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PIB Corner

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Modi set to flag off India's first hydrogen-powered train from Haryana's Jind

Unlike traditional trains, the NaMo Green Rail generates its own power through chemical reaction between hydrogen and atmospheric oxygen; PM will unveil initiatives worth over ₹25,000 crore

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

In a push towards sustainable transport, modern health care and advanced connectivity, Prime Minister Narendra Modi is scheduled to visit Haryana, Chandigarh, and Punjab on Friday and unveil initiatives worth over ₹25,000 crore.

The highlight of the multi-State visit will be the flagging off of the NaMo Green Rail, India's first-ever hydrogen-powered fuel cell train in Haryana's Jind.

Designed and integrated indigenously, the 10-coach train is among the world's longest and most powerful hydrogen-fuelled passenger trainsets. It is powered by a 3,200 horsepower propulsion system.

Unlike traditional trains, it generates its own electricity onboard through a chemical reaction between hydrogen and atmospheric oxygen, leaving behind water vapour.

The Prime Minister will



India's first hydrogen-powered train, the NaMo Green Rail, is ready for operations on Jind-Sonipat route in Haryana. X/@NAYABSAINIIBJP

then proceed to the Ekla-vya Stadium in Jind to lay foundation stones and dedicate to the national highway projects worth ₹12,470 crore, including the Delhi-Amritsar-Katra Expressway.

The 157.92-km, four-lane access-controlled stretch has been built at a cost of ₹9,680 crore and will reduce the travel time between Delhi and Katra from 14 hours to six hours. The Jind-Gohana Greenfield Highway (NH-352A) will re-

duce travel time from two hours to 40 minutes.

He will also lay the foundation stone for a state-of-the-art Sikh museum in Kurukshetra to honour the legacy of the Sikh gurus. He will also dedicate to the nation new medical colleges in Bhiwani and Narnaul.

Healthcare facilities

In the afternoon, the Prime Minister will arrive in Chandigarh to inaugurate and commission health-care and road infrastruc-

ture projects worth ₹4,700 crore in the city. The projects include PGIMER Chandigarh's Advanced Mother and Child Centre, a 300-bed tertiary care facility tailored for high-risk pregnancies and intensive newborn treatment.

Mr. Modi will also inaugurate an advanced neurosciences centre, which will be an integrated hub offering neurology, neurosurgery, and neuro-critical care diagnostics under a single roof. He will lay the foundation stone for the PM-ABHIM Critical Care Block, a 150-bed emergency response and disaster backup facility.

Mr. Modi will also inaugurate the six-lane greenfield highway from IT City to Kurali (Mohali) to streamline inter-State transit between Punjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, and Jammu & Kashmir.

Concluding his tour in Jalandhar, the Prime Minister will dedicate rail and road infrastructure projects worth ₹5,470 crore.

1. **Context (GS3 – Infrastructure | Environment)**

India's first hydrogen fuel-cell train (NaMo Green Rail) will be flagged off from Jind, Haryana. The indigenous 10-coach, 3,200 HP train generates electricity onboard using hydrogen, with water vapour as its only direct emission.

2. **How a Hydrogen Fuel-Cell Train Works**

- i. Hydrogen stored in onboard tanks combines with atmospheric oxygen in a fuel cell.
- ii. Electrochemical reaction:
$$2\text{H}_2 + \text{O}_2 \rightarrow 2\text{H}_2\text{O} + \text{Electricity} + \text{Heat}$$
- iii. The electricity powers the traction motors, while excess energy is stored in batteries.
- iv. Only water vapour is emitted; no direct CO₂ emissions.

3. **Why is it Different?**

- i. Produces electricity onboard; no overhead wires required.
- ii. Suitable for non-electrified railway routes.
- iii. Cleaner alternative to diesel locomotives.

4. **Significance**

- i. Promotes green rail transport.
- ii. Supports the National Green Hydrogen Mission.
- iii. Reduces fossil fuel dependence and carbon emissions.

BIMSTEC meet in Delhi: Security chiefs vow to combat terror

Shubhajit Roy

New Delhi, July 16

NATIONAL SECURITY chiefs of BIMSTEC countries on Thursday vowed to jointly combat regional security challenges and endorsed new guiding principles to streamline maritime law enforcement co-ordination.

