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GI Tagging ...

UT Administration will work to secure them. Dr Rajni Kant informed the Lt Governor that the GI tag process for eight products from Leh district—Ladakh Pashmina Textile, Ladakh Nambu, Snambu Textile, Ladakh Pabu (shoes), Ladakh Thangka Painting, Ladakh Likir Pottery, Ladakh Chilling Metal Work, Ladakh Thigma (tie-and-dye textile), and Ladakh Challi Textiles—is in the final stages, and the focus would now be on securing GI tags for products made in Kargil.

The Lt Governor stated that the GI tags for these products would not only increase their marketability and value, along with boosting the local economy through fair prices and employment, but would also promote tourism and assure consumers of a product's genuine quality.

Similarly, a delegation comprising members of Ladakh Buddhist Association (LBA) Leh, met the Lt Governor and requested the relocation of slaughterhouses to an appropriate place, which is far from human settlements.

Social activist Roqiya Bano from Chuchot Gongma met the LT Governor and apprised about various development issues in the area. A delegation from WWF-India met the Lt Governor and apprised about the ongoing projects in Leh for the protection of endangered wildlife species, special curriculum for students in schools, women empowerment and capacity-building of youth.

In his concluding remarks, the Lt Governor said that GI tagging, along with community participation and conservation initiatives, will play a pivotal role in shaping Ladakh's future by striking a balance between tradition and modernity.

He assured that the UT Administration will extend all necessary support to safeguard Ladakh's heritage, protect its ecology, and empower its people, so that the Union Territory emerges as a global model of sustainable growth rooted in cultural pride.

Famers pillars ...

practices. He said that such events bring him personal happiness as they directly benefit farmers.

Stressing the importance of consuming organic produce, he noted that in today's era of adulterated and unhealthy foods, locally grown organic products are essential for both health and financial sustainability.

He proudly highlighted that apricots and apples from Kargil are already being exported abroad and expressed hope that in the near future, vegetables, particularly mushrooms, will also find export markets.

He extended heartfelt thanks to KVK Kargil-1, Agriculture, and Horticulture Departments for their tireless contributions.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr Nazir, Scientist at KVK Kargil-1, highlighted the objectives of the Mela and encouraged farmers to disseminate information about government schemes and the economic potential of organic products.

District Agriculture Officer, Razia Khatoon, motivated SHGs and farmers to adopt integrated farming practices, work towards self-reliance, and also invited them to participate in the upcoming Agriculture Mela.

The was attended by Cheif Agriculture officer Ashiq Hussain, dupty director Comand area development Mohd Iqbal, senior scientist KVK Kargil-1 Nasreen Fatima, District Agriculture Officer Kargil Razia Banoo and officials from KVK Kargil-1 and Agriculture and Horticulture.

Safeguarding future...

advertisements related to online money games and bars banks and financial institutions from transferring funds for any of such games.

Later in the day the PM, along with Singapore Prime Minister Lawrence Wong virtually inaugurated the second phase of the PSA-operated Bharat Mumbai Container Terminal (BMCT) at the Jawaharlal Nehru Port here.

Following this, the terminal's total container

handling capacity would stand at 4.8 million TEUs from 2.4 million TEUs earlier.

JNPA Chairman Unmesh Sharad Wagh said that the country's premier container port, Jawaharlal Nehru Port, is looking at allowing Ro-Ro (Roll on/Roll off) service from its facility for efficient vehicle transportation.

The country's premier container port handles five major dedicated container terminals operated by global market leaders with a deep draft of 15+ metres, with the capability of handling 18,000 TEU vessels.

At the port, the event was attended by Minister of State for Ports, Shipping and Waterways Shantanu Thakur, Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis, Managing Director PSA India Gobu Selliaya and Wagh, among others.

"We are also thinking of starting a Ro-Ro service. The exporters (car makers) have sought permission, which are pending due to certain issues. We are discussing those issues with them," Wagh said on the sidelines of the event.

He said that the Port is "very keen" to give them permission for these services, as there is a lot of demand, adding that currently these export vehicles come to Mumbai from Pune, and have to travel an additional distance besides congesting the city's roads.

