



‘Game of balance, cooperation’: PM Modi draws parallels between volleyball and India’s growth story

(Gns). Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday inaugurated the 72nd National Volleyball Championship via video conferencing, extending greetings to players from across the country and underlining the role of sports in nation-building. Addressing the event, PM Modi emphasised the parallels between volleyball and India’s growth story, highlighting the importance of teamwork, coordination, and trust. Speaking at an event, he said volleyball teaches

valuable lessons about balance, cooperation, and willpower, reflecting India’s journey towards progress, the result of teamwork and coordination among its people. “Volleyball is a game of balance and cooperation... it also demonstrates willpower. Volleyball connects us through team spirit... I see many similarities between India’s growth story and volleyball... Volleyball teaches us that our victory depends on our coordination, our trust, and our team’s preparation... We succeed only when

everyone fulfils their responsibilities. Our country is also progressing in the same way,” said PM Modi. The Prime Minister said he was proud to welcome



athletes to Kashi and described the tournament as a reflection of India’s unity and collective spirit. Addressing the gathering, the Prime Minister, who is also the Member of Parliament from Varanasi, said he was delighted to welcome athletes to Kashi. “As the Member of Parliament for Kashi, I am delighted to welcome and congratulate all the players. You have reached this national tournament after a

lot of hard work,” PM Modi said. He noted that teams from 28 states are participating, presenting a vivid picture of ‘Ek Bharat, Shreshtha Bharat’. Highlighting Varanasi’s sporting legacy, PM Modi said the city has always been a hub for sports lovers. “Many sports like wrestling, boxing, boat racing, and kabaddi are famous here. Banaras has also given many national players to the country,” he said, expressing confidence that the energy of the city would remain high throughout the tournament. He added that participants would not only compete but also experience Kashi’s rich culture, with encouragement from local residents.

PM Modi further said “Today India’s sports model is athlete-centric. The welfare of the athletes is prioritised in every way. The government made huge reforms in the sports sector. With the National Sports Governance Act and Khelo Bharat Neeti 2025, the right talent will get the opportunity and transparency will increase in sports.”

“Atmanirbhar Bharat” and is now entering a phase where other nations are becoming increasingly dependent on Indian capabilities. Citing examples from vaccines, medical devices, and indigenous technologies, he said India has transitioned from import dependence to exports worth several crores, reflecting the growing global acceptance of Indian science and technology. “We are not only self-reliant; we are making others rely on us,” he remarked.

Emphasising DSIR’s four pillars—Science, Industry, R&D and Technology Transfer, the Minister said that meaningful research cannot be sustained without industry as an early and essential partner. He noted that DSIR’s role has expanded beyond certification to include fiscal incentives such as customs duty exemptions, making it more attractive for industry, MSMEs and startups to collaborate with government-supported R&D.

Celebrating 42nd Foundation Day of DSIR, Government Announces Relaxation for Deep-Tech Startups for DSIR recognition, Strengthens India’s R&D and Innovation Ecosystem

(Gns). Marking the 42nd Foundation Day of the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research (DSIR) under the Ministry of Science & Technology (MoST), Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science & Technology, Earth Sciences, PMO, Department of Space and Department of Atomic Energy, Dr. Jitendra Singh, today announced a major relaxation of the mandatory three-year existence condition for deep-tech startups to avail recognition under DSIRs Industrial Research and Development Promotion Program.

The removal of the three-year existence requirement

published on their own, while continuing to maintain



is a significant incentive to help deep-tech startups scale faster, even before they are fully on their own,” he said, adding that the reform reflects the Government’s trust in India’s innovators and its confidence in their sustainability and intent.

appropriate evaluation standards linked to technological maturity.

The move, aimed at accelerating India’s StartUp ecosystem, is expected to provide early momentum to early starters or beginners of StartUp projects as well as promising innovators and entrepreneurs. Addressing the gathering, the Minister said that while the ₹1 lakh crore Research, Development and Innovation (RDI) Fund has generated unprecedented enthusiasm across the country, it is designed to support startups that have graduated to a certain level of technological maturity. “For early-stage innovators or Startups, a wide basket of schemes already exists across departments such as DST, CSIR, TDB and others.

The Minister later congratulated the entire DSIR family on the occasion, describing the relationship between DSIR and CSIR as an “intergenerational symbiosis”, where both institutions complement and strengthen each other. Drawing an analogy with a joint family, he said that while DSIR emerged from CSIR, the latter’s present-day technology transfers, MoUs and industry partnerships are equally enabled by DSIR’s facilitative role. He highlighted that this close coordination has transformed interdisciplinary science into intergenerational collaboration, critical for India’s innovation ecosystem.

Dr. Jitendra Singh highlighted that India has moved beyond the goal of

Shri Amit Shah, directs the administration to act on a war footing to address the water-borne typhoid situation in Gandhinagar

Gandhinagar, 04 January 2026: Following reports of typhoid cases among children and citizens due to contaminated water caused by pipeline leakages in Gandhinagar’s Sector 24, 28, and Adivada areas, Shri Amit Shah, MP from the Gandhinagar Lok Sabha constituency and Union Minister of Home Affairs and Cooperation, remained in constant contact with Deputy Chief Minister Shri Harsh Sanghavi, the District Collector, and the Municipal Commissioner. After detailed discussions and a review of the situation, he directed the administration to act on a war footing to address the issue.

repairs and intensive pipeline inspections to prevent further spread.

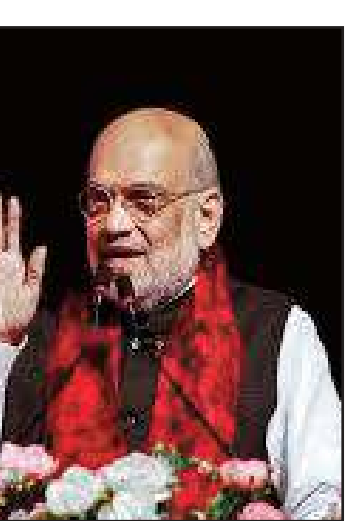
Intensive health arrangements and survey operations have been undertaken regarding suspected typhoid cases in Gandhinagar city, especially in those areas from where these suspected cases have been reported—Sectors 24, 26, and 28, and Adivada—surveys have been conducted by 75 health teams.

Thus far, 113 suspected typhoid cases have been identified, and 19 patients undergoing treatment have been discharged.

The remaining 94 patients are being treated at Gandhinagar Civil Hospital, and the UHCs of Sectors 24 and 29, and their condition is stable. A 24x7 OPD has been started

ed in the affected areas. Meal arrangements have been made for relatives of patients receiving treat-

ment at the Civil Hospital.



Survey teams of the Gandhinagar Municipal Corporation have so far surveyed more than 20,800 households, covering a population of over 90,000.

As preventive measures, 30,000 chlorine tablets and 20,600 ORS packets have

been distributed.

Survey teams are carrying out door-to-door outreach, distributing awareness pamphlets, and educating people on boiling drinking water, avoiding outside food, and maintaining hand hygiene.

