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Chief Secy ...

and border belts.

The project continues to draw wide attention as Ladakh pushes ahead with infrastructure that aims to overcome isolation and bolster economic links with the rest of the country.

Earlier, The Chief Secretary chaired a comprehensive review meeting in Kargil with senior officers to assess administrative functioning, developmental progress and delivery of public services in District Kargil.

The meeting was attended by Administrative Secretary, Education, Bhanu Prabha; Administrative Secretary, PHE, Rahul Sharma; Administrative Secretary, YS&S Moses Kunzang; Senior Superintendent of Police, Kargil, Nitin Yadav; Additional Deputy Commissioner, Imteaz Kacho; Directors, Joint Directors, Chief Engineers PWD, PDD and BRO, Sub-Divisional Magistrates District Officers and heads of various Public Sector Undertakings based in Kargil.

The Deputy Commissioner, Kargil, attending the meeting virtually, gave a broad outline about the District's achievements and highlighted the challenges being faced. Important development indicators were discussed in detail. The Senior Superintendent of Police gave a broad outline about the law and order situation in the District. On the other hand, heads of various departments presented sector-wise updates on ongoing works, funds utilization, achievements and key challenges.

During the meeting, the Chief Secretary was given an overview of the District's profile, including education and health infrastructure, budget allocation, expenditure and revenue. Progress under major schemes such as the Jal Jeevan Mission, sewerage and sanitation projects, tourism development, education and health initiatives, power supply, rural development, agriculture and allied sectors, employment generation and digitization of revenue services with emphasis on timely completion, effective utilization of assets and improved service delivery. The law and order situation and status of crime status were also reviewed.

The Chief Secretary stressed on strengthening citizen-centric governance through wider outreach, enhanced digital services and programmes such as Kargil Jan Hit Camp 1.0. He directed all heads of the departments to adopt a solution-oriented approach, conduct regular field visits, remain accessible to the public and work in close coordination to address public concerns and promote inclusive development.

The meeting concluded with the Chief Secretary reiterating the importance of transparency, teamwork and people-centric governance for the overall development of Ladakh.

Earlier in the morning, the Chief Secretary attended the inaugural ceremony of the 5th LG Ice Hockey Tournament at the Ice Hockey Rink in Byamathang, Kargil as guest of honour where Chairman/CEC, LADHC-Kargil was the chief guest. In his address, the Chief Secretary lauded the efforts of the concerned departments for the promotion of winter sports, particularly ice hockey. He described ice hockey as a unique experience and noted that today's experience was his first first-hand exposure to the sport which left a lasting impression on him.

Kundra also appreciated the role of the Indian Army for its dual role—safeguarding the nation's borders while actively contributing to sports promotion and youth engagement in the region. He assured full support from the UT Administration for the development of winter sports infrastructure in Kargil while emphasizing that necessary steps would be taken to strengthen facilities and encourage wider participation.

Subsequently, he inspected stalls at Khri Sultan Cho Sports Stadium showcasing handloom, handicrafts, handloom industry products, tourism initiatives, and local entrepreneurship. He interacted with stakeholders/SHG members and emphasized the need to promote local crafts, strengthen value chains and enhance livelihood opportunities through focussed administrative support.

The Chief Secretary then reviewed the progress of works on infrastructure of the Youth Services & Sports Department adjacent to the sports stadium and passed instructions for early completion of the projects. He also visited the Tourist Facilitation Centre (TFC) of the Tourism Development Authority of Kargil and reviewed its operations and management.

CS pays ...

surreal," saying that only by reaching these remote heights can one fully feel the courage and endurance required of soldiers posted along the frontier. During his interaction with Army personnel stationed at the memorial complex, the Chief Secretary conveyed Ladakh's gratitude to the armed forces and praised their constant duty in extreme weather and high altitude. He acknowledged the hardships faced by troops serving in areas where temperatures dive well below freezing and where vigilance never eases.

