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JAMMU, WEDNESDAY, MARCH 29, 2023

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## Dalai Lama names Mongolian boy as spiritual leader

DHARAMSHALA, Mar 28: Tibetan spiritual leader the Dalai Lama has recognised an 8-year-old US-born Mongolian boy as one of the highest spiritual leaders in Buddhism, Dalai Lama's office confirmed. However, the enthronement ceremony has not taken place as yet. The Dalai Lama acknowledged the 8-year-old as (Contd on page 11 Col 4)

## Govt extends PAN, Aadhaar linking deadline till June 30

NEW DELHI, Mar 28: The Government today extended the deadline for linking PAN with Aadhaar by three months to June 30 to enable people comply with the mandatory income tax provisions. The deadline for linking PAN with Aadhaar was ending on March 31. As per the Income Tax Department, failure to link (Contd on page 4 Col 1)

## EPFO raises interest to 8.15 pc

NEW DELHI, Mar 28: Retirement fund body EPFO today marginally raised interest rate on Employees' Provident Fund (EPF) deposits to 8.15 per cent for 2022-23 for its over six crore subscribers. In March 2022, Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) had lowered the interest rate on EPF for 2021-22 to a four-decade low of 8.10 per (Contd on page 4 Col 5)

## HC orders fresh ban on constructions in Sonamarg

SRINAGAR, Mar 28: The High Court has put a fresh ban on constructions in Sonamarg tourist resort and directed that any repairs permitted by the court shall be carried out after obtaining proper permission from Building Operations Controlling Authority (BOCA) of Sonamarg. (Contd on page 4 Col 5)

## Earthquake jolts Ladakh

LEH, Mar 28: A 4.3 magnitude earthquake struck the Union Territory of Ladakh today, according to the National Center for Seismology (NCS). The tremor was felt at 10.47 am. So far, there is no report of any damage. The epicentre was 166 kilometres north of Leh town, while the depth was 105 kilometres.

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## 'Centre's VVP, SDP helped in recovering losses' Population of Yak, Goat increases again in Ladakh

Bivek Mathur  
JAMMU, Mar 28: With the timely intervention of the Central Government, the population of the Yak-a bovine native to Himalayas and different varieties of the Goat, which was decreasing gradually in the Union Territory of Ladakh, has shown upward trends yet again. As per the 19th livestock census conducted in the year 2012 by the Department of Animal Husbandry & Dairying, Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying, the total population of the Yak was 33,754 in 2012, which declined to 20,743 in 2019 (year when

# 'Clampdown on graft will continue' Those involved in corruption coming on one platform: PM

NEW DELHI, Mar 28:

Prime Minister Narendra Modi today linked opposition parties coming together against the BJP to his Government's campaign against corruption, and asserted that the clampdown on graft will continue without being hindered by "false allegations". After inaugurating an extension of the BJP headquarters here, Modi said that at a time when India's strength is rising to a new high, it is natural that "anti-India" forces within and outside the country will join hands. "Some parties have launched 'bhrashtachari bachao abhiyan' (save corrupt campaign)," he said in a blistering attack on opposition parties protesting against the alleged misuse of probe agencies such as the ED. Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's disqualification from Lok Sabha following his conviction in a criminal defamation case has also become a rallying point for the Opposition. Modi said, "The country will not bend nor will the action

## \*Anti-India forces attacking Constitutional institutions



Prime Minister Narendra Modi with BJP president JP Nadda at the party Central Office (Ext.) in New Delhi on Tuesday. attacking its foundation and are engaged in conspiracies to defame bodies such as the judiciary and probe agencies and destroy their credibility, he said. "The 'anti-India' forces are attacking constitutional institutions as they are the strong 'foundation' of a rising India, he said. And, to stop the country's growth, they are resorting to

courts deliver a verdict not to the liking of these forces, they are questioned, the Prime Minister said. "Some people are bound to get angry when we act so much against corruption," he said. Never before in the history of independent India, such a big campaign against corruption has taken place and it has rattled the corrupt. "All those involved in corruption have come onto one platform," he said, asserting that people realise that when the BJP comes to power, corruption goes away. Citing figures, Modi said that during the Congress-led UPA rule between 2004 and 2014, assets worth Rs 5,000 crore were seized under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act, while the figure has zoomed to Rs 1.10 lakh crore in the nine years of the BJP rule. The cases registered under the act more than doubled under his Government while the number of the arrests surged 15 (Contd on page 4 Col 3)