To contain the outbreak, super-chlorination of water has been intensified, and chlorine levels are being regularly monitored.

The Municipal Corporation will switch over to a 24x7 water supply by Monday, ensuring the delivery of adequately chlorinated water even to each and every household.

Immediate repairs of both minor and major leakages in the affected areas have been undertaken. The Municipal Corporation is also carrying out intensive inspections of the sale of pani puri, ragda patties, ice golas, shikanji soda, and milk-based beverages across the city.

Vigilance recommends CBI probe against VD Satheesan over alleged foreign funding in ‘Punarjani’ project

(Gns). The Vigilance and Anti-Corruption Bureau (VACB) has recommended a Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) probe against Leader of the Opposition in the Kerala Assembly, V.D. Satheesan, over alleged receipt of foreign funds in connection with the ‘Punarjani’ project.

It has been reported that the VACB’s investigation into allegations of fraud and the illegal diversion of funds for the ‘Punarjani’ rehabilitation project has indicated possible violations of the Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA), 2010.

According to the Vigilance, discrepancies were found in funds collected from the United Kingdom through a foundation, which the VACB has identified as a violation of provisions under the FCRA.

A report recommending a CBI investigation has been submitted to Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan.

As per the VACB report, Satheesan allegedly facilitated the collection of nearly ₹20 lakh from individuals in the UK through a foundation named Manappattu. The report states that the funds were routed through a UK-based NGO, the Midland International Aid Trust, into the foundation’s FCRA account.

It further notes that GBP 22,500 (approximately ₹19.95 lakh) was collected from various individuals in the UK and transferred to the foundation’s account. The Vigilance department contends that this constitutes a violation of Section

3 of the FCRA, which prohibits politicians from accepting foreign contributions.

Reacting to the Vigilance recommendation for a CBI probe, Satheesan said that the state’s Vigilance wing had earlier investigated the same allegations and dropped them due to lack of evidence. “If the plan is to keep a case hanging over me in January because elections might be announced in March, then so be it,” he told mediapersons in Sulthan Batherly.

“If a CBI investigation is announced two months before the elections, the people of Kerala have the common sense to understand the intent behind it,” Satheesan added.

The Congress leadership has rallied behind

Satheesan, dismissing the move as a desperate political stunt by the CPI(M) ahead of the Assembly elections. Senior Congress leader Ramesh Chennithala said the case was a political ploy by Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan as elections draw near.

Meanwhile, a Vigilance report stating that a case under the Prevention of Corruption Act against Satheesan would not stand has come to light. The report, submitted by the Vigilance Deputy Inspector General to the Vigilance Director in September last year, states that there is no evidence of money having been received in Satheesan’s account and that he could not be found to have committed any offence under the Prevention of Corruption Act.

Jaishankar to visit France, Luxembourg

(Gns). External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar will be on a week-long official visit to France and Luxembourg from Sunday to discuss bilateral issues as well as global developments.

In Paris, he will be meeting the French leadership and holding talks with Minister for Foreign Affairs Jean Noel Barrot. They will discuss the progress made under the India-France Strategic Partnership and matters of global impor-



tance, the Ministry of External Affairs said.

The US action in Venezuela and the ongoing

Ukraine conflict are expected to come up during the discussions.

Jaishankar will also

address the 31st edition of the French Ambassadors’ Conference as the Guest of Honour.

The minister will also be visiting Luxembourg, where he will hold discussions with Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs Xavier Bettel of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg and with the senior leadership of Luxembourg. He will also be interacting with the members of the Indian Community in Luxembourg.

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Editorial

Casual Response

US President Donald Trump's decision to publicly shrug off China's latest military drills around Taiwan may sound reassuring, but it masks a far more consequential reality unfolding in the western Pacific. These exercises are not background noise, nor are they mere muscle-flexing for domestic consumption. They are part of a carefully sequenced strategy by China to redefine the military and psychological boundaries around Taiwan ~ incrementally, persistently, and without triggering outright war.

The drills, which simulate blockade conditions and integrate air-sea coordination, reveal Beijing's evolving preference for coercion over confrontation. Rather than a dramatic invasion scenario, China appears intent on normalising constant pressure: crossing the median line, saturating Taiwan's airspace, and forcing Taipei to remain on perpetual alert. Over time, this approach erodes readiness, drains resources, and conditions both regional actors and global audiences to accept a more militarised status quo. What makes this moment especially volatile is the absence of clear red lines.

As China pushes incrementally and the United States signals restraint through tone rather than policy, deterrence becomes blurred. In such grey zones, signalling matters as much as firepower ~ and misreading intent can be as dangerous as provocation itself. President Trump's remarks, rooted in personal diplomacy and historical precedent, risk misreading this shift. While it is true that China has conducted exercises in the region for decades, the scale, frequency and operational sophistication have changed markedly. The assumption that a cordial relationship with Chinese President Xi Jinping can meaningfully influence Beijing's approach to Taiwan overlooks how central the issue is to China's national narrative. Reunification is framed not as a policy choice but as a historical obligation ~ one that transcends individual leaders and transactional bargains.

The drills are also a pointed response to recent US arms sales, signalling that Beijing views military assistance to Taiwan as crossing from deterrence into provocation. Yet, the real audience extends beyond Taipei. These manoeuvres are designed to probe Washington's resolve and expose ambiguity in its commitments. Mixed signals ~ arming Taiwan while downplaying Chinese pressure ~ create strategic uncertainty that benefits the side willing to push boundaries. For Taiwan, the dilemma is acute. Its leadership must project calm and restraint while preparing for worst-case scenarios. Overreaction risks escalation; complacency invites encroachment. The island's greatest challenge may not be a sudden assault, but the slow recalibration of norms that makes extraordinary pressure seem routine. The broader danger lies in miscalculation.

When one side treats drills as routine and the other treats them as rehearsal, the margin for error narrows. History shows that conflicts often erupt not from deliberate intent, but from accumulated misunderstandings layered over time. President Trump's nonchalance may play well domestically, but geopolitics is not governed by personal chemistry alone. In the Taiwan Strait, power is being exercised quietly, persistently, and with long memory. Ignoring that reality does not reduce the risk ~ it merely postpones the reckoning.

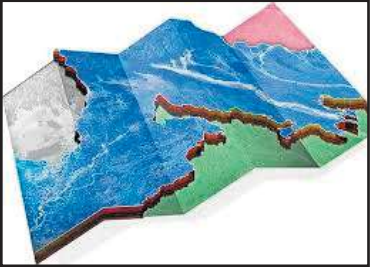
Chicken's Neck

(Gns).

It is not just elements on the fringes of the Bangladesh establishment who have threatened to exploit India's vulnerability in the Siliguri corridor; some months ago, interim leader Mohammed Yunus had hinted at this weakness. While there have been angry ~ and predictable ~ reactions to these statements in India, including a reference to Bangladesh's similar vulnerabilities by the Assam chief minister, these appear to miss the point.

