

Modi, Trump discuss mutual co-operation

NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday held discussions with US President Donald Trump on bilateral co-operation, including several big-ticket deals, US Ambassador to India Sergio Gor said.

Some big-ticket deals, including on energy, are expected between India and the US in the next few days and weeks, the ambassador said.

The issue of the blockade of the Strait of Hormuz in West Asia also came up during their 40-minute phone conversation, according to Gor.

It was the third phone call between the two leaders this year and the first after the recent peace talks between Iran and the US.

They spoke on February 2 to announce progress in a trade deal, and on March 24 to discuss the situation in West Asia.

The call ended with Trump telling PM, "I just want you to know we all love you", the US ambassador said.

Earlier, it was reported in media today that Pakistan is engaged in high-level contacts to bring Iran ► P11

PM seeks all-party backing for Women's Quota amendments



DEHRADUN: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday said that the Women's Reservation Act was passed with the support of all parties after a long wait and urged them to back the amendments in laws to ensure its implementation in the 2029 elections, calling it the "collective sentiment" of the nation.

"Let all political parties come together to unanimously take forward this initiative, which concerns the rights of the sisters and daughters of the nation," he said at a public meeting here ahead of the three-day special

sittings of Parliament from April 16 to consider a legislative package, including amendments to the Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam, to implement quota for women from the 2029 Lok Sabha elections.

In September 2023, Parliament passed the 'Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam', commonly known as the Women's Reservation Act, that provided for the reservation of one-third of seats for women in the Lok Sabha and legislative assemblies.

PM Modi said that women have a pivotal role to play in the making of a devel-

oped India and asserted that Indian democracy will become stronger and more vibrant if elections to the Lok Sabha and various ► P11

LS seats may rise to 850 for 33pc women's quota

NEW DELHI: Lok Sabha seats will be increased to up to 850 from the current 543 to "operationalise" the women's reservation law before the 2029 parliamentary polls following a delimitation exercise to be carried out on the basis of last published census.

According to the draft Constitution amendment bill, which will be introduced and expected to be passed in the upcoming special sitting of Parliament, seats would also be increased in state and Union ► P11

Tawi Mahotsav-2026 LG dedicates Tawi Riverfront Phase-I to public on Baisakhi

Dedicated 'Ghat' developed for sacred Tawi Aarti

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU: On the auspicious occasion of Baisakhi, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha dedicated Tawi Riverfront Project (Phase-I), developed at a cost of Rs 156 crore, to the public.

In Phase-1 of Tawi Riverfront Project, Jammu Smart City Limited has developed promenades on the left bank, right bank, and the central island, creating four continuous stretches for walking, jogging, and cycling.

A dedicated ghat area has also been developed for the sacred Tawi Aarti.

"Our vision is to create inclusive, accessible, and enriching spaces for every citizen. The Tawi Riverfront embodies this ethos with a seamless blend of tradition and modernity, where development harmonises with nature," the Lieutenant Governor said. The Lieutenant Governor was attending the



3-day long Tawi Mahotsav, organized by Jammu Smart City Limited, where he joined the citizens for the Tawi Aarti, and launched a series of transformative urban initiatives aimed at elevating the overall environment of the Tawi riverfront and the surrounding area.

On the occasion, the Lieutenant Governor laid the foundation stone for 4-lane connecting road to the right Bank with a bridge to decongest a critical stretch of city and directly connect Bhagwati Nagar rotary with Jewel Chowk.

The development of green spaces along the top promenade of the Left Bank was also launched by the Lieutenant Governor. The one-kilometre stretch will transform Tawi Riverfront into an ideal urban space and a vibrant hotspot for residents and tourists.

The Lieutenant Governor said under the Urban Challenge Fund, two major initiatives are being taken up: real estate monetisation of Phase-I and the extension of the riverfront from Bikram Chowk Bridge to Har Ki Paudi. He emphasised that these initiatives ► P11

Nitish steps down as Bihar CM

PATNA: Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar on Tuesday said he has submitted his resignation from the post to Governor Syed Ata Hasnain. Kumar, the longest-serving CM of Bihar, made this announcement on X after he met the governor at Lok Bhavan here.

Accompanied by Deputy Chief Minister Samrat Choudhary, JD(U)'s national working president Sanjay Jha, and state minister Vijay Choudhary, Kumar reached Lok Bhavan and submitted his resignation.

"I have done a lot of work for the people of ► P11

Our Govt brings clarity, new beginning: CM Omar opens fruit, vegetable processing unit in Jablipora

BIJBEHARA: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Tuesday inaugurated Jashn-e-Amad-e-Bahar, the Spring Festival on the occasion of Baisakhi, at Jablipora in Anantnag.

Addressing a large gathering on the occasion, the Chief Minister described spring as a symbol of renewal and hope, stating that the festival represents not just a seasonal transition but also a new phase of development and ► P11



Omar hails PM, Gadkari for key tunnel approvals

SRINAGAR: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah has expressed heartfelt gratitude to Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari for their support and approval ► P11

Ambedkar opposed Article 370 for India's integrity: Amit Shah

NEW DELHI: Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Tuesday said Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar staunchly opposed Article 370 of the Constitution for the sake of India's integrity.

In a post on X on Ambedkar's birth anniversary, Shah said he laid the strong foundation of India's democracy by giving the country a Constitution that grants equal rights and opportunities to every class.

"He staunchly opposed Article 370 for the sake of the country's integrity. Babasaheb, who gave the mantra to the society to become edu-



cated and stay organised, teaches us through his life that when the resolve is for national service and the welfare of people, every obstacle becomes small," he said in his post in Hindi.

