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Rajnath flags ...

called the commissioning of the ship a "major achievement".

He said the ship is capable of high-speed transit and can remain deployed at sea for extended periods. It is equipped with systems designed to monitor enemy movements, ensure its own security, and if necessary, deliver an immediate response.

Singh said it features modern radar, sonar, and missile systems, such as BrahMos and surface-to-air missiles, which further augment its operational prowess.

"From high-intensity combat to maritime security, anti-piracy operations, coastal surveillance, and humanitarian missions, it fits perfectly into every role, making it a unique naval platform," he said.

With indigenous content exceeding 75 per cent, the ship highlights the maturity of India's domestic defence ecosystem, involving over 200 MSMEs and supporting thousands of jobs.

Taragiri is powered by a Combined Diesel or Gas (CODAG) propulsion system, offering high-speed and high-endurance capabilities for diverse naval operations.

The frigate is equipped with advanced weapon systems, including supersonic surface-to-surface missiles, medium-range surface-to-air missiles and a specialised anti-submarine warfare suite. These systems are integrated through a modern combat management system, enabling swift and precise responses to emerging threats, the Navy said.

Apart from combat roles, Taragiri is designed for humanitarian assistance and disaster relief operations, enhancing its operational versatility in both peace and conflict scenarios.

Further, underscoring the importance of the undersea internet cable system, Singh said financial transactions, communication network and defence coordination depend on it.

If anyone damages these cables then its impact will not be limited to any single country, but the global system.

"That's why, the maritime security has to be seen from a comprehensive and future ready framework beyond the traditional perspective," he stressed.

"We must not limit ourselves to merely securing our own shores, but also ensure the protection of those critical sea lanes, choke points, and digital infrastructure that are linked to our national interests. I am pleased that the Indian Navy is pro-actively engaged in all these security tasks," Singh said.

He pointed out that this approach towards security will prepare the country for the challenges of the future, and will establish India as a powerful maritime power.

When India builds and deploys advanced ships like INS Taragiri, it becomes a guarantee of peace and prosperity for the entire region, Singh said.

Meanwhile, India today commissioned its new indigenously-built nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarine INS Aridaman into service, further strengthening the naval component of nuclear triad, authoritative sources said.

India's nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarine (SSBN) programme is a closely guarded project. INS Arihant was the first boat under the SSBN project that was followed by another boat, INS Arighat.

India is among a select group of countries that possess nuclear-powered submarines. The countries that have such assets are the US, Russia, the UK, France and China.

INS Arihant is India's first home-made nuclear submarine. It was launched in July 2009 and was quietly commissioned in 2016. The navy commissioned its second indigenous SSBN, INS Arighat, in August 2024. The SSBN stands for ship submersible ballistic nuclear or nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarines.

INS Aridaman has been commissioned after months of sea trials. It is learnt that Defence Minister Rajnath Singh attended the commissioning ceremony at a naval base in Kerala.

There is no official word yet on the commissioning of the boat.

"It's not words but power, 'Aridman'," Defence Minister Singh said in a cryptic social media post in Hindi this morning.

While India has proven air and land-launched nuclear capabilities, it is now focusing on boosting its underwater nuclear prowess

MP Chadha ...

bickering over his removal as deputy leader of the party in Rajya Sabha.

Chadha asserted that he was "silenced, not defeated" while sharing an Urdu couplet.

"Meri Khamoshi Ko Meri Haar Mat Samajh Lena, Main wo Dariya Hun Jo Waqt Aane Par Sailab Banta hai (Don't take my silence for my defeat, I am the river which turns into a devastating flood when time comes)," he read out the couplet for those who "snatched away his right to speak and silenced" him.

In a video posted on X earlier in the day, Chadha said, "I would like to tell those who have snatched away my right to speak in Parliament to not take my silence for defeat."

The MP said whenever he got a chance, he raised public issues in Parliament, including topics that are often overlooked, and questioned whether speaking about people's problems was a crime, "Did I commit any offence," he asked.

