

"When you give joy to other people, you get more joy in return. You should give a good thought to the happiness that you can give out."

—Eleanor Roosevelt

Inking the Truth

IN BRIEF

Delhi court grants bail to Shabir Shah

NEW DELHI: A Delhi court on Saturday granted bail to Kashmiri separatist leader Shabir Shah in a money laundering case linked to terror funding.

Special Judge Prashant Sharma granted Shah the relief. A reasoned order is awaited.

On March 12, the Supreme Court granted bail to Shah in a terror funding case, in which he was arrested by the National Investigation Agency (NIA) on June 4, 2019.

On September 4 last year, the apex court refused to grant interim bail to Shah in the case and issued a notice to the NIA, seeking its response on his plea challenging a Delhi High Court order dated June 12, 2025, that denied him relief.

The high court refused to grant bail to Shah, noting that the possibility of his carrying out similar unlawful activities and influencing witnesses could not be

Achieving 'Viksit Bharat' needs effort of 1.4 bn citizens amid global crunch: Modi

NOIDA: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday urged citizens to work with dedication and unity to tackle global challenges, and said that the government prioritizes securing India's interests and safeguarding "families and farmers".

Referring to the ongoing conflict in West Asia, while addressing a gathering at the inauguration of the first phase of the Noida International Airport in Jewar, the Prime Minister said achieving "Viksit Bharat" would require collective effort and unity among 1.4 billion citizens.

He stressed that the government's priority is to enhance citizens' convenience by saving time and reducing costs.

"I once again appeal to the people of the country that we must face this crisis calmly, with patience and unity. This is a global crisis, but we must prioritise India's interests. That is our greatest strength," he said.

He said he had discussed the situation in detail in Parliament and also held exten-



DM Rajnath calls for long-term readiness

NEW DELHI: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Saturday underlined the need to ensure medium to long-term preparedness and ensure swift decision-making process to navigate the impact of the evolving crisis in West Asia.

Singh made the remarks while chairing the first meeting of the Informal Empowered Group of Ministers (IGoM) set up to monitor the situation in West Asia.

The meeting was attended by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijju, Oil Minister Hardeep Singh Puri, Power Minister Manohar Lal and Chemicals and Fertilizers

sive and "very positive" deliberations with the Chief Ministers of various states.

The Prime Minister urged political parties to refrain from making irresponsible statements during such times.

"Those who make remarks that harm the country may gain some points in political debates, but such actions will never be forgiven by the people," he said, recalling how voters rejected misinformation campaigns during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The remarks come against the backdrop of political controversies during the COVID-19 pandemic, when Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav had publicly expressed reluctance to take a COVID-19 vaccine, triggering a political debate over vaccine hesitancy.

The controversy was a talking point in the run-up to the 2022 Uttar Pradesh Assembly elections, in which the Samajwadi Party was defeated, and the BJP retained power. The PM said that India is confronting

Land of Kashmiri Pandits retrieved in Valley: Omar

'Proposal under study to notify new tourism-worthy areas'

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU: The Jammu and Kashmir government on Saturday said it has retrieved and restored encroached land belonging to Kashmiri Pandits in the Valley.

Replying to a question by BJP MLA Yudhvir Sethi in the Assembly, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah said, "Land measuring 3,729 kanals and 4 marlas belonging to Kashmiri migrants has been retrieved and restored in the Kashmir Valley."

Since November 2024, 844 kanals and 4 marlas of land belonging to Kashmiri Pandits have been retrieved and restored, Abdullah said.

Data indicates that land worth crores of rupees belonging to Kashmiri Pandits, who were forced to flee due to targeted killings after the emergence of terrorism in J-K in 1990, was illegally occupied.

Abdullah, who holds charge of the Department of Disaster Management, Relief, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction, said the retrieval process is being carried out under the



'Karnah has immense potential for tourism'

JAMMU: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah today said that Karnah has immense potential for border tourism, hiking and trekking, asserting that the government is working on a comprehensive programme to promote tourism in the area.

