

India, Vietnam eye \$25 billion bilateral trade target by 2030

STRATEGIC MOVE. 13 MoUs signed on digital payments, rare earths

Our Bureau
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India and Vietnam set a \$25 billion annual trade target by 2030, up from \$16 billion last fiscal, and elevated ties to an enhanced comprehensive strategic partnership in a meeting between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Vietnamese President To Lam on Wednesday.

The talks focused on areas including trade, investments, banking, defence, agriculture, health, ICT and critical minerals with 13 MoUs signed in diverse areas, such as digital payments and cooperation in rare earth elements and emerging technologies.

"We have taken several important decisions today to take our bilateral trade to \$25 billion by 2030. The MoU between our drug authorities will now increase access to Indian medicines in Vietnam. The export of Indian agricultural, fisheries and animal products to Vietnam is also going to be easier. Soon, Vietnam will taste India's grapes and pomegranates, and we will taste Vietnam's pomelos," Modi said in his speech at the joint press briefing with Lam after their bilateral talks.

The Vietnamese President is on a three-day visit to India and is accompanied by a



EXPANDING TIES. Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Vietnam President To Lam during the joint press briefing in New Delhi ANI

business delegation. The leaders welcomed the signing of the MoU between the Reserve Bank of India and the State Bank of Vietnam on financial innovation and digital payments. "They agreed to promote linkages for retail payment platforms via QR codes that would facilitate tourism and businesses of both sides," per a joint statement.

The two leaders also agreed to update the India-Asean trade agreement by the year-end, Modi noted. "This will give new impetus to trade and investment between India and all Asean countries. New initiatives in critical minerals, rare earths and energy cooperation will ensure the economic security and supply chain resilience of both our countries," he said.

TWO-WAY FLOWS

On investments, the leaders agreed to encourage greater

two-way flows to further strengthen India-Vietnam economic ties, especially in the fields of high technology, transport, manufacturing, logistics, renewable energy, smart agriculture, electric vehicles and information technology, healthcare, agriculture and agro-processing, aquaculture, tourism and hospitality, per a joint statement issued by the two sides.

"They also agreed to strengthen the linkages between the two countries' start-up ecosystems and encourage substantive cooperation among innovation centres," the statement highlighted.

The two countries would bring about a stronger change in economic cooperation, trade cooperation and investment cooperation through value chain connectivity, removing barriers and expanding market access, the Vietnamese President said.