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## Eastern India emerging as gateway to development: Modi

He said that through Utkarsh Odisha Abhiyan, the state has attracted Rs 20 lakh crore investment proposals, of which work was being done on projects worth Rs 3.5 lakh crore.

"The state government is laying stress on ensuring favourable conditions for industries to be established," the PM said, adding that Rs 6,000 crore is being invested in the power sector.

He lauded the state government's decision to give Rs 3,100 per quintal of paddy to farmers and financial assistance to over 1 crore women under Subhadra Yojana.

The people of Odisha are now getting treatment across the country through Ayushman Yojana. As soon as the BJP government came to power, it opened the four gates of Puri's Jagannath temple and introduced a scheme for reducing dropout rates among tribal children, he said.

Stating that tribal areas had historically remained deprived of basic services and infrastructure, Modi said tribal development was a top priority of his government.

The prime minister said the PM JANMAN Mission is specifically designed for Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs), ensuring that government services reach even the most marginalised tribal communities at their doorsteps.

On education and employment opportunities for tribal youth, he said nearly 500 Eklavya Model Residential Schools have already been established across the country, while approximately 750 more schools have been sanctioned.

More than 1.5 crore tribal students have received scholarships worth hundreds of crores at pre-matric and post-matric levels.

He also announced that approval has been granted for the establishment of an additional Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya in Mayurbhanj district.

He said Sickle Cell Anaemia is a challenge in tribal-dominated areas and the government has launched a nationwide campaign against the disease.

Modi said International Day of Yoga would be observed on June 21, describing Odisha as a land deeply connected with knowledge and yoga traditions.

He appealed to people across India and around the world to participate in Yoga Day in large numbers and embrace yoga as a way of life.

Modi also congratulated Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi for Odisha's "success in cleanliness and public welfare schemes".

Modi paid tributes to Pandit Raghunath Murmu, creator of the Ol Chiki script for the Santali language, and highlighted the central government's efforts to promote and preserve the Santali language and culture.

## LG Sinha calls for strengthening India's soft power

these diversities into a harmonious unity that enriches the nation's collective consciousness," Sinha said.

"Indian civilisation has always been defined by its centres of knowledge. Nalanda, Takshashila, Vikramashila, and many others were hubs of global intellectual exchange, attracting travellers from China, Korea, Java, Persia, and West Asia," he said.

"Nalanda is a living intellectual cosmos of its time. It is a seat of critical thinking and curiosity where thousands of scholars in the past engaged deeply with logic, grammar, medicine, mathematics, philosophy, religion, and the arts. Likewise, Jammu & Kashmir was the unique Sharda Peeth of learning, drawing people from afar for instruction across disciplines from mathematics to music," he added.

"The young generation needs to understand India's knowledge traditions, whose roots strengthened in Bihar region during Emperor Ashoka's era around the third century BCE. European scholars once overlooked this legacy but I am happy to note that the host city of this event, Srinagar, was also established by Emperor Ashoka. The Srinagar-Nalanda Dialogue reminds us that the moment has come to renew this tradition as a modern, relevant intellectual project. Just as scholars in ancient times travelled from Nalanda to Jammu & Kashmir carrying manuscripts, philosophies, and scientific ideas, we must revive open exchange and deep engagement of ideas," the LG said.

"Our ancient towns are living learning centres, and places like Nalanda, Jammu, Purmandal, Srinagar, Varanasi, Hampi, Sanchi, Madurai, Puri, and Thanjavur carry centuries of experience and knowledge," he added.

"We must strengthen the role of these towns. That requires infrastructure development, heritage conservation, and platforms like the Srinagar-Nalanda Dialogue for cultural exchange. We should continuously promote festivals, exhibitions, and discussions that bring together these towns and artists, scholars, and citizens from across the world," he said.

Among those present on the occasion included Prof Shafi Shauq; Suman Billa, Director General, Ministry of Tourism; Prof Siddharth Singh, Vice-Chancellor of Nava

Nalanda Mahavihara University; Chittaranjan Tripathy, Director of National School of Drama, New Delhi; D Aaliya, Festival Chairperson, Nalanda Literature Festival; Ganga Kumar, Festival Director, Nalanda Literature Festival; Prof A Ravinder Nath, Vice Chancellor, Central University of Kashmir; Prof Nilofer Khan, Vice Chancellor, University of Kashmir; Dr G V Sundep Chakravathy, SSP Srinagar; Akshay Labroo, Deputy Commissioner, Srinagar; senior officials, literary personalities, prominent citizens and youth.

## Sinha greets people on Int'l Yoga Day

This year's International Yoga Day theme is 'Yoga for Healthy Ageing'. Yoga stands as an invaluable treasure of our ancient Indian heritage, which harmonizes mind and body, bridges the bond between humanity and nature, and guides us toward a more holistic realm of health and happiness," the LG said.

