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## Modi lauds Art 370 abrogation, pays tributes to Ambedkar

added. Acknowledging the delay in the event, the Prime Minister said, "I apologise that I was late by more than an hour. I left on time, but the 12-kilometre-long roadshow, there was so enthusiastic that it was difficult to move the car quickly. The huge crowd in the 12-kilometre-long stretch, even under this heat, shows the love and blessings. I will take a new inspiration from Uttarakhand."

Further, he said that the six-lane Delhi-Dehradun Economic Corridor will accelerate Uttarakhand's progress while strengthening connectivity.

Extending greetings for festivities, "The new year has arrived, I extend greetings for Baisakhi, Puthandu and Bohag Bihu. Badrinath and Kedarnath Yatras will also begin in a few days. I got an opportunity to offer prayers to Maa Daat Kali. Maa Daat Kali's blessings have been instrumental in completing the Delhi-Dehradun Corridor."

"After offering prayers at Baba Kedar, I had expressed that the third decade of this century would belong to Uttarakhand. I am very happy that through the double-engine government's policies, the state is moving forward on the path of development and strengthening connectivity. This project will further accelerate Uttarakhand's progress and give new momentum to its development," the Prime Minister said.

PM Modi inaugurated the Delhi-Dehradun Economic Corridor in Dehradun. The 213 km long six-lane access-controlled Delhi-Dehradun Economic Corridor has been developed at a cost of over Rs 12,000 crore. The corridor traverses through the states of Delhi, Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand, and will reduce travel time between Delhi and Dehradun from over six hours at present to around two and a half hours.

## Trump dials Modi

ted to further strengthening our Comprehensive Global Strategic Partnership in all areas. We also discussed the situation in West Asia and stressed the importance of keeping the Strait of Hormuz open and secure," he added.

US envoy to India Sergio Gor described the call as "very positive and productive."

He said that President Trump keeps PM Modi updated regularly.

"They just got off the phone a few minutes ago. The president gave an update on what is happening in the Middle East, along with some of the big-ticket items happening in Washington between the United States and India," Gor said.

Asked if he sees India playing a potential role in the peace process, Gor said that the US would welcome New Delhi's involvement.

During the call, Trump told PM Modi, "I just want you to know we all love you," the US envoy said.

The two leaders had last spoken on March 24, during which PM Modi told Trump that India supports de-escalation and the restoration of peace in the Middle East at the earliest. The two leaders had also discussed that the Strait of Hormuz remaining open, secure, and accessible is essential for the world.

The US and Iran are in the middle of a two-week fragile ceasefire as efforts continue for a second round of talks after failed negotiations in Pakistan over the weekend.

The latest call between PM Modi and Trump comes a day after the US enforced a fresh blockade of Iranian ports, as Tehran continues to block selective vessels in the Strait of Hormuz.

In another phone call on February 2, the two leaders had discussed progress on the bilateral trade deal.

## LG dedicates Tawi Riverfront Project to people on Baisakhi

The LG said, "Our culture holds that cities along rivers retain even the winds infused with timeless values."

"Jammu embodies this truth. This ancient temple town is the heart of spirituality, culture and a living metaphor," he said.

"For millennia, this land has beckoned saints, philosophers, and artists, enriching itself with their cultural and spiritual legacies. Over the past five-six years, under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership, we have strived to amplify Jammu's grandeur and cultural consciousness," the LG added.

"Culture thrives only when lived and is passed to the next generation through its values," he said.

"Those who built this city did not build it for themselves alone. They built it with confidence and trust that those who followed would understand and honour this priceless inheritance," he said and added, "The measure of a life is not what you gathered, but what you gave. Not what society offered you, but what you returned to it," he said.

The LG administered the anti-drug pledge to the citizens. He also felicitated the winners of the traditional dangal.

The function was also attended by politicians, bureaucrats, police officers, religious leaders and a large number of people.

## No trace of 'suspects'

Army, police and CRPF had started a search operation which continued today also but forces were yet to find any trace of the suspected terrorists, officials said.

