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## India, Australia seal key pacts in uranium, LNG, defence

like India and Australia," he said.

"Today, we have issued an important Joint Declaration to enhance cooperation in defence and security. Through the India-Australia Defence Innovation Corridor, we will work to connect defence startups and industries," he said.

The prime minister said the India-Australia Maritime Security Collaboration Roadmap will give new impetus to shared efforts in the Indo-Pacific.

"We will also move forward together in shipbuilding, ship repair, and maintenance," he said.

Modi also said that India and Australia recognised that terrorism poses a serious challenge not just to any one country, but to all of humanity.

"Therefore, our fight against terrorism is shared, our resolve unwavering, and our cooperation continues to strengthen," he said.

"We also believe that the tensions and conflicts raging in many parts of the world can only be resolved through dialogue and diplomacy. Together, we will further strengthen peace, stability, freedom of navigation, and a rules-based order throughout the Indo-Pacific region," he said.

In his remarks, Albanese said Australia's relationship with India has never been more consequential than it is today.

The Australian prime minister said the pact on nuclear energy will facilitate uranium exports from Australia to India for peaceful purposes.

"The arrangement facilitates Australian uranium exports to India to help increase the share of non-fossil fuel power capacity, providing an additional market for the Australian resources sector," he said.

Albanese said the two sides are focusing on diversifying ties to grow from strength-to-strength.

"Six years into our strategic partnership, Australia's relationship with India has never been more consequential than it is today. Our partnership has never been stronger," he said.

"We share a focus on deepening and diversifying the relationship between our countries so we can continue to grow from strength to strength."

"Today, we have done exactly that across the breadth of our relationship. With new landmark agreements, we are expanding our relationship across defence and security education, science and technology and energy security and critical minerals," he said.

Albanese said the joint declaration on defence and security cooperation will provide for deepening "practical partnership".

"Australia values India as a top-tier security partner and the declaration reflects our shared commitment to a peaceful, stable and prosperous Indo-Pacific region."

"We will boost strategic coordination, increase the complexity of our defence exercises and further build interoperability between our defence forces," he said.

## LG reviews yatra arrangements, interacts with pilgrims

He emphasised the need to maintain a close coordination and vigilance in ensuring effective crowd management, hassle-free registration process and dissemination of timely information updates to pilgrims throughout the pilgrimage.

He also directed for strict legal action against those found involved in fraudulent registration practices.

The LG was accompanied by DGP Nalin Prabhat, Shri Amarnathji Shrine Board CEO Mandeep K Bhandari, IGP (Kashmir) V K Birdi, divisional commissioner Anshul Garg, CIR DIG Rajiv Pandey, SSP (Srinagar) G V Sundesh Chakravarthy, deputy commissioner (Srinagar) Akshay Labroo, municipal commissioner (Srinagar) Faz Lul Haseeb and other senior officers.

## Spillway gates of Salal Dam opened

few days, which has significantly raised the reservoir level.

"Authorities are closely monitoring the situation and have advised people living along the Chenab banks to remain alert and avoid venturing close to the river as water discharge is expected to increase," officials said.

"The opening of the spillway gates forms part of the standard reservoir management protocol to maintain the structural safety of the dam during periods of high inflow," the officials added.

## Chief Sey assesses status of arrangements for ongoing Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra

**SRINAGAR, JULY 09:** Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, today chaired a high-level review meeting to assess the arrangements put in place for the ongoing Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra-2026 and issued directions for further strengthening the facilities and services being provided to the pilgrims to ensure the safe, smooth and hassle-free conduct of the annual pilgrimage.

The meeting was attended by senior officers from the Civil Administration, Shrine Board, and security establishments, including Administrative Secretaries, senior officers of Police, CAPFs, BRO/BEACON, Heads of Departments, Divisional Commissioner, Kashmir.

Deputy Commissioners/SSPs of Anantnag and Ganderbal; Director Information; besides other concerned officers.

Reviewing the progress of the Yatra, the Chief Secretary took note of the extensive arrangements made and their further augmentation in view of the unprecedented response from pilgrims this year. It was informed that the pilgrimage has witnessed an overwhelming turnout since the commencement of yatra this year.

The meeting held detailed deliberations on the recommendations presented by the Chief Executive Officer, Shri Amarnath Ji Shrine Board, Dr. Mandeep K. Bhandari based on the reports of various committees constituted to assess the status of arrangements on the ground.

The discussions focused on identify-

ing additional measures required to make the arrangements more robust, reliable and responsive to the needs of the pilgrims.

