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INDIA NEWSLETTER

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INDEX

- Prime Minister Modi Participates in Quad Leaders' Virtual Meeting
- India Successfully Concludes Operation Ganga
- India's Deep Ocean Mission
- PM chairs High-level meeting to review COVID-19 situation
- Defence Equipment Projects under 'Make in India' Programme



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Prime Minister Modi Participates in Quad Leaders' Virtual Meeting



Key Highlights of PM Modi's Address

- Concrete, practical forms of cooperation within the Quad needed
- Dialogue, diplomacy needed to diffuse Ukraine-Russia crisis
- Re-state the importance of adhering to the UN Charter, international law, respect for sovereignty & territorial integrity

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi on 3 March participated in the virtual summit of Quad leaders. The meeting reviewed the progress on Quad initiatives since the September 2021 Quad Summit. The leaders agreed on accelerating cooperation, with an objective to achieve concrete outcomes by the summit in Japan later this year. PM Modi underlined that the Quad must remain focused on its core objective of promoting peace, stability and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific region. He called for concrete and practical forms of cooperation within the Quad, in areas like Humanitarian and Disaster Relief, debt sustainability, supply chains, clean energy, connectivity, and capacity building. Developments in Ukraine were also discussed in the meeting, including its humanitarian implications. The Prime Minister emphasised the need to return to a path of dialogue and diplomacy.

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India Successfully Concludes Operation Ganga

On 15 March, Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi [interacted](#) with stakeholders involved in Operation Ganga, under which about 23000 Indian citizens were evacuated successfully, as well as 147 foreign nationals belonging to 18 countries, from Ukraine. Prime Minister expressed his warm appreciation for Indian community leaders, volunteer groups, companies, private individuals and government officials who worked tirelessly for the success of the operation. Reiterating the high priority that government attaches to the safety of Indians abroad, Prime Minister recalled that India has always acted with alacrity to assist its citizens during any international crisis. Guided by India's age-old philosophy of *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*, India has also extended humanitarian support to nationals of other countries during emergencies.



In his [statement](#) in the Rajya Sabha (Upper House), External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar informed that under Operation Ganga, 90 flights were operated, out of which 76 were civilian flights and 14 were Indian Air Force flights. While Indian Air Force rose to the occasion, most of the private airlines also participated enthusiastically.

INDIA'S GROWTH STORY

- PM Interacts with Beneficiaries of PMBJP
- India's exports in February 2022 up by 25.41%

INCREDIBLE INDIA

- Lalitgiri, Ratnagiri, Udayagiri – the Golden Triangle of the Buddhist Circuit in Odisha



India's Deep Ocean Mission

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs chaired by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi in June 2021 approved India's "Deep Ocean Mission", with a view to explore deep ocean for resources and develop deep sea technologies for sustainable use of ocean resources. The estimated cost of the Mission will be Rs. 40.7 billion (~US\$534 million) for a period of 5 years. Deep Ocean Mission will be a mission mode project to support the Blue Economy Initiatives of the Government of India.

The Deep Ocean Mission consists of the following six major components:

- Development of Technologies for Deep Sea Mining, and Manned Submersible
- Development of Ocean Climate Change Advisory Services
- Technological innovations for exploration and conservation of deep-sea biodiversity
- Deep Ocean Survey and Exploration
- Energy and freshwater from the Ocean
- Advanced Marine Station for Ocean Biology

The Minister of State (Independent Charge) for India's Ministry of Earth Sciences and Ministry of Science & Technology, Dr. Jitendra Singh, in a written reply to the Parliament on 16 March informed that the Ministry of Earth Sciences has launched the Deep Ocean Mission with Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) as one of the collaborators for the implementation of the Mission. National Institute of Ocean Technology is developing a manned submersible with a capacity to carry three human beings to 6000m ocean depth. The Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre (VSSC) of ISRO is involved in developing a titanium alloy human sphere of 2.1 m diameter for the manned submersible.

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Cabinet Decisions: 16 June, 2021

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46 years

Furthering Blue Economy, Envisioning Sustainable India



Cabinet Approves the Proposal of Ministry of Earth Sciences on "Deep Ocean Mission"



The mission aims to explore deep ocean for resources and develop deep sea technologies for sustainable use of ocean resources



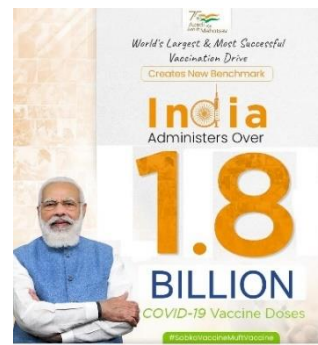
₹4077 crore estimated expenditure for 5 years & to be implemented in a phase-wise manner

- ₹2823.4 crore estimated for the first phase for 3 years (2021-2024)



The mission will create employment opportunities, capacity development in Marine Biology, growth of the MSME and Start-ups, etc.

