

India's energy imports from Russia at record high: Kremlin spokesperson

MOSCOW

KREMLIN spokesperson Dmitry Peskov said that there is no slowdown in India's Russian energy imports which continue to set records.

"I don't want to give you any figures for understandable reasons, but every month we have a new record," Peskov said in a virtual briefing with Indian journalists, ahead of the BRICS Summit to be held in the national capital this week.

He also said the issue of accumulated rupee payments in the India-Russia bilateral trade was gradually being resolved.

Peskov further stated that Russia and India are holding discussions for closer cooperation in the exploration of rare earths, while the issue of Russia selling its Sukhoi Su-57 stealth fighter jet to India is on the bilateral agenda.

Peskov said that the BRICS currency shift was driven by Western pressure, not desire to abandon the dollar.

He pointed out that the use of national currencies is not a de-dollarisation policy. "We do not want to claim any de-dollarisation policy. We're simply doing what better corresponds with our national interests," Peskov told the media.

He further stated that certain countries are using some national currencies as a tool for political pressure. "If they don't let us use their money, we use our own money," Peskov said.

Russia turned to national currencies after being denied right to use the dollar and euro. Russia does not seek "de-dollarisation" and is open to every acceptable method of payment, he



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added. Russian President Vladimir Putin will participate in the BRICS summit in New Delhi on September 12-13, where he will promote security, the economy, finance and culture.

Putin will also hold bilateral talks with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday, with trade and economy forming a large part of

the agenda, he added. India's BRICS Presidency in 2026, under the theme "Building for Resilience, Innovation, Cooperation and Sustainability," comes at a pivotal moment. With an expanded membership comprising Brazil, China, Egypt, Ethiopia, India, Indonesia, Iran, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE), along with 10 partner countries, BRICS@21 now has a significantly broader geographic and economic footprint.

For India, this expansion presents a major opportunity to strengthen exports, attract investment, diversify supply chains, promote technology partnerships and contribute to a more inclusive and multipolar global economic order.

The partner countries, including Belarus, Bolivia, Kazakhstan, Cuba, Malaysia, Nigeria, Thailand, Uganda, Uzbekistan and Vietnam, further broaden the outreach.

Quantum leap: Beyond research, India needs to build solutions for real world

Unlocking quantum technologies potential will be a major challenge, says Col Sai Shankar, Founder and Director of QClairvoyance

RITWIK MUKHERJEE

INDIA's next major deep-tech opportunity could lie in quantum technologies, but unlocking its potential will require the country to move beyond research papers and build solutions that can be deployed in the real world, according to Col Sai Shankar P, VSM (Retd.), Founder and Director of Hyderabad-based QClairvoyance Quantum Labs and Technical Advisor to India's National Quantum Mission.

A 22-year veteran of the Indian Army's Corps of Signals, Col Shankar believes the transition from sovereign military technology to commercial deep tech is less a change of direction than a continuation of the same mission—building critical capabilities that India can understand, control and develop domestically.

His experience includes helping establish and maintain secure communication systems for the Army and developing SAI (Secure Application for Internet), an encrypted messaging platform for the Armed Forces. The platform, developed and tested over two years, was subsequently recognised by the Ministry of Defence.

The experience reinforced his conviction that strategically important technology needs indigenous capabilities. That conviction, he said, became particularly relevant as quantum computing began to pose a potential threat to existing crypto-

graphic systems. "Quantum computing is going to change the way we think about digital security," Shankar said, pointing to the vulnerability of encryption systems protecting banking, healthcare and government infrastructure.

QClairvoyance is now working across two principal areas—quantum-safe cybersecurity and quantum-assisted drug discovery. In cybersecurity, the company helps organisations identify quantum-vulnerable cryptography and migrate towards newer post-quantum standards.

The challenge, however, is not about replacing conventional infrastructure with quantum computers. Existing classical systems can be upgraded to implement post-quantum cryptography, Shankar said. The larger task is to identify vulnerable cryptographic components across complex technology environments and build "crypto agility"—the ability to replace algorithms, keys and protocols without rebuilding entire technology stacks.

