



The management and staff of The Earth News greet all patrons and readers on the auspicious occasion of Ram Navami.

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Inking the Truth

IN BRIEF

Sinha, Omar greet people on Ram Navami

JAMMU: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha has extended his heartfelt greetings to the people on the auspicious occasion of Ram Navami, which will be celebrated tomorrow.

In a message, the Lieutenant Governor has said: "On the auspicious occasion of Ram Navami, I extend my heartfelt greetings and best wishes to all."

The festival commemorates the sacred birth anniversary of Maryada Purushottam Bhagwan Shri Ram, the epitome of virtue and righteousness. His exemplary life stands as a timeless testament to the enduring principles of compassion, humility, unwavering commitment to truth, selfless dedication to duty and the discipline.

The sacred occasion of Ram Navami inspires us to follow Prabhu Shri Ram's timeless ideals and life. **P11**

We are not a 'Broker' country like Pak: Govt at all-party meet

Oppn seeks debate on West Asia crisis in Parliament

NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi has conveyed to US President Donald Trump that the war in West Asia must end soon as it is hurting everyone, the government told an up-in-arms Opposition at an all-party meeting on Wednesday and rubbished Pakistan's reported mediation in the conflict, saying India is not a "dalaal" (broker) nation.

There is nothing new in Pakistan's mediation efforts in the matter as that country has been "used" by the US since 1981, sources quoted External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar as saying.

"We are not a dalaal nation," Jaishankar is said to have told the attendees of the meeting convened at the Parliament complex to discuss the West Asia crisis.

The sources added that



'No scarcity of petrol, diesel'

NEW DELHI: The government on Wednesday said there is no shortage of petrol, diesel or LPG in the country, and urged citizens not to believe rumours circulating on social media or resort to panic buying. LPG supplies remain affected due to the ongoing disruption in the Strait of Hormuz. In a media briefing, Sujata Sharma, Joint **P11**

the government refuted the Opposition's charge that New Delhi was silent on the situation, asserting that "we are commenting and responding".

When the Iran embassy was opened, the foreign secretary visited immediately and signed the condolence book, the government told the parties in response to the Opposition's charge that India displayed moral weakness in not condoling the death of the Iranian Supreme Leader sooner.

The government is also said to have informed the parties that its prime concern is ensuring the security of the Indian diaspora living in the Gulf region and fulfilling domestic energy needs.

On that count, the government said it has been successful so far. **P11**

LG inaugurates ISTD's Jammu Chapter Focus on start-up ecosystem to drive J&K's growth: Sinha

EARTH NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU: Jammu and Kashmir Lt Governor Manoj Sinha on Wednesday said the purpose of education is not merely to impart knowledge, but to prepare students for life's challenges and opportunities.

"We should focus on soft skills, research, entrepreneurship, and a startup culture. The education sector must bring transformation through mentoring and academia-industry collaboration," he said.

Addressing the inaugural ceremony of the Jammu chapter of the Indian Society for Training & Development (ISTD) here, the Lt Governor said, "Today's challenges are complex and multi-dimensional. Their solution is possible only through collective effort and we must focus on this to actively drive Jammu Kashmir's rapid growth." He directed the stake-



holders to prioritise collaboration and create an environment where a professional community is built through networking, best practices, national and international exposure, and joint training programmes.

Sinha emphasised cooperation and dialogue to forge a strong, inclusive model of development for the Union Territory. The Lt Governor asked the ISTD's Jammu chapter to

focus on job creation, make local talent more globally competitive, training, research, collaboration in industries, and the agriculture sector of Jammu-Kashmir to boost productivity and market linkage.

"The future is full of challenges but it is also brimming with opportunities. We must ensure we are ready to seize the new opportunities," he said. "The entire **P11**

70-yr Pak intruder detained; repatriated

JAMMU: A 70-year-old Pakistani intruder was detained by the Border Security Force (BSF) along the International Border in Samba district on Wednesday afternoon, officials said.

Abdul Hussain, a resident of Lehari Khurd village, was repatriated to Pakistan within six hours of his detention after it was established that he had inadvertently crossed the border into the Indian side, officials said.