The meeting reviewed the status of infrastructure and facilities at Yatra camps, langars and along both the Baltal and Pahalgam routes. It was highlighted that the recommendations include complete tiling of the pilgrimage track up to the Holy Cave Shrine to enhance the safety of pilgrims, widening of narrow stretches of the track and bridges at vulnerable locations to prevent overcrowding, construction of retaining walls in landslide-prone areas, augmentation of rain shelters and waiting sheds, installation of iron barricades for effective queue management, and ensuring adequate availability of palkis and stretchers for prompt evacuation during medical emergencies.

The meeting also comprehensively reviewed the availability of essential public amenities across the Yatra camps and holding areas. These included adequate toilet and bathing facilities, uninterrupted drinking water supply, regular sanitation and cleanliness of camps, scientific waste management, and efficient functioning of first-aid and medical facilities.

Moreover the need for installation of additional digital display boards for dissemination of advisories, strengthening fire fighting infrastructure, and enhancing disaster preparedness through adequate mitigation equip-

## Mortar shell defused

Security forces also carried out searches in the field but no more explosive device was found, the officials added.

## SPO disengaged for dereliction of duty

sent without seeking prior permission or furnishing any satisfactory explanation, which was viewed as a serious act of negligence and dereliction of duty during one of the Jammu and Kashmir's most sensitive security operations, officials said.

Taking a serious view of the misconduct, the SSP Anantnag ordered the immediate disengagement of the SPO from service, reaffirming the department's zero-tolerance policy towards indiscipline and negligence, the officials added.

## Narcotics worth Rs 2.33 cr destroyed

a Kathua police team after obtaining approval from the competent authority and following the prescribed legal procedure, officials said.

The narcotics had been seized in 43 cases registered under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act and were stored in various police station malkhanas before being disposed of after completion of all legal formalities, the officials added.

## Govt forms committee to implement health reforms

alia, facilitate the coordination, implementation, monitoring and periodic review of health reform initiatives undertaken by the health & medical education department, says the order.

## India, Russia condemn Pahalgam attack, Red Fort blast

terrorist groups, including those listed in the UNSC 1267 Sanctions Committee and their proxy groups and affiliates," it said.

The two sides also shared their experiences in counter-terroring terrorism and "agreed to enhance cooperation" to address challenges of violent extremism, radicalisation, terror financing and the use of new and emerging technologies and digital financial technologies for terrorist purposes, the MEA said.

They discussed the current and emerging terrorist threats at the global and regional levels.

"Both sides reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening counter-terrorism cooperation in bilateral as well as multilateral platforms including at the UN, BRICS, EAG and SCO. The two sides agreed to hold the next meeting of the Joint Working Group on Counter Terrorism in Russia on a mutually convenient date," it added.

On April 22 last year, terrorists killed 26 people, mostly tourists, at Pahalgam in south Kashmir.

The dastardly act had shaken the nation and drawn condemnation from governments and leaders across the world. On the evening of November 10 last year, a car explosion near the Red Fort complex in Delhi claimed 15 lives.

## EAM reviews India-Kuwait strategic ties

of defence and foreign affairs. The discussions provided an opportunity to review the India-Kuwait Strategic Partnership and exchange views on regional and global issues of mutual interest, the Ministry of External Affairs said.

Jaishankar visited Qatar and Bahrain earlier this week, where the leadership of the Gulf states shared their assessment of the situation in West Asia with him. Jaishankar will travel to Oman next.

According to sources, New Delhi is also in contact with the Iranian authorities to secure safe passage for at least nine tankers laden with oil and liquefied petroleum gas waiting to transit the Strait of Hormuz.

Nearly 10 million Indians live and work in West Asia, and India relies heavily on the region for its energy supplies.

## 8th batch of 8,150 pilgrims leaves for holy cave shrine

that only registered pilgrims would be permitted to proceed to Kashmir, while unregistered devotees would be stopped at designated checkpoints until fresh registration quotas become available.

The 57-day pilgrimage to the cave shrine was officially flagged off by LG Manoj Sinha on July 2 morning from

Bhagwati Nagar base camp here simultaneously for the traditional 48-km Nunwan-Pahalgam route in Anantnag district and the shorter but steeper 14-km Baltal route in Ganderbal district. The yatra will conclude on August 28.

Authorities have put in place multi-layered security arrangements along the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway and at all transit camps to ensure the safe and smooth movement of the yatra convoys. A multi-tier security setup has been activated in and around the Bhagwati Nagar base camp.

