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179 killed as plane veers off runway, bursts into flames

among the wreckage. Lee said that workers were looking into various possibilities about what caused the crash, including whether birds struck the aircraft.

Transport Ministry officials later said their early assessment of communication records showed the airport control tower issued a bird strike warning to the plane shortly before it intended to land and gave its pilot permission to land in a different area. The pilot sent out a distress signal shortly before the plane went past the runway and skidded across a buffer zone before hitting the wall, the officials said.

Senior Transport Ministry official Joo Jong-wan said workers have retrieved the flight data and cockpit voice recorders of the plane's black box, which will be examined by government experts investigating the cause of the crash and fire. Joo said the runway at the Muan airport will be closed until Jan. 1.

Emergency officials in Muan said the plane's landing gear appeared to have malfunctioned.

The Transport Ministry said the plane's passengers include two Thai nationals.

Thailand's prime minister, Paetongtarn Shinawatra, expressed deep condolences to the families of those affected by the accident in a post on social platform X. Paetongtarn said she ordered the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to assist immediately.

Kerati Kijmanawat, the director of the Airports of Thailand, confirmed in a statement that Jeju Air flight 7C 2216 departed from Suvarnabhumi Airport with no reports of abnormal conditions with the aircraft or on the runway.

Jeju Air in a statement expressed its "deep apology" over the crash and said it will do its "utmost to manage the aftermath of the accident."

In a televised news conference, Kim E-bae, Jeju Air's president, deeply bowed with other senior company officials as he apologized to bereaved families and said he feels "full responsibility" for the incident. Kim said the company hadn't identified any mechanical problems with the aircraft following regular checkups and that he would wait for the results of government investigations into the cause of the incident.

Family members wailed as officials announced the names of some victims at a lounge in the Muan airport.

Boeing said in a statement on X it was in contact with Jeju Air and was ready to support the company in dealing with the crash.

"We extend our deepest condolences to the families who lost loved ones, and our thoughts remain with the passengers and crew," Boeing said.

It's one of the deadliest disasters in South Korea's aviation history. The last time South Korea suffered a large-scale air disaster was in 1997, when a Korean Airlines plane crashed in Guam, killing 228 people on board. In 2013, an Asiana Airlines plane crash-landed in San Francisco, killing three and injuring approximately 200.

Sunday's accident was also one of the worst landing mishaps since a July 2007 crash that killed all 187 people on board and 12 others on the ground when an Airbus A320 slid off a slick airstrip in Sao Paulo and collided with a nearby building, according to data compiled by the Flight Safety Foundation, a nonprofit group aimed at improving air safety. In 2010, 158 people died when an Air India Express aircraft overshot a runway in Mangalore, India, and plummeted into a gorge before erupting into flames, according to the safety foundation.

The incident came as South Korea is embroiled in a huge political crisis triggered by President Yoon Suk Yeol's stunning imposition of martial law and ensuing impeachment. Last Friday, South Korean lawmakers impeached acting President Han Duck-soo and suspended his duties, leading Deputy Prime Minister Choi Sang-mok to take over.

Choi ordered officials to employ all available resources to rescue the passengers and crew before he headed to Muan. Yoon's office said his chief secretary, Chung Jin-suk, will preside over an emergency meeting between senior presidential staff later on Sunday to discuss the crash.

Constitution has stood every test of time: Modi

the Maha Kumbh should be that the entire country must be united)."

He added, "Ganga ki aviral dhara, na bante samaj hamara" (Like the uninterrupted flow of Ganga, let our society remain one).

Noting the diversity of people visiting the mammoth congregation, which will be held in Prayagraj from January 13, he said there is no other example of such a sight of unity in diversity.

"Maha Kumbh's speciality lies not just in its vastness but also in its diversity," he said.

The mega-religious event is held every 12 years. Tens of millions of people congregate at the event, he said adding that saints, thousands of traditions, hundreds of sects and many akharas become its part.

