



Why Isn't PM Sacking Education Minister Despite Repeated Paper Leaks, Asks Rahul

P-7

RJ Mahvash Says She Will Be Part Of India's Got Latent Season 2: 'Samay Asked Me If...'

P-10

Search operation launched

A massive search operation was today launched by security forces to track down the terrorists said to be operating in certain areas of Poonch district. While searches continued for several hours, forces could not find any trace of terrorists, officials said. On May 12, forces had foiled an infiltration bid from Mankote area of Mendhar, Poonch, and killed a suspected Pakistani terrorist.

Artillery shell found, destroyed

An artillery shell was today found and subsequently destroyed by security forces in a forward village in Jammu's Rajouri district. According to officials, locals in Dhanaka village of Nowshera sub-sector spotted the shell in the border area and informed security forces. Soon thereafter, a joint team of Army and police rushed to the spot and cordoned off the area, officials

Driver killed as truck falls into gorge

A truck today skidded off the road near Nachlana in Banihal area of Ramban district, resulting in the death of its driver. According to officials, the truck was on its way from Jammu to Srinagar when its driver lost control over it as a result of which it plunged into Bashlari nallah near Nachlana. The body of the driver was shifted by rescuers to a local hospital for medico-legal formalities, officials said. Police had taken cognizance of the incident.

Saxena approves wage reforms for Ladakh daily wagers



Himalayan Mail News JAMMU, MAY 17

Ladakh is all set to undergo one of the biggest reforms, with LG Vinai Kumar Saxena, approving the long-pending wage rationalisation

CNG prices hiked by Re 1

NEW DELHI, MAY 17: CNG prices were hiked by Re 1 per kg on Sunday, the second increase in rates in less than a week. CNG now costs Rs 80.09 per kg in the national capital, according to Indraprastha Gas Ltd, the country's biggest city gas firm. The rate hike comes within days of Rs 2 per kg increase in rates on Thursday. Rates of gas piped to household kitchens, called piped natural gas, however, remain unchanged. IGL said, "The retail selling price of CNG has been increased by Re 1/kg wef 6

India, Netherlands elevating ties to strategic partnership: Modi

17 agreements inked

THE HAGUE, MAY 17: Elevating their relationship to the strategic partnership level following extensive talks between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Dutch counterpart Rob Jetten amid shifting global geopolitics, the two countries inked 17 agreements.



Modi began his two-day visit to The Hague on Friday as part of four-nation trip to Europe that is aimed at ramping up bilateral ties in a range of key areas. The two countries inked 17 agreements to boost cooperation in defence, critical minerals and other key sectors.

The agreements were signed after a meeting between Modi and Rob Jetten. The prime minister suggested that there should be convergence of the Netherlands' expertise and India's "speed and skill" in every sector. "There has been significant progress in India-Netherlands ties in last one decade," Modi said in his televised opening remarks during the talks with Dutch PM Jetten. Netherlands is one of India's largest trading destinations in Europe, with bilateral trade touching USD 27.8 billion in 2024-25. The European nation is India's fourth largest investor with cumulative foreign direct investment of USD 55.6 billion. In his remarks, the prime minister said India considers the Netherlands among

its most important partners as the historical and people to people relations between the two sides are "deep" rooted. "Democratic values, market economy and responsible behavior are part of our common approach. Our cooperation in areas of Water, healthcare and education has been making the lives of our people better," he said. Modi also highlighted India's economic growth. The prime minister suggested that there should be convergence of the Netherlands' expertise and India's

"speed and skill" in every sector.

"We need to take our cooperation in areas of innovation, investment, sustainability and defence to new heights. Under this common vision, we are taking India-Netherlands relations to the level of strategic partnership," Modi said. In his comments, Jetten also highlighted various key aspects of growing ties between the two countries and announced elevating the relations to the level of strategic partnership. Ahead of the bilateral talks, PM Modi, along with Jetten, interacted with prominent CEOs of leading Dutch companies across various sectors such as energy, ports, health, agriculture, and technology, among others. Modi invited Dutch companies to explore opportunities in India, particularly in maritime, renewable energy, digital technologies,

Cont. on P9 >

LG completes self-enumeration, urges citizens to do their part

Himalayan Mail News JAMMU, MAY 17



LG Manoj Sinha today completed his self-enumeration, marking the beginning of House Listing & Housing Census (HLO) operations in the UT of Jammu & Kashmir.

"Census 2027 assumes historic significance as it is India's first fully digital and paperless census integrating advanced digital technologies, mobile-based data collection systems and self-enumeration mechanisms," he said. "The exercise is aimed at ensuring greater efficiency, transparency, accuracy and real-time monitoring of operations," the LG added.

