

October 11, 2026 – Dinamani Newspaper – Tit bits

1.US signs agreement with Russia to purchase diesel

(i) Fuel Crisis and Domestic Economic Pressure

- Due to the Middle East conflict and global supply chain disruptions, the US is facing a severe diesel shortage.
- Average diesel prices have surged from \$3.68 per gallon last year to \$6.28 per gallon currently.
- Soaring fuel costs and inflation present a major political hurdle for the ruling Republican Party ahead of the midterm congressional elections scheduled for early November.

(ii) US–Russia Diesel Agreement and Phased Procurement

- US President Donald Trump announced on his 'Truth Social' platform that an agreement was finalized following detailed telephone discussions with Russian President Vladimir Putin.
- Russia agreed to immediately supply over 300,000 tons (3 lakh tons) of diesel for both the US and international markets.
- The deal includes purchasing 500,000 tons (5 lakh tons) next month, followed by an additional 1,000,000 tons (10 lakh tons).
- Depending on Russian refinery capacity, up to 3,000,000 tons (30 lakh tons) of additional diesel could be supplied in the short term to relieve American truckers and farmers.

(iii) Temporary Sanctions Waiver

- Following Trump's announcement, the US Department of the Treasury issued an order temporarily waiving select economic sanctions on Russian fuel until April 7 next year to facilitate deliveries.

(iv) Political Backlash and International Criticism

- Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky strongly criticized the agreement, stating that concessions to Putin do not foster peace and that generating revenue for Russia is equivalent to indirectly funding its military operations.
- The move drew strong opposition from the US Democratic Party as well as several Republican lawmakers.

(v) Foreign Policy Contradiction and Global Impact

- Just last month, the US Congress passed legislation granting authority to impose heavy tariffs on nations—such as India—that continue to purchase Russian fuel.
- The decision of the US to directly procure fuel from Russia shortly after threatening sanctions on other importing countries has sparked widespread international debate.

2.Two powerful, consecutive earthquakes struck Panama, a Central American country, causing buildings to collapse and extensive damage.

(i) An earthquake measuring 7.7 on the Richter scale struck at a depth of 10 km in the morning near the

Pitalosa Arriba area in Herrera Province. This was followed by another earthquake measuring 6.6 in the evening, along with more than 45 aftershocks. People fled their homes and took shelter in the streets. The tremors were felt as far away as neighbouring Colombia.

3.Ethiopia has informed the United Nations Security Council that neighbouring Eritrea has deployed troops across its borders and occupied certain areas. Ethiopia stated that it was taking defensive measures in response.

(i) Ethiopia has accused Eritrea of deploying military units over the past few weeks and providing financial assistance and weapons to Tigray-region rebels. In a letter, Ethiopian Foreign Minister Gideon Timothewos stated that Ethiopia was exercising its right to self-defence under Article 51 of the UN Charter.

(ii) Eritrea, in turn, has accused Ethiopia of pursuing an expansionist policy by seeking access to the Red Sea.

(iii) Tensions have escalated following Ethiopia's expulsion of 10 Eritrean diplomats last week, amid a breakdown in diplomatic relations between the two countries. The growing rift between the two nations, which jointly operated against Tigray-region rebels during 2020–2022, has raised fears of a new war.

4.Union Sports Minister Mansukh Mandaviya will inaugurate the BRICS Traditional and Indigenous Sports Meet 2026, which is scheduled to begin on Monday in Ahmedabad.

- India will participate in Mallakhamb, Yogasana and Kalaripayattu.
- Participants from Belarus, China, Russia, Ethiopia, Iran, Kazakhstan, South Africa and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) will also take part.

5.Indian Olympic Association (IOA) President P. T. Usha has announced that the IOA elections will be held on December 5. Former Delhi election official Sanjay Srivastava has been appointed to oversee the electoral process. The newly elected executive committee members will serve a four-year term from 2026 to 2030. P. T. Usha made the following statements:

- The IOA Constitution was amended in accordance with the National Sports Governance Act, 2025, and the IOA Regulations, 2026. The elections will be conducted under these provisions.
- Sanjay Kumar Srivastava has been appointed as the Returning Officer for the 2026 elections. He will oversee the Athletes' Commission elections, the selection of outstanding sportspersons and the executive committee elections.
- The 2022 elections involved 77 members, including former and current sportspersons such as P. V. Sindhu, Gagan Narang, Sakshi Malik, Yogeshwar Dutt and M. M. Somaya.
- A few days ago, the Union Sports Ministry approved the continuation of the executive committee with 16 members.
- She stated that transparency and accountability were being maintained in the functioning of the IOA.