Attempts to target the Chicken's Neck will likely be made by non-state actors, and not the Bangladeshi state, and India's response cannot be seen to be disproportionate. Therefore, before training its guns eastwards, the Indian security establishment ~ which must include the states of West Bengal, Bihar, and Assam ~ needs to take steps internally to fortify India's position. The

Siliguri corridor poses a unique security challenge, straddles as it does several districts of West Bengal, in addition to sensitive districts of Bihar. This in effect means



from one of these districts to the other to evade the law.

Add to this the challenge posed by their complex demographics and the activities of radical elements in these districts ~ those who may already be here and those who can easily slip in from Bangladesh ~ and the situation begins to look increasingly alarming. In effect, any insurgent action in this area can quickly spiral out of control, especially if the local population is

Vibrant Gujarat Vision Launched by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi in 2003 Has Grown Into a Strong Pillar of Development

VGRC's, District-Level Programme Organised in Junagadh under chairmanship of Minister of Social Justice & Empowerment and In-charge Minister, Dr. Pradyuman Vaja

Industrialists and Experts Hold Discussions at Junagadh District-Level Programme to Accelerate Industrial Growth

22 Hectares of Land Allocated to Accelerate Growth of the Seafood Industry: District Collector Shri Anilkumar Ranavasiya

Exhibition of Locally Manufactured Products Emerges as Major Attraction at District-Level Programme

Junagadh, 4 January 2026: Under the chairmanship of the Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment and In-charge Minister of Junagadh district, Dr. Pradyuman Vaja, 218 MoUs were signed for investments worth Rs. 1,209 crore across various sectors to provide new dimensions to the industrial development of Junagadh district.

Ahead of the Vibrant Gujarat Regional Conference (VGRC) being held in Rajkot, the District level Programme was successfully organised today in Junagadh district with the participation of industri-

alists and young entrepreneurs, opening up new avenues for investment. Today, significant MoUs were signed in sectors such as health and hospitals, education institutions based on Sanskrit language and traditions, tourism, resorts, and related fields.

On this occasion, Cabinet Minister Dr. Pradyuman Vaja said that the foundation of Vibrant Gujarat laid by Prime Minister Shri Narendrabhai Modi in 2003 has grown into a strong platform, now enabling industrial development MoUs even at the district level.

Through this summit, mainly 102 MOUs worth approximately ₹281 crore were signed in the agro, food processing, and dairy sectors; 55 MOUs worth ₹144 crore in engineering and technology; 41 MOUs worth ₹403 crore in minerals and mining; and MOUs worth ₹114 crore in tourism and ₹175 crore in infrastructure. The upcoming investments in the district will create large-scale employment and give the district an identity in national and global markets.

He said that the industrial sector will play a key role in achieving Prime Minister's vision of Viksit Bharat @2047, and that the district-level programme reflects the vision of Vocal for Local and Local to Global. He stated that Junagadh district is richly endowed by nature, with



operation was launched based on specific intelligence inputs about the Maoist movement in the

abundant natural beauty, mountains, forests, the sea, and rivers. Along with these natural assets, Junagadh is also renowned for its historical, cultural, mythological, and spiritual heritage. He added that the Ginnar Ropeway has provided a significant boost to tourism, while the presence of the Asiatic lion has placed Gujarat prominently on the global map.

He highlighted that Seafood, spices, food processing products, machinery, and several other goods from Junagadh are now exported to global markets. The district has developed strong industrial clusters in plastic products, engineering, seafood, and agro and food processing. Infrastructure such as Vande Bharat railway services, the expansion of Keshod Airport, national highways, small and large industrial estates, and GIDC facilities has significantly strengthened the industrial ecosystem.

Under the guidance of Chief Minister Shri Bhupendra Patel, focused and successful efforts have been made to promote trade and industry, particularly agriculture-based and tourism-based sectors. He also extended special congratulations to the investors who signed MoUs and the

operators of various industrial units who participated in the exhibition.

District Collector Shri Anilkumar Ranavasiya, in his keynote address, said that when the then Chief Minister and present Prime Minister Shri Narendrabhai Modi launched Vibrant Gujarat in 2003, the vision he set to

make Gujarat a leading state has today turned into a well-defined pathway for growth. With strong infrastructure, skilled manpower, and consistent government support, Gujarat has created a favourable environment for industrial development, which is being further strengthened under the leadership of Chief Minister Shri Bhupendra Patel.

He stated that Junagadh district is agriculture-based and is also well known for tourism. To add new dimensions to both these sectors, necessary efforts have been made to further develop the agro-processing industry here, and these efforts are yielding success. The development of the agro-processing industry will also provide farmers with a strong option for their produce. The district's Kesar mango and Ravana (Jamun) are well known across the country and enjoy special demand. He also invited investors to invest with a

new setup to develop religious tourism along with tourism. In this context, he also cited the example of the Ram Temple in Ayodhya. He said that Keshod Airport is also being expanded on a large scale. Its runway will be extended from 1.5 km to approximately 2.5 km, which will enhance cargo facilities, benefit the coastal areas of Saurashtra, and also increase the number of tourists. He highlighted that to give a boost to the seafood industry, 22 hectares of land has also been allocated, which will also generate large-scale employment.

Chairperson of the Junagadh Municipal Corporation Standing Committee, Smt. Pallaviben Thakkar stated that under the leadership of Prime Minister, several initiatives have been implemented to enable youth to become job providers rather than job seekers. She added that due to the Prime Minister's farsighted vision, Gujarat today holds a leading position in the country.

Secretary of the Chamber of Commerce, Shri Sanjay Purohit, stated that the district-level programme has been result-oriented. New agro-processing units have been established in the district, and the sector's existing potential will be further expanded. He also highlighted the district's infrastructure development and

outlined its strong potential in the tourism sector.

On this occasion, symbolic distribution of assistance cheques to beneficiaries, including under the Vajpayee Bankable Yojana, was also carried out by the Cabinet Minister and he also inaugurated the exhibition showcasing locally manufactured products at the District Vibrant Summit and toured the exhibition.

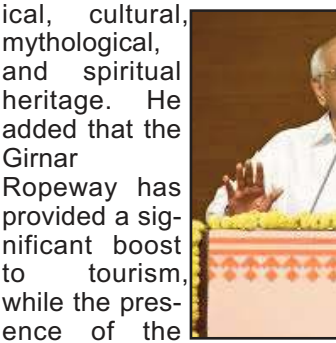
General Manager of the District Industries Centre Shri Dhairya Joshi, welcomed the dignitaries.

In addition, seminars were organised during the programme on AI, startups, and innovation as strategic partners in modern entrepreneurship, during which Shri Dharmendra Joshi and Jatin Katariya shared their views.

