



- Ek Per Maa ki naam
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ଦିନକରେ ଲାଗିଲା ୧.୪୯ କୋଟି ଗଛ



ପ୍ରଧାନମନ୍ତ୍ରୀଙ୍କୁ ଜନ୍ମଦିନ ଭେଟି

- ▶ ଧାର୍ଯ୍ୟଲକ୍ଷ୍ୟର ପ୍ରାୟ ଦୁଇ ଗୁଣ ଗଛ ଲାଗିଲା
- ▶ ସୁନ୍ଦରଗଡ଼ରେ ସର୍ବାଧିକ ୧୪,୨୧,୬୧୮
- ▶ ରାଜ୍ୟବାସୀଙ୍କୁ ଧନ୍ୟବାଦ ଜଣାଇଲେ ମୁଖ୍ୟମନ୍ତ୍ରୀ

ଭୁବନେଶ୍ୱର, ୧୭/୯ (ଇମିପି): ଅଲ୍ପତପ୍ତର୍ଣ ଉତ୍ସାହ ଦେଖିବାକୁ ମିଳିଥିଲା। ପ୍ରଧାନମନ୍ତ୍ରୀଙ୍କ ୭୫ତମ ଜନ୍ମଦିନରେ ରାଜ୍ୟବାସୀ ୭୫ଲକ୍ଷ ଗଛ ଲଗାଇ ପ୍ରଧାନମନ୍ତ୍ରୀଙ୍କୁ ଏକ ଉପହାର ଦେବାକୁ ମୁଖ୍ୟମନ୍ତ୍ରୀ ମୋହନ ଚରଣ ମାଝୀ ରାଜ୍ୟବାସୀଙ୍କୁ ଅନୁରୋଧ କରିଥିଲେ। ରାଜ୍ୟବାସୀଙ୍କ ମଧ୍ୟରେ ଆଜି ଏନେଇ

ଅଲ୍ପତପ୍ତର୍ଣ ଉତ୍ସାହ ଦେଖିବାକୁ ମିଳିଥିଲା। ଏହି କାରଣରୁ ମୁଖ୍ୟମନ୍ତ୍ରୀ ଦେଇଥିବା ଲକ୍ଷ୍ୟର ପ୍ରାୟ ଦୁଇଗୁଣା ଅର୍ଥାତ୍ ୧କୋଟି ୪୯ଲକ୍ଷ ୧୧ହଜାର ୩୩୯ଟି ଗଛ ପାରା ରାଜ୍ୟରେ ଲାଗିଛି। ରାଜ୍ୟର ୭୧,୯୨୪ଟି ଗ୍ରାମରେ ବିଭିନ୍ନ ବର୍ଗର ଲୋକ ଏହି ଅଭିଯାନରେ ସାମିଲ ହୋଇ ଗଛ ଲଗାଇଛନ୍ତି।

BHUBANESWAR Edition
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ଆଜିଠୁ ବିଧାନସଭା

ଭୁବନେଶ୍ୱର, ୧୭/୯ (ଇମିପି): ଗୁରୁବାରଠାରୁ ବିଧାନସଭାର ମୌସୁମୀ ଅଧିବେଶନ ଆରମ୍ଭ ହେବ। ସେପ୍ଟେମ୍ବର ୨୫ ତାରିଖ ପର୍ଯ୍ୟନ୍ତ ଚାଲିବାକୁ ଥିବା ଏହି ଅଧିବେଶନରେ ସାତଟି କାର୍ଯ୍ୟଦିବସ ରହିଛି। ସେପ୍ଟେମ୍ବର ୧୯ ତାରିଖରେ କେବଳ ବେସରକାରୀ ସଭ୍ୟଙ୍କ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟ ପାଇଁ ଧାର୍ଯ୍ୟ ହୋଇଥିଲା ବେଳେ ବାକି ୬ ଦିନ ସରକାରୀ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟଦିବସ ରହିଛି। ଗତକାଳି ବାଚସ୍ପତି ସୁରମା ପାଢ଼ୀ ସର୍ବଦଳୀୟ ବୈଠକ ଡାକି ଗୃହ ସୁରୁଖୁରୁରେ ଚଳାଇବା ପାଇଁ ସବୁ ଦଳର ସହଯୋଗ ଲୋଡ଼ିଥିଲେ। ଅଧିବେଶନର ପ୍ରଥମ ଦିନରେ ଦିବଂଗତ ବିଧାୟକ ରାଜେନ୍ଦ୍ର ଢୋଲକିଆଙ୍କୁ ଶ୍ରଦ୍ଧାଞ୍ଜଳି ଜଣାଇ ଗୃହରେ କୌଣସି କାର୍ଯ୍ୟ ହେବ ନାହିଁ ବୋଲି ସୂଚନା ମିଳିଛି।

