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Jaishankar meets Putin in Moscow

India, Russia agree to expand cooperation in trade, energy

MOSCOW: India and Russia on Monday decided to further expand their cooperation in trade, energy and fertiliser supplies, as External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar met Russian President Vladimir Putin and held talks with his key interlocutors.

Jaishankar, here on a two-day visit, also co-chaired with First Deputy Prime Minister Denis Manturov a meeting of the India-Russia Inter-Governmental Commission (IRIGC) on Trade, Economic, Scientific, Technological and Cultural Cooperation.

These meetings - which come ahead of Putin's expected visit to New Delhi for the BRICS leaders' summit on September 12-13 - assume significance as India and Russia seek to deepen their economic engagement and expand co-operation in a range of areas.

In his meeting with Putin, Jaishankar conveyed Prime Minister Narendra Modi's greetings and a personal com-



munication to the Russian president.

"Prime Minister Modi looks forward to meeting you at the SCO summit, then welcoming you in India for the BRICS Summit, and ► P11



Sinha celebrates Raksha Bandhan with students

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

SRINAGAR: Lok Bhavan Jammu Kashmir on Monday hosted a special Raksha Bandhan celebrations for the students of Delhi Public School (DPS) Baramulla, at Srinagar.

As a part of the celebrations, the students tied sacred thread of Rakhi to the Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha and exchanged greetings.

The Lieutenant Governor called upon the students to carry forward the true spirit of Raksha Bandhan. He encouraged the young minds to spread the message of peace, love, unity and harmony.

Ahead of the Raksha Bandhan, which will be celebrated on August 28, 2026, the event offered the young students a unique opportunity ► P11

CM directs inquiry into minor's rape, death

Only 6.83 pc after 4 years: Omar defends Power Hike



■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Monday said the increase in electricity tariff was a compulsion for his government; however, he asserted that the 6.83 per cent hike was the lowest in recent years.

"Those pointing fingers at me should remember that they have also been in power at some point. During their (PDP-BJP coalition) tenure, the power tariff was raised by 14 per cent.

At that time, they did not see it as unjust. Four years earlier, there was a 15 per cent hike, and again, the BJP remained silent. We have only raised tariff by 6 per cent, and that too after four years," Abdullah told reporters here.

The chief minister justified the hike in light of rising inflation and prices of other goods.

"How much have inflation and prices gone up during this period? We increased the tariff at the lowest possible rates. We are not celebrating it; it was a compulsion. The more we reduce the (Transmission and Distribution) losses, the less we will have to resort to these measures," he added.

Abdullah explained that while his government is committed to providing 200 units of free electricity to poor and needy households, he never guaranteed that tariff rates would not rise.

"When did we say that the electricity tariff would not ► P11

KP employees seek enhanced security over recent threat

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU: Kashmiri Pandit government employees working in the Valley have expressed concern over fresh terror threats after posters allegedly containing names and personal details of some of them were circulated on social media, calling for enhanced security and an investigation into the alleged leak of sensitive information.

The threats, purportedly issued by a shadow group calling itself United Liberation Council (ULC), allegedly carries names, residential addresses and vehicle details of Kashmiri Pandit government employees.

In a letter addressed to the chief secretary, the All PM Package Employees Forum Kashmir said a purported threat poster, dated August 23 and allegedly issued by an outfit calling itself the United Liberation Council, had surfaced on social media, causing fear among employees.

Sunny Raina, a Kashmiri migrant employee recruited under the Prime Minister's (PM) Special Package and working in the Valley, said the latest threats have heightened apprehension among employees and their families.

"Recently, during the first week of August, similar ► P11



Doval lands in Beijing for border talks

BEIJING: National Security Advisor Ajit Doval arrived in Beijing on Monday for a two-day visit to take part in the Special Representative talks on the India-China boundary question with his Chinese counterpart and Foreign Minister Wang Yi.

The talks - scheduled for Tuesday - assume significance as they are ► P11

Land subsidence sparks evacuation of 3 families

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU: Three families comprising 10 members were evacuated as a precautionary measure after land subsidence and cracks in residential houses were reported in a village in Ramban district of Jammu and Kashmir, officials said on Monday.

The land subsidence at Kulthi Chakka Kundi in Tehsil Rajgarh, along the banks of the Chenab River, triggered panic among the local villagers, particularly in the wake of recent heavy rains that have affected several areas of the district, they said.

Administrative, revenue and rescue teams rushed to the affected area and shifted the affected families to safer locations. Tehsildar Rajgarh

'EVMs have no Internet, connectivity'

LUCKNOW: Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar on Monday said Indian electronic voting machines (EVMs) are manufactured by public sector companies and do not have internet, Bluetooth, or Wi-Fi connectivity.

During his two-day visit to Lucknow, Kumar interacted with students at the historic Colvin Taluqdars' College and discussed India's democratic system, the electoral process, the reliability of EVMs, and the importance of young voters, according to an official statement.