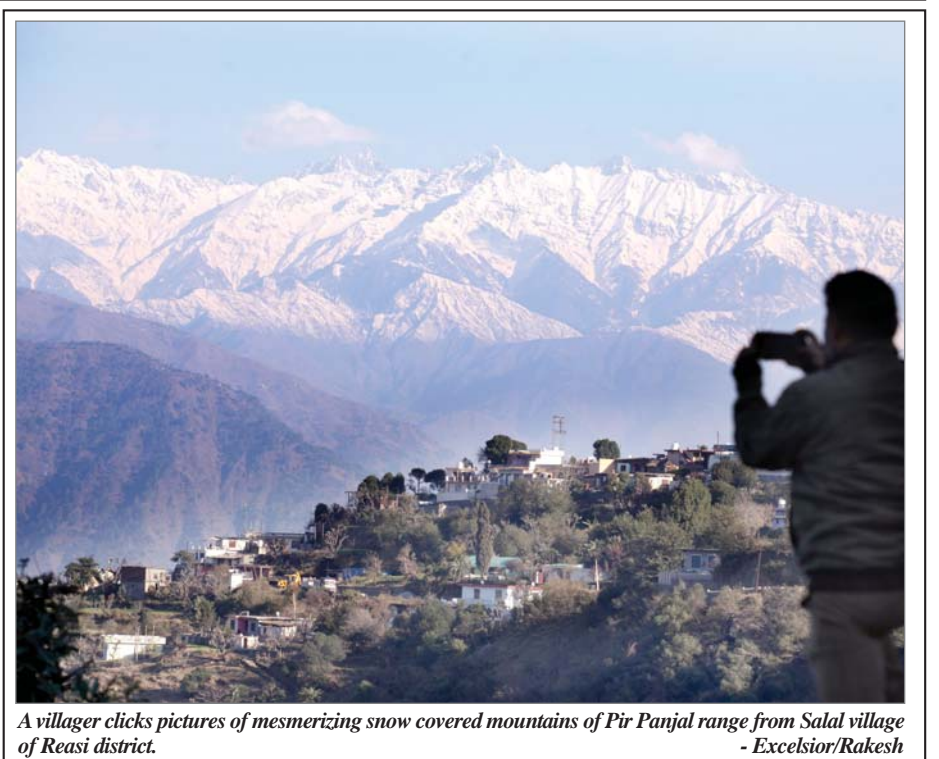
## Only one Integrated Rehabilitation Centre in entire UT Nearly 10 lakh drug addicts in J&K: Central Ministry

\*No major progress in destruction of poppy, cannabis

Mohinder Verma  
JAMMU, Mar 28: There are nearly 10 lakh drug addicts in Jammu and Kashmir as per the National Survey on Extent and Pattern of Substance Use in India conducted by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment through National Drug Dependence Treatment Centre (NDDTC) of All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) New Delhi. This has been revealed by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment in the Lok Sabha in response to a question

of National Conference Member of Parliament Hasnain Masoodi, who had sought details of total number of suspected drug-addicts in Jammu and Kashmir and the total number of Addiction Treatment Facilities, De-addiction Centres and Rehabilitation Centres in the Union Territory. The Ministry, while pointing towards the survey, informed the Parliament that estimated 108000 males and 36000 females were found using Cannabis in Jammu and Kashmir while as 534000 males and 8000 females were found in the dragnet of Opioids and 160000 males and 8000 females were found using sedatives of different kinds. Likewise, 127000 males and 7000 females were noticed using inhalants and large number of males and females were addicts of cocaine, Amphetamine-Type Stimulants (ATS) and Hallucinogens in Jammu and Kashmir, the Ministry further informed the Parliament. However, the number of drug-addicts might be much more than the figures pointed out by the Ministry as survey was conducted few years back and since then drug menace has tightened its grip in the length and breadth of Jammu and Kashmir.