"With rising stress and modern health challenges, yoga offers a powerful ray of hope. Let's take a step towards wellness today by participating and committing to a healthier lifestyle," he added.

## 8 SHOs honoured for role in Nasha Mukta Abhiyan

of the 50-day Nasha Mukta J&K Abhiyan 2026.

Those honoured include Rajbagh police station SHO, Insp Susheel Kumar, Samba police station SHO, Insp Pushpinder Singh, Janipur police station SHO, Insp Vikram Sharma, Billawar police station SHO, Insp Zaheer Mushtaq, Bahu Fort police station SHO, Insp Susheel Choudhary, Bari Brahmana police station SHO, Insp Sandeep Chib, Bani police station SHO, Insp Pawan Singh, and Kathua police station SHO, Insp Ashish Sharma.

## Retd ASI among 3 booked by CB

It said a preliminary inquiry revealed that the official had secured appointment in police by producing a fake 8th pass school leaving certificate.

The verification conducted through the chief education officer, Udhampur, confirmed that no such candidate existed in the records of the concerned government higher secondary school, Basantgarh, officials said, adding a departmental inquiry also recommended criminal action.

In the second case, the CB said a written complaint lodged by four persons alleged that Mohammad Younis and Sarfaraz Ahmed, both residents of Mendhar, has induced them to pay money on the false promise of securing jobs for their wards in MES.

The accused allegedly collected over Rs 6 lakh through cash and online transactions and later supplied fake appointment orders bearing forged stamp and signatures of the Chief Engineer, Headquarters Central Command, 56 APO. Officials said the verification established that the appointment orders had never been issued by the concerned authority and the documents were forged.

Accordingly, a formal FIR was registered at the crime branch for further action.

## 25 appointed as liaison officers for Par Panel visit

The officers are: Sheeba Inayat, Gulzar Ahmad Bhat, Bashir Ahmad Padder, Zahoor Ahmad Bhat, Mohammad Altaf Bhat, Mirza Shahid Ali Beigh, Aijaz Ahmad Shigon, Hakim Riyaz ul Haq, Mushtaq Ahmad Maqdoomi, Asif Amin Chandel, Ibad-ur-Rehman, Arshid Qadir Bhat, Altaf Hussain Bhat, Sakhi Mohammad Khan, Dr Iqbal Hussain Mir, Dr Irfan Ali Khan, Azhar Amin Zargar, Abdul Majeed Rather, Qaiser Mehmood, Mohammad Imran Naik, Tahira Tabasum, Tariq Ahmad, Mohammad Zubair Lattoo, Abdul Rashid Raina and Mohammad Yousf Ganaie.

## Union Home Secy reviews security, assesses preparations

the steps taken to secure the life and property of citizens in Jammu and Kashmir, officials said.

The home secretary was also briefed about the steps taken to maintain the prevailing peace and break the terror ecosystem in the Union Territory, officials said.

The officers also briefed the home secretary on measures undertaken to ensure smooth conduct of the pilgrimage, including deployment plans, convoy protection, emergency response, healthcare facilities, communication networks, and transportation services, the officials added.

Over the last few days, security forces have conducted a series of mock drills to assess and strengthen the security preparedness, emergency response mechanisms, and inter-agency coordination for the smooth and safe conduct of the annual pilgrimage.

Mohan arrived in Srinagar on Saturday. The visit comes at a time when security forces have intensified area domination exercises, route sanitisation and counter-terror surveillance measures across J&K, particularly in districts connected to the annual pilgrimage.

In recent weeks, multiple security audits, mock drills and

joint exercises involving police, CRPF, SDRF and other agencies have been conducted to ensure seamless coordination during the yatra period.

## India has always spread peace: Prez

dia spread the message of peace... Issues can be resolved through mutual discussion, not through war," she said, while addressing a public gathering at Rairangpur in Odisha's Mayurbhanj district, where she, along with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, attended the second anniversary celebrations of the state's BJP government.

India's glory has enhanced at the international level due to PM Modi's "influential leadership", she said, while praising him for his dedication towards the country and its people.

The entire world witnessed India's management skills during the COVID-19 pandemic. During that period, India not only successfully vaccinated its people, but also provided vaccines to several foreign countries, she said.

India has always been the first to extend a helping hand to countries facing natural calamities, she added.

## Strait of Hormuz closed again over 'enemy's breach of promise': Iran

But on Saturday (June 20, 2026), an Israeli military official said it was conducting fresh attacks against the Iran-backed movement, which it accused of having "launched more than 50 projectiles at Israeli forces in southern Lebanon" overnight.