"There is no discrimination anywhere. No one is big or small. Such a scene of unity in diversity will not be seen anywhere else in the world," he said.

"It is also the Maha Kumbh of unity. This time's Maha Kumbh will strengthen the mantra of Maha Kumbh of unity. When we participate in the Kumbh, let us bring along this resolve of unity with us. Let us also make a resolve to annihilate the feeling of division and hatred in the society," he added.

The prime minister said an AI chatbot will be deployed at the event for the first time, and the facility of digital navigation will help people reach different ghats, temples, and akharas of sadhus. Information related to the Maha Kumbh will be available in 11 Indian languages through the AI chatbot, he said.

Modi cited a WHO report to highlight an 80 per cent reduction in the number of malaria cases and deaths in the country between 2015 and 2023. "This is no mean achievement."

In the tea gardens of Jorhat in Assam, malaria used to be a major cause of concern until four years ago but people's participation in a movement against the mosquito-borne disease has curbed it, he added.

Citing another success on the health front, the prime minister referred to a study in the medical journal Lancet that said the chances of starting cancer treatment on time in India have increased.

He said the 'Ayushman Bharat Yojana' has played a big role in getting cancer patients timely treatment.

"Because of this scheme, 90 per cent of cancer patients have been able to start their treatment on time. Due to lack of money, poor patients would earlier shy away from getting tested for cancer and its treatment. Now, the Ayushman Bharat Yojana has become a big support for them," he said.

"There is only one mantra to fight cancer - Awareness, Action and Assurance. Awareness means awareness of cancer and its symptoms, Action means timely diagnosis and treatment, Assurance means the belief that every help is available for patients," he added.

Turning to India's animation films, TV serials and movies, he said their popularity underscores the potential of the country's creative industry.

Noting that the year 2024 marked the 100th anniversary of many great film personalities, including Raj Kapoor and Mohammad Rafi, he said a great opportu-

nity is on the way to showcase India's creative talent to the world.

Next year, for the first time, the World Audio Visual Entertainment Summit i.e. WAVES summit is going to be organised in our country, he added.

This summit is an important step towards making India a hub of global content creation, he said the "creators' economy" is bringing in new energy in the country's target of emerging as a USD 5 trillion economy.

During the broadcast, Modi highlighted the increasing appeal of Indian traditions and culture, noting that a Tamil teaching programme in Fiji is drawing a lot of interest.

He said a unique Olympics has started in Bastar, long associated with violent Maoist activities.

"A new revolution is coming to Bastar through the first Bastar Olympics. This is taking place in the region which was once a witness to Maoist violence. The mascot of the Bastar Olympics are - 'Wild Water Buffalo' and 'Hill Myna'. It reflects the rich culture of Bastar," he said. In the very first instance, 1.65 lakh players from seven districts have participated in the Bastar Olympics in athletics, archery, badminton, football, hockey, kho-kho and volleyball among other sports.

Modi asked people to encourage such sporting events in their regions, saying sports not only lead to physical development but are also a powerful medium to connect society with the sportsman spirit.

He also spoke of the "vegetable revolution" in Odisha's Kalahandi, one known for its grim tales of poverty and people's migration, and lauded farmers.

NH reopens as weather improves

on both sides of the tunnel, the highway was closed to vehicular traffic. It was made operational last evening, with the clearance of snow and the administration allowing the Jammu-bound vehicles to move towards their destinations.

It was a sunny day in Jammu on Sunday.

Weather in the valley also improved following heavy snowfall, with a slight rise in night temperatures, although they remained below freezing, officials said.

The Meteorological Centre predicted another spell of snowfall from January 3 to January 6. This was expected to bring light to moderate snowfall at several locations in Kashmir and scattered areas in Jammu division.

The minimum temperature in Srinagar recorded last night was -0.2 °C against the -1.0 °C recorded a day ago. This was 2.4 °C above average for the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir during this period of season.

