Retail inflation goes past RBI's limit to 6.1% in Oct.

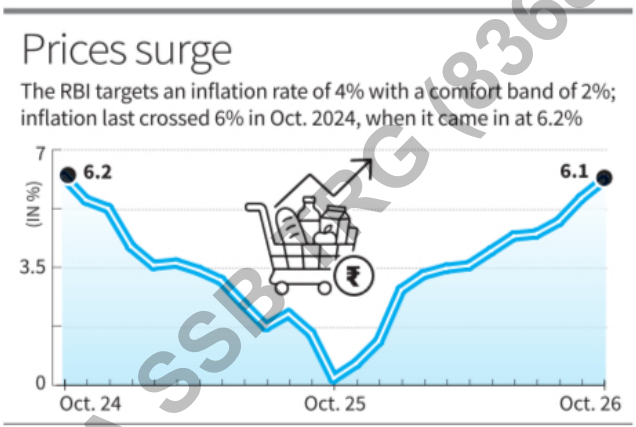
Almost all categories in the index hit series highs as inflation crosses the targeted comfort band for the first time in two years; inflation in food and beverages rises to 8.5%, transport sector at 5.8%

T.C.A. Sharad Raghavan
NEW DELHI

Retail inflation rose to 6.1% in October, crossing the Reserve Bank of India (RBI)'s upper threshold for the first time in two years.

The continued uptick in inflation, while driven by food and fuel prices, has now spread to nearly all sectors, data released by the government on Thursday showed.

The RBI targets an inflation rate of 4% with a comfort band of 2% higher or lower than figure. Inflation as measured by the Consumer Price Index (CPI) last crossed this upper threshold of 6% in October 2024, when it came in at 6.2%. Retail inflation in the corresponding month this year was the highest since then. The new series of the CPI, with a base year of 2024, has sectoral data that goes back to only January 2026, which means a historical analysis is possible only up to that point. Within that, the latest data show inflation across most categories rose to series highs in October.



The data showed that inflation in the food and beverages category rose sharply to 8.5% in October, the highest in the series.

Coupled with this, rising fuel prices meant that inflation in the transport category also rose to 5.8%, a series high.

As a result of accelerating food and transport prices, inflation in the restaurant and accommodation services category jumped to 10.1%, the first time it has come in at double-digits in the new series.

"Although inflation remains predominantly supply-driven, stronger consumer demand pull associated with festive-season purchases may have added to price pressures, reinforcing the RBI's decision to raise the repo rate by 25 basis points to 5.50%," Pranjal Ghate, economist at Brickwork Ratings said, referring to the Monetary Policy Committee's decision in October.

Apart from food and fuel, the data showed that other aspects of day-to-day life have also seen prices rising at a faster pace.

CONTINUED ON
» PAGE 12
'STRAINED HOUSEHOLDS'
» PAGE 13

SAURYA SSB RG (8368104529)

Retail inflation crosses RBI's limit to 6.1% in Oct.

Clothing and footwear, for example, saw inflation coming in at nearly 5% in October 2026 – the highest in this series – from 3.9% in the previous month. The 'furnishings, household equipment, and routine household maintenance' category saw inflation quicken to 3.9% in October, also a series high.

Inflation in the health category quickened to 2.05% in October 2026, the highest since January, from 1.4% in September.

The 'housing, water, electricity, gas and other fuels' category saw inflation of 2.9% in October, also the highest in the series.

According to Madan Sabnavis, chief economist at the Bank of Baroda, some food prices could rise further in the coming months.

"The ongoing harvest prospects will throw more light on how food prices behave," Mr. Sabnavis said. "Area under cultivation was lower for rice, maize, oilseeds, cotton and sugarcane. It has also been reported that pulses production, especially tur, could be lower this time, which can lead to a spike in prices."

SHAURYA SSB TPC 8368104529

Other services get pricier too

Education services saw inflation touch the 4% target for the first time in the new series, while inflation in the information and communication category rose to a series-high of 3.2% in October 2026.

Recreation, sports, and culture saw inflation rise to 2.5% in October 2026, also the highest in the series.

The only category that saw some relief in October was the broad 'personal care, social protection and miscellaneous goods & services' category, which saw inflation ease to 10.1%, the lowest it has been in the new series of the CPI.

"The latest reading makes it increasingly difficult for the MPC to justify holding rates unchanged at its next meeting [in December], strengthening the likelihood of another 25-basis-point hike," Mr. Ghate said.

New infra projects sanctioned along Chinese border in Arunachal

Vijaita Singh
NEW DELHI

Amid continuing face-offs with the Chinese Army along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in Arunachal Pradesh since late July, the Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) has sanctioned the construction of new border infrastructure in the northeastern State, a senior government official told *The Hindu*.

Earlier, in February, the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) had cleared the third phase of the Indo-China Border Roads (ICBR-III) project.

Under the scheme, as many as 26 roads are to be constructed along the LAC in Arunachal Pradesh, another government official said. The Union Government has not yet officially announced the ICBR-III project or publicly disclosed these details.



A bridge that is currently under construction in Arunachal Pradesh along the border with China. ABHINAY LAKSHMAN

This is only the second time after the 2020 Galwan clashes in eastern Ladakh that a critical road infrastructure project has been sanctioned along the border with China.

The first phase of the ICBR was initiated in 2005 when it was decided that the Union Home Ministry would construct 27 priority roads with a total length of 608 km along the border with China.

The second phase of the ICBR, comprising 32 roads with a total length of 683 km, was approved on September 21, 2020, just months after 20 Indian soldiers were killed in violent clashes with the Chinese People's Liberation Army in eastern Ladakh.

Since September, the ITBP has authorised the construction of 15 pedestrian suspension bridges and 18 log bridges in Upper Subansiri and Kurung Kumey districts, covering the areas bordering China in Arunachal Pradesh.

