

India requires \$220 billion for green power transition by FY30'

Saptaparno Ghosh

NEW DELHI

India's renewable energy sector will need \$220 billion in investment between FY27 and FY30, spanning generation, transmission, manufacturing and emerging green technologies, Santosh Sarangi, Secretary, Union Ministry of New and Renewable Energy, said.

Another senior official told reporters at the cur-

tain-raiser for the Bharat Renewable Energy Summit & Expo 2026 that solar energy would account for \$70-75 billion of the requirement followed by transmission infrastructure at \$40-45 billion, wind energy at \$25-30 billion and green hydrogen at \$20-25 billion. Manufacturing will require another \$15-20 billion, the official said.

The sector attracted about \$64 billion in private

investment between July 2024 and June 2026, including \$6.2 billion in foreign direct investment. The Centre infused \$6 billion to support renewable energy development.

Mr. Sarangi said Indian green hydrogen developers got orders to supply 5.5 lakh tonne until 2026. The Ministry is developing a framework for geothermal exploration rights similar to hydrocarbon sector.

India raises concern over U.S. support for Pakistan's F-16 jets

Rajnath Singh discusses cross-border terrorism with Hegseth; Secretary of War reaffirms support to combat issue; they review defence relations

Saurabh Trivedi

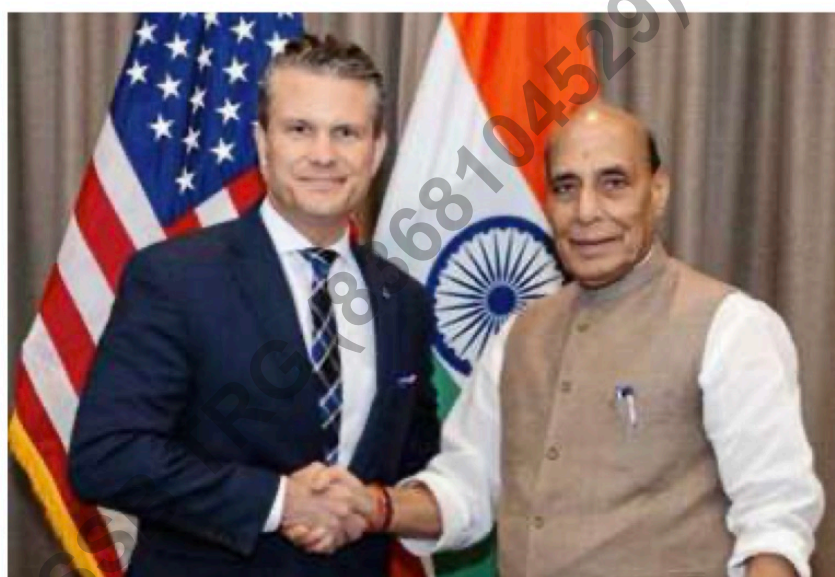
NEW DELHI

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Wednesday raised India's concerns over Washington's support package for Pakistan's F-16 fighter aircraft with U.S. Secretary of War Pete Hegseth during a bilateral meeting on the sidelines of the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting-Plus (ADMM-Plus) in Cebu, Philippines.

The two leaders also discussed the threat of cross-border terrorism, with Mr. Hegseth reaffirming Washington's support to India in combating the menace.

According to the Ministry of Defence, the meeting provided an opportunity to review progress under the India-U.S. Major Defence Partnership, including the implementation of foundational security agreements and avenues to enhance operational readiness, technology sharing and defence industrial integration.

Mr. Singh emphasised the need for a zero-tolerance



Defence Minister Rajnath Singh during a meeting with United States Secretary of War Pete Hegseth on Wednesday. PTI

approach towards countries that support, train or finance terrorist organisations. He expressed appreciation for the consistent support extended by the U.S. in India's fight against cross-border terrorism.

Mr. Singh also conveyed to Mr. Hegseth that any transfer of advanced military technology to Pakistan could ultimately result in the technology reaching a third country, raising concerns over its wider proliferation and implications for regional security.

