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Gupta pledges ...

there into a Community Health Centre (CHC). Member of Parliament from Ladakh, Mohmad Hanifa Jan, met the Lieutenant Governor and sought a private aircraft facility for winter travel in Kargil, the extension of the district hospital from 100 to 200 beds, and the establishment of a multi-speciality wing on the lines of AIIMS and PGI in Kargil.

Similarly, a delegation led by the Chairman of the Hiji Committee, Mohammad Ali Majaz, requested the establishment of a Passport Seva Kendra in Kargil.

A delegation of job aspirants from Kargil also called on the Lt Governor and submitted their demands. Likewise, a delegation of contractual employees, including cooks and helpers, highlighted their issues, while a group of medical employees currently working at SKIMS raised concerns regarding their transfer.

The Lieutenant Governor patiently heard the issues raised and assured that the UT Administration would ensure their speedy redressal through a consultative and coordinated approach.

The Lt Governor emphasised that equitable growth across Ladakh is a key priority of the UT Government.

Modi & ..

Modi and Xi know each other well. Before the Ladakh tensions, they met numerous times in bilateral and multilateral summits, including informal summits, spending quality time to understand each other. Since the Kazan meeting, the two sides have stepped up wide-ranging interactions.

Special Representatives for the boundary issue, NSA Ajit Doval and his counterpart Wang Yi, have held two rounds of talks in the last nine months to set the tone for the normalisation process of the bilateral relations.

This month's Doval-Wang meeting, which took place in the backdrop of Trump's tariff tirade against India, has breathed new momentum into the Sino-Indian relations, which had a chequered history in the last seven decades.

The two officials even spoke of an early harvest of the boundary issue, which is rarely heard in the fraught India-China relations.

In this background, the Modi-Xi meeting acquires significance and raises expectations that they may provide a broader roadmap for enhanced ties.

Also, Trump warmed up to Pakistan after Operation Sindoor, hosting an unprecedented luncheon meeting for Pakistan Army Chief Asim Munir, opening a new strategic window to Islamabad despite India's grave concerns related to cross-border terrorism promoted by Pakistan.

Pakistan, a member of the SCO, will also be present at Tianjin as Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif will be attending the summit.

Modi's meeting with Putin was expected to draw global attention as Trump singled out India for a tariff hike for buying Russian oil and gas.

For its part, China is trying to make the Tianjin SCO summit the largest by inviting 20 foreign leaders.

On the Modi-Xi meeting, Chinese strategic analysts say the Indian Prime Minister's attendance at the SCO meeting is important for their bilateral relations and for the summit itself.

Welcoming Modi ahead of his visit to the country for the SCO Summit, China believes that the atmosphere of the summit between PM Modi and President Xi will be quite harmonious, since both of them are friends and know each other well, Zhou Rong, Professor of strategic studies at China's Renmin University, said.

"They used to have very friendly and sincere meetings for the last 10 years. China hopes that Modi's coming will encourage the concerted effort of all parties to make the summit of the SCO successful and fruitful," he said.

Although China and India have started making joint efforts to repair their ties, it makes sense that China would be pragmatic and prudent in handling the relations with India, he said, adding that "we need a good neighbourly relation with India and we need to revitalise the two great civilisations".

Rong Ying, a senior research fellow at China Institute of International Studies (CIIS), said India's participation and support for the SCO is crucial, and all the other SCO members welcome PM Modi's participation.

"China, as a host, is anticipating India to make more contributions and play a constructive role in the SCO. China-India close cooperation and collaboration in regional and global groupings like the SCO has been a major area with great potential," Rong, also Professor at Sichuan University, told PTI.

The success of the SCO Tianjin summit should be defined by peace, security, and development challenges commonly facing the SCO members, which is going to showcase the significance of the bloc as a new regional grouping different from the traditional ones, Rong said.

Modi, in an interview with The Yomiuri Shimbun published during his ongoing visit to Japan, Modi also asserted that stable, predictable, and amicable bilateral relations between India and China, as two neighbours and the two largest nations on earth, can have a positive impact on regional and global peace and prosperity.