The project clearance came days after India hosted the 18th BRICS Summit from September 11 to 13 in New Delhi, which was attended by Chinese President Xi Jinping. A government release after the meeting stated that Prime Minister Narendra Modi emphasised that peace and tranquillity in the border areas remains an essential basis for the continued development of bilateral relations. He underlined the need for both sides to observe existing agreements and understandings on border-related issues.

In December 2020, the Union Home Ministry had approved construction of 18 pedestrian tracks, including foot suspension bridges, log bridges, and staging camps, measuring a total length of 598.27 km in the border areas of Arunachal Pradesh.

'Continuing face-offs'

On October 22 this year, former ITBP Director-General Shatrujeet Kapur mentioned that the "face-off" with Chinese troops "continues at several locations in Arunachal Pradesh."

Addressing the Himveer Samman Samaroh at the Central Training College at Alwar in Rajasthan, Mr. Kapur said: "In the past few days, a situation arose where face-offs happened at several locations in Arunachal and it still continues. Our Shaurya commandos played an exemplary role in this."

The 73-minute video recording of the former ITBP Director-General speech's – in which he also stressed the need to invest in and develop drone and counter-drone technology, noting that it may not be possible to face China through traditional methods as they have invested a lot in the modernisation of their weapons and infrastructure – has since been taken down from the ITBP's official YouTube page.

HILL COUNCIL POLLS ON DEC 4



The Apex Body Leh launched an indefinite protest, led by its chairman Tsering Dorjay Lakrook, on Thursday. EXPRESS

'Unjustified': Ladakh bodies on police action against Wangchuk during election protest

Naveed Iqbal
Srinagar, November 12

A DAY after climate activist Sonam Wangchuk was removed from a protest site in Ladakh, Kargil Democratic Alliance (KDA) leadership strongly condemned the action on part of the Union Territory administration. Meanwhile, the Apex Body Leh (ABL) on Thursday initiated an indefinite protest led by its chairman Tsering Dorjay Lakrook.

Leh-Kargil range DIG Kaushal Sharma defended the action against Wangchuk, and said maintaining peace and public order remained police's top priority. All necessary steps would be taken within the framework of law to prevent untoward incidents during the polls to panchayats, municipalities and the Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Councils (LAHDCs).

Terming the police action "unjustified", KDA co-chairman Sajjad Kargili said the right to peaceful protest was constitutionally guaranteed. "Under no circumstances can anyone be prevented from expressing dissent in a peaceful manner," Kargili said in Kargil, flanked by Ladakh Lok Sabha MP Mohmad Haneefa Jan and KDA co-chairman Asgar Ali Karbalai. He also accused the administration of resorting to bureaucratic high-handedness and using intimidation, threats and forms of pressure to suppress the voices of Ladakh's people. Kargili is set to join the dharna in Leh on Friday.

Lakrook said in Leh: "This dharna is about all of the pressing issues in Ladakh at the moment. We are seeking a restoration of the dialogue with the Centre, Ladakh's liquor policy as well as the timing of the LAHDC polls. Everyone should have the opportunity to participate in elections, so many of our people have already left Ladakh (due to the winters)..."

Expressing "shock" at the UT administration, Jan said while the people of Ladakh are out on streets and are not in favour of LAHDC polls, "the UT administration is not budging from its position." He said the country and the people of Ladakh normally celebrate elections but this time, they are even considering a boycott. "That is why the people in Leh have begun a protest demonstration," he said.

DIG Sharma, meanwhile, said that "peace is paramount".

Seeking a deferment of the proposed LAHDC polls on December 4, Wangchuk had attempted to lead a protest in Leh on Wednesday evening.

WITH PTI INPUTS

SHUBHAM SRT (9681042529)

Why did Ladakh groups decry the announcement of polls?

Why did LAB and KDA seek the postponement of polls? What led to the impasse in talks with the Centre?

Peerzada Ashiq

The story so far:

The Lieutenant Governor-led administration of Ladakh has announced back-to-back elections in the Union Territory (U.T.). The three-tier polls – hill councils, panchayat and municipal elections – will be held in the next one month. While the panchayat and municipal elections are slated for November 21, the hill council elections will be held on December 4.

Ladakh is a U.T. without a legislature. So, these polls are key to provide platforms to public representatives in the region. However, the short window provided by the State Election Commission (SEC) is likely to make it hard for political parties to chart the course for their campaigning and enter into possible alliances.

How are these elections different?

Previously, Ladakh operated with only two hill development councils – the Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council (LAHDC) in Leh and LAHDC in Kargil – which together covered 52 constituencies, split evenly with 26 in each district. However, the Ladakh administration restructured the region's local governance by creating six new districts and establishing dedicated hill councils for each of them.

As a result of this administrative expansion, the upcoming local elections will be held across 100 constituencies. Each new district council will now comprise between seven and 24 elected members, down from the previous 26. In a first, 36 of the 100 total LAHDC seats have been reserved for women.

Meanwhile, Chief Secretary Ashish Kundra assured that the newly formed hill councils "would retain all powers vested in them under the existing law."

What makes polls difficult in Ladakh?

Conducting elections in Ladakh comes with logistical and geographical challenges. The region, spread across 59,146 square kilometres, has a sparse population of just 2.74 lakh, according to the 2011 census.

The region has 1.90 voters, according to the Election Commission of India (ECI) figures of 2025. So, the 100 constituencies going to voting will have an average 1900 voters per constituency.

Several villages are located at altitudes as high as 15,000 feet above the sea level and there are many passes, connecting the valleys and higher reaches, which get closed due to snowfall in winters. To overcome these conditions, the Ladakh administration has promised to provide heating and specialised logistical support to facilitate the polling.

According to Mr. Kundra, a portion of local representatives has already been decided without a contest.