This is significant since BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation) comprises India, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Nepal and Bhutan, and all of them have stakes in the developments in the Indian Ocean.

The meeting held in New Delhi was hosted by National Security Advisor Ajit Doval. The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said the national security advisors and heads of delegations discussed practical and result-oriented solutions to combat terrorism and organised crime, and to ensure security in the cyber, maritime and energy domains.

It said they also deliberated on boosting connectivity, facilitating efficient disaster management.

“They adopted guidelines for the maritime component of humanitarian assistance and disaster relief. These will help

BIMSTEC member states to undertake relief operations in the region,” the MEA said.

“They also endorsed a set of guiding principles on the conduct of maritime law enforcement agencies during interactions at sea,” it said.

The MEA said these principles are expected to outline reference points for increasing predictability and promoting safety during maritime engagements among member states.

“As BIMSTEC approaches its 30th anniversary next year, the National Security Advisors/ Heads of Delegations reiterated their resolve to further enhance collaboration and knowledge sharing towards strengthening regional security, building resilience, and enhancing institutional capacities to address diverse security threats,” it said.

Doval underscored the need for closer regional cooperation to tackle evolving security challenges, saying the current global landscape marked by conflicts, geopolitical uncertainties and disruptions requires BIMSTEC member states to work together and take “decisive actions” for their mutual benefit.

The NSA said BIMSTEC have built strong cooperation across security sectors and made significant progress in countering threats.

1. **Context (Counter-Terrorism | Maritime Security | Disaster Management)**

The National Security Advisers (NSAs) of BIMSTEC countries met in New Delhi, chaired by India's NSA Ajit Doval, and agreed to strengthen cooperation in counter-terrorism, cyber security, maritime security, disaster management and regional connectivity. They also adopted Guiding Principles for Maritime Law Enforcement and Maritime Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) Guidelines.

2. **BIMSTEC – Basics**

- i. **Full Form:** Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation.
- ii. **Established:** 1997 (Bangkok Declaration).
- iii. **Secretariat:** Dhaka, Bangladesh.
- iv. **Members (7):** Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Thailand.
- v. **Priority Sectors (7):** Trade & Investment, Security, Connectivity, Environment & Climate Change, Agriculture & Food Security, Science & Technology, People-to-People Contact.
- vi. **Significance for India**
 - * Links South and Southeast Asia.
 - * Supports Neighbourhood First, Act East, and MAHASAGAR.
 - * Key platform for Bay of Bengal regional cooperation.

3. **Key Outcomes**

- i. Enhanced cooperation against terrorism, organised crime and cyber threats.
- ii. Adopted Maritime Law Enforcement Principles.
- iii. Approved Maritime HADR Guidelines.
- iv. Agreed on greater intelligence sharing and institutional capacity building.

1. Context (Space Technology | Private Space Sector | Commercialisation of Space)

Skyroot Aerospace is set to launch Vikram-1, India's first privately developed orbital launch vehicle, from Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Sriharikota under Mission 'Aagaman'. The mission marks a major milestone in India's private space sector by attempting to place a payload into Low Earth Orbit (LEO) using an indigenous private rocket.

2. Vikram-1 – Basics

- i. **Developer:** Skyroot Aerospace (Hyderabad-based private space startup).
- ii. **Named After:** Dr. Vikram Sarabhai, father of India's space programme.
- iii. **Mission:** Aagaman ("Arrival") – First orbital test flight.
- iv. **Payload Capacity:** Up to 350 kg to Low Earth Orbit (LEO).
- v. **Target Orbit:** 450 km altitude at 60° inclination.
- vi. **Purpose:** Launch small satellites into orbit and demonstrate indigenous private orbital launch capability.

3. Why is it Significant?

- i. First attempt by an Indian private company to place a payload into orbit.
- ii. Strengthens India's commercial space ecosystem after space sector reforms.
- iii. Complements ISRO's Small Satellite Launch Vehicle (SSLV) for the growing small satellite market.
- iv. Enhances India's competitiveness in the global commercial launch services market.

