PACT TO USHER IN 'NEW ERA' IN TIES: DEFENCE MINISTRY

India, US sign 10-year defence framework

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh with his American counterpart Pete Hegseth during a meeting to sign a 10-year US-India defence framework, in Kuala Lumpur on Friday PTI

● Critical to free, open Indo-Pacific, says Rajnath; Hegseth calls it cornerstone for regional stability

AMRITA NAYAK DUTTA
New Delhi, October 31

AS THEY CONTINUE to negotiate a bilateral trade deal and the thorny issue of a tariff penalty by Washington over Delhi's purchase of Russian oil, India and the US Friday signed a 10-year Framework for the US-India Major Defence Partnership, signalling stable ties between the two countries in the defence sector.

The pact was signed following a bilateral meeting between Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and his US counterpart Pete Hegseth on the sidelines of 12th Asean Defence Ministers' Meeting — Plus (ADMM-Plus) in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

In a statement, the ministry of defence said the 2025 framework is intended to provide a unified vision and policy direction to deepen defence cooperation. It said the framework will usher in a new era in the already strong defence partnership between the two countries and marks a new chapter in further transforming it over the next 10 years.

Singh said the framework will provide policy direction to the entire spectrum of the India-US defence relationship. "It is a signal of our growing strategic convergence and will herald a new decade of partnership," he said in a post on X, adding that defence will remain a major pillar in bilateral relations between the two sides.

The partnership, he said, is critical for ensuring a free, open and rules-based Indo-Pacific region — a reference to efforts aimed at countering China's assertive behaviour in the region.

Hegseth, secretary of war, said the 10-year framework advances the India-US defence partnership, a "cornerstone for regional stability and deterrence".

"We are enhancing our coordination, info sharing and tech cooperation. Our defence ties have never been stronger," he said in a post on X.

In February this year, following a meeting between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Donald Trump, the two sides had announced plans for the new 10-year defence framework. A joint statement after that meeting stated: "High-lighting the deepening convergence of US-India strategic interests, the leaders reaffirmed their unwavering commitment to a dynamic defence partnership spanning multiple domains. To advance defence ties further, the leaders announced plans to sign this year a new 10-year Framework for the US-India Major Defence Partnership in the 21st Century."

In Sept, Indian and American troops participated in a two-week military exercise Yudh Abhyas at Fort Wainwright in Alaska

Despite the strain in relations between Delhi and Washington over the issue of tariffs that came up in July and August, there has been no visible dip in military ties between the two countries.

The vision for bilateral defence cooperation was encapsulated in the September 2013 Joint US-India Declaration on Defence Cooperation and the 2015 Framework for the US-India Defence Relationship, in which the two countries committed themselves to increasing cooperation in the sector.

Between 2016 and 2020, the two sides signed four more agreements, including the Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement (LEMOA) in 2016, the Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement (COMCASA) in 2018, and the Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement (BECA) in 2020.

In August 2024, both countries signed a Security of Supply Arrangement (SOSA) and Memorandum of Agreement regarding the Assignment of Liaison Officers, among other bilateral military agreements that have enhanced defence and security cooperation.

In September this year, Indian and American troops participated in a two-week military exercise Yudh Abhyas at Fort Wainwright in Alaska.

A week before that, the US submarine support ship USS Frank Cable visited Chennai on a scheduled port visit — the Military Sealift Command's second to the region in two years.

Big-ticket Indian military procurements from the US include MH-60R Seahawk multi-role helicopters, Sig Sauer rifles, and M777 ultra-light howitzers. Negotiations are underway to manufacture GE F-414 jet engines in India for the LCA Tejas Mk2 fighters, and to procure 31 MQ-9B High-Altitude Long-Endurance (HALE) UAVs. Deliveries of the GE-F404 engines for the LCA Tejas Mk1A are underway.

BPCL profit more than doubles in Q2 on boost from refining margins

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
New Delhi, October 31

BHARAT PETROLEUM CORPORATION (BPCL) on Friday reported a 169% jump in its September quarter net profit on the back of a surge in refining margins.

Its standalone net profit of ₹6,442.53 crore in July-September — the second quarter of FY26 — was 169% higher than ₹2,397.93 crore earned in the same period last year, according to a stock exchange filing by the company.

The company earned $10.78 on turning every barrel of crude oil into fuels like petrol and diesel, compared to a gross refining margin of $4.41 per barrel in July-September 2024.

The revenue from operations was up 3% at ₹1.21 lakh crore.

On operational performance, BPCL said its refineries achieved a throughput of 9.82 million tonne with a capacity utilisation of 111% in Q2 against 10.28 million tonne processed in the same period a year back.

BPCL registered quarterly domestic sales of 12.67 million tonne, a growth of 2.26% over 12.39 million tonnes in Q2 FY25.

Its board approved an interim dividend of ₹7.5 per equity share.

