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A Black Kite bird perches on the finger of Netaii Subhash Chandra Boses statue, in Kolkata, Wednesday.

### Unattended

New Delhi: Ahead of Republic Day celebrations, two unattended bags were found on Wednesday in east Delhi's Trilokpuri area, officials said. According to fire officials, they received a call at 1 pm regarding the bags near metro pilar number 59, block-15, Trilokpuri. Further details are awaited. Last week, an improvised explosive device (IED) stuffed with RDX and ammonium nitrate was found inside an unattended bag at the Ghazipur flower market.

#### **Suicide**

Jaipur: A retired IRS officer allegedly committed suicide by consuming poison owing to domestic issues, police said on Wednesday. Shankar Lal Jain (64) was found dead at his factory that manufactures snacks in Bassi area earlier in the day. A suicide note was recovered from the spot, police said. Jain was upset as he was unable to marry off his children. His business was also going through a lean phase, they said.

## **IEDs**

■ Seraikela: A police team on Wednesday recovered 15 pressure cooker bombs, suspected to have been planted by Maoists, along a non-metalled road in a forest in Jharkhand's Seraikela-Kharswan district, a senior officer said. Shortly after the explosives were detected in Kaderango forest, a bomb disposal squad cordoned off the area and defused the IEDs. the officer said. According to the officer, the district police force has launched a massive anti-naxal operation here, on the directive of Superintendent of Police Anand Prakash.

# Mishap

■ New Delhi: A 30-year-old woman and her four children died after allegedly inhaling toxic smoke from an angithi' (stove) kept in their room in Shahdara's Seemapuri area on Wednesday, police said. According to police, a PCR call was received at around 1.30 pm regarding four to five people lying unconscious in a room on the fifth floor of a house in Old Seemapuri. Upon reaching there, the woman and three of her kids were found dead while the fourth and the youngest one was taken to a hospital but declared dead by doctors, a senior



48,120

GOLD

SILVER

police officer said.

# 'No foreign chief guest at R-Day this year'

guest for the Republic Day event, sources said on Wednesday.

Amid the COVID-19 pandemic continuing and the cases rising, this would be the second year in a row when there would be no foreign leader as the chief guest at the Republic Day celebrations.

"This year there will not be a Foreign Head of State or Head of Government as the chief guest for our Republic Day event," a source said. There would be no for-

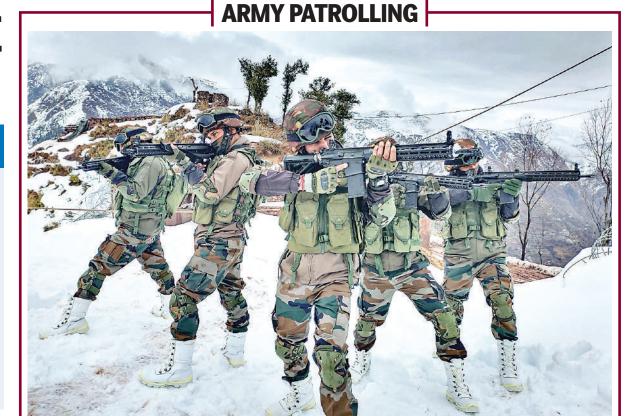
eign leader as the chief guest at the Republic Day celebrations, but a day later Prime Minister Narendra Modi will host

Republic Day on January 26, stated a notice to airmen (NOTAM) issued by the Airports Authority of India (AAI). No landing or take off will be permitted from the Delhi airport for airlines' non-scheduled flights and general aviation companies' charter flights between 10.15 am-1.15 pm till January 24, the NOTAM noted. On Republic Day itself, non-scheduled flights and charter flights will not be allowed to land or take off from the Delhi airport between 7 am-1 pm and between 2 pm-6.30 pm, it mentioned. On January 29, due to Beating the Retreat ceremony, non-scheduled flights and charter flights will not be permitted to land or take off from the Delhi airport between 4 pm-7 pm, it noted. There will be no impact of NOTAM on the aircraft of the Indian Air Force, Border Security Force and the Indian Army's aviation wing, it mentioned. "State owned aircraft or helicopter can fly with the governor or chief minister of state," it noted. Scheduled flights of airlines will operate as usual, it mentioned.

the first India-Central the Asia Summit in a virtual format on January 27.

The summit will be held with the participation of

the press Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Tajikistan, presidents Turkmenistan Uzbekistan.



Army jawans pose near the snow-covered border in Poonch, Wednesday

# **5G SCARE**

# Air India cancels 8 US flights

#### **■ DGCA working to** overcome situation

**New Delhi, Jan 19 (PTI):** 

Air India cancelled eight flights on India-US routes from Wednesday onwards due to deployment of 5G internet in North America which could interfere with aircraft's navigation systems.

Meanwhile, DGCA chief Arun Kumar told PTI that the Indian aviation regulator was working "in close coordination with our carriers to overcome the situation" that has arisen due to 5G internet's deployment in the US.

US aviation regulator Aviation Federal Administration (FAA) had on January 14 said that

flights between India and

Delta Airlines did not respond to PTI's queries regarding this matter.

Air India stated on Twitter that it won't be operate eight India-US flights on Wednesday "due to deployment of the 5G com-

aircraft's radio altimeter could prevent engine and braking systems from transitioning to landing mode, which could prevent an aircraft from stopping on the runway". Altimeter measures height of the aircraft above the ground. The band on which altimeter works is close to that on which 5G system works. Total three carriers -- American Airlines, Delta Airlines and Air India -currently operate direct

American Airlines and

New Delhi, Jan 19 (PTI): Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel met Congress president Sonia Gandhi, former party chief Rahul Gandhi and party general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra here on Wednesday, and discussed the strategy for the upcoming Uttar Pradesh Assembly polls. Baghel, who has been appointed as the senior ob-

server for the Uttar Pradesh polls by the Congress, met Sonia Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi at the former's 10, Janpath residence, while he called on Rahul Gandhi at his 12, Tughlaq Lane house, sources said.

During the meeting with the top Congress leaders, Baghel apprised them of the feedback he received



**STRATEGY FOR UP POLLS** 

'Baghel meets Sonia, Rahul, Priyanka'

Chief Minister Bhupesh Bhagel at UPCC party office, ahead of UP assembly polls, in Lucknow, Wednesday.

Pradesh tour and also discussed the flagship schemes of Chhattisgarh that could be included in the party manifestoes for the upcoming Assembly polls in five

Schemes related to af-

ED seizes Rs 8-cr cash from

CM's relative; Rs 21L gold

and relief to farmers and the Godhan Nyay Yojana

has also invited the Gandhis to his son's wedding ceremony.

that awareness has increased among people after the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic and the government or the political party that takes better initiatives on this front stands a chance to get more political benefits, the sources

have been highly appreciated at the national level, the sources close to the Chhattisgarh chief minis-They added that Baghel

The Congress believes

Baghel was on a tour of Uttar Pradesh recently, during which he took part in

A group of 480 IAS

Reports of their RT-PCR tests conducted at the

# **COVID SURGE**

# 84 IAS trainees at LBSNAA, Mussoorie test positive

#### For COVID-19

**Dehradun, Jan 19 (PTI):** 

Eighty-four IAS trainees Mussoorie's Bahadur Shastri National Academy Administration have tested positive for the ovel

coronavirus infection, offi-

cials said on Wednesday. Those infected have been isolated and the rest quarantined at the academy, Chief Medical Officer (CMO) Manoj Upreti said.

trainees, including those of allied services, arrived here on Sunday from Gujarat on way to the Academy, he said.

on arrival have come positive, he said. Meanwhile, 25 personnel at the state police head-

Dehradun Railway Station

quarters here have also tested positive for the infection. DGP Ashok Kumar asked the infected personnel to take precautions besides asking those who had come into contact with them to undergo RT-PCR tests and quarantine themselves. As all police department personnel have received both doses of COVID-19 vaccine, all of them have mild symptoms only, the CMO said.

Uttarakhand had on Tuesday reported 4,482 positive cases, the highest single-day caseload in the state in eight months.

# **MAJOR DECISION**

# Cabinet sanctions Rs 974 cr to SBI for ex-gratia payment to borrowers

**New Delhi, Jan 19 (PTI):** 

The government on Wednesday approved sanction of Rs 973.74 crore to State Bank of India (SBI) as reimbursement related to loan moratorium that was implemented in 2020 amid the pandemic.

This amount is for the payment of claims submitted by lending institutions (LIs) under the scheme for grant of ex-gratia to borrowers in specified loan accounts during the moratorium period announced by RBI in March 2020.

Briefing media on the Cabinet decision. Information Broadcasting Minister

Anurag Singh Thakur said the Budget had made provision of Rs 5,500 crore for the scheme of ex-gratia payment of difference between compound interest and simple interest for six months to borrowers in specified loan accounts. Of this, Rs 4,626.93 crore

payment was made in 2020-21, he said, adding, additional claims of Rs 1,846 crore were received during the current financial year.

SBI was given Rs 873.07 crore towards reimbursement of ex-gratia between July 23 and September 22, 2021. To clear the remaining amount, Thakur said, the Union Cabinet has approved sanction of Rs 973.74 crore to SBI towards payment of these dues. 'Operational guidelines for the scheme are already

issued with the approval of the Cabinet. The said amount of Rs 973.74 crore will be disbursed in accordance with the said operational guidelines," an official statement said.

On March 27, 2020, RBI announced a loan moratorium on payment of instalments of term loans falling due between March 1 and May 31, 2020, due to the pandemic. Later, the same was extended to August 31. Financial and non-bank-

ing financial institutions were asked to credit the difference between compound and simple interest collected on loans of up to Rs 2 crore during the moratorium scheme in November 2020.

The Ministry Finance has said that after crediting this amount, the lending institutions would claim reimbursement from the central government. SBI was made a nodal agency for reim-

bursement of claims. By granting ex-gratia payment of difference be-

tween compound interest and simple interest during the six month moratorium period to distressed/vulnerable category of borrowers, irrespective of whether the borrower had availed of moratorium or not, the scheme would equitably help small borrowers bear the stress on account of the pandemic and get back on their feet, the

# IndiGo planes avert mid-air collision over Bengaluru New Delhi, Jan 19 (PTI): DGCA to probe,

Two IndiGo planes averted mid-air collision over the Bengaluru airport just after their takeoff on the morning of January 9, senior officials aviation regulator DGCA said on Wednesday.

The incident was not logged in any logbook and it was not reported by the Airports Authority of India (AAI) either, they

Meanwhile, DGCA chief Arun Kumar told PTI that the regulator is investigating the incident "and shall strictest action against those found delinquent". IndiGo and the AAI did not respond to PTI's request for a statement on

**New Delhi, Jan 19 (PTI):** 

The third wave of the

COVID-19 pandemic in

India may peak on January 23 with daily

cases likely to remain

below the four lakh mark,

according to a scientist at

the Indian Institute of

Delhi, Mumbai and Kolkata have already

reached their peak in case

numbers in the past seven

days, said Manindra

Agrawal, a professor at IIT

Kanpur and one of the re-

searchers associated with

Technology-Kanpur.

take strict action

this matter. Officials of Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) said that the two IndiGo planes -6E455 (Bengaluru to Kolkata) and 6E246(Bengaluru Bhubaneswar) -- were involved in 'breach of separa-

tion' at Bengaluru airport.

Breach of separation happens when two aircraft cross the minimum mandatory vertical or horizontal distance in an airspace. Both these aircraft departed from the Bengaluru airport within a span of approximately 5 minutes on the morning of January 9, the officials mentioned.

**IIT KANPUR SCIENTIST** 

India's third Covid wave

likely to peak on Jan 23

The Sutra model has

been used to track and pre-

dict Covid case numbers

in the country since the

beginning of the pandem-

According to Agrawal,

Maharashtra,

projected to peak on third wave y January 23 in India and January end.

COVID-19 cases will peak

Karnataka, UP, Gujarat,

and Haryana this week,

while states like Andhra

Pradesh, Assam, and

Tamil Nadu may peak

The daily peak cases are

the Sutra Covid model.

The ED on Wednesday said it has seized cash amounting to over Rs 10

**Chandigarh, Jan 19 (PTI):** 

crore, including about Rs 8 crore from a relative of Punjab Chief Minister Charanjit Singh Channi, during raids conducted in connection with an antimoney laundering investigation against illegal sand-mining operations in the poll-

In a statement, the Enforcement Directorate (ED) said "incriminating" documents related to "illegal" sand mining and property transactions, mobile phones, gold worth more than Rs 21 lakh and a Rolex

stay below the four lakh

mark. Metro cities Delhi,

Mumbai, and Kolkata

have already peaked,

to 11th indicates the peak

on 23th Jan with nearly 7.2

lakh cases per day. The ac-

tual trajectory is already

deviating significantly,

and the actual peak is un-

likely to cross 4 lakh

cases/day, Agrawal tweet-

Agrawal had earlier pre-

dicted that the COVID-19

Trajectory with data up

Agrawal told PTI.

ed on Tuesday.

#### **PUNJAB MINING RAIDS**

watch worth Rs 12 lakh were also seized during the searches that ended on Wednesday.

Agency sources also refuted allegations of high-handedness during the raids, saving the action launched on Tuesday was undertaken by following "due legal procedures and no personal comments or individual threats were made". They said most of the documents related to the sand-mining business and about Rs 8 crore cash were seized from the premises linked to Bhupinder Singh alias Honey, a nephew of

Cash amounting to about Rs 2 crore was seized from the premises linked to a a man identified as Sandeep Kumar, the sources said.

The ED statement said those covered in the raids included "Kudratdeep Singh, the Pinjore Royalty company and its partners and shareholders, Kanwarmahip Singh, Manpreet Singh, Sunil Kumar Joshi, Jagveer Inder Singh, Randeep Singh, Providers Overseas Consultants Private Limited, its directors and shareholders, including Bhupinder Singh and Sandeep Kumar, at Mohali, Ludhiana, Rupnagar, Fatehgarh Sahib and Pathankot".

# Covid ban on Int'l passenger flights extended

New Delhi, Jan 19:

suspension of scheduled international passenger flights in the Wednesday.

passenger flights have since March 23, 2020.

ating between India and approximately 40 countries since July 2020 under air bubble arrangements formed with them.

Wednesday,

Directorate General of Civil Aviation stated: "The competent authority has decided to extend the suspension of scheduled international commercial passenger services to/from India till 2359 hrs IST of February 28, 2022."

This restriction shall not apply to international all-cargo operations and flight specifically approved by the DGCA, it mentioned.

affected, it noted.

November 26, 2021, announced that India will resume scheduled international passenger flights from December 15, 2021.

# ■ Till Feb 28

country has been extended till February 28, aviation regulator DGCA said on Scheduled international

been suspended in India However, special passenger flights have been oper-

In a circular

third wave will peak by

Fights under air bubble arrangement will not be The DGCA had on

statement said.

# **New Delhi, Jan 19 (PTI): Restrictions imposed on charter flights,** non-scheduled commercial flights This year there will be no foreign head of state or Restrictions have been imposed at the Delhi airport on charter government as the chief flights and airlines' non-scheduled flights due to approaching

# **Divisional Commissioner serves**

Flaws in Gauthan of

Along with this, he also is-

sued notice to AREO of

Chandkhuri. It needs to be

mentioned here that on

Tuesday, the Divisional

Commissioner had inspect-

ed Chandkhuri Gauthan

and found that the register

/ records were not being

Taking the flaws into

cognizance, he issued notice to the concerned

AREO. He also issued no-

tices to the Deputy

Directors and asked them

to explain why they did not

maintained properly.

Gauthan of

village Chandkhuri Chandkhuri Gauthan, the Divisional Commissioner **Central Chronicle News** had questioned about the number of animals visit-Bhilai, Jan 19: Divisional ing the Gauthan and the Commissioner Mahadev status of fodder production. When he did not get Kawre issued show-cause notices to Deputy Director satisfactory reply, he had Agriculture said that monitoring of Department and Deputy Director of Livestock Gauthan is not being done regularly by the depart-Development Department. mental officers.

village

He said that NGGB is the most ambitious scheme of the government and is the backbone of rural development. Hence the works being done under this scheme should be monitored regularly. At the same time, the officials should examine that all the concerned registers records are being updated and maintained properly.

monitor the matter.

During the visit at

Cow dung procurement should continue and Gauthans shall become a means of livelihood activi-The Divisional

Commissioner has said that according to the expectations of Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel, Gauthan should become self-supporting and become the center of livelihood activities. For this purpose, work will have to be done on a war footing. He said that the Gauthans would be reviewed regularly.

**show-cause notices to Deputy Directors** 

The status of fodder production, Godhan Nyay Yoina and other schemes

cers should keep monitoring the activities continuously so that the villagers can get the maximum benefits of the scheme.

Divisional Commissioner had also oversaw the production activities going on here and said that according to the instructions given by the government, register / record entries must be made and innovative ideas should be implemented.

Divisional

Commissioner has issued notices to the Deputy Director of Agriculture, Suresh Singh Rajput and the Deputy Director of the Animal Department, Dr MK Chawla, Notice has also been served to Rural Agricultural Extension Archana Chakhivar.

After serving the show cause notices, Divisional Commissioner commented that these schemes are public welfare schemes of the government. Any kind of negligence with these schemes will not be accepted. Due to these schemes, the economic condition of rural areas is developing and women are also getting employment through selfhelp groups.

Women are becoming an integral part of women empowerment in the state. Therefore, it is necessary that the welfare schemes of the government take shape in a positive direction.

# **Ore Handling Plant** B creates new record in Wagon Unloading

appreciation to Jagdish

Chandra Padhi, OCT and

Tirupati Rao, OCT for

their role in achieving this

feat. Director I/c BSP,

Anirban Dasgupta con-

**Central Chronicle News** 

Bhilai, Jan 19: SAIL-Bhilai Steel Plant's Ore Handling Plant B (OHP-B) has added another feather to its cap by creating a new record of ever best unloading of 88 BOXNS wagons in a record time surpassing the previous best record of 74 wagons. This could be achieved under challenging circumstances of different rakes being placed at different intervals of time.

The feat could not be possible without the dedication, sincere hard working and commitment of team comprising of Jagdish Chandra Padhi, OCT and Tirupati Rao, OCT, and Satish Kumar, Manager under the guidance of AR Mandal, DGM under the excellence leadership of BL Chandwani.

CGM, OHP. OHP B and associated de-BL Chandwani, CGM, partments for their per OHP gave away letters of formance.

Congratulating the entire team of OHP, Chandwani said credit for the shift record of wagon unloading goes to strategic planning and better execu

# Monetary encouragement provided to meritorious Divyangs



**Central Chronicle News** 

Bhilai, Jan 19: On Wednesday, Collector Dr Sarveshwar Narendra Bhure provided monetary encouragement to the meritorious Divyangs. He handed over a cheque of Rs 5000 to Mansi Mishra for her excellent performance in class 12th exam.

A cheque of Rs 30000 was handed over to Hari

Shankar Sahu for qualifying the Mains Exam of Public Chhattisgarh Service Commission.

the Collector Dr Sarveshwar Narendra Bhure congratulated both the beneficiaries and wished them a bright future ahead. Deputy Director of Social Welfare Department, Donar Prasad Thakur was

# **Mayor Neeraj expresses displeasure** over delay in development works

Instructs to complete the construction works like toilet, Anganwadi and school within the prescribed limit at review meeting

**Central Chronicle News** 

Bhilai, Jan 19: Mayor Neeraj Pal took a review meeting of the development works going on in the under Bhilai Municipal Corporation limits. At the meeting he made it clear that negligence in works related to public will not be tolerated. He instructed the officers to visit the field and get completed the development work within the time limit.

In the review meeting, the Mayor reviewed the progress of approved works in Zone 03 Mother



Teresa Nagar and Zone 04 Khursipar. The Mayor sought update directly the from Zone Commissioner, Assistant Engineers and Sub Engineers of both the zones. He instructed to complete the works announced by the Chief

with special impetus on quality. He discussed in detail the major works going on in Zone 03 and 04 area and expressed his displeasure over the works that have not yet been started even after getting the approval and asked the offiget the work done and report on the progress. He directed to complete the works of public convenience like schools, toilets, Anganwadi within the stipulated time frame. In the meeting, Speaker

Girwar Bunty Sahu, MIC member and Public Works Department Ekansh Banchore. Superintending Engineer Deepak Joshi, Commissioner Yesha Lahare and Amitabh Sharma and Engineer DK Verma, Sanjay Bagde and other employees

# 90 Patwaris reshuffled in Durg

Billiai, Jali 19:

On Wednesday, transfer orders were issued to 90 Patwaris of the district. They have been transferred and posted to other 'patwari halkas' of the district.

For the purpose of tightening the administrative works, Durg Collector Sarveshwar Narendra Bhure had given instructions to the Sub-Divisional Officers. Accordingly, 34 patwaris have been reshuffled in Patan sub-division, 27 in Durg sub-division and 29 in Dhamdha sub-divi-

It needs to be men-

tioned nere that for the smooth conduct of the works, the state government had issued instructions to tighten up administrative structure. Accordingly, all the SDMs have issued the transfer / post-

The District Collector is working continuously to ensure that the administrative works are being carried out smoothly and with transparency as per the intention of the govern-

ing order.

In the recent past, he inspected and reviewed the status of revenue works in all the tehsils. He reviewed the pending cases and also examined the status of disposal of applications.

Later, he directed all the SDMs to review the works of the 'Patwari Halkas' and take actions for ensuring proper arrangements to ensure smooth functioning of the administration.

An order in this regard has been issued on Wednesday. It could be recollected here that Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel has directed the officers to take immediate action to resolve the revenue related matters. Accordingly, monitoring is being done continuously to resolve the cases in Durg district.

# Slum dwellers seek rehabilitation before eviction

Bhilai, Jan 19: Eviction of slum dwellers in Bhilai becoming a matter of great concern. A number of families have settled on railway land in this area. Few days ago, the railway administration has issued notices to these slum dwellers.

All these families are from weaker sections and most of them are labourers. Durg MP Vijay Baghel has also intervened into the matter and raised the demand of rehabilitation of the affected family before eviction. In this regard, MP Baghel has written a letter to the Union Railway Minister and has requested him for not evicting the poor families without proper rehabilita-

A large number of af-



fected people led by the Corporators of Municipal Corporation Charoda met MP Vijay Baghel at his residence on Wednesday. These families reside in slums on railway land for the last 50 years in Bhilai Charoda's ward number 34 and 35 and G Cabin. The Corporators apprised the MP about the problems faced by the af-

fected families. All of them are from weaker sections and the Railways has issued notices to remove their hutments.

The local Corporators informed MP Baghel that people from weaker sections have settled in that area and have constructed huts and kutchha houses. No facility has ever been provided to these people

by the railway administration. However, the facilities of electricity, road. water, sanitation are being continuously provided in these wards by the municipal corporation. This area has developed after receiving the facilities from the Municipal Corporation.

Public representatives said that now these affected have been served notice

by the railway administration to remove their possession within 21 days and have warned of forced eviction thereafter. In such a situation, all these affect ed people have to deal with a lot of mental stress. They have no alternative place to reside. The school going children and women of these families will be badly affected from the forced eviction.

