was signed during Petroleum and

Natural Gas Minister Hardeep Singh Puri's visit to Mauritius this week.

According to an official statement, India has emerged as a major global refining hub, with an annual output of 267 MMT of refined petroleum products across 23 refineries, making it a net exporter of refined products.

The country already meets the petroleum demand of Nepal and Bhutan and supplies significant quantities to other countries in the region and beyond.

Even during the ongoing West Asia crisis, India has fulfilled its supply commitments to Nepal

and Bhutan, making it a dependable energy security provider for the region.

"The agreement with Mauritius positions India as the country's anchor fuel supplier and strengthens India's strategic and economic footprint in the Indian Ocean region," said the petroleum Ministry.

Under the agreement, IOCL will supply the entire import requirement of Mauritius of Motor Spirit (MS), High Speed Diesel (HSD) and Aviation Turbine Fuel (ATF).

The MoU on oil and gas cooperation institutionalises the longstanding energy partnership between the two countries, covering petroleum products supply, training and capacity building for Mauritian officials and biofuels cooperation.

The statement further stated that it further provides for cooperation in biofuels through exchange of knowledge, research and training.

India-Finland coop takes centre stage at circular economy forum

NEW DELHI, Aug 22 (PTI)

INDIA and Finland are looking to deepen business and technology partnerships in the circular economy as companies from both countries explored opportunities for resource-efficient and sustainable growth at a forum here.

The concluding day of the two-day India Circular Economy Forum (ICEF) 2026, which focused on Finland, on Friday brought together policymakers, businesses and circular economy experts to discuss opportunities arising from the evolving India-EU economic relationship, an official statement.

Held from Aug 20 to 21, the ICEF 2026 was a precursor to the World Circular Economy Forum (WCEF) 2026, which will be held for the first time in South Asia in Gandhinagar from Sept 15 to 18.



The WCEF defines a circular economy as a system where materials never become waste and nature is regenerated. It helps tackle climate change, like biodiversity loss, waste and pollution, by decoupling economic activity from the consumption of limited resources.

Friday's discussions, held under the theme "Harmonising Value Chains: The new India-EU Trade Era", focused on building competitive and resilient value chains through circularity, traceability, resource efficiency and sustainable business practices.

Antti Herlevi, Counsellor for Trade and Investments in the Embassy of Finland in New Delhi, said, "Circular economy is not just an environmental agenda; it is an economic and industrial one."

He said more than 100 Finnish companies were already active in India across sectors such as clean energy, waste management, recycling, digital solutions and sustainable design, and that there was scope for greater cooperation with Indian partners.

"As the Indian market continues to grow rapidly, there is a significant opportunity for Finnish businesses to work alongside local partners in India across a range of fields, combining expertise and innovation to support resource-efficient and sustainable growth," Herlevi said.

Indian and Finnish companies also participated in a dedicated business-to-business session.

India and UK hold key meet to bolster bilateral defence ties

NEW DELHI, Aug 22 (PTI)

INDIA and the UK on Friday agreed to expand bilateral exchanges between the Armed Forces of the two countries through joint exercises, training and capacity building, as both sides held a key dialogue in Delhi.

Defence Secretary Rajesh Kumar Singh co-chaired the 25th India-UK Defence Consultative Group (DCG) meeting with Permanent Under Secretary for Defence of UK, Jeremy Pocklington, in New Delhi.

This was Pocklington's first visit to India in his capacity as Permanent Under Secretary for Defence of UK, the Defence Ministry said.

The visit underlined the long-standing defence cooperation between the two countries and regular exchange of views on issues of mutual interest.

"Both countries reviewed the



ongoing defence industrial cooperation with emphasis on research and development through the India-UK Vision 2035 and the ten-year Defence Industrial Roadmap," it said in a statement.

Both sides agreed to expand

bilateral exchanges between the armed forces of India and the UK through joint exercises, training and capacity building.

They acknowledged the robust maritime security collaboration in the Indo-Pacific, including establishment of the Regional

Maritime Security Centre of Excellence (RMSCE) under the Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative (IPOI), the Ministry said.

The Secretaries also exchanged views on issues of regional peace and security and reaffirmed their commitment to mutual security and strategic autonomy.

"Both sides reiterated that the India-UK Strategic Partnership is based on shared values of peace, stability, freedom, and mutual respect," the Ministry said. Prior to the DCG meeting, Pocklington laid a wreath at the National War Memorial and paid homage to the brave hearts who have made the supreme sacrifice in the service of the nation.

He also visited Gandhi Smriti Museum here and the National Defence College, New Delhi. During the visit, he had a bilateral interaction with the Chief of Defence Staff, Gen NS Raja Subramani.

Jaishankar to undertake 2-day visit to Russia

NEW DELHI, Aug 22 (PTI)

EXTERNAL Affairs Minister S Jaishankar will undertake a two-day visit to Moscow beginning Sunday to hold talks with his Russian interlocutors on a range of issues, including bilateral trade and investment ties.

Along with Russian First Deputy Prime Minister Denis Manturov, Jaishankar will co-chair a meeting of the India-Russia Inter-Governmental Commission on Trade, Economic, Scientific, Technological and Cultural Cooperation (IRIGC-TEC). The External Affairs Minister will also meet Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov and exchange perspectives on regional and global issues, according to an official statement.

Triangular grid of new military garrisons to secure 'Chicken's Neck'



SILIGURI (WB), Aug 22 (PTI)

UNION Home Minister Amit Shah on Saturday held a meeting with senior officials of West Bengal and Central Forces to review security along the nation's eastern borders, focusing primarily on strengthening arrangements at the Siliguri Corridor, also called the 'Chicken's Neck', officials said.

The key focus of the meeting was to enhance border surveillance, improve co-ordination between the central security forces, Intelligence agencies and the State police and administration, and draw up a framework for establishing a 'Triangular Security Grid', they said.

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Centre forms panel for 'permanent solution' to Gorkha issue

SILIGURI (WB), Aug 22 (PTI)

THE Centre on Saturday constituted a committee to draft an agreement and finalise modalities for a "permanent political solution" within the constitutional framework to the Gorkha identity issue in the Darjeeling hills and adjoining areas, officials said following a key

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