Out of 192 *panchayat halqas*, 55 *sarpanches* have already been elected unopposed, leaving polls to be held in only 137 seats. Similarly, 1,186 out of 1,428 *panch* candidates were elected unopposed. While all 21 wards in the Leh Municipal Council will go to the polls, four of the 17 wards in the Kargil Municipal Council have already elected their representatives unopposed.

Meanwhile, the Ladakh Chief Secretary has termed these elections as steps to "strengthening democratic institutions and ensuring their early constitution".

Why have civil society groups questioned the polls?

Ladakh has two key civil society bodies – Leh Apex Body (LAB) and Kargil Democratic Alliance (KDA). These bodies, which are amalgams of socio-political and religious groups, have been negotiating with the Centre over their core demands of Statehood and Sixth Schedule. Now, both the bodies are questioning the timing of these elections.

LAB co-chairperson Tsering Dorjey Lakrook expressed concern over likely poor participation because a sizable population of the region have moved to warmer places, especially students and elderly population. The region was facing "unilateral decisions and order-after-order without consultation," KDA co-chairperson Sajjad Kargilli added.

These groups are demanding postponement of hill council elections to April-May next year. Echoing this, Ladakh Member of Parliament (MP) Haji Haneefa urged the Lieutenant Governor and the State Election Commissioner (SEC) "to consider the region's geographical and climatic conditions before scheduling polls" and claimed that elections in winter could deprive many people of their right to vote.

Mr. Lakrook alleged that the Centre was taking negotiating civil society groups "for granted" and stated he suspected the government "was up to some mischief." He also demanded that the government make public the judicial inquiry report into the September 2025 Leh violence and ensure "justice [is] delivered to the victims." Four civilians died and around 80 were injured in alleged security forces firing in September last year.

What is the status of Ladakh-Centre talks?

Since the violent unrest in 2025, multiple rounds of talks have been held between Ladakh and the Centre, which has constituted a High Powered Committee and a Sub-Committee to engage the civil society groups of the region. However, the dialogue has recently hit an impasse.

In May this year, the Centre floated the idea of "a customised sui generis model" to meet the demands of the region and special status under a special provision of Article 371. On October 15 this year, a team of the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) presented a 32-page draft. Both the LAB and KDA rejected it, terming it as "a departure from the earlier promises".

Later, on October 17, Ladakh Chief Secretary Mr. Kundra reiterated that the Centre was committed to the process of shaping the constitutional structure and called for a discussion over the MHA draft proposal. A proposed meeting on October 22 in New Delhi failed to take place with the Centre not divulging the reason.

Mr. Lakrook stated that they have received no communication from the MHA since October 15.

After month in detention, Siang activist says stir will go on

Premankur Biswas & Shinjini Ghosh
Yingkiong, New Delhi, Nov 12

AFTER NEARLY a month in detention, activist Adum Tayong has said protests against the proposed Siang Upper Multipurpose Project (SUMP) will continue, reiterating that the project is an existential threat to those living in the Siang Valley. This, even as authorities in the district said detentions were necessary to maintain law and order in the region.

Tayong was among four activists detained under the Arunachal Pradesh Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (APUAPA) and released on November 7.

The four, including Omak Paron, Okut Paloh and Oson Paron, were detained on October 9.

Speaking to *The Indian Express*, Tayong claimed, "Initially we had no information, and it was only after detention that we were told that APUAPA had been invoked. For nearly a month, we were lodged in the same prison cells as murder convicts. Our phones were seized, and we had little information about what was going on. We were allowed to speak to our families only once in 15 days."

"We will continue with the protests," he said.

Protests have erupted across several districts in the state, with a section of residents along the Siang River opposing the proposed 11,200-MW



Siang activist Adum Tayong

SUMP. While the state government maintains that it has invited different stakeholders for dialogue, organisations like the Siang Indigenous Farmers' Forum (SIFF) have sought the release of all activists before talks resume.

Tagori Mize, an advocate based out of Itanagar, said, "The four who were released are from Geku village. There are others from different districts who still have FIRs against them and remain in custody."

Urging the state government to release all activists, Mize, who is also the spokesperson of SIFF, said, "Our stand is clear, and we have listed out our demands to the Arunachal Pradesh government. All FIRs against the protesters and activists should be withdrawn without conditions. The government should also withdraw all paramilitary and armed forces deployed in the state."

Ashok Tajo, the Deputy Commissioner of Upper Siang, said APUAPA had to be invoked to maintain law and order in the area.

"APUAPA is basically preventive detention, and for the last few weeks, there were several incidents of houses being attacked and vehicles being torched. Despite repeated requests, a few people from the area had been mobilising people. The environment was quite tense, and in order to contain that, we had to pick up a few people."

"While they were detained initially, now they are free. The effect of detentions can be seen. Such incidents (of arson) have not been reported in the last few days. People have realised that there is a rule of law. As a district magistrate, it is my duty to maintain law and order and ensure it is peaceful, and I have done my part."

• CLIMATE

Why India's carbon emissions could rise amid global fall

Pratyush Deep
New Delhi, November 12

GLOBAL CARBON dioxide emissions from fossil fuels are projected to decline marginally in 2026 compared with last year. But India is expected to be the only major emitter set to record an increase.

According to a new study by the Global Carbon Budget, global fossil fuel emissions are projected to fall by 0.4% this year, with China, the US, the European Union and Japan expected to record declines. India's projected rise in fossil fuel emissions, meanwhile, has been pegged at 4.4%.

The projected global decline has been attributed to the expansion of solar and wind power and the energy shock triggered by the West Asia conflict.

Although geopolitical upheavals and economic disruptions — besides the Covid-19 pandemic — have previously led to temporary reductions in fossil fuel use, these were largely one-year aberrations. The study cautions that the projected decline in global emissions this year is also likely to be a short-term consequence rather than a sustained structural shift.