ଅଧିବେଶନର ଅବଧି କମ୍ ଥିଲେ ବି ବିଭିନ୍ନ ଦୃଷ୍ଟିକୋଣରୁ ଏହା ବେଶ୍ ଗୁରୁତ୍ୱ ବହନ



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Amid U.S. tariffs row, PM pushes local production

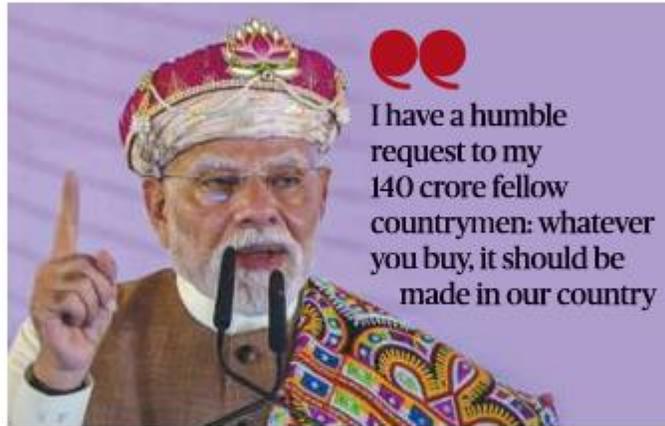
Indians must embrace Swadeshi, as it will lead to the country's development, says Modi; he also highlights the strength of armed forces who 'brought Pak. to its knees' during Operation Sindoor

Mehul Malpani
BHOPAL

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday urged citizens to buy only made-in-India products and traders to sell only indigenously manufactured goods as he laid the foundation stone for the country's first PM Mega Integrated Textile Region and Apparel (PM MITRA) park in Madhya Pradesh's Dhar district.

His remarks came a day after the latest round of talks on an India-U.S. trade agreement, amid tensions over U.S. tariffs on Indian products, even as U.S. President Donald Trump extended birthday greetings to Mr. Modi.

"This is the season of festivals, and at this very time, we must remember



Big push: Prime Minister Narendra Modi during the launch of the PM MITRA Park at Dhar in Madhya Pradesh on Wednesday. PTI

the mantra of Swadeshi and incorporate it into our lives. I have a humble request to my 140 crore fellow countrymen: whatever you buy, it should be made in our country," Mr. Modi said at Bhainsola in Dhar.

Saying he wants to build a developed India by 2047, he added, "Whatever our

businesspersons sell must be made in our country. Now we must make Swadeshi the foundation of a developed India. This will happen when we proudly buy products made in the country. We must first determine whether the product is made in the country. When we do this, our

money remains in the country and leads to the development of the country."

Referring to Operation Sindoor, which began with Indian air strikes on terrorist infrastructure in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir on May 7, Mr. Modi said the armed forces had "brought Pakistan to its knees in the blink of an eye".

"Just yesterday, the nation and the world saw that a Pakistani terrorist shared his ordeal while crying," he said, alluding to a viral video of Jaish-e-Mohammad commander Ilyas Kashmiri, who claimed that the family of group chief Masood Azhar was "torn into pieces on May 7".