Asked about the importance of improving relations with China at this time, Modi said, "At the invitation of President Xi Jinping, I would be travelling to Tianjin from here to take part in the SCO Summit. Since my meeting with President Xi in Kazan last year, steady and positive progress has been made in our bilateral ties."

Stable, predictable, and amicable bilateral relations between India and China, as two neighbours and the two largest nations on earth, can have a positive impact on regional and global peace and prosperity, he said.

This is also crucial for a multi-polar Asia and a multi-polar world, he added.

"Given the current volatility in world economy, it is also important for India and China, as two major economies, to work together to bring stability to the world economic order," Modi said.

India is ready to advance bilateral relations from a strategic and long-term perspective on the basis of mutual respect, mutual interest and mutual sensitivity, and to enhance strategic communication to address our developmental challenges, he said.

On his views on the Japanese government's concept of a free and open Indo-Pacific, Modi said there is a strong convergence between Japan's vision of a free and open Indo-Pacific and India's own approach encapsulated in our Indo-Pacific vision, in the 'Vision MAHASAGAR' and the Indo-Pacific

Oceans' Initiative.

India and Japan are committed to an Indo-Pacific that is peaceful, prosperous, stable and where the territorial integrity and sovereignty of nations are respected, the prime minister said.

"Both our countries have strong and extensive linkages with countries in the Indo-Pacific region, and we both engage with some of them in plurilateral formats to give expression to our shared objectives," he said.

Talking about his recent conversations with the leaders of Russia and Ukraine, Modi said India has maintained a principled and humanitarian stance on the conflict, which is equally appreciated by both President Vladimir Putin and President Volodymyr Zelenskyy.

"In line with this, both the leaders spoke to me to share their perspectives on the developments related to the conflict. I reiterated India's principled and consistent stand and encouraged dialogue and diplomacy to resolve the conflict. I have already indicated India's willingness to support meaningful efforts aimed at achieving peaceful resolution of the conflict," he told the Japanese newspaper.

"I believe, by virtue of our good relations with both sides, including key stakeholders, we can strengthen efforts dedicated to the restoration of an early and lasting peace in Ukraine," Modi said.

Stressing the importance of the Global South, Modi said the global community has made a commitment to create a more equitable world through achieving Sustainable Development Goals by 2030.

"If we have to live up to this commitment, then the Global South must be given priority. In a highly interconnected world, we have seen the debilitating impact of the pandemic, conflicts and supply chain disruptions on the Global South," the prime minister said.

They continue to face myriad challenges involving global governance, climate change, food and energy security, debt and financial stress, all having a significant impact on their development priorities, he said.

"As members of the Global South, we clearly understand these concerns and their effects on people's lives. We have made strenuous efforts to bring these to the forefront of the global agenda," he said.

"All our global initiatives, like Mission LiFE, Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure, International Solar Alliance, Global Biofuels Alliance, focus on promoting the interests of the Global South. Our G20 Presidency saw the inclusion of the African Union and gave voice to the aspirations of the Global South," Modi pointed out.

Similarly, in BRICS, India is actively engaged in working toward the benefit of the Global South, he added.

India attaches importance to its engagement with BRICS, which has emerged as a valuable forum for consultation, and cooperation and has helped promote mutual understanding, on a specific set of issues of common interest to emerging economies, he said.

Under the rubric of the Quad, he said they have worked for the development and progress of the countries in the Indo-Pacific.

"India has also consistently called for urgent and comprehensive reforms of the global multilateral institutions to make them more effective and reflective of the current geopolitical and economic realities," he said.

He pointed out that in the last 20 years, since its inception in 2004, the Quad has emerged as a force of global good, delivering positive outcomes for the people of the Indo-Pacific region.

SAI undertakes ...

players representing Ladakh at the national and international levels.

The National Sports Day celebrations were held under the theme 'Ek Ghaanta, Khel ke Maidan Main'.

The Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports has launched the nationwide sports and fitness movement from 29th to 31st August to encourage participation in physical activities.