In March last year, a gunfight in Soffain forest had left four policemen martyred and two terrorists of Pakistan-based Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) outfit dead. The area is being used by terrorists to move towards hinterland after sneaking from across the International Border.

## Couple killed in road accident

The couple, who were living in a rented accommodation at Model Town, Gangyal, died on the spot, and their bodies were shifted to Government Medical College & Hospital for postmortem, officials said.

The injured was undergoing treatment at the hospital, the officials added.

## Man booked for fake WhatsApp account in SSP's name

people and posing as a close aide in order to influence people.

Upon verification, it was found that he was involved in multiple FIRs and had been operating a fake WhatsApp account in the name of SSP, Budgam

He was also sharing screenshots of conversations to portray himself as a close associate to have undue influence.

Acting swiftly on this information, police registered a case under section 319 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) and section 66-C of the Information Technology Act, and arrested the accused.

## Jitendra for strong clinical foundation in medical education

troenterology, Hepatology and Nutrition" edited by Prof Anupam Sibal and Dr Sarath Gopalan.

He said that once a sound clinical foundation is established, Artificial Intelligence can serve as a valuable enabler, assistant and facilitator.

However, he added that if one turns to AI before grasping the essence of medical concepts, there is a risk of missing the basic learning process essential for becoming a competent clinician, who could be capable of serving the society even in the absence of any instruments, gadgets, investigations or even drugs.

Referring to the rapidly expanding body of medical knowledge, Dr Singh said that the pace of research and publication has increased significantly, making it essential for medical education to focus on conceptual clarity and core clinical training.

He noted that while new technologies have made access to information easier, the process of learning must continue to be rooted in fundamental understanding and hands-on clinical exposure.

He also highlighted the need to continuously upgrade medical education systems in line with emerging challenges, including the integration of technology and the growing complexity of diseases. He emphasized that young medical professionals should be encouraged to build strong basics and gradually develop specialization in chosen areas.

## EAM speaks to Israeli counterpart, discusses West Asia crisis

He pressed for freedom of navigation through the Strait of Hormuz for all countries, including India.

The call came amid increasing global concerns over the US naval blockade of Iran's ports. The US action came in response to Iran partially blocking the flow of shipping traffic through the Strait of Hormuz.

Global oil and gas prices surged after Iran restricted the transit of ships through the Strait of Hormuz, a narrow lane between the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman, that handles roughly 20 per cent of global oil and LNG.

West Asia has been a major source of India's energy procurement.

## Rise above caste: Prez to people

Samrasta Mahotsav' on the birth anniversary of Dr B R Ambedkar at Lok Bhavan (governor's house) in Gandhinagar, Murmu said the caste system is a thing of the past and people should now move forward as one society.

"Those who created the caste system are no longer there. We must move forward together and strengthen social harmony. In a way, there are now only two castes - the haves and the have-nots," she said, emphasising the need to uplift those left behind.

Giving a call for unity, Murmu said, "No one should think only of their own interest. We are all one. We are brothers and sisters." Emphasising India's cultural unity, she said the country's traditions are rooted in compassion, equality, mutual welfare and harmony.

"Rising above all divisions and standing united without discrimination is the true expression of social harmony," the President said. Calling for unity, she said, all the children of Mother India are one, there should be no difference among citizens based on caste, class, language or region.

Murmu also stressed that villages remain central to India's development and social fabric. "The soul of the nation resides in its villages. The path to building a harmonious society runs through villages. Despite diversity, there is affection, warmth and mutual understanding among people in villages, and this reflects the true spirit of Indian culture," she said.

If villages prosper, the country will prosper, Murmu stressed. Invoking B R Ambedkar, she said his message of harmony was based on liberty, equality and fraternity.

Recalling Ambedkar's message of "educate yourselves", the President noted that education is the foundation of both individual and national development. "At the very core of education lies the development of the nation and society. Our Constitution has made education a fundamental right. It is our responsibility to ensure that people from marginalised sections, whether in villages or cities, get access to education," she said.

Along with education, moral values must also be promoted. Through comprehensive education, especially moral education, the bonds of social harmony become stronger, Murmu said.