CONTINUED ON
» PAGE 10

"Terrorists from Pakistan had destroyed the *sin-door* [vermillion] on our sisters. We have destroyed terrorist hideouts through Operation Sindoor. This is new India, it is not scared of anyone's nuclear threats. It enters [the enemy's] house and strikes," the Prime Minister said.

He also noted that the new GST rates will come into effect from September 22, coinciding with the first day of Navratri. "We need to launch a campaign promoting Swadeshi. I will urge the State government to put up signs in every shop detailing Swadeshi goods. Buyers will also know that they are buying Swadeshi," he added.

Mr. Modi launched the Swasth Nari Sashakt Parivar Abhiyaan (SNSPA), a Union government initiative aimed at improving women's health through comprehensive screenings and services.

"Its goal is to ensure that no woman falls victim to any disease due to lack of information. There are diseases that women are most vulnerable to. It's crucial to detect these diseases early. Serious diseases like cancer can be detected early. The women of our country continue to bless me. Therefore, these programs are for them," he said, urging women to avail free check-up and medication services.

The campaign will run until Gandhi Jayanti on October 2.

The PM MITRA park in Dhar is one of seven such establishments approved by the Union Ministry of Textiles. The other sites are in Tamil Nadu's Virudhnagar, Telangana's Warangal, Gujarat's Navasari, Karnataka's Kalaburagi, Uttar Pradesh's Lucknow, and Maharashtra's Amravati.

Based on the 5F theme – farm to fibre to factory to fashion to foreign – the initiative aims to boost India's textile manufacturing and exports. Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav recently said proposals worth more than ₹23,000 crore have been received from 114 textile companies for the Dhar park.

A judicial nudge following stuck legislative business

The Supreme Court of India has heard arguments on the Presidential Reference in respect of the Governor's powers under Article 200 pertaining to the assent to Bills passed by the State legislature. Earlier, a two-judge Bench, headed by Justice J.B. Pardiwala, had fixed a timeline of three months for the Governor to take a final decision on a Bill submitted to him for assent. The same timeline was made applicable to the President of India also.

The time limit fixed by the Court has raised eyebrows in the government as well in the media. The general refrain from a section of the media was that the Court cannot direct the Governor or the President, who are high constitutional authorities, to act within a specified time when the Constitution does not have any such time frame. The government had also taken this line of argument in the Court.

Reiteration of a recognised principle

Article 200 of the Constitution has four options for the Governor when a Bill is presented to him after being passed by the State legislature. These options are to assent to the Bill; to withhold assent; return the Bill to the Assembly with a request to reconsider the Bill as a whole or certain clauses, or reserve it for the consideration of the President.



P.D.T. Achary

is former Secretary
General, Lok Sabha

Government of India Act, 1935. Section 75 of this Act is substantially the same as Article 200. Section 75 uses the words "the governor in his discretion" which means that giving assent or withholding it or sending the Bill back to the legislature or reserving it for the consideration of the Governor General is done by the Governor in his discretion.

This Section has been virtually reproduced in Article 200 but omits the words "in his discretion". This would show that the Constitution-makers wanted the Governor to exercise the power under Article 200 only on the advice of the Council of Ministers.

The issue of 'discretion'

The question of discretion of the Governor under Article 200 is one that has been dealt with by the Court in a number of cases. Surprisingly, the Court, in *Shamsher Singh*, discovered a discretionary power in the Governor under Article 200. It held that he must exercise it to the best of his judgement and should pursue a course which is not detrimental to the state.