"Census 2027 carries special significance for the UT in view of urban expansion, migration trends, expansion of municipal jurisdictions and evolving developmental priorities. It will generate reliable and granular datasets essential for evidence-based governance, targeted welfare delivery and long-term planning," he said. Self-Enumeration period from May 17 to May 31 will collect information regarding several key aspects of the housing and conditions of buildings. Questions in this phase will cover aspects such as housing conditions, household assets, amenities and facilities, access to sanitation and drinking water, type of construction, communication and transport facilities, availability of electricity and internet. The second phase, which is population enumeration, will be conducted in February 2027 in normal areas while in snow-bound and

non-synchronous areas of Jammu & Kashmir will be conducted earlier in September 2027 as per notified timelines with separate operational arrangements and logistics planning. This phase will collect demographic and socio-economic information relating to population, age, gender, literacy, occupation, migration, marital status, disability, fertility and other demographic indicators. Extensive preparatory activities have already been initiated across the Union Territory in coordination with the Office of the Registrar. Cont. on P9 >

Prez approves increasing SC judge strength from 34 to 38

NEW DELHI, MAY 17: President Droupadi Murmu has promulgated an ordinance increasing the number of judges in the Supreme Court to 37 - excluding the Chief Justice of India (CJI).



The gazette notification stated the "Parliament is not in session and the President is satisfied that the circumstances exist which render it necessary for her to take immediate action". The ordinance is called the Supreme Court (Number of Judges) Amendment Ordinance, 2026. The ordinance was promulgated in accordance with the powers of the President under Article 123 of the Constitution. The ordinance would be placed in both Houses of the Parliament when it convenes. It would cease to operate if six weeks expire without any resolution passed on it after

the reassembly of the Parliament or if resolutions are passed in both Houses of the Parliament disapproving the ordinance. The President could also withdraw the ordinance at any time. The current ordinance has amended Section 2 of the Supreme Court (Number of Judges) Act, 1956 to replace the word 'thirty-three' with 'thirty-seven'. The promulgation has happened nearly two weeks after the Union Cabinet approved the proposal to increase the number of Supreme Court judges. Cont. on P9 >

Army conducts training capsule for VDGs

Himalayan Mail News JAMMU, MAY 17

Ahead of the forthcoming Shri Amarnathji Yatra, Army organised a comprehensive training capsule for Village Defence Groups (VDGs) from Kabbi, Gandhri, Khatter, Mughala and Bhatni villages of Ramban district. The training was aimed at enhancing local preparedness, strengthening coordination with security forces and fostering a secure environment for the smooth conduct of the annual pilgrimage.

Cont. on P9 >

'Diplomatic deadlock' US offers 'no tangible concessions' to Iran's blueprint to end war

TEHRAN, MAY 17: Laying bare a deepening diplomatic gridlock, reports said the United States had failed to make any concrete concessions in its latest response to Iran's proposed agenda for negotiations to end the war.

Dismantling the specifics of Washington's diplomatic framework, reports said Washington had presented a five-point list, which included a demand for Iran to keep only one nuclear site in operation and transfer its stockpile of highly enriched uranium to the United States. Reports revealed a stark financial impasse, noting that the US also refused to release "even 25 per cent" of Iran's frozen assets abroad or pay any reparations for the damage inflicted on Iran during the war, which broke out on February 28. Adding to the friction, the reports added that the US had conditioned the cessation of hostilities on all fronts on the start of negotiations. Offering a scathing critique of the ongoing diplomatic back-and-forth, re-

ports said, "The United States, offering no tangible concessions, wants to obtain concessions that it failed to obtain during the war, which will lead to an impasse in the negotiations." In its proposal, Iran had called for an end to the war on all fronts, including Israel's campaign in Lebanon, as well as a halt to the US naval blockade on Iranian ports in place since April 13. Seeking a total dismantling of Washington's economic stranglehold, the Cont. on P9 >

