China extends suspension of 24 pc tariffs on US imports for two months

NEW DELHI, Nov 9 (IANS)

CHINA has extended the suspension of an additional 24 per cent tariff on imports from the United States for two months and prolonged the suspension of special port fees on US-linked vessels, while maintaining the existing 10 per cent tariff on affected goods.

The 24 per cent additional tariff on US imports will remain suspended for two months. The suspension of special port fees on US-linked ships has been extended until January 10, 2027, according to multiple reports citing China's Finance Ministry.

China will also continue to suspend its probe into shipping and shipbuilding supply chain security, the reports said.

The moves follow a September summit in Washington between the leaders of China and the United States, after which both sides proposed a $60 billion package of reciprocal tariff reductions. The package covers nearly $17 billion worth of US agricultural goods imported by China in 2024, although the proposal has yet to be finalised.

The tariff suspensions have been extended to implement the "outcomes and consensus reached at the Washington meeting between the heads of state of China and the United States", the reports cited the State Council's tariffs panel.

China has "noted that the ?US side has repeatedly stated that it intends to use Section 301 tariffs to replace the tariffs imposed under the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA) that have been held invalid by judicial rulings."

China will "closely follow subsequent measures taken by the US side and will, as appropriate, adjust relevant tariff countermeasures in light of developments," it added.

Modi, Zelenskyy discuss Ukraine peace efforts

Kyiv calls for New Delhi's role to facilitate grain exports through Black Sea

NEW DELHI, Nov 9 (PTI)





INDIA is ready to contribute to all efforts aimed at a peaceful resolution of the Russia-Ukraine conflict, Prime Minister Narendra Modi conveyed this to Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy during a phone conversation that came amid renewed efforts to end the nearly five-year war between Moscow and Kyiv. Zelenskyy said he discussed with Modi Russia blocking grain exports through the Black Sea and that India is willing to "mediate" in establishing food corridors.

The Modi-Zelenskyy conversation came a day ahead of a much-anticipated meeting in Abu Dhabi among officials from Ukraine, Russia and the United States with an aim to find a amicable solution to the conflict.

"I thanked President Zelenskyy for sharing his perspectives on the ongoing conflict, its humanitarian aspects and various efforts to restore peace. Reiterated India's firm commitment to contributing in every possible way towards a peaceful resolution," the prime minister said on social media, describing the talks as "productive". Modi also said that he and the Ukrainian President reviewed "wide-ranging bilateral cooperation and agreed to further strengthen India-Ukraine ties".

An Indian readout said the Prime Minister reaffirmed India's "human-centric approach" and reiterated India's consistent position that the conflict must be resolved through dialogue and diplomacy.

In a post on X, Zelenskyy said India can take lead in ensuring food security at a time Russia is blocking grain exports through the Black Sea, adding Kyiv is "actively" preparing for the meeting in Abu Dhabi.

Zelenskyy said Ukraine has always taken a "constructive" approach, and Russia must show the same readiness to de-escalate the situation.

"The Prime Minister has said more than once, including directly to the Russian leader, that now is the time to end the war, not to continue it. It is important that India identify what steps it can take and what dialogue it can pursue with other leaders to help bring the war to an end. Food security could be one such area.

"We discussed Russia's blocking of grain exports via the Black Sea. India is ready to mediate in establishing food corridors, and we are counting on these efforts to continue," he added.

Around a month back, Ukrainian FM Andrii Sybiha said that Kyiv received separate proposals from India and 3 other nations for a possible ceasefire.

Russia's top independent newspaper closes its office after 3 decades, citing official pressure

MOSCOW, Nov 9 (AP)

NOVAYA Gazeta, Russia's most celebrated independent newspaper, closed its Moscow offices on Monday, citing relentless pressure from Government officials. It was the last major independent media outlet critical of the Kremlin that remained active in Russia. Others closed or moved their operations abroad after President Vladimir Putin sent troops into Ukraine in February 2022.