REPORT CARD

■ Profit stood at ₹6,442.53 cr in Q2FY26
■ It was ₹2,397.93 cr in Q2FY25
■ Revenue from operations increased 3%

GAIL Q2 profit drops 18%

STATE-OWNED GAS UTILITY GAIL (India) on Friday reported an 18% drop in September quarter net profit as petrochemical margins came under pressure in a quarter with flattish volumes.

Standalone net profit of ₹2,823.19 crore in the July-September period, compared with ₹3,453.12 crore earning in the same period last year, according to a stock exchange filing by the company.

While earnings from its natural gas transmission as well as marketing business were flattish, petrochemical business posted a nearly ₹300 crore pre-tax loss on margin pressures.

Revenue from operations rose to ₹35,031 crore from ₹32,930.72 crore in July-September FY25.

For half year (April-September), net profit fell 24% to ₹4,103.56 crore.

According to GAIL, natural gas, which is used to generate power, produce fertiliser, turned into CNG to run automobiles or used in kitchens for cooking, sold in H1 of current fiscal year was 105.47 million standard cubic meters per day, up from 98.02 mmscmd a year back. —PTI

Centre's gross tax receipts rise 2.8% in H1FY26

FE BUREAU
New Delhi, October 31

THE CENTRE'S GROSS tax revenue (before devolution to states) grew by a subdued 2.8% to ₹18.65 lakh crore in the first half of FY26, dragged down by lacklustre performance in both direct and indirect taxes.

This pace falls well short of the 12.5% annual growth required to meet the FY26 target of ₹42.7 lakh crore.

Corporate tax collections inched up just 1% to ₹4.7 lakh crore, far below the 10% growth needed to reach the full-year goal of ₹10.82 lakh crore.

Personal income tax receipts fared slightly better, rising 4.7% to ₹5.9 lakh crore — still only a fraction of the 21.6% annual growth required to achieve the ₹14.38 lakh crore target. The slowdown is partly attributed to major tax relief measures in the FY26 Budget, including raising the exemption limit under the new regime to ₹12 lakh from ₹7 lakh and reducing rates across slabs. These steps have put an estimated ₹1 lakh crore back into taxpayers' pockets to spur consumption and investment.

On the indirect tax front, Central GST collections rose 5.8% to ₹4.7 lakh crore, against an 11.2% annual growth requirement to reach the ₹10.1 lakh crore target.

Customs duty receipts declined 5.1% to ₹1 lakh crore, missing the modest 3% growth needed for the ₹2.4 lakh crore annual goal. The fall comes amid sharp trade headwinds following the Donald Trump administration's imposition of 50% tariffs on most Indian exports to the US, effective August 27 — a move that has rendered many Indian goods uncompetitive compared with Asia-Pacific peers facing 15–20% duties.

पालिका अभियंत्याला मारहाण; वाकोल्यात चौघांवर गुन्हा

मुंबई : रस्त्याच्या कामाची पाहणी करणाऱ्या मुंबई महापालिकेच्या अभियंत्याला मारहाण केल्याप्रकरणी वाकोला पोलिसांनी ४ जणांविरोधात गुन्हे दाखल केले आहेत. सहाय्यक अभियंता सचिन बंडगर असे या अभियंत्याचे नाव आहे.

बंडगर यांच्यासह प्रीतम माने आणि भूषण बधान हे सहकारी अभियंते गुरुवारी वाकोला येथील रस्त्यांच्या कामांची पाहणी करण्यासाठी गेले होते. त्या वेळी एका व्यक्तीने शिवीगाळ करत भररस्त्यात बंडगर यांना मारहाण केली. तेव्हा बंडगर यांच्या सहकाऱ्यांनी नियंत्रण कक्षात फोन करून मदत मागवली. त्यानंतर वाकोला पोलिसांनी घटनास्थळी येऊन आरोपींना ताब्यात घेतले. दरम्यान, पालिका अभियंत्यांना मारहाण करण्याचे प्रकार वाढत असल्याने अभियंता संघटनांनी निषेध केला आहे. दोषींवर कडक कारवाई केली नाही तर आंदोलन केले जाईल, असा इशारा महापालिका म्युनिसिपल इंजिनीअर्स असोसिएशनने दिला.

राज्यातील तापमानात चढ-उताराची शक्यता

पुढील चार दिवस पावसाचा अंदाज

लोकसत्ता प्रतिनिधी

मुंबई : मोंथा चक्रीवादळ निवळल्यानंतर छत्तीसगड राज्यात ठळक कमी दाब क्षेत्राची निर्मिती झाली आहे. दरम्यान, पुढील चार ते पाच दिवस राज्यातील काही भागात पावसाची शक्यता वर्तविण्यात आली आहे.