KU defers exams because of snowfall

While snow has been cleared from main highways and arterial roads, the work is still on in some of the remote areas of the Union Territory.

Kavinder describes PM's 'Mann Ki Baat' as beacon of inspiration

of Jammu and Kashmir to actively participate in initiatives inspired by Mann Ki Baat. "Let us contribute to nation-building by adopting the values and vision articulated by PM Modi," he said.

Katra remains shut for 5th day

Shops, restaurants and business establishments remained closed for the fifth day in the holy town, and traffic was off the roads following the samiti's call for protest.

The bandh, which began on December 25, has disrupted normal life in the busy town of Katra, where thousands of pilgrims arrive daily to pay obeisance at the holy cave shrine of Vaishno Devi.

MLA Sharma, who joined the protesters on Sunday, warned the administration of a chain hunger strike if the detained samiti members were not released within 24 hours.

"Our representatives went to Delhi and the home minister has taken cognisance of the issue. The leadership has been asked to find a solution. That is why I am here with you," he said.

Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board had last month announced plans to install a ropeway to facilitate access to the temple for senior citizens, children and others who find the 13-km track to the cave shrine challenging.

The proposed Rs 250-crore ropeway project would connect Tarakote Marg to Sanji Chhat, leading to the cave shrine in Reasi district.

Bumrah 200 Test wickets: First bowler with below-20 average

tralia here. Bumrah dismissed Travis Head (1) for his 200th victim in the post-lunch session, joining Jadeja in the list of bowlers who are fastest to 200 wickets in Tests.

Both Bumrah and Jadeja achieved the feat in their 44th Test, and overall he is 12th Indian bowler in the format to complete the landmark.

The recently retired Indian spinner Ravichandran Ashwin was the quickest among Indians to have taken 200 wickets, a feat that he achieved in his 37th Test.

Among all bowlers who have crossed the 200-wickets mark in Test cricket, Bumrah is the only bowler with an average of under 20 which includes some of the fearsome fast bowlers from the West Indies such as Malcolm Marshall (376 wickets at 20.94), Joel Garner (259 wickets at 20), Curtly Ambrose (405 wickets at 20.99) as well as England's James Anderson (704 wickets at 26.45) and even Glenn McGrath (563 wickets at 21.64).

Ashwin is ranked third in the overall list of bowlers who were fastest to 200 Test wickets, behind two leg-spinners - Pakistan's Yasir Shah (33 Tests) and Australia's Clarrie Grimmett (36 Tests).

The dismissal of Head followed by that of Mitchell Marsh's (0), caught behind the wicket, as Bumrah took his wickets tally in the Border-Gavaskar Trophy to 28.

He had earlier dismissed opener Sam Konstas (8) for his first wicket in Australia's second innings.

Russia to scrap missile moratorium after treaty breakdown with US

powers could be entering a new arms race together with China.

Russia and the United States, who both admit their relations are worse than at any time since the depths of the Cold War, have both expressed regret about the disintegration of the tangle of arms control treaties which sought to slow the arms race and reduce the risk of nuclear war.

Asked by state news agency if Russia could withdraw from the New START treaty before its expiry in February 2026, Lavrov said that there were currently "no conditions" for a strategic dialogue with Washington.

"Today it is clear that, for example, our moratorium on the deployment of short- and intermediate-range missiles is no longer practically viable and will have to be abandoned," Lavrov said.

"The U.S. has arrogantly ignored the warnings of Russia and China and in practice has moved on to the deployment of weapons of this class in various regions of the world."

The Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty, signed by Mikhail Gorbachev and Ronald Reagan in 1987, marked the first time the superpowers had agreed to reduce their nuclear arsenals and eliminated a whole category of nuclear weapons.

The United States under former President Donald Trump formally withdrew from the INF Treaty in 2019 after saying that Moscow was violating the accord, an accusation the Kremlin repeatedly denied and dismissed as a pretext.

