

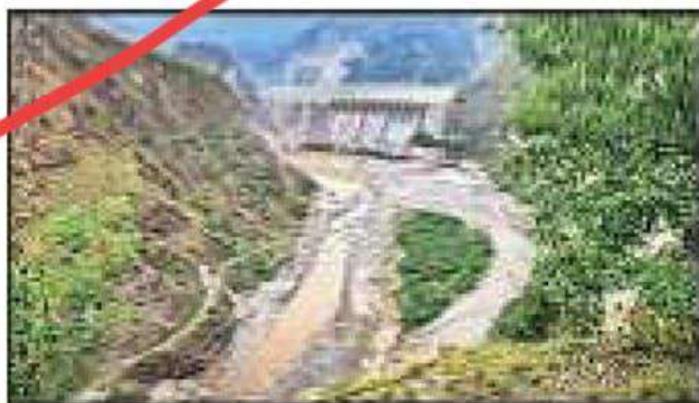
Centre's green panel gives nod to Dulhasti hydel power project on Chenab river

NEW DELHI, Dec 27 (PTI)

A PANEL under the Ministry of Environment has approved the 260-megawatt Dulhasti Stage-II hydropower project on Chenab river in Jammu and Kashmir's Kishtwar district, officials said on Saturday.

The clearance comes in the backdrop of India suspending the Indus Waters Treaty with Pakistan following the deadly Pahalgam terror attack in April this year. The Expert Appraisal Committee on hydel projects accorded the approval during its 45th meeting earlier this month, paving the way for floating construction tenders for the run-of-the-river project, estimated to cost over Rs 3,200 crore.

According to the minutes of the meeting, the panel noted that



the water of Chenab basin is shared between India and Pakistan in accordance with provisions of the Indus Water Treaty, 1960, and the project's parameters were planned in accordance with the treaty.

"However, the Indus Water Treaty stands suspended effective from April 23, 2025," the panel noted.

When the Indus Water Treaty was in force, Pakistan had rights over the Indus, Jhelum and Chenab rivers, and India over the Ravi, Beas and Sutlej.

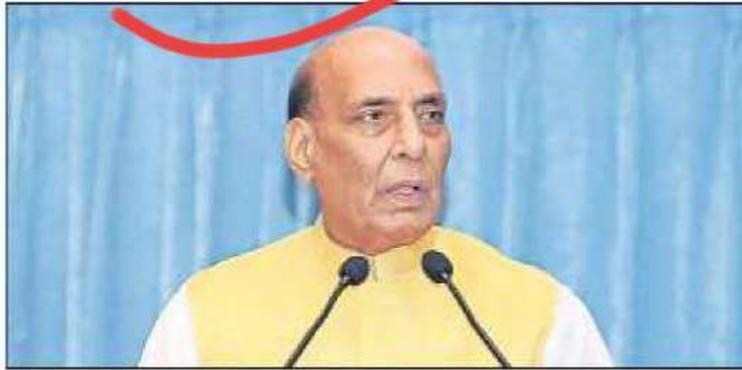
Given equal opportunity, women perform as well as or better than men: Rajnath

VALSAD (Gujarat), Dec 27 (PTI)

WOMEN have proved that whenever they get equal opportunities, they perform as well as or even better than men, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said on Saturday.

After inaugurating the Shrimad Rajchandra Sarvamangal Centre of Excellence for Women at Dharampur in Gujarat's Valsad district, Singh said the legacy left behind by Jain spiritual leader Shrimad Rajchandraji in his short life will continue to guide people for centuries.

In 2022, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had virtually laid the foundation stone for the Centre, which is spread over 11 acres and assists women in skill development and improving livelihood. Shrimad Rajchandra was a Jain saint, poet, mystic, philosopher, and a major



reformer of the late 19th century. His devotee Gurudev Shri Rakeshji founded Shrimad Rajchandra Mission Dharampur, a spiritual organisation.

"I believe that the women who will work here will not only be empowered but also become self-reliant and get the opportunity and time to engage in spiritual contemplation in their own way," Singh said. "Women have proved that whenever they have been giv-

en equal opportunities, they have performed as well as or even better than men," Singh said, citing the examples of Ela Bhatt of SEWA (Self Employed Women's Association) and Shri Mahila Griha Udyog's founder Jaswantiben Popat.

Singh said that the centre of excellence, which will be completely managed by rural women, will further strengthen women's entrepreneurship and will set an

excellent example of women's empowerment and women-led development.