The two Ministers also reviewed the ten-year India-U.S. Defence Framework and discussed strengthening maritime security cooperation, military-to-military exchanges and resilient defence supply chains.

Separately, Mr. Singh held talks with Japanese Defence Minister Shinjiro Koizumi, reviewing progress in bilateral defence cooperation since their meeting in August. The discussions explored joint development in naval shipbuilding and design.

Jaishankar headed to Atlanta for G20 ministers' meet; CHOGM next stop

Shubhajit Roy

New Delhi, October 28

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS Minister S Jaishankar will be headed to Atlanta in the US to attend the G20 Foreign Ministers' meeting to be held on October 30-31. This comes just days after US Secretary of State Marco Rubio visited India, October 20-22.

Jaishankar will also attend the Quad Foreign Ministers' meeting in Atlanta, along with the top diplomats from Australia and Japan. They were supposed to meet in Australia last week, but that couldn't take place due to scheduling conflicts. The Quad foreign ministers had last met in Delhi in May this year.

From Atlanta, Jaishankar will travel to Antigua & Barbuda to attend the CHOGM (Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting) from November 1 to 4. The External Affairs Minister's forthcoming trips are part of Delhi's engagement with multilateral groupings, and it offers an opportunity to have bilateral engagements with counterparts from other countries. Announcing Jaishankar's travels, Ministry of External Affairs official spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said on Wednesday, "External Affairs Minister will be attending the G-20 Foreign Ministers' meeting to be held in Atlanta... On the sidelines of it, he will also participate in a QUAD Foreign Ministers' meeting and have several bilateral engagements with his counterparts."

Jaishankar's visit is also being seen as laying the groundwork for Prime Minister Nar-



External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar with Austria's Minister of Foreign Affairs Beate Meinl-Reisinger in New Delhi on Wednesday. PTI

endra Modi's possible visit to the US for the G20 leaders' summit in mid-December.

The visit to the US will once again give an opportunity for Jaishankar to meet Rubio and discuss the state of bilateral relations. As India and the US look to finalise a trade deal, stalled by tensions over American tariffs and India's purchase of Russian oil, Rubio and Jaishankar had focused on "energy security and defence cooperation" during their talks in Mumbai last week.

This is significant since the US is looking at selling energy and defence equipment to meet its \$500 billion trade target by 2030. The two sides had also reaffirmed the importance of advancing the India-US strategic partnership.

At the G20 Foreign Ministers' meeting, the ministers are expected to discuss regional and global issues, including the war between US and Iran, which has created an energy crisis across the world including in India.

India-New Zealand trade ties set to scale new heights

In 1953, Sir Edmund Hillary of New Zealand and Tenzing Norgay, the Nepalese-Indian Sherpa mountaineer made history by becoming the first ever to climb Mount Everest. This extraordinary partnership showed what co-operation, trust and determination could achieve, and we are once again set to see the India-New Zealand partnership scale to new heights with the entry into force of the India-New Zealand Free Trade Agreement (FTA).

The India-New Zealand relationship has always been cordial and extends beyond diplomatic ties. Their people share the same passion for cricket, place a high value on domestic traditions and share strong people-to-people ties. In fact, New Zealand is also home to a large Indian diaspora, strengthening relations between the two countries, be it in business, education or cultural exchange. The implementation of the FTA provides another opportunity to leverage these ties for a stronger economic partnership.

Moreover, this FTA is among the recently signed modern FTAs of India which will strengthen its foothold and economic engagement in the Indo-Pacific. The complementary nature of the two economies will help in creating greater opportunities for both countries, not just in trade but also in investments and other areas of economic co-operation.

High potential for trade expansion

India-New Zealand bilateral merchandise trade, which is at \$1.2 billion, is way below potential. India caters to just 1.9% of New Zealand's merchandise imports worth \$47.5 billion, while China accounts for an over 22% share and Australia, the United States, South Korea and Japan together account for another 33% share.

Most of these major suppliers (excluding the U.S.) already enjoy preferential access to the New Zealand market through respective trade



Anant Goenka

President, The Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI)

The India-New Zealand FTA will strengthen trade, investment and professional mobility

agreements, thus placing Indian exporters at a competitive disadvantage.

