

Army constructs homestay in Arunachal's border village

ITANAGAR, Dec 30 (IANS)

THE Indian Army constructed a homestay at the border village of Taksing under Vibrant Village Program through 'Operation Sadbhavna' in Arunachal Pradesh's Upper Subansiri District, officials said on Monday.

Defence spokesman Lt Col Mahendra Rawat said that as part of an initiative towards border area development, the Indian Army, under 'Operation Sadbhavna', has constructed a double-storey homestay at the remote border village of Taksing in Upper Subansiri district of Arunachal Pradesh.

He said that the facility has been dedicated to the local community under the Vibrant Village Programme.

According to the defence spokesman, the project has been executed by the Spearhead Division of Spear Corps to



strengthen community welfare, generate sustainable livelihood opportunities and promote border tourism in the region.

The homestay is expected to provide a reliable source of income to residents while improving tourism infrastructure in this strategically important border area, he said.

According to Lt Col Rawat, the initiative has been warmly appreciated by the local villagers, who acknowledged the Indian Army's continued efforts towards inclusive development and civil-military cooperation in remote and border regions.

This endeavour reflects the spirit of "Seema Suraksha ke

Saath Sabka Vikas & Sabka Vishwas (security of borders along with development for all and trust of all)," reinforcing the Indian Army's commitment not only to safeguarding the nation's borders but also to contributing meaningfully to the socio-economic development of border communities, the spokesman said. Indian Army's 'Operation Sadbhavana' (Goodwill) is a long-running military-led civic action program, primarily in Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh as well as in Northeastern region, focused on winning hearts and minds by addressing socio-economic needs through education (Army Goodwill Schools), healthcare (medical camps), infrastructure development (water, power, roads), and empowering women/youth via vocational training, counteracting alienation and fostering national integration.

Trump warns Iran against nuclear programme

PALM BEACH, Dec 30 (AP)

PRESIDENT Donald Trump warned Iran against reconstituting its nuclear programme on Monday as he welcomed Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to his home in Florida for wide-ranging talks. The warning comes after Trump has insisted that Tehran's nuclear capabilities were "completely and fully obliterated" by US Strikes on key nuclear enrichment sites in June. But Israeli officials have been quoted in local media expressing concern about Iran rebuilding its supply of long-range missiles capable of striking Israel.

"Now I hear that Iran is trying to build up again," Trump told reporters soon after Netanyahu arrived at his Mar-a-Lago estate.

**US
President
welcomes
Netanyahu
for talks**

"And if they are, we're going to have to knock them down.

We'll knock them down.

We'll knock the hell out of them. But hopefully that's not happening."

Iran has insisted that it is no longer enriching uranium at any site in the country, trying to signal to the West that it remains open to potential negotiations over its atomic program. But Netanyahu was expected to discuss with Trump the need to potentially take new military action against Tehran just months after launching a 12-day war on Iran.

Trump criticised Iran anew for not making a deal to completely disarm its nuclear programme ahead of the US and Israeli strikes earlier this year.

"They wish they made that deal," Trump said.

Defence Ministry inks Rs 4,666 cr contracts for battle carbines, torpedoes

NEW DELHI, Dec 30 (PTI)

THE Defence Ministry on Tuesday signed contracts worth Rs 4,666 crore to procure over 4.25 lakh close quarter battle carbines and 48 heavy torpedoes.

The contract for the battle carbines along with accessories worth Rs 2,770 crore for the Indian Army and the Indian Navy were signed with Bharat Forge Ltd and PLR Systems Pvt Ltd, the Ministry said.

“This achievement marks the culmination of an extraordinary, persistent effort to equip Indian soldiers with world-class lethality, replacing legacy systems with cutting-edge indigenous technology under the ‘Aatmanirbhar

Bharat’ vision,” it said.

The contract for the procurement and integration of 48 heavy-weight torpedoes along with associated equipment for Kalvari class submarines of the Indian Navy at an approximate cost of Rs 1,896 crore was signed with WASS Submarine Systems SRL, Italy.