In his moratorium proposal, Putin suggested Russia

could agree not to deploy the missiles in its Baltic coast exclave of Kaliningrad. Since leaving the pact, the United States has tested missiles with a similar profile.

Russia fired a new intermediate-range hypersonic ballistic missile known as "Oreshnik", or Hazel Tree, at Ukraine on November 21 in what Putin said was a direct response to strikes on Russia by Ukrainian forces with U.S. and British missiles.

Stay vigilant against internal, external foes: Rajnath to Army

stitutes - Army War College, Military College of Telecommunication Engineering and Infantry School - other than the Infantry Museum and Army Marksmanship Unit.

"We also face challenges on the internal front. Against the backdrop of this, we can't sit quiet, unconcerned," the defence minister, who is on a two-day tour of the state, said.

"Our enemies, whether internal or external, remain active always. In these circumstances, we must keep a close eye on their activities and take appropriate, timely and effective steps against them," he told the Armymen.

"To make Bharat a developed and self-reliant country by 2017, the role of the Army is very crucial," the defence minister added.

"As the country's defence minister, I would like to tell you that we should be alert always. This patch of time, though often referred to as peacetime, struck me deeply when I arrived and witnessed the discipline and dedication with which you are undergoing training. Your regimen is no less than that of a war," he told the gathering.

"To maintain such a level of discipline, dedication and firm conviction are needed," he added.

Singh said he was impressed by the cleanliness at the Army establishments and cantonments across the country.

"Your dedication to work inspires me. I can say that the most appealing thing is your devotion towards work and sense of responsibility," the defence minister said and added, "It is inspiring to all of us."

Earlier, Singh along with Chief of Army Staff Gen Upendra Dwivedi paid floral tributes at the memorial of Dr B R Ambedkar at Mhow.

The memorial of Ambedkar, the chief architect of India's Constitution, has been built at his birthplace in the Kali Paltan area of Mhow cantonment.

Manmohan Singh's ashes immersed in Yamuna

in the morning by Singh's family members and later taken to the 'Asth Ghat' on the Yamuna river bank near the gurdwara.

Singh's wife Gursharan Kaur, their three daughters - Upinder Singh, Daman Singh and Amrit Singh - along with other relatives were present at the immersion site.

As part of Sikh rituals, the family will hold an 'Akhand Path' at its official residence on 3, Motilal Nehru Marg on January 1.

A 'bhog' ceremony, 'Antim Ardas' and 'kirtan' would be held on January 3 at the Rakab Ganj Gurdwara near Parliament complex.

Singh passed away at AIIMS Delhi on December 26 due to age-related medical complications. He was 92.

The former prime minister, who ushered in an era of economic liberalisation in the 1990s, was accorded a state funeral at the Nigambodh Ghat on Saturday.

President Droupadi Murmu led the nation in paying last respects to the former prime minister.

"We all will always remember Manmohan Singh Ji's service to the nation, his dedication and his simplicity," the Congress said on its official X handle while sharing pictures of the immersion.

However, BJP leader Manjinder Singh Sirsa lamented that there was no one from the Gandhi family when the ashes of the former prime minister were immersed.

"It's a sad moment for all of us. However, it's true that no one was there from the Gandhi family today (during the immersion of Singh's ashes)... Today, when there was no camera, there was no one from Congress. This is a sad thing. Manmohan Singh is highly respected," Sirsa said.

LG Sinha gives 7 resolutions to educational institutions

continue their quest to learn new skills.

"In today's era of rapid change, when new technological advancements are taking place every day, only one skill will be relevant in the future and that is - Lifelong Learning Skill," he said.

"The primary and secondary education is an interesting phase of positive change in a student's life. This is the time when knowledge and influence around affects his mind and body," he added.

"Whatever a child learns in this impressionable age stays for long years. It is during this period when a child develops instincts to make decisions and the sense of understanding between good and bad, right and wrong. Our focus should be to develop primary and secondary education as per the needs of the modern world," the LG said.