Mr. Kundra also spoke warmly of Ladakh's long-standing support for the Army, noting that the region's people have always stood with the soldiers—offering help, goodwill and trust, whether during conflict or in calmer times. He added that this bond remains a source of strength for both the forces and residents of Ladakh.

Officials accompanying the Chief Secretary said the memorial continues to draw visitors from across the country, each arrival renewing the collective memory of the conflict and the lives lost. As the Chief Secretary concluded his visit, the memorial stood once more as a quiet reminder of sacrifice, national unity and the spirit of service.

China has ...

chief has given a responsible statement and I welcome it," he said.

Responding to allegations by some regional leaders in Jammu and Kashmir about the unrest in Ladakh, the governor outrightly dismissed the claims. "Ladakh is moving at a fast pace on the path of development. Ladakhis are united, fully nationalistic, and they fully support the government in all development work," he said.

He also highlighted the sharp increase in budgetary allocations for the region. "I want to convey to those leaders to mind their own business. This is not the Ladakh of the past, which was given a budget of ₹150 crore. Today, Ladakh has

a budget of around ₹6,000 crore," Gupta added.

Last Friday, India criticised China's infrastructure development projects in the Shaksgam valley, saying it reserves the right to take necessary measures to safeguard its interests as the area is an Indian territory.

Pakistan illegally ceded 5,180 sq km of Indian territory in the Shaksgam valley to China in 1963 from areas illegally occupied by it.

"Ladakh Awaits..."

ecology.

Sharing his travel notes from the past five months, the LG said he has visited Nubra, Zaskar, Hanley, Aryan Valley, Kargil, Drass, Darchik and other hard-to-reach belts to understand tourism prospects on the ground.

"These places hold stories and sights unlike anywhere else. Tourists return with memories they carry for life," he said.

The LG appealed to the travel trade to curate routes and packages that introduce travellers to Ladakh's lesser-known valleys, living heritage, community-run home-stays and emerging adventure zones.

He added that tour operators are vital in shaping visitor choices, helping travellers discover new destinations and opening economic opportunities for local youth.

Reaffirming the administration's support, Gupta said the UT Government stands ready with policy help, coordination and facilitation to expand responsible tourism in partnership with industry.

Wrapping up the interaction, the LG voiced confidence that stronger ties between Ladakh and Maharashtra will create steady tourist flow, fresh investment and shared growth, marking a new chapter in travel cooperation.

Supreme Court ...

an arbitrary exercise, violating Wangchuk's fundamental rights.

The top court deferred the matter on November 24 last year, after Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, representing the Centre and the Union Territory of Ladakh, sought time to respond to a rejoinder filed by Angmo.

On October 29, the court sought responses from the Centre and the Ladakh administration on an amended plea of Angmo.

Wangchuk was detained under the stringent National Security Act (NSA) on September 26 last year, two days after violent protests demanding statehood and Sixth Schedule status for Ladakh left four people dead and 90 injured in the Union Territory. The government has accused Wangchuk of inciting the violence.

According to the amended plea, the detention order is founded upon "stale FIRs, vague imputations and speculative assertions, lacks any live or proximate connection to the purported grounds of detention and is, thus, devoid of any legal or factual justification".

"Such arbitrary exercise of preventive power amounts to gross abuse of authority, striking at the core of constitutional liberties and due process, rendering the detention order liable to be vitiated by this court," the plea has contended.

It has said that it is wholly preposterous that after more than three decades of being recognised at the state, national and international levels for his contributions to grassroots education, innovation and environmental conservation in Ladakh and across India, Wangchuk would suddenly be targeted.

Angmo has said the unfortunate events of violence in Leh on September 24 cannot be attributed to the actions or statements of Wangchuk in any manner.

Wangchuk had himself condemned the violence through his social media handles and categorically said it would lead to the failure of Ladakh's "tapasya" and peaceful pursuit of five years, Angmo said, adding that it was the saddest day of his life.

The NSA empowers the Centre and states to detain individuals to prevent them from acting in a manner "prejudicial to the defence of India". The maximum detention period is 12 months, though it can be revoked earlier.