PM chairs High-level meeting to review COVID-19 situation



Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi on 9 March chaired a [high-level meeting](#) to review the COVID-19 pandemic situation, particularly in the context of the Omicron wave and the status of the vaccination drive in the country. A detailed presentation on the global scenario and India's status of COVID-19 was given. India's consistent efforts towards the vaccination campaign and an analysis of vaccine effectiveness to aid the lesser hospitalization and low severity and mortality during the recent surge was highlighted. It emerged in the review that pro-active and collaborative efforts led by the Central Government helped in the effective management of the spread of infection. Prime Minister appreciated the relentless efforts put in by Vaccinators, Healthcare Workers, Central and State Governments. Prime Minister underlined the significance of following the COVID-related protocols and urged continued support from the community and participation of the individuals to get vaccinated when due and follow the COVID appropriate behavior. It was reported on 12 March that India had administered 1.8 billion vaccine doses and as of 22 March, India reported its daily caseload of less than 1,600.



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Celebrating
Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav
75 Years of
India's Independence

Visit: AmritMahotsav.MyGov.in

EMBASSY'S CORNER

- Ambassador Addresses Conference to Promote Buddhist Tourism
- Embassy Organizes Webinar to Mark International Women's Day

Defence Equipment Projects under 'Make in India' Programme

#AatmaNirbharEconomy

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Enhancing Self Reliance in Defence Production

'Make in India' for Self-Reliance in Defence Production:

- Notify a list of weapons/platforms for ban on import with year wise timeline
- Indigenisation of imported spares
- Separate budget provisioning for domestic capital procurement
- Will help reduce huge Defence import bill

Corporatisation of Ordnance Factory Board would improve autonomy, accountability & efficiency in Ordnance Supplies

₹ 20 LAKH CRORE FOR 2020 Dated: 16 MAY, 2020



In a written reply to the Rajya Sabha (Upper House) on 14 March, Minister of State of the Ministry of Defence Shri Ajay Bhatt informed that the Government has taken several policy initiatives in the past few years under 'Make in India' programme and brought in reforms to encourage indigenous design, development and manufacture of defence equipment in India. Many significant products including 155mm Artillery Gun system 'Dhanush', Light Combat Aircraft 'Tejas', Surface to Air Missile system 'Akash', etc. have been produced in the country during the last few years which are being used by the Indian Armed Forces.

The Government, in the last three years i.e. from 2018-19 to 2020-21 and current year till December 2021, has accorded Acceptance of Necessity to 150 proposals worth Rs 2,400 billion approximately (~US\$31.4 billion), under various categories of Capital procurement which promote domestic manufacturing.

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INDIA'S GROWTH STORY

PM Interacts with Beneficiaries of PMBJP

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi interacted with the beneficiaries of the *Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana* (PMBJP - Quality Medicines at Affordable Prices for All) on 7 March. The PMBJP launched by the Department of Pharmaceuticals of India aims to make quality generic medicines available at affordable prices to all by setting up dedicated outlets known as *Jan Aushadhi Kendra*. The programme's benefits include:



- Make available quality drugs at affordable prices through dedicated stores selling generic medicines which are available at lesser prices but are equivalent in quality and efficacy as expensive branded drugs;
- Promote greater awareness about cost effective drugs and their prescription;
- Make available unbranded quality generic medicines at affordable prices through public-private partnership;
- Encourage doctors, more specifically in government hospital to prescribe generic medicines;
- Enable substantial savings in health care more particularly in the case of poor patients and those suffering from chronic ailments requiring long periods of drug use.

#JanaushadhiDiwas2022

Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana

Ensuring Affordable Healthcare For All

Prices of the Jan Aushadhi Medicines are 50%-90% Less Than that of the Open Market



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Addressing the gathering, the PM noted that PMBJP is an important link to provide best and affordable treatment to every person in the country. Today every month more than 10 million families are availing very affordable medicines through these centers. The Prime Minister added that the prices of medicines at Jan Aushadhi Centers are 50% to 90% less than the market, Rs 22 billion (~US\$288 million) have been saved by poor and middle class due to Jan Aushadhi Centers.