BCMC Corporator Nandni Corporator Prakash Pandey and Corporator Lalit Yadav explained the woes of the people to MP Vijay Baghel. He has assured the Corporators to write a letter to the Union Railway Minister to apprise him about this matter and not to evict the poor families from the railway land without any proper reha-

# **Bhilai Mayor inaugurates the fourth Dhanwantri Medical Store in city**

**Central Chronicle News** 

Bhilai, Jan 19: Bhilai Mayor Neeraj Pal on Wednesday inaugurated the fourth Dhanwantri Medical Store in the city by cutting the ribbon. He also became the first customer of the store by purchasing multivitamin tablets immediately after inaugurating the medical

Also present at the inaugural ceremony were Commissioner Prakash Surve, Speaker Girwar Sahu Bunty and Additional Commissioner Dwivedi and Superintending Engineer in-charge Deepak Kumar

The mayor inquired

about the stock of medicines in the medical store. The store also had available cosmetic and herbal as well as other essential items. The fourth in the series of the Dhamwantri medical store in the city has been opened on Road No 18 near Anganwadi. Earlier, the generic

medical stores have been opened at Subhash Market Medical Line, Bhagwa Chowk Kurud Mother's Market Power House in the city. These were inaugurated virtually by Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel.

In view of the demand for cheap and good quality medicines and to promote health schemes in the city, the Mayor on Wednesday

inaugurated another medical store. Here it needs to men-

tion that earlier on medi-

cines had to be purchased from medical stores in market at a much higher price, but now people are

getting medicines at a discount of about 55 percent, which includes both generic and branded medAmong those present at

present.

the inauguration were MiC members Ekansh Banchore, Sandeep Nirankari, Lalchand Verma, Aditya Singh, Neha Sahu, Mannan Ghaffar Khan, Rita Singh Gera, Mother Teresa Nagar Zone President Santosh Nath Singh Jalandhar, Councillor Satyadevi Jaiswal and Engineer Salman. On behalf of the corporation officials zone commissioner Yesha Lahare, executive engineer DK Verma, Assistant Engineer RK Sahu and Krishna Jangel, Sori, Parganiha and other officers/employees

# **Inspects Baikunthdham Hospital**

Mayor Neeraj Pal also reached the 10-bed Baikunthdham Hospital after the launch of the medical store along with the MIC members. He took information about the mega vaccination campaign from the in-charge of Baikunthdham Hospital, Geeta Sinha. He also discussed things with the beneficiaries who had come to the hospital for vaccination. He also took details of the availability of oxygen in case of emergency, facility of Covid test and medicines. Dr Sinha explained in detail all the arrangements that have been made to fight Covid. Giving information about the launch of Shree Dhanwantri Yojna nearby, the Mayor said that in order to get cheap and high quality medicines, the people coming to the hospital should be motivated to buy medicines in the generic medical store, so that more and more people can be benefited from the scheme. He also made available the list of medicines of Dhanwantri Generic Medical Store to the hospital management.

# Works of greater public interest should be completed within stipulated time: CS

As per intentions of CM Baghel



**■ RGGBKMNY: Virtual** programmes will be organized for release of first installment

Raipur, Jan 19:

As per the instructions Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel, fund distribution to beneficiaries under Rajiv Gandhi Bhoomiheen Gramin Krishi Mazdoor Nyay Yojana (RGGBKMNY) will started Rozgar Chhattisgarh Mission is being launched and Youth Welfare, Skill in the state. In addition, many other schemes and programmes are being run in state for convenience and welfare of the citizens of state.

Chhattisgarh Secretary Amitabh Jain chaired a meeting of state senior officials through video conferencing today to review the outline and implementation status of these important schemes of the state government. Secretary Mr. Jain said in the meeting that the works of greater public interest should be compulsorily completed within the stipulated time-limit. He also reviewed the top priority

schemes of the state government in the meeting which will be implemented by various departments including Housing and Environment, Revenue,

Forest, Home, Urban

Administration, Sports

Employment, Commerce

Development

and Industry. The meeting also discussed preparation of a draft for the collection of information of the beneficiaries of these schemes and programmes and the phased activities required for the successful implementation of these schemes besides fixing the time-frame for them.

Chief Secretary Jain directed to organize a virtual event to release the first installment under the RGGBKMNY to the rural landless laborers. He asked to mandatorily follow Covid-19 protocol while distribution of

funds to the beneficiaries at the divisional level. He has directed to prepare a special action plan to provide employment opportunities in production and service sector under Chhattisgarh Rozgar Mission.

In the meeting, the Chief

Secretary instructed the

officials concerned to assess the revenue earned on free-holding the lease-hold land of the urban body. In case of profit, further action will be taken in this regard. He also directed to conduct the first lottery at the earliest for allotment of 65 thousand houses constructed under the 'Affordable Housing in Partnership' scheme. He said that this lottery for allotment of houses would be conducted at the state level in Raipur and in all the divisions simultaneously. In the meeting, Additional

formed that the works of regularization of unauthorized construction and commercialization of land sponsorship of shops operating in residential area have been simplified. In addition, an app has also been launched keeping in view the convenience of The public. Chief Secretary has said in this regard that the applications received should be

verified within stipulated

time and the applications

should be made online. Mr.

Jain has instructed to fix a

fine for the approval of

layout up to five thousand

square feet in the town

and country planning

area.

Besides, Jain has given instructions to run a campaign for settlement of cases of name change, demarcation, partition, and diversion of land. He directed to make online entry of pending cases exceeding time limit and continuously monitor it. He has asked to organize a review meeting of revenue officers every month in this regard. He has also given instructions to review the applications related to the complaints received by the police which are pending from a long

In the meeting, the Chief Secretary directed the Urban Administration Department to start Mitan Yojana—a doorstep service delivery scheme—at the earliest besides instructing to fix time limit for formation of Rajiv Yuva Mitan Club of Sports Youth Welfare Department. Along with this, instructions were given to enter the information regarding formation of the club in the web portal and monitor it regularly. Instructions have been given to prepare detailed guidelines regarding the formation and activities of Rajiv Yuva Mitan Club and get its approval.

Principal Secretary Dr. Alok Shukla, Principal Secretary Mr. Manoj Kumar Pingua, Principal Chief Conservator of **Forests** Rakesh Chaturvedi. Secretary Revenue, Sports and Youth Welfare Secretary Administration Alarmelmangai D, and Director Commerce and Industry Mr. Anil Tuteja

# UNDER-BRIDGE AT SNAIL'S PACE



The slow pace of under-bridge under construction near Gudhiyari is posing problems for the commuters daily and shows concern for people on part of local RMC authorities and PWD.

## CM pays tribute to Maharana Pratap on his death anniv

Raipur, Jan 19: Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel paid tribute to the great warrior, the epitome of courage and valour, Maharana Pratap on his death anniversary today, Baghel said that the glory of Maharana Pratap, king of Mewar Rajasthan, makes the Indian History even more prestigious. His persistence, determination and bravery inspire humanity even today.

# Governor okay's amendments to curb Hukka Bar in Ch'garh

**Central Chronicle News** 

Raipur, Jan 19: Governor Anusuiya Uikey on Wednesday gave her consent to the proposed Legislation on amendments in the Cigarette and other Tobacco Product Bill. With the above approval, the Bill would be presented before President of India for final approval.

According to the information received, amendments have been made in the Bill to ensure ban on Hukka Bar as well as public use of the Tobaccobased products to curb smoking at evening at the Restaurants Chhattisgarh. Amendments in the Bill

also empower the competent officers to seize the Tobacco-based product if the officer is confident of violation of the Bill. Strict imprisonment from one year to three years could be imposed against the people involved in the entrepreneurship of Hukka Bar. Heavy penalty would also be imposed against the culprit involved in the

Raipur, Jan 19: In a strange instance of cyber fraud complained in Newra police station. an account holder of IndusInd Bank has reported duped of Rs 41, 314 without being told about any link or any OTP number. According to police, complainant Keshav Sharan Vaishnav holds a bank account in local branch of IndusInd Bank. Recently he got is

**Bank account holder** 

duped of Rs 41. 314

**Central Chronicle News** 

passbook updated and this revealed withdrawal of Rs 41,314 from his bank account in three separate installments. Police. meanwhile, have registered an offence under Section 410 IPC against unidentified fraud and further investigation is now

# Poll to elect 504 candidates today

#### PANCHAYAT **BYPOLL**

Raipur. Jan 19:

Voting for the by-election to elect 504 representatives of three-tier panchayat bodies in 28 districts of Chhattisgarh will be held on Thursday, officials said.

Besides, voting for the general poll to elect eight sarpanches in as many village panchayats of two districts will also be held

simultaneously. Preparations nave been done for the polling to be held from 7 am to 3 pm on Thursday. The polling parties have started reaching their destination amid tight security," a state election commission official told PTI.

In view of COVID-19. one healthcare personnel has also been deputed at each polling booth. Each member of the polling team will have to follow all precautionary measures, including wearing

### **Poll timings**

Preparations have been done for the polling to be held from 7 am to 3 pm on Thursday. The polling parties have started reaching their destination amid tight security," a state election commission of-

## Election in Kondagaon and Korea...

The general elections will be held to elect sarpanches in five gram panchayats of Kondagaon district and three of Korea district. Similarly, by-elections will be held to elect three Jila Panchayat members- one each in Raigarh, Surajpur and Bijapur districts, 27 Janpad Panchayat members, 144 sarpanches and 330 panches

tisers and maintaining so- bers, 144 sarpanches and cial distancing, he added.

"The polling will be held through ballot papers, after which counting will take place in respec-tive polling booths," he added. The general elections will be held to elect sarpanches in five gram panchayats of Kondagaon district and three of Korea district. Similarly, by-elections will be held elect three Jila Panchayat members- one each in Raigarh, Surajpur and Bijapur districts, 27

masks, using hand sani- Janpad Panchayat mem-330 panches in 28 districts, he said.

There are 1,288 candidates in the fray for both the general election and bypolls, for which 1,066 polling stations have been set up, he said.

The exact figure of voters was yet to be released by the commission.

Elaborate arrangements have been made at all polling stations to ensure fair and peaceful polling,

# Bank of India, Narayanpur branch inaugurated





Raipur, Jan 19: Bank of India Raipur Zone has inaugrated its 62nd branch in Chhattisgarh State on January 19, 2022, at village District Narayanpur-Bemetara. Narayanpur branch was inaugurated by Lokesh Krishna, General Manager, BOI. Bank of India Narayanpur branch will provide banking service in rural areas of 5 districts. In the presence of General Manager, an MoU is executed between Bank of India and NABARD on January 18, 2022 for the purpose of promoting various loan schemes sponsored by Central/State NABARD in the state of Chhattisgarh.

The MoU was signed by Lokesh Krishna, General Manager, Bank of India National Banking Group (Madhya Pradesh and ■ MoU agreement between Bank of India and NABARD with the aim of promoting various loan schemes sponsored by the **Central, State** and NABARD.

Chhattisgarh) and Rajat Mohanty, General Manager, NABARD. Under this MoU, loans will be provided under the implementation of schemes for the agriculture sector of self-reliant India of the Central Government, schemes maintained by the Chhattisgarh Government and NABARD. On this occasion, Chief General Manager NABARD Dr. D. Ravindra, Zonal Manager of Bank of India Raipur Zone, Vivek Prabhu and Deputy Zonal Manager, Neeraj Kumar Dutta were also present. The grassroot level implementation of this MoU will encourage investment credit for capital formation in the agriculture sector.

# Garment store owner arrested for selling counterfeit clothing of branded companies

**Central Chronicle News** 

Devendra Nagar police station on Tuesday night arrested a garment store owner after he was nabbed selling counterfeit garments of two multinational companies. The accused was arrested on a complaint lodged by the lawyer of a company which has been representing these branded

garments According to police complainant Himanshu Choudhary is the lawyer of M/s. United Overseas Trademark Company representing Nike and Armani companies.

He recently came to know that accused Sashank Talreja, owner of Satnam Clothing, has been selling counterfeit cloths of both the branded companies thus not only cheating the original companies but are also duping the state exchequer by hiding the taxes. Following the complaint, police raided the particular shop and seized from there garments which had no bar code in the cloths.

The shop owner also failed to produce any purchase bills of the counterfeit garments that were seized from

The seized garments seized from the shop included 584 nos. track pants and 67 T-Shirts of Nike Company; 48 nos. of track pants and 81 nos. of and 91 pants of Armani Company, all totaling to

Rs. 2,14,200. Devendra Nagar police in the meantime have registered an offence under Section 63, 65 of Companies Act after ar resting the accused and is now investigating the

# matter further. BJP urges removal of Users' Charge from people

#### **Cyber fraud dupes** man of Rs 1.44 lakh

**Central Chronicle News** 

Raipur, Jan 19: In a repetition of a cyber fraud concerning fraudulent credit card, unidentified fraud duped the complainant of Rs 2.44 lakh on pretext of verification of the credit card issued in his bank account. According to Purani Basti police, unidentified fraud called complainant Chandrasekhar Agrawal on his phone over phone number 91-12435-21697 wherein it was told to the complainant that a credit card has been issued in the bank account of his number. Further the fraud asked him to share the OTP number being sent to his phone number. Not suspecting the fraud who introduced himself as an executive of State Bank of India he straightway shared the OTP with the unidentified caller. This resulted in a major mistake as the fraud instantly siphoned Rs 1.44 lakh from his bank account in three separate installments. Police, meanwhile, have registered an offence under Section 420 IPC against the holder of the above mentioned phone number and further investigation is now underway.

# Chhattisgarh govt decisions brought prosperity to farmers: Chandrakar



President of Apex Bank, Mr Baijnath Chandrakar, while addressing the inauguration ceremony of the branch of District Co-operative Central Bank at Andbhar, Nagar Panchayat of Janjgir-Champa district, said that under the leadership of Chief Minister Mr. Bhupesh Baghel, many imnortant decisions were taken by the Chhattisgarh government in the interest of farmers. Due to the decisions taken by the Chhattisgarh government in the interest of farmers in the last three years, there has been happiness in the lives of farmers and villagers. He said that due to loan waiver of farmers, purchase of paddy on support price, input

Gandhi Kisan Nyay Yojana to boost crop production, agriculture and farmers have become prosperous in the state.

Chandrakar further said that this is the reason that there has been a tremendous increase in the area under cultivation and the number of farmers in the state in the last three years. Farming has become easier due to giving input subsidy to the farmers. He said that crop diversifica-

tion would be encouraged by the provision of subsidy of Rs 9000. He said that branches of cooperative banks are being opened in the state to provide banking facilities to the farmers. The opening of a cooperative bank branch in Andbhar is a link, this will facilitate farm-

ers and villagers. He congratulated and extended best wishes to all the farmers and villagers on this occasion. Chandrapur MLA, Ram Kumar Yadav, Bilaspur District Cooperative Central Bank, President, Pramod Nayak and Ariun Tiwari were specially present on this occasion.

This branch of the cooperative bank started in the Nagar Panchayat Andbhar Malkharoda block of Jajangir-Champa district is the 57th branch of the District Co-operative Central Bank, Bilaspur. In Janigir-Champa district. including the Andbhar branch of Cooperative Bank, there are total 19 branches. Adbhar, Sakarra, Mohandikala and Karrapali cooperative societies have been included under the

The program was also addressed by MLA Ramkumar President Yadav. Cooperative Bank, Pramod Nayak, Arjun Tiwari, District Panchayat President Mrs.

Andbhar branch.

Yanita Chandra.

### Delegation submit memo to

**Minister Daharia Central Chronicle News** 

Raipur, Jan 19: Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on Wednesday submemorandum Administration Shiv Daharia seeking waiver of Users' Charge from people included in the Property Tax by the Raipur Municipal Corporation (RMC).



Sundrani led the BJP delegation to the Minister during which demand was made to slash Users' charge from the people who are already battling hard to

overcome the financial crisis. While the people have already waiting for the state government to reduce the Property Tax by 50% as promise made in the election manifesto, the recent

addition of Users' charge in the Property Tax has resulted in financial burden on the. Delegation stated that the RMC is charging Users' Charge of Rs 7800 from every traders for cleanliness purpose. Raipur BJP General Secretary

Ramesh Singh Thakur, Leader of Opposition in RMC Meenal Choubey and others urged the Minister to take appropriate steps in this regard. In reply, the Minister assured them to consider on their request to provide relief in near future.

# Governor releases documentary centered on Raj Bhawan Chhattisgarh

Raipur, Jan 19: Governor Ms. Anusuiya Uikey released a documentary focused on Rai Bhawan. Chhattisgarh. Appreciating the documentary in the program organized in the conference hall of Raj Bhavan, the Governor said that in this documentary interesting presentation of all the parts of Raj Bhavan has been made. Through this documentary picture, the

general public will get de-

tailed information about



mentary describes the journey of Raj Bhawan from the construction of Raj Bhawan till now. In this, detailed information has been given about all the governors, the infrastructure of different parts of Raj

Secretariat, Durbar Hall etc. Along with this, both the gardens of the Raj Bhavan, the species of trees and plants in it have been told in detail. Along with this, information about the specialties of the Durbar

Hall of Raj Bhawan and the special programs organized here has been given. This documentary has been produced by the Public Relations Department. On this occasion the Secretary to the Governor, Amrit Kumar Khalkho, the Legal Advisor to the Governor R.K. Agrawal, Deputy Secretary Deepak Kumar Agrawal, Governor's assistant Suraj Singh Parihar and other officers and employees were present.

**HYWA TURNS TURTLE** 

# Akbar inaugurates newly constructed community hall of Sarathi Samaj

Akbar announced Rs 10 lakh rupees for the social building of Kandra Samaj

Kabirdhaam, Jan 19:

Under the leadership of Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel, the Chhattisgarh government is taking all possible initiatives to connect the socially, economically and educationally weaker sections of the people in the main stream of the society. It has been started in Kabirdham district under the able guidance of State Forest, Transport, Housing and Environment Minister and Kawardha MLA Mohammad Akbar. In this context, fulfilling the special demand of the Sarathi community, a social building with all facilities has been constructed at the cost of about Rs 15 lakh. On this occasion, Municipality President, Rishi Kumar Sharma presented the key of the social building to the District President Samaj, Sarathi. Addressing the inaugural program, Minister Akbar said that the state government is constantly striv-



socially, economically and educationally weaker sections. We will continue to work for the benefit of the society in future also. Forest Minister Akbar, fulfilling the special demand of senior social

in the program, announced an amount of Rs.10 lakh for Kandra society at Kawardha district headquarters. District President of Samaj, Mr. Gaukaran Sarathi, on betude to the Minister for the gift of this building. He said that earlier we made tireless efforts to build a social building for our society, but after the formation of the new government in the state, the demands of the society are being met on priority.

gift. Ashok Sarathi said that due to the availability of social building, now very good facilities have been made available for all the events of the community. On this occasion members of the society Rohit Sarathi, Narayan Sarathi, Bhurva Sarathi, Bhuvan Sarathi, Punni Sarathi and senior social worker Mrs Munni Kandra expressed her gratitude to the Minister Mr. Akbar for this gift. Akbar had a one-to-one dialogue with all the seniors of the Sarathi community and got to know about their well being. He also listened to their problems and directed the Municipal President and Kawardha SDM to make efforts for concrete solutions to the problems of the people of the comunity. Corporators Mr. Mohit Maheshwari, Mr. Pramod Lunia, Mr. Sunil Sahu, Councilor representative Mr. Hiresh Satnami, Mr. Rajesh Makhijani, SDM Mr. Vinay Soni, SDO Mr.

In this episode, our society has got this important



A Hywa vehicle carrying debris turned turtle and caused huge traffic jam. It was using JCB machine that it was lifted and towed away and then normalcy in traffic could be stored.

# **Police arrest Director of Chit Fund Company**

For embezzlement funds worth Rs 89 lakh from 208 persons Mrigendra Singh Baghel

Dantewada, Jan 19:

Dantewada police has arrested Director of a fake Chit Fund Company from Raipur on charges of embezzlement of funds to the tune of Rs 89 lakhs form around 208 persons. According to the Police sources, the Director of this fake Chit Fund Co

was arrested from Raipur on Tuesday. He was produced in the court and sent to judicial remand. He is resident of Grma Semarpakha of Shahdol district of MP. In this case, it was as per instructions from SP Siddharth Tiwari, ASP Rajendra Jaiswal, the

Saurabh Singh Parihar and his team was in search of the Director of this fake Chit Fund Company. The Police informed that there are other Directors of this Company who are still absconding and search for them is in process and

# 10 Hywa vehicles seized illegally transporting Lime Stone



Jagdalpur, Jan 19:

In a surprise inspection by District Mineral team as per instructions by the Collector in Darbha and Kodenar area of district during night hours, 10 Hywa vehicles illegally

transporting minerals were seized. Mineral officer in-Charge Hemant Cherpa informed that all the 10 Hywa vehicles were illegally transporting Limestone in it. He informed that the depart-

vehicles bearing No.'s CG 20 J 1667; CG 20 J 4777; CG 20 J 6555; CG 17 KT 2435; CG 18 M 1451; CG 18T 0007; CG 08 L 2251; CG 26 E 5381; CG 17 KL 8899; CG 20 J 6809 and all ten were loaded with Lime Stone.

On transporting this limestone without valid documents, the Mineral Department seized all the 10 Hywa vehicles and handed it over to the Police and took action against the owners of Hywa vehicles. In the above action, mineral inspection team comprised Devendra Sahu, Balmukund Mishra and

# Costly teak wood sleeper worth Rs 15000 seized



Jagdalpur, Jan 19:

per instructions from DFO Bastar Stylo Mandavi and as per instructions from SDO Ranger Jagdalpur, Jagdalpur Range Devendra Verma, Dy Amit Jha, Nirmal Dewangan,

Pramod Ranjeeta, Saraswati. Ramsingh and Navaguda Samit and Bodal Samiti nabbed wood smugglers with 3 pieces of teak wood sleeper of around 0.266 cu. mt.; 3 cycles, 2 pieces of axes and cost of the wood seized costing around Rs

# **Banks turning breeding** ground of Covid-19 infection

With Covid-19 infection rates turning to its peak, in the month of January, many public and private places are turning vectors and breeding grounds to the infection, as these places accumulate crowds in the form of trade and business. Banks operating in the region are the biggest cause of worry as customers from different corners of the region come here to transact verify and deposit, and the maximum of the customers are traders and business house employees who travel two and fro transporting



tration after preliminary rounds of warning and fining the trespassers of Covid spread, are spreading the word of caution through different modes, but the greatest responsibility lies with the general

# Displaced villagers given barren land for cultivation

Marwani, Jan 19: The displaced tribals of the newly formed GPM district are desperate for livelihood due to the barren land given to them, and are not getting bene-Government fits of schemes too.

In the name of displacement from Achanakmar Tiger Reserve in Kuba village situated in the middle of forests of Gaurela Pendra Marwahi district, barren land has been handed over to the tribals here and now the Baiga tribals are not getting proper benefits of the schemes of the government in the displaced villages, due to which there is a lot of resentment among the people. At the same time, even after 75 years of



independence, these displaced Baiga tribals are deprived of basic facilities, in many forms. If we talk about, the forest dwellers of Achanakmar Tiger Reserve who were displaced by the Forest Department about 12 years ago by removing a village

of Achanakmar Tiger Reserve and settling Kuba village in the area of ??Gaurela range Marwahi forest division, ironically by spending a sum of about Rs 3 crore.

But the land given to the people of Kuba village turned out to

est awellers here are the owners of the land, but their land is of no use, neither can crops be grown in them. However, after the formation of GPM district, after a lot of effort, their names were registered as the residents of the dependent village of Amadob. But in the newly resettled Kuba village, the government is also starting some schemes like MNREGA, so that these people can get some employment. At the same time, these displaced people of Kuba village are currently making a living by working as laborers in the surrounding villages, but at the same time they are also very angry with the neglect being done by

# Hindu society should be united to fight against religious opponents: Gupta

Balod, Jan 19:

In villages of Daundi Lohara Block, Vishwa Hindu Parishad is being formed vigorously in these areas. In this sequence, District President of District Vishwa Hindu Parishad Balram Gupta, and tribal leaders Devlal Thakur, Ramesh Hardel, Dilip Kumar Bande took a meeting of villagers in Kukurdev temple of village Khapri and village Kumhalori and worked unitedly to strengthen Sanatan Dharma organi-

With the resolution of the VHP unit in the villages, it was decided to Patel, Chintaram Patel,



form a unit of VHP in Kumhalori village. Bhavsingh Sahu, Santosh Sahu, Bholaram Sahu, Kripad Deshmukh, Dnyaneshwar Deshmukh, Kisnu Ram

Yogesh Patel, Nemkumar Patel, Pramendra Dhok, Kriparam Nishad, Omlal Kumbhakar, Surendra Nirmalkar, Yadav, Dhansai Yadav, Ranjit Thakur, and Yeswant Dhankar attendPresident Balram Gupta in his address said that at present, the situation in Balod district including the country and the state has accelerated in works like conversion, love jihad and land jihad.

