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Modi pushes for IIT, IIM Satellite Campuses in Ladakh

enhance energy efficiency and reduce its carbon foot-print, reflecting the importance of sustainable infrastructure in Ladakh's ecologically sensitive environment.

Modi also dedicated to the nation the 298-km-long Nimmu-Padum-Darcha Road, constructed by the Border Roads Organisation (BRO), a 9 MW Hanu small hydroelectric project and the 66 kV double-circuit Dah-Hanu-Khaltsi transmission line.

Besides, the prime minister also inaugurated India's first Petroglyph Conservation Park at Sindhu Ghat in Leh and 40 water bodies developed across 40 villages under Project Him Sarovar.

"I extend my heartiest congratulations to all the people of Ladakh for these projects. I also congratulate all the engineers, workers and local colleagues involved in these projects. I specially appreciate the colleagues of the BRO," he said.

Modi said Ladakh had immense potential in sports and the youth of the Union territory have carved out a unique identity in fields like ice hockey, winter sports, and mountaineering.

The prime minister said he was pleased that efforts are being made to promote sports talents through the new sports policy in Ladakh.

"Our effort is to ensure that the youth receive better training and facilities, and achieve new accomplishments at national and international levels," he said.

The prime minister said sometime ago, he had laid the foundation for the terminal building at the Kushok Bakula Rimpoochee Airport and it was his good fortune that he had the opportunity to inaugurate the important project today.

"This is the first airport terminal in India equipped with geo-thermal heating facilities. Our effort is to develop modern infrastructure in Ladakh while taking complete care of the environment," he said.

The terminal will also bring new energy to the tourism sector in Ladakh, he said.

"I extend my heartfelt congratulations to all my brothers and sisters of Ladakh for this modern airport terminal," he said.

Referring to the road projects, Modi said a journey that once took around 12 hours can now be completed in just three hours.

"This will not only save travel time but also significantly benefit trade and commerce along this road," he said.

"Earlier, I had the privilege of laying the foundation for and inaugurating the power transmission line connecting Srinagar and Leh. Today, the Sanok hydroelectric project and its associated transmission line have also been inaugurated," Modi said.

LG calls upon youth to dream big, build drug-free society

ented initiatives, including "Run for Unity" and the upcoming "Pedal for Paradise" rally, the LG said these efforts had strengthened trust, community participation and youth engagement.

Congratulating medal winners, he urged them to remain humble, while encouraging other participants to view setbacks as stepping stones towards future success.

In his message, he expressed confidence that Jammu & Kashmir's water-sports ecosystem would continue to expand, creating greater opportunities for young athletes in the years ahead.

Heavy rains, hailstorm lash Jammu

windows of houses. Several nallahs and local streams were also flooded, disrupting normal life in the region.

Udhampur recorded the highest rainfall at 59.6 mm, followed by Poonch (39.5 mm), Samba (34 mm), Shopian (34 mm), Baramulla (29 mm), Katra (23.1 mm), Ramban (17 mm), Anantnag (16 mm), Kulgam (18 mm) and Jammu (7.6 mm), according to weather data.

Widespread rains also lashed the valley, including Srinagar (12 mm), during the night and continued till Thursday morning, as the weather remained cloudy in most parts of the region, officials said.

Meanwhile, upper reaches of Jammu and the valley experienced fresh snowfall.

Jammu recorded a maximum temperature of 33.1 degrees Celsius, and a minimum of 17.6 degrees Celsius.

The weather department has forecast generally dry weather in the Jammu region on October 16, with a brief spell of light rain at isolated to scattered places.

Jaiswal posted as LG's principal secy

Amarnathji Shrine Board. As per a GAD order, Jaiswal, who was awaiting orders of adjustment, was posted as principal secretary to the LG in the interest of administration.

The order says that he will also hold the additional charge of CEO of Shri Amarnathji Shrine Boarduntil further orders.

HC bans motorboats on Dal Lake

operates by fuel, is operated in Dal Lake until further orders," a division bench of Chief Justice Pushpendra Singh Bhati & Justice Rajesh Sekhri said in aorder.

The court also directed that any violation of the order would be seen as contempt of court.

"Therefore, the officers concerned shall take a strict view by restricting and prohibiting such operations," the order read.

The bench observed that the court was convinced that at a time when lake systems had become a growing concern for civilisation, steps were being taken to exclude activities which would cause pollution.