'NO CENTRAL SUBSIDY FOR LAND ACQUISITION TO SET UP CHIP PLANTS, STATES EXPECTED TO TAKE LEAD'

Govt not keen to cover land, tech transfer costs in new chip scheme

Soumyarendra Barik
New Delhi, July 16

UNDER THE next phase of India's ambitious Rs 1.27 lakh crore Semiconductor Mission, the Central government may not offer subsidies to companies arising out of technology transfer costs, with the prevailing thought being that calculating such expenses is complicated, *The Indian Express* has learnt.

The Centre may also no longer offer subsidies for land acquisition to set up chip manufacturing plants, as state governments are expected to take the lead on that, a senior government official said.

Under the first iteration of the scheme, there was a provision for the government to cover a portion of technology transfer costs that approved companies may incur, but a senior government official said that it has been removed under India Semiconductor Mission (ISM) 2.0. Even though the provision existed under ISM 1.0, such disbursements were not made, it is understood.

"The reason we have de-

cided to not offer subsidies on technology transfer costs is because when we were evaluating proposals under the first leg of the scheme, there was a realisation that such transfer costs are quite opaque. It is almost impossible to reliably calculate the exact amount, so we have made changes accordingly," the official said, requesting anonymity.

Technology transfers are an important element in companies setting up semiconductor manufacturing operations in India, because many participants may not have access to such technology in-house. For instance, Tata Electronics, which is setting up a chip fabrication plant in Gujarat, is getting the manufacturing technology from Taiwan's PSMC.

These reconsiderations also point to the broader theme of India's shifting priorities under its new chip incentive scheme. The new policy is expected to place greater reliance on subsidising chip design, and the broader ancillary industry.

"In terms of our priorities for the new scheme, first would be chip designing, then bringing the broader supply chain

• TECH TRANSFER COSTS

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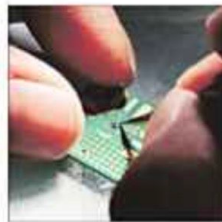
BUT A senior government official said the provision has been

removed under ISM 2.0. Even though it existed under ISM 1.0, such disbursements were not made

ecosystem to India, and then subsidising building of new chip manufacturing units," a second official said.

On Wednesday, the Union Cabinet approved ISM 2.0 with an outlay of Rs 1.27 lakh crore. Under the first scheme, India managed to attract 12 chip making plants, including a fabrication facility being set up by the Tata Group.

The country's foray into semiconductor production and



removed under ISM 2.0. Even though it existed under ISM 1.0, such disbursements were not made

packaging has been outlined as a strategic move by New Delhi to insert itself into the global chip supply chain and establish the sector to deepen domestic value addition in its electronics sector. Semiconductors — used to power devices from toasters to fighter jets — have become a critical resource amid heightened geopolitical tensions over the last few years.

By 2029, India expects to achieve the capability to design

and manufacture chips required for nearly 70-75% of domestic applications, and by 2035, the country aims to be among the top semiconductor nations globally.

Compared to the first iteration of the ISM, government incentives for semiconductor manufacturing plants have been slashed in ISM 2.0. For instance, the first scheme carried a uniform capex subsidy of 50% for fabs and assembly plants. However, under ISM 2.0, silicon fabs will receive a subsidy of 40%, and other fabs will get 35%. Similarly, the incentive for advanced packaging has been kept at 35%, and 25% for conventional packaging.

Under the new scheme, the government will offer grants and may also take equity in large companies and start-ups that design semiconductor chips, which rank higher on strategic and commercial parameters. The government's investment will depend on whether these companies are able to raise money from private equity investors.

FULL REPORT ON
WWW.INDIANEXPRESS.COM

1. Context (Semiconductor Manufacturing | Industrial Policy | Electronics Value Chain)

The Union Cabinet has approved India Semiconductor Mission (ISM) 2.0 with an outlay of ₹1.27 lakh crore. Compared to ISM 1.0, the new scheme proposes no Central subsidy for land acquisition and technology transfer costs, with States expected to provide land. The policy shifts focus towards chip design, domestic value addition and building a complete semiconductor ecosystem.