The event was attended by Mayor Shri Dharmeshbhai Poshia, Deputy Mayor Shri Akashbhai Katara, Leader of the Ruling Party Shri Manan Abhani, Commissioner Shri Tejas Parmar, District Development Officer Shri H.P. Patel, District BJP President Shri Chandubhai Makwana, District City President Shri Gaurav Rupareliya, leader Shri Punithbhai Sharma, industrial association officials Shri Amrutbhai Desai and Pareshbhai Chovatia, along with representatives from the Hotel Association, Gems & Jewelry Association, GIDC Association, Chamber of

Investment of Rs. 1,209 crore through 218 MoUs signed for industrial development and employment generation in Junagadh district

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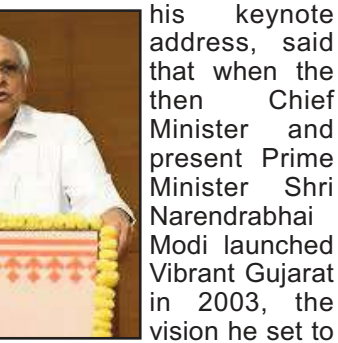
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Why Republicans are fleeing Congress

Jerry Nadler is retiring after 34 years, following mounting pressure from upstart challengers and a growing consensus among Democrats that it's time for older politicians to step aside.



Nancy Pelosi, the former speaker who will turn 86 in March, is also retiring. Sometimes, members of Congress depart for the same reasons other workers might leave any job. Like many Americans, members of Congress might find something more attractive elsewhere. Retiring members are attractive hires for lobbying firms and corporations, thanks to their insider knowledge and connections within the institution. These firms usually offer much higher salaries than members are used to in Congress, which may explain why more than half of all living former members are lobbyists of some kind.

Other members remain ambitious for elective office and decide to use their position in Congress as a springboard for another position. Members of the House regularly retire to run for a Senate seat, such as, in this cycle, Democratic Rep. Haley Stevens of Michigan. Others run for executive offices, including governor, such as Republican Rep. Nancy Mace of South Carolina. But some are leaving Congress due to growing frustration with the job and an inability to get things done. Specifically, many retiring members cite growing dysfunction within their own party, or in Congress as a whole, as the reason they're moving on.

In a statement announcing his departure in June, Sen. Thom Tillis, R-N.C., mused that "between spending another six years navigating the political theatre and partisan gridlock in Washington or spending that time with my family," it was "not a hard choice" to leave the Senate.

In addition, there are a few other factors that can

help explain why so many Republicans in particular are heading for the exits leading up to 2026. The shifting of boundaries that has come with the mid-decade redistricting process in several states this year has scrambled members' priorities. Unfamiliar districts can drive incumbents to early retirement by severing their connection with well-established constituencies. In Texas, six Republicans and three Democrats ~ nearly a quarter of the state's entire House delegation ~ are either retiring or running for other offices, due in part to that state's new gerrymander for 2026. All decisions about retirement and re-election are sifted through the filter of electoral and partisan considerations.

A phenomenon called "thermostatic politics" predicts that parties currently in power, particularly in the White House, tend to face a backlash from voters in the following election. In other words, the president's party nearly always loses seats in midterms. In 2006 and 2018, for example, Republican members of Congress were weighed down by the reputations of unpopular Republican Presidents George W. Bush and Trump. Republicans had arguably even greater success in midterm elections during Barack Obama's presidency. Currently, 2026 looks like it will present a poor national environment for Republicans.

Trump remains highly unpopular, according to polls, and Democrats are opening up a consistent lead in the "generic ballot" question, which asks respondents which party they intend to support in the 2026 midterms without reference to individual candidates.

Democrats have already been overperforming in special elections, as well as the general election in November in states such as New Jersey and Virginia, which held elections for governor.

256 Naxals killed, over 1,500 surrendered in 2025 as Bastar sees decisive Anti-Maoist push: IG P Sundarraj

Bastar Range Inspector General of Police P. Sundarraj said that 2025 marked a decisive turning point in the fight against Left-Wing Extremism in the region, with security forces killing 256 Naxals in encounters and facilitating the surrender of more than 1,500 Maoists during the year.

"In 2025, in various encounters in the Bastar division, 256 Naxals were killed... More than 1,500 Naxals surrendered. Their rehabilitation work is being done," IG Sundarraj told ANI

on Saturday.

Speaking to the media, the Bastar IG said sustained intelligence-based operations, coordinated action by multiple security agencies, and focused area domination had significantly weakened Maoist networks across the Bastar division. He added that surrendered cadres are being rehabilitated under government policies to help reintegrate them into the mainstream.

His statement came after security forces recovered the bodies of 14

Maoists following multiple encounters in the Bijapur and Sukma districts. According to the IG, the



operation was launched based on specific intelligence inputs about the Maoist movement in the

southern parts of the two districts.

"During the operation, multiple encounters took place between security forces and Maoists. After conducting searches in the area, two Maoist bodies were recovered from Bijapur district and 12 from Sukma district, taking the total to 14," Sundarraj said. He added that a large cache of graded weapons, including an AK-47 and INSAS rifles, was also seized from the encounter sites.

An official release described 2025 as a historic

year for the Bastar Range, citing major breakthroughs against Maoist leadership, large-scale recovery of arms, and the surrender of senior cadres. These developments, the release said, have created a strong foundation for long-term peace and stability in the region.

"Significant achievements on the fronts of security, peace, justice, and development have marked the year 2025. Precise and timely intelligence-based operations and strong coordination among security forces

have established decisive control over Naxalite activities," Sundarraj said in the release.

The improved security situation has also had a positive impact on development and public welfare in Bastar. Authorities said expansion of roads, communication networks, healthcare, and education facilities has accelerated, ensuring better delivery of government welfare schemes to remote and previously inaccessible areas.

Supreme Court To Pronounce Judgement On Umar Khalid, Sharjeel Imam's Bail In Delhi Riots Case On Monday

(Gns). The Supreme Court is set to deliver its decision on 5 January on the long-pending pleas for release filed by activist Umar Khalid, scholar Sharjeel Imam and several others, all seeking regular bail in the UAPA case connected to the alleged "larger conspiracy" behind the February 2020 Delhi riots.

The verdict will address challenges to a 2 September Delhi High Court order that refused bail to Umar Khalid, Sharjeel Imam, Gulfisha Fatima, Meeran Haidar, Shifa Ur Rehman, Mohd Saleem Khan and Shadab Ahmed, who argue that continued detention under the stringent anti-terror law is not justified by the evidence on record.

The Supreme Court will announce its decision on January 5 regarding bail pleas from Umar Khalid,

Sharjeel Imam, and others, who are accused in the UAPA case related to the 2020 Delhi riots, challenging the Delhi High Court's denial of their bail. The case concerns alleged conspiracy, the applicability of the UAPA, and delays in the trial, and involves the Delhi Police and several senior advocates.

A bench of Justices Aravind Kumar and N. V. Anjaria heard detailed submissions from both sides and reserved judgment on 10 December, after arguments on the nature of the charges, the delay in trial and the scope of the UAPA provisions that have been invoked in connection with the north-east Delhi violence.

On behalf of the Delhi Police, Solicitor General

Tushar Mehta and Additional Solicitor General S. V. Raju opposed the plea for liberty, while senior advocates Kapil Sibal, Abhishek Singhvi, Siddhartha Dave, Salman Khurshid and Sidharth Luthra appeared for the accused, questioning the strength of the prosecution case and the prolonged incarceration.