Today, the matter of insulting the saffron flag, the symbol of Sanatan Dharma, is coming up in the state, which is a matter of concern he said. He also opposed conversion and asked Hindus to stand united.

If we stand united, only then our religion and society will be safe from such opposing people, and for this there is a need to strengthen the VHP in

# Female elephant dies coming in contact with live wire



Surajpur, Jan 19: A female Gram elephant Pratappur Darhoraof Forest circle of Surajpur district died of electrocution from live electric wire. Signs of burning on many parts of her body have been found and nearby her body the wires were found lying on the ground. In the morning today, when the villagers saw the body of female elephant, they informed it to the Forest department and after which the team reached the site and conducted investigation. At the site of incident a 11 KV wire is passing at just 4-5 feet above the ground. Last night herd of four elephants passed this way and out of which one female elephant got in contact with this live electric wire and died on the spot.

Death due to electric DFO in-Charge BM In Gram Darhora of **Pratapur forest circle** 

Bhagat informed that seeing the body of elephants primarily it appears that she died of electric shock as there are signs of burning of skin on her body. There is an 11 KV line passing above the farm and notice will be issued to the electricity department in this regard. It is notable here that the live electrical wiring is hanging at short height from the ground-level due to formation of loop at many places and it is on account of which this 49 yr old female elephant fell victim of the same.

# Children celebrate Cher- Chera wearing masks **Anwari, Jan 19:**

the government.

In all the villages of the region including Anwari Bhaisbod, Chhattisgarh's folk festival Cher-Chera was celebrated with great enthusiasm, and children wearing masks, came out to ask for Cher-Chera, ringing from door to door singing traditional songs linked to the festival. In return the groups of children of different age groups were given handful of rice, as a token of goodwill to the festival. Many also took to feed delicacies to the visiting children.

'Let your Kothi (barn) be full of food and wealth' sang the children when given alms of rice and grains. This sight was wit-



nessed in all the villages of including the region Anvari, Bhaisbod, Joratarai, Bhedsar. Kumhari, Thuha, Banjari, Bagaud, Singdehi, Koliari, Kalle, Bhakhara Bhatheli, Semra, Supela, Siltara, Sirve and others.

Cher-Chera, the tradi-

tional festival Chhattisgarh is celebrated to signify the importance and joy of giving, and little children go with bags door to door singing folk songs, asking alms, and in return people willingly give them grains as token to celebrate the festival, which

comes soon after the paddy harvest season.

It is believed that on the full moon day of Paush month, bathing in the morning, worshiping and donating will keep the house blessed throughout the year and Mata Annapurna Mata the food

deity gives her blessings. Grains like wheat, rice, pulses etc. are donated. According to Thaneshwar Sahu, a resident of Anwari, it is believed that donating food grains on Paush Purnima brings happiness, prosperity and fame like King Bali, and this is a great festival of food donation. In Chhattisgarh, this

festival is celebrated after the new crop comes home from the barn and the festival reminds me of the tradition of charity in agrarian culture, and the most important aspect of the festival is spiritual as well, as it eliminates the discrimination of big and small and the feeling of arrogance, he said.

# 'Contenders and claimants for ticket should analyse their ground reality'

**Central Chronicle News** 

Khairagarh, Jan 19: In the party workers sammelan of Khairagarh VS area held in Chuikhadan, PCC Chief Mohan Markam took class of all the probable contenders for ticket. Markam came down heavily against the party workers who were holding this show of strength openly violating corona guidelines.

Expressing his annoyance Markam said that the persons who could not even win their booths are now asking for contendership for LS/Vidhan Sabha (VS) ticket. Citing the old records of last four years of VS polls, Markam said that the senior party leaders and contenders should make actual analysis of their position and whether they are capable of winning their booths or not.

In-between PCC Chief Mohan Markam came down heavily against the

PCC Chief also said that their show-of-strength and he has got records and desaid that just by hiring handful of 50 persons with

allurements of food and

drinks cannot make any-

one get party's ticket. The

contenders should first

analyse their actual posi-

tion in their booth and

only those candidates

should come forward who

can stake their claim for

ticket with factual data of

tails of each & every party worker/ leader Congress and those making contendership should also see their actual posi-Citing about booths like

'Nachania', 'Sarai' and others. Markam held the need to work on each and every single booth. PCC Chief seems to be very much annoyed over the fact that present were not adhering to corona guidelines.

Appeals party workers to take target of 2024:

PCC Markam said that the party workers should take the target for 2024 LS polls with their farsightedness. Through this sammelan, PCC chief also took class of Block Presidents Khairagarh, Chuikhadan and Gandai.

Apart from formation of

booth committee, he also took information about membership campaign. He also said that minimum of 50 hard working party workers should be added to each booth and he made it clear that unless Congress is strong in every booth, then only they can win any elections. Citing about by-poll of

Dantewada and Marwahi he said that till the party does not work at groundlevel, till then the results will not be as expected. As a warning to all the party's office bearers, he said that those who fail to perform and work and does not bring results as per expectations, would be removed without any second thought. Citing about his working style he said that unless we all would not work like a common party worker of a booth, till then the results will not be positive and it would not generate required results.

# **Activeness of millers led** to lifting of 96% paddy

**GPM stands first in** state in paddy lifting

**Central Chronicle News** 

Gaurela-Pendra Marwahi, Jan 19: GPM district stands first in the lifting of paddy by millers after its purchase through samitis. Till date 50242 MT paddy has been purchased by samitis and 48711 MT has been lifted by the

The paddy purchase started from December 01 but most of the purchase remained under open skies as the purchase used

> What responsible officials say

"For the first time paddy is continuously lifted and transported from the societies whereas during previous stock was kept stacked in samitis. The farmers are getting sufficient space to keep their stock."

- Balram Thakur, Manager



to be more than the limit of the societies. But this time due to activeness shown on the part of Marketing Federation and big rice millers, paddy was

"Even after rains, as millers quickly lifted the paddy from 18 PPCs no paddy stock lie in these centres. Arrangement was made to cover the paddy kept in open. After the rains have stopped tokens are distributed and paddy purchase has started at all the centres.

- Vinay Kumar Sahu **Nodal Officer** District Cooperative Bank GPM



societies and kept at re-

# **Ward residents express** gratitude towards PHE Minister

**And ward corporator** for fulfilling the promise made

**Central Chronicle News** 

Nandini-Ahirwara, Jan 19: The ward corporator of ward No. 11 of Ahirwara Nagar Palika Poornima Amit had promised the voters during elections that he would construct CC road on Church road and on fulfillment of this promise, the residents of the ward expressed gratitude towards PHE Minister Guru Rudra Kumar and ward



Amit Das. On construction of this road, Paswan Salim Khalko of Christian community and all the ward

gratitude towards the Cabinet Minister Guru Rudra Kumar and ward corporator

#### **Technical flaw**

There is no plaster on CC road and due to which the strength of the road will not be so strong. On this occasion Nagar Palika Ahirwara sub-engineer DR Sahu was not present and during telephonic talks he said that there is no provision of plotter on this road. The work was started without laying the plastic and neither the 'murrum' lying on the road has been cleared. This clearly indicates that DR Sahu and contractor are working in each other's nexus. Ward corporator Poornima Amit Das said that strict action be taken against the engineer and the contractor and then only payment be released.

#### **Central Chronicle News**

Konta/Sukma, Jan 19: The famous Ramaram fair of Sukma district will be celebrated this year too as like previous years'. This year Rama Ram Mela will be organized on February 15. In connection with the organization of the fair and all the arrangements, a meeting was called in the meeting room of the district office on Tuesday.

In the meeting, Collector Vineet Nandanwar took the opinion for organizing the fair keeping in mind the Covid-19 from the members of Ramaram Mela Trust Committee.



Meeting conducted to chalk out

Rama Ram fair arrangements

The members of the trust said that the situation of Covid-19 remains grim at present, if it continues in the same way,

ized traditionally in a lesser form. If the situation of Covid-19 becomes more severe, then the fair will be organized according to the instructions of the gov-

District Panchavat Devnarayan Kashyap, SDM Sukma Ms. Preeti Collector Rupendra Patel, Municipality Sukma President Jagannath Sahu, Chairman of Ramaram Mela Trust Committee Manoj Dev, Karan Dev along with Manjhi, priest and other members of the commit-

tee were present.

**ABVP** launches

awareness campaign

for COVID 19 third wave

A meeting will be held

on February 2 at 4:00 pm

for organizing Rama Ram

Mela, in which the final

decision of the event will

# National flag to be hoisted at 51 feet height Villagers of Kistaram and Palodi reach district Hqs for basic facilities

Knairagarn, Jan 19: On occasion of the Republic Day, a national flag will be hoisted at 51 feet Ambedkar Chowk. It is under the aegis of Nagrik Ekta Manch that this 51 national flag would be hoisted in the 'Sangeet

Nagri' - Khairagarh on Jan 21 at Ambedkar Chowk at 51 feet

It is notable here that in the last R-Day a young girl from city started the procedure of hoisting of the national flag at 51 feet height. Along with this the example of women's empowerment Phulbasan Yadav had con-

**Central Chronicle News** tributed labour work at the flag erment, the Samiti took the initiative of Pragati Clinic

Khairagarh forward would present lifetime medical checkup as gift to needy women. The voluntary institutions of city viz. Nirmal Triveni Mahabhiyan, Shantidoot Sansthan, Sriram

Gausewa Samiti. Foundation, Mahabodhi Budha Vihar Kalyan Samiti, Gokul Nagar Swayam Sewa Samiti, Dreams Academy, Drivers Union Sangh have given valuable contribution and guidance in making this programme sucGentrai Giirdilicie News

Konta, Jan 19: The picture of Sukma district in the state of Chhattisgarh seems to be changing now. Moved by the continuous development work being done by the district administration, now the villagers of the most sensitive areas are reaching the district office directly and raising their demand for basic facilities.

Villagers of Kistaram of Konta block of Sukma district and reached the collectorate office to meet the collector of Palodi. The villagers apprised the collector about their basic

needs. At the same time, the collector also assured to fulfill the demands of the villagers at the earli-

Sharma was also present during this. The picture of change is constantly coming to the fore in the district. Earlier, a large number of villagers from Minpa, Kondasavali, Maraiguda have also come to meet the collector with their demands. All the demands of which were resolved by the administra-

The wide impact of which is visible in the interior area and now the

villagers have once again come out from the same On Tuesday, Kistaram and Palodi's rural collectors reached the collectorate to meet Nandanwar. Vineet Collector Vineet Nandanwar and SP Sunil Sharma also seated the villagers with utmost ease and discussed them in de-

Aware of the basic facilities, the villagers demanded basic facilities like boring, CC road, pond, land leveling and other development works in the village from the col-

The collector took infor-

mation from everyone about the preparation of ration cards from Aadhar card in the facility camp, after that told the villagers that survey of the village has been done under Dabri, pond, solar facility in the field, tap-water scheme in the village.

Better management of roads, health and education will be done in the area. The same collector gave his mobile number to the villagers and said that whenever there is any problem, inform me, we will solve it immediately. During this a large number of women and children also participated.

mention has been made

in the Master Plan of 2011

for the construction of a

The space is also suffi-

cient at that place. But

neither the political par-

ties nor the administra-

tion seem to be making

efforts towards building a

Liquor business in place of Dal-bhaat

bus stand at that place.

towards

stand

Badhiya Tola.

**Central Chronicle News** 

Rajim, Jan 19: After cases of Omicron variant of COVID 19 are constantly increasing day by day, an awareness program was carried out by activists of Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad of Rajim city here. The said awareness

campaign is being run by Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad Rajim unit by going to schools, colleges, temples etc. in the town through pamphlet distribution and other means and advocating safety rules to the pub-

According to City Minister ABVP Gaurav Rao the pamphlets are being pasted by the workers in

schools, colleges, temples and crowded places and educating people to safeguard themselves against the pandemic.

City Co-Minister ABVP Yash Kahar said that ABVP is playing the role of educating people by distributing pamphlets as the disease is taking many people in its

In this campaign, City Minister Gaurav Rao Ghatge, city cominister Yash Kahar, Dikas Dewangan, Humman Dewangan, Kashyap, Kundan Sonkar, Karan Sonkar, Montu Sonkar, Yogesh Kahar and student council workers are constantly engaged in this cam-

# Bus stand worth 75 lakhs lies abandoned due to non-maintenance

# **Illegal liquor business flourishing in Dal Bhaat Center**

**Central Chronicle News** 

Dongargarh, Jan 19: The bus stand constructed in 2002 at a cost of 75 lakhs for the convenience of the common people of the block has reached a fragmented state due to lack of maintenance and today is lying in an unclaimed condition.

Approved by the then Late Shivendra Bahadur Singh, the bus stand worth 75 lakhs due to not usage by the municipality, the facilities available to the passengers also go unavailable, as passengers are being seen looking for convenience under the open sky and the purpose for which the bus stand was constructed has been not

implemented till today.

Keeping in view the public facilities during the BJP regime, the state government had given approval of 5 crores in the name of Hi-Tech Bus Stand, but even after 3 years of Congress coming to power, no meaningful effort has been made for the process of Hi-Tech Bus Stand, in the region.

Meanwhile School Chowk, where the square was once given the form of a bus stand by the bus owners for the operation of private buses, is even today, the point of stoppage of buses, for passenger's reroute the direction of Kawardha

Rajnandgaon. Due to traffic collapse,



accidents are frequent in the region, but the administration is yet to provide facilities for a new bus stand. Interstate bus

also being operated by private bus owners on this route, causing traffic congestion, as the buses

Keeping in mind the facilities of the visitors of Maa Bamleshwari and

the residents of the city, a

Center! During the BJP regime, a Dal Bhaat Center was being operated for the convenience of the public, but

presently illegal liquor business is flourishing in the Center. Due to the closure of the centre passengers of distant routes are facing problems in getting

## **BRIEF**

# **Flag** ■ Mumbai: A 31-yearold mentally unstable man was arrested for took place at Agar lice was alerted by

#### allegedly setting afire a BJP flag in Dadar in Mumbai. The incident Bazar in Dadar West at around 7 am and po passersby. He was arrested under section 435 (mischief by fire or explosives) of the IPC and a probe has found the person is mentally unstable, the official informed.

#### Lifer

■ Baripada: A court in Odisĥa's Mayurbhanj district sentenced a 32 year-old man to life imprisonment for killing a woman on the suspicion of being a witch eight years ago.

Baripada Additional Sessions Judge Prabir Choudhary also imposed a fine of Rs 5,000 on the convict, Kanda Majhi. On Dec 14, 2014, Majhi killed Srimati Marandi with a sharp weapon near village in Baisinga as he suspected that she was practising witchcraft.

#### **Demolished**

■ **Jammu:** The Jammu Municipal Corporation (JMC) demolished 10 illegally raised structures on footpaths outside the Government Medical College (GMC) hospital here. The anti-encroachment drive near the GMC and Chest Disease hospital in the heart of the city was conducted under the instructions of Commissioner, JMC. Avny Lavasa to clear the footpath and roadside obstructions, he said.

## Safety

■ New Delhi: The Jawaharlal Nehru University Teachers' Association (JNUTA) and the students union accused the varsity administration of neglecting campus safety after a PhD student was allegedly molested there. They alleged that there has been a string of security lapses on the campus and pointed out that the accused in the January 2020 attack on teachers and students are yet to be arrested.

# Held

Gurugram: Two more members of a gang involved in stealing and trafficking infants were arrested, and a sixmonth-old girl child was rescued from them. With these arrests, the police have nabbed 13 people of the gang. The arrested were identified as Anand and Baby, residents of Alwar in Rajasthan. While Baby used to steal infants and sell them to Anand, the latter would also 'purchase' children from the poor and labourers,

## Approved

police said.

■ New Delhi: The Delhi Development Authority's budget for 2022-23 was approved with allocations being made for ongoing housing projects, key civic infrastructure works and for Ph-IV of the Delhi Metro. The budget with an annual outlay of Rs 7,933 crore with receipts being projected at Rs 7,943 crore – was approved in an online meeting of the Authority, chaired by Lt Governor Anil Baijal, also the chairman of the DDA.

# **HC refuses plea by ATCs** concerning breath analyser tests

Civil Aviation (DGCA),

submitted that BA tests

were being conducted in

accordance with the earli-

er directions passed by the

Board had recommended that one machine would be used per person

**New Delhi, Jan 19 (PTI):** 

The Delhi High Court on Wednesday refused to entertain a petition by Air Traffic Controller (ATC) Guild India against the conduct of random breath analyser (BA) tests on five per cent of the controllers on duty at the airports amid the ongoing covid pandemic.

Justice V Kameswar Rao, who said that he was not inclined to interfere with the procedure, noted that not more than six persons are to be tested in an hour, and even in big airports, five per cent of ATCs comes down to only three to four persons.

Everyone must be test-

the area is thoroughly sanitised.

The judge closed the petition and clarified that the authorities shall continue to scrupulously follow the directions passed by the court

taken seriously.

earlier and

any infrac-

tion will be

Lawver Pivush Šanghi. ed... (It takes) one minute appearing for the petitionfor the test. In six minutes er Association, contended that as per the earlier (out of an hour) everyone is through. I am not inorder passed the court, clined, the judge said. I do only two per cent of the not see any reason to en-ATCs can be allowed to tertain the writ petition, take the BA test at ranthe judge said. dom, and thus the aviation Advocate Anjana authority cannot increase Gosain, appearing for the the number to five per cent Directorate General of at a time when there is a

surge in COVID-19 cases. He also claimed that the BA test was being held in a closed area which is also used for airport ground court and after each test,

# **VACCINATION VAN**



Haryana CM Manohar Lal Khattar flags off a COVID-19 vaccination van in Chandigarh on Wednesday.

# BJP walking on thin ice in Bengal amid infighting, bickerings

Kolkata, Jan 19 (PTI):

Plagued by infighting and exodus, the West Bengal BJP, which is still licking its wounds after the assembly poll defeat, is staring at bleak prospects in the state as senior leaders engage in feud off and on social media, leaving little time for the party's growth. Churnings in the Bengal BJP had started after the recent organisational revamp, with several senior leaders and party legislators openly criticising the top brass over its decisions.

All damage control efforts seem to be hitting the wall of late as the house stands divided. "Yes, there have been some issues, few



BJP MLA Lakshan Ghorui during a blanket distribution function in Durgapur on Wednesday.

we are hopeful that the problems will be sorted out very soon," BJP state spokesperson Samik Bhattacharya said. Sources in the BJP said that the party, which had

its flock together after former union minister Babul Supriyo and five legislators, including its national vice president Mukul Roy, switched over to the TMC. is facing an "inner-party been fighting hard to keep rebellion" as leaders anfrom key posts are organising separate meetings.

Leading from the front is prominent Matua leader union minister Shantanu Thakur who recently quit the WhatsApp groups of the party, accusing the state leadership of sidelining leaders from his community for newcomers in the camp, according

Nine BJP MLAs from the community, including Asok Kirtania, Subrata Thakur and Mukutmani Adhikari, have exited legislators' Whatsapp group in the last one month. "It seems the BJP no longer acknowledges the role played by Matua commu-

# **Delhi Police asks Clubhouse** app about organiser's details

Obscene comments against women case

New Delhi, Jan 19 (PTI):

The Delhi Police on Wednesday wrote Clubhouse app seeking details about the organiser of the alleged audio chat group in which some "obscene comments were made against Muslim women", official sources

The development comes day after the Delhi Police's Intelligence Fusion and Strategic Operations unit which works under the supervision of Special Cell filed a FIR against the unknown persons in the matter.

The FIR was registered just hours after the Delhi Commission for Women (DCW) issued a notice to have also written to

the Delhi Police demanding action against some people who made "obscene comments against Muslim women" on the app.

"A case has already been registered in the matter under relevant sections of Indian Penal Code. We

Clubhouse app seeking de tails about the organiser of the alleged audio chap group in which some "obscene comments were made against Muslim women" an official source The sections include

153A (promoting enmity between different groups on grounds of religion, race, place of birth, residence, language, etc., and doing acts prejudicial to maintenance of harmony), 295A (deliberate and malicious acts intended to outrage religious feelings of any class by insulting its religion or religious beliefs) and 354 A (sexual harassment and punishment for sexual harassment), ac-

# MP decides to slash booze rates at airports, selected shops



A liquor retailer in Bhopal.

Bhopal, Jan 19 (PTI): In the new Excise Police for the next Financial Year, the BJP government in Madhya Pradesh has decided to allow the sale of liquor at all airports in the state and select supermarkets in four big cities, and issue home bar licenses to those earning Rs one crore or more annually. In the Excise Policy 2022-23, approved by the state Cabinet, the government also decided to

slash retail prices of liquor by 20 per cent in a bid to "make them practical". Explaining the rationale behind the proposed cut in rates of alcohol, an official said that the prices will become competitive with neighbouring states. Meanwhile, the opposition Congress took a swipe saying the state government is not willing to provide any relief to **■ MPCC** president **Kamal Nath** slammed state

taxes on fuel but is reducing the prices of liquor. The Cabinet meeting chaired by Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan also cleared the Madhya Pradesh Heritage (Traditional) Liquor Policy. Under the new Excise Policy, counters selling liquor can be opened at all the airports in MP while licenses for (opening) such outlets can now be issued in select supermarkets in Indore, Bhopal, Jabalpur and Gwalior at a fixed fee, an official statement said. Now, a home bar license will be issued at an annual fee of Rs 50,000 to applicants with an annual individual income of Rs common people by slashing

# Bommai recovers from COVID, says decision on relaxing curbs likely

**Bengaluru, Jan 19 (PTI):** 

Karnataka Bommai on Wednesday said his government will re-examine the COVID-19 curbs that are in place, and will take a decision regarding relaxation, including the weekend curfew on January 21.

The Chief Minister, who had tested positive for COVID on January 10, has resumed his day-today work from office, after recovery. "On Friday, I will hold a meeting with experts, and will re-examine the curbs that have been enforced," he said.

Speaking to reporters here, he said, "The COVID numbers are increasing, but it has not put a load on



Karnatka CM Basavaraj Bommai working through video

hospitals with very less admissions, attention should be given to OPD (Outpatient Department), with all this, let's see what experts have to say."

Asked whether the weekend curfew will be withdrawn, the CM maintained that all those things will be decided after consulting the experts and going through their report. He said based on the trends in different countries and states, experts have esti-

peak in the state by end Januarv February first week.

To a question, why discussion on relaxing curbs when the cases are expected to peak, he said, "the general feeling that it (in fection) is like a flu, and not much hospitalization is taking place, so day-today activities can be allowed by following COVID rules. Experts are examining it, they will place things before us on Friday. Following which we will make a decision.

With surge in cases, the Karnataka government had last week decided to extend the COVID curbs such as night curfew and the weekend curfew till the end of January.