But the Court, in *The State of Tamil Nadu vs The Governor Of Tamilnadu and Anr. (2025)*, did not accept the idea of a Governor exercising his discretion in withholding assent or reserving the Bill for the consideration of the President. It says, "if the power to withhold assent to Bills or to

prescribed by the Court within which the Governor and the President are required to take a final decision on a Bill. From the arguments made on behalf of the Union Government, it is clear that it has strong objections to the time limit. It is true that no time limit has been prescribed by Articles 200 or 201. It is obvious that the Court fixed the time limit because some of the Governors had sat on Bills for years together without exercising any of the options available under Article 200. The question is whether the Constitution permits such a course of action. It does not.

So, is there no remedy available to States whose important Bills go in limbo? When a Governor sits on Bills for years, should not the Union intervene and direct the Governor to act in accordance with the Constitution? Article 355 can be creatively interpreted to mean that the Union Government can intervene to ensure that the government of a State is carried on in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution. Thwarting the legislative process by the Governor by sitting on Bills passed by the legislature for years creates a situation where in the government cannot be carried on in accordance with the provisions of the constitution. Article 355 imposes a duty upon the Union to direct the Governor to perform his constitutional duty under Article 200.

How does SC's order affect Waqf law?

What is the Waqf (Amendment) Act, 2025? On what grounds was the law challenged? Which provisions did the court uphold, and on which did it impose a stay?
What are the broader implications for minority rights?

EXPLAINER

Aaratrika Bhaumik

The story so far:

The Supreme Court, on September 15, declined to suspend the Waqf (Amendment) Act, 2025, in its entirety, but stayed the operation of certain contentious provisions pending further judicial scrutiny. The interim order, delivered by a Bench led by Chief Justice of India B.R. Gavai and Justice A.G. Masih, put on hold the enforcement of provisions that empowered District Collectors to unilaterally decide whether a property claimed as waqf belonged to the government, and the clause stipulating that only a lawful property owner who has been practising Islam for at least five years could create waqf through a formal deed. It also capped the number of non-Muslims who may be appointed to the Central Waqf Council and State Waqf Boards.

What did the challenge entail?

Uaisha Civil Service Examination



THE GIST

▼ The Supreme Court, on September 15, stayed certain contentious provisions of the Waqf (Amendment) Act, 2025, including the five-year practising Islam requirement, powers of District Collectors to decide waqf property ownership, and limits on non-Muslim representation in Waqf boards.

▼ Provisions that remain in force include the derecognition of 'waqf by user' properties, the requirement to register waqf properties on a central digital portal, and the application of the Limitation Act to waqf lands.

▼ The order aims to protect property rights and minority protections, ensure judicial

A little-known resistance in Malabar region during the run-up to Independence

A new book sheds light on the 'Malabar Revolt' in an area which had a history of Muslims and Hindus collaboratively persevering in their defiance against colonial forces; other books explore its links to the Khilafat movement and why it is more than a peasant uprising

Ziya Us Salam

Growing up in Delhi, one had only a limited idea about the resistance movement in the Malabar region. The popular history books tended to treat it at best as a little outpost of the freedom movement. Noted historian Bipan Chandra in *India's Struggle for Independence* (Penguin) dubbed it as a peasant movement.

"In August 1921, peasant discontent erupted in the Malabar district of Kerala. Here, Mappila tenants rebelled. Their grievances related to lack of any security of tenure, renewal fees, high rents...the impetus for resistance had first come from the Malabar District Congress Conference at Manjeri in April 1920," Chandra writes. Sumit Sarkar too, confined himself to calling it an "anti-landlord revolt" in his book, *Modern India (1885-1947)*, published by Pearson. There have been noises about the association with the Khilafat movement in academic circles, though. Just as there are historians who see it merely from a communal prism. A holistic picture had failed to emerge.

community underwent profound transformations in the wake of the cataclysmic events of 1921-22. This epoch witnessed a staggering loss of lives, the forced displacement of families... The old mosque of Tirurangadi emerged as a veritable repository of memories and narratives, a historical bastion of ideological resistance against the British colonial apparatus." Fittingly, it was on the commemoration of the 75th anniversary of the 1921 resistance that Panakkal started his exploration, speaking to the family members of those directly involved.