Highlighting the value of sports, Dr Akhoon said, "Sports help in both mental and physical well-being and should also be seen as a professional career option."

He appreciated the commitment of officials like recently appointed secretary Youth Services and Sports, Bhanu Prabha and Joint Director Youth Services & Sports, Tahir Zubdavi, describing them as competent professionals, who are dedicated and enthusiastic about developing sports infrastructure in Ladakh.

Dr Akhoon expressed hope that young players from Ladakh, particularly girls who are excelling in every sphere of life, will continue to shine at national and international platforms.

He assured that despite limited funds, the Department of Youth Services and Sports will continue to organize more sporting events at higher levels.

CEC also said that LG Ladakh has assured full support to promote traditional games like Horse Polo sport at National level.

Special guest on the occasion, Member Parliament UT Ladakh, Haji Hanifa Jan congratulated SAI and the Youth Department for successfully conducting Sports Day in Kargil.

He noted that sports-related activities in Ladakh have been steadily increasing over the past years, with several athletes earning recognition at national and international levels.

He also stressed that the forthcoming sports policy will provide much-needed financial support to athletes, enabling them to achieve excellence.

The event was also attended by Additional Deputy Commissioner Kargil Inteeaz Kacho, Joint Director Youth Services and Sports Tahir Hussain Zubdavi, Colonel Aman Sali, DYSSO, athletes, and students from various institutions.

Banks to ..

Commissioner, CEO, LAHDC Kargil, Rakesh Kumar including directing banks to ensure fulfilment of all set achievements and targets. The DC instructed to Fix locations of bank branches and banking correspondents in designated rural areas.

The DC convened the District Level Review Committee (DLRC) and District Consultative Committee (DCC) meeting at the Conference Hall, Baroo, to review the performance of the banking sector and line departments for the quarter ended June 30, 2025.

At the outset, the DC reviewed the achievements under the Annual Credit Plan, CD Ratio, financial inclusion, progress under PM Vishwakarma, PMEGP, MUDRA, KCC, NRLM, NULM, PMJDY, and social security schemes.

He emphasized the need for banks and departments to achieve the given targets in time and work towards saturating all government-sponsored schemes.

He asked to extend ATM facilities at feasible areas to im-

prove accessibility and generate revenue.

The DC directed to Introduce unique short-term skill-based training programmes through RSETI in horticulture and tourism sectors to promote self-employment in the district.

The DC stressed all stakeholders to strengthen the banking ecosystem in Kargil district and ensure timely benefits of government schemes to the people.

The Member of Parliament, Ladakh, Mohammad Haneefa also raised various concerns such as the need for hassle-free opening of zero-balance bank accounts and easy disbursement of loans and other beneficiary-oriented schemes for the general public.

He asked the agencies to address the concerns raised and to improve overall financial inclusion in the district.

The meeting also discussed the low CD Ratio of certain banks and directed them to improve their performance in the upcoming quarter.

Progress of CFL Centres and the utilization of Business Correspondents, Customer Service Points for outreach in unbanked areas were also reviewed.

The meeting was attended by the Member of Parliament Ladakh, Chief Horticulture Officer Kargil, Assistant Director Fisheries, representatives of DIC Kargil, Lead District Officer RBI Jammu, District Development Manager NABARD Kargil, Chief Manager SBI Kargil, Cluster Head J&K Bank Kargil, Director RSETI Kargil, Branch Managers of PNB, ICICI, HDFC, AXIS, Bandhan, IndusInd, J&K Grameen Bank, J&K State Cooperative Bank, and Operation Manager CRISIL Foundation (CFL), among others.

India, Japan ...

including the UN Charter. They welcomed the ongoing diplomatic efforts by various countries to achieve a just and lasting peace, the statement said.

They reiterated their commitment to peace and stability in the Middle East, calling on all parties concerned to show restraint, protect civilians, comply with international law, and refrain from taking actions that could further escalate the situation and compromise regional stability, it said.

