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Modi showcases India's cultural heritage to Seychelles leadership

bastien Pillay, was gifted a magnificent Kanchivaram Silk Fabric by Prime Minister Modi.

Renowned for its luxurious texture and exceptional durability, this textile originates from the historic temple town of Kanchipuram in Tamil Nadu. The fabric features a rich maroon field decorated with gold zari motifs and is framed by a striking border of red, green and gold.

Inspired by traditional temple architecture and nature, this Geographical Indication (GI)-tagged and One District One Product (ODOP)-recognised silk represents the peak of Indian handloom weaving.

Seychelles National Assembly Speaker Azarel Ernesta received a Toda Embroidered Shawl, completing the cultural offerings.

This distinguished textile is crafted entirely by hand by the Toda community, an indigenous pastoral people inhabiting the Nilgiri Hills of Tamil Nadu. Woven on a white cotton base, it features bold red and black geometric embroidery executed via a unique, age-old hand-weaving technique known as Pukhoor.

Traditionally worn during sacred ceremonies, the shawl represents the preservation of indigenous knowledge and mirrors Seychelles' own steadfast commitment to protecting its unique cultural heritage.

The Prime Minister wrapped up his landmark three-day visit on Monday, leaving for India after sealing 19 significant geopolitical outcomes across sectors like defence, space and healthcare, and being conferred with the 'Guardian of the Blue Horizon' honour by President Herminie.

Omar reviews preparations, lays roadmap for mega event

meaningfully integrated with the film festival through exhibitions, facilitating networking opportunities and business engagements.

He instructed the organisers to facilitate structured interactions between local talent and eminent national and international filmmakers, producers, directors, actors and industry experts through master-class & in-conversation sessions, workshops, panel discussions, mentoring sessions and knowledge-sharing programmes.

Such engagements, he said, would provide aspiring professionals from Jammu & Kashmir with global exposure, technical expertise and industry networks while encouraging innovation and excellence in filmmaking.

He also called for instituting a special segment to recognise distinguished actors, filmmakers, directors, producers, cinematographers, musicians and other cinema personalities who had played a significant role in keeping Jammu & Kashmir's cinematic legacy alive by creating memorable films in the region over the decades.

Recognising their contribution, he said, would celebrate J&K's enduring association with Indian cinema while inspiring a renewed partnership between the film industry and the UT.

Highlighting the festival's wider developmental potential, the chief minister said it should also create meaningful opportunities for local artisans, craftspeople, entrepreneurs, tourism stakeholders, ensuring that the benefits of the event extend well beyond the film fraternity. He directed the concerned departments to make the festival a comprehensive celebration of Jammu & Kashmir's artistic, cultural and entrepreneurial excellence.

During the meeting, detailed discussions were held on the festival's branding strategy, global outreach, programming, digital engagement, technical collaborations, venue management, audience experience, promotional campaigns and institutional partnerships. The proposed festival will feature international competition, Indian cinema, documentaries, short films, student films, animation, regional cinema, industry forums, workshops and cultural programmes.

The proposed four-day festival, scheduled to be held in September 2026, will host screenings across multiple venues, offering an immersive experience for filmmakers, delegates and audiences.

The meeting also reviewed proposals for developing a dedicated digital ecosystem, including a festival website and an AI-enabled mobile application to facilitate film submissions, registrations, accreditation, scheduling, audience engagement, media outreach and real-time festival management. Plans for an integrated social media campaign and global promotional strategy also came up for discussion.

Proposals related to technical partnerships with premier film institutions for festival curation, jury support, capacity building and specialized training for local youth were also deliberated upon. The festival is expected to bring together eminent filmmakers, actors, producers, technicians, film critics and cultural personalities from India and abroad.

Reiterating his vision, Abdullah said the International Film Festival should firmly establish Jammu & Kashmir as a world-class destination for cinema while leveraging the opportunities created under the J&K Film Policy to attract greater investment, film productions and creative enterprises.