# AP Govt seeks donations to build school infra

Amaravati, Jan 19 (PTI):

The Andhra Pradesh government has decided to raise funds from donors. both national and international, as it urgently requires over Rs 6,300 crore to ramp up infrastructure in schools for implementing the National Education Policy-2020. Also, with its plan to get all the 44,500plus government schools in the state affiliated to the Central Board Secondary Education, requisite physical infrastructure needs to be built. There are 44,519 state-run schools in AP with 66,846 rooms at present. As per the infrastructure standards for foundation and foundation-plus schools and high schools, and also the norms of the CBSE, the total requirement of rooms

in these schools is 1,15,472.

A government school in Vizianagaram District, Andhra

We need to build 48,626 additional rooms in these schools. An estimated Rs 6,321.38 crore is required for that. Hence, we have decided to seek donations from different quarters, a top official told PTI. A Government Order on the modalities of donation would be issued soon, he said. The government also School requires a Maintenance Fund of Rs

450 crore per annum but the amount is being deducted from the beneficiaries of Ammavodi freebie scheme at the rate of Rs 1,000 each. Under Ammavodi, the government has been paying Rs 15,000 each annually to about 44.5 lakh mothers for sending their kids to school. Since last year, the government has been crediting only Rs 14,000 each into the mothers' accounts

while retaining the balance for school maintenance. While that takes care of the maintenance part, no money is available with the state government for new infrastructure development as banks are also disinclined to advance any more loan, officials point out. Hence, the donation scheme, they said.

Donors can give for one school or a group of schools or even components. The expenditure will be displayed in public domain and the donor will receive a certificate, a top official involved with the programme said. The government is seeking to tap foreign donors, particularly multinational corporations and trusts run by businessmen-philanthropists, who have been funding other programmes in the coun-

# Vaccination team treks snowy mountains to reach villagers

mated that the cases may

**Srinagar, Jan 19 (AP):** 

In a Himalayan village of Jammu and Kashmir, young health worker Masrat Farid packed her bag with vaccines on a frigid morning in January as strong winds swept snow through the air.

She is part of a team of health workers undertaking a door-to-door campaign in the region to deliver vaccine shots to teens and boosters to old people in remote mountain villages. 'We have to fight the infection. We have to keep going,' Farid said as she made her way through the knee-high snow Gagangeer, a hamlet lying between forests. Farid and her colleagues have vaccinated thousands in the last year, mostly in villages



Safia Banoo, receives vaccine for COVID-19 from Masrat Farid of J&K health department, in Gagangeer village.

that they reach by trekking long distances across rugged countryside. But bone-chilling cold and snowy inhospitable terrain are not their only obstacles. Some residents are still vaccinehesitant and winning their trust is more difficult than braving Himalayan winter. 'Most young girls are hesitant, fueled by misinformation and mistrust,' Farid said during a recent vaccination drive in a snow-covered mountain village.

### **BRIEF**

# **Wildfires**

■ Billings: The Biden administration plans to significantly expand efforts to stave off catastrophic wildfires that have torched areas of the US West by more aggressively thinning forests around areas called hotspots where nature and neighbourhoods collide. As climate change heats up and dries out the West. administration officials said they have crafted a USD 50 billion plan to more than double the use of controlled fires.

#### **Extends**

■ **Jerusalem:** Israel has extended the detention of a Palestinian teenager with a rare neuromuscular disorder who has been held without charge for a year in what authorities refer to as administrative detention, his father said. Amal Nakhleh, who was detained in Jan 2021 and turned 18 this week, was one of handful of minors being held in administrative detention.

#### **Test**

Jerusalem: Israel said it has successfullv tested a system designed to intercept ballistic missiles outside the earth's atmosphere. The Arrow Weapon System is part of an array of missile defenses Israel has developed in recent years to protect itself in any future conflict with archene my Iran or regional militant groups, such as the Lebanese Hezbollah or the Palestinian Hamas.

## Foiled

■ Waesaw: Poland's Border Guard authorities say that almost 600 attempts by migrants at crossing the border from Belarus have been foiled so far this year. The attempts have continued since their peak in the fall, but the number of registered tries has dropped significantly, to dozens a day from nearly a thousand a day in November.

Japan widens COVID curbs, including in Tokyo, as cases surge



A woman stands in front of a mask-clad lion statue outside a department store in Tokyo's Ginza district.

Tokyo, Jan 19 (AP):

The Japanese government will place Tokyo and a dozen other areas under restrictions for COVID-19 effective Friday, allowing local leaders to shorten hours for eateries, as a surge in omicron cases threatens to paralyze society.\A governmentcommissioned experts panel on Wednesday approved a plan to put the 13

public to wear masks and practice social distancing, as the government seeks to minimize damage to the economy. Japan had been gradually expanding social and business activity since an earlier wave of infections subsided in September, which experts say was largely due to the country's rapid progress in rolling out the initial two doses of vaccines. areas under a three-week But experts say breakrestraint through Feb. 13, Revitalization Minister

through infections by the omicron variant are more common. The fast-spreading variant has caused a number of medical workers and others to self-isolate after testing positive or coming into close contact with someone who has. Sharply rising infections have already begun to paralyze hospitals, schools and other sectors in some areas.



AGAINST DRILLING

An activist holds a sign reading "Argentine Sea Without Oil" during a demonstration against a project for offshore oil drilling off the coast of Mar del Plata, Argentina.

# Throwaway economy thwarting climate goals

Economy

Daishiro Yamagiwa, who

is also in charge of virus

measures. Prime Minister

Fumio Kishida is expected to officially announce the

new measures at a govern-

ment taskforce meeting

later Wednesday. Japan

has so far resisted the use

of lockdowns to fight the

pandemic and instead has



An aerial view shows rubbish and waste left by fly-tippers in Blackburn, north west England.

#### Issue remains significant blind spot for governments

London, Jan 19 (AFP):

Countries are neglecting the massive impact of the "throwaway" economy on planet-warming emissions, according to research published Wednesday that calculated more than half a trillion tonnes of virgin materials have been consumed since

the 2015 Paris climate deal. From clothing to food,

planes to buildings, research by the organisation Circle Economy estimates that 70 percent of greenhouse gas emissions are linked to the manufacturing and use of products.

But in its annual report on the state of the world's use of materials, researchers said national climate pledges to reduce emissions focus narrowly on fossil fuel use and ignore the mounting global appetite for stuff. Matthew Fraser, head of research at Circle Economy, said the report aimed to look beyond just fossil fuel use

and the transition to green energy and ask about the emissions implications of using fewer resources.

'What if we reimagine our relationship with stuff, what would that bring us? Actually, it is quite significant," he told AFP. The report estimates that if the economy were more circular, reducing resource extraction and consumption by 28 percent, then the world could meet the Paris warming target of 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels. But only a third of nations' climate pledges mention the circular economy as part of their emissions goals, the report said. It warns that humanitv is consuming 70 percent more virgin materials than the world can safely replenish.

The analysis looks at global material flows based on national import and export figures and translates them into estimates of materials used -

# US, allies pledge unity on Russia, to do what isn't as clear

Action includes **banning Russia** from SWIFT banking system

**Washington, Jan 19 (AP):** 

President Joe Biden has rallied European allies to pledge as one that they will take tough measures against Russia if it rolls troops into Ukraine. But when it comes to what exactly the United States and Europe are willing to do. the allies don't look as ringingly united.

Militarily, for example, the United States, Turkey and Britain have stood out for supplying or agreeing to supply anti-tank missiles, armed drones, naval warships and other weapons, along with money to help Ukraine build its defenses. But key ally Germany appears averse to any such direct military aid — so much so



A woman walks past statue of Lenin in Donetsk, the capital of self-proclaimed Donetsk People's Republic (PDR) in eastern Ukraine.

that a British military flight taking weapons to Ukraine on Monday flew around German airspace rather than taking the most direct route through it. While Biden has warned Russian President Vladimir Putin of economic consequences 'like none he's ever seen' if Russia invades Ukraine, some major European allies have demonstrated less en-

thusiasm for huge econom-

damage some European economies, or put in jeopardy the Russian natural gas Europeans need to stay warm this winter. During weeks of intense diplomacy, Russian leaders have dismissed the allies' pledge of a united stand against Russia. In reality, Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov protested, it's the US call-Europeans falling in line.

ic penalties, which could

# CHHATTISGARH STATE POWER TRANSMISSION COMPANY LIMITED, RAIPUR

## PUBLIC NOTICE

In compliance to the provisions under Section 62 and 86(1 of the Electricity Act-2003 and Chhattisgarh State Electricity Regulatory Commission (Terms and Conditions for determination o tariff according to Multi-Year Tariff principles and Methodology and Procedure for determination of Expected revenue from Tariff and Charges) Regulations, 2021, Chhattisgarh State Power Transmission Company Limited (CSPTCL) has filed a petition (No-02 of 2022) for final True-up of FY-2020-21, Aggregate Revenue Requirement(ARR) for control period FY 2022-23 to FY 2024-25 and determination of Transmission Tariff proposal for FY 2022-23 before the Hon'ble Commission

CSPTCL has requested to approve ARR of Rs.955.16 Cr. for true-up of FY 2020-21 and also requested to approve ARR of Rs 1121.78Cr., 1256.83 Cr. & 1624.49 Cr. for FY 2022-23, FY 2023-24 & FY 2024-25 respectively.

Copies of the tariff petition are available at Chhattisgarh State Electricity Regulatory Commission's office, New Shanti Nagar, Raipur and at the office of the Chief Engineer(C&RA), CSPTCL, Danganiya, Raipur which can be purchased on any working day on payment of Rs.300/-& may also be obtained by post on payment of additional charge of Rs.50/-. Copies of petition are also available at website www.cspc.co.in and www.cserc.gov.in.

Persons intending to file objections / suggestions relating to the tariff proposals of CSPTCL may send the copies of objections suggestions with documents and evidence in support thereof directly to Chief Engineer(C&RA). CSPTCL, Danganiya, Raipur and to Secretary, Chhattisgarh State Electricity Regulatory Commission's office, New Shanti Nagar, Raipur within 21 days of the date of publication of this notice. Advance copies of objections / comments may also be sent to CSPTCL at fax no - 0771-2574698 and to CSERC at fax no - 0771-4073553. The Commission shall also hear the persons for which place, date and time shall be notified separately through

Chief Engineer(C&RA) CSPTCL, Raipur

G-66916/2

#### SOUTH EAST CENTRAL RAILWAY No.W/BSP/Homeo/22/BSP, Date: 18.01.2022. NOTIFICATION

Short notification is issued for walk - in - interviev for Engagement of 02 Homeopathic Practitioners purely on contract basis for One Year, 01 Post for Bilaspur and 01 Post for Shahdol.

For more details i.e eligibility, qualification, age experience and other term and conditions may please log in to South East Central Railway website http:// www.secr.indianrailways.gov.in.(About Us-Division/Workshop-Bilaspur-Personnel-

CPR/10/314 For Sr. Divl. Personnel Officer/Bilaspur. f South East Central Railway 🗟 @secrail

कार्यालय कार्यपालन अभियंता, लोक स्वास्थ्य यांत्रिकी खण्ड, कोण्डागांव जिला – कोण्डागांव (छ.ग.) (Phone no. 07786 - 296071, Email id - eekon-phe-cg@gov.in)

## -:: ई-प्रोक्यरमेंट निविदा सचना ::-

छत्तीसगढ़ की राज्यपाल की ओर से जिला कोण्डागांव में एकीकृत पंजीयन प्रणाली अंतर्गत सक्षम श्रेणी में पंजीकृत ठेकेदारों से निम्नलिखित निर्माण कार्य हेत् ऑनलाईन निविदा

कार्य का नाम:— जल जीवन मिशन अंतर्गत विभिन्न ग्रामों में रेट्रोफिटिंग/एकल ग्राम

नलजल प्रदाय योजना कार्य।				
स. क्र.	निविदा क्रमांक एवं दिनांक	सिस्टम निविदा क्रमांक		कार्य की अनुमानित लागत (रू. लाख में)
1	2	3	4	5
1	168 / 11.01.2022	90733	कुकाङ्गारकापाल रेट्रोफिटिंग नलजल प्रदाय योजना	138.10
2	169 / 11.01.2022	90735	कमेला रैट्रोफिटिंग नलजल प्रदाय योजना	89.65
3	170 / 11.01.2022	90749	चलका एकल ग्राम नलजल प्रदाय योजना	75.51
4	171 / 11.01.2022	90765	एहकली एकल ग्राम नलजल प्रदाय योजना	68.11
5	172 / 11.01.2022	90790	चौडंग एकल ग्राम नलजल प्रदाय योजना	64.35
6	173 / 11.01.2022	90771	जोडेंगा रेट्रोफिटिंग नलजल प्रदाय योजना	60.99
7	174 / 11.01.2022	90772	बड़ेकुरूषनार एकल ग्राम नलजल प्रदाय योजना	94.48
8	175 / 11.01.2022	90774	काकडगांव एकल ग्राम नलजल प्रदाय योजना	67.81
9	176 / 11.01.2022	90779	पुसावण्ड एकल ग्राम नलजल प्रदाय योजना	93.82
10	177 / 11.01.2022	90781	मालाकोट रेट्रोफिटिंग नलजल प्रदाय योजना	135.90
11	178 / 11.01.2022	90785	बाडागांव रेट्रोफिटिंग नलजल प्रदाय योजना	35.98
12	179 / 11.01.2022	90789	मारंगपुरी रेट्रोफिटिंग नलजल प्रदाय योजना	97.15
13	180 / 11.01.2022	90793	उड़ीदगांव रेट्रोफिटिंग नलजल प्रदाय योजना	125.21
14	181 / 11.01.2022	90794	छोटेबंजोड़ा एकल ग्राम नलजल प्रदाय योजना	68.54
15	182 / 11.01.2022	90795	चिमड़ी एकल ग्राम नलजल प्रदाय योजना	68.52
$\overline{}$	Control of the Contro	_		

निविदा की सामान्य शर्तें, धरोहर राशि, विसतृत निविदा विज्ञप्ति, निविदा दस्तावेज व अन नकारी कार्यालयीन अवधि में कार्यालय से प्राप्त की जा सकती है, साथ ही यह जानका —प्रोक्योरमेंट वेब पोर्टल http://cgeprocurement.gov.in पर तथा विभागीय वेबसाईट http://phedcegprocurement.gov.in से डाउनलोड की जा सकती है। डाउनलोड करने व अंतिम तिथि 04.02.2022 है।

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER P.W.D. (B&R) AMBIKPUR CIRCLE AMBIKAPUR Invitation Date :- 14.01.2022

E-PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTICE

## For tender detail please visit http://eproc.cgstate.gov.ir

- 02. Bid Due Date 27.01.2022
- 03. Concern Division Jashpur Division.

	System Number	Name of work	in lacks
1	2	3	4
1	128 90841 2nd Call C Class and Above	BT Renewal Work of Pidi to Bartoli Road Length 1.80 Km., Khonga to Khoura Road Length 4.00 Km., Sarnatoli Bumtel Road Length 2.00 Km., Kalyan Ashram Road Length 0.45 Km, Hindpuri Gamhariya Road Length 1.30 Km. Housing Board Coloney Road Length 2.00 Km, Under PWD Sub Division No. 1 and Sub Division No. 2 Jashpur.	130.96
2	129 90842 2nd Call	Construction of Prashasnik Bhawan and Main Gate at District Jail Jashpur	58.04

Superintending Engineer P.W.D. Ambikapur Circle Ambikapur

**GOVERNMENT OF CHHATTISGARH, WATER RESOURCES DEPARTMENT** OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, WATER RESOURCES DIVISION, PENDRAROAD

> e-Procurement Tender Notice eProcurement Portal: https://eproc.cgstate.gov.in (FIRST-CALL)

SYSTEM TENDER NO. 90680 / NOTICE INVITING TENDER

NO. 12 /SAC/2021-22 DATED: 14.01.2022 Online Tenders are invited for the

following works up to 04-02-2022 (17.30 hours IST). System Group

6	Tender No.	No.	Name of Work	amount of contract
	90680		RENOVATION OF HEAD WORK AND C.C. LINING OF CANALS OF AURAPANI TANK SCHEME.	
	The deta	ils car	n be viewed & downloaded online directely from	n the Govt.

Chhattisgarh Integrated e-Procurement portal (https://eproc.cgstate.gov.in) from dated 21-01-2022 at 17.31 hours (IST) onwards.

Note: All eligible/interested contractors /bidders are mandated to get enrolled on the integrated e-Procurement portal (https://eproc.cgstate.gov.in) and get approva on specific vendor class from PWD under centralized contractor/ supplie registration in order to download the tender documents and participate in the subsequent bidding process.

Note:-Election Code of Conduct has not been Violet.

**EXECUTIVE ENGINEER** WATER RESOURCES DIVISION, PENDRAROAD (C.G.) For, Chief Engineer

Hasdeo Basin Water Resources Deptt. Bilaspur (C.G.)





INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY KHARAGPUR

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Application Start Date: <a href="mailto:january20,2022">january 20, 2022</a> Application End Date: <a href="mailto:february15,2022">february 15, 2022</a> Contact: <a href="mailto:jgdba@vgsom.iitkgp.ac.in">jgdba@vgsom.iitkgp.ac.in</a>, <a href="mailto:jgdbaw.iitkgp.ac.in">jgdbaw.iitkgp.ac.in</a>, <a href="mailto:jgdbaw.iitkgp.ac.in">jgdbaw.iitkgp.ac.in</a>, <a href="mailto:jgdbaw.iitkgp.a \*Dates of the test and interview are subject to change depending upon the prevailing COVID condition.

davp 39103/12/0011/2122

D Class and

G-66915/2



कोण्डागांव (छ.ग.)

कार्यपालन अभियंता

लोक स्वास्थ्य यांत्रिकी खप



Established 1974 Volume 47 No. 108

# **Demographic trend**

ndia's population is set to fall as its total fertility rate (TFR) or the average number of children born to a woman over her lifetime has dropped below replacement level for the first time and is now 2. This was revealed in the National Family Health Survey data for 2019-21 for phase-2 states along with all-India data. The replacement level TFR, at which a population exactly replaces itself from one generation to the next, is estimated to be 2.1. Rural TFR is above replacement level only in Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and Jharkhand among the larger states and in Meghalaya, Manipur and Mizoram among the smaller states. With correct economic policies, India can accelerate economic growth as population growth is now stable. Need is to take balanced approach regarding demographic trend. In general, households tend to opt for smaller family sizes when the infant mortality rate declines - part of a complex web of reasons that has driven the demographic transition across large parts of India. The relationship between declining infant mortality rates and increasing female literacy is widely known in demography, and these are two of the primary proximate causes of declining fertility. India continues to have a large number of adolescents and youth. Hence, despite the decline in TFR, it will take some time for overall population growth in the country to slow down. It is critical that we make the most of this window of opportunity by investing in education, health and skill development for our youth. Enabling access to secondary and higher education as well as suitable opportunities for women to participate in the labour force, needs special focus. The TFR represents the average number of births per woman, and for reference, the UK has a TFR of 1.65 while the USA maintains a 1.70. India has now hit a national record low of less than 2.0, below the replacement rate threshold of 2.1, with some regions even reporting a TFR of 1.6. While the effect will not be an immediate downswing in population, it will slow the population growth significantly. Urbanisation is also an important reason for the decline. By 2030, as much as 41 percent Indians will be living in towns and cities. In the countryside, an additional family member is a helping hand but in cities raising a child is expensive. Also in cities, women have less social pressure to have more children. The survey shows the fertility rate at 1.6 percent in urban areas and 2.1 percent in rural India. The current moderate to slightly high fertility in a few categories of the population is because of lower education, higher infant mortality, preference for sons and lack of access to good quality family-planning services. It's time to stop playing politics over population and focus on the profound economic and social impacts of a slowing population growth. India has entered a demographic sweet spot that will continue for another three decades, half of India's population is under 29 years of age.

# **Afghan identity**

human rights experts have voiced grave concern over attempts by the Taliban in Afghanistan to steadily erase women and girls from public life, saying women from ethnic and religious minorities such as the Hazara, Tajik, Hindu and other communities are even more vulnerable in the wartorn country. Afghanistan never had a sense of national kinship despite a common religious faith but different community affiliations. The sense of identity in Afghanistan is derived from tribes such as Pashtuns, Tajiks and Hazaras, but what gradually emerged as the overpowering distinction was one of religion and sects. The Shia-Sunni divide was a historical legacy and so was the split of Sunnis between the radicals who were totally against the US-led West and in favour of a revival of Islam of the period of the four 'Companions' of Prophet or the 'Pious Caliphs' - and the body of Islamists who advocated that the Islamic Republic, though rooted in Sharia, was capable of existing in 'competition not conflict' with the Western democracy. The overriding imprint of radical Islam on Afghanistan strengthened through the years of the US-led 'war on terror' is traceable to the Jehad launched by the leading Ulema of the times - Al Tijani in Algeria, Abdul Wahab in Arabia and Wahab's follower Shah Waliullah in India - against the Western encroachment on 'Muslim land', in the middle of the 19th century. Due to their numbers, the key groups in the Afghan power stakes are the Pashtuns, Tajiks, Hazaras and the Uzbeks. The Pashtuns are based in the southern and southeastern parts of Afghanistan and also have a presence across the border in northwestern Pakistan, where the core of the Taliban leadership is said to have moved following the US invasion. The Tajiks, who speak Dari, occupy the northern and western parts of the country and have their stronghold in the Panjshir valley. They have featured prominently in Afghan power struggles. Apart from Ahmad Shah Massoud, the leader of the Northern Alliance, there was Burhanuddin Rabbani, who served as Afghan president from 1992 to 1996 before Kabul fell to the Taliban. Abdullah Abdullah, who has ended second-best in multiple presidential elections and had entered a power-sharing agreement with Ghani after the last of them, in 2019, is of mixed Pashtun-Tajik ethnicity but is widely considered the latter. The Hazaras are mainly based in central Afghanistan. The group, which speaks a Dari dialect, has historically faced persecution at the hands of Afghan rulers, leading to their perception as 'the traditional underclass of Afghan society". But their numbers meant that they maintained their stronghold. The chief leader of the Uzbeks, the ethnic group that occupies the northern parts of Afghanistan, along its border with Uzbekistan, is Abdul Rashid Dostum, a warlord known for frequently changing sides. A report by the Minority Rights Group International in 1992, when the country was caught in a violent contest for power among its various warlords and militia commanders following the Soviet departure, was entitled, 'Afghanistan: A Nation of Minorities'.

Central Chronicle welcomes, articles, write ups, comments on different issues for editorial page (800-900 words), Letter to editor for this page. It can be sent by The letters can be edited or rewritten for clarity of thoughts.

CENTRAL CHRONICLE. RAIPUR. THURSDAY, JANUARY 20, 2022



Visitors wearing face masks take a photo in the snow at the Gyeongbok Palace, one of South Korea's well-known landmarks, in Seoul, South Korea.

# India needs roads network and still reach net zero carbon target

#### UMA KAMBHAMPATI & SUBHAM KAILTHYA



ne of the keys to China's economic renaissance over the past couple of decades is often overlooked. Namely, it has built a lot of roads. China's highways have more or less tripled from around 50,000km in 2000 to around 160,000km by the end of 2020. This means that in just two decades, China has added highways that are 20 percent longer than the entire US interstate highway system, and these make up about 40 percent of all roads in the country. India, too, has tripled its highways over the same duration, but the network is far less impressive. They are lower quality, narrower, less well maintained and only make up a very small part of the total system of roads in the country. This is arguably one of the reasons why its economy has substantially under performed China's over the past 20 years: China's GDP grew 12fold to be worth USD14.7 trillion by 2020, while India's grew sixfold to be worth USD2.6 trillion over the same period. So why has India been much poorer at building roads? And with Prime Minister Modi having just committed to reaching net zero emissions by 2070, is it possible to build roads and decarbonise at the same time?