Background to the Umar Khalid Sharjeel Imam bail litigation and Delhi riots

The case stems from clashes that broke out in parts of north-east Delhi in February 2020, during protests over the Citizenship (Amendment) Act and the proposed National Register of Citizens, violence that resulted in 53 deaths and injuries to more than 700 people, along with extensive

damage to homes and shops.

Investigators have invoked the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act along with sections of the erstwhile Indian Penal Code, alleging that Umar Khalid, Sharjeel Imam and others functioned as "master-minds" who coordinated protests and road blockades that, according to the prosecution, were used as a cover to organise riots on communal lines across the area. In an affidavit filed in October before the Supreme Court, the Delhi Police claimed that the unrest was part of a planned "regime-change operation" designed to destabilise India and damage its image abroad, asserting that the events were not spontaneous but followed a pattern allegedly visible in chats and witness accounts.

India Issues Travel Advisory After US Military Operation In Venezuela

(Gns). India's ministry of external affairs has urged citizens to stay away from Venezuela, after the United States carried out multiple military strikes and announced the capture of Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro and Maduro's wife during an operation early on Saturday.

The advisory said Indians should avoid any non-essential travel because of the volatile security situation in the South American country, where explosions and low-flying aircraft were reported around key sites, including La Carlota airport, following the United States-led action.

India's Ministry of

External Affairs advised citizens to avoid non-essential travel to Venezuela due to a volatile security situation following U.S. military strikes and the reported capture of President Nicolas Maduro and his wife; Indians in Venezuela are urged to stay in contact via a dedicated email and emergency phone line.

Earlier, US President Donald Trump revealed that American forces had seized Nicolas Maduro and Maduro's wife, following weeks of pressure from the

Trump administration. Talking to media, Trump said the United States would take a primary role in shaping events in Venezuela going forward.

During the interview, Trump stated: "We'll be

media after confirmation of the operation, saying: "We're going to run the country until such time as we can do a safe, proper and judicious transition." Trump called the raid "one of the most stunning attacks and effective and powerful displays of American military might and competence in American history".

Trump argued that no other state could have matched the speed or scale of the mission. "No nation in the world could achieve what America achieved yesterday," Trump said, claiming Venezuelan military capabilities had been fully neutralised by the strikes that triggered India's latest advisory.

Greece Radio Frequency Outage Disrupts Airspace And Flights Across The Country

(Gns). Flights across Greece were brought to a sudden standstill on 4 January after a radio frequency problem disrupted communications, leaving Greek airspace largely empty and forcing nationwide suspensions of take-offs and landings while aviation authorities investigated the cause and imposed strict safety limits on airport operations.

Greece's civil aviation authority confirmed that the disruption affected radio frequencies used for air traffic control, prompting restrictions on airport activity, though some overflights crossing the Athens Flight Information Region continued under controlled conditions, while officials stressed that enquiries were under way to identify

what triggered the outage. On January 4, a radio frequency problem disrupted communications, halting flights and airport operations across Greece, leading to delays and diversions, while aviation authorities investigated the cause and imposed safety restrictions.

All arrivals and departures stopped from 9:00 a.m. local time, affecting airports and impacting schedules throughout the region, with the Athens Flight Information Region effectively closed.

State broadcaster ERT reported that all arrivals and departures at airports across Greece stopped from 9:00 a.m. local time

(0700 GMT), with footage from Eleftherios Venizelos International Airport in Athens showing crowded departure halls and stranded passengers as flight-tracking platforms displayed Greek airspace almost completely clear of commercial aircraft.

A Transport Ministry official told Reuters that more than 75 flights faced delays, although a limited number of aircraft travelling towards northern and eastern destinations received permission to depart, while several other services were diverted to nearby states as airlines adjusted routes to avoid affected Greek airspace.

Greek airspace failure

triggers diversions and delays abroad

In Israel, an Airports Authority spokesperson said Greek airspace would remain closed until 4:00 p.m. local time (1400 GMT), warning travellers to expect delays to both arrivals and departures on routes linked to Greece, and advising passengers that the disruption could affect schedules throughout the region.

Greek City Times posted on X: "Security Check-In Closed Since 9 AM! Due to the ongoing radio frequency failure in Greek airspace (started early January 4, 2026), NO takeoffs possible nationwide. Security check-in & departures halted at Athens International since ~9 AM," capturing the scale of the shutdown in Greek airspace.

Ships built by GSL & other Indian yards are floating symbols of India's sovereignty, says Raksha Mantri ahead of commissioning of Pollution Control Vessel 'Samudra Pratap' into ICG

"Aatmanirbharta in defence is not a luxury, but a strategic necessity"

"Equipping ships with state-of-the-art equipment, AI-enabled maintenance & cyber-secure platforms is key to gaining edge over adversaries"

"India is a proactive maritime nation, ensuring stability, cooperation & rule-based order throughout the Indian Ocean Region"

(Gns).

"The ships built by the Goa Shipyard Limited (GSL) and other Indian yards for the Indian Navy & the Indian Coast Guard (ICG) are the floating symbols of India's sovereignty, representing our presence, capability, and resolve on the high seas," said Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath

Singh during his visit to the GSL on January 04, 2026, on the eve of the commissioning of Pollution Control Vessel (PCV) 'Samudra Pratap' into the ICG. Samudra Pratap, the first of two PCVs built by the GSL, will be commissioned in the presence of Raksha Mantri in Goa on January 05, 2026.

Shri Rajnath Singh described Aatmanirbharta in defence as not a luxury, but a strategic necessity, lauding institutions like the GSL for transforming this necessity into reality. The GSL is developing capabilities, absorbing technology, and strengthening indigenous design, which have resulted in the timely deliv-

ery of equipment to the Armed Forces and accelerated the pace towards making the nation self-reliant, he said.

Underlining the critical role played by the Indian shipyards in today's complex security environment, Raksha Mantri asserted that non-traditional threats are constantly increasing alongside traditional challenges in the maritime domain. "We face numerous challenges at sea, such as narcotics trafficking, illegal fishing, human trafficking, environmental crimes, and grey-zone challenges. In such a situation, the role of shipyards becomes even more

critical. Located in a city which is the center of the country's maritime history, naval heritage, and strategic foresight, the GSL is one of the pillars of India's defence ecosystem, bearing the responsibility for maritime security," he said.

Shri Rajnath Singh emphasised that a ship is not just an amalgamation of steel, machinery, and technology, it is a symbol of the trust of the people and the expectations & needs of the Armed Forces. The GSL has fulfilled this trust and expectations for years, he said.

Raksha Mantri stressed that India is emerging as a proactive maritime nation, and its role in ensuring stability, cooperation.

Several Feared Dead After Explosion Triggers Massive Rock Collapse at Stone Quarry in Odisha's Dhenkanal

(Gns). Several workers are feared dead following a rock collapse triggered by an explosion at a stone quarry in Dhenkanal district, Odisha, sparking panic and an urgent rescue effort.

(Gns). In Dhenkanal district, Odisha, a rock collapse at a stone quarry, triggered by an explosion near Gopalpur village, resulted in a rescue operation after workers were trapped under debris; senior officials, including District Collector Ashish Ishwar Patil, are overseeing efforts while Naveen Patnaik expressed sorrow and sought a probe.