He directed all concerned departments to work in close coordination and ensure timely completion of all preparatory activities for the successful conduct of the inaugural festival.

The meeting was attended by CM's advisor Nasir Aslam Wani, additional chief secretary to CM, Dheeraj Gupta, additional chief secretary (finance) Shailendra Kumar, information secretary R Alice Vaz, floriculture, parks & gardens secretary Zubair Ahmad, director information Shreya Singhal, joint director information, Kashmir, Syed Shah Nawaz Bukhari, joint director information, Jammu, Deepak Dubey, senior officers from tourism and GAD, representatives of NFDC and other concerned officers.

Yatra briefings restricted to div coms, IGPs

Similarly, the divisional commissioner, Kashmir, and the IGP, Kashmir, have been designated as the authorised spokespersons for Kashmir division.

The circular states that the designated officers will conduct press briefings on all aspects of the annual pilgrimage and will closely coordinate with the Information Department and Shri Amarnathji Shrine Board to ensure accurate and timely dissemination of information.

The order has been issued by the tourism department under the approval of financial commissioner (additional chief secretary) Ashish Chandra Verma and circulated to all administrative departments and senior officials for compliance.

Vistadome train operations curtailed

icant step towards enhancing passenger experience and connectivity.

Launched in October 2023, the Vistadome train service in Kashmir features specialised coaches with 360-degree rotating seats, large glass windows and glass roofs for a panoramic view of the valley.

"For the information of the passengers, it is informed that Train No. 04688/04687 Vistadome Special will run up to Banihal instead of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra from July 1 to August 31 or until further orders," a spokesperson of the Jammu railway division said.

Officials said the temporary curtailment follows a recommendation from the security agencies as part of the arrangements for the smooth conduct of the annual Amarnath Yatra, which is scheduled to commence on July 3 and conclude on August 28, coinciding with Raksha Bandhan.

ACB arrests 2 revenue officials in graft case

plainant for issuing two fards (revenue extracts). Unwilling to pay the bribe, the complainant approached ACB and sought legal action against the accused, officials said.

Following the complaint, ACB conducted a discreet verification, which established a prima facie case of bribery.

Accordingly, an FIR was registered at Police Station ACB Central, Jammu, under section 7 of the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988, and section 61(2) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS).

During investigation, ACB constituted a team, which successfully laid a trap and caught the accused red-handed while allegedly demanding and accepting the bribe amount of Rs 70,000 from the complainant.

Both the accused were arrested on the spot, and the bribe money was recovered from their possession in the presence of independent witnesses, officials said.

Searches were also conducted at the residential premises of both the accused in the presence of executive magistrates, the officials added.

Further investigation was underway.

ACC approves key appointments

cial Protection Group (SPG) with immediate effect from the date he assumes charge.

The appointment has been made by temporarily upgrading one vacant post in the SPG to Level-16 until further orders or until the post is required, whichever is earlier. As per the order, Amit Kumar will take over as Director, Special Protection Group, after the completion of the tenure of the incumbent Shri Alok Sharma, IPS (Uttar Pradesh Cadre: 1991) on March 31, 2027.

In a separate decision, the ACC approved the re-appointment of Shri Ravi Agrawal as Chairman, Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) on a contract basis for a period of six months, from July 1, 2026, to December 31, 2026, or until further orders, whichever is earlier.

The DoPT order stated that Ravi Agrawal's re-appointment will be governed by the usual terms and conditions applicable to re-employed Central Government officers, in accordance with the relevant Recruitment Rules.

The two appointments are part of the Centre's ongoing administrative decisions aimed at ensuring continuity in leadership at key security and revenue institutions.

Mahesh Dixit takes over as IB chief

Pradesh cadre (now serving Telangana), will head the premier internal intelligence agency for a two-year tenure.