BSF troops picked up the movement of the intruder around 1 pm opposite the Border Out Post Bhalher in Ramgarh sector and subsequently challenged **P11**

CS stresses for time-bound revamp of recruitment rules

EARTH NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU: Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo on Wednesday chaired a high-level meeting to assess the current status and expedite the updation of Recruitment Rules (RRs) across various departments of the Union Territory, with a strong emphasis on ensuring transparency, efficiency and employee welfare in public administration.

The meeting was attended by the Commissioner Secretary, ARI & Trainings Department, along with Administrative Secretaries of other departments.

While underscoring the importance of timely finalization of Recruitment Rules, the Chief Secretary directed all Administrative Secretaries to work in close coordination with the ARI & Trainings Department to complete the



process within a defined timeframe.

He stressed that updated and well-structured Recruitment Rules are crucial for ensuring a transparent, merit-based and efficient recruitment framework, besides facilitating the prompt filling of vacancies across departments.

Reiterating the Government's

commitment towards employee welfare and administrative efficiency, the Chief Secretary issued clear instructions that the entire exercise must be pursued in a mission mode, eliminating delays and ensuring uniformity in recruitment processes across departments.

During the meeting, Commissioner Secretary, ARI & **P11**

Around 40 pc teaching posts lying vacant in J&K varsities

EARTH NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU: About a dozen universities in Jammu and Kashmir are grappling with a severe faculty shortage, with around 40 per cent teaching posts lying vacant, according to official data.

Figures provided by the Higher Education Department show that more than 3,300 teaching posts are sanctioned across nine public universities and two central universities functioning under the aegis of Union Ministry of Education, while only around 1,900 are in position, leaving a large gap that has forced several institutions to function with far below their approved strength.

The data shows that the University of Jammu has 252 teachers in position against 442 sanctioned posts, leaving around 43 per cent vacancies, while the University of Kashmir has 373 teachers against

570 sanctioned posts, a shortage of about 35 per cent.

In agricultural universities, SKUAST-Jammu has 237 teachers against 411 sanctioned posts, nearly 42 per cent vacant, while SKUAST-Kashmir has 424 in position against 540 sanctioned posts, leaving about 21 per cent unfilled.

Among other institutions, Baba Ghulam Shah Badshah University, Rajouri has only 93 teachers against 241 sanctioned posts, leaving more than 60 per cent vacancies, while the Islamic University of Science and Technology has 135 teachers against 385 sanctioned posts, with nearly two-third posts vacant.

Central University of Kashmir has 108 teachers in position against 195 sanctioned posts, while Central University of Jammu has 160 teachers against 177 sanctioned posts. Similarly, the cluster **P11**

Artillery shell found near LoC

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir Police on Wednesday safely disposed of a live artillery shell found in the forests near the Line of Control in Baramulla district, officials said.

Upon receiving the information about the presence of a live shell in the Kalgai forest area of Uri, a police team reached the spot, secured the area and took all necessary precautionary measures, they said.

"A Bomb Disposal Squad (BDS) team of Baramulla Police was deployed, which safely neutralised and disposed of the live artillery shell in accordance with established safety protocols," the officials said. Officials said **P11**

Sanasar Tulip Garden opens; 2 lakh blooms welcome tourists

EARTH NEWS SERVICE

RAMBAN: The most picturesque Sanasar Tulip Garden was thrown open for tourists and visitors on Wednesday as two lakh blooming tulips are ready to attract them, nestled in the lush green meadows in Ramban district.

The Director Floriculture informed that the garden, spread over 35 kanal, features a centrally located fountain and showcases more than 2 lakh tulips of 25 different varieties, making it a major attraction for nature lovers and tourists alike.

Member Legislative Assembly Ramban, Arjun Singh Raju today inaugurated the



Tulip Garden at the picturesque Sanasar, throwing open the much-awaited tourist attraction for the season.

