

Far and Wide

Every week we share selection of six news from six continents that we believe will impact our world in the near or distant future

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India-EU Energy Panel Advances Clean Energy and Green Hydrogen Collaboration

Welcome to the latest edition of Far and Wide, where we embark on a journey to explore intriguing stories and global developments.

The 10th meeting of the India-EU Energy Panel, co-chaired by Shri Tanmaya Lal, Secretary (West), Ministry of External Affairs, and Ms. Ditte Juul Jørgensen, Director-General for Energy, European Commission, was held on November 21, 2024, in Brussels. Representatives from India's Ministries of New and Renewable Energy and Power, along with the EU's Directorate Generals for Energy and Climate Action, attended.

The meeting reviewed achievements of the second phase (2021-2024) of the India-EU Clean Energy and Climate Partnership, highlighting 51 technical cooperation initiatives across nine sectors. A work plan for the third phase (2025-2028) was adopted, prioritizing collaboration in five areas: green hydrogen, offshore wind energy, regional connectivity and smart grids, energy efficiency, and energy and climate diplomacy. Green hydrogen cooperation was a central theme which focused on infrastructure feasibility, regulatory compliance alignment, technology sharing, and supply chain strengthening. India participated as an exclusive partner in European Hydrogen Week 2024, while the EU contributed to India's International Green Hydrogen Conference. Both the nations have committed to long-term research partnerships in clean energy through the India-EU Trade and Technology Council.

The panel welcomed EU and member states' active participation in the International Solar Alliance and reaffirmed collaboration within the International Energy Agency and G20 frameworks. This strengthened commitment showcases mutual priorities in advancing renewable energy, climate resilience, and innovation in clean technologies.

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Europe

India-EU Collaboration: Advancing Green Hydrogen and Clean Energy Goals

India and the European Union (EU) have finalized a comprehensive roadmap for green hydrogen collaboration, encompassing infrastructure development, technology cooperation, and strengthening supply chains. This was formalized during the 10th India-EU Energy Panel meeting in Brussels.

As part of the meeting, a "work plan" for the third phase of the India-EU Clean Energy and Climate Partnership (2025-28) was adopted, focusing on five priority areas: which includes green hydrogen, offshore wind energy, energy efficiency, smart grids, and energy and climate diplomacy. The green hydrogen agenda puts emphasis on feasibility studies for infrastructure, regulatory alignment, technology sharing, and strengthened supply chains. The panel also reviewed achievements from the partnership's second phase (2021-24), which involved 51 technical initiatives across nine sectors. EU actively participated in India's international green hydrogen conference, while India will serve as the exclusive country partner for European Hydrogen Week 2024.

Source : CNBC TV18

<https://www.cnbc18.com/india/environment/india-eu-boost-ties-with-extensive-green-hydrogen-roadmap-19513842.htm>

Both the nations also committed to long-term research collaborations in clean energy projects under the India-EU Trade and Technology Council's clean and green technologies working group, established in January 2023. The partnership will reinforce mutual priorities in achieving energy reduction goals and spurring innovation in renewable energy sectors

North America



Indo-US Summit 2024: Advancing Rare Disease and Orphan Drug Collaboration

The Indo-US Bridging RARE Summit 2024, held in New Delhi from November 16 to 18, brought together key experts from both countries to discuss issues surrounding rare diseases, orphan drug clinical trials, and diversity in healthcare. Hosted by the Indo-US Organization for Rare Diseases and All India Institute of Medical Sciences, the summit focused on various themes such as cross-border patient engagement, digitization of rare diseases, and regulatory pathways for orphan drugs. The central mission of the summit was to transform rare diseases from being a rare occurrence to one that is widely understood and treated.

The summit highlighted India's progress in healthcare innovation under PM Modi's leadership, particularly the launch of the National Policy for Rare Diseases in 2021. Notable outcomes included the identification of 12 Centres of Excellence (CoEs) for rare diseases across India, the establishment of five Nidan Kendras for genetic testing, and the provision of financial assistance of up to INR 50 lakh for treatment at CoEs.

It also emphasized India's diverse population as a valuable resource for understanding rare diseases and developing targeted treatments. The summit stressed the importance of international collaboration to improve patient engagement, streamline clinical trials, and overcome the challenges in orphan drug development, ultimately aiming to make rare diseases a conquerable challenge.



Source: ANI News

<https://aninews.in/news/world/asia/indo-us-bridging-rare-summit-2024-effort-against-rare-diseases-celebrates-indias-health-sector-transformation20241119144730>

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South America

India to Strengthen Ties with Key Latin American Nations



Prime Minister Narendra Modi held important discussions with leaders of Brazil, Argentina, and Chile during the G20 Summit in Rio de Janeiro, focusing on expanding trade, securing key resources, and strengthening defence ties.