Somnath temple ...

immortal, like the sun and the moon. This Somnath temple is a symbol of India's faith, belief, and pride," he added.

Somnath Swabhimani Parv will be celebrated for an entire year, and many programmes will be held across the country to stir the soul of India, awaken its consciousness, and take the roots of Sanatan Dharma to the deepest levels, Shah said.

"A thousand years ago, our magnificent Somnath temple was destroyed by Mahmud Ghazni. After that, it was repeatedly attacked by other invaders, such as Alauddin Khilji, Ahmed Shah, Mahmud Begada, and Aurangzeb. But the temple was rebuilt every time," he said in his address.

"The destroyers believed in destruction, and the builders believed in creation. Today, 1,000 years later, those destroyers have disappeared, but the Somnath temple still stands proudly in front of the sea," the senior BJP leader pointed out.

After Independence, this temple was rebuilt with the efforts of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, KM Munshi, Maharaja of Jammu, and the first President, Dr Rajendra Prasad. They all had taken a resolve to restore it, Shah said.

"The intention behind that resolve was that the attack on Somnath was not just an attack on a temple, it was an attack on our faith, our religion and self-respect. And the answer to that cannot be another attack. The answer lies in protecting our self-respect," the Union minister noted.

Among other projects, Shah inaugurated a sports complex at Mansa town, his native place.

For future requirements and in line with global standards, Shah said some more facilities are required to be incorporated in the sports complex.

"Therefore, I have decided to collect Rs 15 crore through CSR funds to add all the necessary facilities in this complex. It is the responsibility of the elected representatives of this region to ensure that the children from the surrounding areas utilise these facilities," he said.

Shah said the Gujarat government is making Ahmedabad a 'sports hub city' that will attract the attention of the entire world.

In 2030, athletes from several countries will be coming to Ahmedabad to participate in the Commonwealth Games and efforts are also on to get hosting rights for the 2036 Olympics, he added.

India alert ..

sensitive but firmly under control.

The Army chief said that the situation along the Northern Front remains "stable but needs constant vigil".

"The situation along the Northern Front remains stable, but needs constant vigil. Apex-level interactions, renewed contact, and confidence-building measures are contributing to the gradual normalisation of the situation that has also enabled grazing, hydrotherapy camps, and other activities along the Northern Borders," he said.

"With our continued strategic orientation on this front, our deployment along the Line of Actual Control remains balanced and robust. Concurrently, capability development and infrastructure enhancement are progressing through a whole-of-government approach," he added.

General Dwivedi said that the situation in Manipur has witnessed "marked improvement" due to many proactive government initiatives.

"As regards the Northeast, neutral, transparent and decisive action by security forces, along with many proactive government initiatives, has led to a marked improvement in the situation in Manipur during 2025. Peaceful conduct of the Durand Cup, resumption of cultural festivals and renewal of suspension of operations, that is, SoO, with Kuki insurgent groups in September 2025, have been key markers of stability," he said.

He further said that the Army operated across two neighbouring countries and 10 states with regard to the Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR), and rescued over 30,000 people.

"As regards the HADR, the Army operated across two neighbouring countries and 10 states. It rescued over 30,000 people, and during the Punjab floods in Pathankot, some of you would recollect the daring rescue of the CRPF personnel by an Army aviation helicopter from a collapsing building," General Dwivedi said.

"In the border states, the Army was able to act even before formal requests were received from states. These three affirm our role as the natural first responder during HADR crisis," he added.

Ladakh implements ...

Detection and Suppression Systems has been made compulsory, while clearly marked emergency exits, roof hatches and emergency windows are intended to ensure swift evacuation in critical situations. Evacuation plans and illuminated safety signage must be prominently displayed inside the buses to guide passengers during emergencies.

The circular also introduces strict structural and design standards for sleeper berths to enhance passenger safety during long journeys. Berth layouts and dimensions have been standardized, with secure access to upper berths through ladders and handholds. Restraint systems are to be installed on sleeper berths to prevent passengers from falling while the vehicle is in motion. Special provisions have been mandated for differently-abled passengers, including designated lower berths near service doors and emergency call facilities. Only fire-retardant upholstery materials are permitted, and the use of solid partitions between sleeper cabins has been prohibited to reduce fire hazards.