With the India-New Zealand FTA now in force, Indian exporters will also get a level playing field in this market across all tariff lines that have been now offered duty free access.

The immediate gains for India could be significant in the labour-intensive sectors. New Zealand imported nearly \$1.2 billion worth of apparel in 2025, but India's share was only around 4%. The elimination of average tariffs of nearly 10% on apparel offers Indian apparel manufacturers and exporters an opportunity to expand their presence in New Zealand. Similar potential exists in sectors such as leather, footwear, home textiles and carpets.

The opportunity is equally important in higher-value manufacturing. New Zealand imports nearly \$7 billion worth of machinery and \$5.2 billion worth of vehicles and automotive components annually. Yet, India's market share in these categories remains around 1% or lower. The FTA provides an opportunity for Indian engineering and automotive manufacturers to deepen their presence in New Zealand for these products.

Greater market access

The agreement also addresses regulatory barriers, which will create an opportunity for sectors such as pharmaceuticals. India already enjoyed zero-duty access for pharmaceuticals in New Zealand and has held a share of around 5.5% in New Zealand's imports. The FTA includes provisions that facilitate the use of regulatory evaluation and inspection reports from recognised regulators. This can reduce duplicative compliance requirements and further improve market access for Indian pharmaceutical companies.

New Zealand's services imports stood at \$24.2 billion in 2024, and India's share was less than

3%. The FTA has provided commitments across 118 services sectors, including IT, professional services, healthcare, education and financial services.

The agreement also creates dedicated pathways for skilled professionals, providing a quota of 5,000 visas at any given time and stay for up to three years.

Additionally, the agreement ensures enhanced student mobility and post-study work opportunities. These will strengthen educational and professional linkages that exist between the two countries.

As part of the agreement, New Zealand will facilitate \$20 billion worth of foreign direct investment into India over a 15-year period. This should not be difficult, given India's attractiveness to global investors and New Zealand's capital and technological expertise. India offers significant investment opportunities across sectors, be it high-value manufacturing, renewable energy, agritech, food processing, digital technologies or infrastructure.

Effective utilisation is the key

The outcomes from the FTA will flow only if they are effectively utilised. Indian businesses need targeted market intelligence, stronger distribution networks, regulatory preparedness and commercial partnerships. What is equally important is sustained engagement with New Zealand's investors to develop a pipeline of commercially viable projects.

Through the combined efforts of all stakeholders – the government, the associations as well as the industry on both sides – it should not be difficult to double India-New Zealand bilateral trade by 2030. The agreement has created an enabling framework and success will depend on how these opportunities are converted into exports, investments, jobs and meaningful partnerships.

Kukis, Meiteis back on edge; the trigger this time may have been felled trees

Deeptiman Tiwary

New Delhi, October 28

THE SUNULOK Hills killings of October 19 which have reopened the Meitei-Kuki fault-line in Manipur, after relative peace for some time, may have been triggered by a dispute over felling of trees.

An official probe has found that villagers in the area had complained to local militant groups that some people from the Meitei community were regularly felling trees and taking away wood in the Khongbal Sunulok Hills, along the Imphal East-Kangpokpi border, and had asked them to intervene.

Following this, some militants, along with local village volunteers, are suspected to have stopped a vehicle carrying Meitei men, who were allegedly in the area to collect wood. On seeing gun-wielding militants and village volunteers, they tried to flee, but the gunmen opened fire, killing three, officials said.

While officials suspect involvement of the Kuki National Front (Nehlung) in the killing of the Meitei men, it has denied any role. A security establishment officer said: "It appears the initial intention was to scare the Meiteis or at best to detain them and make them pay for their release. But things turned ugly and people were killed."

Sources among Kuki groups described the incident as unfortunate and ill-timed, as they have been locked in a conflict with Nagas for the past nine months and have been making efforts to mend ties with the Meiteis.

The Manipur Police has arrested three village volunteers for the killings, who subsequently led investigators to



Security personnel deployed amid protests against recent violence between Meitei and Kuki groups, in Imphal. ANI

eight weapons hidden underground. "One of these guns appears to have been fired recently and a forensic examination is being conducted to establish if it was the same gun used for the killings," said another officer.