He gave seven resolutions to the educational institutions across the UT of J&K.

"The first resolution is to make the digital learning system interactive and encourage children to actively participate in the learning process," he said.

"We must focus on one-to-one mentoring instead of information delivery," he said and added, "We should offer field experience to students outside the classroom," he added.

"Teachers must share their life experiences with students and encourage them for data interpretation and problem solving," he said.

"Teachers should also provide students with the freedom to explore new ideas," the LG said.

"Our focus should also be on project-based learning so that children develop the ability to use their skills in different situations," he added.

The seventh resolution is to ensure regular training and capacity building of teachers and provide them the opportunity to learn new things continuously," the LG said.

He also impressed upon youth to imbibe the ideals of Dr Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan and Dr APJ Abdul Kalam.

"National Education Policy 2020 is a great opportunity for you. Kindle the curiosity within you and discover new frontiers in real life through independent thinking, creativity and problem solving," he said.

The LG felicitated the students who excelled in academics and diverse fields. He also released the latest edition of school magazine.

Divisional commissioner, Jammu, Ramesh Kumar, deputy commissioner, Jammu, Sachin Kumar Vaishya, heads of various institutions and senior officials of civil & police administrations were also present on the occasion.

Holiday calendar for 2025: Sheikh Abdullah's birthday not in list

day (January 6), Republic Day (January 26), Eid-ul-Fitr (March 31), Independence Day (August 15), and Diwali (October 21).

The calendar also honours Maharaja Hari Singh and Dr B R Ambedkar.

Earlier this month, deputy chief minister Surinder Choudhary had said that the Omar Abdullah government would soon reinstate public holiday on the birth anniversary of Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, which falls on December 5.

Before Choudhary, NC General Secretary Ali Muhammad Sagar had also pitched for reinstating December 5 as a public holiday.

The Omar-led government had also submitted the pro-

posal of reinstating the December 5 holiday to Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha last month.

Russia shot down plane, says Azerbaijan Prez

was hit by fire from the ground over Russia and "rendered uncontrollable by electronic warfare." Aliyev accused Russia of trying to "hush up" the issue for several days, saying he was "upset and surprised" by versions of events put forward by Russian officials.

"Unfortunately, for the first three days we heard nothing from Russia except delirious versions," he said.

The crash killed 38 of 67 people on board. The Kremlin said that air defense systems were firing near Grozny, the regional capital of the Russian republic of Chechnya, where the plane attempted to land, to deflect a Ukrainian drone strike.

Aliyev said Azerbaijan made three demands to Russia in connection with the crash.

"First, the Russian side must apologize to Azerbaijan. Second, it must admit its guilt. Third, punish the guilty, bring them to criminal responsibility and pay compensation to the Azerbaijani state, the injured passengers and crew members," he said.

Aliyev noted that the first demand was "already fulfilled" when Russian President Vladimir Putin apologized to him on Saturday. Putin called the crash a "tragic incident" though stopped short of acknowledging Moscow's responsibility.

He said that an investigation into the crash was ongoing. Russia has denied responsibility, but a Dutch court in 2022 convicted two Russians and a pro-Russia Ukrainian man for their role in downing the plane with an air defense system brought into Ukraine from a Russian military base.

Rolling out new Criminal Laws, CAA major tasks of MHA in 2024

an Indian Parliament and marks the end of colonial criminal justice laws," he said.

Shah said the laws were not just about changing the nomenclature but bringing about a complete overhaul. "Soul, body and spirit of the new laws are Indian," he said.

The new laws brought in a modern justice system, incorporating provisions such as Zero FIR, online registration of police complaints, summonses through electronic modes such as SMS and mandatory videography of crime scenes for all heinous crimes.

According to home ministry officials, the new laws have tried to address some of the current social realities and crimes and are going to provide a mechanism to effectively deal with these, keeping in view the ideals enshrined in the Constitution.