"The Ministry supports setting up of Addiction Treatment Facilities (ATFs) in the Government hospitals across the country, which is being implemented through AIIMS New Delhi and out of 46 ATFs established till date 10 are running in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir", read the reply furnished to the Member of Parliament, the copy of which is available with EXCELSIOR. Moreover, the Ministry extends support for establishment of Integrated Rehabilitation Centres for (Contd on page 4 Col 3)



A villager clicks pictures of mesmerizing snow covered mountains of Pir Panjal range from Salal village of Reasi district. - Excelsior/Rakesh

## 'Industrialists must take note of this' Law & order, policy interventions worth investing in J&K: Shah

\*Z-Morh tunnel inauguration in April: Gadkari Sanjeev Pargal

JAMMU, Mar 28: Union Home Minister Amit Shah said today that both law and order situation and policy interventions are worth investing in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir and the industrialists should take note of it while Union Minister of Road, Transport and National Highways Nitin Gadkari announced that Z-Morh tunnel on Srinagar-Leh National Highway will be inaugurated next month and work on Asia's longest tunnel at Zojila is likely to be completed in 2024. Both the Union Ministers were speaking at the industry body ASSOCHAM's annual session in New Delhi. Gadkari, as exclusively reported by the Excelsior recently, will be inspecting Zojila tunnel on April 10 during his visit to the Union Territory of Ladakh while he will visit Banihal along Jammu-Srinagar National Highway the next day.

"Law and order situation as well as policy interventions are worth investing in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir," Shah said and called upon the industrialists to take note of it. "Industrialists should choose the region for investment according to their market strategy and keeping their business interest in mind. I have no issue wherever you invest as long as it benefits the country. But I must say that both policy and law and order are worth investing in Jammu and Kashmir, and you must consider this," said Shah, in response to a query by an industrialist. Only a day before, the Union Ministry of Home Affairs headed by Amit Shah had stated in the Parliament that private investments in Jammu and Kashmir which were Rs 64058 crore in December 2022 have now gone up to Rs 66,000 crore while 129 units have started working on ground and 350 others have come into production after announcement of New Industrial Policy for the Union Territory. "As many as 560 units have signed lease deed and taken over possession of the land allotted to them while 129 units have started working on ground. In addition, 250 existing units have also come into production after announcement of the New Industrial Policy," the Home Ministry said. Addressing the same function, Union Minister for Road, Transport and National Highways announced that 6.5 kilometres Z-Morh tunnel on Srinagar-Leh National Highway will be inaugurated next month. "Work on Asia's longest tunnel in Zojila, also falling on Srinagar-Leh National Highway, is likely to be completed in 2024," Gadkari said. Earlier, the deadline for completion of Zojila tunnel which will link the Union Territory of Ladakh with rest of the country by road round-the-year had been (Contd on page 4 Col 1)

## JK announces new Excise Policy, decks cleared for 'big players' Retail beer vends allowed at JKTDC/ Tourism establishments, Airports; bid starts from Apr 4

\*MRP in bars reduced from 25 to 10% ; 25% less duty on CSD/PMF brands Gopal Sharma

JAMMU, May 28: Clearing decks for the big players in Liquor Industry in the country and discouraging monopoly of the local manufacturers besides introducing three categories of new Licenses, the J&K UT Government today announced its New Excise Policy-2023-24. While encouraging low alcoholic beverages and discouraging illicit liquor, the UT Government has allowed retail selling of beer/ RTD (Ready To Drink) products with low liquor content at JKTDC/ Tourist establishments besides Airports in Jammu and Kashmir. The Government has also allowed operation of open/ rooftop bars in the high end hotels and restaurants with the additional 50% of the annual license fee to boost tourism related activity. Providing a big relief to the Bar operators, the Government has reduced their MRP from existing 25 to 10% or as per menu/which ever is higher. While giving extension to the existing retail liquor vends up to April 16, 2023, the Excise Department has declared to start bid for the new retail liquor vends from April 4 while its registration process will commence from March 29 (Wednesday). The registration fee has been increased from Rs