Voicing grave concern over the humanitarian situation in Gaza, the two leaders strongly stressed the importance of reaching an agreement among the parties concerned regarding the release of all hostages and the immediate and sustainable ceasefire, as well as addressing the deteriorating humanitarian situation.

Triumph of ...

pointing out their contribution in the Make in India campaign.

Making a special mention of the country's defence sector, she said, Operation Sindoor is a golden chapter in humanity's victory against terrorism.

"This operation completely destroyed terrorist camps and thwarted attempts to attack India. The indigenous Akashter Air Defence Control and Reporting System displayed infallible capability. Public sector enterprises contributed to building this system. This is a matter of great pride for them," she said.

The President asserted that PSUs' contribution has been proven in achieving self-reliance on national security via innovation and India's growing technical expertise. Public sector enterprises have played a crucial role in sectors including agriculture, mining and exploration, manufacturing, processing and services, she said.

Murmu further pointed out that women-led development is one of the government's national priorities, asserting that women leaders have to overcome multiple challenges.

Yami Gautam ...

"The feeling of sipping Chai while nestled in the lap of the mighty mountainous terrain of Leh," she captioned the post.

Yami Gautam celebrated Independence Day at Leh's Hall of Fame. The museum, located on the Leh-Kargil Road, was built in memory of the brave Indian soldiers who were martyred in the Indo-Pak wars. Yami and Aditya Dhar posed in front of the war memorial as the Indian Flag fluttered in the background. "Best Independence Day Celebration. Ever! Jai Hind!" she wrote.

Panel to...

days after Chief Minister Omar Abdullah questioned allowing the pilgrims for the Yatra when there was a warning of heavy downpour.

The committee headed by the additional chief secretary, Department of Jal Shakti, will submit its report within two weeks to Sinha, who is also the chairman of the Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board, an official order said.

Jammu Divisional Commissioner Ramesh Kumar and Inspector General of Police B S Tuti are the two other members of the panel, Special Secretary in the L-G Secretariat, Krishan Lal, said in the order issued on the directions of Sinha.

A landslide struck near the Inderprastha Bhojnalaya at Adhkuwari, about halfway along the winding 12-km trek route from Katra to the shrine, on Tuesday, killing 34 pilgrims and injuring 20 others.

There are two routes leading to the shrine. While the Yatra had been suspended on the Himkoti trek route since Tuesday morning, it was going on along the old route till afternoon when authorities decided to suspend it as a precautionary measure, a couple of hours before the tragedy struck.

"A high level three-member committee is hereby constituted to inquire into the reasons behind the tragic landslide incident near Adhkuwari on the Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Ji track, Reasi district, on 26-08-2025," the order said.

The committee would examine in detail the reasons behind the incident and point out any lapses, assess responses in the form of rescue and relief measures undertaken, and suggest appropriate SOPs and measures for preventing recurrence of such incidents, it added.

"The committee will submit its report within two weeks to the chairman of the Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board," the order said.

A partial strike was observed in Katra on Thursday as a mark of respect and solidarity with the deceased pilgrims, with hundreds of people taking out a march to criticise the Shrine Board over the tragic incident.

"The tragedy shows the incompetence of the Shrine Board, which allowed the Yatra despite weather warnings," former J-K minister Jugal Kishore Sharma said, alleging that the track was developed in a highly-unplanned man-

ner.

Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP) general secretary Karan Singh, who was also part of the protest march in Katra, accused the Shrine Board of over-commercialising the pilgrimage, and requested it not to play with the "sanctity of the holy shrine".

On August 27, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah asked why officials of the Shrine Board, which is under the administrative control of the LG, did not stop pilgrims from treading the track when there was a warning of the calamity.

"When we knew about the weather, should we not have taken certain steps to save lives? The weather warning had come to us a few days ago," Abdullah said.

Posing questions to the officials, he added, "Why were these people on the track? Why were they not stopped? Why were they not moved to a safe place? This has to be discussed later. We feel sorrow over the loss of precious lives."

