

# PM for Asean-Europe corridor via India

## Modi says Asean is the central pillar of India's Act-East Policy

SUBHAYAN CHAKRABORTY  
New Delhi, 7 September

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday proposed a multi-modal connectivity and economic corridor linking Southeast Asia to Europe through India and West Asia, and closer digital ties at the 20th India-Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) summit.

The first edition of the summit to be held since India-Asean relations were elevated to the level of the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership in 2022, the summit also saw both sides adopt two joint statements — maritime cooperation and food secu-



**Prime Minister Narendra Modi, China Premier Li Qiang, and US Vice President Kamala Harris at the East Asia Summit as part of the 43rd Association of Southeast Asian Nations Summit in Jakarta, on Thursday**

PHOTO: PTI

rity. Addressing the leaders of the 10-nation bloc in Indonesia's Jakarta, Modi stressed greater cooperation in

strategic engagements and addressing contemporary challenges, the Ministry of External Affairs said. The

Prime Minister also emphasised the need to complete the review of the Asean-India free trade agreement in a time-bound manner.

On the technology front, the PM offered to share India's Digital Public Infrastructure Stack, a moniker for a set of open APIs and digital public goods introduced by the government, such as Aadhaar, Unified Payment Interface, Co-Win, DigiLocker, UMANG, and Government e-Marketplace, with Asean nations.

He announced the Asean-India fund for Digital Future focusing on cooperation in digital transformation and financial connectivity and renewal of support to economic and research Institute of Asean and East Asia (ERIA) to act as knowledge partner for enhancing our engagement.

Modi called upon the bloc to work with India to collectively raise issues being faced by the Global South in multilateral fora, engage in enhanced

cooperation on maritime safety and security and domain awareness, and fight terrorism, terror financing and cyber-disinformation.

### East-Asia Summit

Addressing the East-Asia Summit, which concurrently took place in Jakarta, Modi said a free and open Indo-Pacific was in everyone's interest, in a veiled message to China. Modi also asserted India's belief in the necessity for the code of conduct in the South China Sea to be both effective and in accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).

In his short speech, Modi said Asean was the central pillar of India's Act-East Policy and that India remained committed to elevating the voice of the Global South in the common interest of all.