25000 to Rs 50,000 and EMD from Rs 7 lakhs to Rs 10 lakhs and the reserved bid price from Rs 10 lakh to Rs 15 lakhs. Giving boost to the local production, the Government has announced 25% less Excise Duty on CSD/PMF brands manufactured in J&K only. While protecting local industry, restrictions shall be imposed on import on brands having MRP Rs 600 per bottle (750 ml). While taking major initiative for the first time and clearing decks for the big players from outside, the JKUT Government introduced JKEL-6A, Bottling License on leased out premises and W-1 Winery License for the first time. It will help in big way (Contd on page 11 Col 4)

## Alleged backdoor appointments in courts SC asks J&K CJ to look into allegations

Excelsior Correspondent  
NEW DELHI, Mar 28: Supreme Court has asked the Chief Justice of Jammu and Kashmir High Court to look into the grievance of the petition...Time for filing counter affidavit has been extended. Counter shall be filed by Registrar of J&K HC after specifically taking instructions and directions from Chief Justice of J&K High Court. The petition assails the appointments made from 2007 onwards on adhoc or through advertisements as 'suspicious'. The petition provides a list indicative of the existing members of staff and the Judges of High Court who have extended favour to their kin and kith. It further states: "There are instances where amendments have been made in the existing rules just to facilitate backdoor appointments and/or facilitating the appointment of kin of functionaries against higher cadres who otherwise were eligible only for lower cadres and that too if selected after a regular legal recruitment process." It alleges that there was lack of transparent selection process in making these appointments. It further submits that no public notice or advertisement had been issued and the appointees were chosen in the most arbitrary manner. "No individual or persons have a right to occupy public office without being selected and appointed in accordance with the procedure established by law", the petitioner organization submitted. "There were highly qualified candidates who could have been appointed if a fair selection (Contd on page 4 Col 5)

od but it has also showed upward trends according to the local leaders and officers. As per the figures provided by Tashi Namgyal Yakzee, Executive Councillor (Animal/Sheep), Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council (LAHDC), Leh and Livestock Development Officer Kargil, Dr Gulzar Hussain, the total population of the cattle in the UT of Ladakh was 87,094 in 2012, which declined to 84,201 in 2019 and the current number of the cattle is 57,342. Meanwhile, the population of sheep was 2,29,992 in 2012, 1,98,501 in 2019 and it has (Contd on page 4 Col 5)

Govt has Rs 29,335 cr liability J&K revenue receipts rise but fall short of estimates: CAG  
NEW DELHI, Mar 28: The revenue receipts of Jammu and Kashmir in 2021-22 increased by 13 per cent as compared to the previous year but it still fell short of the budget estimates by 39 per cent, the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) said today. Presenting the Union Territories Finances Audit Report for the year ending March 31, 2022 in Parliament, the federal auditor said the Government of Jammu and Kashmir had an outstanding liability of Rs 29,335.41 crore. Besides, there are outstanding borrowings amounting to Rs 2,122.77 crore of Jammu and Kashmir Infrastructure Development Finance Corporation (JKIDFC) and Rs 10,321.83 crore of J&K Power Corporation Limited. "During 2021-22, revenue receipts increased by 13 per cent with respect to last year, but it fell short of budget estimates by 39 per cent. The UT's own tax revenue increased by 32 per cent and non-tax revenue increased by 19 per cent with respect to previous year," the CAG stated. It said there was an increase in revenue receipts by Rs 6,742 crore and increase in revenue expenditure by Rs 6,635 crore with respect to previous year (Contd on page 4 Col 3)