The company has already completed deployments at stock exchanges of national importance and is working with financial institutions on the transition. With banks, insurance companies and payment networks handling increasingly sensitive digital information, Shankar believes organisations cannot afford to wait until quantum computers become powerful enough



Quantum technology brings together physics, mathematics, computer science and engineering, creating demand for multidisciplinary talent. India, he believes, has much of the intellectual capital required but needs to provide researchers and engineers with difficult problems, strong teams and the freedom to build

nology can generate tangible commercial value.

For him, the larger opportunity extends beyond individual applications. Quantum technology brings together physics, mathematics, computer science and engineering, creating demand for multidisciplinary talent. India, he believes, has much of the intellectual capital required but needs to provide researchers and engineers with difficult problems, strong teams and the freedom to build.

His military background has also shaped his approach to entrepreneurship. While the commercial world demands speed, traction and milestones, deep tech requires patience, experimentation and intellectual honesty, he said.

"Deep tech needs patience," Shankar said, arguing that companies should prioritise validated technology over premature announcements.

With quantum sensing also emerging as a potential opportunity, QClairvoyance's ambition is to build a globally respected deep-tech company from India using Indian talent and technology.

India has already demonstrated its ability to build globally competitive capabilities in space, defence and software. The next frontier, Shankar believes, could be quantum—and the more important question now is not whether India can build these technologies, but how far it can take them.

Trump says H-1B visa fee hike ensures priority for US workers

WASHINGTON

US President Donald Trump used his Labour Day proclamation to promote a proposed new fee on H-1B visa petitions, saying it would encourage American companies to invest in US workers before looking overseas for talent.

"To ensure we are hiring and training American workers, we are proposing a new fee on H-1B visa petitions that will encourage companies to invest in qualified Americans before looking overseas for labour," Trump said in the proclamation on Monday (local time).

The presidential endorsement puts the politically sensitive H-1B visa programme directly into Trump's Labour Day message, which focused heavily on manufacturing, trade, tariffs and protecting American jobs.

The H-1B programme is widely used by US technology companies and other employers to hire highly skilled foreign professionals. Indian nationals have historically constituted the largest group of H-1B beneficiaries, making changes to the programme closely watched in India and among the Indian professional community in the United States.

The fee cited by Trump is not a new levy imposed on Monday. The Department of Homeland Security last month proposed establishing a \$103,265 fee for all H-1B petitions subject to the annual numerical cap, including petitions eligible for the advanced-degree exemption. Under the proposed rule, the fee would be paid when the petition is filed and would be in addition to other applicable immigration fees.

The administration says the money would help cover federal costs associated with administering the lawful immigration system.

Trump presented the H-1B proposal as part of a broader economic strategy aimed at giving preference to American workers. "After decades of disastrous trade policies that surrendered



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our industrial strength to foreign nations, companies are now returning home, investing trillions of dollars into the United States economy, and adding over 900,000 American jobs," Trump said.

He credited what he called his

"protective tariffs" with shielding US workers from foreign competition and said American manufacturing had expanded for six consecutive months.

"Our nation is entering a bold new era of American manufacturing, technological innovation,

and economic prosperity -- powered by the might of the American worker," Trump said.

The proclamation formally designated September 7 as Labour Day and called on Americans to honour the contributions and resilience of workers.

The administration's latest H-1B proposal follows a separate attempt by Trump to impose a \$100,000 fee on new H-1B visas. A federal judge in Massachusetts struck down that fee in June, ruling that the administration had exceeded its authority. A federal appeals court in July rejected the administration's request to suspend that ruling while the case proceeds.

The new \$103,265 proposal is being pursued through the federal rulemaking process rather than taking immediate effect. It applies to cap-subject H-1B petitions and remains a proposed rule, meaning employers are not being charged the new amount merely because of Trump's Labour Day proclamation.

India joins US-led initiative to develop secured 6G networks

WASHINGTON

INDIA has joined the US-led global partnership to accelerate the development of secure 6G wireless networks, the US Department of Commerce said.

The initiative includes countries such as the United Kingdom, Germany and Japan. It intends to help coordinate governments' 6G strategies years before the technology is expected to begin replacing 5G networks in the 2030s.

