



**TATHASTU**  
Institute Of Civil Services

# DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

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**TATHASTU**  
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## Topics Covered

- India-Russia friendship like the pole star: PM
- IndiGo cancels over 1,000 flights, gets exemption from new night duty rules
- Cheaper loans likely as repo rate cut by 25 bps
- Deal without peace

## India-Russia friendship

# India-Russia friendship like the pole star: PM

Russian President Vladimir Putin, who is on a two-day India visit, and Modi hold bilateral talks

Modi signals, despite Western opposition, energy ties to continue as a 'strong pillar' of partnership

Both sides sign 16 MoUs on semi-skilled workers, fertilizers, media, and academic collaboration

Kallol Bhattacharjee  
NEW DELHI

Appreciating Russian President Vladimir Putin for taking the India-Russia relationship to "new heights" over the past quarter of a century, Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid out an expansive canvas of energy and trade collaborations between the two countries, stretching to 2030.

Addressing the media after bilateral talks at Hyderabad House on Friday, Mr. Modi described the India-Russia friendship as a "pole star" and called for a peaceful solution to Russia's war with Ukraine.

"Over the past eight decades, the world has witnessed many ups and downs. Humanity has faced numerous challenges and crises. Yet, through all of this, the India-Russia friendship has remained

steady like a *dhruva tara* (pole star)," the Prime Minister said.

### 'Sustained ties'

Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri expanded on the Prime Minister's use of the Hindi term '*dhruva tara*' during a later briefing, saying it referred to the "sustained and long-term significance of this relation." Highlighting the "sustainability and certainty" of India-Russia ties, Mr. Misri added, "This relationship is a constant. There have been several crises along the way but they have not altered the fundamentals of this relationship."

Mr. Putin's visit has attracted global attention as it comes months after U.S. President Donald Trump imposed punitive tariffs on India for purchasing Russian energy. Mr. Trump described his move as a tactic to push Russia to the negotiating table on Ukraine.



Vladimir Putin and Narendra Modi shake hands at a reception in the Rashtrapati Bhavan on Friday. RV. MODI/PTI

In his remarks, the Prime Minister referred to "energy security" as a "strong and vital pillar of the India-Russia partnership". Since the beginning of the conflict in Ukraine, "India has consistently advocated for peace, with regards to the situation in Ukraine," he added.

Ahead of the press statements by Mr. Modi and Mr. Putin at Hyderabad House

the Russian President's special envoy, Kirill Dmitriev, told the Russian and Indian media that "British and European press is going hysterical trying to disrupt the U.S.-Russia negotiation". In an oblique reference to an article recently published in an Indian newspaper that was jointly authored by the French, British, and German sources to India. Mr.

## Pacts to raise opportunities for Indian workers in Russia

The Hindu Bureau  
NEW DELHI

Indian and Russian governments on Friday signed two agreements that will enhance mobility of Indian semi-skilled and skilled workers to Russia, as official sources indicated that New Delhi

will increasingly utilise India's "strength" in the category of "semi-skilled workers" in the coming years while adding dynamism to existing relations between the partner countries.

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forts being made for a peaceful and lasting resolution in this matter. India has always been, and will always be ready to contribute," he said.

Referring to the Kudankulam power plant as the "largest nuclear reactor of India", Mr. Putin announced that Russia is also willing to collaborate with India for small modular nuclear reactors.

The India-Russia joint statement also made an extensive reference to energy security, noting "the current and potential cooperation between Indian and Russian companies in fields such as oil and oil products, oil refining and petrochemical technologies, oilfield services and upstream technologies and related infrastructure." Both sides have also agreed to resolve the challenges faced by their "investors in the energy sector".

He described India and Russia as countries that both follow an "independent foreign policy" that calls for a "more just, democratic multipolar world order and respect for sovereignty".

The two sides signed sixteen MoUs covering areas such as the mobility of semi-skilled workers, fertilizers, media, and academic collaboration.

Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** appreciated Russian President **Vladimir Putin** for strengthening ties over the last 25 years.

He described the India–Russia partnership as a **"pole star (dhruva tara)"** — meaning **steady, reliable, and constant** through global ups and downs.