Hezbollah said Israel had carried out "under the cover of the ceasefire... an infiltration attempt towards the Ali Taher hills", a strategic feature overlooking the city of Nabatieh, adding its fighters "confronted them with appropriate weapons".

## BJP shopping from other parties; common people suffering: Kharage

Citizens Party of India (NCPI) and extend their support to NDA. 7 AAP Rajya Sabha MPs merged with the BJP earlier this year.

## Blasts rock Northwest Pakistan; 7 killed, 3 injured

bereaved families, assuring them that the provincial government would provide all possible support during this difficult time.

He also instructed the relevant authorities to ensure the provision of the best possible medical treatment to those injured in the explosions.

"The provincial government will not leave the affected families alone in this hour of grief," the chief minister said. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Faisal Karim Kundi also condemned the blasts.

## BRICS NSAs' meet from June 22-23: MEA

They will discuss the rapidly evolving nature of national security challenges, as well as the role of new technologies in emerging security threats.

According to the statement, the National Security Advisers/Heads of Delegation will also review the outcomes of the recently held BRICS Joint Working Groups on Counter-Terrorism, and on Security in the use of Information and Communication Technologies.

The meeting comes as India holds the BRICS Chairship for the fourth time in 2026, having previously held it in 2012, 2016, and 2021.

India's BRICS Chairship is guided by the theme "Building for Resilience, Innovation, Cooperation and Sustainability", reflecting a people-centric and humanity-first approach articulated by Prime Minister Modi at the 2025 Rio Summit.

BRICS brings together eleven major emerging markets and developing countries of the world: Brazil, China, Egypt, Ethiopia, India, Indonesia, Iran, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, United Arab Emirates. It serves as a useful platform for consultation and cooperation on contemporary issues having global as well as regional significance, and issues of global political and economic governance.

The official website for BRICS 2026 highlights how the BRICS agenda has expanded considerably from its initial focus on economic issues of mutual concern and is structured around three core pillars-- political and security, economy and finance and cultural and people to people exchanges.

"BRICS cooperation continues to broaden its scope across a wide range of global issues, including fight against terrorism, climate change, food and energy security, the international economic and financial situation, telecommunications, agriculture, labour and employment, international financial architecture, trade, and the WTO," the official website highlighted.

## VP pays tributes to soldiers, visits key heritage sites in Ladakh

"I deeply appreciate the Indian Army for establishing and maintaining this memorial, which preserves the in-

spiring legacy, courage and sacrifices of our heroes and serves as a source of inspiration for present and future generations," the vice-president said on X.

He also visited galleries depicting operations during the Indo-Pak and Indo-China wars, describing them as a testament to the bravery, dedication and sacrifices of armed forces personnel.

Later, he visited the sacred Sindhu Ghat near Leh and offered prayers on the banks of the revered Sindhu River. He described the river as a timeless symbol of Bharat's civilisational heritage and cultural unity, inspiring generations through its enduring legacy.

During his tour, Radhakrishnan also visited the Pashmina Goat Farm at Upshi, where he reviewed efforts aimed at preserving and promoting Ladakh's renowned Pashmina heritage.

He praised the role of Changthangi goats and the globally acclaimed Pashmina wool industry in sustaining local livelihoods and preserving the region's rich cultural traditions.

The vice-president commended the work of scientists, staff and local stakeholders associated with the farm, noting that their efforts were strengthening rural livelihoods, promoting women's economic participation and safeguarding a valuable national asset.

He also visited the first rock check dam on the Sindhu River at Upshi, constructed under the Sindhu Jal Samridhi Abhiyan. Appreciating the eco-friendly and cost-effective initiative, he said such locally adapted interventions could significantly enhance water security, support agriculture and contribute to the long-term development of Ladakh.

Radhakrishnan also interacted with personnel of the 5th Battalion of the Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) and commended their unwavering dedication, professionalism and steadfast commitment to guarding the nation's frontiers under some of the most challenging conditions.

He expressed the gratitude of the people of India for the force's selfless service and sacrifices, stating that their efforts play a vital role in ensuring the country's security and territorial integrity.

He arrived in Ladakh on Friday and received a traditional welcome on his first official visit to the union Territory.

## Art 370 abrogation has changed mindset: Jitendra

that in the mindset. Today, children from small towns are topping exams... This aspirational surge took place, and they felt a feeling of belongingness, which wasn't there before, because of Article 370, they considered themselves different, and the people who were outsiders, also saw them as different," he said.

"Daughters didn't have rights over their property, and people who came from Pakistan didn't have the right to vote. Now, they feel that they too are equal citizens of India," he added.