She stressed the importance of health and a clean environment, saying both are essential for the progress of individuals and society. The President noted that efforts are being made to strengthen healthcare services at the village level.

She also called on individuals to contribute towards the upliftment of others, sharing a personal message about using one's abilities for the benefit of society.

"Becoming successful is good, but it becomes meaningful only when you look back and see how many people you can help. You may not be able to change the entire nation, but you must ask yourself what you can do for others," she said.

Highlighting the role of governments, Murmu said support is being provided in sectors such as education, healthcare and agriculture, but people must actively participate.

"The government is doing its duty, but people must also make efforts to move forward and become self-reliant," she said.

Murmu also emphasised the role of the cooperative sector and local communities in promoting inclusive growth and social cohesion, and called for initiatives related to sanitation, tree plantation and animal husbandry to improve social well-being.

Gujarat Governor Acharya Devvrat, Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel and Deputy CM Harsh Sanghavi were present at the event.

## Nation's willpower as important as military strength: NSA

people, said the NSA Explaining this, Doval cited global examples and said, "If Russia (then USSR) withdrew from Afghanistan (in 1988-89), or if the United States was compelled to withdraw from Vietnam (in 1970s) or if the US failed to achieve its objectives

in Afghanistan - it was not for a lack of technology or military strength. "Rather, the decisive factor was the spirit and commitment of the local people, what we refer to as nation's willpower." He stressed that the sole objective of warfare is to break the morale of one's adversary, thereby compelling them to accept a treaty on your terms.

The NSA said the role of citizens is crucial in building this strength. "In the cultivation of this willpower, the role of general public is of paramount importance, specifically the degree of awareness regarding their own security," he

opined.

Doval noted India is witnessing a shift in this regard. "Today, after a long time in our history, we are witnessing a new awakening. (That) national security is a collective responsibility shared by the entire nation.

It is not the sole responsibility of the armed forces, police, or intelligence agencies - it is the combined strength of all of you that ultimately constitutes our national morale," he told the gathering.

Highlighting the role of professionals in security ecosystem, including those in academia, research and operations, he said their knowledge, technical expertise and awareness significantly influence outcomes.

The NSA stressed the importance of character and discipline in the field, saying "mental power" and the ability to work as a team are essential qualities for excelling.

Calling commitment the "third indispensable element," Doval said the field of national security demands the highest level of dedication.

In a message to youngsters wishing to join the security domain, the NSA asserted, "This is a game in which there are no silver medals. You are either victorious, or you are vanquished. If you win, you make history; but if you lose, you become history. Your very existence will be at stake."

During the convocation ceremony, Doval was conferred an honorary Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) degree by President Murmu in recognition of his contributions to national security.

"With the utmost humility, I accept the Honorary Doctorate degree conferred upon me here today. I am deeply grateful for this honour," the NSA added.

## No change in policy to improve relations with India: China

China-India relations were generally stable.

China's policy committed to improving and developing China-India relations remains unchanged, Guo said.

"We hope the two sides will work in the same direction and act more in ways conducive to bilateral relations," Guo added.

On March 26, China's Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region announced the creation of Cenling county, a strategic region located near the Pakistan-occupied Jammu & Kashmir (PoJK) and Afghanistan.

It is also reportedly close to the western sector of the Line of Actual Control (LAC) with India.

Cenling, located near the Karakoram mountain range, is the third new county established by China in Xinjiang, a predominantly Muslim Uyghur region.

India last year lodged a protest with China over the creation of Hean and Hekang counties, stating that parts of their jurisdiction fall within its Union territory of Ladakh.

China has been publishing its names for various regions in Arunachal Pradesh since 2017 for which India has been consistently objecting, saying that "fictitious names" to Indian territory cannot alter "undeniable reality".

## Ambedkar opposed Art 370 for India's integrity: Shah

Shah said he laid the strong foundation of India's democracy by giving the country a Constitution that grants equal rights and opportunities to every class.