"It would be important that whatever policy is framed is more reasonable while balancing tourism activities, pollution, as well as the uniformity between the players involved," it said.

The bench observed that solar boats and electric boats could be a solution to strike a balance between the needs of tour operators and sustenance of lakes.

Such boats as may be used for emergency services, law and order, disaster management, and safety will be exempted from this order, the court said.

The government was earlier directed to submit a comprehensive policy for motorised boats.

"The senior additional advocate generalshall also explore and bring it before this court whether complete motorisation can be substituted by solarised e-engines," the bench said and listed the case for next hearing on October 30.

Actor Imran Khan ordered to leave India

briefly taken the actor into custody. "Imran Khan holds foreign citizenship and is not an Indian national. Under relevant provisions of the Foreigners/Immigration Act, foreign nationals are prohibited from participating in political protests or political activities on Indian soil," a police official said.

"A formal notice directing the actor to leave the country by October 28 has been served on him, and he has received a copy, the police said. Further administrative procedures in the matter are underway,"he added.

Former BJP MP Kirit Somaiya had urged Mumbai police to act against Imran Khan for joining a protest here in support of the Cockroach Janta Party despite being a "foreign citizen," and sought clarity on whether he can participate in such agitations.

India opens additional control room in Makkah

up at the Indian Haj Pilgrims Office (IHPO), Makkah, while its existing 24-hour control room in Jeddah will continue to operate.

On Tuesday, the consulate had advised Indian nationals, particularly Umrah pilgrims travelling to and from Jeddah and Madinah, to remain in regular contact with their airlines and check flight status before heading to airports.

Umrah is an Islamic religious ritual that can be undertaken at any time of the year, unlike the annual Haj pilgrimage. Umrah pilgrims travel to Saudi Arabia to perform a pilgrimage to Makkah, the holiest city in Islam.

Indian nationals requiring assistance can contact the Makkah control room at +966 553646966, the consulate said in a post on X.

Passengers were also advised to stay in touch with travel agents, tour operators and Umrah service providers regarding cancellations, rescheduling, alternative travel arrangements and accommodation, wherever required.

The consulate said it was in regular contact with airlines and local authorities to facilitate assistance to affected Indian nationals and would share updates on flight operations through its official social media channels.

It had also established a 24-hour control room in Jeddah to assist affected passengers. The helplines are +966 12 2614093 and +966 556122301, while assistance is also available through WhatsApp at +966 536209704 and email at pbskcgil@gmail.com.

On Wednesday, the Indian Embassy in Riyadh advised Indian nationals in Saudi Arabia to follow local authorities' instructions, stay indoors in case of an aerial attack and refrain from circulating videos or news related to ongoing events.

Flight operations remained suspended at King Khalid International Airport in Riyadh, while flights from Dammam, Jeddah and Madinah continued with some disruptions, the embassy said on Wednesday.

Indian carriers Air India, Air India Express, Akasa Air and IndiGo have suspended flights to and from Saudi Arabia until October 17, while Saudi carriers Saudia and Flynas continue to operate some scheduled services, according to the embassy.

Any terror act from Pak will invite stronger response: Rajnath

while advocating for peace, remains vigilant when it comes to security and is fully capable of safeguarding its sovereignty, integrity, and national interests," he said.

In a pointed reference to the changing security environment, Singh said the nature of terrorism was evolving, with threats no longer confined to organised networks but increasingly involving lone-wolf attackers and what he termed "white-collar terrorism". He called for greater vigilance by security agencies and citizens to identify suspicious activities and prevent attacks.

Describing the emerging security landscape, he identified what he called the "5D Security Threat", disinformation, destabilisation, disruption, deception and destruction, warning that hybrid, high-tech and hyper warfare had made the task of detecting and countering threats increasingly complex.

The Defence Minister also claimed that since 2014, the "shelf life" of most terrorists had fallen to less than a year, with security forces neutralising them within a year of their taking up arms against India.

On defence preparedness, Singh called for a shift towards "smart power", combining military strength with advanced technology, artificial intelligence and affordable, adaptable weapons systems.

"Modern defence strategies must integrate precision-guided weapons and loitering munitions with cost-effective weaponry, human intelligence with artificial intelligence, and advanced systems with low-cost, agile and adaptable technologies to address evolving security challenges," he said.