SHAURYA SSP IRC (8368104529)

'No drop in road transport emissions'

The study shows India, which accounts for around 8% of global emissions, is projected to record higher emissions growth in 2026 than its average annual increase of 3.5% over the past decade. It attributes part of the increase to a rebound from relatively low emissions growth in 2025, when a wet pre-monsoon period reduced demand for cooling. In contrast, a drier monsoon and higher temperatures in 2026 increased cooling demand, pushing up electricity consumption.



A waste-to-energy plant near Delhi's Okhla landfill. FILE

SUMMER SURGE

- India witnessed an unusual surge in power demand this summer amid persistently high temperatures and deficient rain.
- Weather conditions influenced by the El Niño climate phenomenon added to the pressure.

Notably, India witnessed an unusual surge in power demand this summer amid persistently high temperatures and deficient rainfall, with El Niño-influenced weather conditions adding to the pressure.

This increased reliance on coal-based power generation, which increased by around 13.2% to 846,229.29 million units (MU) between April and November 10, 2026 compared with the corresponding period in 2025. The dependence was also reflected in declining coal stocks.

An analysis of government data shows that while domestic consumption of overall petroleum products declined by 2.24% in January-October 2026, consumption of transport fuels continued to increase. Petrol consumption increased by 6.61% to 37.15 million tonnes from 34.85 million tonnes, while diesel consumption increased by 5.76% to 80.86 million tonnes from 76.46 million tonnes over the same period.

India's industrial emissions

An analysis by the Centre for Research on Energy and Clean Air (CREA) found that India's CO_2 emissions in the first half of 2026 increased 3.7% year-on-year because of an increase in emissions from steel, cement and other sectors.

CREA analyst Anubha Aggarwal told *The Indian Express* that the power sector's contributions to CO_2 emissions remained flat for two years until June 2026. CO_2 emissions from oil and gas fell 7% year-on-year, despite higher demand for diesel and petrol.

"For two years till June 2026, all of the growth in India's electricity demand has been met by clean energy, and that has halted the rise of coal power for the first time in half a century. The challenge now is industry, where coal dominates and electricity makes up a smaller share of energy use than in almost any other G20 economy, so unless steel and other energy-intensive manufacturers begin to electrify, rising output will keep pushing India's total emissions up even as the power sector stabilises," Aggarwal said.

SHAURYA SSB TRG (8691004329)

Norwegian journalist says India cancelled visa before Bharat Summit in Hyderabad

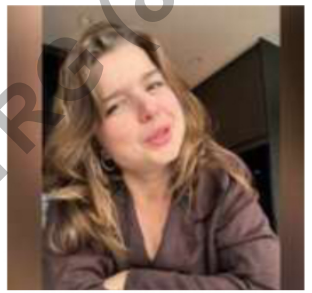
Serish Nanisetti
HYDERABAD

Norwegian journalist Helle Lyng, who works for the Oslo-based daily *Dagsavisen*, has said that she has been stopped from coming to India despite having a valid visa.

"I got a visa to India and was supposed to leave this morning to attend the Bharat Summit in Hyderabad. I had been invited as a panellist and speaker on the future of media and press freedom. But orders from above in the Ministry of Home Affairs have cancelled my visa," she said in a post on X on Wednesday.

In a video message, she put the onus on Union Home Minister Amit Shah to allow her entry, noting that 48 hours still remained before her session.

She linked the refusal to let her into India to the question on press freedom she had posed to Prime Minister Narendra Modi during his visit to Norway in May. "I was supposed to speak on media, press freedom and democracy and how they are intertwined," she said in the video.


Helle Lyng

Ms. Lyng has been listed as a speaker in a session on Day 2 of the Bharat Summit in Hyderabad on November 14. *The Hindu* has access to Ms. Lyng's documents, which show a visa was first granted and revoked later. The External Affairs Ministry has declined a response.

(With inputs from Suhasini Haidar)

In a dilemma

India must improve ties with Bangladesh, and protect Hasina

Bangladesh's former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina now in exile in India, has set off speculation about her imminent return to Dhaka by submitting an application for a new Bangladeshi passport and national identity card this week. The application, made through the Bangladesh High Commission in Delhi, was dismissed by Prime Minister Tarique Rahman's Foreign Affairs Adviser Humayun Kabir, who said that the government in Dhaka would not grant a passport to a "terrorist", and would seek her return via the extradition agreement as a "prisoner transfer process" with India. Ms. Hasina has already announced that she plans to return to Bangladesh in December this year, as she did after her previous stay in India in exile from 1975-1981, after the brutal assassination of her father Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and nearly every other member of her family. However, the situation is considerably different now. This time, Ms. Hasina came to India in 2024 fleeing mobs of protestors that overthrew her government, and has since been convicted by a tribunal for ordering a crackdown on thousands of students, and sentenced to death. In interviews, including to *The Hindu*, Ms. Hasina says she hopes to return to Bangladesh to argue her case and rebuild her party, the Awami League, but that is hardly likely, given the anger against her amongst the polity, and bipartisan consensus to ban the Awami League from politics. Despite the harsh rhetoric it employs against her, the BNP government is unlikely to wish for her return, as it would have to begin execution proceedings against the 79-year-old former Prime Minister, with international opposition to such a move expected to be voluble. Not doing so would only strengthen its opposition party, the Jamaat-e-Islami, that has accused the Rahman government of soft-peddling the issue. The government must also worry about possible protests and violence within the country in the event Ms. Hasina returns.

The situation puts the Modi government in a spot. Ever since Ms. Hasina announced plans to return, during a virtual press conference held in Delhi on August 5 this year, Delhi-Dhaka ties have been on a downslide. The government's decision not to prevent Ms. Hasina from addressing the press, where she used the opportunity to soundly criticise PM Rahman, meant the abrupt cancellation of the Bangladesh PM's visit. Next month, the Indo-Bangladesh Ganga Water treaty is set to expire, and talks on its extension have also become a casualty. Ms. Hasina has been an honoured guest in India, and the government cannot physically restrain her from taking the flight to Dhaka or travelling to the land border at Petrapole to cross over. Nor can it wash its hands of her situation once she crosses over. New Delhi must redouble its diplomatic efforts on improving bilateral ties while also ensuring Ms. Hasina's welfare.