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Indian Exports Reap the Rewards of Make in India

Exports in Feb 2022 up by 25% over the same month last year



Source: Ministry of Commerce and Industry *Estimated data

India's exports in February 2022 up by 25.41%

India's overall exports (Merchandise and Services combined) in February 2022 are estimated to be US\$57 billion, exhibiting a positive growth of 25.41% over the same period last year and a positive growth of 27.07% over February 2020. Overall imports in February 2022 are estimated to be US\$69.3 billion, exhibiting a positive growth of 35.64% over the same period last year and a positive growth of 44.62% over February 2020.

India's overall exports (Merchandise and Services combined) in April-February 2021-22 are estimated to be US\$601.7 billion, exhibiting a positive growth of 36.19% over the same period last year and a positive growth of 23.44% over April-February 2019-20. Overall imports in April-February 2021-22 are estimated to be US\$ 683 Billion, exhibiting a positive growth of 51.51% over the same period last year and a positive growth of 21.66% over April-February 2019-20.

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INCREDIBLE INDIA

Lalitgiri, Ratnagiri, Udayagiri – the Golden Triangle of the Buddhist Circuit in Odisha



Lalitgiri, Ratnagiri and Udayagiri are popularly known as the Golden Triangle of the Buddhist circuit in Odisha. This is where one can experience the best of Buddhist culture and art. While Kapilvastu, Bodhgaya and Sarnath are places associated with Lord Buddha's life, Odisha was more associated with his teachings.

Lalitgiri is one of the oldest Buddhist Centres of Odisha, dating back to 1st Century AD. Together with Ratnagiri and Udayagiri it has a number of best sculptures of that age – such as significant stupas and monasteries. As a

renowned Buddhist pilgrimage, Lalitgiri is a holy destination for a large number of Buddhism devotees. The museum at Lalitgiri hosts relic caskets that contain the bones of Gautama Buddha, the remnants of a stupa, caskets comprising four containers made of khondalite, steatite, silver and gold, and numerous other archaeological treasures.

Ratnagiri has a rich concentration of Buddhist antiquities. The excavations have revealed the establishment of this Buddhist centre at least from the time of the Gupta king Narasimha Gupta Baladitya (first half of the sixth century AD). Buddhism had developed at this place unhindered up to 12th century AD. Initially, this was an important centre of Mahayana form of Buddhism. During 8th-9th century AD, this became a great centre of Tantric Buddhism or Vajrayana art and philosophy. All the above indicate the importance of Ratnagiri as one of the main Buddhist centres of Odisha from very early times.



Udayagiri is one of the largest Buddhist Complexes in Odisha and bears a number of significant stupas and monasteries. Udayagiri was referred as 'Madhavapura Mahavihara' in the history, as per the epigraphical artifact found in the region. Recent excavations have brought to light a sprawling complex of Buddhist remains consisting of brick monasteries, a brick stupa, rock-cut sculptures and a stepped well with an inscription. Chronologically, the Udayagiri Buddhist Complex is later than Ratnagiri and Lalitgiri and the monasteries were probably flourishing between 7th and 12th centuries AD.

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Ambassador Addresses Conference to Promote Buddhist Tourism



Ambassador Pranay Verma addressed a hybrid conference on 4 March organized by the Consulate General of India in Ho Chi Minh City for promotion of Buddhist destination tourism from Vietnam to India. Ambassador reiterated the importance of the shared Buddhist heritage as a strong bond between the two countries and highlighted the promotion of Buddhist tourism as a key focus of the Embassy and the Consulate General of India this year when India and Vietnam are celebrating the 50th anniversary of Diplomatic Relations and the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav. The conference titled "Bodh Gaya - A Spiritual Journey" saw participation of more than a hundred stakeholders including senior officials of India's Ministry of Tourism, Vietnam National Administration of Tourism, Tourism Bihar, Bodh Gaya Temple Management Committee, Buddhist experts and scholars, and several travel and tour operators from India and Vietnam.

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Embassy Organizes Webinar to Mark International Women's Day



To mark the International Women's Day, the Embassy and the Swami Vivekananda Culture Centre in Hanoi organized a webinar on "Role of Women in India's Freedom Movement" on 08 March. The webinar was also part of the series of events commemorating the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav. Ambassador Pranay Verma gave the opening remarks. Dr. Ven. Bhikkhuni Veditadhamma Lieu Phap of the Vietnam Buddhist University in Ho Chi Minh City spoke as a special invitee. Two expert presentations were made by Prof. Dr. Neeru Misra, Former Director of Indian Council for Cultural Relations and Assoc. Prof. Dr. Do Thu Ha, Head of Department of Indian Studies at the University of Social Sciences and Humanities, Hanoi.

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