

**IN BRIEF**

**LG, CM extend greetings on Mahavir Jayanti**

**JAMMU:** Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha has greeted the people on the auspicious occasion of Mahavir Jayanti, which will be celebrated tomorrow.

In a message, the Lieutenant Governor has said: "On the auspicious occasion of Mahavir Jayanti, I extend my hearty greetings and best wishes to all.

Bhagwan Mahavir's profound teachings of Ahimsa (non-violence), Satya (truth), compassion, and humility serve as a guiding light for humanity.

Let us, on this auspicious day, rededicate ourselves to the ideals of Bhagwan Mahavir and resolve to work selflessly for the upliftment of the downtrodden and the collective welfare of society."

Meanwhile, CM Omar Abdullah extended warm greetings to the people on the auspicious occasion of Mahavir Jayanti, wishing them happiness, peace and prosperity.

In his message, the Chief Minister said that Jammu and Kashmir has a rich legacy of celebrating festivals and sacred occasions in an ► P11

**Anantnag ADC suspended pending inquiry**

**SRINAGAR:** The Jammu and Kashmir Administration on Monday placed the Anantnag Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) pending an enquiry.

"Pending enquiry into his conduct, Sundeeep Singh Bali, JKAS, Additional Deputy Commissioner, Anantnag, is hereby placed under suspension, with immediate effect in terms of Rule 31 of Jammu and Kashmir Civil Services (Classification, Control and Appeal) Rules, 1956," read an order issued by the General Administration Department.

According to the order, during the period of his suspension, Bali shall remain attached to the office of ► P11

**Six IAS, JKAS officers transferred**

**JAMMU:** The Jammu and Kashmir Government on Monday ordered transfers and postings of six IAS and a JKAS officers.

As per an order issued by the General Administration Department, Nazim Zai Khan, IAS, has been posted as Director, Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs, Kashmir, while Dr Sagar Doifode Dattatray, IAS, has been appointed as Special Secretary in the Agriculture Production Department and will also hold additional charge of Mission Director, HADP and JKICP.

Shreya Singhal, IAS, Managing Director, ► P11

## India free from Naxals: Amit Shah declares in Lok Sabha

**NEW DELHI:** Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Monday declared that the country has become free from Naxals with the apex body of the Maoists and the central structure almost completely dismantled, and accused the Congress of doing "nothing" to end the long spell of violence perpetrated by the ultras.

Replying to the debate in the Lok Sabha on 'Efforts to free the country from left-wing extremism (LWE)', Shah also alleged that Congress leader Rahul Gandhi was seen multiple times in public with sympathisers of Naxals and even posted videos "sympathetic" to the Maoists from his social media handle.

Targeting the Congress, the Home Minister claimed that former prime minister Indira Gandhi had accepted the support of the Naxals in an election in the 1970s in then undivided Andhra Pradesh and remained "influenced" by the Maoist ideology. "Experts say without the support of those in power, the



Red Corridor could not have been created," he said, referring to the region affected by Naxalism across Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Odisha, Maharashtra, Kerala, West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana.

The debate was held a day before the deadline declared by Shah for the elimination of Naxal violence.

Last year, Shah had announced that the LWE would end in the country by March 31, 2026, and a major operation had been organised against the Naxals. Giving details of the suc-

cess achieved by the security forces against the Naxals, the Home Minister said all members of the state committees of Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, and Chhattisgarh have surrendered and of the four remaining in Odisha, one has surrendered and three have been killed.

He said in Telangana, six have surrendered, three have been killed and now not a single one remains there.

"Their Politburo and central structure have been almost completely dismantled. Our goal was a Naxal-free India by March 31. The country will be informed once ► P11

## 'Vande Mataram' is our identity, strength; not just verse, but civilizational essence: LG

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

**JAMMU:** J&K Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha said on Monday that "Vande Mataram" is the country's identity, strength, and vow.

"Vande Mataram is our identity, strength, and vow. It is not just verses but a profound experience woven into our civilization's fabric. Vande Mataram singing and related events revives memories of immortal martyrs, honours their sacrifices, and renews our commitment to India's glory," the Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha said this on Monday.

He called upon every section of society to share one dream: making India the world's greatest nation.

"We must unite to realize it. When every citizen of J&K UT dedicates themselves to building a developed India, I believe that collective spirit will become an unstoppable force," the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor was speaking at the closing ceremony of Special Phase marking the 150 years of Vande Mataram, at Abhinav Theatre, Jammu. The Special Phase organised from 23rd



## Sinha assents to 3 Bills passed by LA

**JAMMU:** Secretary, Legislative Assembly, Manoj Kumar Pandit today informed the House that the Lieutenant Governor has assented to three Bills passed by Legislative Assembly (LA).

Informing the House, the Secretary read, "The House is informed that the bills namely Jammu and Kashmir Appropriation Bill 2026 (LA Bill No. 4 of 2026), Jammu and Kashmir Appropriation Bill 2026 (LA Bill No. 5 of 2026) and Jammu and Kashmir Appropriation Bill 2026 (LA Bill No. 6 of 2026), passed by Legislative Assembly have been assented to by the Lieutenant Governor on 27th of March 2026".

