



S Vice President JD Vance to join his wife in Greenland on Friday

P-7

Khushbu Sundar Shuts Down Rumours of Nayanthara Disrupting Mookuthi Amman 2 Shoot: 'She Is Professional'

P-10

Asia's largest Tulip Garden opens for public

Asia's largest tulip garden opened for the public today, marking the beginning of a new tourism season in the valley. The Indra Gandhi Memorial Tulip Garden was thrown open to the public by Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah. The garden was set up by Ghulam Nabi Azad, the then chief minister of the erstwhile state in

Probe ordered into AEE's unauthorised absence

The Public Works (R&B) Department has ordered an inquiry into the unauthorised absence of Punit Pal Singh, in-charge assistant executive engineer (mechanical) who remains under suspension. "It is hereby ordered that Punit Pal Singh, in-charge AEE, mechanical (under suspension) shall remain attached with the office of chief engineer, mechanical & hospital engineering department, Jammu, with immediate effect, till further orders," says an order

3 cops held after 'suspicious substances' found at traffic post

Three traffic policemen were taken into custody after "suspicious substances" were recovered from their post near Chenani-Nashri tunnel in Udhampur district. While police did not elaborate on what the substances were, locals who protested outside the traffic post late on Tuesday night claimed that the policemen were cooking meat. Chenani police received a complaint that some people had noticed some suspicious substances at a traffic police post near the

Mishra appointed to EAC-PM



NEW DELHI, MAR 26: Former ED Director Sanjay Kumar Mishra had been appointed by the Union government as a full-time member of the Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister (EAC-PM). Mishra, 65, served as the Enforcement Directorate (ED) chief till September 15, 2023 after the

GoC reviews security situation in Rajouri sector

General Officer Commanding (GOC), White Knight Corps, Lt Gen Navin Sachdeva visited Rajouri sector of Jammu on Wednesday and reviewed the security situation in the region. He commended troops for their professionalism in dealing with challenging conditions. "The GOC White Knight Corps visited the headquarters of Counter Insurgency Force

'Entity of concern'

India shreds USCIRF over demand to sanction RAW

NEW DELHI, MAR 26: In a strongly-worded rebuttal, India today said that it was the US religious freedom body USCIRF that should be designated internationally as an 'entity of concern' for its repeated 'pattern of biased and politically motivated assessments' and 'misrepresentation' of facts. The statement came hours after the US body's annual religious freedom report claimed that minorities in India continue to face deteriorating treatment. The panel's report also called for imposing sanctions on India's external intelligence agency R&AW over its alleged involvement in the "assassination" plots against 'Khalistani' separatists and extremists overseas. "We have seen the recently released 2025 Annual Report of the US Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF), which once again continued its pattern of issuing biased and politically motivated assessments," Ministry of External Affairs said, raising concerns on the authenticity of the body over such "agenda-based" claims. Indirectly calling the panel's report fake, India questioned if at all the USCIRF was even genuine in its work and concerns on religious freedom.

"The USCIRF's persistent attempts to misrepresent isolated incidents and cast aspersions on India's vibrant multicultural society reflect a deliberate agenda rather than a genuine concern for religious freedom," the foreign ministry said. Saying that the US religious freedom body is far from reality, New Delhi said, "It does not even expect the panel to engage with the truth. India is home to 1.4 billion people who are adherents to all religions known to mankind. However, we have no expectation that the USCIRF will engage with the reality of India's pluralistic framework or acknowledge the harmonious coexistence of its diverse communities," noted the foreign ministry. Labeling the US religious freedom body as "an entity of concern", India said, "Such efforts to undermine India's standing as a beacon of democracy and tolerance will not succeed. In fact, it is the USCIRF that should be designated as an entity of concern." Despite the US panel's recommendation, it is unlikely that the US government will sanction India's external intelligence agency R&AW for its alleged involvement in plotting the killings of extremists and terrorists overseas. This is because the panel's

views and recommendations are not binding on the government. In its current report, the US panel has recommended that India be designated as a "country of particular concern" over alleged violations of religious freedom and "impose targeted sanctions" against R&AW. It also alleged that Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the ruling BJP "propagated hateful rhetoric and disinformation against Muslims and other religious minorities". The USCIRF recommended to the US government to impose "targeted sanctions on individuals and entities, such as Vikash Yadav and RAW, for their culpability in severe violations of religious freedom by freezing their assets and/or barring their entry into the United States". The US has charged Yadav, a former Indian government official, in the alleged foiled plot to kill Khalistani separatist Gurbatwant Singh Pannun on American soil in 2023. In its recommendation, the USCIRF also called for designating India as a "country of particular concern" or CPC, for engaging in and "tolerating systematic, ongoing, and egregious religious freedom violations, as defined by the International Religious Freedom Act (IRFA)".