In a statement published October 30, the newspaper said the Russian authorities and the security services had "forced our editorial team to cease operations." "Human rights and freedoms have been abolished in this country, and defending them is now treated as a crime," the newspaper said. "Elections and elected governing bodies have been effectively dismantled, civil society institutions have been wiped out, freedom of conscience and human dignity have been trampled underfoot."

> Launched in 1993, Novaya Gazeta quickly became known for its fierce reporting and dedication to uncovering Russian human rights abuses and corruption

Launched in 1993, Novaya Gazeta quickly became known for its fierce reporting and dedication to uncovering Russian human rights abuses and corruption. Six of its journalists have been killed, including Anna Politkovskaya, who reported on atrocities during the second Chechen War at the start of Putin's first term as President. She was fatally shot in her apartment building in 2006.

On the newspaper's final day in its office on Monday, journalists slowly removed the portraits of their slain colleagues from the newsroom where reporters and editors planned their work.

Tatiana Britskaya, the editor of Novaya Gazeta's investigations desk, said she had expected the outlet's closure almost every day for the past 4.5 years.

"It is an incredibly difficult decision, because this is more than a workplace, more than an office -- this is our home, and we're losing it," she said.

Russia, Ukraine batter each other with long-range strikes a day before US-brokered talks

KYIV, Nov 9 (AP)

RUSSIA battered Ukraine's power grid again and Ukrainian forces hit another of Russia's biggest oil refineries, officials said on Monday, hours before delegations from Moscow and Kyiv were due to meet for new US-brokered talks on how to end the fighting.

Nearly five years after Russia invaded its neighbour, the two countries remain locked in battle with no sign that either side is ready to budge from their demands. The war has already killed hundreds of thousands of soldiers and thousands of civilians, analysts and humanitarian organisations say.

US President Donald Trump said in a "60 Minutes" interview that aired Sunday that Moscow and Kyiv are "very close" to a deal, despite the "tremendous hatred" between Russian President Vladimir Putin and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy.

He said that Ukraine would have "a little bit different shape" under the settlement, but he didn't elaborate. Trump has previously made statements about developments in the war which haven't materialised.

Gadi Eisenkot stakes claim to form Govt in Israel

Gadi has recommendations from 67 of 120 members of the Parliament, compared with 46 for PM Netanyahu

- Gadi Eisenkot, a former chief of the Israel Defence Forces (IDF), has 28 days to form a Government

By Harinder Mishra
JERUSALEM, Nov 9 (PTI)

ISRAELI President Isaac Herzog on Sunday formally tasked Yashar party leader Gadi Eisenkot with forming a Government after he secured recommendations from 67 of the 120 elected members of the Parliament, compared with 46 for Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

Eisenkot, a former chief of the Israel Defence Forces (IDF), has 28 days to form a Government and secure the approval of the Knesset -- Israel's Parliament. He may seek an additional 14-day extension from Herzog.

The October 27 elections, seen as a referendum on Netanyahu's leadership, produced no clear majority but divided the political landscape into two competing blocs, with the anti-Netanyahu alliance recommending Eisenkot.



Israeli President Isaac Herzog (R) hands over the mandate to task Yashar Chairman Gadi Eisenkot with forming the next Government in Jerusalem. (PTI)

Read Time & Tide
COALITION PANGS
on page 8

India, EU resolve to boost tech and investment ties ahead of sealing of landmark trade deal

NEW DELHI, Nov 9 (PTI)



WEEKS ahead of inking of a mega trade pact, India and European Union (EU) on Monday vowed to boost their ties in trade and investment, quantum technologies, semiconductors and biotechnology to deliver "mutually beneficial and transformative" outcomes.

The two sides also agreed to work towards conclusion of the proposed investment protection agreement and the pact on geographical indications.

A comprehensive scrutiny of the two-way engagement was carried out at the seventh India-EU Strategic Partnership Review Meeting (SPRM) held in New Delhi.

India and the 27-nation bloc are set to seal next month the landmark free trade agreement -- billed as the "mother of all deals" -- to create a market of two billion people.