China's massive road-building

programme is immediately visible to visitors. The pace of investment in the network has accelerated since 2011. Not only that, the Chinese are planning to increase their highway network by another 50 percent by 2035. On paper, it looks as though India's road infrastructure is better. The cumulative road network is 5.9 million kms, which is longer than China (4.6 million kms), though slightly smaller than the US (6.7 million kms). The density of India's road network, at 1.62km of roads per square kilometre of land, is much higher than the US (0.68) or China (0.49) – though this is not surprising when you reflect that both these rivals are geographically three times larger than India. However, the quality of India's road infrastructure is very poor: only 3 percent of these roads are national highways, and 75 percent of highways are only two-lane. Roads are congested and road maintenance is under-funded. At the same time, 40 percent of the roads are dirt roads, and over 30 percent of villages have no access to all-weather roads. Many explanations have been given for India's inadequate road investment, including lack of funds and poor project management. An Economist article from 2017 blamed a litigious system that makes it hard for the government to requisition land, as well many public-private partnerships stalling. We recently published a paper arguing that India's political system is another factor. Road-building is jointly the responsibility of the central government and each state. The central government rewards states which are politically aligned with the ruling party, particularly the core supporters.

states and central government to get around obstacles like land acquisition, planning permission and vetting of tenders all of which can delay projects and lead to huge cost overruns. The need for green transport infrastructure is another issue. All this requires the central government to cooperate with states from across the political spectrum. Investing in road infrastructure can catalyse growth in two ways. Like all Keynesian investments, it increases employment, incomes and therefore demand throughout an economy. For a country like India with relatively low incomes and an excess supply of labour, road-building can unlock growth quickly particularly as a way of recovering from the COVID collapse. As John Maynard Keynes famously said of the importance of governments increasing spending during difficult times: 'The government should pay people to dig holes in the ground and then fill them up.' Roads also make economies more productive. They make it easier for people to get to work, for supply chains to function, and for companies to bring goods to market.

Roads bring down transport costs, make everyone more confident that things will move from A to B, and reduce the need for companies to store costly inventory to avoid running out of sup plies. According to a 2014 World Bank survey, one in ten Indian firms thought inadequate transportation infrastructure was a major obstacle to their growth. It is worth pointing out that improvements to India's roads have already increased productivity for companies over the past two decades despite the poor quality of the network as a whole. We found that a 1 percent increase in road density raised productivgives a sense of what could be achieved with greater investment. Indeed, India is now investing more in its road network for exactly these reasons though the US and China are too. India is planning to construct 40km of highways every day in the current financial year, and intends to increase its highways by a third in the next few years. Given a large pool of unemployed labour, the conditions are ideal to do this. But the worry is that the same old obstacles get in the way: a report earlier this year by a parliamentary standing committee suggested that more than 800 road projects had been delayed, for instance.

Then there are carbon emissions, which have the potential to significantly increase both from road-building and increased traffic. Modi's announcement at COP26 that India would not aim for net zero until 2070 signals that, in the short run, growth is likely to come first and it is obviously difficult for wealthier nations to argue that India should not have a world-class road network. Having said that, roadbuilding has to go hand in hand with investing in technology to reduce emissions, including more electric and hybrid vehicles and a charging network to make electric cars viable. This needs to not only be an investment priority for India but for players like the US who have been working to assist developing countries to decarbonise. If India is to tap the potential of infrastructure development to stimulate growth, it needs to both make the green transition part of the programme and to look at the obstacles to making road-building succeed. With a state-of-theart road network, India could achieve so much more.

### Mamata's ambition

Merciless Mamata Banerjee, also fondly known as Didi is no doubt the undisputed political leader of West Bengal. Her recent triumph in Assembly election in the state of West Bengal has propelled her to be chief of opposition alliance for the 2024 Lok Sabha polls. Seeing her propulsion into the national politics Mamata Banerjee has become overambitious. From West Bengal's state politics, she is now trying to form a united front against ruling BJP-led NDA, minus the Congress at the Centre. In this process, she has already started visiting non-BJP ruled states like Maharashtra, Punjab, Rajasthan etc., in recent time. She minces no words to attack her bete noire Narendra Modi in any issue fair or foul. For her information I want to remind her that an exact similar type of attempt was made by one Chandra Babu Naidu, ex-CM o Andhra Pradesh, (son in law of NT Rama Rao) the then blue-eyed boy of the oppositions to topple the then government with the support of the opposition, which later on came down crashing into the ground. In present date Chandra Babu Naidu is a non-entity in state as well as nation's politics, in simple words he has become history. To be ambitious is good, but to be over ambitious it can boomerang badly. I wish Didi all the best.

#### Lanu Dutt, via emai **Exam experiments**

Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) current objective type exams have brought in a lot of criticism from the student community as the papers were found very tricky, confusing and 'stress creating'. Students of class twelfth had the shock of their life when the English paper had them bewildered because of questions that were confusing and the option to be chosen, the students opine, were all similar and each answer was a valuable point in itself making the students very difficult to get the right one! Mathematics also had them tensed as it was lengthy and took time to get the answers! The problem was even raised in the parliament and a request was made to the Education Ministry to make evaluation liberal. He also expressed anguish as the students were totally depressed and mentally down and this can even affect their prospects also. The board had gone for such innovations in the past too and though some of its novelties had gone well with the students some did not. Now the board's experimentation of two semesters, as public examinations, and with difficult papers making the round undoubtedly has caused anxiety and apprehension among parents and students. The papers have caused a furore among the students, parents and teachers community spreading a sort of fear and panic and disappointment even among the very bright ones who are under severe pressure. Students who aimed for a centum now doubt whether they would be able to even score a pass mark in the subjects and what makes them tenser is the fact that the board had announced earlier that in a future situation if Covid crisis becomes critical and the exam in April is cancelled then the first-semester mark would be taken. The students cry that it would be a tough time for them when the results come as they would have to sweat a lot to get high marks in the second-semester exam if there is one. They also may find it hard to compete with state syllabus scorers who score more owing to a much easier set of questioning. What teachers and parents are worried about is that the board's new ideas and experimentation in question papers might result in more students opting for the state syllabus in the plus 2 levels in future. It is high time the board minimized its way of exploring and experimenting

M Pradyu, via email

ity by about 0.25 percent. This quires coordination between (Uma Kambhampati is Professor of Economics and Subham Kailthya is Teaching Fellow at University of Warwick, UK.)



Arvind Virmani@dravirmani 'Debt trap education,' and 'Debt trap diplomacy', share the problem of asymmetric information and Moral hazard; ie one side of the market has institutionally greater information and knowledge than the other, and can easily cheat the latter in the absence of an independent regulator!

Anil Talwar@aniltalwar2 As young offrs we were always upto some prank or the other to unnerve our NCO instrs. During YO's, the tech classes were taken by NCO instrs. They always asked an initial question to link up to the main subke hotey hain, koi ek'? Talwar saab.



In addition, road building re-

RajSingNiranjan

Raj Singh@

Bhatia@m\_bhatia19

Success is the product of daily habits-not once in a lifetime transformations. Your outcomes are a lagging measure of your habits. Your networth is a lagging measure of your financial habits. James Clear-Atomic Habits.





# Harini Calamur@calamur

Those tableaux (wtf don't we call them floats) remain about as interesting as they were when I was in the 3rd standard (a long time ago), why do we even have them? random people doing folk dances from the early days of DD such a supreme waste of time, energy, effort and bandwidth.

## Amar Sidhu@amarsidhu

Blindly aping the western way of life without thought and deliberation and running down your indigenous culture and calling it 'progressive' is resulting in chaos and will have its own pitfalls and consequences. Being in, and causing misery is hardly 'progressive'!

Setting up of Hydro power plant below 25 MW is delicenced in India. Hence all states in India must be encouraged to set up as many hydro projects with MUST RUN status to help produce clean energy during monsoon. We must run such campaign to discuss with all stockholders.

#### Bharati Chaturvedi@Bharati09 Spot the weapon. No, it's not a gun. It fights climate change. #wetlands.



# **BRIEF**

#### **Funding**



(previously known as BukuKas) on Wednesday said it has raised USD 80 million (about Rs 595.8 crore) in funding led by Tiger Global and Sequoia Capital India. CEO Krishnan Menon about conviction in the rapidly growing digital economy.

#### Reduce

■ New Delhi: State-run non-banking financial firms -- Power Finance Corporation (PFC) and REC Ltd -- have reduced their lending rates across all types of loans by 40 basis points. The reduction in rates has been possible due to lower cost of borrowings by these organisations. It is pertinent to note that PFC and REC are already providing short-term loans at interest rates as low as 6.25 per cent for continued efforts to re-

### Raises



main competitive.

■ New Delhi: Dogsee Chew on Wednesday said it has raised Rs 50 crore in Series A round from Mankind Pharma along with existing investor. Sixth Sense Ventures Founder Bhupendra Khanal said this such a giant is a huge vote of confidence for us.

# Logistics

■ Mumbai: MatchLog, a container logistics optimisation platform, has raised USD 3 million (around Rs 22.3 crore) in a funding round from venture capital fund Blue Ashva Capital, Rainmatter Climate, and early-stage investor Capital-A. The capital raised in the pre-Series A round will be deployed to develop Matchlog's platform further for AI and machine learning-based pairing of cargo, grow multimodal share in addition to road transport.

## Invest



New Delhi: Used two wheeler platform CredR on Wednesday said it will invest around Rs 110 crore in 2022-23 to expand its business. CEO Sasidhar Nandigam said, the pandemic was an unexpected boon to our business. Break in business allowed us to reposition.

## **Foodtech**

New Delhi: Fresh produce food-tech venture, Pluckk has raised around Rs 37 crore seed capital in a funding round from Exponentia Ventures a fund focussed on emerging business ideas in both B2C and B2B space, the company said on Wednesday.

# Economic recovery yet to attain durability

#### Inflation causing stagflation risk

Mumbai, Jan 19 (PTI):

Rating agency Icra on Wednesday said while there is some evidence of the economic recovery becoming broad-based in the third quarter of fiscal 2022, it is yet to attain the durability being sought by Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) as a precursor to policy transmis-

The agency expects the real GDP to expand 6-6.5 per cent year-on-year in the third quarter of FY2022 (+8.4 per cent in Q2 FY2022). It also sees the RBI maintaining the status quo in the upcoming monetary policy review to be held in February.

Its Chief Economist Aditi Nayar said economic activity rebounded in December 2021, even as many sectors continued to trail the performance

Mumbai, Jan 19 (PTI):

The rupee snapped its 3-

day losing streak to settle

14 paise higher at 74.44

(provisional) against the

US dollar on Wednesday,

tracking positive regional

peers, even as the domes-

tic equity market settled

At the interbank foreign

exchange market, the

rupee opened lower at

74.70 a dollar, registering a

decline of 12 paise from

the last close. During the

day, it pared losses and wit-

nessed an intra-day high of

ly settled at 74.44 (provi-

American currency, up 14

On Tuesday, the rupee

paise over its last close.

sional)

The domestic unit final-

against the

with significant losses.

ECONOMIC

recorded in October 2021. Encouragingly, the quarterly data suggests a modest broad-basing of the recovery in Q3 FY2022, relative to Q2 FY2022, when compared to respective pre-COVID-19 volumes.

"However, the onset of the third wave of COVID-19 has triggered state-wise restrictions, which have expectedly interrupted the momentum in the ongoing month, reiterating that the recovery is yet to attain durability," Nayar said in a released on Wednesday. The agency said the y-o-y performance

Rupee 14 paise higher at 74.44

against USD, silver jumps Rs 1,603

slumped by 33 paise to

close at a two-week low of

74.58 against the US dollar.

gained the most in a week

following stronger region-

al currencies. Domestic

bond markets saw a recov-

ery on suspected interven-

tion by the central bank,

which helped in rupee re-

covery," said Dilip Parmar,

Research Analyst, HDFC

Also, the relentless sell-

ing of dollars from corpo-

rates caused speculative

unwinding of positions,

pected to consolidate with-

in the 74.25 to 74.80 band in

the coming days," he

lar index, which measures

Meanwhile, the US dol-

"Spot USD/INR is ex-

"The

Securities.

Parmar said.

Indian rupee

of 10 of the 15 high-frequency indicators improved in December 2021 compared to November

These include generation of GST e-way bills, non-oil merchandise exports, electricity generation, two-wheeler output as well as aggregate deposits and non-food credit of scheduled commercial banks.

The report further said the y-o-y performance of nine of the 15 high-freindicators in

the greenback's strength

against the basket of six

currencies, fell 0.11 per

Silver prices spurted by

Rs 1,603 per kg while gold

was marginally up in the

local market here on

Wednesday amid a weaker

rupee, according to HDFC

Gold prices inched up by

Rs 16 to Rs 47,878 per 10

grams. In the previous

trade, the precious metal

had settled at Rs 47,862 per

slightly higher following a

weak rupee," according to

Dilip Parmar, Research

Analyst, HDFC securities.

Rs 63,435 per kg from Rs

61,832 per kg in the previ-

Silver jumped Rs 1,603 to

prices traded

cent to 95.62.

Securities.

10 gram

'Gold

tions and retail payments rose to all-time highs in December 2021, while the monthly mobility for retail and recreation rose above the level of baseline period for the first time since the onset of COVID-19, it said. Navar further said that following the reimposition of state-wise restrictions to curb the third wave of COVID-19, the early data for January 2022 is expectedly weak.

The daily average generation of the GST e-way bills dipped to 2.1 million during January 1-16, 2022, from 2.3 million in December 2021.

After a y-o-y growth in December 2021, the sales of petrol and diesel of state refiners slipped back to a contraction in the first half of January 2022. Even, the y-o-y growth in electricity demand eased to 1.9 per cent during January 1-16, 2022, from 2.8 per cent in December 2021, she said.

### **Big Bazaar** introduces 'Sabse Saste Din Ab Aayenge'

Mumbai, Jan 19:

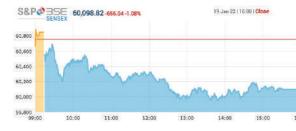
Big Bazaar, India's largest omni channel retailer begins 2022 with the biggest savings extravaganza of the year- Sabse Saste Din, from January 19th to 26th. This power packed sale will deliver to every Indian home the lowest prices on food, household items, electronics, fashion apparels, footwear, toys and many other categories for maximum savings. This year customers can avail all the offers not just in stores but also get it deliveredhome via the Big Bazaar app, shop.bigbazaar.comwebsite and avail free home delivery in 2 hours. Along with lowest prices, customers will get fashionvouchers worth Rs.2500 on shopping any-

# **Koo unveils** new features

Mumbai, Jan 19:

In an effort to empower, engage and inform voters before they cast their ballots in the upcoming Legislative Elections, micro-blogging platform - Koo - has announced a slew of hyperlocal initiatives across multiple Indian languages. As the largest platform which enables online expression in Indian languages, the Koo App will undertake innovative feature enhancements and awareness campaigns to enhance voter confidence in the electoral process, and guide voters to make an informed decision while exercising their franchise. Koo will launch a dedicated section on the platform for live updates, news about candidates and parties and constituencylevel announcements. which will be available in Hindi, Punjabi, Marathi, etc., for the benefit of voters from poll-bound states. In addition, Koo will offer Chat Rooms in native languages to facilitate healthy discussions and debates on election-related topics in

# Sensex, Nifty tanks around 1% as rate hike worries hit



#### Mumbai, Jan 19 (PTD:

Equity benchmarks Sensex and Nifty tanked around 1 per cent on Wednesday due to sharp losses mainly in IT, banking and FMCG shares following a global rout in equities on rate hike worries.

The 30-share BSE Sensex declined by 656.04 points or 1.08 per cent to close at 60,098.82, with 23 of its constituents ending in the red. The broader NSE Nifty

plunged by 174.65 points or 0.96 per cent to close at 17,938.40 points as 35 of its stocks closed with losses.

Infosys fell the most among Sensex stocks, declining by 2.85 per cent. Among other IT stocks, TCS fell by 1.87 per cent, Wipro by 1.52 per cent, and HCL Tech by 1.70 per cent. Asian Paints by 2.71 per cent, HUL declined by 2.41 per cent, Bajaj Finance by 2.07 per cent, and Kotak Bank by 1.86 per cent.

Foreign investors re mained net sellers in the Indian equity markets as they offloaded stocks worth 1,254.95 crore on Tuesday, according to stock exchange data.

Asian stock markets de clined in cautious trading with Tokyo's Nikkei 225 plunging nearly 3 per cent following losses on Wall Street. Australia's S&P/ASX 200 fell 1 per cent to 7,332.50. South Korea's Kospi declined 0.8 per cent, the Shanghai Composite lost 0.3 per cent to 3,558.18. Hong Kong's Hang Seng inched up. France's CAC 40 added 0.1% to 7,138.95, while Germany's DAX shed 0.3% to 15,720.91. Britain's FTSE

100 sank 0.1% to 7,556.70.

# Exchange, fraud issues dampen cross-border biz for MSMEs

#### **■ MSMEs key to raising India's exports**

New Delhi, Jan 19 (PTI):

MSMEs have cited challenges related to high costs, exchange-related issues and concerns around frauds while doing business across borders, according to a sur-

To overcome such issues, MSMEs have been partnering with third-party online selling platforms, developing their own websites and apps, digitising internally for online selling, and adopting a global payment system, said PayPal's MSME Digital Readiness Survey in partnership with Edelman Data and Intelligence.

"98 per cent of the surveyed businesses have ex-

pressed an interest to invest in more payment options. Of this, 95 per cent are looking to introduce newer ways of (30 per cent)," it said. payment and 89 per cent are keen on optimising card payments. This is followed by optimization of services to accept digital wallets like PayPal (70 per cent)," it noted. The survey was conducted between October-November 2021, and assess-

"MSMEs have called out certain challenges associated with doing business across borders like high costs (74 per cent), exchangerelated issues (31 per cent), and fraud-related concerns

terviews with 250 business

decision makers of India's

small and medium enter-

prises, which are defined as

having an annual turnover

between Rs 5-250 crore.

The survey highlights the shift in consumer behaviour induced by lockdowns. It has paved way for purchasing from virtual stores. MSMEs have positively seen a 65 per cent increase in online buying from customers and close to 80 per cent shared that their consumers are more receptive to using different payments options,

# Developers expect up to 30% rise in real estate prices

**New Delhi, Jan 19 (PTI):** 

A significant percentage of real estate developers expect property prices to rise of up to 30 per cent this year due to sharp increase in rates of building materials, according to a survey conducted by realtors body CREDAI. The Confederation of

Real Estate Developers Associations of India (CREDAI) conducted the 'Real Estate Developers Sentiment Survey 2022' during December 30 to January 11, 2022. As many as 1,322 developer members participated in the

Around 60 per cent developers foresee a price rise up to 20 per cent in 2022, due to increase in prices of building materi-

**New Delhi, Jan 19 (PTI):** 

Tata Motors on Wednesday for-

Tigor trims, priced between Rs

Delhi). The Tiago iCNG range is

and Rs 7.64 lakh while the three

tagged at Rs 7.69 lakh, Rs 8.29

homegrown auto major plans to

lakh and Rs 8.41 lakh respec-

strengthen its position in the

CNG market which has been

"It is very clear that the CNG

growing at a fast pace.

tively. With the launch, the

ayed into the CNG segment

with the launch of Tiago and

6.09 lakh and Rs 8.41 lakh

respectively (ex-showroom

priced between Rs 6.09 lakh

variants of Tigor iCNG are



al, the report said. As per the survey findings, nearly 35 per cent of respondents expect prices to rise by 10-20 per cent, while 25 per cent of builders see up to 10 per cent hike in rates.

# exchange for third straight year

New Delhi. Jan 19 (PTI):

The National Stock Exchange of India has emerged as the world's largest derivatives exchange for the third consecutive year in 2021 in terms of the number of contracts traded, according to the Futures Industry Association (FIA).

In addition, the exchange was ranked fourth by the number of trades in cash equities, as per the statistics maintained by the World Federation of Exchanges (WFE) for 2021.

In a statement on Wednesday NSE said it has ranked as the largest exchange globally in equity derivatives as well as currency derivatives by the number of contracts

added. Chandra noted that the



NSE world's largest derivatives

traded. "It is a matter of trades," Vikram Limaye, MD & CEO, NSE, said.

The year 2021 witnessed the total registered investor base on NSE surpassing the 5-crore mark

great pride for us and our country that NSE has emerged as a global leader and achieved the distinction of being the largest derivatives exchange in the world for the 3rd consecutive year and the 4th largest exchange in cash equities by the number of

to reach a count of 5.5

# NTPC top biomass user in India,

State-run power giant NTPC has emerged as the top biomass user, having cofired about 58,000 MT of biomass, while tendering a total of 10.7 MMT over short-term and long-term basis, the power ministry said on Wednesday.

As on date, approximately 59,000 metric tonnes (MT) of biomass has been cofired in thermal power plants in the country, while tenders for 12 million metric tonnes (MMT) are at different stages of process for short-term & long-term duration, the ministry said in

#### crore investors. In the last 10 years, the

equity derivatives daily average turnover increased by 4.2 times from Rs 33,305 crore in 2011 to Rs 1,41,267 crore in 2021. During the same period, the cash market daily average turnover surged by 6.2 times from Rs 11,187 crore in 2011 to Rs 69,644 crores in 2021.

In currency derivatives, the daily average turnover increased by 83 per cent from Rs 14,252 crore in 2011 to Rs 26,017 crore in 2021. Academic research has shown that a wellfunctioning derivatives market can offer a variety of benefits, including improved liquidity and enhanced price discovery for the underlying assets, the exchange said.

# to slip, down 2% in Dec December due to delays in

India's oil production continues

wew veini, Jan 19 (PTI):

es the impact of COVID-19

on small businesses that

have an online presence.

The results are based on in-

India's production of crude oil, which is refined to produce petrol and diesel, continued to decline in December 2021, with lower output from state-owned ONGC leading to a near 2 per cent drop, official data showed on Wednesday.

Oil production December 2021 was 2.51 million tonnes, down from 2.55 million tonnes a year earlier and a target of 2.6 million tonnes. The output was, however, higher than 2.43 million tonnes production in November State-owned Oil and

Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) - India's biggest producer, produced 3 per cent less crude oil at 1.65 million tonnes

mobilising equipment at western offshore fields. Oil India Ltd (OIL) produced 5.4 per cent more crude oil at 2,54,360 tonnes.

India is 85 per cent reliant on imports to meet its crude oil needs as domestic output is insufficient to meet the demand.

During April-December the first nine months of the current fiscal year crude oil production fell 2.63 per cent to 22.3 million tonnes. ONGC produced 4 per cent less oil at 14.6 million tonnes. Natural gas production, however, rose by almost a fifth to 2.89 billion cubic meters (bcm) in December, mainly due to output from newer fields in the KG-D6 block, operated by Reliance Industries Ltd and BP plc.