In response to questions about EVMs, the CEC emphasised that the ► P11

ISRO-Industry synergy to drive "space ambitions": Dr Jitendra

NEW DELHI: The BJP on Monday hit back at Congress over its charge that the Modi government is pursuing an "aggressive privatisation agenda" in the space sector, asserting that the expansion of private participation is enabling ISRO to focus on frontier missions while industry scales up manufacturing and launch capabilities.

The remarks came after Congress general secretary in-charge communications Jairam Ramesh accused the government of "strangulating and emasculating" the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and pursuing an aggressive privatisation agenda for the space programme just as it has for nuclear energy.

Ramesh claimed recent reports about ISRO's future role in India's space programme raised "legitimate concerns", given the capabilities built by the organisation over six decades.

MoS (Space) Jitendra Singh rejected Ramesh's criticism, saying India's space programme is "not being scaled back, but being scaled up", with ISRO focusing increasingly on frontier missions such as ► P11



Minor's rape, death in Kishtwar Tribal body urges intervention of NCST for action under SC/ST Act

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU: A tribal advocacy group has approached the National Commission for Scheduled Tribes, seeking invocation of the SC/ST Act in the case of a minor Gujjar girl's death during an abortion following a sexual assault, monitoring of the investigation, and compensation to her family.

The 15-year-old girl in Kishtwar district was allegedly raped by her teacher for months, resulting in her pregnancy and death during an abortion bid.

In a complaint filed through its member trustee Kabir Ahmed, the Tribal Gujjar Bakkarwal Welfare Foundation (TGBWF) urged the National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST) to take immediate cognisance of the case, and seek periodic progress reports from authorities until completion of the investigation.

On Friday, police arrested the accused Khalid Ahmed Sheikh, a Grade-II teacher and in-charge headmaster of a government middle school in Inderwal village, along with his brother, officials said.

The accused were booked under under Sections 61(2) (criminal conspiracy), 65(1) (rape of a woman below 16 years), 90 (death caused by an act intended to cause miscarriage), 91 (act intended to prevent a child from being born alive or to cause its death after birth) and 92 (causing the death of a quick unborn child by an act amounting to culpable homicide) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita.

Besides these, the FIR registered at Chatroo police station included Sections 4 (punishment for penetrative sexual assault), 6 (punishment for aggravated penetrative sexual assault), 8 (punishment for sexual assault), 10 (punishment for aggravated sexual assault) and 17 (punishment for abetment) of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act.

The TGBWF complaint pointed out that despite the deceased girl being a Gujjar, which is a notified Scheduled Tribe, and the accused not belonging to any scheduled community, the SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act has not been invoked in the case. It urged the NCST to direct the police to invoke provisions of the special law.

The foundation also sought an inquiry into ► P11

Sanjeev Sinha takes charge as ED & CEO AIIMS Jammu

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU: Prof (Dr) Sanjeev Sinha on Monday assumed charge as the new executive director and CEO of All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) Jammu, succeeding Prof (Dr) D N Sharma.

Sinha joined AIIMS Jammu on deputation from AIIMS New Delhi, bringing a rich blend of clinical expertise, academic experience and research orientation to the institution, a spokesperson of the institute said.

As professor in the Department of Medicine at AIIMS New Delhi, Sinha has a distinguished academic and clinical background, with experience spanning patient care, teaching, medical training and research. His expertise is expected to bring valuable academic and scientific perspective to AIIMS Jammu, the spokesperson said.

Under his leadership, AIIMS Jammu will be expanding and strengthening clinical services, enhancing the quality of medical education, promoting high-quality research and innovation, encouraging interdisciplinary academic collaboration and creating greater opportunities for faculty and students to engage in impactful research, he said.

Sinha's leadership ► P11

CM reviews plan to raise 714 high schools to K-12 composite schools

Abdullah reviews stray dog menace in Srg

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

SRINAGAR: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah today chaired a review meeting of the School Education Department at the Civil Secretariat here to review a comprehensive roadmap for strengthening access to senior secondary education and improving the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) at the higher secondary level in Jammu and Kashmir.

The meeting discussed a phased plan to upgrade 714 High Schools into K-12 composite schools, with focus on requirements of teaching and non-teaching staff, infrastructure, laboratories and other essential facilities.

The proposed upgradation is aimed at ensuring continuity in school education, expanding access to Classes XI and XII and reducing dropouts at the critical transition after Class 10, particularly in underserved and geographically remote areas.

The meeting also deliberated on better utilisation of existing human resources, strengthening academic facilities and improving the overall school network. The roadmap envisages a planned and requirement-based approach to expansion, besides coordination with the Government of India for necessary support under centrally sponsored schemes.

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah emphasised the need for a focused and need-based strategy to expand senior secondary education, ► P11