The incident has raised serious concerns about safety practices at quarry sites in the region, as officials continue to assess the scale of the tragedy.

According to officials,

the incident occurred on Saturday evening near Gopalpur village under Motanga police station limits. Workers were engaged

services, personnel from the Odisha Disaster Rapid Action Force, dog squads and heavy machinery operators, were immediately



in drilling and stone exploration when a sudden explosion reportedly led to a massive rockfall, trapping several people under debris. The exact cause of the explosion is yet to be confirmed.

Emergency response teams, including local fire

deployed to the quarry. Search and rescue operations are ongoing as authorities work to determine how many workers remain trapped.

"The rescue operation is in progress," a fire service officer said.

Senior officials super-

vise operations on ground. District Collector Ashish Ishwar Patil and Superintendent of Police Abhinav Sonkar reached the site to oversee rescue efforts and coordinate between agencies. Officials said more details would emerge once debris is cleared and the situation is fully assessed.

Naveen Patnaik expresses grief, seeks probe

Leader of Opposition Naveen Patnaik expressed deep sorrow over the incident and called for accountability. In a post on X, he said, "I am deeply saddened to learn that workers lost their lives due to a rockfall following an explosion in a stone quarry in Dhenkanal."

Ayush Export Promotion Council observes 4th Establishment Anniversary in New Delhi

AYUSH exports climb 6.11% to USD 688.89 Million in 2024-25 amid export facilitation measures and trade agreement inclusion

(Gns). The Ayush Export Promotion Council (AYUSHEXCIL) observed its 4th Establishment Anniversary today in New Delhi in India's efforts to promote exports of traditional systems of medicine and wellness products.

Since its formation, AYUSHEXCIL has undertaken several initiatives focused on capacity building of exporters, facilitation of export procedures and regulatory compliance, and the organisation of B2B meetings, international exhibitions, seminars, and outreach programmes in key overseas markets.

Exports of AYUSH and herbal products have registered a growth of 6.11 per cent, increasing from USD 649.2 million in 2023-24 to

India's traditional medicine systems (AYUSH) have also received formal recognition in bilateral trade agreements, includ-



USD 688.89 million in 2024-25. Following the establishment of AYUSHEXCIL, this growth has accelerated, reflecting enhanced global outreach and rising international demand for India's traditional medicine and herbal products.

ing the India-Oman CEPA and the India-New Zealand FTA, with dedicated annexes on health-related services and traditional medicine. AYUSHEXCIL has been entrusted with anchoring the Ayush Quality Mark programme of the Ministry of Ayush, launched by the

Hon'ble Prime Minister during the 2nd WHO Summit on Traditional Medicine (17-19 December 2025), marking a key milestone in strengthening quality assurance and global recognition of AYUSH products.

As AYUSHEXCIL enters its fifth year, the Council aims to further strengthen international cooperation, leverage opportunities under Free Trade Agreements, promote quality and certification frameworks, and enhance global acceptance of India's traditional systems of medicine.

The anniversary underscores India's growing leadership in the global AYUSH and wellness economy, aligned with the vision of Atmanirbhar Bharat and Make in India.

Guwahati to Host Human Capital Working Group Meeting Ahead of India AI Impact Summit 2026

(Gns). IndiaAI, Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), Government of India, in collaboration with the Government of Assam, and IIT Guwahati, will convene the Human Capital Working Group Meeting on January 5-6, 2026, in IIT Guwahati campus. The Working Group is chaired by Prof. T. G. Sitharam, Chair of the Human Capital Working Group and former Chairman, AICTE, Government of India. The two-day meeting will bring together senior policymakers, academic leaders, industry experts, and practitioners to deliberate on the future of education, skilling, and workforce readiness in the age of Artificial Intelligence.

The event will see par-

ticipation from Shri Syedain Abbasi, IAS, Special Chief Secretary, Government of Assam, Shri K. S. Gopinath

emicians and dignitaries. The inaugural session will also feature a Summit Address by Prof. T. G.



Narayan, IAAS, Principal Secretary (IT), Government of Assam, Shri. Ashwani Kumar, IAS, Director IT Dept, Government of Assam

Prof. Jalihal, Director IIT Guwahati, Prof. Gautam Barua, Former Director IIT Guwahati, Smt. Shikha Dahiya, Joint Director, IndiaAI, MeitY, and other government officials, acad-

Sitharam, outlining the Human Capital vision under the India AI Impact Summit framework.

Anchored in the objective of treating AI as a public utility, the Working Group Meeting will focus on designing inclusive, scalable, and responsible approaches to AI-led workforce transition. Deliberations will place par-

ticular emphasis on education reform, gender-responsive AI strategies, and domain-specific augmentation of human capabilities, ensuring that AI adoption strengthens human potential rather than displacing it.

The agenda includes expert panel discussions on Gender-Responsive Strategies for the AI Transition, Redefining Education for the Cognitive Age, The Architecture of the National Language Translation Mission, Building an Inclusive and Empowered India, and The Reverse Engineering Approach to AI Education. Together, these sessions will examine how India can reimagine learning systems, language access, and skills pathways to prepare citizens for an AI-enabled economy.

Union Minister Shri Rajiv Ranjan Singh to Inaugurate the Smart Green Aquaculture Farm and Research Institute and state-of-the-art Re-circulatory Aquaculture System (RAS) Facility in Telangana

Smart Green Aquaculture pioneers the first ever successful farming of rainbow trout, a High Value cold-water species under Hyderabad's climatic conditions

(Gns). The Union Minister, Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying and Ministry of Panchayati Raj, Shri Rajiv Ranjan Singh alias Lalan Singh will inaugurate the Smart Green Aquaculture Farm and Research Institute and state-of-the-art Recirculatory Aquaculture System (RAS) Facility following the General body meeting on 5th January 2026 in Hyderabad, Telangana.

Smart Green Aquaculture Limited has

established India's first commercial-scale tropical Recirculating Aquaculture System (RAS)-based Rainbow Trout Aquaculture Farm & Research

Institute, marking a watershed moment in the evolution of Indian aquaculture. Situated at Kandukur Mandal in Ranga Reddy District, Telangana conclusively demonstrates that high-value cold-water species such as Rainbow Trout can be farmed year-round in tropical climates, using precision engineering, controlled biological systems, and advanced water recir-

culation technologies. This achievement overturns long-standing assumptions that premium aquaculture



species are geographically constrained to specific climatic zones, and it establishes technology-not climate-as the primary determinant of aquaculture viability.

The project functions as a live training and demonstration platform, equipping

youth with hands-on experience in advanced aquaculture systems, automation, and biosecurity, thereby strengthening human capital in the fisheries sector.