The acquisition will enhance the combat capability of the six Kalvari class submarines, the Ministry said. The delivery of torpedoes will commence from April 2028 and will be completed by early 2030. “These torpedoes have significant operational capabilities and advanced technological features,” the Ministry said in a statement.

Over RS 10,300 CRORE allocated for IndiaAI Mission, 38,000 GPUs deployed

NEW DELHI, Dec 30 (IANS)

INDIA stands at the cusp of a new era powered by Artificial Intelligence (AI), and the Government has allocated more than Rs 10,300 crore over the five years for the 'IndiaAI Mission' with 38,000 GPUs deployed, it was announced on Tuesday.

From expanding computing infrastructure to fostering home-grown models and supporting startups, the country is creating a robust AI ecosystem that benefits citizens and drives innovation.

Initiatives in agriculture, health-care, education, and governance demonstrate practical applications with real impact. Strategic initiatives like the IndiaAI Mission, Digital ShramSetu, and foundational model development are ensuring that innovation reaches every citizen while fostering research, skills, and entrepre-



Union Minister for Electronics and IT, Ashwini Vaishnaw along with other dignitaries.

neurship, according to an official statement.

At least six million people are employed in the tech and AI ecosystem and the Indian tech sector is projected to cross \$280 billion in revenue this year. Moreover, AI can add \$1.7 trillion to India's economy by 2035. According to the statement, India's technology sector is

expanding rapidly, with annual revenues projected to cross \$280 billion this year.

The country hosts more than 1,800 Global Capability Centres, including more than 500 focused on AI. India now has more than 1.8 lakh startups, nearly 89 per cent of new startups launched last year used AI in their products and serv-

ices. On the 'NASSCOM AI Adoption Index', India scores 2.45 out of 4, showing that 87 per cent of enterprises are actively using AI solutions.

Leading sectors in AI adoption include industrial and automotive, consumer goods and retail, banking, financial services and insurance, and healthcare. Together they contribute around 60 per cent of AI's total value.

About 26 per cent of Indian companies have achieved AI maturity at scale, according to a recent BCG survey. India has also secured the third position globally in Artificial Intelligence competitiveness, according to a report by Stanford University's '2025 Global AI Vibrancy Tool'.

"These efforts lay a strong foundation for India to emerge as a global AI leader while advancing the vision of Viksit Bharat 2047," said the official statement.

Invest in development, not destruction, urges UN chief

■ By Yoshita Singh

UNITED NATIONS, Dec 30 (PTI)

IN A first, UN chief has issued his New Year's message for the year 2026 in Hindi, among other languages, calling on world leaders today to invest in development, not destruction.

Antonio Guterres' New Year message has been issued in 11 languages, including in the six official UN languages of Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian, and Spanish as well as Hindi and Urdu.

His video message on the occasion has been issued with Hindi subtitles as well.

In an urgent appeal for the New Year, Secretary-General Guterres called on world leaders today to get "priorities straight" and invest in development, not destruction. "As we enter the New Year, the world stands at a crossroads. Chaos and uncertainty surround us," Guterres said in his message for 2026 Monday. "People everywhere are asking: Are leaders even listening? Are they ready to act?"

He said the scale of human suffering in the world today is

Guterres' New Year message has been issued in 11 languages, including Hindi



staggering - over one-quarter of humanity lives in areas affected by conflict.

More than 200 million people globally need humanitarian assistance, and nearly 120 million people have been forcibly displaced, fleeing war, crises, disasters or persecution.

"As we turn the page on a turbulent year, one fact speaks louder than words: global military spending has soared to \$2.7 trillion, growing by almost 10 per

cent," he said.