Hiranagar encounter

Ops enters 4th day; terrorists remain untraced

Himalayan Mail News JAMMU, MAR 26 Even as the multi-tier combing operation continued for the fourth consecutive day today in the woods of Hiranagar in Kathua district, security forces were yet to find any trace of the terrorists, said to be five in number. The terrorists were first sighted in Dolka woods of Sanyal village of Hiranagar by a couple on March 23 evening. There was a brief

exchange of fire between forces and terrorists the same day. The terrorists later fled the spot and forces were yet to re-establish any contact with them even as a massive search operation continues. Meanwhile, a local woman informed police yesterday that two men in Army uniform asked her for water while they were having food in Ding Amb area of the district. Acting on her information, an operation had been launched there too.

Judge cash discovery row

Legislature, judiciary not pitted against each other: Dhankhar

NEW DELHI, MAR 26: Vice-President and Rajya Sabha Chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar on Wednesday said the executive, legislature and judiciary were not pitted against each other and they had to function in tandem with checks and balances. He made the comments in Rajya Sabha a day after saying "things would have been different" if the mechanism for judicial appointments - referring to the National Judicial Appointments

Commission (NJAC) - had not been struck down by the Supreme Court. The reference to NJAC on Tuesday in the Upper House came amid a row over the discovery of wads of currency notes at the New Delhi home of Justice Yashwant Varma. Dhankhar had called a meeting of leaders of various political parties to discuss the fallout of the row and the way forward. "I need to indicate to the House that we yesterday had a very fruitful interaction on the issue that is agitating the minds of the public," he said. Leaders of various political parties including Leader of the House and Union minister Jagat Prakash Nadda and Leader

Maternity scheme severely underfunded: Sonia

NEW DELHI, MAR 26: Congress Parliamentary Party (CPP) chairperson Sonia Gandhi on Wednesday said the government's flagship programme to provide maternity benefits to pregnant women is "severely underfunded", resulting in a drastic fall in entitlements to beneficiaries. Raising the issue through a Zero Hour mention in the Rajya Sabha, she said Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY) has seen a drastic fall in the number of beneficiaries and asked the government why this was allowed to happen.

Gandhi said the National Food Security Act (NFSA), passed by Parliament in September 2013 under the leadership of the then prime minister Manmohan Singh in September 2013, has been the foundation for PM Garib Kalyan Yojana (PMGKY), which was launched during Covid-19 to provide foodgrains to poor families. PMGKY currently has 81 crore beneficiaries. Under NFSA, pregnant women were entitled to maternity benefit of Rs 6,000 per child, paid in two instalments. PMMVY was launched in 2017 to fulfil this entitlement. But under PMMVY, only Rs 5,000 is given for the first child and the benefits are extended to the second child only if it is a girl. "According to an informed analysis for 2022-23, about 68 per cent of pregnant women received

5 employees dismissed from service

Himalayan Mail News JAMMU, MAR 26 The government today dismissed from service five employees for their involvement in narcotics trade. According to officials, four of the dismissed employees included Abdul Rashid Bhat, gang coolie, irrigation & flood control division, Sumbal, Dilbag Singh, lineman, Jal Shakti (PHE) sub-division, Hiranagar, Gulzar Ahmed, assistant motorman, Hydraulic Division, Ramban,

Expect LoP to follow rules of procedure: LS Speaker

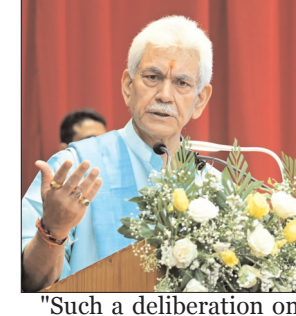
NEW DELHI, MAR 26: Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla on Wednesday asked Leader of the Opposition Rahul Gandhi to follow the rules of procedure that members are expected to observe to uphold the dignity of the House. It was not immediately clear what was the reason

CJ allocates distts, tribunals to judges

Himalayan Mail News JAMMU, MAR 26 J&K and Ladakh High Court Chief Justice Tashi Rabstan today issued an order reallocating administrative districts, tribunals, and authorities among judges. As per an order, Justice Sanjeev Kumar is allocated Srinagar district, MACT Srinagar, Special Tribunal, Srinagar, and One-Man Forest Authority and Budgam district. Justice Sindhu Sharma is allocated Jammu district, MACT Jammu, Spe

Committed to empower small, micro entrepreneurs: LG

Himalayan Mail News JAMMU, MAR 26 Expressing hope that MSMEs would meet new challenges and benefit from new opportunities, LG Manoj Sinha today said it was his resolve to empower small and micro entrepreneurs in J&K. "We stand committed to ensuring that our industry moves ahead with confidence and without fear or apprehension," the LG, who attended NITI Aayog's workshop on promotion of innovation, investment and industry in MSME sector at IIM Jammu, said.