Among them was Muhammed Ali Musaliar, grandson of Ali Musaliar, a luminary of the 1921 struggle. The British referred to Ali Musaliar as a king; the locals regarded him as a community and spiritual leader, calling him Musaliar Uppapa. Indeed, if Musaliar was a 'king', Malabar was his 'kingdom'.

Incidentally, the term Malabar is derived from the vernacular Mala, signifying hill, and the affix originating from the Arabic word *barr*, which means the source of all goodness. The region had a long tradition of anti-colonial resistance dating back to the 16th century. "Muslims

such as Malabar Revolt and Moplah Rebellion to delineate these struggles is emblematic of this issue. Revolt itself is a term crafted by colonial administration, characterising violent actions against a recognised government or ruler."

'Peaceful coexistence'

There were others, though, whose hearts beat for the locals, luminaries who either linked the resistance to the Khilafat movement or, in isolation, read it as an agrarian struggle. Among them were Saumyendranath Tagore, who regarded it as "an organic and spontaneous 'uprising' of the Malabar peasantry against British imperial rule" and E.M.S.

Namboodiripad, who too "didn't discount the role played by agrarian discontent". There was a common thread: the oppression and exploitation meted out by colonial officials and landlords was no less severe upon the Hindu peasants as they were on their Muslim counterparts.

Writes Panakkal, "The Malabar narrative heralded a rare phenomenon: the harmonious convergence of Hindus and Muslims. This coalition was underpinned by a shared objective – to oust the oppressor... and a collective aspiration for

numbers for a concise time. They were then responsible for much property damage'." In his persuasively argued book, with much of the focus on the post-resistance time in the late 1930s and 40s, Chekkutty also talks of the rebels not harming any substantial section of the local population before going on to document the failure of the Congress to retain local Muslim support after the resistance movement. It was a vacuum which both the Communist Party of India and the All India Muslim League attempted to fill.

The Khilafat angle

Interestingly, against this background of common cause transcending the confines of faith came the pan-Islamist Khilafat movement. Things became even more ironic as Malabar's historical tapestry of anti-colonial resistance "had been woven with threads of unity binding Muslims and non-Muslims in a shared 'jihad' to safeguard the throne of the Hindu king, the Zamorin of Calicut," as analysed by Panakkal. Khilafat, Non-Cooperation, Mappila, with seemingly disparate social elements, all fused to bring about a strong anti-colonial movement.

EU-India partnership set for upgrade

EU's top diplomat Kaja Kallas releases strategic agenda on trade, technology, security, defence and climate; however, India's military exercises with Russia and its continued purchase of Russian oil are seen in Brussels as potential obstacles to the deepening of the relationship with New Delhi

Sriram Lakshman
LONDON

The European Union has set out a plan to upgrade its strategic ties with India, even as it warned that India's military exercises with Russia and its purchase of Russian oil are risks to the growing strategic ties between Brussels and New Delhi.

The European Commission and the EU's top diplomat Kaja Kallas released 'A New Strategic EU-India Agenda' on Wednesday in Brussels, and urged the European Parliament and Council (i.e., the heads of member states) to adopt it.

Ms. Kallas called India a "crucial" partner for the EU, as she outlined the strategy that encompassed trade, technology, security, defence and climate. She was speaking at a tele-

ships of the 21st century". Brussels and New Delhi are in the midst of negotiating a free trade agreement (FTA), with the EU's trade chief Maroš Šefčovič visiting New Delhi last week for talks with Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal.

"We are also negotiating an agreement of exchange of classified information and deepening ties between defence industry [sic]," Ms. Kallas said, adding that there were hesitations here among the College of Commissioners (comprised of Commissioners from the 27 EU countries).

With Russia escalating its attacks on Ukraine in recent weeks, the Europeans are grappling with how to navigate New Delhi's closeness to Moscow.