"This campus is promoting both the economic and social aspects of women's empowerment. Once products from this place reach the global market, it will encourage the Atmanirbhar Bharat initiative of our Prime Minister Narendra Modi," he said. Singh said the path to "liberation", shown again by Shrimad Rajchandraji about 150 years ago, centuries after it was first shown by Lord Mahavir nearly 2,500 years ago, has laid the foundation of spirituality for a new era.

"The legacy left behind by Shrimad Rajchandraji in his short life will continue to guide us for centuries. Time has not diminished his relevance; rather, I would say that his relevance is continuously increasing," he said.

'India 2nd largest mobile mfg country in the world'

■ The PLI scheme for Large Scale Electronics Manufacturing has attracted over Rs 13,475 crore in investment

NEW DELHI, Dec 27 (IANS)

INDIA has ramped up electronics production six-fold and is the second largest mobile manufacturing country in the world, Union Minister of Electronics and Information Technology Ashwini Vaishnaw said on Saturday.

In multiple posts on social media platform X, Vaishnaw said that the country has increased electronic exports eightfold over the past 11 years, mainly driven by policy support from the Production Linked Incentive Scheme. The PLI scheme for



Large Scale Electronics Manufacturing has attracted over Rs 13,475 crore in investment and helped achieve production of about Rs 9.8 lakh crore in electronics sector, driving manufacturing, jobs, and exports, he said.

Vaishnaw highlighted that "over 1.3 lakh jobs were created in the last five years and that electronics is now India's third-largest export category, climbing from seventh place".

He said the country was initially focusing on finished prod-

ucts, but the Electronics Component Manufacturing Scheme supported a shift to "building capacity for modules, components, sub-modules, raw materials, and the machines that make them."

The Electronics Component Manufacturing Scheme has 249 applications representing Rs 1.15 lakh crore in investment, Rs 10.34 lakh crore in production, and creating 1.42 lakh jobs, the post said, adding it is the highest-ever investment commitment in

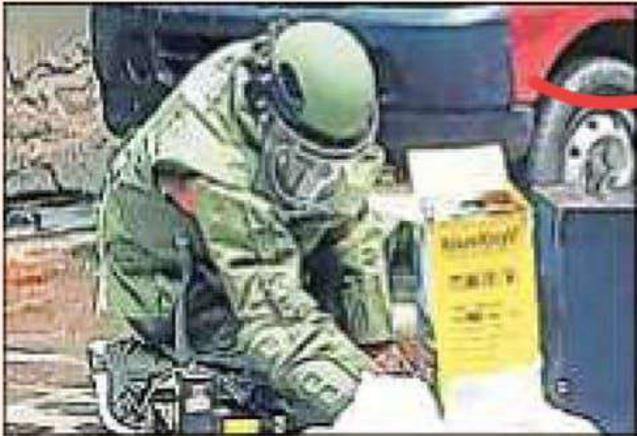
India's electronics sector, indicating industry confidence.

Vaishnaw also noted progress in the semiconductor sector, saying ten units have been approved, with three already in pilot or early production. The Minister said that "Fabs and ATMPs from India will soon supply chips to phone and electronics manufacturers".

"Electronics manufacturing created 25 lakh jobs in the last decade. This is the real economic growth at the grassroots level," the Minister said.

"As we scale semiconductors and component manufacturing, job creation will accelerate. From finished products to components, production is growing. Exports are rising. Global players are confident. Indian companies are competitive. Jobs are being created. This is 'Make in India' impact story!" he noted.

India gets its first standard for bomb disposal systems to boost security infra



NEW DELHI, Dec 27 (PTI)

THE Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) has notified a dedicated standard for bomb disposal systems to address a critical gap in the country's security preparedness framework and provide manufacturers with performance benchmarks.

The new standard, IS 19445:2025, was developed at the request of the Union Ministry of Home Affairs and the Terminal Ballistic Research Laboratory. It establishes comprehensive guidelines for evaluating bomb disposal systems against blast loads and splinter effects.

Consumer Affairs Secretary Nidhi

Khare said the standard is intended for "voluntary adoption" by procurement agencies, manufacturers, and testing bodies.

"Its implementation is expected to bring uniformity in evaluation practices, promote quality-driven manufacturing, and enhance confidence in bomb disposal systems deployed in critical security operations," she said. The standard specifies requirements for test equipment, test range conditions, and evaluation procedures to objectively assess system effectiveness, according to the Consumer Affairs Ministry.

