

**THOUGHT of the DAY**

"Whenever you see a successful woman, look out for three men who are going out of their way to try to block her."

—Yulia Tymoshenko

*Making the Truth*

## JK Migrants to get free ration from today

JAMMU: The Jammu and Kashmir government announced the distribution of free ration to migrants from April 18 across designated ration depots in the Union territory.

According to the Department of Disaster Management, Relief, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction, the ration distribution will be carried out under a special scheme for migrants in both Kashmir and Jammu divisions as notified by the government on March 5.

"All relief ration card holders, irrespective of their categorisation into priority household, non-priority household or special category, will continue to receive 11 kg of free ration per person per month along with 1 kg of sugar as per the existing scale", Relief Commissioner Arvind Karwani said.

Individuals registered with the relief department under the non-relief category, such as pensioners and classified under ► P11

## SPO axed over drug case link

SRINAGAR: A special police officer (SPO) of Jammu and Kashmir Police in Anantnag district was on Friday disengaged from service for alleged involvement in an NDPS case.

According to a police spokesman, SPO Mohammad Ashraf Malik, a resident of Kuchal in Kishtawar, was found to be involved in a case registered under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act at Devsar Police Station.

Taking serious note of his involvement in the case, the senior superintendent of police, Anantnag, initiated appropriate action, leading to the SPO's ► P11

# Women's Quota Amendment Bill defeated in Lok Sabha; Govt pledges to continue fight

298 members voted in support, 230 MPs voted against it

NEW DELHI: In a major setback to the government, a Constitution Amendment Bill to implement 33 per cent reservation for women in legislatures in 2029 and increase the number of Lok Sabha seats to 816 was defeated on Friday, with the ruling dispensation asserting that the struggle to give the rights to women will continue.

While 298 members voted in support of the Bill in Lok Sabha, 230 MPs voted against it. Out of 528 members who voted, the bill required 352 votes for a two-third majority.

According to the Constitution (131st Amendment) Bill, Lok Sabha seats were to be increased to 816 from the current 543 to "operationalise" the women's reservation law before the 2029 parliamentary polls, following a delimitation exercise based on the 2011 Census.

Seats were also to be increased in state and Union territory assemblies to accommodate 33 per cent reservation for women.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, senior ministers Rajnath Singh and Amit Shah, Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi were among those present during the voting.

This was for the first time a bill under the Modi government was defeated in Parliament.

After the legislation was defeated during the voting, Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla adjourned the House for the day and announced that it would meet again on Saturday.

The three-day special sitting was convened from April 16 to 18 for getting the Parliament's approval to the bill.

When the Constitution Amendment Bill was defeated, Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju conveyed to the Speaker that the government has no intention to move ahead with the two other bills -- the Delimitation Bill and the Union Territories Laws (Amendment) Bill -- as both the legislations were interlinked with the Constitution Amendment Bill.

Rijiju said the Opposition lost a historic opportunity to honour the country's women but the Modi government's struggle to give rights to women will continue.

"We will not take rest till we ensure that the country's women get reservation in legislatures," he said.

After the bill was defeated, Union Home Minister Amit Shah blamed Congress, TMC, DMK, and Samajwadi Party for not allowing its passage.

He said after the bill was defeated, the opposition parties were celebrating and raising victory cries which is ► P11



## Women Reservation Act 2023 comes into force

NEW DELHI: The Women Reservation Act 2023, which gives 33 per cent quota to women in legislatures, came into force on Thursday to operationalise the proposed amendment being discussed in Parliament. An official explained that bringing the law into force was essential as its proposed amendment will not have come into effect without that. The constitution amendment Bill became a law but did not become part of the Constitution as the government ► P11

## Govt notifies Women's Reservation Act in J&K

NEW DELHI: The Centre on Friday notified the implementation of the Women's Reservation Act 2023 which provides a 33 per cent quota for women in legislatures, Jammu and Kashmir and Union Territories (UTs).