"He staunchly opposed Article 370 for the sake of the country's integrity. Babasaheb, who gave the mantra to the society to become educated and stay organised, teaches us through his life that when the resolve is for national service and the welfare of people, every obstacle becomes small," he said in his post in Hindi.

Shah also extended his greetings to people on the occasion of the foundation day of the Khalsa Panth and Baisakhi.

In another post on X, he said, "Heartfelt greetings to everyone on the foundation day of the Khalsa Panth and the festival of Baisakhi." "This sacred day reminds us of the establishment of the Khalsa Panth by Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji, an inspiration that gives us the courage to walk fearlessly on the path of truth and righteousness," he said.

Shah said Baisakhi is also a celebration of the joy of India's hardworking farmers, whose dedication brings prosperity across the country "On this sacred and auspicious occasion, I extend my heartfelt greetings to the Khalsa Panth and bow to the tireless efforts of our annadatas," he added.

Shah also extended his wishes to the people of Tamil Nadu on the occasion of Tamil Puthandu.

"May the zesty festivities of welcoming the new year deepen our bond with culture, strengthen social unity, and bless everyone with well-being, abundance, and joy," he said in another post on X.

The home minister also extended greetings to the people of Odisha on the auspicious occasion of Maha Vishubha Sankranti. "May the blessings of Prabhu Jagannath bring happiness and good health for everyone," he said.

## Nitish resigns; Samrat Choudhary to be Bihar's first BJP CM

cabinet rejig.

Choudhary's name as the frontrunner for the Chief Minister's post emerged as soon as Kumar decided to contest for the Rajya Sabha. The buzz soon translated into consensus as several senior party leaders backed his name for the next Chief Minister to rule Bihar.

In a key legislature party meeting, Deputy Chief Minister Vijay Sinha, along with senior BJP leaders Mangal Pandey, Dilip Jaiswal and Renu Devi, formally proposed his name as leader of the BJP Legislature Party. The proposal was endorsed by the central observer and Union Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan.

## Machail Mata shrine opens; registration mandatory for devotees

tricity, water supply, sanitation, langar sewa, accommodation, transportation and healthcare facilities for the devotees, officials said.

The DC issued directions for effective implementation and enforcement of RFID registration, with counters to be established for on-the-spot registration at Gauri Shankar Mandir Sarkoot and base camp Gulabgarh.

He emphasised that no entry shall be permitted without registration. He issued instructions for the strict implementation of sanitation measures, including the deployment of sanitation workers and proper management of plastic waste to make the Yatra 100 per cent plastic-free, officials said.

Further, directions were issued to ensure uninterrupted supply of electricity to Machail and adjoining areas.

The DC also directed for adequate water supply and provision of accommodation facilities in educational institutions (schools and colleges) in the event of adverse weather conditions and emergencies along the Yatra route from Gulabgarh to Machail.

Officials said helicopter services shall also be initiated after obtaining permission.

"There shall be no movement of pilgrims, nor any establishment at the cloudburst-affected site at Chishoti," the DC said.

He also directed the concerned executing agencies to assess the feasibility and undertake necessary measures to increase the height of the bridge at Chisoti.

## Omar thanks Modi, Gadkari for approval of tunnels

support and approval of the Sudhmahadev-Dranga and Singhpora-Vailoo tunnel projects.

"These vital infrastructure projects will significantly strengthen connectivity, ensure all-weather access, and accelerate economic growth across the Chenab region and adjoining areas," he said.

The Government of India has approved the construction of the uni-directional twin-tube Sudhmahadev-Dranga Tunnel (12.85 km, including 2-lane plus paved shoulder approaches) and the twin-tube Singhpora-Vailoo Tunnel (38.61 km, including 2-lane plus paved shoulder approaches) on NH-244 in Jammu & Kashmir, at an estimated total cost of ₹9,779.42 crore.

Recalling his earlier intervention, the chief minister said that in June last year, he had written to the Prime Minister and the Union Minister highlighting delays in the projects and seeking their urgent consideration.

He had urged that the projects be taken up under the NH (O) scheme of the Ministry of Road Transport & Highways on priority to ensure their timely completion in line with the broader vision for the development of Jammu & Kashmir and the nation.