SHUBHRA SEBTRO (8368104329)

India-Bangladesh talks postponed over Hasina rift

Kallol Bhattacherjee
NEW DELHI


Sheikh Hasina

Days after Bangladesh's deposed Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina requested Dhaka for a new passport and national identity card, the fifth India-Bangladesh consular dialogue scheduled for November 17 and 18 has been postponed, a diplomatic source has confirmed.

The source indicated that the postponement of the dialogue was mainly on account of growing tensions caused by Ms. Hasina's announcement that she will return to Bangladesh next month.

The planned consular dialogue would have been the first such meeting between the two sides in more than two years. The last such dialogue was held in New Delhi on May 29, 2024, just over two months before the Hasina government fell in a youth-led uprising in Dhaka.

The consular dialogue was scheduled to be held in Dhaka at the level of Directors-General of the Foreign Ministries of both countries. The planned agenda included issues of border management, visa procedures, and the repatriation of citizens detained on both sides.

Attempts at normalising the India-Bangladesh relationship in recent months have been hindered by Ms. Hasina's presence in India, where she took refuge on August 5, 2024. On November 9 this year, a London-based legal firm representing Ms. Hasina wrote to the High Commission of Bangladesh in New Delhi requesting a new passport and the national ID card.

However, the Acting Foreign Minister of Bangladesh, Humayun Kabir, responded to this development by telling journalists that Bangladesh would not issue a passport to Ms. Hasina. Instead, he said, Dhaka would seek Ms. Hasina's extradition under an "acceptable prisoner exchange process", adding that such a handover would have to be conducted carefully.

SHAURYA SSB TRG (8368104529)

Quad summit likely in Manila next week on margins of regional meets

PM will attend India-Asean, East Asia summits

Shubhajit Roy
New Delhi, November 12

A SUMMIT of the Quad leaders is expected to take place in Manila next week where Prime Minister Narendra Modi will be attending the ASEAN-India and East Asia summits.



Security near the venues for ASEAN summit in Manila. AP

US President Donald Trump, Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi and

»CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

e EXPLAINED

Summit that wasn't

Leaders of the Quad grouping last met in Atlanta in 2024. India was to host it in 2025, but that never happened. Scheduling issues were cited as the reason, but by the latter half of that year, India-US ties had taken a knocking over Trump's actions.

SHAURYA SSB TRG (9568104129)

Quad meet likely in Manila

Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese — the other leaders in the grouping – are expected to attend the East Asia summit and the Quad gathering is expected to take place on the sidelines.

The last Quad summit took place in September 2024 when then US President Joe Biden hosted it in his hometown, Wilmington in Delaware.

India was supposed to host the summit in 2025 and 2026 but that did not materialise. While scheduling of the Quad leaders' visits have been cited as the reason, the strained ties between India and US over tariffs, visa curbs, deportations and Washington's close ties with Pakistan's military have come in the way of Trump's visit to India in the last two years.

Quad Foreign Ministers have met thrice this year — in Delhi in May, Manila in July, and Atlanta in October when External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar travelled to the US city for a meeting of the G20 Foreign Ministers.

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio hosted the Quad Foreign Ministers hours after assuming office in January 2025.

The grouping, which was revived in 2017 under the Trump administration's first term to counter China's aggressive behaviour in the Indo-Pacific region, has faced challenges in recent years. And Trump's outreach and engagement with China's President Xi Jinping has raised some concerns about the impact on the grouping. Beijing has always opposed Quad, calling it a "small clique" which promotes bloc confrontation and destabilises regional peace and stability.

On Thursday, the Ministry of External Affairs announced the Prime Minister's visit: "At the invitation of Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr., President of the Republic of the Philippines, Prime Minister Narendra Modi will visit Manila, Philippines, from November 16 to 17."

During the visit,the PM, the MEA said, will participate in the 23rd ASEAN-India Summit and the 21st East Asia Summit , being hosted by the Philippines as the ASEAN Chair for 2026 on November 17.

"The visit comes as India and ASEAN are celebrating 2026 as the ASEAN-India Year of Maritime Cooperation, and will commemorate 35 years of Dialogue Relations and five years of our Comprehensive Strategic Partnership in 2027," the MEA said.

Secretary (East) Rudrendra Tandon said the ASEAN-India Summit will review progress in the implementation of the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership, including the ASEAN-India Plan of Action 2026–2030, and chart the future direction of cooperation.

The East Asia Summit will provide an opportunity to exchange views on matters of regional and global importance with ASEAN and other participating countries, he said.

Asked about the Quad summit and bilateral meetings on the sidelines, Tandon declined to confirm, saying meetings are being worked out and are developing.

Nvidia CEO Huang resigns as scandal raises security risks

Associated Press
HONG KONG

In a spectacular downfall for a vital player in the artificial intelligence boom, long-time head of chipmaker giant Nvidia, Jensen Huang, resigned as the company's CEO on Thursday after his extramarital affair raised national security concerns.

The company named Colette Kress, executive vice-president and chief financial officer, as its interim chief executive. The Board of directors also named Harvey C. Jones, an entrepreneur and venture investor, as its first-ever chairperson.

Ms. Kress took over the role as Nvidia's chief financial officer in 2013, overseeing the company's global finance operations. Before that, she worked for three years at Cisco and spent 13 years at Microsoft.

In a statement on Thursday, Ms. Kress said that Nvidia's "strength has always come from its people" and that she was "committed to building on the extraordinary foundation Jensen created over the last 33 years".


Jensen Huang

Shares of Nvidia tumbled 14% at the opening bell on Thursday, while the tech-heavy Nasdaq stock exchange slid 1.5%.