The Chief Minister was replying to a supplementary raised by the MLA Karnah during the Question Hour of the ongoing Budget Session of the J&K Legislative Assembly. Highlighting the scenic beauty of the region,

Avalanche alert issued for 2 districts

SRINAGAR: Authorities in Kashmir on Saturday issued an avalanche warning for two districts in the valley and asked people to remain highly vigilant, officials said.

An avalanche with a medium danger level is expected to occur above 2,400 metres in Bandipora and Ganderbal within the next 24 hours, officials added.

"People are strictly advised to avoid venturing into avalanche-prone areas, including slopes, hilly terrain, and higher reaches, until further orders are issued

Nasha Mukt Bharat Abhiyaan LG orders major crackdown on drug networks targeting youth

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU: Jammu and Kashmir Lt Governor Manoj Sinha on Saturday directed a massive crackdown on drug smuggling networks targeting youth in the Union Territory.

Reviewing the progress of 'Nasha Mukt Bharat Abhiyaan' at a high-level meeting at Lok Bhavan here, he said deliberate and sinister efforts are being made to push the JK youth into the



abyss of drug addiction.

"A comprehensive, whole-of-government approach, combining stringent enforcement, robust preventive measures, and a carefully calibrated multi-pronged action plan, is

urgently required to dismantle the entire ecosystem of drug smuggling and narcoterrorism," the Lt Governor said.

The meeting was attended by Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo,

BSF chief reviews readiness along LoC

SRINAGAR: BSF Director General Praveen Kumar reviewed the security scenario and operational preparedness along the Line of Control (LoC) in Kashmir during his three-day visit to the valley, the force said on Saturday.

The BSF chief's three-day visit concluded on Saturday.

"DG BSF Shri Praveen Kumar, IPS visited BSF Kashmir Frontier, to review the security scenario and operational

MLAs condemn attack on Dr Abdullah Speaker for impartial probe; stern punishment in assassination bid

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU: Members of the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly cutting across party lines on Saturday condemned the assassination attempt on the life of National Conference president Farooq Abdullah and demanded a judicial probe into the attack.

Treasury and opposition benches both unanimously termed the incident deeply disturbing and a glaring security lapse. They also demanded that the attacker be declared a terrorist.

Abdullah, a former chief minister, had a miraculous

escape on March 11 when 63-year-old Kamal Singh, a resident of Purani Mandi area of Jammu, opened fire from a point-blank range while the politician was leaving a wedding function in the Greater Kailash area. The attacker was overpowered and arrested with a revolver.

Police have constituted a special investigation team (SIT) under the supervision of a deputy inspector general of Police (DIG) to probe the incident.

As the house assembled for the day, several National Conference legislators informed Speaker Abdul

Rahim Rather that they had moved an adjournment motion to discuss the attack on Abdullah.

The speaker, however, ensured a peaceful conclusion of the question hour and later allowed a discussion on the incident.

"I have received a notice for an adjournment motion from several NC legislators...It should have been submitted an hour earlier, but given that the issue is of serious concern to all members of the House, I am allowing a discussion without the need for an adjournment motion," said Rather.

150 word limit set for MLAs' queries

JAMMU: MLA Balwant Singh Mankotia raised a Point of Order regarding the length of questions raised during the Question Hour.

In response, Speaker Legislative Assembly Abdul Rahim Rather emphasized the need for concise questions, stating that the length should not exceed 150 words to save the House's precious time.

Rather, while citing Rule 38 Condition 7, stressed that MLAs' questions should be brief and within the

Centre assured of continuous supply, says CM; backs PM's call for 'Team India' unity

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU: Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Saturday said that the Centre has assured an uninterrupted supply of essential commodities and underscored Prime Minister Narendra Modi's call for national unity in the face of emerging global challenges.

He said adequate stocks of essential items, including fuel and LPG, are available in the Union Territory, urging people to remain calm and not to pay heed to rumours.

"Prime Minister convened an important meeting yesterday (Friday) which was attended by chief ministers across the country ex-

cept five states where the elections are taking place.

"During the meeting, the Cabinet Secretary made a detailed presentation on the prevailing situation, with a focus on global developments, particularly tensions in the Strait of Hormuz and West Asia, and their potential impact," the chief minister told reporters here.