Singh credited the government's defence reforms with strengthening India's military capabilities and reducing dependence on foreign suppliers. He said the focus had moved beyond meeting immediate requirements towards building an Aatmanirbhar and future-ready defence ecosystem.

Singh also highlighted the expansion of the defence innovation ecosystem, stating that as of March 2026, the Innovations for Defence Excellence initiative had engaged 676 start-ups and innovators and facilitated 551 contracts.

The Defence Minister said India was steadily moving towards a broader national security model in which government agencies, industry, researchers, and citizens shared responsibility for protecting the country.

He expressed confidence that India would become a developed nation by the centenary of Independence, emerging as a global leader in technology, the economy, and defence.

Converted Muslims can't claim quota benefits: SC

der which held that a person converting to Islam can't claim reservation under Backward Class (Muslim) category, solely on the basis of conversion.

While upholding the high court order which had quashed the Tamil Nadu government's notification to grant reservation to converted Muslims, the top court said it called for no interference.

"No statutory benefit, protection, reservation, or other entitlement under Article 16(4) of the Constitution, the enjoyment of which is predicated upon a particular Hindu social order, can be claimed or extended merely on the basis of such antecedent membership after the person has converted to Islam, Christianity, or any other non-Hindu social order," the bench held.

It said the court has reached the conclusion that a person who converts from the Hindu social order to a non-Hindu social order cannot claim affirmative action under Article 16(4) of the Constitution merely on the basis of the social backwardness associated with his pre-conversion status.

"A backwardness suffered in the antecedent social order cannot by itself be carried forward so as to confer upon him the status of a backward class in the region to which he has converted...," it said.

The top court held that a person, who professes a religion other than Hinduism, Sikhism, or Buddhism cannot be believed to be a member of a scheduled caste.

"Consequently, upon conversion to a religion not specified therein, such person ceases to possess the scheduled caste status attached to his antecedent caste and cannot claim any affirmative action benefit of a backward class under Article 16(4) of the Constitution, which is predicated upon membership of a scheduled caste status," it said.

It said that conversion to a non-Hindu social order does not by itself concur membership of any particular notified backward class community.

"A person's pre-conversion caste or community status cannot, merely by reason of conversion, be transposed into

membership of a distinct notified backward class community in the post-conversion social order," it said, adding social backwardness, which forms the basis of the person's pre-conversion status, cannot by itself be the only legal foundation for conferring upon a membership of a different notified backward class community after conversion.

The state government had contended that the object behind its order of March 9, 2024 was to ensure that persons belonging to socially and educationally backward communities were not deprived of reservation benefits solely on account of conversion to Islam.

The HC's verdict came on a petition filed by one Sameer Ahamed, who converted from Hinduism to Islam in 2015, with the conversion being notified through a Gazette notification in 2016.

He subsequently married according to Islamic rites and sought a certificate identifying him as belonging to the "Muslim Lebbai" community to avail reservation benefits.

The state contended that it has the authority, based on the report of the TN Backward Classes Commission, to issue backward classes (Muslim) community certificates to eligible persons who had embraced Islam among the backward classes, most backward classes, denotified communities and Scheduled Castes (SCs).

On June 25, the high court held that a person converting to Islam was not entitled to claim reservation under the Backward Class (Muslim) category solely on the basis of conversion and declared unconstitutional the Government Order issued on March 9, 2024.

It observed that a person converting to Islam could only be treated as a Muslim and could not, by virtue of conversion alone, be classified as belonging to any specific notified Backward Class Muslim community for reservation purposes.

First tranche of India-US trade pact finalised: Goyal

Also, on Thursday US Ambassador to India Sergio Gora said the "big items are done" in the negotiations and expressed confidence that both sides would finalise the pact. Speaking at the Bloomberg New Economy Forum, Gora described the negotiations as moving at an "incredible pace" and said the two sides were "very close to landing it".

Commerce Secretary Rajesh Agrawal said negotiations were progressing in the right direction and expressed hope that the agreement would be concluded and signed at the earliest.

"Probably we are in a very good zone. We anticipate closing the deal and signing the deal at the earliest possible time," Agrawal told reporters in New Delhi.

He said the signing would depend partly on the US formalising its overall tariff structure.

"So, there is a parallel work being done in the US also to get back the tariff structure and based on some of the outcomes under (Section) 301, we will progress towards signing the deal at a mutually agreed time," he said.

Agrawal said legal drafting was underway, but stressed that India was seeking preferential market access for its goods compared with those of competing countries.