# Why just electric and not auto LPG, asks IAC Tata Motors drives in CNG **consumes 58,000 MT** New Delhi, Jan 19 (PTI):

New Delhi, Jan 19 (PTI):

Indian Auto Coalition (IAC), the nodal body for the promotion of Auto LPG in India, has questioned the 'disproportionate' policy focus on electric vehicles in the war against carbon emissions by vehicles, saying running automobiles on LPG offers

equally worthy solution. Almost 30 crore vehicles on Indian roads cannot be wished away, for which electric is simply not an option, it said adding with lower entry barriers, auto LPG far outshines EVs in terms



of infrastructure investment in the immediate term

While attaining self-reliance for lithium-ion or equivalent battery technology is too far away, auto LPG is way more affordable than buying new expensive

EVs. More importantly, 60 per cent of electricity still comes from fossil fuels which does not paint EVs in the best light, IAC said in a statement emphasising the need to consider well-towheel emissions for Auto "There has been a period-

ic spotlight on the electric vehicles in the country envisaging a perfect future when so-called 'clean' electric vehicles would replace the heavily polluting carbon-based popular fuels such as petrol and diesel in our modes of transport and mobility.



trims of Tiago, Tigor

segment is going to witness a steep growth over the next few years. So, therefore in response to this rise in demand, we have chosen two models -- Tiago and Tigor to roll out with factory fitted CNG," Tata Motors **Passenger Vehicles Managing** 

**Director Shailesh Chandra told** PTI in an interaction. The demand for both economical personal mobility as well as greener, emission friendly mobility is rapidly rising, he

growth opportunities in the market to give more options to the customers. "In this light. what we have seen is that the demand for CNG cars, especially in the last few years, has gone up tremendously. In the last fiscal the CNG car sales grew by around 60 per cent over the previous financial year (2019-20). In the first half of the current fiscal, the sales have grown by 97 per cent over the same period of 2020-21," he stated.

company has been witnessing very strong growth for its conventional product range and it needs to keep exploring for new

a statement.

LEISURE

**Vaani Kapoor wants her filmography** to be as diverse as possible off any character that I'm ap-

proached with to play on screen." Stating her opinion

ctress Vaani Kapoor, who recently essayed a trans woman Lin 'Chandigarh Kare Aashiqui', is consciously working on shaping up her filmography by choosing scripts and characters that are different from

'Chandigarh Kare Aashiqui' and her upcoming release 'Shamshera' where she will be seen opposite Ranbir Kapoor, will incite the confidence in film-makers about her craft. Talking about the same, she says, "I would like my filmography to be as diverse as possible and after showing my range as an actor in 'Chandigarh Aashiqui' 'Shamshera', I can only hope that filmmakers would feel extremely confident to approach me with any challenging role. I have always wanted to win

on the best thing about the profession of acting, the actress says, "The best thing about She hopes that her work in our profession is that one can get to become so many characters and live so many

over their trust and be a part of interesting cinematic visions of powerful film-makers." She adds, "I know that I will give it my everything to pull

'Prachand Dev to cause huge havoc in Bhimrao's life'

eteran actor Govind Khatri is now seen in &TV's Ek Mahanayak - Dr B.R. Ambedkar as Prachand Dev Ji - a self-appointed guardian of the upper caste who believes himself next to God. In this candid chat, the actor talks about following the show even before joining the team, his newly introduced character, his previous

Excerpts from the interview: How would you define your character of Prachand Dev Ji?

> Prachand Dev Ji's entry will bring a lot of troubles and challenges in young Bhimrao's life. Somehow Bhimrao and his paths intervene, leading to huge ideological differences, with him plotting to cause huge havoc in Bhimrao's life. Prachand Dev ji also

finds a partner in Narrotam to fight

against Bhimrao and his ideologies and resort to extreme humiliation and cruel-

tv. Prachand Dev Ji's actions are backed by his evil agenda. However, the extreme steps adopted by Prachand Dev will only strengthen Bhimrao to face these compelling situations boldly, bringing to fore his evolved vision, indomitable perseverance, and determination. The mayhem that Prachand Dev creates in Bhimrao's life makes for an extremely emotional yet inspirational storyline for the viewers.

Were you following the show even before joining the team?



Ek Mahanayak - DR B R Ambedkar is one of the most well-known shows on Indian television right now and I have been watching it right from the beginning. Interestingly, I have been watching some of the earlier episodes again to understand the show better and as part of my preparation to essay the new character. Tune in to &TV to watch Ek Mahanayak Dr B R Ambedkar, airing every Monday to Friday at 8:30

unny Leone, who had incredible

'Machli' and 'Panghat, for which she reunited with Baby Doll singer Kanika Kapoor, is in a happy space. The actress maintains that all the songs

pushed her to do her best as all of them were very different from each

Elated with the love pouring her

way, she says, "I see myself as

an entertainer and I take

great pride in my songs

becoming raging hits.

People have been

loving the num-

ber. It's so over-

whelming that

my hard

work has

paid off."

Considered

among the

industry's

dance number hits with tracks like 'Auntiyaan Dance Karengi',



Sony Entertainment Television's Indian adaptation of the globally renowned business reality format -Shark Tank has hit the right notes amongst aspirational individuals who have a vision and stake in India's future. Bringing forth some mind-blowing products created by bright minds, Shark Tank India has showcased the face of the blossoming entrepreneurial wave that has started in every nook and corner of our country. Amongst power-packed pitches, one such venture that not only impressed the Sharks but



also left them tearyeyed was Sunfox Technologies' flagship product 'Spandan', a pocket-size portable instant ECG monitor. The Dehradun-based start-up got a deal of 1 crore for 6% equity from all the five sharks Bansal, Ghazal Alagh,

Anupam Mittal, and Namita Thapar. Around 20 lakh people lose their life due to cardiovascular diseases owing to the nonavailability of monitoring equipment, lack of routine heart checkups, and no early diagnosis. And, the scenario is worse in re-

#### most effortless dancers, Leone savs she remembers training for most part of November to make sure each of these numbers have a different vibe to She adds, "Sometimes there is a tendency to replicate steps but each of these songs were designed so dif-

ferently. It meant working on a different track every few days but I consciously wanted each of these to stand out. I am so happy with the response. Ask her if there's a favourite

and she signs off with a smile, "Why pick when you can groove

> **Sunny Leone:** I take great pride in my songs becoming raging hits

> > 44. Teacher's favorite

45. Early car (2 wds.)

52. Building cement

60. Retirement accts.

63. Presidential power

65. Snaky letters 66. Biblical garder

49. Sleazier

59. Shaquille

62. Kingdom

67. Matured

**DOWN** 

2. Babe

4. Notre

1. Sch. groups

5. Emphasizes

6. Most inferior

3. Band instrument

\_ loss (2 wds.)

# I will get to learn a lot from Remo as this is my first show as a judge: Mouni Roy

Mouni Roy has been roped in to join renowned choreographer Remo D'Souza in the panel of judges on dance reality show 'Dance India Dance Li'l Masters Season 5'. She says it is surely going to be a learning experience for her.

Mouni says: "I am sure I will get to learn a lot from Remo sir since this is my first show

as a judge, and I am very eager to meet the contestants. I know for a fact that judging talented kids won't be an easy task, but I

actress will try my best and I hope I will be able to do justice to the responsibility

The actress started her acting career with TV

shows like 'Kyunki... Saas Bhi Kabhi Bahu Thi' and 'Devon Ke Dev... Mahadev'. She finally rose to fame with her performance in the supernatural thriller 'Naagin'.

Mouni adds in her new role as a judge she has to be careful while making comments on the contestants "I am very excited to meet the super talented Li'l Masters who are known to floor everyone with their unimaginable dancing prowess at such a tender age. One really needs to take care of their emotions and I personally love kids a lot. So, I will be extra careful with my words while making my comments.

The auditions for 'DID Li'l Masters Season 5' have already started. Participants between the age group of 3 to 13 years will compete against each other to become the ultimate Li'l Master.

'DID Li'l Masters Season 5' will be coming soon

## **HOROSCOPE THURSDAY JANUARY 20**

## Aquarius: Jan 21 – Feb 18

You will plan your day well. Good, says in your schedule. That way, you will also get more time to do stuff you never came around doing it. So, bring out your old Cliff Richard records, and wipe clean your dusty LP player. You may finally get to revive old times!

# Gemini: May 22 - June 21

You will be unable to cope with the flurry of demands made upon your time and person by those around you. You will try to break free of the rut and look for some new things to do in the evening. Some creative and constructive work will provide you with demands of the day, says Ganesha.

## **Libra: Sept 23 – Oct 23**

Money matters may cause you some concern, at least till the latter half of the day, foresees Ganesha, After that, those finan cial troubles will make way for lucrative opportunities. Expect to make money from all quarters later in the afternoon You shall be your own boss when it comes

## Pisces: Feb 19 - Mar 20

A good day for investments and speculans, especially in the real estate markets Your gains will outweigh the risks associate ed with your transactions. However, maintain some monetary reserves to invest in other opportunities, as even better times are round the corner. You will come across as a happy soul in the face of such good fortune, says Ganesha

## Cancer: June 22 – July 22

Your natural talents will be rewarded at work, predicts Ganesha. Later in the day, your peers will fully co-operate to help you achieve your goals. Your popularity will grow by leaps and bounds. But you should not let success get to your head.

# Scorpio: Oct 24 – Nov 22

Athletes will achieve prime fitness and form today, says Ganesha. Engineers will design plans that will concentrate their resources on laying the foundation to new business ventures. Your social reputation will get a major boost later in the day.

## Aries: Mar 21 - Apr 20

Ganesha says that at the beginning of the day you will feel happy and will support your loved ones in good and bad times and talk to them in that regard. You will also try to reduce their worries by listen ing to their problems and finding solum. In the afternoon, you will feel like staying in solitude for some

# **Leo: July 23 – Aug 23**

With your penchant for being almost surgical in your tasks, it seems there isn't a eye. This fact comes to the fore today and helps you step into the limelight, especially at work, where your efforts get noticed and appreciated

# Sagittarius: Nov 23 - Dec 21

Today will be a day when you are inclined not only to being upbeat but also firm, says Ganesha. In your line of work, you may get passionate about your views. But compromise is on the cards and that too without any harm to your dignity. Your better half will keep you occupied, says Ganesha.

# **Taurus: Apr 21 – May 21**

Your thoughts are not likely to remain focused in your business or profession Ganesha sees them drifting from such issues and moving towards your home and family members. You will be keenly aware of the fact that you have been neglecting your family interests and affairs on account of your professional involvement.

## Virgo: Aug 24 – Sept 22

The day will bring in innovation and ingenuity on your part today. Expect a probable visit to a museum or a historical place, says Ganesha. Being frisky will help shape that body up a bit. Entertainment will work as a wonderful remedy to cure the wounds of an estranged relationship, says Ganesha.

# Capricorn: Dec 22 - Jan 20

Dreading the consequences of errors induced in the past, you will be extra cautious while working on important assign ments and will try to save your skin, says Ganesha. This apart, you will spend a major part of the day worrying over career prospects and mulling a change of job.

# **CROSSWORD**



## **ACROSS**

1. Urge

#### 5. Stunned 9. Business gp. 14. Large brass instrument

15. Show up 16. Happen again 17. Tiny particle 18. Gator's kin 19. blanch

20. Most transparent

## 22. Formal procession

23. Went in 25. Swab 26. Appalled

40. Gardener's tool

42. District attorney

41. Poor grades

agent (2 wds.) 38. Small bay 39. Certain poem

# 10. Burn

8. Christmas mo 9. Video game 11. Beat it! 12. Surpass

26. Like the Sahara

13. Crawl 21. Bowler's button 22. Singer \_\_\_\_ Seeger 24. Appraises



192

27. Kelly or Autry 29. Pub potable:

33. Turmoil

34. Potato 35. Behind schedule 36. Revered person

37. Jaunty 40. Make points 42. Equal

43. Ralph Waldo 44. Biblical songs

46. Love (Ital.) 48. Regions 50. Risked

53. Fable 55. Epic 56. Tiny stick

57. Roof part 58. Tinted

# Osaka, Barty advance toward Australian Open showdown

Melbourne, Jan 19 (AP):

For the first set, Naomi Osaka's rediscovered love of the game meant it was anything but fun for Madison Brengle in the third round of the Australian Open.

The defending champion conceded only four points in the first four games Wednesday and rifled forehand winners seemingly at will as she breezed to 6-0 in a mere 20 minutes.

The second set started with Brengle celebrating a service hold like she'd finished a long-distance race, but gradually the No. 54ranked American ground down Osaka to a stage in the seventh game where she finally converted a break-point opportunity after missing her first nine

That triggered a change in the former No. 1-ranked Osaka, who responded by breaking back immediately and winning the last nine points to complete a 6-0, 6-4

will next face Amanda Anisimova, a 20year-old American who beat Olympic gold medalist Belinda Bencic 6-2, 7-5. The winner of that is likely to



in the fourth round. Osaka won the Australian Open last year, her fourth Grand Slam title, but then withdrew from the French Open and skipped Wimbledon as she took a break for her mental health. She then was ousted early at the U.S.

After a long off-season to reset, she's unbeaten in five matches in Australia this year. Asked how she rated her form, Osaka said that's not how she's approaching

Honestly I'm trying not to do that, she said in an oncourt TV interview.

"I'm a bit of a perfectionist. If I compare myself with the past, I'll never be

The goal for me is just to have fun ... (and) I think we're accomplishing that.

Since the draw for the first major of the year was made, a big focus has been on a potential encounter between Osaka and Barty, the 2021 Wimbledon and 2019 French Open champion who is aiming to be the first Australian woman since 1978 to win her home cham-

Barty was front and center when the tournament First Nations Day, albeit only for 52 minutes as she beat 142nd-ranked qualifier Lucia Bronzetti 6-1, 6-1.

It was nice for me to be a part of it in a way that I feel most comfortable, Barty, who has Indigenous heritage, said of the day dedicated to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people of Australia.

"Out on the tennis court is how I express myself as an athlete, it's how I'm able to express myself as a person as well.

On a day we're bringing cultures together, bringing people together ... it was great for me to be able to play a small role doing what

Rafael Nadal didn't get it all his own way in the subsequent match on Rod Laver Arena, needing five match points before beating 126th-ranked German qualifier Yannick Hanfmann 6-2, 6-3, 6-4.

The sixth-seeded Nadal, aiming for a men's record 21st Grand Slam singles title, had two match points on Hanfmann's serve and two more on his own in the next game before finally clinching a spot in the third round when his rival sent a

# Mandhana named in ICC T20I women's Team of the Year, no Indian in the men's side

**Dubai, Jan 19 (PTI):** 

Star India opener Smriti Mandhana was Wednesday named in the ICC T20 women's Team of the Year for her superlative show in the format in 2021 but no Indian made the men's side.

The stylish Southpaw, who is the Indian team's vice-captain in the format, was the country's highest scorer in the format in 2021 with 255 runs at an average of 31.87. The 25-year-old scored two fifties in the nine matches she played and got her team off to rapid starts regularly, as evident up by her strike-rate of 131.44. While Mandhana was the only Indian, several members of the English side feature in the team with Nat Scriver being named captain.

The experienced England all-rounder produced many impactful performances throughout the year. Batting in the middle-order, Sciver scored a total of 153 runs, including one fifty, and she also picked up 10 wickets at an excellent average of 20.20. Accompanying Mandhana at the top is Tammy England's Beaumont. The 30-year-old's reliable presence at the top of the order helped England off to steady starts



matches and amassed 303 runs at an average of 33.66, including three fifties. Danni Wyatt, wicketkeeper Amy Jones and spinner Sophie Ecclestone are the other English players in the

Gaby Lewis of Ireland, South African trio of Laura Wolvaardt, Shabnim Ismail and Marizanne Kapp and Zimbabwe's Loryn Phiri make up the rest of the playing XI. There was no Indian representation in ICC Men's T20I Team of the Year 2021, which featured three Pakistanis including skipper Babar Azam, who has been named captain.

Apart from Azam, opener Mohammad Rizwan and Shaheen Afridi, who had a sensational T20 World Cup were name in the squad.

(India), Tammy Beaumont (England), Danni Wyatt (England), Gaby Lewis (Ireland), Nat Sciver (c) (England), Amy Jones (England), Laura Wolvaardt (South Africa), Marizanne Kapp (South Africa), Sophie Ecclestone (England), Loryn Phiri (Zimbabwe), Shabnim Ismail (South Africa). Men: Jos Buttler (England), Mohammad Rizwan (Paksitan), Babar Azam (c) (Pakistan), Aiden Markram (South Africa), Mitchell Marsh (Australia), David Miller (South Africa), Tabraiz Shamsi (South Africa), Josh Hazlewood (Australia), Wanindu Hasanranga (Sri Lanka),

Women: Smriti Mandhana

All-rounder Mitchell Marsh and pacer Josh Hazelwood, who played a vital role in winning Australia's maiden T20 World Cup title, featured in the team while the trio of South Africans Aiden Markram, David Miller and Tabraiz Shamsi also made it to the playing XI.

Mustafizur Rahaman

(Pakistan).

(Bangladesh, Shaheen Afridi

Flamboyant wicketkeep er batter Jos Buttler was the sole member of the England team in the ICC side.

# Sania to retire after 2022 season, says body is wearing down



**Melbourne, Jan 19 (PTI):** 

India tennis star Sania Mirza on Wednesday announced that 2022 will be her last season since her body is "wearing down" and motivation and energy for the everyday grind is not the same anymore.

Mirza, 35, had returned to tennis after giving birth to her son in March 2019 but her progress was later thwarted by the coronavirus pandemic.

Mirza made the retirement announcement after losing the Australian open women's doubles first round with partner Nadiia

Kichenok. "There's a bunch reasons for it. It's not as simple as 'okay I'm not going to play'. I do feel my recovery is taking longer, I do feel, considering my son is three years old, I'm putting him at risk by travelling so much with him, that's something I nave to take into account, Mirza said at the postmatch press conference.

"My body is wearing down. My knee was really hurting today and I'm not saying that's the reason we lost but I do think that it is taking time to recover as I'm getting older," she

# Open men's and women's doubles Melbourne, Jan 19 (PTI):

Veteran Indian players Rohan Bopanna and Sania Mirza were knocked out of the men's and women's doubles events of the Australian Open respectively, after losing their first round matches, here on Wednesday.

Bopanna and his French partner Edouard Roger-Vasselin lost in three sets to wild card pair of Chirstopher Rungkat and Treat Huey. They began confidently but lost momentum mid-way to lose 6-3 6-7(2) 2-6 in one hour and 48 minutes.

Mirza Ukrainian partner Nadiia Kichenok, on the other hand, lost 4-6 6-7(5) to Slovenian team of Tamara Zidansek and Kaja Juvan in one hour and 37 minutes. Kichenok was offcolour today as unforced errors kept flowing from her racquet throughout the contest.

The two Indians are, however, still alive in the first Grand Slam of the

bottom of Group C with a



Bopanna and Mirza out of Australia

season as they will compete in the mixed doubles. Bopanna has teamed up with Croatia's Darija Jurak Schreiber, while Mirza has paired up with American Rajeev Ram.

None tne iour Indians, who competed in the singles Qualifiers, made it to the main draw.

Philippines' left-hander Huey's exceptional service games and net play was crucial in the outcome of the men's doubles match, Indonesian Rungkat, who initially appeared as the weak link, gradually upped his game.

Rungkat's hitting from the baseline improved remarkably as the match wore on. The Indo-French pair got the first break chance in the fourth game when Bopanna hit a crushing forehand winner past Huey at 15-30 on the serve of Rungkat, who could not put the ball across the net

on the next point. That break positioned Bopanna to serve out the set in the ninth game and he did that with ease, at

serves. Rungkat and Huey came out all guns blazing in the opening game of the second set, attacking Bopanna's serve and earned two breakpoints with a flurry of winners but could convert none.

Both the pairs held serves throughout the second set, which was decided by a tie-breaker.

In the 11th game, though, Roger-Vasselin and Bopanna earned two break chances but their rivals saved both. It was a winner from Roger-Vasselin and a Rungkat forehand error that put the wild cards 15-40.

The wild card pair reeled off six straight points in tie-breaker from 1-2 to level the match.

The momentum changed dramatically after that with Rungkat and Huey dominating the contest by breaking their rivals with ease. They raced to a 5-1 lead with a double break. Indonesian then served out the match.

# Sindhu cruises into second round of Syed Modi International



Lucknow. Jan 19 (PTI):

Olympic Two-time medallist P V Sindhu stormed into the second round of the Syed Modi International Super 300 tournament with a dominating straight game win over fellow Indian Tanva Hemanth in the women' singles competition here on Wednesday.

The 26-year-old from Hyderabad, who lost in the semifinals at India Open

With eye on quarterfinals spot, India

Super 500 last week, thrashed Tanya 21-9 21-9 in a lop-sided contest at the Babu Banarasi Das Indoor Stadium. A former world champion, Sindhu will square off against USA's Lauren Lam, who managed to get past a fighting Ira Sharma 15-21 21-16 21-16. In another match, India's Kanika Kanwal overcame USA's Disha Gupta 21-15 16-21 21-6 to also make a winning start to her campaign.

# Ghana eliminated from African Cup in shock loss to Comoros



Comoros' forward Ahmed Mogni (C) celebrates with teammates after scoring his team's second goal during the Group C Africa Cup of Nations (CAN) 2021 football match between Ghana and Comoros at Stade Roumde Adjia in Garoua.

Garoua, Cameroon, Jan 19 (AP):

Four-time champion Ghana was eliminated in the group stage at the African Cup of Nations with a 3-2 loss to tournament debutant Comoros in a shocker that eclipsed a series of big surprises already in Cameroon.

Two days after defending champion Algeria was beaten by Equatorial Guinea for one of the biggest upsets in African Cup history, collapse

Tuesday provided a new, possibly better contender.

In a tumultuous game, Ghana fell behind in the fourth minute, had captain Andre Ayew harshly sent off in the 25th, and was 2-0  $\,$ down in the 61st. The Ghanaians leveled with two goals in 13 minutes late in the game, only to concede again when Ahmed Mogni swept in his second in the 85th minute to give Comoros undoubtedly its biggest soccer moment ever.

It sent Ghana home at the

draw and two losses and its worst performance ever at the African Cup. Ghana is a traditional power of African soccer and has made at least the semifinals in six of the last seven African Cups and was last dumped out in the group stage in 2006. Its squad of players from top clubs was pitted against a Comoros team whose two-goal hero Mogni plays in the third division in France. Morocco won the group after a 2-2 draw with Gabon in another pulsating game. Morocco, which had already qualified, twice came from behind and snatched the point that won the group with a curling free kick from Paris Saint-Germain's Achraf Hakimi with six minutes to go. Gabon was missing its three best players with cap-Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang and midfielder Mario Lemina sent back to their clubs for more med-

ical tests after suffering

from the aftereffects of

COVID-19. Forward Denis

Bouanga was among a new

group of players to test posi-

tive for the virus.

# Kohli, Pant and Bumrah move up in latest ICC Test rankings



Indian star Virat Kohli on Wednesday moved up two places to seventh after scores of 79 and 29 in his last Test as captain in the latest ICC rankings for batters in the five-day format.

Wicketkeeper Rishabh Pant's unbeaten century in the second innings of the series-deciding third Test against South Africa lifted him 10 places to 14th, while bowler Jasprit Bumrah's six wickets in Cape Town took him back chart.

to the top 10 in the bowling Kohli decided to quit Test captaincy a day after India lost the three-match series against South Africa 1-2, ending his seven-year reign at the helm. In the latest weekly update that

takes into account the third match of the South Africa-India series in Cape Town which the hosts won by seven wickets to clinch World Championship (WTC) series, Keegan Petersen has shot up 68 places to 33rd after match-winning scores of 72 and 82. He scored the maximum runs to claim the Player of the Series award, his 276-run aggregate helping him surge up after starting the series in 158th position. Temba Bavuma (up seven places to 28th) and Rassie van der Dussen (up 12 places to 43rd) are the other South Africa batters to advance while fast bowlers Kagiso Rabada (up two places to third) and Lungi Ngidi (up

six places to 21st) have also

made notable progress.

# ■ Women's AFC **Asian Cup**

Navi Mumbai. Jan 19 (PTD:

A FIFA World Cup playoffs spot within their grasp, hosts India would seek a winning start against an under-prepared and lowerranked Iran in their women's AFC Asian Cup campaign opener here on Thursday

Hosting the continental showpiece for the second time after 1979, India would look to script history by qualifying for the quarterfinals of the 12-team tournament, which will see some of Asia's and world's best players in action.

