

“Keep a little fire burning; however small, however hidden.”

—Cormac McCarthy

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IN BRIEF

NIA seeks life term for Andrabi

NEW DELHI: The NIA has sought life imprisonment for Kashmiri separatist and Dukhtar-e-Millat chief Asiya Andrabi following her conviction in a UAPA case, saying she had waged war against India and a stern message is required to be sent that conspiring against the State will invite the harshest penalty.

Submissions were made before the Additional Sessions Judge Chander Jit Singh, who was hearing arguments on the quantum of sentence against Andrabi and her two associates, Sofi Fehmeeda and Nahida Nasreen. They were convicted under the stringent anti-terror law, Unlawful Activities Prevention Act (UAPA), earlier in January.

“The convicts are well-educated women, and their acts were part of a deep-rooted conspiracy to wage war against the Government of India. They were ► P11

No need to panic or pay attention to rumours, says PM on Energy Crisis

‘West Asia conflict disrupts global energy supply chain’

TIRUCHIRAPPALLI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday appealed to the people not to pay attention to rumours or panic in the wake of the LPG supply disruption caused by the ongoing conflict in West Asia, and urged that only verified information be disseminated.

The PM’s comments come in the wake of the commercial LPG short supply that has affected the hotel industry across the country and opposition criticism over the issue and also amidst fears of a possible shortage of or spurt in prices of petrol and diesel in the coming days.

Addressing a mega NDA poll rally here, the PM also slammed the DMK rule in Tamil Nadu and said that people wanted a government that worked for every family, and not just for one family.

“I would like to appeal to people, let us only spread correct, verified information,” he said, apparently referring to the LPG crisis triggered by the supply disruption due to the conflict between US-Is-



rael and Iran that has affected the Gulf region.

The conflict has affected whole world’s energy supply chain, he said.

“There is no need to panic or pay attention to rumours,” he said.

“In any situation, we have seen how our government always puts interests of India above everything.” He said he was confident that as a nation, “we will nav-

igate every situation successfully.” Sharpening his attack against the DMK, he said, “In DMK rule, everything starts and ends with one family...”

“In 2021, people of TN brought DMK to power; and instead of taking it as a responsibility, they have betrayed the mandate.”

People know that NDA could bring change in Tamil Nadu, the Prime Minister said, addressing the massive rally of the opposition bloc, here, the third one for the state since January 23.

The AIADMK heads the National Democratic Alliance in Tamil Nadu and its constituents include the BJP, PMK and AMMK.

Further, just like all rivers go to sea, all corrupt money in the state goes to one family, he said, targeting the DMK regime. The Dravidian party was infamous for its “scientific corruption model,” he alleged.

Mounting a blistering attack on the ruling DMK dispensation, Modi said that “today ► P11

‘Weapon used in crime seized, accused kept in custody’ 63-yr-old man opens fire in wedding event; Dr Farooq Abdullah, Dy CM escape unhurt

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU: The alert security wing of Jammu and Kashmir Police averted a major assassination attempt by overpowering a 63-year-old man from Jammu who opened gun fires on National Conference president Dr Farooq Abdullah and J&K Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Choudhary during a wedding ceremony at posh Greater Kailash locality of Jammu city on late Wednesday evening.

The security wing of J&K Police showed exceptional professionalism to thwart the attack and once again upheld its commitment to safeguard the people of J&K.

Both Dr Farooq Abdullah and Surinder Choudhary escaped unhurt in an attack by a gunman outside a marriage hall in the outskirts of Jammu on Wednesday night, officials said.

“It is due to the swift and prompt action of the security Guards and J&K Police a major tragedy was averted”, the eyewitnesses said.

The accused, Kamal Singh Jamwal, a resident of Purani Mandi, was overpowered by security guards and was whisked away

Security wing of J&K Police thwarts major ‘assassination attempt’



for questioning, they said.

The incident took place at posh Greater Kailash locality of Jammu when Abdullah and the deputy chief minister were coming out of a marriage function, the officials said.

They said the accused, who is in his 70s, was waiting outside the venue and tried to fire on Abdullah. However, two police personnel – an inspector Khursheed and a

sub-inspector – overpowered him and later he was disarmed and taken into custody.

No one was injured in the firing, the officials said, adding Jamwal was allegedly in an inebriated condition.

Abdullah and Choudhary had come to greet party leader B S Chouhan on the marriage of his son, the officials said. Meanwhile, the ► P11

Slain terrorist identified as LeT operative

JAMMU: The terrorist who was killed along the Line of Control (LoC) in Rajouri district during a failed infiltration attempt has been identified as a launching operative of Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) outfit, officials said on Wednesday.

According to the army, the terrorist was killed in the general area of Jhangar in the Nowshera sector around 3 pm on Tuesday, while he, along with another associate, was trying to sneak in from across the border.

Based on the documents and intelligence inputs, the deceased has been identified as Hamza Yousaf, a resident of Pakistan-occupied Kashmir. Yousaf was a ► P11

Country adopts proactive deterrence posture: COAS

HYDERABAD: Citing key lessons from Operation Sindoor, Army Chief Gen Upendra Dwivedi has said India is shifting from a reactive approach to a proactive deterrence posture.

Addressing the participants of the 21st Higher Defence Management Course at the College of Defence Management (CDM) here on Tuesday, also said the Indian Army stands at the cusp of a new era defined by technological prowess, organisational agility and self-reliance.

“Highlighting key lessons from Operation Sindoor, the Chief of the Army Staff underscored India’s shift from a reactive to a proactive deterrence posture,” a defence release said



here on Wednesday.

General Dwivedi stressed the need to effectively harness multi-domain operations, data-centric warfare and unmanned systems in future conflicts, it said.