Shah also extended his greetings to people on the occasion of the ► P11

Man booked for posing as SSP Budgam

SRINAGAR: Police in the Budgam district of Jammu and Kashmir on Tuesday said a First Information Report (FIR) was registered against a person for operating a fake WhatsApp account in the name of SSP Budgam.

"Budgam police station has received reliable information that an individual, Sameer Ali Bhat, a resident of Pallar Budgam, was sharing screenshots of chats with a fake WhatsApp account operating in the name of SSP Budgam among the general public and posing as a close aide in order to ► P11

US-Iran may hold talks again in 2 days: Report

WASHINGTON: President Donald Trump has said that a second round of talks with Iran could be held in Islamabad "over the next two days", according to a US media report on Tuesday.

"You should stay there, really, because something could be happening over the next two days, and we're more inclined to go there," Trump told The New York Post.

Trump attributed the possibility of a second round of talks to the "great job" done by Pakistan Army chief Field Marshal Asim Munir.

"It's more likely, you

Ramban youth goes missing: CM calls for stern message against hooliganism

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Tuesday urged Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha to take strict action against those behind the death of a Ramban youth, to send out a strong message that jungle raj will not be tolerated in the Union Territory.

"We want the atmosphere to remain good, but there are some people who want to create jungle raj here. They want to vitiate the atmosphere here and create a communal conflict," Abdullah said while addressing a function in Bijbehara area of south Kashmir's Anantnag district.

Referring to the Ramban incident, Abdullah said an innocent person was killed there.

"I want to tell those people who want to vitiate the atmosphere here in the garb of religion, that as long as my government is there, we will never allow them to succeed in Jammu and Kashmir," he said.

The chief minister appealed to Lt Gov Sinha to take stern action against those involved, and those

trying to vitiate the atmosphere, "so that a message is sent out that the current government will not allow this hooliganism, this jungle raj, in Jammu and Kashmir."

Authorities on Tuesday intensified a multi-agency search in Ramban district for a man feared to have fallen into a fast-flowing stream after allegedly being assaulted for carrying a cow in his vehicle.

A Special Investigation Team (SIT) has been constituted and four people have been arrested in connection with the case, which triggered widespread ► P11

NIA Court sentences 3 in Al-Qaeda linked plot

NEW DELHI: Three men have been sentenced by a National Investigation Agency (NIA) court for involvement in an Al-Qaeda-linked terror conspiracy to carry out attacks in Uttar Pradesh, officials said on Tuesday.

The trio men have been identified as Museeruddin alias Raju and Minhaj Ahmad alias Minhaj of Lucknow, and Tawheed Ahmad Shah alias Sobu Shah, hailing from district Budgam of Jammu and Kashmir, they said.

The Lucknow special court on Monday pro-

nounced varying jail terms, ranging from 5 years of rigorous imprisonment (RI) to life imprisonment, against the three accused, the officials said.

The terror convicts have also been fined a sum of up to Rs 20,000, they said.

Three other accused, namely Shakeel, Mohd Mustaqeem and Mohammad Moid (all residents of Lucknow), were convicted earlier in this case after they had pleaded guilty under the Arms Act.

NIA had filed charges against all the six convicted accused in the case ► P11

LG attends upgradation ceremony of Apna Bhojanalaya Sewa Bharti's spirit of giving back inspires masses, strengthens communities: Sinha

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Tuesday attended the ceremony marking the upgradation of 'Apna Bhojanalaya' at Government Medical College Jammu. The community kitchen is run by Sewa Bharti and supported by J&K Bank along with other donors.

The Lieutenant Governor lauded the noble initiative and partook in a meal at Apna Bhojanalaya.

The Lieutenant Governor said the Sewa Bharti's enduring spirit of giving back, em-



powers individuals and strengthens communities.

"There is no higher duty than serving those in need. Sewa Bharti has honored that duty by nourishing bodies,

restoring souls, and affirming the dignity of every human life. To strengthen Apna Bhojanalaya is to strengthen the very fabric of our society," the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor said that to feed a hungry soul is to invite grace into your own.

"To serve food to the hungry is among the most sacred acts a human being can perform. When a hand extends in need and another rises in nurture, divine grace moves quietly between them. This act is not merely kindness. This is humanity at its ► P11

Policy on ties with India unchanged, says China

BEIJING: China on Tuesday said its policy to improve relations with India has not changed as it defended its move to publish new names for various regions in Arunachal Pradesh.

India on Sunday categorically rejected China's efforts to assign "fictitious names" to Indian territory, asserting that such attempts to create "baseless narratives" cannot alter "undeniable reality" and could derail efforts to normalise bilateral ties.

New Delhi's ► P11

Nation's willpower key to security alongside military strength: Doval

GANDHINAGAR: National Security Advisor (NSA) Ajit Doval on Tuesday described national security as a complex and multifaceted phenomenon, and stressed that the biggest mistake in assessing a nation's strength is ignoring the willpower of its people.

While factors such as military strength are critical, inherent strength of people often proves decisive in security matters, he insisted.

Addressing students at the fifth convocation ceremony of the Rashtriya Raksha University (RRU) in Gandhinagar in the presence of President Droupadi Murmu, Doval emphasised



that national security is a collective responsibility shared by the entire nation.

"National security is a vast, complex, and multifaceted phenomenon. It comprises numerous components: a nation's military might, technological prowess, natural resources, diplomatic strength, and human capital," he ► P11