India had finished runners-up twice -- in 1979 and 1983 - and third in 1981.

A win against Iran at the DY Patil Stadium will assure India of at least a third-place finish in Group A. Besides the two top teams, two third-placed sides across the three groups will also qualify for quarterfinals. Iran are the lowest ranked team in the group which also has



# Two members of Indian team test **COVID** positive on eve of tournament

COVID-19 breached the Indian women's football team's biosecurity bubble here on Wednesday ahead of the AFC Asian Cup with two players testing positive for the virus, forcing the organisers to shift them to a medical facility for isolation."Two members of the Indian Women's Senior National Team for the AFC Women's Asian Cup India 2022 have tested positive for COVID-19, and are currently in isolation at a designated medical care facility," the All India Football Federation (AIFF) tweeted. "The AIFF prioritises the health and safety of its players, and are following all," the organising federation wrote in another tweet. One of the players would have featured in the starting XI in the campaign opener against Iran, a source close to the AIFF said.

China and Chinese Taipei. They are ranked at 70th in the world as against India's 55th. Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, the Indian team had the luxury of a good number of exposure tours and international matches last year, including against former World Cup runners-up side Brazil. These international

match experience is expected to keep Thomas Dennerby's team in good stead even though the hosts are playing without star striker Bala Devi who is recovering from a surCENTRAL CHRONICLE. RAIPUR. THURSDAY, JANUARY 20, 2022

# **MASS PRAYER**



Devotees belonging to Brahmin community conduct a mass prayer for speedy recovery of those infected with COVID-19, in Varanasi, Wednesday,

#### **FINMIN TO MINISTRIES**

# 'Restrict expenses within prescribed limit'

**New Delhi, Jan 19 (PTI):** 

In a bid to maintain fiscal deficit within the targeted limit, the finance ministry has asked ministries and departments to restrict their expenses with the revised estimates. The communication comes ahead of the Union Budget 2022-23, likely to be unveiled on February 1.

In an office memorandum seeking proposals for the third and final batch of Supplementary Demands for Grants, the economic affairs department under the finance ministry asked the ministries and departments to submit their proposals

posals for supplementary grants, the grant-controlling authority must invariably identify savings available within the grant so that the infructuous or inflated supplementary demands are weeded out and the eventuality of surrender after obtaining supplementary grant is avoided," it said.

The proposal for Supplementary Demands for Grants may be projected after a thorough and objective assessment of additional requirements of funds, it said. "All the ministries and departments have been requested to contain the expenditure within the approved Revised Estimate ceilment estimates a fiscal deficit of 6.8 per cent of the gross domestic product (GDP) in the current financial year ending on March 31.

Fiscal deficit is an indication of the government's  $% \left( \frac{1}{2}\right) =\left( \frac{1}{2}\right) \left( \frac{1}{2}\right)$ borrowing to meet the shortfall between expenditure and receipts from taxes and other sources. The memorandum further said the demand proposal should be made after a thorough review of savings within the Grant.

"In cases where re-appropriation can be made without the requirement of Supplementary as per the extant provisions, no Supplementary proposal, including for a token posed. "Such requirement may be met by re-appropriation of savings after obtaining approval of competent authority," it

The cases that will be eligible to be incorporated under such demands include those where adfrom Contingency Fund of India have been granted.

payments Besides, against court decree will be included as well in cases where the finance ministry has specifically advised moving of supplementary demand in the budget session, it said. The two-phase Budget session begins on January 31 and continues till April 8.

# 'Book throws light on lives of prisoners in Indian jails'

New Delhi, Jan 19 (PTI):

Bringing prisoners' lives and liberties to the heart of public debate and policies, a new collection of essays, "Hope Behind Bars: Notes from Indian Prisons", gives readers valuable insights into the vexed idea of incarceration.

The collection of essays written by a retired Supreme Court judge, former prison administrators, lawyers, journalists, academicians, searchers, a former prisoner and leaders of grassroots organisations -- is ed-

ited by Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative (CHRI) director Sanjoy Hazarika and head of CHRI's prison reforms programme Madhurima

Published by PAN Macmillan India, the book aims to shed light on the "opaqueness of the system, making it not just more humane but also showing what can be achieved within the current ambits of the law, despite the infirmities of creaky and ineffective

"A prison is a world of its own, where residents live without the support systems that those on the outside take for granted. Prisoners hope and will each day to be their last in confinement. We believe that the stories in 'Hope Behind Bars' provide insight into lives less ordinary," wrote the editors in the introduction of the

Retired Supreme Court judge Madan B Lokur, celebrated SC human rights lawyer Vrinda Grover, iournalist Sunetra Choudhury and CHRI researchers Sabika Abbas, Sugandha Mathur and Amrita Paul are among the authors whose works are featured in the book.

It includes a powerful essay on the rights of vulnerable prisoners, write up on the challenges of establishing a prison training institute, the critical need to train prison officials and the gut-wrenching story of Wahid - who spent ten years in prison on a terrorism case before a court pronounced him innocent -- where he talks of custodial violence, torture and police arbitrari-

"Vrinda Grover traces how she navigated the ups and downs, twists and turns of the Hashimpura killings case, which took thirty years to conclude: the case involved the Uttar Pradesh Provincial Constabulary Armed (PAC), which was charged with gunning down fortytwo Muslims in the Hashimpura area of Muzaffarnagar, less than a hundred kilometres from New Delhi.

"The perils of prolonged judicial delays were underlined in this case three of the accused died during this period," wrote the editors while talking about one of the chapters in the

# TMC trade union removes leader after disruption in Exide plant

Kolkata, Jan 19 (PTI):

The trade union arm of the Trinamool Congress, INTTUC, on Wednesday said its Purba Medinipur district president has been removed in a message of "zero tolerance" towards anyone disrupting smooth functioning of the industries in West Bengal.

The action was taken against Sanjay Banerjee after authorities of Exide plant in Haldia alleged that production was hampered due to protests by casual labours on Monday.

Some contract workers created chaos and prevented others from joining work leading to the disruption in production.

Without disclosing further details, Exide officials said production is back to normal on Wednesday. Cabinet minister Moloy

Ghatak and Indian Trinamool National Trade Union Congress (INTTUC) state president Ritabrata Banerjee went to Haldia following the in-

We have suspended the

district INTTUC leader (Sanjay Banerjee) on corruption charges. We want to reiterate the stand of our Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee about zero tolerance towards anyone who will try to disrupt smooth functioning of industry in the state, Banerjee told PTI.

Sanjay Banerjee was also removed from his post and was replaced by sibnath Sarkar, he said. Operations at Exide's Haldia plant have been normalised Ritabrata Banerjee said.

# **AIG HOSPITALS STUDY**

# '30 % individuals lose vaccineacquired immunity against COVID-19'

After 6 months

Hyderabad, Jan 19 (PTI):

As much as 30 per cent individuals lose vaccineacquired immunity after six months, according to a study conducted by AIG Hospitals along with the Healthcare Foundation on Vaccine Immunity.

The study was conducted on 1,636 healthcare workers who were fully vaccinated against COVID-19, a press release from AIG Hospitals said.

"Our study results were at par with other global studies where we found that almost 30 per cent individuals had antibody levels below protective immunity level of 100 AU/ml after six months. These individuals were majorly above 40 vears with co-morbidities like hypertension and diabetes. Out of the develop any immune protection at all," Dr D Nagesnwar кеаау Chairman. Hospitals said.

The results clearly indicated that with age, immunity waning is directly proportional which means that younger people have more sustained antibody levels than the elderly population.

One of the most important results of the study showed that people above 40 years with co-morbidities like hypertension and diabetes have significantly less antibody response after six months of getting fully vaccinated, the release further

Individuals above 40 years with diabetes and hypertension of both genders may be at a hightotal, 6 per cent did not er risk of SARS-CoV-2 infection and these individuals should be prioritised for a booster dose after six months, AIG said.

At present, the ninemonth gap for a precaution dose benefits 70 per cent of the population who can retain enough antibody levels beyond six months.

However, considering the scale of our country, the 30 per cent people especially those with comorbid conditions like hypertension, diabetes, etc., who are more prone to develop an infection after six months of getting fully vaccinated should also be considered for the prevention dose, Dr Reddy added.

# Rebel SP MLA, elected assembly dy speaker quits his party

Lucknow, Jan 19 (PTI): Uttar Pradesh assembly's Deputy Speaker Nitin Agarwal, a Samajwadi Party MLA who had been elected to the House's post on the BJP's support, formally quit the SP's membership.

The SP MLA from Hardoi Sadar assembly seat said he has also quoit as the MLA and deputy speaker of the House.

"I have sent my resignation from the SP to its president national Akhilesh Yadav. I have also resigned from the assembly membership and from the post of deputy speaker," Nitin Agarwal

told reporters here. Agarwal, who was elected the assembly deputy speaker on the BJP's support had not formally joined the party and was technically still an SP MLA.



Volunteers distribute food among the needy at Centenary Wesley Church in Hyderabad, Wednesday.

# **OBC RESERVATION**

# SC directs Maha govt to submit data before SBCC

New Delhi, Jan 19 (PTI):

The Supreme Court Wednesday directed the Maharashtra government to submit data on Other Backward Classes (OBCs) to the SBCC to examine its correctness and make recommendations on their representation in elections for the local bodies.

The top court also directed the State Backward Classes Commission (SBCC) to submit the interim report to the authorities concerned in two weeks of receiving information from the state government.

"Maharashtra has asked this court to permit elections based on data already available to the state

ward classes. Instead of examining the data, the appropriate step would be to present this data before a state appointed dedicated commission which can examine the correctness... "If it deems it appropri-

concerning other back-

ate, make recommendations to the state based on which further steps can be taken by the state or State Election Commission... The commission may submit the interim report if so advised to concerned authorities in two weeks from receipt of information/data from the state government," a bench headed by Justice A M Khanwilkar said.

The apex court clarified, however, that the list to be

prepared by the state government concerning socially and educationally backward classes would be independent of the census carried out by the Centre. "The information and

data available to the state can be furnished to the dedicated commission which can take decisions about efficacy thereof and make recommendations to state government as may be necessary. This obviously would not complete the triple test exercise which has to be completed (as per 2010 judgement) before providing reservation of seats in local government for OBC category," said the bench, also comprising Justices Dinesh

Maheshwari and C T

Ravikumar. This observation must also govern different states which are to proceed for elections of local govt, the top court, adding that until the triple test is complete, these seats will be treated as open category.

advocate Senior Shekhar Naphade, appearing for Maharashtra, submitted that the state has some data on the basis of which reservation can be sustained. He said there

are elections in March and data is already before the commission. 'Your lordship may tell the commission to submit a report in two weeks so we can act on the March elections. Otherwise a

large section of the com-

munity might go unrepresented," he said. With regard to Madhya

Pradesh, Additional Solicitor General K M Nataraj, appearing for the state, stated that the Election Commission has cancelled the Madhya Pradesh Panchayat Raj Evam Gram Swaraj (Amendment) Ordinance 2021 and assured that the new ordinance would be in accordance with apex court's directions.

Senior advocate P Wilson, appearing for one of the intervenors, said the OBC category does not have adequate representation. "We are happy with your lordship's decision to leave it to the commis-

# Punjab CM Channi alleges conspiracy' to 'trap' him

hatched to trap me in this

handigarh, Jan 19 (PTD:

Chief Punjab Minister Charanjit Singh Channi on Wednesday accused the BJP-led central government

hatching a conspiracy to trap him in the case in which raids were conducted by the Enforcement Directorate at many places in the state. He alleged that whenever elections are to take place, the BJP government at the Centre uses **Enforcement Directorate** (ED), Income Tax and others against political opponents to target and armtwist them.

A conspiracy has been

case, claimed Channi, referring to the ED raids conducted at the residence of his nephew on Tuesday. He alleged that attempts were being made by the federal probe agency sleuths to trap him in the case. Channi, accompanied by some ministers including Sukhjinder Singh Randhawa, was addressing a press conference. ED sources said on Wednesday about Rs 10 crore cash has been seized during the raids conducted in an anti-money laundering investigation against illegal sand mining operations in Punjab that included about Rs 8 crore from the linked premises

Bhupinder Singh alias

Honey, a nephew of Channi. Another about Rs 2 crore has been seized from the premises linked to a person identified as Sandeep Kumar, they said.

Reacting to the ED raid at his nephew's premises. Channi claimed that he was not even named in a 2018 FIR of the Nawanshahr (Shaheed Bhagat Singh Nagar district) Police. However, officials said the action has been initiated after taking cognisance of the 2018 FIR of the Nawanshahr Police and some other such police complaints against some companies and individuals alleged to be involved in the business of illegal sand mining in the state.

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A Black Kite bird perches on the finger of Netaii Subhash Chandra Boses statue, in Kolkata, Wednesday.

#### Unattended

New Delhi: Ahead of Republic Day celebrations, two unattended bags were found on Wednesday in east Delhi's Trilokpuri area, officials said. According to fire officials, they received a call at 1 pm regarding the bags near metro pilar number 59, block-15, Trilokpuri. Further details are awaited. Last week, an improvised explosive device (IED) stuffed with RDX and ammonium nitrate was found inside an unattended bag at the Ghazipur flower market.

#### **Suicide**

Jaipur: A retired IRS officer allegedly committed suicide by consuming poison owing to domestic issues, police said on Wednesday. Shankar Lal Jain (64) was found dead at his factory that manufactures snacks in Bassi area earlier in the day. A suicide note was recovered from the spot, police said. Jain was upset as he was unable to marry off his children. His business was also going through a lean phase, they said.

## **IEDs**

■ Seraikela: A police team on Wednesday recovered 15 pressure cooker bombs, suspected to have been planted by Maoists, along a non-metalled road in a forest in Jharkhand's Seraikela-Kharswan district, a senior officer said. Shortly after the explosives were detected in Kaderango forest, a bomb disposal squad cordoned off the area and defused the IEDs. the officer said. According to the officer, the district police force has launched a massive anti-naxal operation here, on the directive of Superintendent of Police Anand Prakash.

# Mishap

■ New Delhi: A 30-year-old woman and her four children died after allegedly inhaling toxic smoke from an angithi' (stove) kept in their room in Shahdara's Seemapuri area on Wednesday, police said. According to police, a PCR call was received at around 1.30 pm regarding four to five people lying unconscious in a room on the fifth floor of a house in Old Seemapuri. Upon reaching there, the woman and three of her kids were found dead while the fourth and the youngest one was taken to a hospital but declared dead by doctors, a senior police officer said.



48,120

# 'No foreign chief guest at R-Day this year'

**New Delhi, Jan 19 (PTI):** 

This year there will be no foreign head of state or government as the chief guest for the Republic Day event, sources said on Wednesday.

Amid the COVID-19 pandemic continuing and the cases rising, this would be the second year in a row when there would be no foreign leader as the chief guest at the Republic Day celebrations.

"This year there will not

be a Foreign Head of State or Head of Government as the chief guest for our Republic Day event," a source said. There would be no for-

eign leader as the chief guest at the Republic Day celebrations, but a day later Prime Minister Narendra Modi will host

**Restrictions imposed on charter flights,** non-scheduled commercial flights

Restrictions have been imposed at the Delhi airport on charter flights and airlines' non-scheduled flights due to approaching Republic Day on January 26, stated a notice to airmen (NOTAM) issued by the Airports Authority of India (AAI). No landing or take off will be permitted from the Delhi airport for airlines' non-scheduled flights and general aviation companies' charter flights between 10.15 am-1.15 pm till January 24, the NOTAM noted. On Republic Day itself, non-scheduled flights and charter flights will not be allowed to land or take off from the Delhi airport between 7 am-1 pm and between 2 pm-6.30 pm, it mentioned. On January 29, due to Beating the Retreat ceremony, non-scheduled flights and charter flights will not be permitted to land or take off from the Delhi airport between 4 pm-7 pm, it noted. There will be no impact of NOTAM on the aircraft of the Indian Air Force, Border Security Force and the Indian Army's aviation wing, it mentioned. "State owned aircraft or helicopter can fly with the governor or chief minister of state," it noted. Scheduled flights of airlines will operate as usual, it mentioned.

the first India-Central the Asia Summit in a virtual format on January 27.

The summit will be held with the participation of

the press Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Tajikistan, presidents Turkmenistan Uzbekistan.





**ARMY PATROLLING** 

Army jawans pose near the snow-covered border in Poonch, Wednesday

# **5G SCARE**

# Air India cancels 8 US flights

#### **■ DGCA working to** overcome situation

**New Delhi, Jan 19 (PTI):** 

Air India cancelled eight flights on India-US routes from Wednesday onwards due to deployment of 5G internet in North America which could interfere with aircraft's navigation systems.

Meanwhile, DGCA chief Arun Kumar told PTI that the Indian aviation regulator was working "in close coordination with our carriers to overcome the situation" that has arisen due to 5G internet's deployment in the US.

US aviation regulator Aviation Federal Administration (FAA) had on January 14 said that

could prevent engine and braking systems from transitioning to landing mode, which could prevent an aircraft from stopping on the runway". Altimeter measures height of the aircraft above the ground. The band on which altimeter works is close to that on which 5G system works. Total three carriers -- American Airlines, Delta Airlines and Air India -currently operate direct flights between India and

Delta Airlines did not respond to PTI's queries regarding this matter.

Air India stated on

aircraft's radio altimeter

American Airlines and

Twitter that it won't be operate eight India-US flights on Wednesday "due to deployment of the 5G comNew Delhi, Jan 19 (PTI): Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel met Congress president Sonia Gandhi, former party chief Rahul Gandhi and party general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra here on Wednesday, and discussed the strategy for the upcoming Uttar Pradesh Assembly polls. Baghel, who has been appointed as the senior ob-

server for the Uttar Pradesh polls by the Congress, met Sonia Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi at the former's 10, Janpath residence, while he called on Rahul Gandhi at his 12, Tughlaq Lane house, sources said.

During the meeting with the top Congress leaders, Baghel apprised them of the feedback he received



**STRATEGY FOR UP POLLS** 

Chief Minister Bhupesh Bhagel at UPCC party office, ahead of UP assembly polls, in Lucknow, Wednesday.

Pradesh tour and also discussed the flagship schemes of Chhattisgarh that could be included in the party manifestoes for the upcoming Assembly polls in five

Schemes related to af-

ED seizes Rs 8-cr cash from

and relief to farmers and the Godhan Nyay Yojana have been highly appreciated at the national level, the sources close to the Chhattisgarh chief minis-

has also invited the Gandhis to his son's wedding ceremony.

The Congress believes the outbreak of the COVIDa chance to get more political benefits, the sources

Uttar Pradesh recently, during which he took part in

They added that Baghel

that awareness has increased among people after 19 pandemic and the government or the political party that takes better initiatives on this front stands

Baghel was on a tour of

Mussoorie test positive For COVID-19 Dehradun Railway Station

**Dehradun, Jan 19 (PTI):** tive, he said.

**COVID SURGE** 

84 IAS trainees at LBSNAA,

Mussoorie's Bahadur Shastri National Academy Administration have tested positive for the ovel coronavirus infection, offi-

Eighty-four IAS trainees

cials said on Wednesday. Those infected have been isolated and the rest quarantined at the academy, Chief Medical Officer (CMO) Manoj Upreti said.

A group of 480 IAS trainees, including those of allied services, arrived here on Sunday from Gujarat on way to the Academy, he said.

Reports of their RT-PCR tests conducted at the on arrival have come posi-Meanwhile, 25 person-

nel at the state police headquarters here have also tested positive for the infection. DGP Ashok Kumar asked the infected personnel to take precautions besides asking those who had come into contact with them to undergo RT-PCR tests and quarantine themselves. As all police department personnel have received both doses of COVID-19 vaccine, all of them have mild symptoms only, the CMO said.

Uttarakhand had on Tuesday reported 4,482 positive cases, the highest single-day caseload in the state in eight months.

# IndiGo planes avert mid-air collision over Bengaluru

New Delhi, Jan 19 (PTI):

Two IndiGo planes averted mid-air collision over the Bengaluru airport just after their takeoff on the morning of January 9, senior officials aviation regulator DGCA said on Wednesday.

The incident was not logged in any logbook and it was not reported by the Airports Authority of India (AAI) either, they

Meanwhile, DGCA chief Arun Kumar told PTI that the regulator is investigating the incident "and shall strictest action against those found delinquent". IndiGo and the AAI did not respond to PTI's request for a statement on

**New Delhi, Jan 19 (PTI):** 

The third wave of the

COVID-19 pandemic in

India may peak on January 23 with daily

cases likely to remain

below the four lakh mark,

according to a scientist at

the Indian Institute of

Delhi, Mumbai and Kolkata have already

reached their peak in case

numbers in the past seven

days, said Manindra

Agrawal, a professor at IIT

Kanpur and one of the re-

searchers associated with

Technology-Kanpur.

DGCA to probe, take strict action

this matter. Officials of Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) said that the two IndiGo planes -6E455 (Bengaluru to Kolkata) and 6E246(Bengaluru Bhubaneswar) -- were involved in 'breach of separa-

tion' at Bengaluru airport.

Breach of separation happens when two aircraft cross the minimum mandatory vertical or horizontal distance in an airspace. Both these aircraft departed from the Bengaluru airport within a span of approximately 5 minutes on the morning of January 9, the officials mentioned.

**IIT KANPUR SCIENTIST** 

India's third Covid wave

likely to peak on Jan 23

The Sutra model has

been used to track and pre-

dict Covid case numbers

in the country since the

beginning of the pandem-

According to Agrawal,

Maharashtra,

projected to peak on third wave y January 23 in India and January end.

COVID-19 cases will peak

Karnataka, UP, Gujarat,

and Haryana this week,

while states like Andhra

Pradesh, Assam, and

Tamil Nadu may peak

The daily peak cases are

the Sutra Covid model.

# CM's relative; Rs 21L gold **Chandigarh, Jan 19 (PTI):**

The ED on Wednesday said it has seized cash amounting to over Rs 10 crore, including about Rs 8 crore from a relative of Punjab Chief Minister Charanjit Singh Channi, during raids conducted in connection with an antimoney laundering investigation against illegal sand-mining operations in the poll-

In a statement, the Enforcement Directorate (ED) said "incriminating" documents related to "illegal" sand mining and property transactions, mobile phones, gold worth more than Rs 21 lakh and a Rolex

stay below the four lakh

mark. Metro cities Delhi,

Mumbai, and Kolkata

have already peaked,

to 11th indicates the peak

on 23th Jan with nearly 7.2

lakh cases per day. The ac-

tual trajectory is already

deviating significantly,

and the actual peak is un-

likely to cross 4 lakh

cases/day, Agrawal tweet-

Agrawal had earlier pre-

dicted that the COVID-19

third wave will peak by

Trajectory with data up

Agrawal told PTI.

ed on Tuesday.

#### **PUNJAB MINING RAIDS**

watch worth Rs 12 lakh were also seized during the searches that ended on

Wednesday. Agency sources also refuted allegations of high-handedness during the raids, saving the action launched on Tuesday was undertaken by following "due legal procedures and no personal comments or individual threats were made". They said most of the documents related to the sand-mining business and about Rs 8 crore cash were seized from the premises linked to Bhupinder Singh alias Honey, a nephew of

Cash amounting to about Rs 2 crore was seized from the premises linked to a a man identified as Sandeep Kumar, the sources said.

The ED statement said those covered in the raids included "Kudratdeep Singh, the Pinjore Royalty company and its partners and shareholders, Kanwarmahip Singh, Manpreet Singh, Sunil Kumar Joshi, Jagveer Inder Singh, Randeep Singh, Providers Overseas Consultants Private Limited, its directors and shareholders, including Bhupinder Singh and Sandeep Kumar, at Mohali, Ludhiana, Rupnagar, Fatehgarh Sahib and Pathankot".