"India's participation in Russia's military exercises



The European Commission's High Representative for Foreign Affairs Kaja Kallas and European Commissioner for Trade Maroš Šefčovič at a press conference in Brussels, Belgium on Wednesday. REUTERS

las said.

"It is of utmost importance to the EU that any enablement of the war be curtailed," the strategy document says.

The negotiations with New Delhi would address these challenges with the aim of adopting a joint roadmap at the next EU-India summit in early 2026.

peaceful resolution of the Ukraine conflict," he said, reflecting on his phone call on Wednesday with European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen.

India and the EU have been seeking to bolster ties in the face of increasing geopolitical uncertainty and challenges in their trade relationships with the U.S.

according to the Commissioner. Brussels and New Delhi are hoping to conclude a trade deal by the end of the year.

Mr. Šefčovič said he was in frequent touch with Mr. Goyal but wished that there had been "more progress" on talks during his visit to New Delhi last week. He also said that Indian trade negotiators have a reputation for being "tough".

Tariff barriers

On the question of agricultural tariffs, Mr. Šefčovič said that the issue was not about numbers but rather about whether what was being offered was commercially meaningful, after taking into account tariff and non-tariff barriers. He cited India's Qualitative Control Orders (QCOs) as an example and said they were

Quizzed specifically on India's participation in the recent Zapad-2025 military exercises led by Russia, Ms. Kallas said she had spoken to External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar on Tuesday. She reiterated that exercises with Russia and buying oil were issues to the relationship.

"The question is always whether we leave this void to be filled by somebody else. So we try to fill it ourselves," she said in response to the question on cooperation with India. She responded similarly, when quizzed on India's apparent détente with China.

The College of Commissioners had agreed that the EU should deepen ties with India to "not really push them into Russia's corner".

Ms. Kallas cited the principle of 'nothing is agreed

Despite issues, online RTI queries may cross one million in 2025

Aroon Deep

NEW DELHI

The Union government may have made it cumbersome to file Right to Information (RTI) applications online, but that has not deterred transparency activists and the general public from seeking information.

Every month, thousands of RTI applications, sometimes more than one lakh, are being filed with the Union government and other public authorities, show data provided to *The Hindu* by the Department of Personnel and Training, which runs the RTI online portal.

This has come even as the website deals with increased failure rates, besides adding a 'speed-breaker' in the form of a one-time passcode before an application is filed.

The number of applications filed are growing each year, with 7,09,323 requests in 2022, 8,44,262 in 2023, and 9,64,813 applications in 2024, representing a 14-19% yearly growth. Already, 7,66,167 requests



Already, 7,66,167 requests have been filed so far in 2025.

have been filed so far in 2025, and the numbers could exceed one million this year. These numbers do not represent all RTI applications sent to the Central government, as many are filed physically. Besides, the State governments and the Election Commission maintain separate portals.

The RTI portal was launched in 2013, and in recent years users have complained of lengthy downtimes and payment failures.

Users have also reported long wait times for receiving OTPs.

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CAG to launch AI system for auditing and efficiency

The Hindu Bureau

NEW DELHI

The Comptroller and Auditor-General (CAG) is developing a large language model (LLM) to help auditors access decades of institutional knowledge, thereby improving efficiency and consistency in audit analysis using the system powered by artificial intelligence.

The system's first version is expected to be ready by November.

Previous inspection reports will be used to train the model. The LLM will strengthen institutional capabilities in analysing large datasets, generating documents, including inspection reports, and assisting auditors in preparing comprehensive reports.

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Digitisation process at the Centre and States will soon facilitate remote or hybrid audits of most government agencies and departments.

The CAG has also developed the 'Connect Portal'. The site will provide 10 lakh audit entities with a unified digital interface to directly respond to audit queries, observations, and inspection reports, making the entire process transparent.

It will be launched during the annual conference of State Finance Secretaries on Friday.