His appointment was cleared last week by the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC), chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Prior to his elevation, Dixit was serving as the Special Director in the IB, and was in-charge of counter-terror desk besides overseeing other departments of strategic importance.

A qualified medical doctor-turned-law enforcement professional, Dixit brings nearly three decades of extensive experience to the top post. Within the security establishment, he is widely recognised for his strong ground-level intelligence network and sharp counter-terrorism acumen.

Throughout his career, Dixit has managed diverse and sensitive portfolios, ranging from operations in the Northeast and Ladakh to handling anti-Naxal desks, Tourist Destinations

While serving in Telangana, his collaborative efforts with the state IB and state police were instrumental in building what is widely considered one of India's best counter-terrorism units, particularly at a time when Hyderabad had emerged as a key hub for pan-Islamic terrorist outfits, including the Indian Mujahideen and HUIJ.

He also had a stint at the Indian mission in Moscow.

As the head of the Subsidiary Intelligence Bureau (SIB) in Srinagar, Dixit is credited by officials with playing a pivotal role in maintaining internal stability in Jammu and Kashmir following the abrogation of Article 370.

Last year, acting on an initial lead from the Srinagar police, he was instrumental in successfully busting a major "white-collar" terror network in the valley.

Dixit is considered in the intelligence fraternity as "finest mind" and is widely recognised within the security establishment for his measured approach to crisis management.

He was appreciated during his recent tenure in Jammu and Kashmir, where he handled most volatile security challenges during the post-Article 370 time during which he kept a tight vigil on separatist networks and monitoring shifting regional threats, while simultaneously fostering much-needed operational synergy among different wings of the security forces on the ground.

Dixit was also praised when climate activist Sonam Wangchuk launched high-profile protests in 2024 demanding full statehood and Sixth Schedule inclusion for the Ladakh region.

Known across power corridors as an exceptional crisis manager, Deka served as the head of the IB's operations wing for over two decades before becoming its director. An expert in operations, Deka led the successful crackdown against the Indian Mujahideen network in the 2000s.

Wars will be more integrated, theatre-oriented: Gen Dwivedi

try's bravehearts.

"On the day of relinquishing the appointment of Chief of the Army Staff, General Upendra Dwivedi laid a wreath at the National War Memorial, paying homage to the indomitable courage, unwavering valour and supreme sacrifice of the bravehearts who laid down their lives in service of the nation," the Army said in a post on X, sharing photos of the visit.

Gen Dwivedi told reporters that in the past two years, the Indian Army has maintained its operational readiness in a progressive manner on all fronts.

On the northern border, under Operation Snow Leopard, "our deployment is firm and vigilant", he said.

"On the western border too, the Army has done its duty with complete seriousness and readiness. Operation Sindoer is a burning example," he asserted.

The Army chief underlined that by working for national security with responsibility, the armed forces have "defined a new normal".

During Operation Sindoer in May 2025 in response to the Pahalgam terror attack, all three services of the armed forces worked with jointness and integration.

"The coordination among the three services got strengthened. The Army, the Navy and the Indian Air Force worked together with shared thinking and integration," he said.

"In future, wars will be more joint, integrated and theatre-oriented. So, our direction is clear a€" to see together, make decisions together and take actions together," he said.

An alumnus of the Sainik School in Rewa, Madhya Pradesh, Gen Dwivedi was commissioned into the Jammu and Kashmir Rifles in 1984. Geographic Reference

The general officer has a unique distinction of balanced command as well as staff exposure across Northern, Eastern and Western theatres, in varied operational environments.

"Our unwavering soldiers remain steadfast in mountains, deserts, glaciers, jungles and inhospitable border areas in defence of the nation," he said.

Lt Gen Dhiraj Seth, the Vice Chief of the Army Staff, is set to take over as the next Army chief shortly.

"Today, I am handing over the responsibility to Gen Dhiraj Seth. He is an experienced soldier, and an able leader. I am fully confident that under his leadership, the Indian Army with its glorious traditions, professionalism and resolve will reach greater heights," Gen Dwivedi said.