"Both sides reviewed engagements towards boosting trade and investment cooperation, including the timely signing and implementation of the India-EU free trade agreement, and to continue work towards conclusion of the investment protection agreement and the agreement on geographical indications," according to a joint press statement.

"The discussions also covered strengthening supply chains and economic security, including strategic engagements in the Trade and Technology Council (TTC) and Blue Valleys initiative," it said.

The TTC was unveiled in 2022 to facilitate exchange of critical technologies relating to an array of domains including artificial intelligence, quantum computing, semiconductors and cybersecurity.

At the SPRM, both sides also discussed cooperation on critical and emerging technologies, including Artificial Intelligence (AI), quantum technologies, digital public infrastructure (DPI), advanced semiconductors, clean technologies and biotechnology.

The deliberations also saw a resolve for cooperation to advance a conducive digital environment and promote digital public infrastructure.

It said the two sides expressed satisfaction on deepening research collaboration, including India's potential association with Horizon Europe, a Euro 93.5-billion flagship research and innovation programme. India's association with the Horizon Europe programme is seen as part the comprehensive strategic agenda of the two sides for the next five years.

IOC to buy own ships to strengthen oil, LPG imports

NEW DELHI, Nov 9 (IANS)



OIL marketing company Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) plans to buy some ships of its own for importing crude oil and liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) in order to establish a more reliable supply chain and minimise disruptions due to geopolitical uncertainties such as the West Asia conflict.

Indian Oil's Director, Finance, Anuj Jain, said during the company's earnings call last week that tenders for the purchase of a few vessels were issued some months ago.

The company currently has three crude oil tankers and nine LPG carriers on time charter, which have helped it manage shipping costs during the West Asia conflict when spot rates for shipping have soared.

Freight rates for LPG have also increased sharply. Spot rates have risen to around $160–$180 per tonne from normal levels of about $40 per tonne.

The increase comes amid the increasing attacks on merchant ships passing through the Strait of Hormuz, a waterway through which 20 per cent of the world's energy exports transit during normal times.

During the October 31 earnings call, Jain said Indian Oil was working on three areas of its shipping operations.

These include managing its existing chartered fleet, purchasing vessels, and exploring options to build ships in India.

Apart from buying ships, Indian Oil is also looking at options to place orders for ships with Indian shipyards under the Government's Make in India policy.

The refiner had earlier explored plans to acquire four medium-range vessels through an arrangement involving Shipping Corporation of India and other State-run oil companies. Indian Oil has long-term shipping contracts in place which have cushioned the company from the sharp hike in freight rates due to the Iran war.

With the Houthi rebels taking control of the coastal areas in Yemen around the Red Sea, the situation has become worse, according to Senior Officials.

The oil giant pays around $2–$2.50 per barrel to transport crude oil under its long-term charter arrangements, while spot market rates have surged to $8–$10 per barrel. The company also has nine LPG carriers on time charter. Spot freight charges for LPG shipments have shot up to around $160–$180 per tonne, compared with about $40 per tonne earlier.

Indian Oil has also diversified its crude imports amid the closure of the Strait of Hormuz, with more supplies being sourced outside West Asia from countries such as Russia, Venezuela, Brazil and countries in Africa. During the first half of FY27, around 87 per cent of Indian Oil's crude purchases were made in the spot market, compared with about 50 per cent in the previous financial year.

Russian crude accounted for around 55 per cent of the purchases during the six-month period, while West Asian supplies came down to around 24 per cent.

Apart from cutting costs by buying more Russian crude, the company has been buying cheap heavy crude from Venezuela, which can be processed at its Paradip refinery on the Odisha coast.

The Indian basket of crude imports, which averaged around $65-70 per barrel before the Iran war broke out in February, shot past the $100 mark in March and averaged about $120 per barrel in October, Jain said.

Ahead of peace talks, Zelensky seeks PM's help on ceasefire

Asks For More Steps On Food, Energy Security

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New Delhi: Ahead of the Abu Dhabi peace talks, PM Narendra Modi and Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelensky spoke Monday, with the latter briefing PM about the latest developments related to the Russia-Ukraine conflict and Modi conveying India's "firm commitment" to contributing in every possible way towards a peaceful resolution of the war.