In a notification issued for Jammu and Kashmir, the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) said, "In exercise of the powers conferred by sub-section (2) of section 1 of the Jammu and Kashmir ► P11

## Shah tears into Congress, allies

NEW DELHI: Slamming the Congress and its allies for the defeat of a Constitution amendment bill in Lok Sabha, Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Friday said their mind-set is neither in the interest of women, nor the country.

The bill which failed the LS test sought to implement a 33 per cent women's quota in legislative bodies before the 2029 Parliamentary polls.

"Rejecting the bill that would grant 33 per cent reservation to women, celebrating it, and raising victory cries over it was truly reprehensible and beyond imagination," Shah said in a message ► P11

## Border areas no longer country's edge, but its 1st villages of opportunity: LG

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

RAJOURI: Emphasizing that a nation is defined by its remotest village where our borders begin and our identity shines before the world, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Friday Border areas are no longer the nation's edge but its first village and foremost opportunity. "New commitment thrives and connection with mainstream has taken root," LG said.

He said that through the Border Area Development Programme under Vibrant Villages Programme, we are ensuring infrastructure and welfare schemes reach every border village.

"Under the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, India advances with renewed resolve. Border areas are no longer the nation's edge but its first village and foremost opportunity. New commitment thrives and connection with mainstream has taken root," the Lieutenant Governor said.



The Lieutenant Governor was speaking at a public gathering during his visit to vibrant village Sariah in Rajouri, where he inaugurated the Common Service Centre and initiated several development projects. These projects include Water Conservation Works under JSJB 2.0 and development of playgrounds in vibrant villages Sariah, Pukharni, Bhawani, Chapardhara and Namban. He also paid tributes to Brig. Mohamad Usman.

The Lieutenant Governor said that through the Border Area Development Programme under Vibrant Villages Programme, we are ensuring infrastructure and welfare schemes reach every border village.

"No map fully captures the true essence of our border villages, which reveal only lines. Within those lines, I see a vibrant society and steadfast families advancing the nation's progress," he said. The Lieutenant ► P11

## Pahalgam emerges stronger after April 22 terrorist attack

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

SRINAGAR: On April 22, 2025, the world was shocked when a dastardly terrorist attack ripped through the quaint Baisaran meadow in J-K's Pahalgam, snuffing out 26 innocent lives, mostly tourists.

The brutal attack carried out by Lashkar-e-Toiba cadres led to an exodus of tourists from Jammu and Kashmir, prompting the authorities to shut nearly 50 tourist spots before reopening some of those in a phased manner after a security audit.

Now, about a year down the line, the famed meadows of Pahalgam are once again buzzing with tourist activity,

with none ruing their decision to visit the 'Mini Switzerland' in Anantnag district that is overcoming the shadow of last year's terror attack.

"It feels really good to be here. I never imagined such vast plains at this altitude. We've been to Manali, Gangtok, and the Northeast, but we didn't expect such open grounds here. The security arrangements are excellent," Ashutosh Kosaria from Chhattisgarh said.

Coming from a state hounded by Left-Wing Extremism not so long ago, Kosaria understands the heavy presence of security forces in Pahalgam.

"We're from Chhattisgarh. We have seen ► P11

## Tulip garden sees over 50% visitors decline

SRINAGAR: The Indira Gandhi Memorial Tulip Garden, Asia's largest and a major tourist attraction here, witnessed a sharp decline in footfall this year, with visitors dropping by more than 50 per cent, officials said on Friday.

The garden had recorded its highest ever footfall last year, with 8.55 lakh visitors, they said.

This year, however, only 3.90 lakh visitors -- including about 1200 foreigners -- visited the garden, the officials said.

"This year, 3.90 lakh visitors visited the Tulip garden. Among them were 1222 foreigners, and 2.89 lakh domestic tourists," ► P11

## CM Omar unveils SCC Jersey, releases wildlife publication

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Friday unveiled the jersey of Sher-i-Kashmir Cricket Club (SCC) at a function held here.

The event was attended by Minister for Youth Services & Sports Satish Sharma, Advisor to the Chief Minister Nasir Aslam Wani and members of the club.