In his inaugural address, he extended his felicitations to the NITI Aayog, IIM Jammu, and other stakeholders for bringing together policy makers, industry experts, entrepreneurs and thought leaders for the workshop aimed at exploring challenges and opportunities in three key sectors of Jammu & Kashmir's Economy - Textiles, Food Processing and Tourism. "Such a deliberation on reforms to create growth environment will have a wide-ranging impact on Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises in the Union Territory of India," the LG said and added that the communication between all stakeholders of MSME sector should be deepened, reforms should be seamless and policy makers and entrepreneurs should work as partners. He reiterated his resolve to empower Small and Micro Entrepreneurs of Jammu Kashmir. "Food processing remains an area where we need to improve our performance and boost infrastructure in tourism sector and accelerate development of new tourist destinations,"

he said. Sinha also spoke on the key policy interventions and institutional support extended by the government, under the guidance of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, in the last few years to promote local entrepreneurship and encourage industrial development in J&K. He said the incentives under the New Industrial Scheme had made significant strides in transforming Jammu & Kashmir's industrial landscape. The peace and favourable conditions also ensured more direct investment in tourism and hospitality sector of J&K, he said. "It is a matter of great pride for J&K that the handloom sector has been revived and through better market linkage, the products are being recognised throughout the globe. I am confident that our MSMEs in this sector will meet the new challenges and benefit from the new opportunities," he said. The LG also highlighted

HC adopts SOP on govt officials' court appearances

Himalayan Mail News JAMMU, MAR 26 The Chief Justice of High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh has adopted Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) as regards the personal appearance of government officials in court proceedings, as laid down by the apex court in the above mentioned case for being adhered in the High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh and by all courts under its jurisdiction. This SOP shall be applicable to all court proceedings involving the government in cases before this high court and all other courts acting under their respective appellate and/or original jurisdiction or proceedings related to contempt of court.

courts to frame guidelines/rules for summoning/appearance of government servants before the courts within their respective jurisdiction. Therefore, the Chief Justice of High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh, has adopted the SOP with regard to the personal appearance of government officials in court proceedings, as laid down by the apex court in the above mentioned case for being adhered in the High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh and by all courts under its jurisdiction. A notification issued by high court registrar general Shahzad Azeem said: "The Supreme Court has been pleased to issue the SOP with the direction to all high

Terror funding case

Court allows Er Rashid to attend Par in custody

NEW DELHI, Mar 26: The Delhi High Court has allowed Jammu and Kashmir MP Abdul Rashid Sheikh alias Er Rashid, arrested in a terror funding case, to attend the ongoing Parliament session 'in-custody' and rejected NIA's apprehension that he was a flight risk. A bench of Justices Chandra Dhari Singh and Anup Jairam Bhambhani directed the director general (prisons) that Rashid would be escorted by plain clothed policemen from

prison to Parliament on days of the Lok Sabha session between March 26 and April 4. The Baramulla MP, the bench said, would be handed over to the custody of the Parliament security or marshals, who would allow him to attend the proceedings and he could avail other facilities and amenities there. "While out to attend the Parliament session, the appellant (Rashid) shall not be entitled to use any cellular or landline phone or other communication device; nor shall he be entitled to have access to the internet by any mode," the bench's March 25 order said. Rashid, who was represented by senior advocate N Hariharan and advocate Vikhyat Oberoi, was directed not to interact with anyone out of jail, except within the Parliament precincts. He should not engage with or address the media in any manner, the court

'One Nation, One Election' need of hour: Kavinder

Himalayan Mail News JAMMU, MAR 26 Senior BJP leader and deputy CM Kavinder Gupta today emphasised the significance of the 'One Nation, One Election' initiative, stating that simultaneous elections across the country would not only streamline governance but would also save valuable public resources. "Holding Lok Sabha, Assembly, and local body elections simultaneously will ensure political stability, reduce the burden on exche-

quer, and allow governments to focus on development instead of being in election mode year-round," he said while addressing a programme at Fruit Mandi, Narwal, here. The programme was organised by Vegetable and Fruit Mandi Association in collaboration with BJP Trade & Industry Cell, JKUT. "Frequent elections lead to the model code of conduct