He underlined the importance of developing “battlefield equalisers” ► P11

Red Fort blast: Remand of 2 accused extended

NEW DELHI: A Delhi court on Wednesday extended by five days the custodial interrogation of two terror operatives allegedly involved in the Red Fort area blast conspiracy. Special Judge Pitambar Dutt extended the NIA custody of Zameer Ahmad Ahangar and Tufail Ahmad Bhat after conducting the proceedings in-camera. Ahangar from Ganderbal and Bhat from Srinagar, Jammu and Kashmir, were formally arrested by the NIA in February for their active involvement in the conspiracy related to the Delhi blast. On

February 25, they were sent to NIA custody for 10 days, after which their custodial interrogation was extended by five days on March 6. On Tuesday, the NIA took their blood samples along with other exhibits before a magisterial court. So far, the anti-terror agency has made 11 arrests in the case.

CM reviews plan for expansion, renewal of JK House properties Omar calls for depiction of cultural identity

NEW DELHI: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah today reviewed plans to establish new JK Houses in Dwarka in the national capital and Mumbai and to revamp existing government properties across several states and Union Territories to strengthen Jammu and Kashmir’s presence nationwide.

The review meeting was attended by Resident Commissioner J&K Ramesh Kumar and senior officers of the Resident Commission and concerned departments.

They presented updates on the ongoing projects, budgetary requirements as well as future development plans aimed at strengthening the institutional



infrastructure outside Jammu and Kashmir.

While reviewing the progress of multiple infrastructure projects being handled by the J&K Resident Commission, the Chief Minister stressed that all upcoming and renovated JK House properties must

showcase the rich cultural heritage and distinctive identity of Jammu and Kashmir.

“Ensure that the new constructions and restructuring of existing properties carry a local touch of Jammu and Kashmir’s rich cultural legacy so that these ► P11

Terror hideout busted; SFs recover arms

SRINAGAR: Security forces busted a terrorist hideout in Bandipora district of Jammu and Kashmir, recovering a cache of arms and ammunition, officials said on Wednesday.

The hideout was found during a search operation in the Ranar forest area of the district, officials added.

The recoveries included one RPG launcher, five RPG rounds, one light machine gun (LMG) and two ammunition belts of the LMG.

The forces also recovered seven AK magazines, 544 AK rounds, three ammunition pouches, one pistol magazine, one grenade, five UBGL grenades and other war-like stores. According to officials, the hideout ► P11

LS rejects Opposition’s motion to remove Om Birla as Speaker

NEW DELHI: An opposition move to remove Om Birla as speaker was defeated on Wednesday in the Lok Sabha after a heated debate, with Union Home Minister Amit Shah trashing Rahul Gandhi’s contention that he was not allowed to speak in the House, saying the Congress leader was frequently abroad during sessions and skipped discussions willfully as he “does not want to speak”.

The opposition members rushed into the Well of the House, protesting and raising slogans as the home minister was concluding his speech at the end of the two-day-long debate on the resolution. They demanded an apology for his certain re-



marks, which they said were “offensive”.

Jagdambika Pal, who was in the chair, urged the opposition to take their seats so that he could put the motion to a vote. Amid the din, the resolution was rejected by a voice vote, following which he adjourned the House for the day. Speaker Birla was not

present in the House during the entire period of the debate.

Earlier, interjecting in the debate, Gandhi, the Leader of Opposition (LoP), said he was stopped from speaking in the Lok Sabha on multiple occasions and asserted that the House does not represent one party but the whole country. ► P11

Lt Gen Pratik reviews security Op readiness

JAMMU: Northern Army Commander Lt General Pratik Sharma on Wednesday visited the headquarters of the White Knights Corps based in Nagrota (Jammu), and the Chinar Corps in Srinagar to review operational and security situation in Jammu and Kashmir.

During his visit, he called upon troops to ensure the safety, security and well-being of the people while maintaining the highest standards of operational readiness.

“Lt Gen Pratik Sharma, Army Commander, Northern Command, visited ► P11

Jammu University retitles literary event as ‘Jammu Vishwavidyalaya’

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU: Amid controversy, the University of Jammu has officially changed the title of a literary and cultural programme, renaming it from “Jammuiyat: Sahitya Sanskriti Samagam” to “Jammu Vishwavidyalaya: Sahitya Sanskriti Samagam”, according to an official circular issued by the institution on Wednesday.

The circular, issued by the Registrar, stated that the programme title should now be read as “Jammu Vishwavidyalaya: Sahitya Sanskriti Samagam” in place of “Jammuiyat: Sahitya Sanskriti Samagam” mentioned in the earlier circular No. Estab/26/23206-306 dated 11-

03-2026. The latest order was issued under No. Estab/26/1231-1330 and was circulated to all concerned departments and administrative offices of the university.

Officials said the university administration acted promptly after the matter came to its notice and retitled the event accordingly. The revised title will now be used in all official communications and documents related to the programme.

Meanwhile, the University today announced the organization of “Jammu Vishwavidyalaya: Sahitya-Sanskriti Samagam,” a two-day literary and cultural festival to be held on March 13 and 14, 2026, at the University campus.

The announcement was made during a Curtain Raiser press conference addressed by Vice Chancellor, Prof. Umesh Rai, in the presence of Prof. Neelu Rohmetra, Dean Research Studies; Dr. Neeraj Sharma, Registrar; Prof. Sadaf Shah, Coordinator, Jammu Vishwavidyalaya; Sahitya Sanskriti Samagam; Prof. Seema Rohmetra and Dr. Geemay Dogra, Director DIQA, along with other senior officials of the University.

Addressing the media, Prof. Umesh Rai said that the programme has been conceived to celebrate the rich literary and cultural heritage of the Jammu region and to present it on a wider stage. He observed that Jammu region possesses ► P11