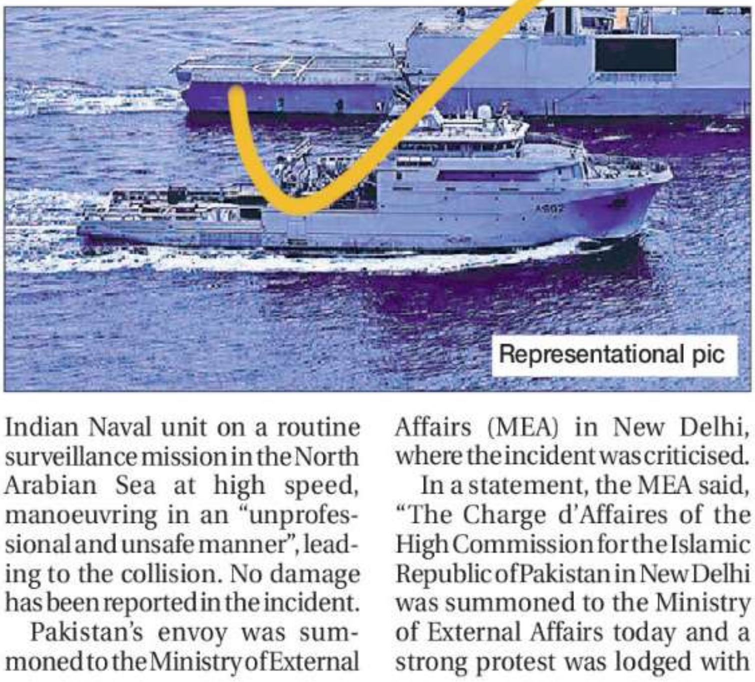
Pak naval ship collides with Indian Navy unit after 'unprofessional, unsafe' manoeuvre

- Pakistan's envoy was summoned to the MEA in New Delhi, where the incident was criticised

NEW DELHI, Sept 16 (IANS)

INDIA on Wednesday lodged a strong protest with the Charge d'Affaires of the Pakistan High Commission after a Pakistani naval ship's action at sea led to a collision with an Indian Navy unit, with the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) terming the action "unprofessional and unacceptable".

According to sources, the incident took place on the evening of September 15 when a Pakistan Naval Ship closed a frontline Indian Naval unit on a routine surveillance mission in the North Arabian Sea at high speed, manoeuvring in an "unprofessional and unsafe manner", leading to the collision. No damage has been reported in the incident.



Representational pic

Pakistan's envoy was summoned to the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) in New Delhi, where the incident was criticised.

In a statement, the MEA said, "The Charge d'Affaires of the High Commission for the Islamic Republic of Pakistan in New Delhi was summoned to the Ministry of External Affairs today and a strong protest was lodged with him over the unacceptable and unprofessional conduct of Pakistani naval units at sea that led to a collision with a unit of the Indian Navy."

The MEA said the incident, which took place in international waters, did not cause any major damage, but the Pakistani naval ship's conduct was in direct contravention of Article 10 of the Agreement between India and Pakistan on Advance Notice on Military Exercises, Manoeuvres and Troops Movements of April 1991.

According to the Ministry, the Charged'Affaires of Pakistan was asked to convey to the concerned Pakistani authorities that all military units should exercise due care and respect the provisions

(Contd on page 3)

China opens USD 10.75 bn canal to boost southwest trade with ASEAN

■ **By K J M Varma**
BEIJING, Sept 16 (PTI)

CHINA on Wednesday opened the USD 10.75 Pinglu Canal, creating a new maritime gateway for the country's southwestern hinterland and providing a shorter route to deepen trade with Southeast Asia particularly with ASEAN region.

The canal forms part of the New International Land-Sea Trade Corridor, a strategic route linking China's inland provinces with ASEAN and other global markets. It is also the first river-to-sea canal project planned and coordinated at the national level since the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949. The waterway is particularly significant for southwestern China, which has historically lagged behind the more prosperous eastern coastal regions and faced higher costs in transporting goods to seaports.

Coal, ore, grain, new-energy materials and automobile parts from the region will now have a more direct route to international markets, state-run 'Xinhua' news agency reported.

China's trade with ASEAN surpassed USD one trillion for the first time last year.

In the first seven months of 2026, bilateral trade reached USD 744.41 billion, up 24.7 per cent year on year and accounting for 21.8 per cent of China's total foreign trade during the period.