Mr. Huang faced growing calls to resign after his affair with a Chinese businesswoman, who reportedly was also acting as a spy for Beijing. China has denied that it engaged in any attempt to ensnare Mr. Huang.

His troubles compounded on Wednesday after reports of another extramarital affair with an Nvidia employee who reported to him.

Nvidia's Board had gathered to discuss Mr. Huang's future after revelations about his affair with Alice Huang, a former executive at Singapore-based Megaspeed International. The two persons are not related and details about Mr. Huang's affair with the former Megaspeed executive are unclear.

Megaspeed faced allegations last year that it was illicitly shipping advanced Nvidia computer chips into China, but in December said there was "no evidence" of such exports.

In its first statement since the scandal broke, Megaspeed said on Thursday that it takes its obligation to comply with U.S. export control laws "extremely seriously".

CONTINUED ON
» PAGE 12

SHAURYA ASSR TRG (3691045291)

Nvidia CEO resigns amid security concerns

Megaspeed, which prominently touts a partnership with Nvidia on its website, said on Thursday that it has cooperated with the U.S. Department of Commerce's Bureau of Industry and Security (BIS), which handles enforcement of national security restrictions on technology exports, and was ready to "cooperate fully with any other relevant U.S. government authority".

"Megaspeed is committed to working constructively and transparently with the U.S. government," said the statement signed by its chairperson and CEO, Tan Yong Pong, who also goes by James Tan.

Nvidia has said it had "no reason to believe" that either national security or its secrets were compromised, but that its inquiry would examine all available information.

Last month, the *Times* reported that U.S. intelligence agencies discovered that Mr. Huang had developed a close relationship with Alice Huang – and determined that she was feeding information directly to Beijing. On Sunday, U.S. President Donald Trump announced that the FBI was investigating.

Nvidia has become a leader in making chips that power AI, and Mr. Huang has lobbied Washington to loosen limits on sales of Nvidia chips to China. In January, he won U.S. President Donald Trump's approval to sell its H200 chips to China.

SHAURYA GUPTA (8368104529)

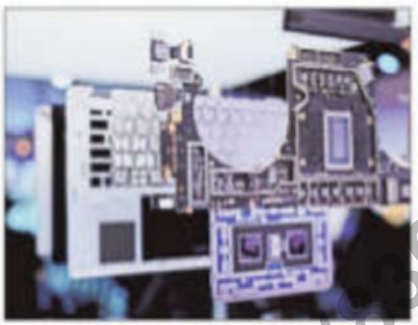
Fearing curbs from US, Chinese AI firms rush to access Nvidia chips

Reuters
Beijing, November 12

CHINESE AI companies are trying to rent Nvidia-powered computing capacity outside China, worried that the scandal involving the US chipmaker's CEO Jensen Huang could spur Washington to tighten restrictions on their remote use of advanced processors, three people familiar with the matter said.

Washington restricts exports to China of Nvidia's most advanced AI chips. But Chinese companies can access such processors remotely by renting computing power at data centres overseas.

The current move to secure rented capacity points to growing concern among Chinese technology companies that the gap in US export controls may now be closed. A major Chinese cloud provider has discussed internally whether to lock in overseas Nvidia chip capacity, while some companies have contacted data-centre operators about reserving it, the people said.



The motherboard of a Surface Laptop Ultra containing Nvidia's new RTX Spark chip

Smaller AI labs are considering similar steps, including approaching major providers of rented computing power in Southeast Asia, two of the people said.

The companies fear the controversy surrounding Huang could add political momentum to the Remote Access Security Act, or RASA, a US bill that would give the Commerce Department authority to regulate remote, cloud-based access to restricted technology, the people said. The House of Representatives passed the bill in January by a 369-22 vote, and it awaits Senate action.

Singapore says US not helpful on Megaspeed investigation

Singapore: Singapore's government said Thursday the US had provided little help in its probe into Alice Huang, the woman at the center of a spy plot that has led to the investigation of Nvidia's CEO, Jensen Huang.

Singaporean authorities held Alice Huang's passport to prevent her from leaving the country from June 2025 until February over "potential false declarations" in relation to her company, Megaspeed, the government said in a statement.

She was ultimately released with a "stern warning" and barred from re-entering Singapore. According to the timeline in the statement, Singaporean authorities had been holding Huang's passport well after President Donald Trump was briefed last fall about her relationship with Nvidia's CEO and the belief that she was a Chinese intelligence asset.

The statement said that it had sought information from an American server maker and close Nvidia business partner, Supermicro, but that the company was uncooperative. NYT

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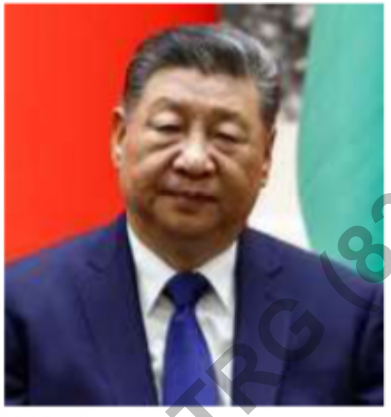
Taiwan 'reunification' must happen, says Xi

Reuters
BEIJING

The tide of history cannot be stopped, Chinese President Xi Jinping said on Thursday, as he urged complete "reunification" of Taiwan with the motherland and pledged to do so peacefully, making no mention of the use of force.

China views democratically-governed Taiwan as its own territory, despite Taipei's strong rejection of that claim, and has repeatedly offered a "one country, two systems" model of autonomy not supported by any major Taiwanese political party.

Resolving the Taiwan question is an "unwavering historical mission" of China's Communist Party, Mr. Xi said in a speech in Beijing's Great Hall of the People.



Xi Jinping

"The tide of history cannot be stopped," Mr. Xi added. "The complete reunification of the motherland must be realised, and it will certainly be realised."