(i) In 2022, P. T. Usha became the first woman president of the Indian Olympic Association.

(ii) The elections are considered important as India is pursuing its bid to host the 2036 Olympic Games.

6.Canada will send a delegation comprising 300 business representatives to India next week.

(i) India and Canada have set a target of increasing bilateral trade to ₹4.75 lakh crore (US\$70 billion) by 2030.

(ii) As of 2025, bilateral trade between the two countries stood at ₹2.06 lakh crore (US\$30.4 billion). With the objective of more than doubling trade, Canada is sending its largest delegation in terms of membership in the past 30 years.

(iii) During Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney's visit to India in March, he met Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Following the meeting, both leaders announced plans for a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) to strengthen bilateral relations.

(iv) Since then, trade teams from both countries have been negotiating to finalise the agreement within the current year. As part of this process, the fifth round of negotiations was held in Ottawa from October 5 to October 9.

(v) Against this backdrop, a delegation of 300 business representatives led by Canadian International Trade Minister Maninder Sidhu will visit India next week. The delegation will hold bilateral trade discussions with Indian representatives in Mumbai and Bengaluru from October 12 to October 17.

(vi) Earlier, on October 1, Indian Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal met Maninder Sidhu on the sidelines of the G20 Trade Ministers' meeting held in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, USA, and held discussions with him.

7. The Supreme Court has established a standing committee to develop an institutional mechanism for identifying and addressing issues affecting the professional and personal lives of judges across the country.

(i) The committee was constituted by Chief Justice of India Surya Kant and will be headed by Supreme Court Justice K. V. Viswanathan.

(ii) The well-being of judges is not merely a matter of individual welfare; it is closely linked to the efficiency, quality and sustainability of the administration of justice. The standing committee will function as a continuous institutional platform to examine existing and emerging challenges relating to judges' well-being.

(iii) The committee, headed by Justice K. V. Viswanathan, includes the following members:

- Dr. Savita Malhotra, former Dean of the Postgraduate Institute of Medical Education and Research (PGIMER), Chandigarh.
- Rajat Mitra, mental health expert.
- Mrinal Kanwar, advocate practising in the Supreme Court.
- Aarti Singh, Registrar of the Supreme Court's Research and Planning Centre.

8. Union Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal has stated that India is negotiating a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with Israel. Speaking at an event organised by the PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry in New Delhi, he made the following points:

(i) An announcement regarding negotiations for a free trade agreement between India and the United

States was made in February. However, the final decision on the agreement will be taken after considering the prevailing circumstances.

(ii) Negotiations for an FTA with Canada are progressing well. India will soon begin negotiations for an FTA with the Southern African Customs Union (SACU). India is also scheduled to begin negotiations with Mexico next week.

(iii) India is continuing FTA-related discussions with Israel, Chile, the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and the Russia-led Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU).

(iv) The Commerce Ministers of the United Kingdom and Canada are also expected to visit India next week for discussions on trade-related matters.

9. Mission Shakti aims to strengthen interventions relating to women's safety, security and empowerment. The scheme comprises two sub-schemes:

- Sambal: Focuses on ensuring women's safety and security.
- Samarthya: Focuses on promoting women's empowerment.

10. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh has stated that India is closely monitoring security-related developments in neighbouring countries.

(i) Speaking at the Tarang Shakti joint air exercise, which began on September 26 at the Jodhpur Air Force Station in Rajasthan, Rajnath Singh highlighted the following:

- In line with the vision of Aatmanirbhar Bharat, structural and strategic changes are being introduced across the Indian Armed Forces.
- The initiative is not intended to isolate India from other countries. Instead, its primary objective is to strengthen domestic capabilities for designing and manufacturing advanced defence equipment incorporating modern technologies.
- The Tejas fighter aircraft, Dhruv and Prachand helicopters, and the Akash air defence system demonstrate India's growing indigenous defence manufacturing capabilities.

(ii) The joint air exercise is being conducted at the Jodhpur Air Force Station from September 26 to October

12. Seven countries are participating alongside India:

- United States
- France
- Germany
- Australia
- Bangladesh
- Sri Lanka
- United Arab Emirates (UAE)