The Government of India has set in motion a series of transformative ini-

WESTERN RAILWAY
ELECTRICAL WORK
Deputy Chief Electrical Engineer, (Construction) Western Railway, Pratnagar, Vadodra, invites E-Tender
Notice No: TR-C-10-2025-26-T, dtd 01.01.26. Work & Location: Design, Supply, Erection, Testing, Commissioning & Modification of 25 KV AC OHE of Multitracking between Chhayapuri-Bajwa section on Vadodra Division of Western Railway. Approx. cost of work: ₹ 3,92,92,681/- . Bid Security: ₹ 3,46,500/- .
Date of bidding start: 11.01.26. **Date & Time of Closing tender:** On 27.01.26 at 15:00 hrs. For further details please visit our website www.irops.gov.in
Like us on : [facebook.com/WesternRly](https://www.facebook.com/WesternRly) 0974

Two illegal mosques, madrasa demolished in Sambhal; government land to be allotted to beneficiaries

(Gns). In a major anti-encroachment operation on Sunday, authorities demolished two illegal mosques and a madrasa in Sambhal district.

The first action took place in Hajipur village under Asmoli police station, where villagers themselves had already demolished a mosque overnight using hammers and chisels, ahead of the administration's arrival.

The mosque had been constructed on 1,339 square metres (approximately 1.5 bighas) of land. When the administrative team reached the site in the morning, only debris remained.

Tehsildar Dharendra Pratap Singh commented that "God gave the villagers wisdom to remove the illegal structure themselves."

The administration cleared the rubble with bulldozers within three hours.

The second operation also took place in Hajipur, about 500 metres from the first site, where a madrasa was demolished. Announcements were made using drums, and three bulldozers were deployed to clear 1,500 square metres of land. District officials, police, and a large security contingent were present, while drone surveillance monitored the operation.

The third demolition occurred in Raya Buzurg village, approximately 11 km from the madrasa site. Two bulldozers were used to remove a mosque built on 1,500 square meters of government land. Officials



noted that a demolition notice had been issued on October 2, but the mosque committee had approached the High Court. The court from the court one and a half months ago. After the High Court rejected the committee's appeal, a 15-day notice was served, which expired on Sunday.

Tehsildar Dharendra Pratap Singh said that in June 2018, a revenue officer had reported that Haji Shamim had illegally occupied government land to build the mosque. Based on this report, a case titled Gram Sabha vs Haji Shamim Mutawalli was filed and processed in the tehsildar's court.

DM Rajendra Pensia and SP Krishna Kumar Vishnoi were present at the sites. Following the demolition, 20 selected beneficiaries will be allotted the land. The DM stated that the mosque had been illegally constructed 25 years ago, and despite a previous demolition order.

Nearly 5,000 houses surveyed, says Indore Collector amid water contamination crisis

(Gns). Amid chaos over water contamination in Indore, District Collector Shivam Verma said that nearly 5,000 houses have been surveyed and chlorine dosing has been completed in all borewells following the water contamination crisis in the Bhagirathpura area.

"We started the ring survey, and we have completed the survey of approximately 5,000 houses. Of the 65 people in whom symptoms were found, we have sent 15 to the hospital. Currently, 149 people are hospitalised, and 205 have recovered and returned home," Verma said.

"A survey team has also



arrived. They have shared some information. We have completed chlorine dosing for all our borewells. Some samples have also been taken. After the sample reports come in, we will take action accordingly," he added.

The water contamination incident in Indore's Bhagirathpura has sparked widespread criticism after it claimed several lives and affected many families.

Earlier, Indore mayor Pushyamitra Bhargav announced that a water supply survey would be conducted across the city over the next seven days and that complaints related to leaks would be resolved within 48 hours.

Speaking to ANI, Bhargav said, "The team is continuously working in Bhagirathpura to ensure that people receive clean water regularly. The entire staff and team of the Indore Municipal Corporation are working among the people. Any

Bangladesh seeks ICC intervention, after Mustafizur Rahman's removed from IPL

(Gns). Bangladesh has condemned the decision to exclude Mustafizur Rahman from the IPL on Saturday.

"By bowing to extremist communal groups, the Indian cricket board has directed the Kolkata Knight Riders to exclude Bangladesh cricketer Mustafizur Rahman from the team. I strongly condemn and protest this decision," Asif Nazrul, Adviser to Bangladesh's interim government, wrote on Facebook.

Nazrul further said that the interim government has advised the cricket board to



seek ICC intervention in the matter. However, it is important to note that while the Indian Cricket board is an important constituent of the ICC the IPL is a domestic tournament and the ICC has no jurisdiction on its governance.

"As the adviser in charge of the Ministry of Sports, I have instructed the Bangladesh Cricket Board to formally write to the ICC explaining the entire matter. The Board should clearly state that if a Bangladeshi cricketer, despite being under contract, cannot play in India, then Bangladesh cannot consider it safe for the entire national cricket team to travel there to participate in the World Cup", he said.

The interim government has also moved to ban the broadcast of IPL games in the country.

"I have also directed the Board to request that Bangladesh's World Cup matches be held in Sri

Lanka instead. Additionally, I have requested the Adviser for Information and Broadcasting to ensure that the broadcast of IPL matches in Bangladesh is suspended. Under no circumstances will we tolerate the humiliation of Bangladesh, Bangladeshi cricket, or Bangladeshi cricketers. The days of subservience are over", the Adviser said.

The message from Bangladesh follows the BCCI's diktat to IPL franchise KKR to release Mustafizur Rahman from its roster following protests over his inclusion after Hindu minorities were targeted in Bangladesh

India is aiming to become a developed nation, or Viksit Bharat, by 2047, a hundred years after independence

(Gns). India is aiming to become a developed nation, or Viksit Bharat, by 2047, a hundred years after independence. To understand how we should transform ourselves to become a developed country it is necessary to know the gap between us and a developed nation. The idea of a "developed country" is so widely used in public discourses that it often appears as self-evident. But if we probe deeper, we begin to understand the hollowness of its underlying presumptions. Colonial era economists have addressed differences between nations in binary terms: civilised vs uncivilised, advanced vs backward.

Classical economists like Smith, Mill and Marx had treated industrial capitalism as representative of a higher stage of social organisation and a model that all nations should emulate. Colonial administration translated these assumptions into their



extractive policies for governing the colonies. The terms "developed" and "underdeveloped" entered the economic lexicon from President Harry Truman's inaugural address in 1949: "We must embark on a bold new program for making

developed" countries that treated non-Western societies as laggards in a universal trajectory defined by the West became one of the most enduring and widely used distinctions institutionalised by the global governance structures like the UN, World Bank, IMF, or WTO. The industrialised West became the implicit universal benchmark against which all progress is to be measured in every aspect of social life ~ polity, economy, culture, education, etc. so that the West, now robbed of colonies, can maintain its supremacy. In this new vocabulary, west-

Army Chief to visit UAE, Sri Lanka to strengthen defence ties

(Gns). General Upendra Dwivedi, Chief of the Army Staff (COAS), will visit the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Sri Lanka from January 5 to 8 as part of India's continued engagement to strengthen defence cooperation and military-to-military ties with friendly foreign countries.

"The visit of the Chief of the Army Staff to the UAE and Sri Lanka reaffirms India's commitment to strengthening defence cooperation, fostering mutual trust, and enhancing interoperability with friendly nations in the Indian Ocean Region and West Asia," the Ministry of Defence said on Sunday.