Designed to accommodate vessels of up to 5,000 tonnes, the canal cuts more than 560 km from the inland waterway journey between southwest China and the sea compared with traditional routes through ports in Guangdong Province.

Bharat Forge, US' Pratt & Whitney to develop HALE UAV

NEW DELHI, Sept 16 (PTI)

AN INDIAN firm and an American defence major on Tuesday announced that they will work together to support the development of India's high-altitude, long-endurance (HALE) unmanned aerial vehicle.

In a statement, Bharat Forge and Pratt & Whitney Canada said they will evaluate the integration of advanced turboprop engines into a HALE unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV), being designed and developed under a programme by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).

Pratt & Whitney is a business of US-based RTX. The collaboration supports India's indigenous unmanned aerial systems efforts under the government's Aatmanirbhar Bharat initiative.

HALE UAVs provide long-endurance surveillance, intelli-

gence and reconnaissance across land and maritime domains.

"Pratt & Whitney Canada will evaluate engine compatibility, performance and installation requirements. Bharat Forge will lead engine-airframe integration, including installation design and systems interfaces, drawing on its advanced engineering, manufacturing and aerospace systems capabilities," the statement said. "Bharat Forge Aerospace business is proud to collaborate with Pratt & Whitney Canada to advance India's indigenous aerospace and defence manufacturing capabilities," Amit Kalyani, Vice Chairman and Joint Managing Director, Bharat Forge Ltd., was quoted as saying in the statement. "By combining Pratt & Whitney's globally proven propulsion technologies with Bharat Forge's engineering and systems integration expertise, we aim to support development of a world-class HALE platform that strengthens India's strategic self-reliance and defense preparedness," he said.

This collaboration with Bharat Forge reflects our continued commitment to supporting India's aerospace and defence ambitions, said Ashish Saraf, Vice President and Country Head, Pratt & Whitney.

"Pratt & Whitney Canada's turboprop engines have a proven legacy of reliability in demanding operational environments, which is exactly what's needed for India's HALE programme," he said.

Pentagon report reveals hidden cost of US' Iran war

'Operation Epic Fury' Drained US Of $33.4Bn, Losses Include Dozens Of Aircraft And Drones

Chidanand Rajghatta | TNN

Washington: The war that Iran was supposed to lose in days, if not hours, has now lasted more than six months and is costing America billions — $33.4 billion to be precise. A Pentagon report and startling new photos of wreckage at US bases in the region are beginning to tell a story that official communiques have masked.

A photo obtained by CBS News from anonymous on-field personnel shows a plane damaged by Iranian strikes at Prince Sultan AFB, Saudi Arabia

The Pentagon inspector general's (IG) first congressionally mandated review of "Operation Epic Fury" puts the US cost as of June 29 at $33.4 billion: $22.3 billion in expended munitions, $7.4 billion in additional operating costs, and $3.7 billion in equipment losses.

The losses include dozens of aircraft and drones — wreckage of some of which has been graphically captured in a trove of photographs obtained by CBS News from anonymous on-field personnel. They show Iran's missile and drone campaign inflicted considerably more damage on US forces across West Asia than had been publicly acknowledged — even as Washington insists it has decimated Iran and still retains the capacity to continue the war.

The IG report itself says Iranian strikes damaged or destroyed hundreds of buildings and structures at American installations in Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Oman and Jordan. Repair costs for those facilities are not included because the Pentagon has not yet decided what will be rebuilt, where, or how the costs will be shared with host nations. All this amonga clamour from sections of MAGA to simply leave.

CBS, through unnamed sources, has supplied the pictures to match the IG's paperwork. Photographs provided by active-duty personnel, who spoke anonymously because of military restrictions on media contact, show destroyed buildings and vehicles at Camp Buehring and Camp Arifjan in Kuwait and a badly damaged Boeing E-3 Sentry at Prince Sultan Air Base in Saudi Arabia, its tail apparently severed by a strike.

"This is major damage to our bases that hasn't been communicated to the American public," one service member told the network. Another, referring to Pentagon language describing missiles that got through defences as "squirters", said: "We're standing there with our eyes closed getting punched in the face."

The disclosure that Iran is giving America a bloody nose challenges President Trump and defence secretary Pete Hegseth's early-war assurances that the US has beaten Iran into submission and that there is no shortage of munitions, as has been reported in the media. "Our stockpiles of defensive and offensive weapons allow us to sustain this campaign as long as we need to," Hegseth said in March, adding that Iran was making a "really bad miscalculation" if it believed the US could not sustain the fight.