Mr. Xi's comments came in a speech on the 160th birthday of revolutionary hero Sun Yat-sen who helped lead a 1911 revolt that ended centuries of rule by emperors and empresses and ushered in the Republic of China.

Mr. Xi said China adheres to "peaceful reunification and the policy of 'one country, two systems'" and is willing to talk to Taiwan while upholding the "one-China principle", or Beijing's position that both sides of the Taiwan Strait are one country.

All Chinese, including those in Taiwan, should join hands to jointly oppose Taiwan independence "separatist" forces and strive for peaceful development of cross-Strait ties, Mr. Xi added.

Despite Mr. Xi not mentioning the use of force, which China has never renounced for Taiwan, its military operates around the island on a daily basis, and is extending its reach further into the Pacific.

SHAURYA SSB TRG (8369104529)

Is Trump's 'no-war, no-peace' plan on Iran sustainable in the long term?

NEWS ANALYSIS

Stanly Johny

In September this year, U.S. President Donald Trump told the UN General Assembly that he could "annihilate" Iran if the conflict was not resolved soon. In the following weeks, Mr. Trump said several times he would soon take a decision on whether he should "destroy" Iran. Media reports claimed that Mr. Trump could opt for a short but intense war against Iran, targeting the country's critical infrastructure once the November 3 U.S. midterm elections were over.

Israel's Benjamin Netanyahu, who lost his governing majority in the October 27 elections, was pushing Mr. Trump to resume air strikes. Pentagon chief Pete Hegseth and CENTCOM Commander Admiral Brad Cooper were reportedly in favour of renewed strikes.

After the midterms – in which the Republicans suffered a crushing defeat – Mr. Trump appears to have stepped back from the immediate prospect of restarting the war.

On November 10, he wrote in a social media post that the U.S. would hold off on fire for now and keep the naval blockade on Iran in place. Meanwhile, diplomatic efforts under the mediation of Qatar would continue. Vice-President J.D. Vance, who had sent a letter to Iran's Security Council chief Mohsen Rezaei last month seeking to revive direct talks, is considering a face-to-face meeting with him in the coming weeks, according to U.S. media reports.



Donald Trump appears to have stepped back from the immediate prospect of restarting the war with Iran after the midterms. AFP

Why did Mr. Trump retreat again? To understand this, one has to first look at the options he had. Mr. Trump had three broad options and he had deferred a decision until after the midterm elections.

Three options

First, resume strikes on Iran. Supporters of this plan argued that Iran was already battling a serious economic crisis due to the blockade and another round of strikes targeting the country's critical infrastructure could force Tehran to surrender its nuclear programme. But this is also a risky plan because Iran will counter-escalate by striking the critical infrastructure, including energy facilities and undersea Internet cables, in the Persian Gulf region. In the run-up to the midterms, oil prices were already high (above $100 a barrel). Saudi Arabia was at war with Yemen's Houthis. And all Gulf economies except Oman were projected contract in 2026, according to the IMF. The resumption of an all-out war would weaken these economies further and add to the global inflationary pressures. The electoral setback for the Republicans in the U.S., which Mr. Vance blamed on the war on Iran, also put pressure on Mr. Trump against restarting the war.

The second option was to strike a deal with Iran. However, Iran's stance has only hardened over the past eight months despite the military and economic pressure the U.S. has mounted on the Islamic Republic. For any deal to be worked out, Iran, according to state media, has made seven demands: end hostilities on all fronts; lift U.S. economic and trade sanctions; release frozen Iranian assets; lift U.S. naval blockade; pay compensation for war damage; reduce/withdraw U.S. military presence in the region; and end threats, insults, and interference in internal matters. If the U.S. meets these conditions, Iran would reopen the Strait of Hormuz and then nuclear talks could be started. So, Iran was looking for another version of the Islamabad MoU, which was signed in June and collapsed within weeks.

The third option was to maintain the uneasy stalemate: keep the naval blockade and economic pressure in place, avoid a full-scale resumption of the war, but not agree to Iran's demands to restart talks. And that's what Mr. Trump appears to have chosen, for now. The logic behind this policy is to maintain the naval blockade and sanctions on Iran, hoping that economic pressure would force Tehran to offer concessions in the near future.

But what would the Trump administration do if Iran did not buckle under pressure?

Two possibilities

Sustaining the blockade for the long term is challenging for the U.S. It has deployed up to 28 warships and is spending more than $32 million a day to enforce the blockade and protect a transit route out of the Strait of Hormuz. Still, the Strait is not fully open or safe. In October alone, there were at least 36 attacks on vessels in the Strait. Iranian officials, from Supreme Leader Mojtaba Khamenei to Speaker M.B. Ghalibaf, have said that they would break the 'no-war, no-peace' stalemate.

Now, the U.S. has two options. It can walk away, declare victory and ease the blockade. But this could leave the Strait of Hormuz under Iran's control and strengthen the country's strategic position in the Persian Gulf. Alternatively, if Washington keeps the costly blockade in place in the hope of extracting concessions from Tehran, Iran could launch strikes to break the status quo, potentially dragging the U.S. back into active fighting.

Despite Mr. Trump's decision to hold off on further strikes, he remains neck-deep in the war he launched alongside Mr. Netanyahu on February 28, 2026.

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No compromise with Ukraine, Putin indicates to U.S. envoys during talks

The Russian President proposes a short-term ceasefire in key frontline city in Donetsk; he also rules out agreeing to foreign troops being stationed in Ukraine; Kushner, Witkoff urge Putin to include European representatives in next round of talks

Agence France-Presse
MOSCOW

Vladimir Putin indicated on Thursday that Russia will not compromise on its hardline demands to end the Ukraine offensive, but offered a short-term ceasefire in a key frontline city in Donetsk during a Kremlin meeting with U.S. envoys.