He also said the modernisation process in the Army is continuous, and in the past two years, work has been done swiftly on force restructuring, technology absorption, jointness, system reforms and human resource management.

The Army said in a separate post on X, "His (Gen Dwivedi's) distinguished career of over four decades reflects a legacy of selfless service, inspirational leadership and unwavering commitment to the nation, leaving an enduring imprint on the Indian Army and its continued journey towards transformation."

Gen Dhiraj Seth takes charge as new Army Chief

the 1.3 million-strong force at a time when it is forging a path to become a self-reliant and future-ready Army while meeting challenges on the borders.

The general officer succeeded Gen Upendra Dwivedi, who retired today after an illustrious career spanning over 40 years in the armed forces.

Gen Seth is an alumnus of the National Defence Academy (NDA), Khadakwasla. He was commissioned into the Armoured Corps in December 1986.

Prior to becoming the 31st Chief of the Army Staff (COAS), he served as the Vice Chief of Army Staff.

Gen Seth took over as the COAS at a time when the global geo-strategic environment remains dynamic, with challenges in the security domain becoming more pronounced due to technological advancements and the ever-changing character of modern warfare.

Tenanting pivotal appointments earlier in strategic planning and capability development verticals of the Army Headquarters, he shaped its modernisation trajectory, capability roadmap and long-term force structuring initiatives.

Prior to his appointment as the Vice Chief of the Army Staff on April 1, he headed the Pune-based Southern Command, and under his leadership, the elite command maintained a high degree of operational readiness during the Operation Sindoer last year.

In nearly four decades, he built an exceptional operational profile across diverse terrains and conflict environments, including counter-insurgency experience.

Heavy motor vehicle movement restricted on NH

advisories for exact cut-off timings.

Regarding heavy vehicles, the advisory stated that HMVs will be allowed to ply on alternate days only, depending on the prevailing traffic situation. No HMV will be permitted from Qazigund or Jakheni after 7 pm during the yatra period.

Traffic police have advised operators carrying fresh produce, perishable goods and livestock to plan their movement accordingly to avoid inconvenience.

Traffic police also said that after the cut-off timings, intra-district movement of local commuters across Jammu and Kashmir would be facilitated only after verification of valid photo identity cards, which commuters must carry during the yatra period.

The authorities have appealed to the public to plan their journeys in advance and cooperate with traffic police and other agencies for smooth and safe conduct of the Shri Amarnathji Yatra.

Strong economy, national security pillars of great nation: Def Min

India Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Since he became Prime Minister, India's prestige has risen on the global stage. Today, when India speaks at international forums, the world listens attentively. The credit for this goes to Narendra Modi, who was born to a Gujarati mother," he said.

The defence minister said the Vibrant Gujarat initiative, launched by PM Narendra Modi in 2003 during his tenure as Gujarat Chief Minister, had transformed into a broader movement over the past two decades.

"The Vibrant Gujarat platform reflects the vibrancy of the people and industries of Gujarat. It was founded in 2003 by the then Chief Minister Narendra Modi. Today, it has become a broad movement linked to the vision of a developed India. Over the last two decades, it has brought unprecedented transformation to Gujarat, and today Gujarat has become the growth engine of India," he said.

The defence minister said great nations stand on three strong pillars.

"Great nations stand on three strong foundations--economic strength, technological strength and national security. These three are deeply interconnected. Where there is economic prosperity and technological advancement, security becomes stronger. And where national security is strong, industries and innovation flourish," Singh said.

Referring to the changing global geopolitical environment, the Defence Minister said India's future role on the world stage would depend on its self-reliance, technological capabilities and collective resolve.

"In the changing geopolitical environment, India's self-reliance, technological capability and collective resolve will determine the country's role on the global stage in the coming decades," he said.

Shah launches FCRA 2.0 portal

bution (Regulation) Act. All key processes related to applications, renewals, annual returns, and other services have now been fully digitised.