Chadha said that in Parliament, he talked about the common people of the country and their issues, including expensive food at airports, problems faced by food delivery riders, food adulteration, toll plazas charges, mobile data expiry, tax on the middle class, among others.

"Anyway, you (common man) have continued to give me unlimited love. Whenever I have raised these issues, you have supported and appreciated me. I thank you for that. Please keep holding my hand like this and continue supporting me," Chadha said.

Hitting back, the AAP sought an explanation from Chadha on why he is afraid to speak against the Modi government on issues of public interest.

Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann slammed Chadha and said he believes he is "compromised", pointing out that he has gone against the party whip.

Delhi AAP President Saurabh Bharadwaj alleged that Chadha failed to toe the party's line on several matters in Parliament and did not join opposition walkouts on key issues.

He also claimed that Chadha had not adequately raised concerns related to Punjab, the state he represents, and criticised his absence during crucial moments, including the arrest of AAP supremo and former Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal.

All party leaders are "soldiers" of Kejriwal, he added. Bharadwaj alleged that in recent months, the government has been cracking down on those daring to question its policies, with critics facing action such as social media account suspensions and FIRs.

He claimed that the government does not care about "soft PR" in Parliament and talking about samosas at airport canteens when bigger issues are at stake.

"Whenever the Opposition staged a walkout in Parliament, you (Chadha) did not participate. You did not raise issues concerning Punjab, from where you are elected, and you hid in a foreign country when former Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal was arrested," he added.

Chadha had successfully campaigned against high airport food prices, leading to the introduction of Rs 20 samosas and Rs 10 tea at several Indian airports through the 'Udaan Yatri Cafes'.

Bharadwaj also pointed out that while opposition parties had moved a motion to impeach the Chief Election Commissioner, Chadha did not sign it and had not participated in certain opposition walkouts.

Meanwhile, BJP came in support of Chadha, saying his video statement itself is proof that dialogue and democracy within the AAP have completely ended.

Delhi BJP president Virendra Sachdeva said when a senior Member of Parliament is forced to use social media plat-

forms to express his views within his own party, it reflects a deeply troubling internal condition.

On Thursday, the AAP replaced Chadha as its deputy Speaker in the Rajya Sabha with Ashok Mittal.

The move came amid Chadha's prolonged silence on matters related to the AAP, and his absence from several public events led by Kejriwal. He becomes the second AAP Rajya Sabha member, after Swati Maliwal, to have fallen out with the party leadership.

AAP national media in-charge Anurag Dhanda also criticised Chadha, questioning whether someone who "fears" Modi can fight for the country.

"In West Bengal, the right to vote is being snatched away. When a proposal against the CEC came up in the House, you (Chadha) refused to sign it," Dhanda said on X.

Former Delhi chief minister and senior party leader Atishi also questioned Chadha over his silence on key issues, asking why he was "so scared" of raising questions against the Centre and the BJP.

"The democracy and Constitution of the country are in danger, yet you failed to speak on issues such as rising LPG prices," she said.

Referring to the arrest of Kejriwal in March 2024, Atishi said that while party leaders were on the streets protesting and facing detention, questions were raised about Chadha's absence.

"We defended you then, saying you had undergone an eye operation and that is why you were not present. But today I want to ask that when Kejriwal was arrested, were you even then scared of the BJP?" she said.

Once considered a close confidant of Kejriwal and among the youngest MPs in the country, Chadha played a key role in party affairs, particularly in Punjab and during the AAP's tenure in Delhi.

Chadha was abroad for medical reasons when Kejriwal was arrested in connection with the excise policy case in March 2024. He remained away during Kejriwal's nearly six-month incarceration and met him only a few days after his release on September 13, 2024.

More recently, Chadha maintained silence when Kejriwal, former deputy chief minister Manish Sisodia and other AAP leaders were discharged by a Delhi court in the excise case last month.

He also missed Kejriwal's press conference and a recent rally at Jantar Mantar following the court's relief.

The AAP currently has 10 members in Rajya Sabha, including seven from Punjab and three from Delhi.

LG Sinha ...