To further strengthen safety oversight, all sleeper coaches must be fitted with vehicle location tracking devices and panic buttons as per national norms, in addition to carrying fully equipped first aid kits. Windows for upper and lower berths must be designed to function as emergency exits wherever applicable, further enhancing passenger security.

The administration has also laid down strict enforcement measures, directing transport authorities to ensure full compliance before granting or renewing fitness certificates. Sleeper buses not conforming to AIS-119 standards will be declared unfit for operation. Operators have been granted a one-month period to install fire detection and suppression systems, after which non-compliant vehicles will face action. Unauthorized extensions to bus chassis will result in immediate withdrawal from service, while driver partition doors and sliders fitted to sleeper berths are to be removed without delay.

Officials have emphasized that these measures reflect the administration's commitment to passenger safety, particularly in Ladakh's challenging terrain and climatic conditions. The move sends a strong message to bus operators that safety cannot be compromised and that adherence to national standards is essential to ensure secure and reliable public transport in the region.

4 Agra ...

morning, crossing Sarchu where the road was completely blocked due to heavy snow. While returning, their vehicle skidded on an icy patch near Nakila Pass and slipped nearly 20 feet off the road.

Though the vehicle did not overturn, the group remained stranded in freezing temperatures. They stayed inside the vehicle for two nights, running the engine for warmth until the diesel was exhausted. With no help in sight, they trekked 15–20 kilometres on foot towards nearby shelters they had noticed earlier and finally reached a hut where they spent the night with minimal resources.

A police team led by SHO Stanzin Gyaltsen personally undertook a search operation and successfully traced the stranded youths near Whisky Nallah. They were immediately provided food, dry fruits and warm refreshments before being escorted down. Their vehicle was later retrieved and brought back onto the road after strenuous efforts.

The rescued youths were brought safely to the police station and medically examined at a hospital, where all were found to be stable. Their families, who have reached Leh, are expected to take them home shortly.

Police have advised all visitors to strictly adhere to designated tourist routes, verify road status and seek local guidance, especially during winter months, to avoid venturing into closed and dangerous high-altitude corridors.

US, China, ..

of State Marco Rubio, Secretary of the Treasury Scott Bessent, Secretary of Commerce Howard Lutnick, Secretary of Energy Chris Wright, and also US Trade Representa-

tive Jamieson Greer.

Brende said the world is probably facing the most complex geopolitical situation since 1945, and dialogue is not a luxury in times of uncertainty, but an urgent necessity today.

"At a critical juncture for international cooperation - marked by profound socioeconomic and technological transformation - this year's Annual Meeting will be one of our most consequential. With historic levels of participation, it will provide a space for an unparalleled mix of global leaders and innovators to work through and look beyond divisions, gain insight into a fast-shifting global landscape, and advance solutions to today's and tomorrow's biggest and most pressing challenges," he said.

Brende said the WEF Annual Meeting will have a historic participation of more than 3,000 world leaders from over 130 countries this year, including over 1,700 business leaders, half of whom are CEOs or chairpersons.

There would be a record number of 400 top political leaders from across the globe, including a strong Latin American presence.

The meeting will also be attended by more than 30 foreign ministers, over 60 finance ministers and central bank governors and more than 30 trade ministers.

"We also never had more technology leaders at Davos," he said while listing heads of companies like Nvidia and Microsoft, among others.

Top political leaders taking part include Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney, German Chancellor Friedrich Merz, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, Chinese Vice-Premier He Lifeng, and Swiss President Guy Parmelin.

They also include presidents of Argentina, Indonesia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Colombia, Congo, Ecuador, Finland, Mozambique, Poland, Serbia, Singapore, Israel and Syria, alongside prime ministers of Spain, Belgium, Greece, the Netherlands, Pakistan, Palestinian National Authority and Qatar.