The BJP-led government at the Centre repealed Article 370 from Jammu and Kashmir in August 2019 and bifurcated the erstwhile state into two Union Territories of J&K and Ladakh.

Dr Singh reaffirmed the government's firm stance on Pakistan-occupied Jammu and Kashmir (PoJK) and said 'Prime Minister Narendra Modi is the only leader capable of tackling the outstanding issue of the region's re-integration into the country'.

## Lok Bhavan hosts 'Milan Prog' to celebrate West Bengal foundation day

days of various states embody the true spirit of Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat by strengthening the bonds of national unity through cultural exchange and mutual understanding.

"These programmes bring people together and foster a sense of belonging, ensuring that individuals living away from their home states continue to feel connected to their roots while becoming an integral part of the larger national family," he said.

"The Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat initiative promotes mutual respect for India's linguistic, cultural and regional diversity while reinforcing the spirit of national integration. While unity in diversity remains India's greatest strength, it is equally important to preserve and promote the unique cultures, languages and traditions of individual states," he added.

"Our rich cultural heritage can be preserved only when these values and traditions are passed on to future generations," the governor said.

The participants shared insights into West Bengal's vibrant cultural legacy, traditions, festivals, literature, art and cuisine, and engaged in a meaningful interaction with the Governor.

Governor's secretary Sandeep Bhardwaj was also present on the occasion.

## Secretary RDD reviews sanitation preparedness near Holy Cave for SANJY-2026

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS  
BALTAL, JUNE 20

Secretary, Rural Development Department (RDD) and Panchayati Raj, Mohammad Aijaz Asad, today undertook an extensive review of sanitation arrangements and allied facilities from Baltal Base Camp to the Holy Cave Shrine and Panjtarni to assess preparedness for the forthcoming Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra (SANJY)-2026.

The Secretary conducted an extensive field visit along the Yatra route, covering key locations including Baltal, Domail, Rail Pathri, Brari Marg, Kali Mata Track, Sangam Top, Sangam Down, the Holy Cave Shrine and Panjtarni.

Commencing his tour from Baltal Base Camp, the Secretary reviewed the sanitation infrastructure and facilities established along the entire Baltal axis up to the Holy Cave. He was accompanied by Director General, Rural Sanitation, Anoo Malhotra, sanitation officers (BDOs) deployed at various locations and other departmental officials.

At the Holy Cave Shrine area, the Secretary took a first-hand appraisal of the sanitation arrangements and later visited Panjtarni to assess the infrastructure and public amenities put in place for the annual pilgrimage.

During the visit, Aijaz Asad reviewed sanitation facilities, health camps, solid waste management systems and other essential amenities established for the convenience of pilgrims. He assessed the overall preparedness and stressed the need to ensure that all facilities remain fully functional and operational well before the commencement of the Yatra.

The Secretary also visited health camps and reviewed the waste management mechanisms put in place across camps and designated locations. He was informed that a four-stream waste segregation system has been introduced for effective and scientific management of waste generated during the pilgrimage.

Emphasising environmental sustainability, he directed officers to ensure strict adherence to



waste segregation protocols and maintain cleanliness along the entire route. He reviewed the functioning of toilets, washrooms, dustbins, grey water drainage systems, wet waste segregation sites and plastic waste management units. He also examined the placement of dustbins at strategic locations to facilitate waste disposal at source and promote cleanliness among pilgrims. While reviewing arrangements at the Holy Cave Shrine area, the Secretary directed officials to ensure regular cleaning, proper maintenance and periodic upkeep of the installed toilets and bathing facilities so that hygienic and dignified amenities are available to pilgrims throughout the Yatra.

Taking stock of the sanitation workforce deployed along the Baltal axis, he instructed officers to ensure adequate manpower at all locations and maintain the highest standards of hygiene and cleanliness throughout the Yatra period. He underscored that all tracks leading to the Holy Cave must remain clean, hygienic and pilgrim-friendly at all times.

The Secretary further directed that dedicated toilet facilities for women pilgrims be earmarked at all major locations with proper and clearly visible signage to ensure convenience, accessibility and dignity for female devotees.

Reviewing the overall sanitation and support arrangements, he instructed all executing agencies to accord top priority to ensuring seamless operation of facilities, strengthening solid waste management systems and undertaking all necessary measures for the smooth conduct of the Yatra. Advocating sustainable waste management practices, Aijaz Asad called for the adoption of a zero-landfill approach along the entire pilgrimage route to minimise environmental impact and ensure scientific disposal of waste. Reiterating the Government's commitment to providing safe, clean and efficient facilities to pilgrims, the Secretary stressed the need for close coordination among all stakeholder departments and agencies to ensure seamless arrangements for the successful conduct of Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra-2026.