COP30 talks loom as major emitters dither on updating climate goals

Jacob Koshy
COPENHAGEN

Ahead of the 30th edition of the climate talks scheduled in Belem, Brazil, in November, major emitters appear to be dithering on declaring updated climate goals. Only 29 out of 195 countries have so far submitted their updated Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC). These are voluntary targets, updated every five years by countries to regulate fossil fuel emissions. So far, all countries that are signatory to the United Nations climate convention have submitted NDCs detailing emission targets upto 2030.

The European Union, a bloc of 27 member nations, and historically the group that has been a leader in advocating that countries undertake ambitious cuts to fossil fuel production, is



Climate rally: Activists hold a march for climate justice, ahead of the COP30 summit to be hosted in Belem in Brazil. REUTERS

yet to evolve a consensus among its member countries on what their NDCs should be.

EU members are set to vote this week on two climate agreements. One of them is an internal, legally binding commitment to reduce emissions by 90% by 2040, and be on the path to carbon neutrality by 2050. The other is to agree on a 2035 target, to time

with the NDC requirements of COP30 (30th Conference of Parties).

The Hindu has learnt from multiple sources familiar with the EU's climate negotiations that there was "disagreement" among its member countries that were yet to be ironed out, with some major EU member countries, including France and Germany, preferring that a

vote on the matter be postponed.

They indicated, however, that the EU would announce its updated NDC before COP30 commences on November 10.

Andre Lago, COP President and veteran Brazilian diplomat, said that this would be an "implementation" COP rather than stressing on a headline-grabbing cover text to signal forward movement on ambition. New coalitions on a leadership role appear to be forming.

The 2015 Paris Agreement, which 195 countries have ratified, requires countries to submit updated NDCs every five years to show the steps undertaken by them to keep average temperatures from rising, "as far as possible", above 1.5 degree Celsius by the end of the century, and certainly below 2 degree Celsius.

'First round of FTA talks with Russia bloc EAEU likely in Nov.'

The next round of negotiations for the FTA between India and the European Union will take place October 6-10, as per a govt. source

T.C.A. Sharad Raghavan

NEW DELHI

The first round of negotiations for a free trade agreement (FTA) between India and the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU), which includes Russia, is likely to take place in early November, according to the Russian embassy. However, this is yet to be confirmed by the Indian government.

In addition, the next two months are going to see rounds of FTA talks between India and the EU, Chile, Peru, and a review of the FTA with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

In a statement, the Embassy of Russia in India said Minister in charge of Trade of the Eurasian Economic Commission An-



Down to business: Piyush Goyal with EU Trade Commissioner Maroš Šefčovič during India, EU FTA talks. ANI (FILE PHOTO)

drey Slepnev met Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal on September 15.

"The Ministers agreed on an approach under which the first round of negotiations is set to take place in early November this year in India and focus on discussing the core as-

pects of the future deal," the statement said. "It will be preceded by intensive consultations between the Commission, Indian partners, and the EAEU Member States." The Indian government, however, has not confirmed the date of the first round of negotiations.

SEBI may okay banks' investing in non-agriculture derivatives

Press Trust of India

MUMBAI

SEBI will "engage" with the government to allow banks, insurance companies and pension funds to invest in non-agriculture

commodity derivative markets, Chairman Tuhin Kantta Pandey said.

He said SEBI is also looking at a proposal to allow foreign portfolio investors to trade in non-cash settled, non-agricultural com-

modity derivative contracts.

"We will engage with the government to consider banks, insurance firms and pension funds to trade in the (non-cash, non-agricultural) markets," he said.

Bima Sugam entity's website unveiled

N. Ravi Kumar

HYDERABAD

Bima Sugam India Federation (BSIF), the entity that will steer electronic marketplace Bima Sugam mooted by insurance regulator IRDAI, has launched its official website.

It marks the first visible step in building India's pioneering digital public infrastructure for insurance, IRDAI said after Chairman Ajay Seth unveiled the website.