Currently, there are approximately 14,500 active FCRA organisations across the country, receiving approximately 15,000 to 20,000 applications and around 17,000 annual returns. Hosted on the National Government Cloud (Meghraj), the portal includes features such as process restructuring, an integrated dashboard, Aadhaar-based authentication, e-sign facility, and OCR-based document analysis.

For organisations, the portal reduces paperwork. For the government, API-based integration with key databases makes verification faster and more accurate, improves compliance monitoring, and ensures effective oversight of the receipt and use of foreign contributions.

Meanwhile, under the e-OCI system, applicants can complete the entire OCI process online, submitting an application, uploading supporting documents, and downloading a digitally generated card upon approval, while existing cardholders can receive their e-OCI card digitally, in most cases without a new application or physical verification. Under the new system, the requirement for re-issuing an OCI booklet upon obtaining a new passport after the age of 20 has been eliminated; however, cardholders will be required to update their passport details online upon issuance of a new passport, the ministry said.

Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) Scheme was introduced in August 2005, and provides for registration as OCI of all Persons of Indian Origin (PIOs) who were citizens of India on January 26, 1950 or thereafter or were eligible to become citizens of India on January 26, 1950 except who is or had been a citizen of Pakistan, Bangladesh or such other country notified by the Centre.

The launch of the FCRA 2.0 portal comes days after the Home Ministry notified the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Amendment Rules, 2026, introducing a detailed framework classifying permissible activities under the religious category while also tightening compliance requirements for organisations receiving foreign funding in India.

The amendment modifies the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Rules, 2011, and introduces a dedicated schedule outlining activities eligible for registration for religious purposes. The listed activities include construction, renovation and maintenance of places of worship such as temples, mosques, churches, gurudwaras, monasteries, synagogues and other religious sites.

The rules further restrict eligibility by stating that organisations with foreign nationals (other than those of Indian origin) as key functionaries will generally not qualify for registration, unless specifically permitted.

In another significant change, NGOs will be required to utilise at least 75 per cent of previously received foreign funds before being eligible for subsequent instalments. Additional provisions define "reasonable activity" thresholds linked to fund utilisation over a specified period.

2 killed in truck-tractor collision

sustained injuries and were shifted to the district hospital at Ramban. One of the injured, identified as Subash, son of Norang Lal of Rajasthan, later succumbed to his injuries, officials said.

The injured were shifted to hospital by a police rescue team, officials said.

A registered in this connection was registered at Chandernokote police station.

J&K Bank marks 1 yr of Mission YUVA with mega credit drive

ing Chief General Manager Ashutosh Sareen, General Manager (RAM) Rakesh Magotra, and DGMs Tanveer Hussain and Arjun Singh Rathore, participated along with divisional, zonal and cluster heads from Jammu and Kashmir.

Under Mission YUVA, J&K Bank has so far sanctioned over 28,400 cases amounting to more than Rs 1,300 cr, underlining its crucial role in ensuring timely financial assistance to aspiring entrepreneurs across the region.

Expressing satisfaction over the progress made during the first year of Mission YUVA, Amitava Chatterjee lauded the bank's workforce for its contribution to the programme's successful implementation.

He said the real success of Mission YUVA should now be measured not just by the number of disbursements but by the sustainable businesses created under the scheme. He emphasised that beneficiaries must be able to build viable enterprises, generate stable revenues, and create employment opportunities.

Setting an ambitious target for the current financial year, the MD & CEO said, "The bank aims to raise the cumulative number of Mission YUVA disbursements to 50,000 by the end of the financial year." He expressed confidence in achieving this milestone.

He also urged operational heads to closely monitor fund utilization in already disbursed cases and continue guiding entrepreneurs to ensure optimal outcomes.

Earlier, Rakesh Magotra briefed the management on the Bank's performance under Mission YUVA and stressed the importance of post-disbursement monitoring, entrepreneur handholding, and financial discipline to ensure long-term sustainability.