The conversation took place a day before the trilateral peace dialogue involving Russia, Ukraine and the US in Abu Dhabi, and amid renewed Russian strikes on Ukraine's energy infrastructure. Ahead of the talks, where India's recent peace proposals are likely to be discussed too, India remained engaged with both sides on diplomatic initiatives as foreign minister S Jaishankar too spoke to his Russian counterpart Sergey Lavrov. Zelensky recalled Modi's latest peace message to Russian President Vladimir Putin that it was time now to end the "endless war" and urged India to take more steps towards a ceasefire that can ensure food and energy security.

▶**Committed: Modi, P 13**

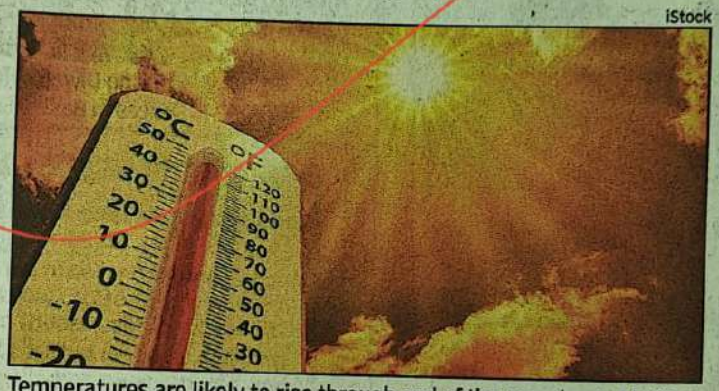
'Think' I'll meet Putin, Xi at summit: Trump

President Trump said Sunday he thinks he will meet his Chinese and Russian counterparts Xi Jinping and Vladimir Putin at an Apec leaders' summit in China next week and discuss ending the war in Iran and denuclearisation. Trump said in an interview that "I believe we're very close to making a deal" to end the Russia-Ukraine war. **P 18**

WMO: 2026 set to be one of 4 warmest years on record

Sea Level, Ocean Heat At Record High; Freshwater Storage Dwindling

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iStock

Temperatures are likely to rise through end of the year due to El Niño

The year 2026 is on track to be one of the four warmest years on record, with the past four years, 2023-26, being the top four, World Meteorological Organisation (WMO) said in its State of the Climate report released Monday, the opening day of the 31st session of the UN climate conference (COP31) in Antalya, Turkiye.

The report showed each of the past 12 years has been among the warmest on record. It said the global average surface temperature for Jan-Sept 2026 was about 1.47°C above the pre-industrial (1850–1900) average.

"This figure is likely to rise through end of the year because of warming effect of El Niño, which has been intensifying since Aug and is expected to be the strongest on record by Dec," WMO said. It underlined the "protracted streak" of exceptional global temperatures, melting ice and rising sea levels are set to "unleash even more heat and extreme weather" well into 2027. So far, 2024 was the warmest year on record, followed by 2023 and 2025. The report underscored the urgency of taking action to prevent further increase in global average temperatures.

The report also highlighted the global mean sea level had reached a record high in 2026, sea-surface temperatures hit monthly records this year, freshwater storage has been dwindling since 2014 and glaciers lost more than 400 gigatonnes of ice in 2025 — equivalent to approximately 1mm of sea-level rise. Simply put, this annual mass loss of ice in 2025 would have filled five Olympic-sized pools every second of the year.

"El Niño and indeed the state of the global climate in 2026 gives new meaning to the phrase off the charts. El Niño doesn't add new heat to the planet. It releases heat from the ocean, which is the warmest ever measured... We are supercharging our weather and El Niño will be a risk multiplier," said WMO secretary-general Celeste Saulo.

El Niño is a naturally occurring climatic phenomenon characterised by above-average sea-surface temperatures in central and eastern equatorial Pacific Ocean. It is a major influencer of climate and weather patterns, affecting temperature and rainfall in different regions, and typically has a warming effect on the global climate. In India, it is invariably associated with a weak monsoon and a harsher summer.