The commencement of the yatra marks the beginning of one of the country's most revered spiritual pilgrimages and reflects the coordinated efforts of the administration and all stakeholder departments to facilitate a secure, seamless and memorable pilgrimage experience for every devotee.

Traffic restrictions will remain in force on various stretches of the highway till August 28, with daily advisories and sector-wise cut-off timings to regulate traffic, officials said.

## Hunt continues for 2nd terrorist

to still hiding in the area, throughout the day today.

The operation would continue till he too was found out and eliminated, the officials added.

## 6 IAS, IPS officers shifted out of J&amp;K; 11 posted in UT

has been transferred to Arunachal Pradesh and Swati Sheemar to Delhi, while Saugav Biswas (from Arunachal Pradesh), Mamta Yadav (from Delhi) and Ishita Rathi (from Puducherry) have been posted in Jammu and Kashmir.

In the IPS cadre, Rajesh Kumar Sharma, Tanushree, Deepika and Gaurav Sikarwar have been transferred out of J&K to Chandigarh, Delhi, Puducherry and Goa, respectively, while Vishnu Kumar, Arshi Aadil, Tikam Singh Verma, K M Priyanka, Rajeev Kumar Ambasta, Deepak Yadav, Anand Kumar Mishra, and Satish Kumar have been posted to Jammu and Kashmir.

The transfers have been ordered with immediate effect and will remain in force until further orders.

## Officers must become agents of good governance: Kavinder

mitment. He said that the training period was crucial in shaping their administrative outlook, leadership qualities and decision-making abilities.

Gupta said that Himachal Pradesh, being a mountainous state, presents unique administrative challenges. Ensuring the delivery of government services and welfare schemes to citizens living in remote and inaccessible areas requires dedication, innovation and a people-centric approach, he said.

He also emphasised the need for preparedness to effectively deal with natural disasters, including landslides, cloudbursts and other challenges arising from climate change.

Highlighting the importance of good governance, Gupta said transparency, accountability and timely delivery of public services should remain the guiding principles of every civil servant.

He asked the trainee officers to remain accessible to people, listen to their grievances with empathy and work sincerely towards their resolution.

He stressed that honesty, integrity and impartiality are the strongest assets of an administrator. He advised the officers to take decisions strictly in accordance with the Constitution, the rule of law and public interest, thereby strengthening people's faith in the administrative system.

He also underlined the importance of adopting technology and innovation in governance. Effective use of e-Governance, digital platforms and modern administrative practices, he said, would make public service delivery more transparent, efficient and citizen-friendly.

Referring to the vision of Viksit Bharat @2047, the governor said that administrative officers would play a pivotal role in transforming this vision into reality.

He urged them to contribute actively towards nation-building by promoting good governance, public participation, innovation and efficient implementation of government programmes.

He also highlighted the importance of Natural Farming and also encouraged them to actively support and promote natural farming initiatives, ensuring effective implementation of government schemes at the grassroots level.

## Honda to create over 3,800 jobs in India by 2028 with 2-wheeler capacity expansion

**NEW DELHI, JULY 09:** Honda Motorcycle & Scooter India, the two-wheeler arm of Japan's Honda Motor Co, expects to create over 3,800 jobs in India as it expands overall annual production capacity to 80 lakh units by 2028, according to its President & CEO Tsutsumu Otani.

With India increasingly becoming an important part of Honda's global manufacturing and export strategy, its production capacity is designed not only to cater to domestic demand but also to support growing international markets, Otani told PTI in an interview.

While electric mobility remains an important pillar of Honda's long-term vision, he said the company remains committed to a balanced, multi-pathway approach encompassing ICE, electrification, and alternative fuel technologies in India.

"India is an increasingly important part of Honda's global manufacturing and export strategy. Our production capacity is designed not only to cater to domestic demand but also to support

growing international markets," Otani said.

As export demand continues to increase, he said, "We are investing in expanding our manufacturing capabilities to efficiently serve both domestic and overseas customers".

Currently, Honda Motorcycle & Scooter India (HMSI) exports to 65 countries, including mature markets like Japan and Europe, Otani said, adding that "our export performance has grown steadily from 0.36 million units in FY24 to 0.51 million units in FY25 and 0.62 million units in FY26, demonstrating the growing role of India as a strategic global manufacturing hub for Honda".

The company has an annual installed production capacity of over 60 lakh units across its four manufacturing plants located in Manesar (Haryana), Tapukara (Rajasthan), Narasapura (Karnataka), and Vithalapur (Gujarat).