The need for an Indian standard arose because existing international standards are either restricted in access or not fully aligned with the threat profiles and operational conditions faced by Indian forces, the Ministry said. Indian armed forces, police forces, and civilian agencies increasingly encounter threats from unexploded bombs, improvised explosive devices, hand grenades in conflict zones etc., it added.

Rlys plans to double train capacity in 5 yrs

NEW DELHI, Dec 27 (PTI)

THE Railway Ministry on Friday said that to keep up with the rapid and sustained growth in travel, the capacity of major cities to originate new trains needs to be doubled in the next five years.

It added that the current infrastructure serving needs to be augmented so as to meet the requirements of the upcoming years. Highlighting actions needed for doubling the originating capacity by the year 2030, it plans to augment the current terminals with additional platforms, identify and create new terminals in and around the urban area, construct maintenance facilities, including mega coaching complexes and increase the sectional capacity with traffic facility works, among others.

"While planning for increasing the capacity of terminals, stations around terminals will also be considered so that capacity is evenly balanced. For example, for Pune city, Hadapsar, Khadki, and



Alandi have been considered for increasing capacity along with increasing platforms and stabling lines at Pune station," the Ministry said.

It added, "The above exercise will be done for both suburban as well as non-suburban traffic, keeping in view the distinct requirements of both segments."

The Ministry will submit a comprehensive plan of stations in the 48 major cities to the Planning Directorate. Some of these cities are Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, Hyderabad, Bengaluru, Patna, Pune, Mathura, Agra and Ludhiana, among others.

'Over 43,000 spl train trips operated during festivals, peak seasons in 2025'

NEW DELHI, Dec 27 (PTI)

INDIAN Railways has undertaken extensive measures to ensure smooth, safe and convenient travel for passengers by operating over 43,000 special train trips during major religious events and peak travel seasons, the Ministry said on Friday.

"These initiatives reflect the Railways' continued commitment to meeting increased passenger demand and providing seamless connectivity across the country," it added.

According to the Ministry, in 2025, special train operations were significantly scaled up, highlighting enhanced planning and a stronger focus on passenger comfort.

Providing details of some of

the major events, it stated that during 2025, Indian Railways undertook one of its largest special train operations for Maha Kumbh, operating 17,340 special train trips between January 13 and February 28 to facilitate the movement of a very large number of pilgrims.

"For Holi 2025, held from March 1 to March 22, 2025, 1,144 special train trips were operated, nearly double the number run during Holi 2024, ensuring better availability and smoother festive travel," it said.

It added, "The summer travel season of 2025, spanning April 1 to June 30, saw the operation of 12,417 Summer Special train trips, maintaining a high level of service during peak vacation months."

'INDIA NOW SETS GLOBAL BENCHMARKS in space, defence, health, innovation'

NEW DELHI, Dec 27 (IANS)

INDIA has transformed into a global science and technology leader over the last decade, and the country now sets global benchmarks in space, defence, health-care, and innovation, said Jitendra Singh, Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science and Technology, on Friday.

Addressing the inaugural session of the Bharatiya Vigyan Sammelan 2025 at the National Sanskrit University here, Singh attributed the feat to "decisive policy support from the top political hierarchy". "Over the last decade, science, technology, and innovation have received unprecedented policy focus and

budgetary support since 2014, removing long-standing bottlenecks that earlier constrained India's scientific potential," the Minister said.



Jitendra Singh

He added that the talent pool in the country was never lacking, but enabling ecosystems and political will were missing, which have now been decisively addressed.

The MoS also highlighted India's rapid innovation growth in startups -- from around 300-400 in 2014 to nearly 200,000 -- and Global Innovation Index ranking -- from 81 to 38.

India's strength in space and strategic technologies was visible in the country's lunar missions, which provided the first confirmed evidence of water on

the Moon and achieved the world's first landing near the lunar south pole.

The growing strength of India's indigenous defence manufacturing ecosystem can be seen with defence exports reaching Rs 23,662 crore, with Indian-made systems being supplied to nearly 100 countries, Singh said.

"India's indigenous missile and defence technologies have demonstrated their credibility and reliability, leading to growing international demand," Singh said. He underlined that these capabilities are the result of sustained investments in atomic energy, space, and advanced research over the past decade.

Further, on healthcare, the MoS stated India has emerged as a global leader in preventive healthcare and affordable medical solutions.