

**"To know how much there is to know is the beginning of learning to live."**

—Dorothy West

*Inking the Truth*

## PM highlights significance of Buddha relics

**NEW DELHI:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday hailed the inauguration of the 'Sacred Exposition of the Holy Relics of the Tathagata' in Leh, and said it offers a valuable opportunity for people from across Ladakh to pay their respects.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Friday inaugurated a sacred holy relics exposition of Tathagata Buddha and the 2569th Buddha Purnima celebrations in Leh during his two-day visit to Ladakh.

"It is a matter of immense delight that yesterday, on the occasion of Buddha Purnima, the 'Sacred Exposition of the Holy Relics of the Tathagata' was inaugurated in Leh," PM Modi said in a post on 'X'.

The prime minister said these revered relics are linked to the Piprahwa Stupa in Kapilavastu and were excavated in the closing years of the nineteenth century. They embody the enduring teachings of Lord Buddha, he said.

PM Modi said this exposition will continue ► P11

## Soldiers' valour marked Op Sindoor a golden chapter in military history: DM



**NEW DELHI:** Defence Minister Rajnath Singh has paid humble tributes to the Indian Defence Forces whose unmatched valour and indomitable spirit marked Operation Sindoor as a golden chapter in India's military history while underscoring Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led Government's unwavering resolve to eliminate terrorism through decisive action. He was addressing an event 'Shaurya' organised in New Delhi on Saturday in the run-up to the first anniversary of Operation Sindoor.

Defence Minister commended the valour, dedication and patriotism of the soldiers, and stated that their ethos of Nation First & Service Before Self have defined India's military traditions from ancient times to contemporary operations such as Op Sindoor. He added that the valour of the Defence Forces extends beyond the battlefield as they provide humanitarian assistance as first responders during natural disasters within the country &

abroad. "Our soldiers use weapons to protect their people, and deliver food & medicines to those in need during the times of crises. This is the defining characteristic of our Defence Forces," he said.

The event was a unique confluence of art and valour with top defence officials, hundreds of personnel and noted artists such as Padma Shri awardees Anup Jalota and Kailash Kher, Harshdeep Kaur and Manoj Muntashir in attendance.

Rajnath Singh highlighted that valour and art are often viewed as opposites, but they, in fact, complement each other. He described them as powerful expressions emanating from human emotions.

Defence Minister underlined that the marching songs by military bands unify soldiers, with music transforming individual identity into collective strength. This sentiment, he said, is deeply embedded in the ethos of the ► P11

## Bridge collapse: 3 bodies, 1 injured pulled from rubble; probe ordered

### LG, CM express grief over loss of lives

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

**JAMMU:** Rescue workers pulled out three bodies and an injured person from the debris of a partially collapsed old bridge during a 12-hour search operation on the outskirts of Jammu, officials said on Saturday.

Three bodies were recovered and two persons were rescued in injured condition from the debris following a 12-hour-long search operation, after a portion of an under-repair bridge collapsed in Bantabal area late Friday, officials said.

Meanwhile, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah today ordered an inquiry into the

bridge collapse. He directed a thorough inquiry into the incident to ascertain the cause and fix responsibility, while wishing a speedy recovery to the injured.

Earlier, Lt Governor Manoj Sinha and Chief Minister Omar Abdullah expressed anguish over the death of three workers in the incident.

"Extremely anguished by the loss of lives due to bridge collapse in Bantabal, Jammu. I offer my deepest condolences to bereaved families and prayers for the speedy recovery of the injured," the Office of the Lt Governor said in a post on X.

The L-G also directed the district administration to pro-

vide necessary assistance to the affected families.

The chief minister expressed deep sorrow over the death of three workers in the incident and extended heartfelt condolences to the bereaved families, according to the chief minister's office.

Meanwhile, Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Kumar Choudhary rushed to the spot at midnight and ordered the suspension of two engineers. The government has also constituted a committee to probe the incident.

According to the officials, labourers were carrying out retaining wall and foundation-laying work on the bridge, which was damaged ► P11

## MP Rashid's father airlifted to AIIMS Delhi

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

**SRINAGAR:** The ailing father of Lok Sabha MP Sheikh Abdul Rashid was airlifted to New Delhi on Saturday for advanced medical treatment at the AIIMS.

"The father of Member of Parliament from Baramulla Rashid, also known as Engineer Rashid, has been shifted to AIIMS Delhi for advanced medical care," said Inam Un Nabi, chief spokesperson of Rashid's Awami Ithihaad Party (AIP).