Elaborating on the ongoing capacity expansion, Otani said the company has recently announced the setting up of a new third pro-

duction line at its Tapukara plant in Rajasthan with an investment of approximately Rs 1,500 crore.

"The new line, scheduled to commence operations in 2028, will add an annual production capacity of 6,70,000 units, taking the total capacity of the Tapukara plant to 2.01 million units," he added.

In 2025, HMSI announced the addition of a fourth production line at its Vithalapur plant in Gujarat with an investment of Rs 920 crore, which is scheduled to commence operations in 2027.

"The new line will add an annual production capacity of 6,50,000 units, increasing the plant's total capacity to 2.61 million units and making it Honda's largest motorcycle assembly plant globally," Otani said.

"Along with planned capacity enhancements at our other manufacturing facilities, HMSI's overall annual production capacity in India is expected to increase to approximately 8 million units by 2028," he added.

"Both these expansions will also generate more than

## Army Chief reviews security along LoC

readiness of troops in the region.

The visit, his first to the forward areas of Poonch after assuming office, comes amid heightened security measures in Jammu and Kashmir in the wake of the ongoing Amarnath Yatra.

The Army chief visited the Nagrota-based White Knight Corps headquarters, where he was briefed by senior commanders on the security situation in Jammu region and the operational preparedness of formations under the corps, officials said.

General Seth later visited forward locations in Poonch district and reviewed the security arrangements and operational preparedness, officials said.

Gen Seth also met senior military officials at the Poonch Brigade headquarters, where he was briefed on deployment of troops, the prevailing security scenario and operational readiness.

The top officers apprised the Army Chief of the overall security environment and the preparedness of troops to effectively respond to emerging challenges.

Gen Seth has been on a visit to Jammu and Kashmir since Tuesday.

## J&amp;K Bank, Census Directorate sign MoU for census awareness campaign

DGM Syed Aadil Bashir.

Under the partnership, J&K Bank will use its extensive branch network, digital signages and customer outreach platforms to disseminate authentic census-related information and promote public participation in the national exercise.

Speaking on the occasion, Amit Sharma said the bank's widespread presence across urban, rural, border and remote areas would help take official census information directly to the people, strengthen public confidence and ensure greater awareness about Census 2027.

He said the initiative would also help counter misinformation and encourage wider participation, particularly in underserved regions.

Chief General Manager Ashutosh Sareen described the census as one of the country's most important national exercises, providing the foundation for informed policy-making and equitable resource allocation.

He said the J&K Bank was privileged to support the initiative by leveraging its extensive physical and digital outreach to spread authentic information and build public trust.

As per the agreement, the bank will display census awareness material, including posters, pamphlets and standees, at its branches, customer service areas and financial literacy centres, besides broadcasting awareness messages through digital signages. The campaign will be coordinated by designated nodal officers from both organisations.

The non-commercial MoU, involving no financial commitment from either side, will remain in force until March 31, 2027, providing a structured framework for coordinated awareness initiatives to facilitate the successful conduct of Census 2027 in Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh.

## Worsening security in Pak raises concerns for foreign investors

ing their businesses had worsened compared to last year.

Confidence in law enforcement also declined. Positive assessments of the Karachi Police and Sindh Police dropped significantly from the previous survey, although respondents expressed relatively improved confidence in the Sindh Rangers and the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Police.

Businesses additionally cited illegal demands for payments, concerns over expatriate security, and recurring protests as major operational challenges.

Regional instability has further compounded business risks. Nearly 88 per cent of surveyed companies said tensions in the Middle East had affected their operations, with supply chain disruptions emerging as the biggest concern, followed by reduced commercial activity and employee safety.

3,800 new employment opportunities."

When asked about electrification, Otani said, "Electric mobility remains an important pillar of Honda's long-term vision, and we continue to strengthen our readiness to expand our EV portfolio in line with evolving market demand and ecosystem development".

The company's approach is focused on delivering practical, scalable, and customer-centric solutions, he added.

Asked about the Delhi EV policy under which only electric two-wheelers will be registered from April 1, 2028, Otani termed it as "a positive step towards promoting sustainable mobility and improving air quality".

"Having said that, the pace of transition will ultimately be determined by customers. Existing ICE vehicles will continue to remain in use, and consumers will choose the mobility solution that best suits their requirements based on factors such as affordability, convenience, charging infrastructure, and daily usage patterns," he noted.