2. India Semiconductor Mission (ISM)

- i. **Launched:** 2021 | **Nodal Ministry:** Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology (MeitY).
- ii. **Objective:** Develop an end-to-end semiconductor ecosystem covering chip design, fabrication (fabs), ATMP/OSAT (Assembly, Testing, Marking & Packaging / Outsourced Semiconductor Assembly and Test), supply chain and R&D.
- iii. **Target:** Meet 70–75% of India's semiconductor demand by 2035 and emerge as a leading global semiconductor hub.

3. What Changes in ISM 2.0?

- i. No subsidy for land acquisition; States will arrange land for chip projects.
- ii. Technology transfer costs removed from eligible incentives as these costs are difficult to assess transparently.
- iii. **Reduced capital subsidy compared to ISM 1.0:**
 - * Silicon fabs: 50% → 40%
 - * Other fabs: 50% → 35%
 - * Advanced packaging: 35%
 - * Conventional packaging: 25%
- iv. Government may provide grants and equity support to semiconductor design companies, subject to their ability to attract private investment.

4. Why this Policy Shift?

- i. Prioritises chip design first, followed by manufacturing and supply-chain development.
- ii. Encourages greater State participation in infrastructure creation.
- iii. Focuses on long-term domestic value addition instead of subsidising opaque one-time costs such as technology transfer.



STRENGTHENING RURAL CREDIT FOR INCLUSIVE GROWTH IN INDIA

On the occasion of **NABARD's 45th Foundation Day** (12 July 2026), the Government highlighted reforms in India's rural credit ecosystem to boost institutional credit, digital outreach and financial inclusion for a stronger and sustainable rural economy.

WHY RURAL CREDIT MATTERS



Ensures timely & affordable credit for agriculture, allied activities, MSMEs and rural enterprises



Reduces dependence on informal moneylenders



Increases productivity, rural incomes & employment



Drives financial inclusion and inclusive economic growth

RURAL CREDIT: KEY DATA (PIB)

NABARD Rural Economic Conditions Survey (May 2026)



77.2%

rural households reported higher consumption



51%

households depend exclusively on formal institutional credit



27%+

households access both institutional & informal credit

RURAL BANKING NETWORK (SCBs)

41,464 branches



2014

35% increase

56,193 branches



July 2025

Over 35% increase in rural branches from 2014 to July 2025

EVOLUTION OF RURAL CREDIT



1955

Long-Term Agricultural Credit Fund & State Bank of India



1969

Nationalisation of 14 major banks



1982

NABARD Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development established



1992

SHG-Bank Linkage Programme



1998

Kisan Credit Card (KCC) Scheme



2014

Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY)



2015

Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana (PMMY)



2022+

Jan Samarth Portal, e-KCC and other digital initiatives

KEY POLICY & SCHEME HIGHLIGHTS



PRIORITY SECTOR LENDING (PSL)

Min. 18% of Adjusted Net Bank Credit for agriculture



GROUND LEVEL CREDIT (GLC) TARGET (FY 2025-26)

₹32.5 lakh crore (₹8 lakh crore in FY 2014-15)



MODIFIED INTEREST SUBVENTION SCHEME (MISS)

Crop loan at 7%, interest reduced to 4% on prompt repayment



COLLATERAL-FREE AGRICULTURAL LOAN

Limit increased to ₹2 lakh per borrower



PM DHAN-DHAANYA KRISHI YOJANA

Targets 100 low-performing agricultural districts through convergence of 36 Central Schemes



PACS DIGITISATION

61,842 of 79,630 PACS migrated to Common ERP (March 2026)



PMJDY IMPACT

- 58.63+ crore accounts
- Deposits ₹3 lakh crore+
- 55.7% women beneficiaries
- 77.8% accounts in rural/semi-urban areas

NABARD - KEY FACTS



- Established: 1982
- Headquarters: Mumbai
- Parent Act: National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development Act, 1981
- Apex Development Financial Institution for agriculture and rural development

CHALLENGES



Dependence on informal credit persists



Regional disparities in credit flow



Limited access for tenant farmers and smallholders



Need for stronger digital infrastructure and financial literacy

WAY FORWARD



- ✓ Ensure universal access to affordable institutional credit
- ✓ Expand digital credit through e-KCC, PACS & Jan Samarth
- ✓ Strengthen FPOs, rural MSMEs & value chains
- ✓ Integrate credit with insurance, markets & agri-infrastructure for sustainable & inclusive rural growth