छत्तीसगडमध्ये तयार झालेली हवामान प्रणाली ईशान्येकडे वाटचाल करीत असून झारखंडच्या वायव्य भागात आहे. ही प्रणाली उत्तर वायव्येकडे वाटचाल करीत बिहार ओलांडल्यानंतर त्याची तीव्रता कमी होण्याचा अंदाज आहे. गेले काही दिवस मुंबईसह इतर भागात पावसाने हजेरी लावली. त्यामुळे तापमानात काहीशी घट होऊन दिलासा मिळाला होता. आता मात्र पुन्हा तापमानात वाढ होण्याची शक्यता आहे. ढगाळ वातावरण मधूनच पाऊस अशा वातावरणामुळे तापमानात चढ- उतार शक्य आहे.

मुंबईत पावसाची हजेरी

गेले काही दिवस मुंबईत पाऊस पडत आहे. दिवसभर उकडा आणि उन्हाचा ताप त्यानंतर सायंकाळी पाऊस असे काहीसे वातावरण मुंबईत आहे. शुक्रवारी सायंकाळी शहर, तसेच उपनगरात पावसाने हजेरी लावली. दिवसभर ढगाळ वातावरणामुळे उन्हाचा ताप काहीसा कमी होता. दरम्यान, शनिवारनंतर मुंबईत कोरडे वातावरण राहील, असा अंदाज हवामान विभागाने व्यक्त केला आहे. मुंबईत मागील काही दिवस सुरू असलेल्या पावसामुळे गारवा निर्माण होऊन मुंबईकरांना काहीसा दिलासा मिळाला होता. त्यानंतर शुक्रवारी सकाळपासूनच ढगाळ वातावरण होते.

हवा 'समाधानकारक'

मुंबईची हवा शुक्रवारी 'समाधानकारक' श्रेणीत नोंदली गेली. मुंबईचा हवा निर्देशांक शुक्रवारी ६४ इतका होता. भायखळा येथील हवा निर्देशांक ४८, चेंबूर ४०, कुलाबा ४२, कांदिवली ४६, भांडूप ४२ आणि माझगाव येथे ४७ इतका होता. म्हणजेच येथील हवा 'चांगल्या' श्रेणीत नोंदली गेली. इतर भागातील हवादेखील 'चांगली' ते 'मध्यम' श्रेणीत नोंदली गेली. मागील काही दिवसांपासून सुरू असलेल्या पावसामुळे हवेत सुधारणा झाली आहे.

ठाण्यातील उपवन तलाव येथे विठ्ठलाच्या ५१ फूट उंच मूर्तीचे अनावरण राज्याचे उपमुख्यमंत्री एकनाथ शिंदे व परिवहन मंत्री प्रताप सरनाईक यांच्या हस्ते झाले. (छाया : दीपक जोशी)

ज्येष्ठ अभिनेते धर्मेंद्र रुग्णालयात

लोकसत्ता प्रतिनिधी

मुंबई : ज्येष्ठ अभिनेते धर्मेंद्र यांना शुक्रवारी ब्रीच कॅण्डी रुग्णालयात दाखल करण्यात आले आहे. नियमित तपासणीसाठी त्यांना रुग्णालयात नेण्यात आले असता डॉक्टरांनी त्यांना देखरेखीखाली ठेवणे आवश्यक असल्याचे सांगितले. त्यामुळे त्यांना रुग्णालयात ठेवण्यात आले असून त्यांची प्रकृती स्थिर असल्याचे कुटुंबीयांकडून सांगण्यात आले आहे.

तिन्ही रेल्वे मार्गांवर उद्या मेगाब्लॉक

करी रोड, चिंचपोकळी, मशीद, सँडहर्स्ट रोडचा लोकल थांबा रद्द

लोकसत्ता प्रतिनिधी

मुंबई : मध्य, हार्बर आणि पश्चिम रेल्वेवर रविवारी विविध अभियांत्रिकी व देखभाल दुरुस्तीची कामे करण्यासाठी मेगाब्लॉक घेण्यात येणार आहे. करी रोड आणि चिंचपोकळी ही दोन्ही स्थानके एकसारखी दिसत असल्याने ती 'जुळी स्थानके' म्हणून ओळखली जातात. रविवारी मेगाब्लॉकदरम्यान या जुळ्या स्थानकांसह मशीद, सँडहर्स्ट रोड स्थानकांतील लोकल थांबा रद्द करण्यात आला आहे.

ब्लॉक काळात काही चर्चगेट लोकल वांद्रे/दादर स्थानकांदरम्यान अंशतः रद्द करण्यात येणार आहेत.

मध्य रेल्वे (मुख्य मार्ग)

कुठे : सीएसएमटी-विद्याविहार, अप-डाऊन धीमा मार्ग

वेळ : सकाळी १०.५५ ते दुपारी ३.५५

हार्बर मार्ग

कुठे : कुर्ला-वाशी, अप व डाऊन मार्ग

वेळ : सकाळी ११.१० ते दुपारी ४.१०

पश्चिम रेल्वे

कुठे : चर्चगेट-मुंबई सेंट्रल, अप आणि डाऊन जलद मार्ग

वेळ : सकाळी १०.३५ ते दुपारी ३.३५