On the expansion, he said, "We require capacity as our trade and economy are growing, which requires a lot of ports. The expansion of this terminal is an important milestone for us in achieving the Prime Minister's vision of port-led development.

The 100 per cent renewable energy terminal, PSA Mumbai Terminal is the first container terminal port with DFC (dedicated freight corridor)- compliant with six rails and 8 RMGs (rail mounted gantry) and efficiency in handling 18000 TEUs, according to JNPA.

The terminal has also received USD 1.3 billion FDI, the largest, under a PP model, providing connectivity to over 63 ICDs - via road and rail, as per the port operator.

Over almost three decades, PSA has invested a total of USD 2.3 billion in India, of which more than half is in BMCT, Singapore Deputy Prime Minister had said during a visit to the JNPA last month.

JNPA handles 54 per cent of the containerised cargo across all major ports of India.

Wagh also said that JNPA has already crossed 10.1-million TEUs capacity, and expressed hope that the facility will be handling this much capacity in the next two years.

"We think that our capacity should be ahead of our requirement. Last year we handled 7.3 million TEUs, while this financial year it will be 8 million TEUs. Even after having this much capacity, we are sure that we will handle over 10 million TEUs in the next two years in JNPA itself. That is the growth India is witnessing," he said.

Wagh also sounded confident that the JNPA will just be a 100 per cent green and shore-power-compliant facility in the next two years but also be able to reduce its turnaround time by at least 20 per cent during this period.

Earlier in the day the PM said, GST 2.0 is a double dose of support and growth for the nation and the next-generation reforms have been done to support India's progress in the 21st century.

His comments came a day after the GST Council approved a complete overhaul of the tangled Goods and Services Tax (GST) regime.

In an interaction with National Teacher awardees, Modi noted that five new gems (panch ratna) have been added to India's vibrant economy through the GST reforms.

He said GST has become even simpler and new rates of 5 per cent and 18 per cent will become effective from first day of Navratri.

"GST 2.0 is a double dose of support and growth for the nation. Next generation reforms in GST has been done to support India's progress in 21st century. Five new gems (panch ratna) have been added to India's vibrant economy through GST reforms," he said.

"Without timely changes, we cannot give our

country its rightful place in today's global situation. I had said from the Red Fort on 15 August this time that it is crucial to undertake next-generation reforms to make India self-reliant. I had also promised the countrymen that there would be a double blast of happiness before this Diwali and Chhath Puja," he added.

The prime minister said that during Congress regime basic household items used to be "heavily taxed" and the BJP government has tried to address those issues for ease of common man.

In another related development, India and European Union pledged to seal their much-awaited free trade deal by December with Prime Minister Narendra Modi and 27-nation bloc's top leaders Antonio Costa and Ursula von der Leyen pledging to promoting a rules-based global order, amid Washington's disruptive trade policies.

In a joint phone call with European Council president Costa and European Commission chief von der Leyen, Modi reiterated India's consistent support for peaceful resolution of the Ukraine conflict and early restoration of peace and stability.

The leaders underlined the role of the India-EU strategic partnership in jointly addressing global issues, fostering stability, and promoting a rules-based order for mutual prosperity, an Indian readout said.

The phone talks among the three leaders came as India looks to blunt the impact of the Trump administration's 50 per cent tariff on Indian goods.

The three leaders also discussed holding the next India-EU summit in India at an early date of mutual convenience and PM Modi invited Costa and von der Leyen for the same.

In a social media post, Modi described the conversation as "very good".

"Reaffirmed our shared commitment for an early conclusion of the India-EU FTA and implementation of the IMEEC corridor. Exchanged views on issues of mutual interest and efforts for bringing an early end to the conflict in Ukraine. We agreed that our Strategic Partnership has a key role to play in fostering stability and promoting a rules-based order," he said.

On the Ukraine conflict, von der Leyen said India has an important role to play in bringing Russia to end "its war of aggression and helping create a path towards peace". The European Commission president welcomed India's continued engagement with President Volodymyr Zelenskyy.

"This war carries global security consequences and undermines economic stability. So it is a risk to the entire world," she said on 'X'.

The phone call, largely focusing on India-EU free trade deal and the summit, came days before EU trade commissioner Maros Sefcovic's planned trip to New Delhi amid reports of both sides making significant headway towards finalising the trade pact.