He had also expressed concern that while other NH projects on NH-244 were progressing under NHIDCL, delays in these two critical tunnels were impeding the expected socio-economic benefits for the Chenab region and hindering its efforts to overcome economic backwardness.

## Iran war threatens to push 2.5 million in India into poverty: UNDP

perience a more moderate increase in the number of people at risk of falling into poverty, from around 115,000 to over 620,000, reflecting small proportional changes applied to a very large population base.

Highlighting the estimated poverty impact of the military escalation (28-day conflict, most severe scenario with 8-month adjustment), the report said that India's poverty rate is estimated to rise to 24.2 per cent post-crisis from 23.9 per cent, pushing 2,464,698 people into poverty. An estimated 354,033,698 people are projected to live in poverty in the country post-crisis as compared to 351,569,000 pre-crisis.

The UNDP simulation estimates the impact of the conflict on the Human Development Index (HDI) for countries across the region. It indicates that Iran's HDI could decline by an amount equivalent to roughly one to one and a half years of human development progress.

"India is projected to experience a loss of approximately 0.03â€"0.12 years of HDI progress, followed by Nepal at around 0.02â€"0.09 years and Viet Nam at 0.02â€"0.07 years, while for China, the estimated effects on HDI remain limited in magnitude, ranging roughly 0.01â€"0.05 years," it said.

The report notes that among the region's larger importers, India meets over 90 per cent of its oil needs through imports, sourcing more than 40 per cent of crude imports and 90 per cent of LPG imports from West Asia. Further, West Asian countries supply over 45 per cent of India's fertiliser imports, while

85 per cent of the country's domestic urea production depends on imported regasified liquefied natural gas.

The shock of the conflict is also influencing energy choices in several countries. With LNG prices rising, some economies, including India, Thailand, the Philippines, and Vietnam, have increased their reliance on coal-fired power.

On trade and supply chain disruptions, UNDP country-level analysis indicated significant impacts in 25 out of 36 countries through freight surcharges, war-risk insurance premia, route diversions, and delayed delivery of intermediate and consumer goods.

India's assessment shows that West Asian markets account for 14 per cent of exports and 20.9 per cent of imports, with roughly USD 48 billion in non-oil exports, particularly in basmati rice, tea, gems and jewellery, and apparel. Bangladesh also reports significant disruption as Gulf carriers cancelled flights, shipments from Bangladesh and India were stranded, it said.

Highlighting the impact of the military escalation on food security, the report said that "For several countries, including India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, and the Philippines, food security pressures could also be compounded by remittance losses, as reduced Gulf economic activity weakens household incomes and purchasing power."

"In India, the timing is especially sensitive: any prolonged disruption would coincide with the preparations for the Kharif (the monsoon cropping season), which begins in June. Urea stocks stood at 6.114 million tons, providing a near-term buffer but not fully insulating the sector if disruptions persist into the planting season," it said.

The report also notes the impact of the conflict on remittances and migrant workers.

"For several countries, the scale of direct exposure to Gulf labour markets and remittance flows is both substantial and consequential," the report said.

"India has the largest absolute exposure," it said as it cited the Ministry of External Affairs data that 9.37 million Indians were residing in Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries as of October 2024, sending about 38-40 per cent of India's inward remittances.

The military escalation is affecting employment and livelihoods across the Asia-Pacific region through disruptions to economic activity, mobility, trade, and supply chains, it said.

"In India, employment risks are likely to be especially pronounced in MSME-intensive sectors that rely on imported energy and inputs or are exposed to Gulf-linked trade. This is particularly significant in a labour market where about 90 per cent of employment is informal.

"Small firms in hospitality, food processing, construction materials, steel-based manufacturing, and gems and diamonds may face higher input costs, supply shortages, and delayed or cancelled orders, with knock-on effects on jobs, hours worked and business continuity. These pressures could translate into reduced working hours, job losses and business interruptions, especially for informal and migrant workers and MSMEs operating with limited financial buffers and constrained access to credit," it said.