He said Rashid's father, Khazir Mohammad Sheikh, who has been undergoing treatment at SMHS ► P11

**100-DAY NASHA MUKT JK ABHIYAAN**

**STOP DRUGS**

**DAY 22**

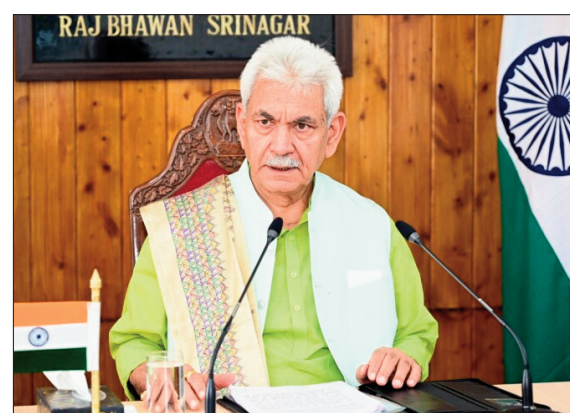
The EARTH NEWS joins with the campaign launched by Honourable Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha Ji to eradicate drug menace from union territory of J&K.

## LG: Drug victims to get 3-yr rehabilitation monitoring

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

**SRINAGAR:** The Jammu and Kashmir administration is working on a three-year monitoring programme for rehabilitation of drug abuse victims, while mulling stringent measures, including the cancellation of driving licenses and recommending revocation of passports of the peddlers, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha said here on Saturday.

The LG also said that he believes that the drug trafficking in Jammu and Kashmir has a direct link with terrorism.



"Some drug traffickers might be building narco palaces, becoming economically prosperous. But ultimately, most of the money ends up fuelling terrorism

and radicalisation," he added.

Ahead of a mega 'padyatra' on Sunday here as part of the 'Nasha Mukta J-K Abhiyaan', the LG said that while more rehabilitation centres would be built, the infrastructure in the existing ones would also be ramped up.

"It is true that we need to build more rehabilitation centres. But those cannot be built immediately, so, in the rehabilitation centres that exist, arrangements are being made for their (victims) treatment. The Health Department has ► P11

## Mega 'Padyatra' in Srinagar today

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

**JAMMU:** Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Saturday called upon people across Jammu and Kashmir to join a major public movement aimed at building a drug-free society, announcing a Mega Padyatra scheduled to be held on May 3 at the TRC Football Stadium Srinagar.

In a public message, the

LG Sinha said he is witnessing a strong and inspiring momentum across the Union Territory towards eliminating the menace of drug abuse. He urged citizens from all walks of life, especially youth, to participate in the Padyatra and collectively take a stand against narcotics.

"Let us unite and work together to create a safer and healthier ► P11

## Inter-state drug network busted

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

**SRINAGAR:** Kulgam Police busted an inter-state narcotics network and attached illegally acquired property worth Rs 92.73 lakhs linked to the accused at Beli Charana, Jammu, a police spokesperson said on Saturday.

He said during a routine patrolling at Kurigam near Qazigund Railway Station on March 20, a police

party apprehended a suspicious individual identified as Mohammad Rafiq Mir, a resident of Panzina, Srinagar.

Upon searching him, approximately 16 grams of heroin were recovered from his possession, the spokesperson said.

He said a case was registered under Sections 8/21 of the NDPS Act, and the investigation began. During ► P11

## Boat mishap death toll climbs to 11

**JABALPUR:** The bodies of two boys were recovered on Saturday evening from the Bargi Dam in Jabalpur district of Madhya Pradesh, raising the death toll in the cruise boat tragedy that occurred two days ago to 11, while search continued for two missing persons.

The boat, operated by the state tourism department, capsized during a storm on Thursday evening with some of the survivors alleging negligence and safety lapses such as life jackets not being distributed in time. ► P11

## Jammu-Srinagar Vande Bharat begins commercial operations

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

**JAMMU:** Amid much fanfare, the commercial operation of the first direct Vande Bharat Express between Jammu and Srinagar commenced on Saturday, two days after its inauguration by Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnav.

The train with 20 coaches will operate six days a week barring Tuesdays, and reduce the travel time between the two destinations to less than five hours, officials said.

The train previously op-



erated from Srinagar to Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra, and now it will go up to Jammu Tawi.