India and the EU relaunched the negotiations for the free trade agreement (FTA) in June 2022 after a gap of over eight years.

"As the world's largest democratic forces, India and EU share a strong and close relationship built on trust, shared values, and a common vision for the future," the Indian readout said.

It said Modi, Costa and von der Leyen also welcomed progress in bilateral relations in key sectors such as trade, technology, investment, innovation, sustainability, defence, security and supply chain resilience, and reaffirmed the shared commitment for an early conclusion of the India-EU FTA negotiations and implementation of the IMEEC (India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor).

"Looking ahead, we plan to agree on a joint strategic agenda at the next EU- "India summit, as early as possible in 2026. We also remain fully committed to concluding the Free Trade Agreement negotiations by the end of the year. To achieve this, progress is needed now," von der Leyen said.

The Indian readout said the leaders also exchanged views on regional and global issues of

mutual interest, including the efforts to bring an end to the conflict in Ukraine.

"PM Modi reiterated India's consistent support for peaceful resolution of the conflict and early restoration of peace and stability. The leaders agreed to remain in touch," it said.

The IMEEC initiative was firmed up on the sidelines of the G20 Summit in Delhi in 2023.

Billed as a pathbreaking initiative, it envisages a vast road, railroad and shipping networks among Saudi Arabia, India, the United States and Europe with an aim to ensure integration among Asia, Middle East and West.

Vital for ...

not only known for its breathtaking landscapes but also for its vibrant festivals, unique traditions, and historical role as a cultural crossroads. These attributes, he added, strengthen the unity of the people of Ladakh.

Quoting the message of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam, 'he world is one family'—often propagated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Kavinder Gupta emphasised the need to spread this philosophy across the globe as a reflection of India's deep-rooted cultural values.

Shri Kavinder Gupta praised the International Performing Arts Festival (IPAF), founded in Ahmedabad in 2015 by social entrepreneur Shyam Pandey, for offering a meaningful platform to artists, including differently-abled performers and young talent, to showcase traditional and contemporary art forms nationally and internationally.

Highlighting tourism as a beneficiary of Ladakh's cultural richness, the Lt Governor said lakhs of tourists visit the region every year to witness its heritage, and it is the responsibility of the people to ensure visitors return with happy memories. He added that the UT Administration is committed to preserving Ladakh's cultural traditions through various initiatives to keep younger generations connected to their roots.

The event featured soulful performances by Pandit Indu Prakash Trivedi, who presented classical ragas, thumri, dadra and ghazals. Kathak exponent Aditi Vashistha, Konchok Sopari Group and artists from CIBS also enthralled the audience with their presentations.

Zanskar Festival'25...

financial constraints. The CEC emphasized the need for all departments to work in close coordination to ensure the successful conduct of the event. Drawing from the successful organization of the Suru Festival earlier this year, he entrusted the Deputy Commissioner Kargil and his team to oversee the Zanskar Festival with the same zeal and dedication.

Deputy Commissioner Rakesh Kumar assured the meeting that all necessary steps will be taken to ensure the festival's smooth conduct, with judicious utilization of resources across departments. Executive Councilors Kacho Mohd Feroz and Er. Phunchok Tashi also shared valuable suggestions and extended their full support.

Meanwhile, Director Tourism informed the meeting that a proposal of ₹24 lakh has been submitted by the Tourist Officer Zanskar to support the festival, which has already been forwarded to the higher authorities of the UT for necessary approval.

The CEC concluded the meeting by directing all concerned officers to work in synergy so that the Zanskar Festival 2025 is celebrated successfully, highlighting the rich cultural heritage and traditions of Zanskar Valley.

The meeting was attended by Executive Councilor Kacho Mohd Feroz, Executive Councilor Er. Phunchok Tashi, Deputy Commissioner and CEO LAHDC Kargil Rakesh Kumar, Director Tourism Department UT Ladakh Tsering Paldan (both joined online), Additional SP Kargil Nitin Yadav, Councillor Stanzin Lakpa, Deputy Secretary LAACL Nazir Hussain, Assistant Director Tourism Mohammad Ali Tak, Tourist Officer Zanskar Rasool Lal, besides other concerned officers.