India will take all measures to ensure energy security of its 1.4 bn people: MEA

US SANCTIONS BILL ON RUSSIA

NEW DELHI, Sept 17 (PTI)

INDIA on Thursday said it will take all necessary steps to protect its economic interests and ensure energy security after the US House of Representatives cleared a bill that will allow US President Donald Trump to impose punitive tariffs of up to 100 per cent on countries such as India and China for procuring Russian crude oil.

The US House of Representatives passed the Lindsey O Graham Sanctioning Russia and Iran Act 2026 that authorises Trump to impose sanctions on Russia and steep tariffs on its leading trading partners. In its reaction, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said India remains "firmly committed" to ensuring the energy security of its 1.4 billion people and will take all "necessary measures" to protect its trade and economic interests. It said the Indian side

is monitoring further developments in the matter following the passage of the Act in the US Congress.

Russia has been a leading source for India's energy security requirements. India's procurement of Russian crude oil has gone up significantly in the last few years.

"As stated on several earlier occasions, India remains firmly committed to ensuring energy security for its 1.4 billion people," it said.

US House nod for bill; trading partners India, China on target

WASHINGTON, Sept 17 (PTI)

THE US House of Representatives passed a bill that would authorise President Donald Trump to impose sanctions on Russia and steep tariffs on its trading partners in oil and gas, including India and China.

The Lindsey O Graham Sanctioning Russia and Iran Act of 2026, passed by the US Senate last month, was approved by the House in a 262-159 vote on Wednesday evening and will now go to Trump to be signed into a law.

Besides 203 Republicans, 58 Democrats and one Independent voted in favour of the legislation. Seven Republicans and 152 Democrats opposed it.

Democratic opposition largely centered around the tariff authorities provided to Trump. The bill is named after Senator Lindsey Graham, the

(Contd on page 5)

China opposes US sanctions bill, says will not accept 'long-arm jurisdiction'

BEIJING, Sept 17 (PTI)

CHINA on Thursday rejected the US "long-arm jurisdiction" to impose tariffs on purchases of Russian oil and gas, saying its normal trade and economic cooperation with other countries should not be subject to interference or coercion by third parties.

The US House of Representatives passed the Lindsey O Graham Sanctioning Russia and Iran Act 2026 that authorises Trump to impose sanctions on Russia and steep tariffs on its leading trading partners such as India and China.

Asked about the bill, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson

Guo Jiakun told a media briefing here that China opposes any action that lacks UN Security Council authorisation.

"China consistently opposes long-arm jurisdiction that lacks a basis in international law and is not authorised by the United Nations Security Council," Guo said. He said that China has always carried out normal economic and trade cooperation with countries around the world based on equality and mutual benefit.

"Such cooperation neither targets any third party nor is subject to interference or coercion from any third party", he said.

Beijing has repeatedly opposed unilateral sanctions. It also defied US sanctions against buying oil from Iran.

China, along with India, is one of the largest buyers of oil and gas from Russia. Much of China's imports are transported through pipelines crossing its land border.

Defying US: Canada 'ready to become EU member'

STRASBOURG (France), Sept 17 (AP)

CANADIAN Prime Minister Mark Carney on Thursday welcomed a proposal for Canada to become the European Union's first associate member, but said he did not mean for a closer alliance to create a new bloc that would rival the world's great powers.

The remarks came after US President Donald Trump suggested the proposed arrangement could be a "hostile act" and threatened heavy tariffs on Europe if he judged its intentions to be unfriendly. Trump also called the idea "laughable."

"We welcome this ambition," Carney told the European Parliament of European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen's proposal, unveiled Wednesday.

Canadian PM Carney giving speech at EU.

Carney said plainly what he was proposing: deeper Canada-Europe integration across trade, defence, critical minerals, artificial intelligence, energy, space, research and financial services to make both sides less vulnerable to economic and geopolitical pressure.

"I am not proposing a third bloc in order to become a great-power rival -- only with better manners," he said. "We do not seek power to dominate others."

Carney said the goal instead is to build Canada's resilience so that no country can control its markets, undermine its sovereignty or dictate its choices.

Canada's been terrible partner; will put heavy tariffs on Europe: Trump

WASHINGTON, Sept 17 (IANS)

US PRESIDENT Donald Trump threatened heavy tariffs or restrictions on trade with Europe if a potential Canada–European Union arrangement was directed against American interests, while expressing hope that the war with Iran was nearing its end.