Decorated with flowers, the train chugged off for Srinagar from platform No. 7 at the Jammu railway station, marking a major milestone in enhancing rail connectivity in the region, Uchit Singhal, senior manager, Jammu Division, said.

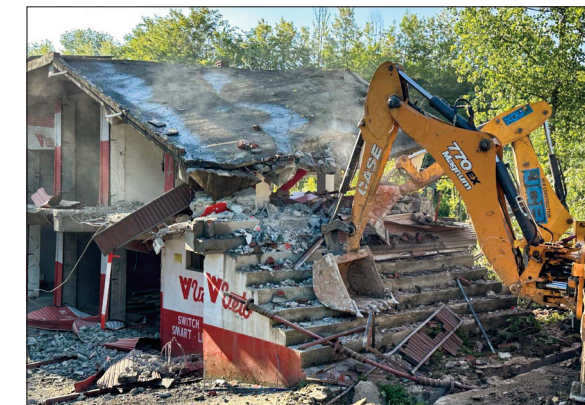
"Today marks the dawn of a new era with the commencement of the Vande Bharat train service from Jammu to Srinagar -- a monumental ► P11

## Drug peddler's illegal complex demolished

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

**SRINAGAR:** An "illegally constructed" commercial complex valued at Rs one crore belonging to an alleged drug peddler was on Saturday demolished in Jammu and Kashmir's Anantnag district, police said.

The police in Anantnag facilitated the demolition of the "illegally constructed" commercial complex comprising 15 shops, valued at approximately Rs one crore, at Waghama Bijbehara, a police spokesman said, adding that the demolished property



belonged to notorious drug peddler Sajad Ahmad Rather. An FIR under the NDPS Act is ► P11

## Udhampur hosts series of events

**UDHAMPUR:** As part of ongoing efforts to promote a drug-free society, a series of awareness programmes were organised across various educational institutions and departments in Udhampur district.

Government Degree College Majalta organised an awareness programme on Nasha Mukta campaign with the objective of sensitizing students to the harmful effects of substance abuse and encouraging a healthy, drug-free ► P11

## Emergency alert feature tested on mobile phones

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

**JAMMU:** Mobile phone users in Jammu and Kashmir on Saturday received an emergency alert on their cellphones with a loud beep as India tested its nationwide emergency alert system, officials said.

Mobile phone users in the Union territory were surprised on Saturday morning as their phones buzzed loudly and received a flash message, the officials said.

They said the alert, sent out at 11.42 am, was a part of the emergency alert system testing.

"This is part of the testing of the Emergency Alert Sys-

tem, so that accurate information can be received on time during disasters," they said.

They said this message may appear repeatedly and asked people to not do anything.

"India launches Cell Broadcast using indigenous technology, for instant disaster alerting service for its citizens. Alert citizens, safe nation. No action is required by the public upon receipt of this message. This is a test message. - Government of India," the flash message read.

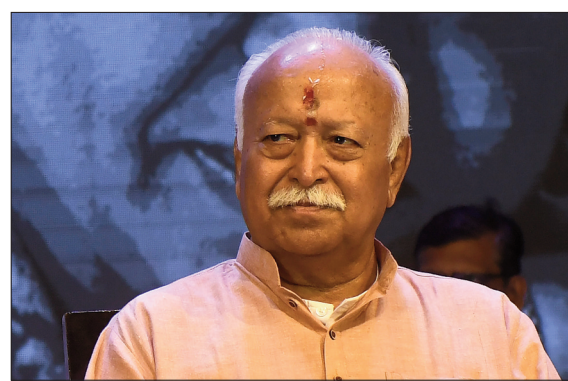
Mehraj Ahmad, a mobile phone user here, expressed surprise when his phone made a loud beep. "I was surprised when the message ► P11

## Bhagwat hails Tribals, Dalits for preserving Bharat's soul

**MUMBAI:** Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) chief Mohan Bhagwat on Saturday said that despite foreign invasions and hardships, tribal communities and Scheduled Castes preserved the country's identity and soul.

He was speaking at the Karmayogi awards ceremony here, where Union Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari was also present.

"Human life is defined by giving back to the world, as we are all part of one great family. A person works and spends for the betterment of society, not as a favour, but



out of duty. In serving others, we foster our own development. By helping others to thrive, we elevate ourselves and grow as human beings. This principle is the core

value of this Indian land, commonly known as a Hindu society," Bhagwat said.

"This is the society's enduring ethos, which ► P11

Jai Mata Di

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