Mughal R/o Chuntwaliwar Lar, Ganderbal," the Home Department said in a communication to the Ganderbal district magistrate.

The Home Department said the issue has been examined and accordingly, "you are requested to get a thorough and impartial magisterial inquiry conducted into the matter to ascertain the facts and circumstances leading to the death of Raashid Ahmad Mughal".

"The inquiry may be completed within a period of seven days and the report be submitted to the Home Department," the communication added.

Political parties in Kashmir today welcomed the magisterial probe into the Ganderbal encounter, and expressed hope that a transparent inquiry will be conducted into the incident and justice will prevail.

The ruling National Conference said the party commends the prompt action taken by L-G Sinha, ordering a time-bound inquiry following concerns raised by Chief Minister Omar Abdullah and the family of the deceased, who have disputed the militant label and sought a thorough investigation.

In a statement, the party's state spokesperson Imran Nabi Dar said the NC welcomes this magisterial probe as a positive and necessary step towards establishing the facts and delivering justice.

"The inquiry must be time-bound, impartial, and its findings made public at the earliest," he said.

The party reiterated its commitment to upholding the rule of law and protecting the rights and dignity of the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

People's Conference chief Sajad Lone also welcomed the magisterial inquiry.

"The ordering of a Magisterial enquiry by @OfficeOfLG-JandK into the allegations made by the family of the person who was killed in an encounter in Ganderbal, is a welcome step," Lone, who is also the MLA from Handwara, said in a post on X.

He expressed hope that a transparent inquiry would be conducted and justice would prevail.

People's Democratic Party leader Iltija Mufti, while appreciating the L-G's "swift response", said a thorough investigation would fix accountability and restore people's confidence.

"Relieved and appreciate L-G's swift response in ordering an enquiry after the unfortunate, tragic killing of an innocent man from Ganderbal. Evidence so far indicates his innocence, and this is a 'fake encounter'. A thorough investigation points to accountability along with restoring people's confidence," Mufti said on X.

Meanwhile, chief cleric Mirwaiz Umar Farooq on Friday expressed hope that justice would be delivered in the Ganderbal encounter case and those responsible would be held to account and punished.

"As the deeply distressing news reports of the killing of a young man, Raashid Ahmed Mughal, at Arhama, Ganderbal, in a claimed encounter came yesterday, his family saying that he was a part-time computer operator with no links to militancy who was picked up and killed in cold blood, painful memories of such encounters got revived," Mirwaiz said.

He was addressing the Friday congregation at the Jamia Masjid in Nowhatta locality here.

He said now that Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha has ordered an inquiry, he hopes that "this time justice gets done".

"His (Mughal's) family seeks justice through an impartial probe. We can only hope that justice is done, as past experiences do not inspire confidence. But, let us hope that, as news came that L-G sahib himself has ordered an inquiry, this time justice gets done and those responsible are held to account and punished," he said.

The Mirwaiz added that not giving Mughal's body to the family for burial "is inhuman and condemnable".

Sinha on Friday ordered a magisterial probe into the encounter in Ganderbal district in which one alleged terrorist was killed by security forces.

Several mainstream leaders, including Chief Minister Omar Abdullah and PDP president Mehbooba Mufti, had raised questions about the encounter that took place on the intervening night of Tuesday and Wednesday.

The Mirwaiz said "targeting of Kashmiris" by multiple agencies creates an atmosphere of fear and intimidation.

"Almost daily, there are reports in newspapers of cases, chargesheets and arrests of Kashmiris by the multiple agencies operating here, SIA, CIK, Cyber Cell, ACB, NIA, on one ground or another. This creates an atmosphere of fear and intimidation and reinforces the narrative that portrays an entire people as dangerous and suspect to be kept under check," he said.

"This coercive policy cannot build viable peace or lead to progress if that is what the authorities seek, as they claim," he added.

Quake tremors ...

seconds. We thought of rushing down but the tremors stopped soon."

Meanwhile, a powerful 6.3-magnitude earthquake shook Pakistan on Friday night, with its epicentre located in Afghanistan's Hindu Kush region.