Asked about Canada potentially becoming an associate member of the European Union, he criticised the country as a trading partner and said he did not see that prospect materialising.

"Canada's been a terrible trade partner. No, I don't see that. If they do that, if I think it's at all a hostile act, I will put very serious tariffs or stop trading with Europe on many things."

Trump did not announce a new tariff, specify which European goods could face restrictions or give a timetable for action. His remarks described a possible response to an arrangement raised in a reporter's question.

He said his reaction would depend on whether Europe acted with good or bad intentions. He did not explain what would determine that judgement.

"So, if they do that, if Europe does that, with a bad intention -- if it's a good intention, that's fine -- if it's bad intention we'll put very heavy tariffs on Europe, which is a possibility."

US clears bill to slap levies on countries buying Russian fuel

Act Imposing Up To 100% Tariffs On Trump's Desk

Chidanand Rajghatta

Washington: US Congress on Wednesday handed President Donald Trump a surgical instrument to punish, at his discretion, not only Moscow but also countries that buy Russian energy, with India and China squarely in the crosshairs.

House of Representatives passed the "Sanctioning Russia and Iran Act of 2026" by a 262-159 margin, voted through by an unusually bipartisan coalition given the deep divisions in Washington: 203 Republicans, 58 Democrats and one Independent voted yes, while 152 Democrats and seven Republicans voted no.

Senate had already approved the measure 86-11 on Aug 7, meaning the legislation now goes directly to Trump's desk for signature.

The bill is named for the late Republican senator Lindsey Graham, who died in July after championing the legislation for more than a year, its most consequential provision for India is the authority to impose tariffs of up to 100% on countries buying Russian oil or gas.

►Critics call out US, P 16

'BLUNT COERCION'

- ➤ Former US administration official Evan Feigenbaum says it amounts to 'blunt coercion, **gross interference in Indian foreign policy'**
- ➤ Critics point to double standards as **America itself continues to import Russian commodities**, including N-fuel
- ➤ **China says move lacks a basis in international law** or authorisation from UNSC

Will have implications for bilateral ties: Govt

New Delhi: India stressed that the US move will have consequences for bilateral ties, recalling its "clearly articulated" messages earlier about potential implications for the relationship as well as global energy markets.

In a formal response, the foreign ministry said India remained firmly committed to ensuring energy security for its 1.4 billion people and will continue to do so through diversified sourcing and on the basis of evolving market dynamics. The ministry also said India had made clear its determination to take all necessary measures to protect its trade and economic interests and will work closely with Indian trade and industry bodies to deal with the implications of these developments.

> This issue has been discussed at high levels in recent months with various US interlocutors. Its **potential implications for** not just the bilateral relationship but also **the international energy market have been very clearly articulated** by the Indian side —**MEA**

Indian ambassador to US, Vinay Kwatra, subsequently posted on X: "India imports over 85% of its crude oil and around half its natural gas. Our sourcing reflects a fundamental national responsibility: looking outside our borders to secure adequate, affordable and uninterrupted energy for our people." TNN

►'Our energy needs', P 24

Houthis, Saudis, Iran — and the future of West Asian oil

Rudroneel.Ghosh@timesofindia.com

TOI Explains

In a lightning offensive last week, Yemen's Houthis took over much of the country's Red Sea coast, threatening shipping in the vital sea lane that had emerged as an alternative to Strait of Hormuz in the Persian Gulf. Houthis have been fighting a Saudi-led military coalition for a decade, although a 2022 UN-brokered truce halted their attacks on Saudi territory. But the Houthis' latest move has once again sent oil prices north of the $100 per barrel mark, adding another front to the wider US-Israel war against Iran. Here's the lowdown on why the Houthis' Red Sea threat matters, how this puts Saudi Arabia in a serious pickle, and what it means for the Iran war:

AFP

File photo of Houthi supporters demonstrating in Sanaa against restrictions imposed by a Saudi-led coalition on Houthi-controlled areas of Yemen

What's The Latest Houthi Offensive All About?

The offensive saw Houthis take over key parts of Yemen's Red Sea coast. This adds weight to the Houthi threat to shipping in the vital sea lane. In fact, Houthis had earlier declared a blockade of Saudi ships in the region. Now they can seriously enforce this. Their mere presence along the coastline will make shippers jittery and raise insurance costs.