The Russian President said he would not water down his territorial demands to control parts of Ukraine that Russia claims to have annexed, and ruled out agreeing to foreign peacekeeping troops being stationed in Ukraine – a deployment that he said would be a "continuation of war".

Jared Kushner and Steve Witkoff were in Moscow after two days of talks in Abu Dhabi searching for a way to end Europe's worst conflict since the Second World War.

Mr. Putin's comments appeared to douse hopes that a deal to end the war could be within grasp, after Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said there was a "window of opportunity" to achieve "a result" before 2027.

The Americans, meanwhile, urged Mr. Putin to allow European representatives to sit at the table for the next round of talks.



Vladimir Putin speaks to U.S. envoys Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner at the Senate Palace of the Kremlin on Thursday. AP

Moscow has successfully managed to reframe the discussions on the war as part of a wider discussion about European security.

But Kyiv and European leaders have urged against a new "Yalta" – a reference to the post-Second World War deal to carve the continent into spheres of influence – and said talks must be focused on ending the Ukraine war first.

Mr. Kushner and Mr. Witkoff will travel to Dublin, where a European summit is taking place, to meet Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy later on Thursday.

'No grey zones'

Usually held behind closed doors, the Kremlin chose to televise a lengthy opening exchange between Mr. Putin and the U.S. envoys.

The Russian leader also rejected talk of a possible territorial settlement involving "grey" – or demilitarised – zones between Ukrainian and Russian positions.

SHARING SSE RG (8368 1945 29)

Russian fossil fuel imports touch record €6.4 bn in Oct

Sukalp Sharma
New Delhi, November 12

INDIA'S FOSSIL fuel imports from Russia hit a record high of 6.4 billion euros in October, helping Moscow generate the most revenue from its fossil fuel sales in nearly four years amid elevated energy prices globally due to West Asia war, said an analysis by European think tank Centre for Research on Energy and Clean Air (CREA).

China, the biggest buyer of Russian energy, also made its highest monthly purchase of Russian fossil fuels since January 2022 in October.

India is the second-largest buyer of Russian hydrocarbons, primarily crude oil, and Moscow has been New Delhi's largest source of crude for about four years now.

"India was the second-largest buyer of Russian fossil fuels in October 2026, importing a total of EUR 6.4 billion of Russian hydrocarbons, its highest monthly total in data going back to January 2022. Crude oil constituted 91% of India's purchases, totalling EUR 5.8 billion. Coal (EUR 333 million) and oil products (EUR 232 million) constituted the remainder of its monthly Russian imports," CREA said on Thursday.

India's oil imports from Russia took off after the Ukraine war broke out.

With much of the West shunning Russian crude following its February 2022 invasion of Ukraine, Moscow began offering discounts on its oil to willing buyers.

Indian refiners were quick to avail the opportunity, leading to Russia — earlier a peripheral supplier of oil to India — emerging as the country's biggest source of crude, displacing traditional West Asian suppliers. India's imports of Russian crude rose 10% sequentially in October, as per the think tank.

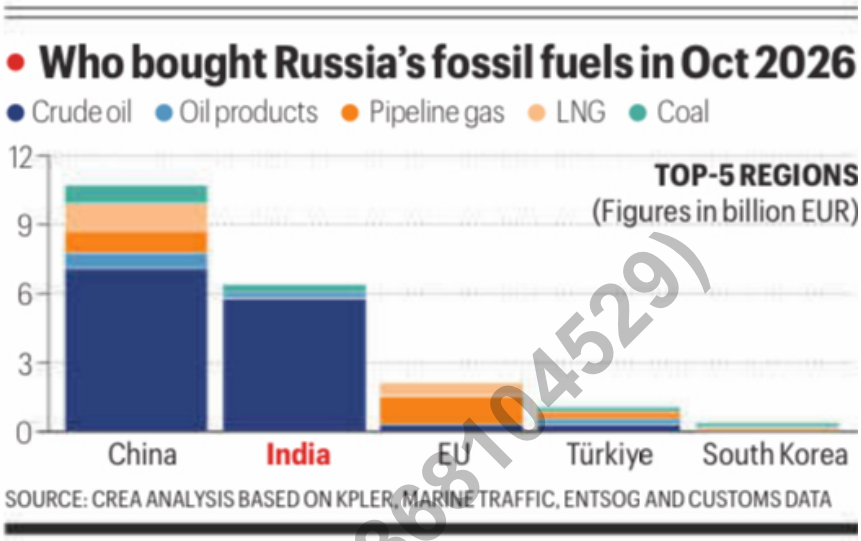
"Russian crude imports rose at all three of India's largest importing refineries: Vadinar (up 12% month-on-month), Jamnagar (up 22%), and Paradip (up 28%). This increase has once again made the Jamnagar refinery the biggest importer of seaborne Russian crude," it said.

Vadinar refinery belongs to Nayara Energy, which is co-promoted by Russia's Rosneft, while the Jamnagar refinery is owned by Reliance Industries. Paradip refinery belongs to Indian Oil Corporation. "In October 2026, China remained the world's largest importer of Russian fossil fuels, and both China (EUR 10.7 billion) and India (EUR 6.4 billion) made their highest monthly purchases in data going back to January 2022. The EU (European Union) remained the third-largest importer, ahead of Turkiye," the think tank said.

The rise in revenues for Russia outpaced growth in its hydrocarbon export volumes, primarily due to elevated energy prices due to geopolitical conflicts — the West Asia war and Russia-Ukraine war.

In October, the average price of Russia's flagship crude Urals rose by 13% month-on-month to $101.7 per barrel, the highest monthly average since at least October 2021.

The energy crisis due to the West Asia war has delivered a substantial boost to Russia's fossil fuel export earnings. CREA estimates that in the six months since the US-Israel strikes on Iran began, higher oil and gas prices have increased Russia's seaborne export revenues by $35.9 billion. FULL REPORT ON WWW.INDIANEXPRESS.COM



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