No loss to life or property has been reported till now due to

the earthquake in any part of Pakistan, officials said.

The Pakistan Meteorological Department's National Seismic Monitoring Centre (NSMC) said that the quake was recorded at 9:13 pm, with a depth of 190 kilometres.

The epicentre was located in Afghanistan's Hindu Kush region at latitude 36.48°N and longitude 70.84°E.

The tremor was felt in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), Islamabad, Pakistan-occupied Kashmir and parts of Punjab.

CAG flags ...

expenditure" and "800 – other receipts" across various major heads, adversely affecting transparency in government accounts.

Recommending corrective measures, the CAG said the government should ensure timely submission of utilisation certificates and detailed countersigned contingent (DCC) bills by departments and grantees.

It also stressed the need to strengthen internal control mechanisms and ensure regular reconciliation of expenditure figures with those of the accountant general.

The audit body further advised the Union territory government to fully implement Indian Government Accounting Standards to improve financial reporting and ensure that companies, corporations and autonomous bodies submit their annual accounts within prescribed timelines.

Meanwhile, Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) growth moderated to 11.18 per cent in 2024-25, down from 12.51 per cent in the previous financial year, though it has remained in the 11-12 per cent range over the past four fiscals, according to the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG).

The CAG report on Union Territory Finances for the year 2024-25 was tabled in the legislative Assembly by the Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Thursday, also showing that Jammu and Kashmir's share in India's GDP inched up marginally to 0.79 per cent in the last fiscal, marking a slight uptick compared to the previous fiscal after a phase of stagnation.

The report said over the five-year period from 2020-21 to 2024-25, the size of J&K's economy has expanded from Rs 1.67 lakh crore to Rs 2.62 lakh crore, marking an overall increase of nearly Rs 95,000 crore and underscoring the gradual strengthening of its economic base.

Per capita income in the UT has also shown consistent improvement, rising from Rs 1,01,645 in 2020-21 to Rs 1,54,826 in 2024-25, although it remained below the national average. The per capita income of J&K was Rs 1,12,898 in 2021-22, Rs 1,23,614 in 2022-23 and Rs 1,40,051 in 2023-24, the CAG said..

The GSDP growth at 2.25 per cent in 2020-21 (Covid Pandemic impact), rising sharply to 12.38 per cent in 2021-22, 11.27 per cent in 2022-23 and 12.51 per cent in 2023-24 before easing to 11.18 per cent in 2024-25, it said.

Jammu and Kashmir's share in India's GDP stood at 0.79 per cent in 2024-25 against 0.78 per cent in the previous year. The UT's share had declined from 0.85 per cent in 2020-21 to 0.80 per cent in 2021-22 and 0.78 per cent by 2022-23 and 2023-24.

The report said the revenue receipts of the UT during 2024-25 increased by 6.12 per cent, mainly due to an increase in Grants-in-Aid from the centre.

However, growth of own tax revenue was 2.5 per cent, the CAG said, adding though UT's own revenue performance improved, the dependence on central grants-in-aid remains substantial.

Out of Total Expenditure of Rs 82,547.28 crore, the revenue expenditure (85.37 per cent) was substantial, particularly committed costs and subsidies (68.39 per cent of Revenue Expenditure and 58.39 per cent of TE), leaving limited fiscal space for capital investment.

Capital expenditure remained below budgeted levels, reflecting constraints in infrastructure investment, the CAG said, adding the UT was not able to arrest the fiscal deficit within the target levels set in the budget documents.

It said the outstanding liabilities of the UT increased from 8.87 per cent of GSDP in 2020-21 to 17.21 per cent in 2024-25. However, taking into account the liabilities of the erstwhile state, the outstanding liabilities increased to 48.47 per cent of GSDP in 2024-25 which was excluding the off-budget borrowings of Rs 23,197.08 crore, it said.

Besides, the UT government also carried forward undischarged liabilities in respect of Guarantee Redemption Fund (GRF), interest liabilities, Consolidated Sinking Fund (CSF) and pension fund to the tune of Rs 934.02 crore and 1.13 per cent of TE in the FY 2024-25, the report said.