The MLA was accompa-

nied by Director Floriculture Jammu, Vivek Modi; Joint Director Floriculture, Vikrant Sharma and Assistant Floriculture Officer Udhampur,

Pawan Kumar. The MLA and team of officers took a round of the garden and reviewed the arrangements and infrastructure put in place for **P11**

India blasts Pak for 'frivolous' narratives on Andrabi sentence

NEW DELHI: India on Wednesday categorically rejected Pakistan's condemnation of a life sentence handed to Kashmiri separatist Asiya Andrabi, and said Islamabad should introspect on systematic human rights violations it continues to perpetrate instead of peddling "frivolous" narratives.

A Delhi court on Tuesday sentenced Andrabi, the chief of banned Dukhtaran-e-Millat, to life imprisonment, and gave 30-year prison terms to her two associates, for conspiring to commit a crime against the State.

Pakistan's foreign ministry on Wednesday condemned the prison terms given to the three women and described Andrabi as a "vocal advocate for the Kashmir cause".

"We categorically reject the statement issued by Pakistan in support of a **P11**

LPG supply to be cut off if PNG switch refused: Govt

NEW DELHI: The government has mandated that cooking gas LPG supply to households will be discontinued if consumers fail to switch to piped natural gas where such connectivity is available, under a new order aimed at accelerating gas network expansion and reducing reliance on a single fuel.

As India grapples with an LPG shortage due to the war in West Asia disrupting supplies from key sources, the government is pushing households and commercial users to switch to piped natural gas (PNG) -- a more convenient alternative that is both domestically produced and sourced through diversified supply. PNG is continuously supplied to kitchen burners through pipelines, eliminating the need to book refills.

The Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas has notified the Natural

Gas and Petroleum Products Distribution (Through Laying, Building, Operation and Expansion of Pipelines and Other Facilities) Order, 2026, aimed at accelerating pipeline infrastructure, easing approvals and promoting a shift from LPG to PNG to strengthen energy security.

The order issued on March 24 states that LPG supply "shall cease after three months" if a household does not opt for PNG despite availability. The provision, however, allows continuation where it is "technically infeasible" to provide a piped connection, subject to a no-objection certificate.

The move is aimed at freeing up LPG supplies from areas with pipeline connectivity and diverting them to regions lacking such infrastructure, while promoting "fuel diversification" amid global **P11**

J&K Bank disburses Rs 4.41 Cr claims to 99 bereaved families



EARTH NEWS SERVICE

SRINAGAR: In a significant relief to bereaved families during their time of loss, J&K Bank has facilitated the swift settlement of Met Loan & Life

Suraksha (MLLS) insurance claims for deceased borrowers across various branches in the Baramulla Zone. The claims, amounting to Rs 4.41 Crore, have been disbursed among 99 families, easing their finan-

cial burden during a difficult phase.

On the occasion, the Bank's DGM & Zonal Head (Baramulla) Tanveer Ahmad Najjar, along with PNB MetLife's Associate Director & Relationship Head Irfan Ali Zargar, symbolically displayed a cheque of Rs 4.41 Crore representing the total claim amount disbursed to the nominees/legal heirs of the deceased customers. The event was also attended by Cluster Head (Baramulla) Masood Ahmad, Cluster Head (Kupwara) Abdul Majid Bhat, Cluster Head (Sopore) Mehboob Allahi Khan, Cluster Head (Bandipora) **P11**

Naib Tehsildar trapped taking bribe; arrested

EARTH NEWS SERVICE

SRINAGAR: The Jammu and Kashmir Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) on Wednesday arrested a senior revenue official in Anantnag district for allegedly demanding and accepting a bribe, officials said.

The ACB received a written complaint that Naib Tehsildar Arwani Mushtaq Ahmad Bhat was demanding a bribe of Rs 1 lakh from the complainant's in-laws for the inheritance mutation of land, the spokesman of the anti-graft body said. Acting on the com-

plaint, the ACB conducted a discreet verification, confirming the demand by the government employee. Following this, the ACB registered a case and took up the investigation, he said.

During the course of the investigation, the team laid a successful trap and caught Bhat, a resident of Dangi-pora Sozeith Budgam, red-handed while demanding and accepting a bribe, the officer said.

The ACB arrested Bhat on the spot and recovered the bribe amount from his possession in the presence of independent witnesses associated with **P11**

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