After meeting with Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, Prime Minister Modi commended Brazil's G20 presidency and called for exploring avenues for collaboration in energy, biofuels, military, and agriculture. Modi's discussions with Chilean President Gabriel Boric Font focused on strengthening deeper partnerships in pharmaceuticals, technology, space, and Ayurveda, highlighting the growing appeal of traditional Indian medicine in Chile.

For the first time, PM Modi engaged with Argentina's newly elected President Javier Milei. Their discussions were focused strategic partnerships and proposed diversification in digital technology, defence, space, energy, mineral resources, and railways.

Source: Economic Times

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/india/pm-modi-meets-leaders-of-three-latin-american-nations-for-trade-energy-and-defence-partnership/articleshow/115461596.cms?from=mdr>

The meetings showcase India's intent to strengthen ties with Latin America, leveraging the region's resource-rich economies and exploring collaborative efforts across sectors which align with India's strategic push to deepen global partnerships, diversify energy supplies, and create stronger trade relationships.

Asia



India and Japan Explore Defense Pact to Strengthen Military Cooperation



India and Japan are exploring a defense pact to strengthen military cooperation and enhance technological ties. During a meeting on the sidelines of a regional security conclave in Vientiane, Laos, Indian Defense Minister Rajnath Singh and his Japanese counterpart Gen Nakatani discussed a reciprocal provision of supply and services agreement to improve interoperability between their forces. The proposed pact would allow the two countries' militaries to utilize each other's bases for repair and supply replenishment, further solidifying defense collaboration.

Source: NDTV

<https://www.ndtv.com/world-news/india-japan-discuss-defense-pact-to-boost-military-cooperation-tech-ties-7083027>

The ministers also focused on co-production and co-development of military hardware, with particular emphasis on increasing cooperation in the defense manufacturing sector. Both sides reaffirmed the importance of their defense industry and technology cooperation.

A notable milestone was the signing of the Memorandum of Implementation (MoI) for the UNICORN mast project, which will enhance warship stealth capabilities through collaborative development of advanced equipment. Additionally, Singh held separate talks with Philippines Defense Minister Gilberto Teodoro, agreeing to deepen cooperation in areas such as defense industry, counter-terrorism, space, and maritime security.

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Australia

India and Australia Strengthen Military Ties with Air-to-Air Refueling Agreement

India and Australia have signed a significant arrangement to enable air-to-air refueling between their armed forces, enhancing military cooperation. The agreement was announced by Australian Defence Minister Pat Conroy and Indian Defence Minister Rajnath Singh during bilateral talks in Vientiane, Laos. Under this arrangement, Australia's KC-30A Multi-Role Tanker Transport aircraft will be able to refuel Indian military aircraft, improving the operational capabilities of both nations' air forces.

The signing took place on the sidelines of the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting (ADMM-Plus) and marks a significant step in deepening the defence relationship between India and Australia. The agreement will increase interoperability between the two countries, allowing for more effective cooperation in various scenarios..

Source : ANI News

<https://aninews.in/news/world/asia/australia-india-sign-arrangement-to-enable-air-to-air-refuelling-for-military-aircraft20241121172126>

Air Vice-Marshal Harvey Reynolds, Deputy Chief of the Australian Air Force, emphasized that the arrangement will strengthen the partnership, build trust, and foster closer collaboration. Additionally, the arrangement lays the groundwork for Australia's KC-30A to refuel India's P-81 Neptune surveillance aircraft, boosting India's operational reach and presence in the Indo-Pacific region. This milestone comes as both nations continue to prioritize defence cooperation in support of regional stability.

Africa

G20 Troika Unveils Historic Digital Public Infrastructure and AI Declaration

Leaders from the G20 Troika which comprises of India, Brazil, and South Africa, have announced a significant joint declaration on Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI), Artificial Intelligence (AI), and data for governance. This comes at a time when global economic growth is projected at just over 3%, its slowest rate since the start of the century. The declaration puts emphasis on the fact that advancing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) hinges on an inclusive digital transformation. The G20 nations highlighted that a well-designed DPI and powered by AI can leverage data for development, generating employment, improve health and education outcomes. The adoption of such technologies by G20 countries could significantly progress citizens' lives. The statement of the declaration also references the adoption of the Global Digital Compact at the UN's Summit of the Future and the upcoming Global DPI Summit in Egypt in 2024.



Source: Economic Times

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/india/india-brazil-south-africa-agree-to-use-digital-public-infrastructure-ai-and-data-for-governance/articleshow/115499794.cms?from=mdr>

The declaration shows that the real benefits of growth, particularly job creation can only be realized when technological systems are designed to serve each citizen. By connecting businesses, both large and small, to these systems, they can improve livelihoods and strengthen communities. However, these systems must be inclusive, secure and development-focused to ensure their positive impact.