The CAG said the fiscal year also continued to witness a large-scale excess in one revenue-charged section and overall savings in all 36 grants.

Excess expenditure in FY 2024-25, previous financial years and that pertaining to erstwhile State of Jammu and Kashmir requires regularisation by the legislature, the report said.

It also flagged delay in submission of 1,395 Utilisation Certificates amounting to Rs 4,105.08 crore.

Against 3,451 AC bills amounting to Rs 25,127.97 crore outstanding as on March 31 2024, there were 3,068 AC bills amounting to Rs 15,607.21 crore outstanding as on March 31, the report said.

It said 28 accounts in respect of eight Autonomous Bodies (ABs) were pending as of March 2025.

During the year 2024-25, Rs 1,941.43 crore under 30 Major Heads of account, constituting 2.35 per cent of the total Revenue and Capital expenditure was classified under the Minor Head 800 in the accounts, the CAG said.

It said of these, Rs 49.15 crore under five Major Heads was budgeted/classified under Minor Head 800- Other Expenditure despite availability of appropriate Minor Heads. These irregularities affect the transparency in financial reporting.

Funds, viz., Building and Other Construction Workers Welfare Cess, District Mineral Foundation Fund Trust, Water Usage Charges and Social Responsibility Corpus Fund were kept outside Government Account, the report said.

It said positive steps like implementation of Empowerment or Janbhagidari portal for transparency about developmental works was taken up by the Government.

However, migration from Single Nodal Account (SNA) to SNA Spars system is still pending. The increasing debt load, high committed expenditure, and limited capital investment raise concerns about fiscal sustainability, the CAG said.

It said there is a need for revenue augmentation, better expenditure control, and structural reforms to ensure long-term fiscal health.

Transparency should be enhanced in off-budget borrowings, ensuring timely accounting and reporting, it said, adding steps should be taken for more judicious budget provisioning.

PoJK will ...

Pahlagam that left 25 tourists and a local pony handler dead, PoJK Ilyasi said tourism had briefly declined after the incident but urged people to visit the region.

"I want to tell everyone that they should visit Kashmir as there is no atmosphere of fear now," he said.

On the conflict in West Asia, he said war benefits no one and expressed hope for peace.

"Wars harm everyone; they are a sign of destruction. I have hopes from our country's Prime Minister Narendra Modi ji, and God willing, he will mediate, and the war will end soon... there will be peace and tranquility," he said.

Fuel supply ...

sources. Consumers have also been asked to use digital modes for LPG bookings and avoid visiting distributors unless necessary.

People were encouraged to adopt alternate fuels such as PNG, induction and electric cooktops where feasible, and to conserve energy in daily use.

Despite the "war situation," the government said it has ac-

quired the highest priority to domestic LPG and piped natural gas, along with essential services such as hospitals and educational institutions.

Measures taken include boosting refinery output, extending LPG booking intervals to 25 days in urban areas and up to 45 days in rural areas, and prioritising critical sectors. Alternate fuels like kerosene and coal are being deployed to ease LPG demand, with additional coal supplies directed to states.

States have been advised to expand PNG connections and ensure targeted LPG distribution. In a review meeting with state officials, the MoPNG reiterated that there is no disruption in LPG supply for migrant workers.

More than 4,000 raids have been conducted across states and UTs to check hoarding and black marketing, with over 1,300 LPG cylinders seized in the latest action. Public sector oil marketing companies have also issued over 670 show-cause notices to LPG distributors.

So far, 21 states and UTs are conducting regular press briefings to keep citizens informed, the statement said.

Ayodhya can ...

against the ravages of time, Sinha said. "We need to establish Ayodhya as a spiritual centre on a global level, a place where humans treat nature not as a resource but a living truth," he said.

Amid the ongoing conflict in West Asia, the L-G said there is a need for building bridges, not battlefields.

RSS leader Joshi said India witnessed a paradigm of change with the coronation of Shivaji Maharaj.

The Mughal rulers controlled most of the territories when a Hindu ruler came up, he said.