Appreciating the club's contribution to promoting cricket, the Chief Minister said that the government is committed to extending all possible support to encourage sports activities and nurture young talent across Jammu and Kashmir.



On the occasion, SCC President Aman Cheema highlighted the club's achievements, noting that it has participated in and won several tournaments. He added that the club is playing a positive role in engaging youth and steering them away from negative influences such as drug abuse by channelizing their energy into sports.

Earlier, the Chief Minister also launched a wildlife magazine titled 'Checklist of Mammals of Jammu and Kashmir, India'. A delegation of wildlife ecologists led by ► P11

## Admin bans inflammatory SM content for 2 months

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU: The administration on Thursday imposed a blanket prohibition on posting or sharing communally sensitive and inflammatory content on social media platforms across Jammu district for a period of 60 days, citing threats to public order and communal harmony.

It pointed out that social media platforms have been increasingly misused to spread communally provocative, false and inciting content, which has the potential to disturb public peace, cause communal tensions, and endanger lives and property.

"In exercise of the powers conferred under Section 163 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023 (BNSS), I hereby order that posting, uploading, sharing or forwarding any content -- text, image, video, audio, meme, graphic or reel -- that promotes enmity, hatred or ill-will between communities on grounds of religion, race, caste, community, language or region is strictly prohibited within the territorial jurisdiction of district Jammu," District Magistrate Dr Rakesh Minhas said.

The BNSS empowers the district magistrate to pass orders to ► P11

## J&K shines bright; Bags 3rd rank nationally in Mission Karmayogi

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU: Jammu & Kashmir has secured the third rank nationally under Mission Karmayogi during SĀDHANA Saptah, marking a major milestone in institutionalising continuous learning and competency-driven governance among the civil servants.

The recognition reflects the Union Territory's structured implementation of reforms under the National Programme for Civil Services Capacity Building (NPCSCB). With a focus on role-based capacity building, competency mapping and optimal use of the iGOT Karmayogi digital platform, J&K has shown measurable progress in



strengthening its administrative capacity. According to the official data, 2,01,962 officials from the UT have been ► P11

## Iran says Strait of Hormuz open; Trump backs move

TEHRAN/WASHINGTON: In a major breakthrough, Iran on Friday said that the Strait of Hormuz is "completely open" for all commercial vessels, a move welcomed by US President Donald Trump.

Trump, however, said the naval blockade against Iran will remain in "full force" until Tehran reaches an agreement with the US to end the war.

The announcement of the reopening of the vital waterway by Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi comes a day after President Trump announced a 10-day ceasefire between Lebanon and Israel, one of the key demands of Iran. "In line with the cease-

fire in Lebanon, the passage for all commercial vessels through the Strait of Hormuz is declared completely open for the remaining period of the ceasefire," Araghchi said in a post on X.

Araghchi, however, said the ships must sail "on the coordinated route as already announced" by the Ports and Maritime Organisation of Iran.

Minutes later, President Trump shared the announcement in a post on Truth Social.

"Iran has just announced that the Strait of Iran is fully open and ready for full passage. Thank you!" Trump said, referring to the ► P11

## Sinha flags off Shobha Yatra on Bhagwan Parshuram Ji Jayanti

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Friday flagged off a grand Shobha Yatra from Chanakya Chowk Parade, Jammu, to commemorate Bhagwan Parshuram Ji Jayanti.

The procession was organised by the Dogra Brahman Pratinidhi Sabha, celebrating the life and teachings of Bhagwan Parshuram, the sixth incarnation of Lord Vishnu.

Earlier, the Lieutenant Governor paid obeisance to Bhagwan Parshuram and prayed for peace, progress, and prosperity for one and all. Ved Prakash Sharma,



President Dogra Brahman Pratinidhi Sabha, and members of organising committee including Parshotam Chander Sharma, Chander Mohan Sharma, Soujanya Sharma, Surinder Sharma, B D Sharma, Er Rajesh and

Raman Sharma; heads of religious organisations, prominent citizens and people from different walks of life attended the flag off ceremony.

Yudhvir Sethi and Devyani Rana, ► P11

Jai Mata Di

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