The investigation has also brought renewed scrutiny on Kuki militant camps operating under the Suspension of Operations (SoO) agreement. On October 20, security forces carried out a surprise inspection of the Sinai Camp in Semol village, close to the site of the killings, and reportedly discovered "serious discrepancies".

Under the SoO pact – which lapsed last month and is yet to be renewed – the Sinai Camp is officially designated to house 159 registered cadres of the Kuki National Army (KNA) and Kuki Liberation Army (KLA). Security forces said they found only 18 people at the camp, with just one of them a legitimately registered cadre.

According to officials, the remaining 17 were using fabricated identities to impersonate registered Kuki cadres – eight

as KNA members and nine as KLA members. All 17 have been arrested and remanded in police custody.

"The militant groups were questioned about the missing members and told to produce them within the next two days. When they couldn't, the camp was taken over by security forces," an officer said.

Security personnel also seized 24 firearms and 38 magazines from the camp premises. A Manipur Police officer said that some magazines and ammunition were found to be missing, "and the same is being investigated".

On October 25, Manipur Chief Minister Yumnam Khemchand Singh visited the camp for an inspection.

Sources added that surprise inspections of Kuki camps were not new and have been on "since the killing of six abducted Nagas in May this year by Kuki militant groups". "Three-four camps have been subjected to these checks since," a police officer said.

In these inspections too, sources said, only 30-40% of

'Selective action': Kuki-Zo Council warns of tough measures

ACCUSING THE government of selective action in dealing with ethnic violence in Manipur, the Kuki-Zo Council (KZC) on Wednesday threatened to withdraw its MLAs from the state government and ask Kuki-Zo armed groups under the Suspension of Operations (SoO) agreement to reconsider their cooperation with the government.

In a strongly worded statement, the KZC reiterated its demand for a separate Union Territory with a legislature, arguing that the existing political arrangement had failed to protect the community. It alleged that while the killings of Meitei and Naga civilians had prompted swift action by security forces, similar action had not followed the killing of Kuki-Zo civilians.

the registered militants were found to be present, with militant groups reportedly explaining to security forces that some of their cadres had died while others had gone away.

Sources said the groups have been asked now to establish identities of all inmates at the camps and ensure their presence, without which the government could withhold the mandated stipend to be paid to militants living at the camps.

IIP: MINING OUTPUT SEES BIGGEST FALL IN 3 YEARS

Industrial growth slowed to 4-month low of 6.7% in Sept

Shubham Rana

New Delhi, October 28

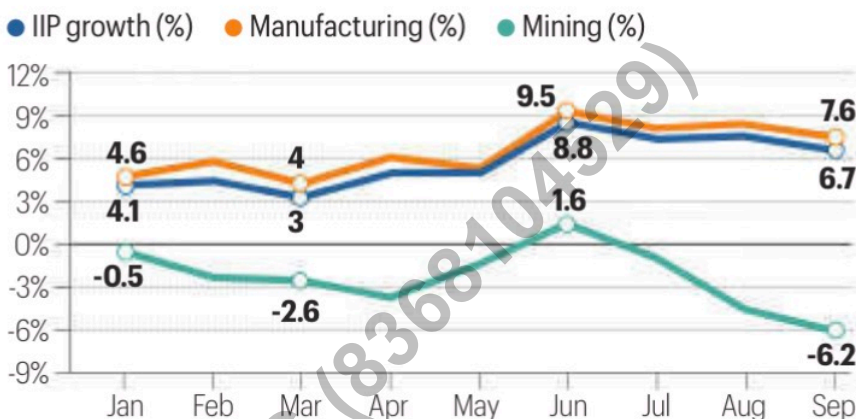
GROWTH IN India's industrial output, as measured by the Index of Industrial Production (IIP), slowed to a four-month low of 6.7% in September, pulled down by the mining sector's worst performance in three years, data released by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation on Wednesday showed.