At UN, India flags concerns over targeting of vessels in Hormuz

UNITED NATIONS, MAY 17: Targeting commercial shipping, endangering civilian crew and impeding freedom of navigation in the Strait of Hormuz is "unacceptable", India's Permanent Representative to the UN Parvathaneni Harish said. Harish's remarks at a special meeting of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (UNECOSOC) on safeguarding energy and supply flows came days after an India-flagged commercial vessel came under attack off the coast of Oman. Omani authorities res-

cued all 14 crew members of the vessel sailing from Somalia, but it was not immediately known who carried out the strike. In a post on X, Mr. Harish said that at the UNECOSOC meeting, he shared India's approach to the recent energy and fertiliser crisis caused by the West Asia conflict. "A combination of short-term and structural measures alongside international cooperation are essential to respond to the crisis," he said. "Reiterated that targeting of commercial shipping, endangering civilian crew and

impeding freedom of navigation in the Strait of Hormuz, are unacceptable. International law in this regard must be fully respected," he added. The attack on the India-flagged vessel on May 13 took place amid the fragile situation in the Strait of Hormuz, a narrow waterway close to the coast of Oman through which roughly one-fifth of the world's energy supplies pass. It has been severely disrupted by the conflict in West Asia that started on February 28, with the U.S. Cont. on P9 >

Power outages due to reduced water discharge in Chenab: JPDCL

Himalayan Mail News JAMMU, MAY 17

JPDCL today said that in view of the reduced water discharge in the rivers of Chenab basin, power generation had declined significantly, resulting in a widened gap between power availability and demand. Consequently, several areas of Jammu experienced outages last night, it said. Jammu Power Distribution Corporation Limited Cont. on P9 >

'Recipe for ecological disaster' Congress opposes Nicobar project, writes to Def Min

NEW DELHI, MAY 17: Congress on Sunday wrote to defence minister Rajnath Singh opposing the Great Nicobar Island Project, calling it a "recipe for ecological disaster" and urging the government to consider alternative defence infrastructure proposals with lower environmental costs. In his letter, Congress leader Jairam Ramesh argued that while strengthening India's strategic and military capabilities was essential, the Great Nico-

bar project in its current form was being justified on "overriding security considerations" despite being "essentially a commercial venture" that could severely damage the region's fragile ecology and tribal rights. Sharing the letter on X, the Congress leader said, "After writing to the Union minister of environment, forests, & climate change and the Union minister of tribal affairs, I have written to the Raksha Mantri on the Great Nicobar Island Project." Ramesh, a former environment minister, said the government had issued a press note titled 'The Great Nicobar Island Project: FAQs' on May 1. He claimed the document presented a "completely false picture" of the environmental clearance process and misrepresented compliance with provisions of the Forest Rights Act, 2006. "On May 10, 2026, I had written to the union minister Cont. on P9 >

China blocks Taiwan from WHA despite US, EU backing

TAIPEI, (TAIWAN), MAY 17: Even as Taiwan enjoys the backing of the US and EU, China has once again blocked it from global health forums. "Taiwan has once again been excluded from the World Health Assembly (WHA), marking the 10th consecutive year that Taipei has been denied participation due to pressure from China," reports said. The 79th WHA, the decision-making body of the World Health Organization (WHO), is scheduled to take place in Geneva. Taiwanese Foreign Minister Lin Chia-lung said Taipei did not receive an invitation to attend the event, blaming China's political pressure for the continued exclusion. Taiwan has long argued that its absence from the WHO weakens global health cooperation, especially given its experience in disease prevention and public health management. Despite the United States formally withdrawing from the WHO earlier this year, Washington reiterated its support for Taiwan's inclusion in international organisations. Cont. on P9 >

A spokesperson for the US Department of State stated that Taiwan's knowledge and resources could contribute significantly to addressing major global challenges. The US withdrawal from the WHO followed repeated criticism by President Donald Trump, who accused the organisation and WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus of mishandling the COVID-19 pandemic and being overly influenced by China. Trump also alleged corruption within the WHO Cont. on P9 >

Salaries of 4 ACDs withheld

Himalayan Mail News JAMMU, MAY 17

The government has withheld the salaries of four additional district programme coordinators (AD-PCs)/assistant commissioners development (ACDs) over poor performance in the implementation of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act during the first quarter of 2026-27. According to an order issued by secretary, rural development & panchayati raj, Mohammad Aijaz Asad, a review of the district-wise performance under MGN Cont. on P9 >

Kavinder highlights role of civil society in nation-building

Himalayan Mail News JAMMU, MAY 17

Himachal Pradesh Governor Kavinder Gupta has said that effective leadership is not merely about holding a position but about carrying people along, understanding the needs of society and becoming an instrument of positive change. Addressing Club Leadership Seminar organised by Rotary District here, he expressed satisfaction over the participation of representatives from Jammu, Punjab, Himachal Pradesh and Delhi, saying that 'such turnout reflects a deep commitment to service, leadership and social dedication'. Commending Rotary International's guiding principle of 'Service Above Self', Cont. on P9 >



Gupta described Rotary not merely as an organisation but as a global movement devoted to humanitarian service. He lauded Rotary's contributions across education, Cont. on P9 >