"The idea is when you do a trade deal, the trade deal has also a very important component that it gives you not only market access in each other's market, it gives you preferential market access in each other's market. So in that context, India has to get a preferential market access with their competitors. And that is something which will come as a part of the new tariff framework that the US is working on," the commerce secretary said.

Asked whether the framework would take into account the US Trade Representative's Section 301 investigations into concerns related to excess capacity, Agrawal said, "I think all other issues will get settled as part of the deal".

Earlier this month, India and 14 other countries called for coordinated global action to curb excess industrial production that distorts markets, hurts domestic industries and contributes to an imbalance between supply and demand.

On the issue, Agrawal said, "Excess capacity due to non-market forces or non-market interventions has been something which India has also been opposing in a big way".

He added that excess capacity created through non-market policies was detrimental to global trade.

"At the same time, there's no - I don't think there's something imminent - but we truly have identified the universe of items that are sticking points. We're working diligently towards them," Greer said.

Agrawal said the range of outstanding issues had narrowed over time.

The framework for the first tranche of the India-US trade agreement was announced in February, but changes in the US tariff landscape led to further negotiations. India is seeking more favourable tariffs for its goods in the US market.

On October 5, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said negotiations on the India-US trade agreement were still underway, but both sides appeared to have reached a "plateau", with limited room for further concessions.

India's outbound shipments to the US grew marginally by 0.92 per cent to USD 87.3 billion in 2025-26 despite high tariffs, while imports rose 15.95 per cent to USD 52.9 billion. India's trade surplus with the US declined to USD 34.4 billion in 2025-26 from USD 40.89 billion in 2024-25.

India may achieve self-reliance before 2047: Prez Murmu

self-reliant and were now helping others achieve economic independence. Some women were earning more than Rs 2 lakh a month, reflecting the growing potential of women-led enterprises, she added.

The president said the country should now move beyond the goal of creating 'LakhpatiDidis' and work towards developing 'Crorepati Didis', encouraging women to expand their businesses and increase their earnings.

She said the growing empowerment of women through rural livelihoods and entrepreneurship gave reason to believe that India could become self-reliant even before the 2047 target.

The 14-day National SARAS Mela, being held from October 15 to 31, features around 650 stalls showcasing products made by women associated with Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas (DWCRAs) groups.

She said Prime Minister Narendra Modi had taken special measures to promote rural women's economic empowerment, adding that SHG members were increasingly participating in technological and financial activities.

The president stressed the need to provide SHGs with greater resources and strengthen women-led organisations under the Rural Livelihood Mission. She said these measures had improved women's financial conditions and awareness.

Murmu called for eliminating intermediaries and supporting rural women, particularly women farmers, to achieve financial independence. She also emphasised the need to improve women's awareness of digital platforms and practices.

Andhra Pradesh Governor S Abdul Nazeer said the event assumed greater significance as it coincided with the Sharananavrat celebrations at Indrakeeladri and the second edition of Vijayawada Utsav.

He described the programme as a celebration of the strength, creativity, enterprise and determination of women SHG members from across the country.

He said SHGs had emerged as powerful instruments of social change and economic transformation through collec-

tive action, access to credit, skill development, enterprise promotion and market linkages.

Women were transforming themselves from beneficiaries of development programmes into entrepreneurs and agents of change, he added.

The SARAS Ajivika Mela brings together 630 stalls and around 1,500 SHG women participants representing states and Union Territories across India. It showcases handlooms, handicrafts, natural food products, live food courts and products from Farmer Producer Organisations and Cluster Level Federations.

With an expected footfall of 50,000 to one lakh visitors a day, the 'mela' offers women entrepreneurs opportunities to connect directly with customers, explore new markets and expand their businesses, he said.

The governor said the focus should extend beyond livelihood generation to building profitable, sustainable and scalable women-led enterprises.

He stressed the need to provide women entrepreneurs access to finance, modern technology, branding, packaging, quality certification and reliable market linkages.

Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu was also present.

34 students, teacher killed as school roof collapses in Pak

Zulfiqar Hameed directed officials to establish a green corridor for the uninterrupted movement of ambulances.

Provincial Education Secretary Inayatullah Waseem directed the managing director of the Private Schools Regulatory Authority to submit a report on the incident by Friday.

President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif expressed grief over the deaths and conveyed condolences to the bereaved families. Sharif also directed authorities to ensure the best possible treatment for the injured.