Close to 200 leaders from civil society and the social sector - including labour unions, non-governmental and faith-based organisations, as well as experts and heads of the world's leading universities, research institutions and think tanks - will also participate in the meeting.

From India, at least four Union ministers -- Ashwini Vaishnaw, Shivraj Singh Chouhan, Pralhad Joshi and K Ram Mohan Naidu -- as well as six CMs are expected to be there, along with over 100 top CEOs from the country.

The chief ministers are Devendra Fadnavis of Maharashtra, N Chandrababu Naidu of Andhra Pradesh, Assam's Himanta Biswa Sarma, Madhya Pradesh's Mohan Yadav, Telangana's A Revanth Reddy, and Jharkhand's Hemant Soren.

While Reddy is from Congress, Soren from Congress ally Jharkhand Mukti Morcha and Naidu from Telugu Desam Party (an ally of the BJP), the other three CMs are from the BJP. Karnataka's Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar (from Congress) is also expected to be there.

Among the Union ministers, Naidu is from TDP, while the other four are from BJP.

Besides, Gujarat's Deputy Chief Minister Harsh Rameshbhai Sanghavi (from BJP) and a high-level delegation from Uttar Pradesh will also visit Davos for the annual jamboree of the rich and powerful from across the world.

Indian leaders are expected to participate in several panel discussions, including one on 'Can India become the third largest economy in the world' during the summit.

Besides, they will hold bilateral meetings and attend India-specific, as well as global events, on the sidelines of the main WEF meeting.

Business leaders from India expected in Davos for the annual congregation of the rich and powerful from across the world include Reliance Industries Chairman and Managing Director Mukesh Ambani, Tata group's N Chandrasekaran, Bajaj Group's Sanjiv Bajaj, Jubilant Bhartia Group's Hari S Bhartia and TVS Motor's Sudarshan Venu.

Other Indian corporate leaders expected to be there are Axis Bank's Amitabh Chaudhry, Godrej Industries Group's Nadir Godrej, JSW Group's Sajjan Jindal, Zerodha's Nikhil Kamath, Bharti group's Sunil Bharti Mittal, Infosys co-founder Nandan Nilekani, Infosys CEO Salik S Parekh, Wipro's Rishad Premji, Essar CEO Prashant Ruia, Paytm's Vijay Shekhar Sharma and ReNew CEO Sumant Sinha.

Former Union minister Smriti Zubin Irani will also be there as founder and chairperson of Alliance for Global Good: Gender Equity and Equality, which was founded a few years ago in Davos itself.

Global leaders attending the summit include United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, World Bank President Ajay S Banga, IMF Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva, European Central Bank President Christine Lagarde, WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, UNESCO Director General Khaled el-Enany, WTO Director-General Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala and London Mayor Sadiq Khan.

From Pakistan, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Affairs Minister Mohammad Ishaq Dar, Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb and Pakistan Peoples Party Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari will also be there.

Project HIMANK: ...

cold, ensuring that forward posts never lose touch with the mainland.

These mountain routes carry more than traffic. They ferry troops, equipment and daily essentials to isolated areas where winter shuts every other door. Without these arteries, the movement of supplies and the safety of soldiers stationed far ahead would be at risk.

Project HIMANK's performance this season again highlights the BRO's grit and discipline. Teams carry out snow clearance at all hours, often reopening routes that heavy weather closes within minutes. The effort demands not only strength and skill but also endurance in rarefied air where every step draws hard-earned breath.

Locals too depend on these roads. When ambulances need to move, when food and fuel trucks head towards remote settlements, it is BRO's labour that makes that travel possible. Their quiet commitment stays out of the spotlight, yet frames daily life in border villages.

True to its motto, "Shramena Sarvam Sadhyam" - everything can be achieved through hard work - Project HIMANK continues to uphold road connectivity as a lifeline of the northern frontier. As winter tightens its grip, these road warriors work on, proving again that national service is not always seen in headlines or uniforms at the front, but just as often behind a snow cutter on a lonely mountain pass.