The visit will begin with the COAS's engagements in the United Arab Emirates



the UAE National Defence College, where he will address officers. These engagements are aimed at further enhancing bilateral defence cooperation, professional military exchanges, and strategic understanding between the two armed forces.

Following the UAE visit, the COAS will travel to Sri Lanka from January 7 to 8, 2026. On arrival, he will be accorded a Guard of Honour by the Sri Lanka Army.

During his visit, he will engage with senior military and civil leadership, including the Commander of the

Sri Lanka Army, the Deputy Minister of Defence, and the Defence Secretary. He will hold detailed discussions on matters of mutual interest, including training cooperation, capacity building, and regional security.

During the visit, General Dwivedi will address officers at the Defence Services Command and Staff College (DSCSC) and interact with officers and trainees at the Army War College, Buttala, reflecting India's strong commitment to defence education and professional military exchanges with Sri Lanka.

General Dwivedi will also pay homage at the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) War Memorial, honouring the supreme sacrifice of Indian soldiers.

Owaisi urges PM Modi to bring back 26/11 masterminds after US action in Venezuela

(Gns). Following the US operation in Venezuela and the abduction of Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro, AIMIM chief Asaduddin Owaisi on Sunday suggested that Prime Minister Narendra Modi should undertake a similar operation to bring back the mastermind of the 26/11 terror attacks and Masood Azhar, the terrorist freed during the BJP-supported government in 1999.

"If US President Donald Trump can abduct Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro from his own country, then you (Prime Minister Modi) can also go to Pakistan and bring back the mastermind of the 26/11 terrorist



attacks to India," Owaisi said.

He further added, "We are telling you, Modiji, you can also enter Pakistan and bring back those cruel people who hatched conspiracies against Mumbai, be it Masood Azhar or the ruthless terrorists of Lashkar-e-Taiba."

His remarks came in the wake of alleged US aggression in the Latin American country. The US reportedly launched a military operation and captured President Maduro and his

wife from their residence. According to reports, Maduro and his wife were dragged from their bedroom by US special forces. The couple was later taken to New York, where they are expected to be charged under US law.

Meanwhile, BJP leaders have responded strongly to Owaisi's remarks.

"Asaduddin Owaisi is known for making sensational statements. He is advising US President Donald Trump. I pray that US President Donald Trump considers his advice," said Bihar Minister Dilip Jaiswal.

Another BJP MP, Ghulam Ali Khatana, said that India's counter-terrorism policy under the Narendra Modi government has been to target terrorists, not countries. He added that India is a responsible nation and will not fall for any provocation.

Russia urges US to release Maduro, calls for dialogue

(Gns). The Russian Foreign Ministry urged the United States to release Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro and his wife, calling them the "legitimately elected leaders" and stressing that issues between the two countries should be resolved through dialogue.

In a post on X, the Russian MFA shared, "In view of the confirmed reports about Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro and his spouse being in the United States, we strongly urge the US leadership to reconsider their position and release the legitimately elected president of a sovereign country and his spouse."

"We highlight the need to create conditions for resolving any existing



issues between the United States and Venezuela through dialogue," the post read.

Venezuela's President Nicolas Maduro and his wife, Cilia Flores, were captured in Caracas and flown out of the country in a joint operation involving intelligence agencies and US law enforcement.

Trump said that Maduro and his wife, who were captured in Caracas during a US military operation, have been indicted on charges of alleged "drug trafficking and narco-terrorism conspiracies" in the Southern District of New York, and will face trial.

Trump said, "No nation in the world could achieve what America achieved yesterday or frankly, in just a short period of time. All Venezuelan military capacities were rendered powerless as the men and women of our military, working with US law enforcement, successfully captured Maduro in the dead of night."

"It was dark, and it was deadly, but he was captured along with his wife, Cilia Flores, both of whom now face American justice. Maduro and Flores have been indicted in the

Southern District of New York," he said.

Trump said that Maduro and his wife "will soon face the full might of American justice and stand trial on American soil" for their alleged role in drug trafficking, adding that they are currently being taken to New York, with authorities to decide later whether the trial will be held in New York or Florida.

According to an unsealed indictment shared by Attorney General Pamela Bondi on X, Maduro and Flores face multiple counts of statutory allegations related to "drug trafficking and narco-terrorism conspiracies".

The capture of Maduro comes amid rising tensions between the United States and Venezuela.

Desert town Churu at 4.4° C remains coldest city in Rajasthan as state braves cold wave conditions

(Gns). With the minimum temperature touching 4.4 degrees Celsius, the desert town of Churu in Rajasthan's Shekhawati region remained the coldest place in the plains even



as most parts of the state reeled under cold wave conditions and dense fog during the past 24 hours.

The trend of falling minimum temperatures at many places over the past

'Luv-Kush' equation on display as Nitish Kumar visits Shakuni Chaudhary on his 90th birthday

(Gns). Bihar's politically influential 'Luv-Kush' (Kurmi-Koeri) equation was on display in Patna on Sunday when Chief Minister Nitish Kumar visited the residence of Deputy Chief Minister Samrat Chaudhary to congratulate the latter's father, veteran leader Shakuni Chaudhary, on his 90th birthday.

On the occasion, Nitish Kumar reminisced about old times with Shakuni Chaudhary and praised his political contributions. He also spoke highly of Samrat Chaudhary, describing him as an energetic leader who works hard and is likely to go far



in politics.

Speaking to the media, Shakuni Chaudhary referred to the 'Luv-Kush' political equation, stating that the social and political alliance was once formed to dislodge Lalu Yadav from power, with Nitish Kumar playing a key role in its formation.

He said that George Fernandes was at the helm during that period and that the seeds sown then are now bearing fruit. Expressing satisfaction, he noted that leaders from the Luv and Kush communities today hold the positions of Chief Minister and Deputy Chief Minister.

Formed in the mid-1990s to challenge Lalu Yadav's perceived promotion of Yadav interests, the caste equation provided Nitish Kumar with a strong political base and an alternative to Lalu's 'MY' (Muslim-Yadav) formula. Both communities have remained strongly aligned with Nitish Kumar and have played a significant role in keeping him in power over the past two decades.

dense fog and icy Himalayan winds kept people shivering even during the daytime, the Meteorological Office said here. Besides, Churu, the neighbouring towns of Pilani registered the minimum temperature at 5 degree C, Sriganganagar 6 degrees C, Ajmer 5.8 degrees C, and also braved severe cold weather conditions. On the other hand, the desert city of Jaisalmer recorded a minimum temperature of 7.8 deg C this Sunday morning. \$ and the state capital of Jaipur faced a more or less similar winter chill at 8.8 deg C.

At Mt Abu, the only hill station in the state, tourists enjoyed their sojourn with the thrill of nature's beauty and the fascination of the monumental tourist spots, despite the low temperature of 2.2 degrees Celsius this morning.

The foggy weather also affected the road and rail traffic. The normal schedule of more than a dozen long route trains was disrupted.