In a late-night statement on Thursday, the Shrine Board refuted allegations of allowing the Yatra to proceed in disregard of weather advisories and at the cost of pilgrim safety, saying the pilgrimage was suspended at noon on August 26 ahead of the cloudburst that triggered the landslide.

However, the Board did not share details about the number of deaths caused by the disaster.

After visiting Katra on August 27, Sinha had said, "This has been a very unfortunate incident. Around noon yesterday, a cloudburst occurred when the Yatra was already suspended. Due to the cloudburst, several people were swept away by the waters. Many precious lives have been lost, and several others have been injured."

Callous failure ...

hollow theatrics.

Tarun Chugh added that this so-called confrontation between Kejriwal and Congress is nothing but Noora Kushti—a fixed match—being played to mislead the people. But the people of Punjab are watching closely, and they will never accept this deceitful brand of politics

Japan to ...

summit talks between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Japanese counterpart Shigeru Ishiba.

The two sides firmed up 13 key pacts and documents and announced the launch of several transformative initiatives, including an economic security architecture to promote supply chain resilience in strategic sectors such as semiconductors, clean energy, telecom, pharmaceuticals, critical minerals and new and emerging technologies.

"We both agree that as two major economies and vibrant democracies, our partnership is very important not only for our two countries, but also for global peace and stability. Strong democracies are natural partners in shaping a better world," Modi, flanked by Ishiba, said.

"Today, we have laid a strong foundation for a new and golden chapter in our Special Strategic and Global Partnership. We have set a roadmap for the next decade."

"We have set a target of 10 trillion yen investment from Japan in India over the next ten years," Modi said.

Of the agreements, one relates to promoting mobility of 50,000 skilled and semi-skilled personnel from India to Japan in the next five years, while another agreement will advance collaboration in digital public infrastructure.

The 10-year roadmap features several key pillars such as economic security, mobility, ecological sustainability, technology and innovation, health, people-to-people exchanges and engagements between Indian states and Japanese prefectures.

Another key pact was to advance cooperation in supply chain resilience for critical minerals, including through the development of processing technologies, joint investments for exploration and mining and efforts for stockpiling critical minerals. A separate declaration was sealed for promoting projects on hydrogen and ammonia.

The pacts signed also featured one on joint crediting mechanism and another on cooperation between the Indian Space Research Organisation and Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency for a joint lunar-polar exploration mission.

The document defines terms and conditions for cooperation between India and Japan on the Chandrayaan-5 mission, giving practical shape to a "landmark" collaboration.

The comprehensive framework on defence will provide for defence and security cooperation to respond to contemporary security challenges, according to the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA).

The two prime ministers also expressed serious concern over the situation in the East China Sea and the South China Sea against the backdrop of China's increasing military muscle-flexing in the strategic waters.

Modi and Ishiba reiterated their strong opposition to any unilateral actions that endanger the safety as well as freedom of navigation and overflight, and attempt to change the status quo by force or coercion.

"They shared their serious concern over the militarisation of disputed features. They reaffirmed that maritime disputes must be resolved peacefully and in accordance with international law, in particular the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)," according to a joint statement.

The two prime ministers, taking into account the prevailing global situation, resolved to uphold the international order based on the rule of law and reaffirmed their steadfast commitment to a free and open Indo-Pacific that is peaceful, prosperous and resilient.

Modi and Ishiba also unequivocally condemned in the strongest terms the terrorist attack in Pahalgam, and took note of the report by the UN Security Council's Monitoring Team mentioning The Resistance Front (TRF) for the attack.

"Prime Minister Modi further explained that the TRF had claimed responsibility for the attack. Prime Minister Ishiba noted this with concern. They called for the perpetrators, organisers, and financiers of this reprehensible act to be brought to justice without any delay," the joint statement said.

In his remarks to the media, Modi said Japanese technology and Indian talent are a winning combination.

"While we are working on high-speed rail at one end, we are also making rapid progress in areas like ports, aviation, and shipbuilding under the next generation mobility partnership," he said.

"We also have shared interests in the areas of defence and maritime security. We have jointly decided to further strengthen our cooperation in the fields of defence industry, and innovation," he said.