The August IIP growth print was revised lower to 7.8% from the 8% provisional estimate. Industrial output had grown 6.1% in September 2025.

Manufacturing sector, which has the highest weightage in the new IIP series at 76%, expanded 7.6% in September, the slowest growth in four months. Within manufacturing, only 10 of the 23 sub-sectors performed better in September compared to August.

Sequentially, the general index rose 1% from August, the biggest month-on-month rise in three months. The sequential uptick in industrial activity suggests that an unfavourable base effect weighed on the headline growth in September. Industrial growth has averaged 6.8% in the first six months of the current financial year, higher than the 4.4% growth in the same period a year ago. Higher IIP growth this year has been driven by the manufacturing and electricity sectors. In September, mining sector output contracted 6.2% year-on-year, the biggest fall since September 2023. Mining and quarrying sector output has contracted in

● Mining output shrinks again



SOURCE: MoSPI

eight of the nine months in 2026. Economists said the sector's output fell in September due to disruptions caused by monsoon rains during the month.

Apart from mining, activity in the other three industrial sectors remained largely resilient in September even as growth moderated from the previous month. "The resilience is consistent with the growth observed across key high-frequency indicators such as GST collections, automobile sales, e-way bill generation, and merchandise exports," said Rajani Sinha, chief economist at CareEdge Ratings. "This reflects that domestic economic momentum has held up well despite persistent global and domestic uncertainties," Sinha said.

"Manufacturing growth has been driven by the auto segment and electrical machinery with support from rubber products, computer, electronics and non-metallic machinery," said Madan Sabnavis, Chief Economist, Bank of Baroda. "Growth was down in case of wearing ap-

parel and chemicals and pharma sectors. The export market was affected here by global disturbances," Sabnavis said.

Electricity and gas supply output growth slowed down to 11.2% in September from a 27-month high of 12.3% in August. Electricity generation from non-renewable sources grew 16.5% in September, the quickest pace of growth in 30 months. Renewable electricity, meanwhile, grew 4.3% in September, slower than 15.4% in August. Growth in output of water supply, sewerage, and waste management—the newest addition to IIP—eased to a four-month low of 5.8% in September from 6.3% in August.

In terms of the use-based categories, five of the six segments saw moderation in growth in September. Consumer non-durables was the only use-based segment where output performance was better than August. The segment's output grew 1.4% in September after contracting for two consecutive months. FE

FROM PM TO CARETAKER PM AS RIGHT-WING BLOC IS POISED TO WIN 53 SEATS IN PARLIAMENT, SURPASSING 48 FOR OPPOSITION

Netanyahu survives another day

Arab parties set to win record 19 seats; rival Eisenkot tells security chiefs to resist pressure

Reuters
Jerusalem, October 28

BENJAMIN NETANYAHU looked set to remain Israel's caretaker prime minister after unexpectedly strong backing among Jewish voters left his opponents little prospect of unseating him, despite his right-wing bloc losing its parliamentary majority.

With nearly 86% of votes tallied on Wednesday, Israel's three main broadcasters projected Netanyahu's bloc of right-wing, far-right and ultra-Orthodox parties would win 53 seats in the 120-seat Knesset, well ahead of the 48 for rival Gadi Eisenkot's opposition bloc.

Parties representing Arab Israelis were projected to win an unprecedented 19 seats, leaving Eisenkot little realistic path to power without their broad backing, which many Jewish political leaders reject.

The results could still change as counting continued, but Eisenkot's bloc of anti-Netanyahu parties, ranging from the centre-left to the hard right, had fallen short of pre-election polls that forecast a tight race.



Israeli Prime Minister and Likud party leader Benjamin Netanyahu gestures after the exit polls, at his party headquarters during Israel's national election, in Jerusalem, on Wednesday. REUTERS

Netanyahu would remain caretaker PM during any coalition negotiations and potentially until another election next year. While a caretaker government faces some constraints, experts say it retains powers, including over the war with Iran.

Netanyahu, addressing his Likud party's faithful after 0100 GMT, called for the formation of "a strong, right-wing national government." He highlighted Israel's military successes and raised the prospect of renewed joint military action against Iran alongside his ally, US President Donald Trump, saying the two countries had a "singular historical opportunity" to remove what

he called the Iranian threat "once and for all."