The CAA, which was enacted in December 2019 for granting Indian nationality to persecuted Hindu, Sikh, Jain, Buddhist, Parsi and Christian migrants from Bangladesh, Pakistan and Afghanistan who came to India on or before December 31, 2014, was rolled out in March and the first set of 14 people were granted Indian citizenship under the law in May.

Shah termed the occasion of granting Indian citizenship under the CAA as a "historic day", saying the decades-long wait of those who faced religious persecution in Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan is over.

After the enactment in 2019, the CAA got the president's assent a few days later but the rules under which the Indian citizenship were supposed to be granted were issued only on March 11 after over a delay of four years.

The passing of the CAA in 2019 sparked protests in different parts of the country with agitators terming it "discriminatory". Over a hundred people had lost their lives during the anti-CAA protests or police action in various parts of the country.

To allay fears of a section of Muslims and students regarding the CAA, the home ministry, a day after the CAA rules were issued, asserted that the Indian Muslims need not worry as the new legislation would not impact their citizenship and has nothing to do with the community which enjoys equal rights as their Hindu brethren.

The ministry made it clear that "no Indian citizen would be asked to produce any document to prove his citizenship after this Act".

Intermittent violence continues to rock Manipur, where the first bout of ethnic clash between majority Meiteis and tribal Kukis was witnessed in May 2023.

Even after the death of about 260 people, injury to hundreds and displacement of thousands of people, peace continues to be elusive in the northeastern state. Though there have been efforts from the central government to bring the warring communities into negotiating table, sporadic violence continues there.

Members of the ruling BJP were also not spared. Mobs set fire to the residences of several BJP legislators, one of whom is a senior minister, and a Congress MLA in various districts of Imphal Valley in November besides making a foiled attempt to storm the ancestral house of Chief Minister N Biren Singh.

Seeing the fragile situation, the Centre in November reimposed the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act in Manipur's six police station areas, including the violence-hit Jiribam.

On December 24, the Centre appointed former union home secretary Ajay Kumar Bhalla as new Manipur governor, in an apparent bid to help itself find a lasting peace. However, it is to be seen how Bhalla will walk through the difficult terrain of the sensitive state.

Jammu and Kashmir witnessed relatively peaceful assembly elections, which were held after a gap of 10 years.

Pak soldier killed, 11 injured in firing by Afghan Taliban

gal areas using both light and heavy weaponry, sources said. Pakistani forces retaliated, inflicting significant losses on the other side as seven to eight personnel of the Afghan forces were killed in the exchange of fire, sources added.

However, in the fire exchange, a "Frontier Constabulary (FC) soldier was killed and 11 others were injured".

The incident of firing occurred days after Pakistan targeted terrorist positions in Paktika province of Afghanistan to punish the banned TTP militants, allegedly using Afghan soil to train and attack Pakistan.

60 pc of terrorists killed in 2024 were Pakistanis: Army

been laying focus on eliminating terrorists from the area looked after by the White Knight Corps of the force.

According to a presentation given by the home ministry to a parliamentary panel, there has been over 70 per cent decline in terror-related incidents in Jammu and Kashmir since 2019, when Article 370 was scrapped and the erstwhile state was bifurcated into two Union Territories - Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh.

The ministry said in 2019, as many as 286 terror-related incidents were reported in Jammu Kashmir and the number came down to just 40 in 2024 (till first week of November).

In 2019, as many as 50 civilians were killed in terror-related incidents and the casualty figure came down to 14 so far this year.

On attacks on security forces, the home ministry said a total of 96 such incidents were reported in 2019 and it went up to 111 in 2020 but since then there has been a steady decline and the number of such attacks came down to 95 in 2021, 65 in 2022 and 15 in 2023 and five so far in 2024.

About casualties of security forces, the ministry said altogether 77 security personnel were killed in various incidents in 2019.

In 2020, 58 personnel were killed, 29 in 2021, 26 in 2022, 11 in 2023 and seven so far in 2024.