"Today, we are pleased to announce that India has joined the US and 24 other countries in the effort to ensure that next-generation networks reflect our shared security interests, strengthen our competitiveness, and drive innovation in 6G," the Department of Commerce said in a post on X.



US Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick and Minister of State of Commerce Jitin Prasada held discussions on the future of 6G on the sidelines of the G20 Innovation Ministerial in Chapel Hill, North Carolina last week.

"India's joint effort with the United States and 24 other countries to promote innovation and competition in 6G technology will give a new direction to the global digital landscape," Prasada said in a post on X.

In July, the US government launched the "Call to Action

for 6G Leadership and Security," backed by 24 other nations across Europe, the Americas and the Asia-Pacific.

The initiative, led by the Department of Commerce's National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA), seeks to advance the objectives of President Donald Trump's "Winning the 6G Race" December 2025 Presidential Memorandum.

The Memorandum identified 6G networks as foundational to the US's national security, foreign policy, and economic prosperity.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi released India's 6G Vision document on March 22, 2023, which envisages the country becoming a frontline contributor in the design, development, and deployment of 6G by 2030.

49% Indian students opt for overseas education to get better jobs, says study

MUMBAI

STUDENTS in India are becoming more outcome-focused, as nearly half of aspirants cite better job opportunities as their primary reason for studying abroad, a report said on Wednesday.

According to skilling and workforce development company upGrad's Transnational Education (TNE) Report 2026, around 49 per cent of Indian aspirants revealed better job opportunities as the primary reason for studying abroad, compared to other factors like quality of education, permanent residency or lifestyle aspirations.

Students in India are significantly becoming more result-oriented and are evaluating destinations based on ROI (Return on Investment), employment opportunities and long-term career outcomes over institutional prominence, the report said.

The upGrad report is based on insights from 53,800 counselled aspirants between January 2025 and June 2026.

The respondent base was mainly made up of aspirants early in their professional journeys and fresh graduates, with 65.8 per cent being freshers, while nearly 60 per cent of aspirants hail from tier II and III cities.

While traditional destinations like the US, the UK, Canada and Australia remain significant, the report further revealed a growing interest in Europe due to rigid immigration policies and rising costs.

Students are now opting for Germany, Finland, Spain and France due to their affordability, industry alignment and stronger employment-linked pathways, it added.

Meanwhile, the report found a clear shift towards more cost-effective and value-driven global education pathways.

Affordability is emerging as a key driver of international education choices, with seven among 10 aspirants planning to pursue overseas education on a total budget of under Rs 30 lakh.

"The study abroad landscape



Indian students are significantly becoming more result-oriented and are evaluating destinations based on ROI (Return on Investment), employment opportunities and long-term career outcomes

is undergoing a significant shift, with Indian students increasingly prioritising future employability, career outcomes and affordability. Europe's growing appeal reflects this evolving mindset, as learners seek destinations that combine quality education with strong workforce opportunities," Pranet Singh, Vice President, University Partnerships, upGrad Study Abroad, added.

India needs 1,60,000 construction project managers by 2035: Report

SINGAPORE

INDIA will need almost 1,60,000 additional construction project managers by 2035, representing a 67 per cent increase from now, according to US-based Project Management Institute's (PMI) recent Construction Talent Gap report.

"As the Indian economy continues its rapid growth, there is an urgent need to strengthen construction project management capability across the country," said Ben Breen, Vice President of Gigaprojects at PMI, who has focused on developments in South Asia for more than two decades.

"The challenge is not simply the number of projects being delivered. As India accelerates investment across infrastructure, manufacturing, energy and urban development, pro-

jects are becoming larger, more interconnected and more complex," Breen told PTI on the sidelines of International Built Environment Week, held in Singapore from September 2-4.

Breen noted that India already has a substantial base of engineering and technical talent. "However, the country's next phase of growth will also require more professionals capable of leading complex projects and programmes from concept through delivery".

PMI will host a project management conference in Bengaluru on October 3. The Project Management South Asia Conference 2026 will bring together more than 800 project leaders and representatives from over 180 organisations under the theme "More, Together: Future-Ready in the Age of AI".