India says this friendship has survived many crises and continues to be long-term and stable.

## Energy as a strongest pillar-

Modi stressed that **energy security** is central to the partnership.

The joint statement highlighted cooperation in:

- oil and petroleum products
- refining and petrochemical technologies
- upstream oil exploration
- resolving problems faced by energy-sector investors

Putin also said Russia is ready to work with India on **small modular nuclear reactors** in addition to the **Kudankulam plant**, the largest nuclear reactor in India

### Both countries emphasise independent foreign policy

India and Russia said they follow **independent, sovereign foreign policies**, not influenced by blocs.

Both support a multipolar world, where no single country dominates.

Russia's envoy criticised Western attempts (UK, France, Germany) to influence the U.S.–Russia negotiations on Ukraine.

# IndiGo cancels over 1,000 flights, gets exemption from new night duty rules

**Jagriti Chandra**

NEW DELHI

IndiGo cancelled more than 1,000 flights on Friday and will axe hundreds more on Saturday, crippling air travel across India and sending airfares skyrocketing that prompted the government to exempt the country's largest airline from meeting new rules until February 10.

The airline suspended all departures from the Delhi airport for the entire day to reboot its systems and stop cascading delays. It cancelled all its domestic flights from Chennai and all flights from Bengaluru to Delhi and Mumbai for the entire day.

"Cancellations were made today to align our aircraft and crew to be where



**Frustrated flyers:** Stranded travellers at Rajiv Gandhi International Airport on the outskirts of Hyderabad on Friday. NAGARA GOPAL

they need to be in order to start afresh tomorrow morning. Measures of the last few days have regrettably proven to be not enough. We have decided today for a reboot of all our systems and schedules," IndiGo's chief executive officer (CEO) Pieter Elbers said in a recorded video

message. He added that cancellations on Saturday were expected to be "below 1,000".

The size and scale of IndiGo's operations meant normalcy is expected only between December 10 and 15, according to the CEO. The airline operates a total of 2,200 flights every day

and accounts for six out of every 10 passengers who travel by air.

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation granted IndiGo exemptions from night duty restrictions, including the cap on two landings, until February 10. The airline had admitted to the government that it underestimated the increased crew requirements, despite the court order issued in April 2025 on new duty hours.

"This exemption has been granted solely to facilitate operational stabilisation and in no way amounts to dilution of safety requirements," a press statement issued by the Ministry of Civil Aviation said.

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## IndiGo cancels over 1,000 flights, gets exemption

IndiGo cancelled over **1,000 flights on Friday** and will cancel hundreds more on Saturday because its **crew and aircraft schedules went out of sync**.

This caused a **massive nationwide disruption**, high airfares, and forced the airline to shut operations in key cities like Delhi, Chennai, and Bengaluru for a day to "reset" everything.

The government has temporarily relaxed some rules so IndiGo can fix the crisis faster.



## What led to this crisis?

### New crew duty hours (April 2025 court order)

A new rule by DGCA increased rest hours for pilots and limited how many flights they can operate. IndiGo needed more pilots and better planning.

### What IndiGo did?

- Cancelled **all flights from Delhi, Chennai**, and major routes from Bengaluru.
- Cancelled **1000+ flights** to realign crew and aircraft.
- Said normal operations will resume only **between December 10–15**.

### Government Action

- DGCA temporarily relaxed **night duty limits and landing caps** until Feb 10,
  - ♦ To help IndiGo get more flying hours from existing crew.
- Clarified that safety norms are **not diluted**, only flexibility allowed to stabilise operations.

### Cheaper loans likely as repo rate cut by 25 bps

The **Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** on Friday voted unanimously to **reduce the policy repo rate by 25 basis points (bps) to 5.25% with immediate effect**.

The **decision comes against the backdrop of data showing that real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth accelerated to 8.2% in the second quarter and average headline inflation reduced to 1.7%.**

**This breached the lower tolerance threshold (2%) of the inflation target (4%) set by the RBI.**

With this, the MPC under Governor Sanjay Malhotra has cumulatively cut the repo rate by 125 basis points on four occasions.