By July, Hegseth was asking Congress for $67 billion in additional funding and warning that without supplemental money the Pentagon "could face critical shortfalls" affecting its ability to pay troops, replenish equipment and munitions and sustain global operations. The IG now provides the missing chapter: the war did not merely consume ammunition; it produced what the report calls "strategic inventory shortfalls" and exposed bottlenecks in production. Solid-rocket motors, high-grade explosives, propellants and skilled manufacturing labour are identified as constraints. The defence industrial base, the report says, requires "significant lead time" to expand production.

Meanwhile, US attention is being pulled in other directions, even as the war is entering its seventh month, with the White House now talking about an end after the Nov midterms. Elsewhere, Congress is challenging the continuation of hostilities.

And then there is Yemen, where Iran's Houthi allies have seized the strategic port of Mocha and advanced toward the Bab el-Mandeb, threatening a second maritime chokepoint after the Strait of Hormuz. For Washington's Gulf partners, that creates an uncomfortable strategic question: if seven months of American military power has not prevented Iran from continuing to contest Hormuz — or its Houthi allies from gaining ground at Bab el-Mandeb — how durable is the American security umbrella? The emerging picture is neither the collapse of US military power, but nor is it the cost-free triumph once advertised. It is something more consequential: a highly talked-up US military inflicting immense damage on Iran, but itself absorbing billions in losses, consuming precious munitions and struggling to restore the strategic depth that great-power competition requires.

House votes again to end war

For a third time, the US House has voted to end the war in Iran, approving a war powers resolution that would halt President Trump's ability to continue military action without congressional approval. The roll call was similar to earlier efforts. None of the resolutions have made it to the president, where Trump would almost certainly veto the measure. AP

Kash defends FBI

Amid fraying US ties, EU talks of making Canada first 'associate member'

European Commission president Ursula von der Leyen Wednesday proposed making Canada the European Union's first associate member, as US President Donald Trump's tariffs and threats pushed Ottawa closer to Europe.

AP

Canadian PM Carney with European Commission president Ursula von der Leyen in Strasbourg

Addressing European Parliament in Strasbourg, von der Leyen said EU and Canada would build on their CETA free-trade agreement through an "Alliance for the Future" to create "a common prosperity and economic security space." She said the partnership would span advanced manufacturing, technology, defence production, the Arctic, energy, critical minerals, batteries, artificial intelligence, quantum computing, cybersecurity and economic security.

"Above all, dear Mark, Europe and Canada believe in democracy," she told PM Mark Carney, who received a standing ovation and will address Parliament Thursday.

Trump's repeated talk of making Canada the 51st US state has soured relations between the neighbours. Canada is seeking to reduce dependence on the US, which receives roughly 70% of its exports. Carney has called for a "unique alliance" with EU.

His office welcomed the proposal, saying Canada was deepening EU ties "to strengthen our sovereignty" and supported moving beyond CETA. A Canadian official said Ottawa was exploring an arrangement short of membership that could allow Canadians to live and work in Europe without visas.

Canada has retaliated against US tariffs and rejected terms Carney says would weaken sovereignty. At World Economic Forum in Jan, he urged middle powers to cooperate. No rulebook exists for associate membership, with current EU accession steps requiring unanimous approval from 27 countries. AP

India rejects illegal Pak-China border panel announcement

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Govt rejected Pakistan's announcement Wednesday about the operationalisation of a Pakistan-China Boundary Joint Commission, saying there is no boundary between China and Pakistan and asking Islamabad to vacate areas under its forcible occupation instead of indulging in theatrics.

The ministry of external affairs said the Union territories of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh have been, are and will always remain integral and inalienable parts of India. Pakistan has no locus standi to enter into arrangements concerning Indian territory under its illegal occupation, it said.

Pakistan had said earlier in the day that the commission would set the stage for enhanced cooperation in border management, joint border surveys, trade flows and people-to-people connectivity. The development comes days after PM Narendra Modi's bilateral meeting with Chinese President Xi Jinping.

India underlined that it had never recognised the 'China-Pakistan Boundary Agreement' of 1963 and consistently maintained that it was invalid. "We have seen reports in this regard. Our position on this matter is clear and consistent. There is no boundary between Pakistan and China. We reject the so-called Joint Commission, which is without any legal basis," said MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal.