Joshi described the construction of the Ram temple in Ayodhya as another "golden chapter" in India's cultural journey.

"A symbol of slavery that had stood for 400 years was removed and Lord Ram's 'Pran Pratishtha' was done. We were fortunate to witness the sign of disgrace getting removed, and a grand temple being built," the RSS leader said, adding, "It means, we are in consonance with Lord Ram".

On December 6, 1992, the centuries-old Babri Masjid in Ayodhya was demolished by an army of 'Karsevaks', triggering communal riots in parts of the country.

On November 9, 2019, a five-judge Supreme Court bench headed by then CJI Ranjan Gogoi paved the way for the construction of the Ram temple and ruled that an alternative five-acre plot be found for a mosque in Ayodhya.

The 'Pran Pratishtha' of the Ram Lalla deity was performed on January 22, 2024, in the presence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Joshi said the making of a temple was not a difficult thing, as it can be built with resources.

"A legal fight was fought. And, beginning of the work to 'bring change' happened in the "100th year", and a saffron flag was hoisted over the temple," Joshi said, describing it as "God's plan".

The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) completed 100 years in 2025.

Referring to Lord Ram vanquishing Ravana, but not taking the throne of Lanka, Joshi said, "He (Lord Ram) was fighting for establishing righteousness, and not for himself."

So, "anti-social, anti-national and immoral forces should be removed" to establish a "Ram Rajya", he said.

In her address, Diya Kumari said a host of events have been planned to mark 300 years of Jaipur in 2027, and suggested that an edition of Ayodhya Parv can be hosted in the Rajasthan capital as part of it.

18 lakh kanals ...

followed by Baramulla with 53,449 kanals and Pulwama with 42,730 kanals, it added.

The data reveals major encroachment on forest land across the Union Territory.

In the Jammu division, Rajouri has the highest forest land encroachment at 4,899.16 hectares, followed by Reasi (2,780.38 hectares) and Ramban (2,648.63 hectares). Other affected districts include Poonch (965.92 hectares), Jammu (645.85 hectares) and Kathua (590.38 hectares), it said.

In Kashmir, forest divisions in Anantnag, Shopian-Pulwama and Budgam have also reported considerable encroachments. The total forest land under encroachment in the region stands at 5,857.41 hectares, it said.

Over 29,067.15 kanals of land have been retrieved from encroachments so far, said officials, adding that of this, 27,351 kanals is state land while the remaining 1,716.15 kanals is forest land.

The data revealed that land retrieval has been reported from several districts since October 2024. Among major recoveries, Doda recorded the retrieval of 13,674 kanals and 13 marlas of state land, followed by Kishtwar with 6,245 kanals and Ramban with 3,362 kanals. Reasi reported recovery of 1,961 kanals, it said.

Kulgam recorded the highest retrieval of forest land at 39.70 hectares, followed by Anantnag (12.33 hectares) and Ramban (10.87 hectares), they added.

Other districts, including Ganderbal, Samba and Rajouri, also reported smaller recoveries, it said.

The government said joint eviction drives are being carried out by the Forest Department in coordination with the Forest Protection Force and police authorities.

They said any latest attempts at encroachment or illegal cultivation are detected and acted upon at the initial stage. Besides, forest boundaries are being re-surveyed using Differential GPS (DGPS) technology to ensure accurate identification of encroachments, while field staff have been directed to maintain strict vigil in vulnerable areas, they said.

Awareness campaigns are also being organised in forest-adjointing villages to sensitise local communities about conservation, they said.

Officials said the Jammu and Kashmir High Court is monitoring the progress of eviction of encroachment in a public interest litigation, with regular status reports being submitted for appraisal.

Suicide car ...

residents. Gunfire erupted immediately after the explosion, further heightening tension in the area.

No group immediately claimed responsibility for the attack.

According to police, rescue teams have recovered five bodies from the site. Among the deceased are a husband, wife, daughter, and son from the same family.

At least four police personnel were among 13 injured in the blast. Emergency response and rescue operations are ongoing as authorities continue