Why Is This A Serious Headache?

With Strait of Hormuz effectively locked up by Iran and US, Red Sea had emerged as a vital alternative route, especially for energy trade out of the region. Saudi Arabia's East-West pipeline was working at full capacity, transporting around 7 million barrels of oil daily across the breadth of the peninsula to the Red Sea port of Yanbu. This was a crucial lifeline for the global energy trade that had been severely restricted following the outbreak of the Iran war in Feb.

But that East-West pipeline was hit by a drone attack last week — blamed on Iran-backed Shia militias in Iraq — to coincide with the Houthi advance on the Red Sea coast. Both operations seem to have been coordinated to put the choke on Red Sea shipping, which has to pass through the narrow Bab el-Mandeb strait that Houthis can now theoretically shut down.

Why Now?

The timing of all this is not a coincidence. Actually, when the Iran war began, among Iran's proxies in the region, Houthis held back. But in July, following the state funeral of Iran's former supreme leader Ali Khamenei, an Iranian plane carrying the Houthi delegation back to Yemen was threatened by Saudi Arabia. Riyadh did not want that plane to land, and bombed the airport in the Houthi-controlled Yemeni capital of Sanaa. But that plane landed anyway.

Following the episode, Houthi rhetoric against the Saudis flared up. But the key development that may have pushed Houthis into action could be the American blockade of Iranian ports and shipping in Persian Gulf. By many estimates, that blockade appears to be working, and putting enormous pressure on the Iranian economy. Tehran is unable to push out its own oil, the Iranian rial has tanked, and Iranians have actually taken to saving eggs instead of hard cash. Plus, this is a strategy that plays into America's strength — it can carry out a naval blockade for a far longer period than a continuous kinetic war against Iran.

So, Iran, through the Houthi action, is sending the message that if oil can't pass through Hormuz, any alternative routes, including through the Red Sea, will also be shut. In short, the energy trade in the region is handcuffed till the war is resolved.

What Do Houthis Want?

The Houthis' main grievance is against the Saudis, whom they have been fighting since 2015. But, of course, as a member of Iran's so-called 'Axis of Resistance', they are now being heavily supported by Tehran in terms of material and intelligence inputs. Especially since the Gaza and Iran wars have seen Tehran's two main proxies in Hezbollah and Hamas take a huge battering. So, the Iranian Axis appears to be undergoing a recalibration, with Houthis and Iran-backed militias in Iraq taking a more leading role among the proxies.

Ultimately Houthis want legitimacy. Their attacks against Saudi Arabia — they reportedly fired a drone at Mecca earlier this week — raise their profile. Their capture of the Red Sea coast gives them international attention. And these, in turn, see them emerge as the primary force in Yemen, instead of the internationally backed Yemeni transition govt. Obviously, all of this helps Iran.

Why Are Saudis In A Jam?

Because US has refused to directly intervene against Houthis this time. Washington is providing diplomatic and advisory support to Riyadh, but not much else. Saudis want missile and drone interceptors. But US stocks are running low, thanks to its war with Iran. Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman has similarly sought assistance from Egypt and UK. But no one is rushing military aid to Riyadh. Interestingly, even the recently inked Mecca Pact between Saudi Arabia, Turkiye, and Pakistan hasn't been activated.

What Are The Takeaways?

First, Houthis prove Iran's Axis of Resistance is changing shape, with the Yemini militia taking a leading role. This has implications for both the Iran war, and security in Red Sea and Horn of Africa region. And second, alternative routes to Hormuz for energy transit, whether through sea or pipelines, are also not fully secure. They can be targeted by a host of Iran-backed militias in the region. This puts West Asia's dominance in global energy supply under a serious cloud, perhaps forcing the international community to look for alternatives away from the region.

5% of Tejas MkIA issues still to be fixed: HAL CMD

Surendra.Singh
@timesofindia.com

Bengaluru: Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) CMD **Ravi K** Thursday said the aerospace organisation has readied "27 airframes of advanced Tejas MkIA (of the total 180), but there are one or two issues that are leading to delays in the delivery of the long-pending first batch of the advanced combat aircraft to the IAF".

"We have received 10 engines from GE Aerospace. But there are one or two issues with the first batch of Tejas MkIA which need further testing, like the integration of AESA radar. Maybe we are there at 90-95%, but the last 5% is still to be fixed. Another problem is missile integration. A few tests are still pending. We need to fly Tejas with the missile (without firing it) to find out whether structurally everything is fine. I am not giving any exact timeline, but we are hopeful it would be done by this year," Ravi K told **TOI**.