Meanwhile, Mission Director, Mission YUVA, Harvinder Singh praised the Bank's performance, describing J&K Bank as the principal implementation partner of the programme.

He commended the Bank's proactive approach, timely credit delivery, and dedicated support to entrepreneurs, stating that its efforts have significantly advanced the Government's vision of entrepreneurship-led employment generation in Jammu and Kashmir.

Mission YUVA has emerged as a key catalyst for entrepreneurship-driven development in Jammu and Kashmir by improving access to institutional credit for youth. Over the past year, J&K Bank has played a pivotal role in supporting thousands of young entrepreneurs, contributing to employment generation, livelihood creation, and inclusive economic growth across the Union Territory.

Kavinder calls for equal opportunities for persons with disabilities

more independent and productive lives.

The beneficiaries, belonging to different age groups, had travelled from Una, Kangra, Rohru, Shimla and Sirmour districts to receive the assistive devices. The distribution followed a registration and assessment camp organized by ACT Humane at the State Red Cross Building on June 4, where eligible beneficiaries were identified and their individual requirements were assessed by experts.

Addressing the beneficiaries, the governor said that the central government under the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi had accorded high priority to the welfare and empowerment of persons with disabilities.

He said that the landmark initiatives, such as the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, accessible public infrastructure under the Accessible India Campaign, inclusive education, skill development programmes and technological innovations in assistive devices, had significantly enhanced opportunities for persons with disabilities across the country.

"These efforts reflect the government's commitment to building an inclusive society where every citizen can participate with dignity and confidence," he added.

"True development can be achieved only when every section of society is provided equal opportunities to participate in the nation's progress. Persons with disabilities are an integral part of society and possess immense talent, determination and resilience," he said and urged them to remain optimistic, continue striving towards their goals and become a source of inspiration for others by overcoming challenges with courage and confidence.

Emphasising the importance of collective responsibility, Gupta said that governments, voluntary organisations and society must work together to ensure that persons with disabilities had equal access to education, healthcare, employment and social participation.

He appreciated the efforts of ACT Humane and the Himachal Pradesh State Red Cross Society for reaching out to those in need and providing them with life-changing support.

The governor also interacted with the beneficiaries and expressed hope that the prosthetic limbs and assistive devices would not only restore their mobility but also strengthen their confidence to pursue education, employment and other aspirations with renewed determination.

He wished them a bright, healthy and self-reliant future.

Earlier, ACT Humane founder Harleen Kaur welcomed the governor and highlighted the organisation's humanitarian initiatives. "ACT Humane has organised artificial limb distribution camps across Solan, Kangra, Dharamshala and Mandi, providing free prosthetic limbs to numerous persons with disabilities, besides extending financial assistance to needy patients for medical treatment," she said.

She also informed that the organisation had developed disability-friendly parks in Solan and Shimla to promote accessibility and inclusive public spaces.

Governor's secretary Sandeep Bhardwaj, NGO manager Yogesh Sharma, officers of the Lok Bhavan and other dignitaries were among those present on the occasion.

Major operational breakthrough for SFs; top OGW held

tion with terrorists, and his terrorist contacts in Pakistan, officials said.

Officials said the initial probe found out that the accused was a key facilitator linked to Pakistan-based terrorists and had played a crucial role in assisting the infiltration of more than a dozen terrorists into the Indian territory over the years. Preliminary investigations also revealed that the OGW had remained in contact with Pakistani handlers for several years and provided logistical support to infiltrating terrorists, officials said.

His sustained questioning was in progress, the officials added.

Police have termed his arrest as vital from security point of view, given the fact that there have some successful infiltration attempts by the Pak-based terrorists in Kathua district during the past some time.

There have been instances when locals picked up the movement of 'suspects' in the border areas of Kathua and reported the matter to security forces but they remained untraced most of the times.