March to 30th March 2026 to commemorate Shaheed Diwas and honour the great martyrs of the freedom struggle, whose immense sacrifices paved the way for India's independence.

The Lieutenant Governor emphasised that the devotion and fervour in Jammu Kashmir towards Vande Matram, reflects how this Union Territory has shed painful chapters, embracing the ideals we have toiled for over the last five-six years.

"Under the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Jammu Kashmir has been integrated into the national mainstream, setting new benchmarks in development and showcasing profound patriotism through pivotal events like Vande Mataram and Har Ghar Tiranga," the Lieutenant Governor said.

The nation witnessed Jammu Kashmir's stellar contribution during the previous phases of Vande Mataram @150 years commemorative event. In the first phase (November 7-14, 2025), 9 of India's top 10 performing districts were from UT, with Kishtwar at Number 1. In the second ► P11

## LeT handler nabbed in UP; remanded to 5-day custody

**NEW DELHI:** The Special Cell of Delhi Police has arrested a suspected Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) handler, Shabir Ahmed Lone, from the Ghazipur area here, officials said on Monday.

After his arrest, he was produced before a court, which sent him to five days of police custody.

Terming Lone as a "hardcore and highly-trained terrorist," the police said that he reportedly established links with handlers operating on behalf of Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI).

"Lone, also known by aliases Raja and Kashmiri, is a resident of Srinagar in Jammu and Kashmir and was allegedly operating as the handler of a recently busted module involved in pasting anti-national posters across multiple locations in

Delhi and Kolkata," a senior police officer said.

According to the officer, a team from the New Delhi Range of the Special Cell arrested Lone on March 29 in connection with the LeT module that had recently been unearthed in the metro poster case on February 22.

"During the arrest, police recovered multiple foreign currencies and other incriminating material from his possession. These included approximately 2,300 units of Bangladeshi Taka, 1,400 units of Nepalese currency, 5,000 units of Pakistani currency, and 3,000 units of Indian currency," they said.

A Nepalese SIM card was also seized, raising suspicions about cross-border communication and operational coordination. ► P11

## Private members' bills assessed on merits, not opposed routinely: CM

**'Indiscriminate felling of walnut trees not allowed'**

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

**JAMMU:** Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Monday said the government does not oppose any private members' bills without due consideration, emphasising that all proposals are examined in detail before a view is taken.

Opposing a private member's bill tabled by Congress legislator Nizam-ud-Din Bhat in the Assembly seeking equitable opportunity of employment in the civil services, Abdullah said remarks made during the discussion could give an impression that bills are not read and are opposed routinely without application of mind, which he de-



scribed as "somewhat unfair". "It may appear as if we pick up a slip marked 'oppose' and stand up to reject a bill, but that is not the case," the chief minister said. He said whenever a ► P11

## Omar tables 7 CAG Reports

**JAMMU:** Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, who also holds the Finance portfolio, on Monday laid on the Table of the House a series of key audit and financial documents during the ongoing Budget Session of the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly.

The Chief Minister tabled seven reports of the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India covering multiple sectors and audit categories. ► P11

## Govt notifies Secretariat Service Recruitment Rules

**JAMMU:** The Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha has notified introducing the Jammu and Kashmir Secretariat (Subordinate) Service Recruitment Rules, 2026, establishing a comprehensive legal and administrative framework governing subordinate staff in the Civil Secretariat.

As per the notification, the rules have been framed under the proviso to Article 309 of the Constitution of India and shall come into force from the date of their publication in the ► P11

## J-K transitioned to 100 per cent e-challenging system: Govt

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

**JAMMU:** Jammu and Kashmir government on Monday informed the state assembly that traffic enforcement agencies in the Union Territory have fully transitioned to a 100 per cent e-challenging system, with over 52,000 challans issued in 2025.

In a written reply to the National Conference MLA Ali Mohammad Sagar, Minister for Transport Satesh Sharma said, "The number of e-challans rose from 40,197 in 2024 to 52,543 in 2025. Similarly, vehicles seized increased sharply from 429 to 1,528 during the same period in Jammu and Kashmir."

Traffic enforcement agencies have shifted to a 100 per cent e-challenging system, he said.

According to the minister, driving licences suspended stood at 2,259 in 2024 and 1,641 in 2025, while the number of blacklisted vehicles increased from 6,340 to 10,439.

He said that registration certificates (RCs) cancelled rose from 1,040 in 2024 to 1,192 in 2025, while route permits cancelled increased from 173 to 300.

Sharma also said that to ensure the sale of standardised and BIS-marked helmets, the Legal Metrology Department inspected 218 sellers, booked 69 cases and seized 4,750 helmets, he informed ► P11.