Heartbroken by the tragic loss of young lives in the school roof collapse in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. My deepest condolences to the families who have lost their loved ones, and prayers for the swift recovery of those injured. No parent should have to send their child to school fearing for their safety. Our schools must be places of learning and protection, not tragedy. Those responsible for ensuring the safety of our children must be held accountable.

Ashok Singhal's life inspiration for commitment to Indian culture: Kavinder

sciousness, moral values and confidence in its heritage," Gupta said.

Emphasising the enduring relevance of Sanatan culture, he said, "Sanatan culture is not merely our ancient heritage, it is a comprehensive vision of understanding and living life. Noble ideals such as Sarve BhavantuSukhinah and VasudhaivaKutumbakam express the essence of Indian culture, which aspires for the welfare of all humanity."

He said Singhal consistently worked to bring cultural awareness into wider public discourse, promote understanding of traditional values and connect people with their civilisational identity.

"Singhal also occupies an important place in the history of the Ram Janmabhoomi movement. Through VHP, he had played a significant role in organising the movement, broadening public support and bringing the issue of faith associated with Shri Ram Janmabhoomi into the national discourse," Gupta said.

Paying tributes to Singhal on his birth centenary, he said the most meaningful way to honour his legacy was to embrace the values of service, discipline, sacrifice and dedication to duty. He called upon people to safeguard India's cultural heritage, pass its knowledge and traditions on to younger generations, and strengthen social harmony and commitment to the nation.

On the occasion, the governor honoured. Rajdulari Sood, a senior woman karsevak associated with the Ram Janmabhoomi movement, and Yoga Acharya Vinod in recognition of their contributions.

Earlier, ProfVeer Singh Rangra, who presided over the programme, recalled Singhal's life, ideals and contributions.

Delivering keynote address, VHP KendriyaMahamantri Bajrang Lal Bagda highlighted Singhal's contributions to social harmony, Vedic education, the saint community and cow protection.

Pak pilots, crew barred under new Israeli aviation rules

airlines about the restrictions on October 1. The restrictions followed the hijacking incident on September 30, when a flydubai flight travelling from Dubai to Tel Aviv was diverted to Saudi Arabia after its Omani copilot attacked CaptMachchhar and attempted to seize control of the aircraft and crash it into Israel's Ben-Gurion Airport.

According to the new directive, pilots and cabin crew operating flights into Israeli airspace must not hold the nationality, or dual nationality, of countries that lack official diplomatic relations with Israel.

The restrictions cover nationals of more than two dozen countries, including Pakistan, Iran, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Algeria and Tunisia, as well as people holding dual nationality of these countries, reports said.

The restrictions have prompted Air France to adjust crew assignments, while United Airlines has also notified employees of the policy, according to French investigative website Mediapart and aviation blog Live and Let's Fly.

Indian pilot Machchhar, who was injured in the September 30 hijacking incident, has been recovering in a hospital in the UAE.

Despite his injuries, he managed to open the cockpit door, allowing passengers and crew members to intervene and subdue the Omani co-pilot before the aircraft was diverted to Saudi Arabia.

Machchhar was hailed as a "hero" by world leaders, including Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, his Israeli counterpart Benjamin Netanyahu and US President Donald Trump.

EC announces Special Summary Revision of rolls in 17 states, UTs

ensuring that "no eligible citizen is left out while no ineligible person gets included". It says furnishing Aadhaar is voluntary and that no application will be denied, and no entry deleted, for failure to provide it.

On polling stations, the EC said, "No polling station has more than 1,200 electors, except with the prior approval of the Commission." Electors "should not be required to travel for more than two kilometres or cross any natural barriers", it said.

The letter also sets out safeguards against wrongful deletions. It refers to a separate October 9 order that limits Form 7 filings "to discourage bulk filing of applications by individual electors". EROs must personally cross-verify cases where deletions exceed 2 per cent of a polling station's electors or where the same person is the objector in more than five cases.

For each deletion, the ERO must pass "a speaking order after giving an opportunity of hearing to the concerned person". No decision on a claim or objection can be taken until at least seven clear days after the lists are published. Appeals lie to the District Magistrate and then to the chief electoral officer.

Booth-level agents of recognised parties "shall not submit more than 10 Forms to BLO per day". If an agent files more than 30 forms during the claims period, "the cross-verification must be done by ERO/AERO themselves", the letter said.