Trump, who had urged Israeli voters to keep Netanyahu in power so two leaders could "finish the job" in Iran, said Netanyahu had done "very well" and claimed his endorsement had "helped him a lot." Israel's high-turnout vote was brushed aside by some in the rest of West Asia.

In Tehran, banners with images of slain Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei reminded Iranians of US and Israeli strikes launched in February which kicked off the war. Just to the right was a poster of late Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah, who was killed on

Netanyahu's orders in Lebanon.

"I genuinely see the possibility of attack," said 50-year-old Iranian citizen Abdullah Karimi.

Outhman Selim, a 62-year-old lawyer, said his hopes that a Netanyahu defeat would steer the country away from the far right had been dashed.

Eisenkot acknowledged that Netanyahu remained caretaker PM but warned that he might use security for political ends. "I call on the heads of the security establishment and the civil service: Netanyahu is a caretaker PM, without a mandate or the people's trust," he said. "Stand firm in the face of any attempt to challenge you."

Israel's President now faces a crucial choice as incumbent fights on

Ephrat Livni
October 28

ISAAC HERZOG, Israel's president, has a largely ceremonial role — except after national elections, when it is his responsibility to choose a potential prime minister and then tasks that person with trying to form a government.

Since Israelis vote for a party or parties rather than an individual, the person who might lead the country is selected after the ballots are counted and parliamentary seats are allocated to parties according to their proportion of the vote.

The president — who is separately elected by the Knesset, Israel's single-chamber legislature — then convenes party leaders to hear their recommendations for prime minister before choosing someone to form a government.

While the president can choose the leader of the party that won the most votes, he can also select another leader who seems more likely to assemble a coalition that can secure a vote of confidence in the Knesset.

In 2009, President Shimon

Peres chose Benjamin Netanyahu — the current PM — even though his right-wing Likud party had won fewer votes than the centrist Kadima party.

Early exit polls on Wednesday suggest a tight race between the far-right coalition led by Netanyahu and the center-right opposition bloc that has called for change.

Herzog, whose job is to stay above political fray, is expected to face a difficult decision. He must discern whether the votes show that the majority of Israelis demanded change or if they indicated a preference for another Netanyahu government.

Netanyahu's governing coalition, the most right-wing in Israel's history, has drawn international condemnation, heightened tensions with allies and divided Israelis.

Herzog has criticized what he has called "a terrible process of brutalization" creeping into Israeli society, citing violence by Jewish settlers in occupied West Bank against Palestinians and abuse of detainees in custody, which some far-right ministers in Netanyahu's coalition are accused of encouraging. NYT

President of UAE honours Capt Machchhar, flydubai crew for bravery during mid-air attack

Press Trust of India

Dubai, October 28

UAE PRESIDENT Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan has conferred the First Class Order of Zayed II on Indian Captain Smit Machchhar and fellow flydubai crew members in recognition of their courageous efforts to ensure passenger safety during an attempted mid-air attack aboard a Dubai-Tel Aviv flight.

The medals were presented by Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Crown Prince of Dubai, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defence, who commended the crew's actions and sense of responsibility, Dubai Media Office said in a statement on Tuesday. Machchhar and the flydubai crew members received the award at the presidential reception.

The incident occurred on September 30 aboard flydubai flight FZ1073, which was travelling from Dubai to Tel Aviv with



UAE President Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Prime Minister Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum and others meet flydubai Captain Smit Machchhar in Dubai on Wednesday. Machchhar was conferred the First Class Order of Zayed II in recognition of his courageous effort to ensure passenger safety. PTI

more than 170 people on board.

Machchhar was seriously injured when his co-pilot attacked him with a crash axe kept in the cockpit for emergencies. Bleed-

ing on the floor, he mustered his remaining strength to activate the cockpit door release.

That allowed passengers and crew to overpower the co-

pilot and enable a second pair of flydubai pilots who were on board to land the jet in Tabuk.

The Omani co-pilot was taken into custody.