## CB files chargesheet in three fraud cases

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

**JAMMU:** The Special Crime Wing (SCW) of the Crime Branch has filed chargesheets against four accused in three separate cases involving a chit fund fraud, a fake government job racket, and criminal conspiracy in Jammu and Doda districts, an official said on Monday.

A chargesheet has been filed in the 13th Finance Commission Court, Jammu, against Pawan Kumar Gupta, who has allegedly duped multiple victims of over Rs 56.89 lakh through an illegal chit fund scheme in 2023, the official said. He said another chargesheet has been filed

against Ashish Bhandari for allegedly cheating a complainant of Rs 7.5 lakh on the false promise of a government job in the Forest Department.

The accused fabricated appointment orders and used forged documents, including cheques of his deceased mother, the official said, adding the chargesheet has been presented before the Additional Sessions Judge (Anti-Corruption Court), Jammu.

Two more accused -- Tariq Rasool Sheikh and Shair Mohd -- were chargesheeted for impersonation and cheating multiple victims on the pretext of providing government jobs and fraudulently collecting approximately Rs 10 to 13 lakh ► P11

## 9 Private Members bills introduced; Temple Protection among 2 rejected

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

**JAMMU:** Nine Members introduced Private Member bills in the Legislative Assembly (LA) today, of which six bills were withdrawn by Legislators after assurances from the Government and two were rejected by voice voting.

Legislator, Qaysar Jamshaid Lone introduced a bill in House which read, "A Bill to amend the Cooperative Societies Act, 1989 (LA Private Members Bill No. 1 of 2025)".

Similarly, Legislator Mir Saifullah introduced a bill in House which reads, "A Bill to make it obligatory on the part of Private Educational institutions to provide reservation to Children of Below poverty Line and Antyodaya

Anna Yojana Families in Agriculture Colleges, Para Medical Colleges, Law Colleges and Skill Development Institutions (LA Private Members Bill No. 6 of 2025)".

Likewise, MLA Nizam-ud-Din Bhat introduced Bill which reads, "A bill to provide for equitable opportunities of employment in the Civil Services in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir keeping in view its complex, socio-economic, geographical, ethnic, linguistic concerns and matters connected therewith and identical thereto (LA Private Members Bill No. 11 of 2025)".

Legislator, Altaf Ahmad Wani also introduced the Bill which reads, "A Bill to amend the Jammu and Kashmir Preservation ► P11

## Phase one of Census 2027 to have a set of 33 questions for citizens: Govt

**NEW DELHI:** The government has notified a set of 33 questions to be asked during the first phase of Census 2027 -- Housing Listing and Housing Operations (HLO) -- a month-long exercise to be conducted between April 1 and September 30 as per schedules finalised by states and Union Territories, a top official said on Monday.

The Registrar General and Census Commissioner of India, Mrityunjay Kumar Narayan, said, according to a January 22 notification, enumerators will collect details such as building number (municipal or local authority or



number), census house number, and the predominant materials used for the floor, walls, and roof. They will also record the use and condition

and sex of the head of the household, whether the head belongs to a Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribe or other category, ownership status of the house, number of dwelling rooms and the number of married couples in the household, he said.

Enumerators will also gather information on amenities and assets, including the main source and availability of drinking water, source of lighting, access to and type of latrine, wastewater outlet, availability of bathing and kitchen facilities, LPG/PNG connection, and the primary cooking fuel, Narayan ► P11

## PM should use global ties to control West Asia war: Omar

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

**JAMMU:** Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Monday said India can play a meaningful role in de-escalation in West Asia, given Prime Minister Narendra Modi's strong relations with the warring countries and their neighbours.

He said Pakistan was leveraging ties with Iran and the United States, and that any effort towards ending the war should be welcomed. "As I said in the House (Assembly), we would like the war to end as soon as possible. The role that the prime

minister can play may not be possible for anyone else because of his good relations with all these countries," Abdullah told reporters on the sidelines of a function here.

He, however, said any escalation would not be easy to manage.

"Any such move by US President Donald Trump, despite the long history of Iran resisting external domination, would not be easy," the chief minister said.

Asked about Pakistan mediating in the war, he said, "I will simply say that if any country can play a role in preventing this war, no one should have any objection to

it." He added, "I will repeat what I said... our prime minister has good and close relations with all countries -- whether it is Israel, the United States, Iran, or the countries around Iran. If those relationships can be used to make some progress and help ease the situation, it would be a good thing."

Abdullah said attacks by terror groups like Lashkar-e-Taiba and Jaish-e-Mohammed in India, as suggested by a report from the United States, are not unlikely.

Meanwhile, he asserted that any efforts to ► P11

## Two BSF personnel injured in assault

**JAMMU:** Two BSF personnel were injured after they were allegedly attacked by some locals in a village in Samba district of Jammu and Kashmir in the early hours of Monday, officials said.

The incident occurred around 1.30 am when the two, an inspector and a sub-inspector of the Border Security Force (BSF), had gone for some investigation to Gujjar Basti Dwarakapuri in the Supwala area, the officials said. ► P11