The ministry said India opposed any attempts to alter the status of occupied territories or legitimise illegal occupation. "Any so-called boundary cooperation between China and Pakistan concerning Indian territories would be completely unacceptable and have no bearing whatsoever on India's sovereignty over these territories," it said.

Clean energy met 7% power demand rise in last 2 years: Study

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New Delhi: India's clean-energy expansion kept carbon dioxide emissions from the power sector flat across the country between the first halves of 2024 and 2026, while coal-fired generation recorded no growth over a two-year period for the first time in more than 50 years, according to an analysis published by UK-based Carbon Brief on Thursday.

Centre for Research on Energy and Clean Air (CREA) analysis, conducted for Carbon Brief, said clean energy met the entire 7% increase in electricity demand over the two years, adding 63 terawatt hours, equivalent to Switzerland's total demand. India added 77 gigawatts of solar capacity, which met 60% of the overall rise in electricity demand.

Coal power remained flat despite growing demand over the same period, while oil and gas consumption declined for the second consecutive year, helping cushion the impact of the Hormuz crisis. Emissions from oil and gas fell 7% year-on-year, extending a decline that began in 2025 despite increased demand for road transport fuels.

However, India's overall emissions rose 3.7% year-on-year in the first half of 2026 because of increases in steel, cement and other sectors. Emissions from the carbon-intensive steel and cement industries grew 8% year-on-year, accounting for 23% of India's total CO_2 emissions during the period.

Gujarat recorded the largest decline in fossil-fuel generation and the biggest expansion in clean power. Rajasthan and Tamil Nadu posted the next-largest hikes in clean-power and reduced fossil-fuel generation.

The report said sustaining the clean-energy expansion would require upgrades to the electricity grid and greater flexibility in coal power. The analysis said the fossil-fuel industry pursued major capital investments even as clean energy covered most of the demand growth.

Manipur Naga village comes under night-long gunfire

No Loss Of Life, But Houses Damaged

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CM Yumnam Khemchand Singh appealed to social organisations to shun bandhs and blockades, saying such actions hit economic activity and development. He called for collective efforts to create an environment conducive to economic recovery

Guwahati: A Naga village in Kuki-majority Kangpokpi came under a night-long militant attack with heavy gunfire Wednesday, leaving two houses burned down and several more damaged.

Hours later, indicating Manipur's ethnic conflict had been burning through more than homes and lives, CM Yumnam Khemchand Singh said that the state lost over Rs 1,200 crore in GST revenue between 2023 and 2026.

Chawangkining came under seven hours of firing, with the village authority later alleging that Kuki armed groups were behind the attack. No casualties were reported. Liangmai Naga Council of Manipur condemned the firing and alleged Kuki militants operating from a designated ceasefire camp at Songtung were responsible.

The attack came after six Kuki-Zo civilians died in Tamenglong, Noney and adjoining areas Sunday and Tuesday, sharpening tensions between Kuki and Naga groups.

Manipur's ethnic conflict erupted on May 3, 2023, between Meiteis in Imphal valley and Kuki tribes in surrounding hill districts. Recent confrontations involving Kuki and Naga groups opened another volatile front. More than 300 people have been killed over the past three years.

The fiscal strain has also deepened. CM Singh, who also holds the finance portfolio, said in Imphal, the prolonged conflict had cost the state more than Rs 1,200 crore in GST revenue in three years.

Govt data placed before the state assembly last week showed outstanding liabilities rose nearly 54% between 2021-22 and 2025-26, while total interest payments climbed 71%. Interest on internal debt rose about 90% during the period and accounted for nearly 90% of Manipur's total interest bill in 2025-26. Market borrowings emerged as the main driver of internal debt, accounting for nearly 95% in 2025-26, up from around 84% five years earlier.

Debt growth accelerated after 2022-23 — about 10% in 2023-24, 10.5% in 2024-25 and 13% in 2025-26, the highest annual increase since 2021-22.

Loans and advances from Union govt increased more than six-fold over five years. Ways and Means Advances from RBI and special securities issued to National Small Savings Fund declined, while loans from financial institutions more than halved.

For 2026-27, govt has made a budgetary provision for debt servicing more than 6% higher than revised interest liability for 2025-26, signalling that servicing accumulated debt will remain a major recurring commitment.

Singh appealed to social organisations to shun bandhs and blockades, saying such actions had hit economic activity and development. He called for collective efforts to create an environment conducive to economic recovery.

Earlier this week, Singh called the violence that began in 2023 "most unfortunate", saying the ethnic fault lines need bridges, not barricades.