The reduction will lead to lower interest rates for borrowers and savers. After this rate cut, the standing deposit facility rate under the liquidity adjustment facility (LAF) will stand adjusted to 5%. The marginal standing facility (MSF) rate and the bank rate will be adjusted to 5.5%.

The RBI's Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) said that **inflation has fallen sharply**, mainly because **food prices have been extremely low**. Even underlying inflation (core inflation) is low, and the recent rise in gold/silver prices contributes only about **0.50% (50 bps)** to inflation.

Economic growth is still strong but may slow down slightly. Because **inflation is comfortably below the target**, the RBI now has **more room to support growth**.

### Deal without peace

**US President Donald Trump counts the crisis in Congo as among the conflicts he has helped resolve.** On December 4, he hosted the leaders of Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo in Washington for the signing of a formal peace agreement.

**Mr. Trump hailed the accord as a “historic” step towards bringing prosperity to Africa,** *while Congolese President Félix Tshisekedi and his Rwandan counterpart Paul Kagame, who had frequently exchanged insults, praised his mediation.*

**Mr. Trump also promised American investments in the resource-rich Congo if peace holds.**

On Thursday, he said he would send **“our biggest and greatest companies over to the two countries”,** adding that **“we are going to take some of the rare earth, take out some of the assets and pay ... and everybody is going to make a lot of money”.**

## Deal without peace

Trump's announcement of the accord between Congo, Rwanda is premature

**P**resident Donald Trump counts the crisis in Congo as among the conflicts he has helped resolve. On December 4, he hosted the leaders of Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo in Washington for the signing of a formal peace agreement, which endorsed an earlier deal concluded by the Foreign Ministers of both countries. Mr. Trump hailed the accord as a "historic" step towards bringing prosperity to Africa, while Congolese President Félix Tshisekedi and his Rwandan counterpart Paul Kagame, who had frequently exchanged insults, praised his mediation. Mr. Trump also promised American investments in the resource-rich Congo if peace holds. On Thursday, he said he would send "our biggest and greatest companies over to the two countries", adding that "we are going to take some of the rare earth, take out some of the assets and pay ... and everybody is going to make a lot of money". But beyond the grandiosity of the ceremony, the situation remains complex and violent, with fighting continuing to rage in eastern Congo between Congolese forces and the M23 rebels. Under the agreement, Rwanda wants Congo to disarm the Hutu militias operating from its territory, while Congo wants Rwanda to withdraw troops from the east. Ultimately, however, the success of the deal hinges on securing peace between the Congolese government and M23.

*The crisis in Congo can be traced back to the*

But beyond the grandiosity of the ceremony, **the situation remains complex and violent, with fighting continuing to rage in eastern Congo between Congolese forces and the M23 rebels. Under the agreement, Rwanda wants Congo to disarm the Hutu militias operating from its territory, while Congo wants Rwanda to withdraw troops from the east.**

Ultimately, however, the success of the deal hinges on securing peace between the Congolese government and M23.

The crisis in Congo can be traced back to the **1994 Rwandan genocide in which about 8,00,000 people, mostly Tutsis, were massacred by ethnic Hutu militias.**

**After the genocidal regime in Kigali fell, thousands of Hutus fled to Congo in the mid-1990s.**

**Rwanda now claims that some of the militias that took part in the genocide continue to operate from Congolese territory.**

**M23, which takes its name from a failed peace agreement signed between a Tutsi-led rebel group and the Congolese government on March 23, 2009, says it is fighting to protect the rights of Congo's Tutsi ethnic minority.**



The Congo and UN experts say **neighbouring Rwanda, ruled by a Tutsi-led government, is backing M23.** In 2012, shortly after its formation, **M23 seized much of Goma in eastern Congo, but withdrew** when Rwanda came under international pressure.

**It started another rebellion in 2021, capturing Goma again** and expanding its reach.

**Congo wants M23 to withdraw from the eastern regions it controls, but the rebels have shown little interest in doing so.**

**Mr. Trump's declaration that he brought the war to an end appears premature,** given the complexity of the crisis.

**For peace, the wounds of the genocide must be healed, inter-racial relations between Hutus and Tutsis improved, non-state militias disarmed and ties between Rwanda and the Congo stabilised.**