Yet, as humanitarian crises around the world intensify, global military spending is projected to more than double - from \$2.7 trillion in 2024 to an astonishing \$6.6 trillion by 2035 - if current trends persist. Data shows that \$2.7 trillion is thirteen times the amount of all global development aid combined and is equivalent to the entire Gross Domestic Product of the continent of Africa.

"On this New Year, let's resolve to get our priorities straight. A safer world begins by investing more in fighting poverty and less in fighting wars. Peace must prevail," Guterres said.

In 2018, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between India and the UN Department of Global Communications establishing the 'Hindi@UN' Project, with the primary focus on broadcasting UN news in Hindi. The Government of India has pledged 1.5 million dollars per annum for a period of five years, over and above the cumulative contribution of 6.8 million dollars till date for the purpose.

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HAL made multi-role copter Dhruv takes flight

Minister Naidu calls it symbol of country's capability

BENGALURU, Dec 30 (PTI)

MARKING a milestone in the country's indigenous aerospace manufacturing, the next generation, multi-role civil helicopter Dhruv NG, billed as an alternative to imported light twin-engine helicopters, made its maiden flight on Tuesday here.

Union Minister Ram Mohan Naidu flagged off the HAL-made helicopter and called it a symbol of the country's capability.

The Minister also performed aarti and participated in the puja before the flight inaugural ceremony. Designed and manufactured by Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) to meet the requirements of the civil aviation market, the helicopter boasts of modern features in terms of ride



Union Civil Aviation Minister Kinjarapu Ram Mohan Naidu during the inaugural flight ceremony of a Dhruv-NG helicopter, at the Helicopter Division, in Bengaluru on Tuesday. (PTI)

quality as well as safety, according to officials. It includes a world-

class civil-certified glass cockpit and a modern avionics suite for

superior situational awareness, they said.

Dhruv NG, a sophisticated 5.5-tonne, light twin-engine helicopter engineered to master the diverse and demanding requirements of the Indian terrain is specifically upgraded to meet the rigorous demands of the global civil aviation market, they said.

Addressing a gathering after witnessing the inaugural flight, Naidu said the event marked a "very important milestone in Indian aviation history" and congratulated the entire HAL workforce, from designers and engineers to technicians, for the achievement.

He said HAL had long functioned like a bicycle with one dominant wheel--defence, but
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91 long-range Ukrainian DRONES tried to attack Putin's residence



Russian President Vladimir Putin listens to Russian Defence Minister Andrei Belousov during a meeting with senior military officers at the Kremlin in Moscow, Russia on Monday. (AP/PTI)

■ **By Vinay Shukla**
MOSCOW, Dec 30 (PTI)

RUSSIA on Monday claimed that 91 long-range Ukrainian drones attempted to attack President Vladimir Putin's country residence in Novgorod region, north of Moscow.

In a televised statement,

Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said that the drone attack in the intervening night of Sunday and Monday failed to cause any damage as the drones were downed.

He, however, warned that Russia reserves the right to

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NEAR ... BUT FAR !
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attempt to derail peace talks by Kyiv and its allies. He added that Moscow will change its stance on peace talks with Ukraine, but peace negotiations will contin-

respond at an appropriate time. Lavrov described the Ukrainian attacks as an

ue with the team of United States President Donald Trump.

"Putin told Trump about the attack on the presidential residence in a phone call the two leaders had on Monday. President Trump was shocked," the Kremlin foreign policy aide Yury Ushakov was quoted as saying by Russian TV channels.

Modi voices deep concern over attack

NEW DELHI, Dec 30 (PTI)

PRIME Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday voiced "deep concern" over the reports of the targeting of the residence of Russian President Vladimir Putin and urged Russia and Ukraine to focus on diplomatic efforts to end hostilities.

"Deeply concerned by reports of the targeting of the residence of the President of the Russian Federation," Modi said in a post on X. Modi said the ongoing diplomatic efforts offer the most viable path toward ending hostilities and achieving peace.

"We urge all concerned to remain focused on these efforts and to avoid any actions that could undermine them," the Prime Minister Modi said.