

● SPANISH PM SAYS LOOKING FORWARD TO ADVANCING FTA TALKS

'Enormous' potential for India-EU ties

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SPANISH PRIME MINISTER Pedro Sánchez on Tuesday said he looks forward to advancing EU-India FTA negotiations, highlighting the "enormous" potential for a stronger relationship between India and the 27-nation European Union bloc, including Spain.

The EU and India proposed a free trade agreement (FTA) aimed at further boosting bilateral trade and investments between the two regions. The two sides are negotiating FTA, investment protection treaty and agreement on geographical indications (GIs).

"The potential for a stronger relationship between India and the European Union is enormous. Spain is one of the largest economies in the world and has invested \$4.2 billion in India... We look forward to advancing negotiations on a European Union-India free trade agreement. This will help our markets grow in size and diversity," Sánchez observed while addressing the CII India-Spain business summit in



Spain's Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez (centre) shakes hands with road transport & highways minister Nitin Gadkari at the India-Spain business summit in Mumbai on Tuesday AP

Mumbai, a statement issued by the industry body said.

This is Sánchez's first visit to India. "We have a lot to offer to India with our experience in solar and wind power. Our expertise can help India reach its goal of 500 gigawatt of renewable energy by 2030. We are committed to partnering with India to boost its energy security and green transition. By combining Spanish innovation with India's potential, we

can make a big impact on the global economy and the environment," Sánchez said. He further said Spain's advanced railway systems, subway networks, and transport solutions can greatly benefit India's infrastructure projects. He expressed willingness on the part of Spanish engineering firms in terms of sharing their expertise in creating efficient and sustainable transport systems.

At the meet, road transport

and highways minister Nitin Gadkari said, "Our Prime Minister's dream is to make India carbon neutral by 2070. Whether it's fossil fuel or energy, green energy and green mobility are now priorities. There is great potential for wind and solar power. I am pleased that many technologies are available in Spain that have great potential in India. Joint ventures can reduce costs and increase competitiveness in global market."

Spanish PM for open and secure Indo-Pacific

UNDERLINING THE NEED to protect freedom of navigation amid assertiveness of Beijing in the South China Sea, Spain's Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez on Tuesday said his country and India must contribute in building an Indo-Pacific region that is open and secure.

Speaking at an event in Mumbai, he maintained that the rules-based international order is at stake and hence Madrid and New Delhi must defend and work towards strengthening multilateral institutions. He said the world's centre of power has shifted towards Asia where India plays a key role.

Sánchez announced that Spain is working to launch a new strategy for Asia which will revitalise his country's relations with the largest continent in the world. —PTI