On the more advanced version of the aircraft, he said, "Tejas Mk 2 is an offshoot of Tejas MkIA. Structure coupling is going on. We are planning to do the grounder (ground testing) by Feb. The F414 engine is a brand new engine. It is the first time the country is using it."

Denying that HAL is working on any Super Sukhoi programme, Ravi K said HAL is "engaged in the design work for indigenising some systems of Su-30MKI fighter jets like radar, though the project has not come to us".

On the licensed production of the 100-seat Russian SJ-100 regional passenger jet, the CMD said, "All the technical discussions are continuing. We have not put a timeline on it."

The CMD said, "HAL is going into the Combat Air Teaming System (indigenous Indian manned-unmanned teaming programme). We are building the prototype."

He said HAL is spending on infrasstructure to modernise all the divisions and also planning to establish MRO in foreign countries. "We are looking for foreign partners that can establish MROs on their own in their country."

Ravi K said they will be delivering the two remaining Tejas trainer aircraft of the total 40 LCA MkI contract to the IAF.

"We are also going to deliver HTT-40 trainer aircraft to the IAF. Besides them, we are going to hand over advanced Dhruv NG helicopters to Pawan Hans, mainly for offshoring sorties," he said.

Micron, Tata, Infineon outline next steps in chip expansion

Aabhas.Sharma
@timesofindia.com

PM Modi receives a warm welcome during the inauguration of the fifth edition of Semicon India 2026 in New Delhi Thursday

New Delhi: Chipmakers including Micron and Infineon and Tata Electronics, which is setting up two fab units, Thursday outlined plans to expand production, build factories and hire engineers, highlighting how India's semiconductor push is spreading across manufacturing, suppliers and research.

Months after starting operations, Micron Technology expects its Sanand assembly and testing plant to process hundreds of millions of chips in 2027, up from tens of millions this year, chief executive Sanjay Mehrotra said. "Potential does not ship products. What I see in India today is execution," he said.

The Gujarat plant receives DRAM and NAND wafers from Micron's global manufacturing network and converts them into finished memory and storage products. Mehrotra said its output was reaching customers worldwide. Tata Electronics CEO and MD Randhir Thakur said the company's Dholera fabrication plant and Assam packaging facility remained on schedule to meet commitments made to govt.

Tata has brought together over 450 ecosystem partners for the Dholera project, spanning construction, equipment, chemicals and materials. It signed 16 agreements at the event to strengthen partnerships across the semiconductor value chain.

Around 300 fresh graduates from Indian universities are being trained at the Taiwan fab of PSMC, Tata's technology partner, Thakur said.

"The question of whether we can make chips in India has changed to how fast and how deep can we build the semiconductor ecosystem in India," he said.

Infineon Technologies CEO Jochen Hanebeck said the German company's India workforce had grown 28% over the past year. It has more than 2,800 employees across Ahmedabad, Bengaluru and Hyderabad and works with over 1,200 local customers. "We expand our presence and deepen customer relationships. We see great potential for India to strengthen its position across the global semiconductor value chain," the chief executive said.

Applied Materials plans to invest $5 billion in India through 2035

Akhil.George
@timesofindia.com

New Delhi: US chipmaking equipment maker Applied Materials plans to invest $5 billion in India through 2035, including a proposed 140-acre semiconductor research park in Bengaluru, expansion of its supplier network and more than doubling its R&D workforce.

The investment will expand the role of its India operations from chip-equipment design to developing complete products for global customers. Applied Materials makes equipment used to manufacture semiconductors, rather than the chips themselves.

"Today, India is participating mostly in the design part of the product life cycle. Now we are talking about the product life cycle end to end," Prabu Raja, president of Applied Materials' semiconductor products group, told **TOI**. This would span innovation, design, development, sourcing and customer support, he said.

The proposed research park near Bengaluru international airport will bring together laboratories, equipment engineering and collaborative research, allowing suppliers, customers and universities to work with Applied Materials on product development. It will include facilities for research using 300mm silicon wafers, which are used to manufacture chips.

"We can invent together and develop a product together. It's all about speed today. India doesn't have to take the same amount of time that other countries took (to develop semiconductor capabilities)," Raja said.