The roll-out of platform features, however, will follow a phased approach, ensuring highest levels of security, compliance and scalability.

The marketplace will progressively go live with real transactions as insurers and ecosystem partners complete necessary integration over the coming months, Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India said.

Mr. Seth, who assumed office as IRDAI chairman recently, on Wednesday chaired a meeting with the insurance industry CEOs and appointed actuaries. The insurers were advised to ensure full benefit of the decision to exempt GST on individual life and health insurance policies, effective September 22, is passed on to policyholders, IRDAI said.

Govt. eyes ₹5,000-cr. clean steel-tech plan

Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI

The government is working on a ₹5,000 crore scheme to promote the adoption of clean steel-making technologies, thereby reducing carbon emissions, Steel Secretary Sandeep Poundrik said.

The senior Ministry official made the remarks on the sidelines of the 'FT Live Energy Transition Summit India' here.

"The proposal is under consideration for a National Mission for Sustainable Steel. It is a ₹5,000-crore scheme," he said.

The scheme will cover all steel makers in the



Sandeep Poundrik

country, with 75-80% of the fund earmarked for secondary players, Mr. Poundrik said.

It aims at promoting lower carbon emissions in steel production by encouraging the use of clean technologies and alternative materials, he added.

RBI forms committee for periodic review of regulations

India's central bank said on Wednesday that it has set up a body to review its regulations periodically. The Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) regulatory review cell will ensure that all regulations issued by the RBI are subject to a comprehensive and systematic internal review every five to seven years. The review body will be advised by a group of six industry experts, and will be chaired by State Bank of India's managing director Rana Ashutosh Kumar Singh. REUTERS

India to start pilot projects in Venezuela

Kallol Bhattacharjee

NEW DELHI

India will start pilot projects in Venezuela in “priority areas” such as agriculture, pharmaceuticals and digital public infrastructure, officials here conveyed to Raul Hernandez, Vice-Minister for the Development of Information and Communication Technologies of Venezuela, who paid a four-day visit to India.

“Both sides agreed to

carry out pilot projects in the priority areas of Venezuela. Training and capacity building in the AI and related areas were also discussed, with Venezuela showing keenness to send its technical personnel for courses in India. Discussions were also held on other bilateral issues of mutual interests such as space, pharmaceuticals and tourism among others,” said an official source about Mr. Hernandez’s visit which coincided with

rising tension between the U.S. and Venezuela after President Donald Trump accused Caracas of sending narcotics into the U.S.

Mr. Hernandez met Secretary (East) P. Kumaran of the Ministry of External Affairs on Tuesday and also met heads of prominent institutions including National Institute of Smart Governance (NISG), UIDAI for AADHAR Digital identity system, NeGD for DigiLocker, AI BHASHINI. The discussions held here coin-

cided with consultation that Indian Ambassador P.K. Ashok Babu held with Venezuela’s Minister of People’s Power for Agriculture and Lands, Julio Leon Heredia where India-Venezuela cooperation in agriculture and livestock sectors were discussed.

According to the Ministry of External Affairs, in 2024-25, India-Venezuela bilateral trade was around \$1.8 billion, with Indian exports at \$216 million and imports at \$1.6 billion.

Q1- The operation 'Eastern Sentry' has been launched by:

- (a) North Atlantic Treaty Organisation**
- (b) United Nations**
- (c) European Union**
- (d) ASEAN**

Q2- The Lukolela territory was in the news after a whaleboat caught fire. The territory is located in:

- (a) Zambia**
- (b) Democratic Republic of Congo**
- (c) Uganda**
- (d) Cameroon**

Q3- Consider the following countries:

- 1. Philippines**
- 2. Malaysia**
- 3. Laos**
- 4. Cambodia**
- 5. Vietnam**

Which of the countries given above shares a border with the South China Sea?

- (a) 1, 2 and 3**
- (b) 2, 3, 4 and 5**
- (c) 1, 3 and 4**
- (d) 1, 2 and 5**