Abdullah said the chief ministers were informed that special emphasis is being laid on maintaining an uninterrupted supply of essential commodities, especially fuel. "The Government of India has assured that there is no shortage of any essential items," he added.

Appealing to the public for

calm, the chief minister said misinformation had led to long queues at petrol pumps and panic buying of LPG cylinders in Jammu and Kashmir recently.

"People should not pay attention to rumours," he said, adding his government is continuously monitoring the supply situation on a daily basis.

"At present, there is no shortage of LPG cylinders, diesel, petrol or kerosene. The Government of India has assured an uninterrupted supply," he said.

He said after the onset of tensions in West Asia, restrictions were initially imposed on commercial LPG cylinders, with distribution capped at 20 per cent, which has now been

CJI inaugurates district court complex, LLSA building in Leh

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

LEH: Chief Justice of India Justice Surya Kant on Saturday inaugurated the newly constructed district court complex in Leh, marking a significant step towards strengthening judicial infrastructure in the Union Territory of Ladakh.

The inauguration ceremony was attended by the Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh, Vinai Kumar Saxena, and the Chief Justice of the High Court of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh, Justice Arun Palli, according to an official spokesperson.

Upon arrival, the Chief Justice was accorded a ceremonial guard of honour, followed by a tradi-



tional welcome featuring a cultural performance that showcased Ladakh's rich heritage.

A commemorative plaque marking the inauguration of the district court complex was un-

veiled, and the inscription was formally read by court officials.

A detailed 3D presentation highlighting the architectural design and facilities of the complex — including courtrooms,

Hangul count rises from 183 to 323: Govt

JAMMU: The population of the endangered Kashmiri stag Hangul has shown a steady and encouraging rise over the past decade, increasing from 183 in 2015 to 323 in 2025, the Jammu and Kashmir government said on Saturday.

Replying to a Calling Attention Motion moved by National Conference legislator Salman Ali Sagar on behalf of Ali Mohammad Sagar in the Legislative Assembly here, Minister for Forest,

Northern Army Cdr presents 93 service, gallantry awards at Investiture Ceremony

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

UDHAMPUR: Northern Army Commander Lieutenant General Pratik Sharma on Saturday presented 93 awards, including 52 individual honours and 41 unit citations, to Army personnel in recognition of exceptional courage and distinguished service at the Northern Command Investiture Ceremony 2026 held here.

The awards acknowledged acts of extraordinary valour in counter-insurgency operations, high-altitude de-



ployments and sensitive border missions across Jammu and Kashmir, Ladakh and other operational theatres, a

Defence Public Relations Officer (PRO) said.

The individual awards included four Yudh Seva

Medals, one Bar to Sena Medal, 37 Sena Medals, one Bar to Vishisht Seva Medal, eight Vishisht Seva Medals and one Jeevan Raksha Padak (Posthumous), the PRO said.

The ceremony was attended by serving military officers, awardees and their families.

Speaking on the occasion, Lt Gen Sharma commended the awardees for their professionalism, dedication and steadfast commitment to duty under demanding conditions. He emphasised the importance of

LA passes 3 Bills; CM tables crucial reports

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU: The Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly on Saturday passed three important Bills through voice vote, marking a significant step towards governance reforms, social equity and strengthening of the judicial framework in Jammu and Kashmir.

The Bills were moved by Chief Minister Omar Abdullah and were subsequently put to vote by Speaker Abdul Rahim

Rather, who presented bills before the House for passage.

The House passed L.A. Bill No. 01 of 2026, which seeks to amend certain enactments to decriminalise and rationalise minor offences, thereby promoting trust-based governance and improving ease of living and doing business in Jammu and Kashmir.

The Assembly also approved L.A. Bill No. 02 of 2026, aimed at eliminating discrimination against persons affected by leprosy.

The legislation ensures equal treatment, removes stigmatizing provisions and enables the government to fulfil its obligations through affirmative action.

Further, the House passed L.A. Bill No. 03 of 2026, which proposes amendments to the Jammu and Kashmir Civil Courts Act, 1977 (Svt), with the objective of improving the efficiency and functioning of the judicial system.

All three Bills were passed by voice vote after being taken up for