# Covid ban on Int'l passenger flights extended

## ■ Till Feb 28

New Delhi, Jan 19:

suspension of scheduled international passenger flights in the country has been extended till February 28, aviation regulator DGCA said on Wednesday.

Scheduled international passenger flights have been suspended in India since March 23, 2020. However, special passen-

ger flights have been operating between India and approximately 40 countries since July 2020 under air bubble arrangements formed with them.

In a circular Wednesday,

Directorate General of Civil Aviation stated: "The competent authority has decided to extend the suspension of scheduled international commercial passenger services to/from India till 2359 hrs IST of February 28, 2022."

This restriction shall not apply to international all-cargo operations and flight specifically approved by the DGCA, it mentioned.

Fights under air bubble arrangement will not be affected, it noted.

The DGCA had on November 26, 2021, announced that India will resume scheduled international passenger flights for the scheme are already from December 15, 2021.

# **MAJOR DECISION**

# Cabinet sanctions Rs 974 cr to SBI for ex-gratia payment to borrowers

**New Delhi, Jan 19 (PTI):** 

The government on Wednesday approved sanction of Rs 973.74 crore to State Bank of India (SBI) as reimbursement related to loan moratorium that was implemented in 2020 amid the pandemic.

This amount is for the payment of claims submitted by lending institutions (LIs) under the scheme for grant of ex-gratia to borrowers in specified loan accounts during the moratorium period announced by RBI in March 2020. Briefing media on the

Cabinet decision. Information Broadcasting Minister Anurag Singh Thakur said the Budget had made provision of Rs 5,500 crore for the scheme of ex-gratia payment of difference be-

tween compound interest

and simple interest for six months to borrowers in specified loan accounts. Of this, Rs 4,626.93 crore payment was made in 2020-21, he said, adding, additional claims of Rs 1,846

crore were received during

the current financial year. SBI was given Rs 873.07 crore towards reimbursement of ex-gratia between July 23 and September 22, 2021. To clear the remaining amount, Thakur said, the Union Cabinet has approved sanction of Rs 973.74 crore to SBI towards payment of these dues. 'Operational guidelines

the Cabinet. The said amount of Rs 973.74 crore will be disbursed in accordance with the said operational guidelines," an official statement said. On March 27, 2020, RBI announced a loan morato-

issued with the approval of

rium on payment of instalments of term loans falling due between March 1 and May 31, 2020, due to the pandemic. Later, the same was extended to August 31. Financial and non-banking financial institutions were asked to credit the

difference between compound and simple interest collected on loans of up to Rs 2 crore during the moratorium scheme in November 2020. The Ministry Finance has said that after crediting this amount, the

lending institutions would claim reimbursement from the central government. SBI was made a nodal agency for reimbursement of claims.

By granting ex-gratia payment of difference between compound interest and simple interest during the six month moratorium period to distressed/vulnerable category of borrowers, irrespective of whether the borrower had availed of moratorium or not, the scheme would equitably help small borrowers bear the stress on account of the pandemic and get back on their feet, the statement said.

GOLD

SILVER

# **'Contenders and claimants for ticket** should analyse their ground reality'

**Central Chronicle News** 

Khairagarh, Jan 19: In the party workers sammelan of Khairagarh VS area held in Chuikhadan, PCC Chief Mohan Markam took class of all the probable contenders for ticket. Markam came down heavily against the party workers who were holding this show of strength openly violating corona guidelines.

Expressing his annoyance Markam said that the persons who could not even win their booths are now asking for contendership for LS/Vidhan Sabha (VS) ticket. Citing the old records of last four years of VS polls, Markam said that the senior party leaders and contenders should make actual analysis of their position and whether they are capable of winning their booths or not.

In-between PCC Chief Mohan Markam came down heavily against the



their show-of-strength and said that just by hiring handful of 50 persons with allurements of food and drinks cannot make anyone get party's ticket. The contenders should first analyse their actual position in their booth and only those candidates should come forward who can stake their claim for ticket with factual data of

PCC Chief also said that he has got records and details of each & every party worker/ leader Congress and those making contendership should also see their actual posi-

Citing about booths like 'Nachania', 'Sarai' and others. Markam held the need to work on each and every single booth. PCC Chief seems to be very much annoyed over the fact that present were not adhering to corona guidelines.

Appeals party workers to take target of 2024:

PCC Markam said that the party workers should take the target for 2024 LS polls with their farsightedness. Through this sammelan, PCC chief also took class of Block Presidents Khairagarh, Chuikhadan and Gandai. Apart from formation of took information about membership campaign. He also said that minimum of 50 hard working party workers should be added to each booth and he made it clear that unless Congress is strong in every booth, then only they can win any elections. Citing about by-poll of

booth committee, he also

Dantewada and Marwahi he said that till the party does not work at groundlevel, till then the results will not be as expected. As a warning to all the party's office bearers, he said that those who fail to perform and work and does not bring results as per expectations, would be removed without any second thought. Citing about his working style he said that unless we all would not work like a common party worker of a booth, till then the results will not be positive and it would not generate required results.

# **Activeness of millers led** to lifting of 96% paddy

**GPM stands first in** state in paddy lifting

**Central Chronicle News** 

Gaurela-Pendra Marwahi, Jan 19: GPM district stands first in the lifting of paddy by millers after its purchase through samitis. Till date 50242 MT paddy has been purchased by samitis and 48711 MT has been lifted by the

The paddy purchase started from December 01 but most of the purchase remained under open skies as the purchase used

> What responsible officials say

"For the first time paddy is continuously lifted and transported from the societies whereas during previous stock was kept stacked in samitis. The farmers are getting sufficient space to keep their stock."

- Balram Thakur, Manager



to be more than the limit of the societies. But this time due to activeness shown on the part of Marketing Federation and big rice millers, paddy was

"Even after rains, as millers quickly lifted the paddy from 18 PPCs no paddy stock lie in these centres. Arrangement was made to cover the paddy kept in open. After the rains have stopped tokens are distributed and paddy purchase has started at all the centres.

- Vinay Kumar Sahu **Nodal Officer** District Cooperative Bank GPM



societies and kept at re-

A meeting will be held

on February 2 at 4:00 pm

for organizing Rama Ram

Mela, in which the final

decision of the event will

# **Ward residents express** gratitude towards PHE Minister

**And ward corporator** for fulfilling the promise made

**Central Chronicle News** Nandini-Ahirwara, Jan 19:

The ward corporator of ward No. 11 of Ahirwara Nagar Palika Poornima Amit had promised the voters during elections that he would construct CC road on Church road and on fulfillment of this promise, the residents of the ward expressed gratitude towards PHE Minister Guru Rudra Kumar and ward



Amit Das. On construction of this road, Paswan Salim Khalko of Christian community and all the ward

Cabinet Minister Guru Rudra Kumar and ward corporator

#### **Technical flaw**

There is no plaster on CC road and due to which the strength of the road will not be so strong. On this occasion Nagar Palika Ahirwara sub-engineer DR Sahu was not present and during telephonic talks he said that there is no provision of plotter on this road. The work was started without laying the plastic and neither the 'murrum' lying on the road has been cleared. This clearly indicates that DR Sahu and contractor are working in each other's nexus. Ward corporator Poornima Amit Das said that strict action be the contractor and then only

# **Central Chronicle News**

Konta/Sukma, Jan 19: The famous Ramaram fair of Sukma district will be celebrated this year too as like previous years'. This year Rama Ram Mela will be organized on February 15. In connection with the organization of the fair and all the arrangements, a meeting was called in the meeting room of the district office on Tuesday.

In the meeting, Collector Vineet Nandanwar took the opinion for organizing the fair keeping in mind the Covid-19 from the members of Ramaram Mela Trust Committee.



Meeting conducted to chalk out

Rama Ram fair arrangements

The members of the trust said that the situation of Covid-19 remains grim at present, if it continues in the same way,

mation from everyone

about the preparation of

ized traditionally in a lesser form. If the situation of Covid-19 becomes more severe, then the fair will be organized according to the

District Panchavat Devnarayan Kashyap, SDM Sukma Ms. Preeti Collector Rupendra Patel, Municipality Sukma President Jagannath Sahu, Chairman of Ramaram Mela Trust Committee Manoj Dev, Karan Dev along with Manjhi, priest and other members of the commit-

# **ABVP launches awareness** campaign for COVID 19 third wave

**Central Chronicle News** 

many people in its grip.

tee were present.

Rajim, Jan 19: After cases of CHANGE OF NAME IS INFORMED TO

Omicron variant of COVID 19 are constantly increasing day by day, an awareness program was carried out by activists of Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad of Rajim city here. The said awareness campaign is being run by Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad Rajim unit by going to schools, colleges, temples etc. in the town through pamphlet distribution and other means and advocating safety rules to the public.

According to City Minister ABVP Gaurav Rao the pamphlets are being pasted by the workers in schools, colleges, temples and crowded places and educating people to safeguard themselves against the pandemic.

City Co-Minister ABVP Yash Kahar said that ABVP is playing the role of educating people by distributing pamphlets as the disease is taking

THE GENERAL PUBLIC THAT I, RISHI KUMAR DIXIT S/O MANMOHAN SINGH RESIDENT OF WARD NO.18, PURANI BASTI, AKALTARA JANJGIR-CHAMPA C.G.495552 CHANGED MY OLD NAME RISHI KUMAR DIXIT S/O MANMOHAN SO IN FUTURE I SHOULD BE RECOGNIZED BY MY NEW NAME RISHI SINGH S/O MANMOHAN SINGH GOVERNMENT AND OTHR DOCUMENTS.

### RISHI SINGH **WARD N0.18,**

# PURANI BASTI,

KALTARA JANJGIR-**CHAMPA** C.G.495552

Equitas Small Finance Bank Ltd

(FORMERLY KNOWN AS EQUITAS FINANCE LTD) porate Office: No.769, Spencer Plaza, 4th Floor, Phase-II, Anna Salai, Chennai, TN - 600 00

# **POSSESSION NOTICE**

(U/s. Rule 8 (1) - for immovable property) Whereas the undersigned being the Authorized Officer of M/s. Equitas Small Finance Bank Limited, under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest [Act, 2002 (54 of 2002)] and in exercise of power conferred under section 13(12) read with [Rule 3] of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002, issued a Demand Notice calling upon the below mentioned Borrowers to repay the total outstanding amount mentioned in the notice being within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice. Since the below mentioned Borrowers having failed to repay the below stated amount within the stipulated time, notice is hereby given to the below mentioned borrowers and the public in general that, the undersigned has taker possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him under Sub-Section (4) of Section 13 of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the Security interest Enforcement Rules, 2002. The Borrowers in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the schedule mentioned properties and any dealings with the properties will be subject to the

anch: Janjgir-Champa All that piece and parcel of Land and building, Comprised in out of Kr NN No: No.1628/7, with an extent of 654 Sq.ft., Situated at Champa Village, N Palika Parishad - Champa, P.H.No.4, R.N.M Champa, Ward N.18 in fro		
Samleshwari Mandir Champa, Champa Taluk, Janjgir Champa, C.G. Die with all present and future superstructure thereon and bounded on the; I by: Road; South by: Land of Mr. Bharat Lal Dewangan; East b	rth & Rs.2,60,728/	15.01.2022

# National flag to be hoisted at 51 feet height

Knairagarn, Jan 19: On occasion of the Republic Day, a national flag will be hoisted at 51 feet Ambedkar Chowk. It is under the aegis of Nagrik Ekta Manch that this 51 national flag would be hoisted in the 'Sangeet

Nagri' - Khairagarh on Jan 21 at Ambedkar Chowk at 51 feet

It is notable here that in the last R-Day a young girl from city started the procedure of hoisting of the national flag at 51 feet height. Along with this the example of women's empowerment Phulbasan Yadav had con-

**Central Chronicle News** 

Dongargarh, Jan 19: The

bus stand constructed in

2002 at a cost of 75 lakhs

for the convenience of the

common people of the

block has reached a frag-

mented state due to lack of

Late

**Central Chronicle News** tributed labour work at the flag of women's empoy erment, the Samiti took the initiative of Pragati Clinic

Khairagarh forward would present lifetime medical checkup as gift to needy women. The voluntary institutions of city viz. Nirmal Triveni Mahabhiyan, Shantidoot Sansthan, Sriram

Gausewa Samiti. Foundation, Mahabodhi Budha Vihar Kalvan Samiti. Gokul Nagar Swayam Sewa Samiti, Dreams Academy, Drivers Union Sangh have given valuable contribution and guidance in making this programme suc-



taken against the engineer and payment be released.

# Villagers of Kistaram and Palodi reach district Hqs for basic facilities

Centrai Chronicie News

Konta, Jan 19: The picture of Sukma district in the state of Chhattisgarh seems to be changing now. Moved by the continuous development work being done by the district administration, now the villagers of the most sensitive areas are reaching the district office directly and raising their demand for basic facilities.

Villagers of Kistaram of Konta block of Sukma district and reached the collectorate office to meet the collector of Palodi. The villagers apprised the collector about their basic

needs. At the same time, the collector also assured to fulfill the demands of the villagers at the earli-

Sharma was also present during this. The picture of change is constantly coming to the fore in the district. Earlier, a large number of villagers from Minpa, Kondasavali, Maraiguda have also come to meet the collector with their demands. All the demands of which were resolved by the administra-

The wide impact of which is visible in the interior area and now the

villagers have once again come out from the same On Tuesday, Kistaram and Palodi's rural collectors reached the collectorate to meet Vineet Nandanwar. Collector Vineet Nandanwar and SP Sunil Sharma also seated the villagers with utmost ease and discussed them in de-

Aware of the basic facilities, the villagers demanded basic facilities like boring, CC road, pond, land leveling and other development works in the village from the col-

ration cards from Aadhar card in the facility camp, after that told the villagers that survey of the village has been done under Dabri, pond, solar facility in the field, tap-water scheme in the village. Better management of

roads, health and education will be done in the area. The same collector gave his mobile number to the villagers and said that whenever there is any problem, inform me, we will solve it immediately. During this a large number of women and children also participated.

The collector took infor-

Bus stand worth 75 lakhs lies abandoned due to non-maintenance

# **Illegal liquor business flourishing in Dal Bhaat Center**

Chowk, where the square was once given the form of a bus stand by the bus

accidents are frequent in

Keeping in mind the facilities of the visitors of Maa Bamleshwari and the mention has been made in the Master Plan of 2011 for the construction of a bus stand towards Badhiya

cient at that place. But neither the political parties nor the administration seem to be making efforts towards building a bus

place of Dal-bhaat Center!

During the BJP regime, a Dal Bhaat Center was being operated for the convenience of the public, but presently illegal liquor business is flourishing in the Center. Due to the closure of the centre passengers of distant routes are facing problems in getting

Date: 20.01.2022

**EQUITAS SMALL FINANCE BANK LTD.** 

Name of the Borrower(s) /Guarantor(s)	Description of Secured Asset (Immovable Property)	Demand Notice Date and Amount	Date of Possession	
Branch: Janjgir-Champa AN No: SEJNJGR0187140 Borrowers: I. Mr. B. Shankar Lal Dewangan, P. Mrs. Malti Dewangan	All that piece and parcel of Land and building, Comprised in out of Khasra No.1628/7, with an extent of 654 Sq.ft., Situated at Champa Village, Nagar Palika Parishad - Champa, P.H.No.4, R.N.M Champa, Ward N.18 in front of Samleshwari Mandir Champa, Champa Taluk, Janjgir Champa, C.G. District, with all present and future superstructure thereon and bounded on the; North by: Road; South by: Land of Mr. Bharat Lal Dewangan; East by: Land of Mr. Bharat Lal Dewangan; West by: House of Mr. Lalmati Dewangan; Measurement: 654 Sq.ft., under Loan Agreement-cum-Mortgage of the property Situated at within the Sub-Registration District of Champa and Registration District of Champa.	16-06-2021 & Rs.2,60,728/-	15.01.2022	
Place : Janigir Champa		Authorised Officer		

#### maintenance and today is lying in an unclaimed con-Approved by the then

Shivendra

Bahadur Singh, the bus stand worth 75 lakhs due to not usage by the municipality, the facilities available to the passengers also go unavailable, as passengers are being seen looking for convenience under the open sky and the purpose for which the bus

stand was constructed has

been not implemented till

Keeping in view the public facilities during the BJP regime, the state government had given approval of 5 crores in the name of Hi-Tech Bus

Stand, but even after 3 years of Congress coming to power, no meaningful effort has been made for the process of Hi-Tech Bus Stand, in the region.

Meanwhile High School

owners for the operation of private buses, is even today, the point of stoppage of buses, for passenger's reroute the direction Kawardha Rajnandgaon Due to traffic collapse,

the region, but the administration is yet to provide facilities for a new bus stand. Interstate bus service in this route is also being operated by private bus owners on this route, causing traffic congestion. as the buses stand on the

residents of the city, a

The space is also suffi-

stand at that place. Liquor business in

CENTRAL CHRONICLE, BILASPUR, THURSDAY, JANUARY 20, 2022

# **Demographic trend**

ndia's population is set to fall as its total fertility rate (TFR) or the average number of children born to a woman over her lifetime has dropped below replacement level for the first time and is now 2. This was revealed in the National Family Health Survey data for 2019-21 for phase-2 states along with all-India data. The replacement level TFR, at which a population exactly replaces itself from one generation to the next, is estimated to be 2.1. Rural TFR is above replacement level only in Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and Jharkhand among the larger states and in Meghalaya, Manipur and Mizoram among the smaller states. With correct economic policies, India can accelerate economic growth as population growth is now stable. Need is to take balanced approach regarding demographic trend. In general, households tend to opt for smaller family sizes when the infant mortality rate declines - part of a complex web of reasons that has driven the demographic transition across large parts of India. The relationship between declining infant mortality rates and increasing female literacy is widely known in demography, and these are two of the primary proximate causes of declining fertility. India continues to have a large number of adolescents and youth. Hence, despite the decline in TFR, it will take some time for overall population growth in the country to slow down. It is critical that we make the most of this window of opportunity by investing in education, health and skill development for our youth. Enabling access to secondary and higher education as well as suitable opportunities for women to participate in the labour force, needs special focus. The TFR represents the average number of births per woman, and for reference, the UK has a TFR of 1.65 while the USA maintains a 1.70. India has now hit a national record low of less than 2.0, below the replacement rate threshold of 2.1, with some regions even reporting a TFR of 1.6. While the effect will not be an immediate downswing in population, it will slow the population growth significantly. Urbanisation is also an important reason for the decline. By 2030, as much as 41 percent Indians will be living in towns and cities. In the countryside, an additional family member is a helping hand but in cities raising a child is expensive. Also in cities, women have less social pressure to have more children. The survey shows the fertility rate at 1.6 percent in urban areas and 2.1 percent in rural India. The current moderate to slightly high fertility in a few categories of the population is because of lower education, higher infant mortality, preference for sons and lack of access to good quality family-planning services. It's time to stop playing politics over population and focus on the profound economic and social impacts of a slowing population growth. India has entered a demographic sweet spot that will continue for another three decades, half of India's population is under 29 years of age.

# **Afghan identity**

human rights experts have voiced grave concern over attempts by the Taliban in Afghanistan to steadily erase women and girls from public life, saying women from ethnic and religious minorities such as the Hazara, Tajik, Hindu and other communities are even more vulnerable in the wartorn country. Afghanistan never had a sense of national kinship despite a common religious faith but different community affiliations. The sense of identity in Afghanistan is derived from tribes such as Pashtuns, Tajiks and Hazaras, but what gradually emerged as the overpowering distinction was one of religion and sects. The Shia-Sunni divide was a historical legacy and so was the split of Sunnis between the radicals who were totally against the US-led West and in favour of a revival of Islam of the period of the four 'Companions' of Prophet or the 'Pious Caliphs' - and the body of Islamists who advocated that the Islamic Republic, though rooted in Sharia, was capable of existing in 'competition not conflict' with the Western democracy. The overriding imprint of radical Islam on Afghanistan strengthened through the years of the US-led 'war on terror' is traceable to the Jehad launched by the leading Ulema of the times - Al Tijani in Algeria, Abdul Wahab in Arabia and Wahab's follower Shah Waliullah in India - against the Western encroachment on 'Muslim land', in the middle of the 19th century. Due to their numbers, the key groups in the Afghan power stakes are the Pashtuns, Tajiks, Hazaras and the Uzbeks. The Pashtuns are based in the southern and southeastern parts of Afghanistan and also have a presence across the border in northwestern Pakistan, where the core of the Taliban leadership is said to have moved following the US invasion. The Tajiks, who speak Dari, occupy the northern and western parts of the country and have their stronghold in the Panjshir valley. They have featured prominently in Afghan power struggles. Apart from Ahmad Shah Massoud, the leader of the Northern Alliance, there was Burhanuddin Rabbani, who served as Afghan president from 1992 to 1996 before Kabul fell to the Taliban. Abdullah Abdullah, who has ended second-best in multiple presidential elections and had entered a power-sharing agreement with Ghani after the last of them, in 2019, is of mixed Pashtun-Tajik ethnicity but is widely considered the latter. The Hazaras are mainly based in central Afghanistan. The group, which speaks a Dari dialect, has historically faced persecution at the hands of Afghan rulers, leading to their perception as 'the traditional underclass of Afghan society". But their numbers meant that they maintained their stronghold. The chief leader of the Uzbeks, the ethnic group that occupies the northern parts of Afghanistan, along its border with Uzbekistan, is Abdul Rashid Dostum, a warlord known for frequently changing sides. A report by the Minority Rights Group International in 1992, when the country was caught in a violent contest for power among its various warlords and militia commanders following the Soviet departure, was entitled, 'Afghanistan: A Nation of Minorities'.

Central Chronicle welcomes, articles, write ups, comments on different issues for editorial page (800-900 words), Letter to editor for this page. It can be sent by The letters can be edited or rewritten for clarity of thoughts.



Visitors wearing face masks take a photo in the snow at the Gyeongbok Palace, one of South Korea's well-known landmarks, in Seoul, South Korea.

# India needs roads network and still reach net zero carbon target

UMA KAMBHAMPATI & SUBHAM KAILTHYA



ne of the keys to China's economic renaissance over the past couple of decades is often overlooked. Namely, it has built a lot of roads. China's highways have more or less tripled from around 50,000km in 2000 to around 160,000km by the end of 2020. This means that in just two decades, China has added highways that are 20 percent longer than the entire US interstate highway system, and these make up about 40 percent of all roads in the country. India, too, has tripled its highways over the same duration, but the network is far less impressive. They are lower quality, narrower, less well maintained and only make up a very small part of the total system of roads in the country. This is arguably one of the reasons why its economy has substantially under performed China's over the past 20 years: China's GDP grew 12fold to be worth USD14.7 trillion by 2020, while India's grew sixfold to be worth USD2.6 trillion over the same period. So why has India been much poorer at building roads? And with Prime Minister Modi having just committed to reaching net zero emissions by 2070, is it possible to build roads and decarbonise at the same time?

China's massive road-building

programme is immediately visible to visitors. The pace of investment in the network has accelerated since 2011. Not only that, the Chinese are planning to increase their highway network by another 50 percent by 2035. On paper, it looks as though India's road infrastructure is better. The cumulative road network is 5.9 million kms, which is longer than China (4.6 million kms), though slightly smaller than the US (6.7 million kms). The density of India's road network, at 1.62km of roads per square kilometre of land, is much higher than the US (0.68) or China (0.49) – though this is not surprising when you reflect that both these rivals are geographically three times larger than India. However, the quality of India's road infrastructure is very poor: only 3 percent of these roads are national highways, and 75 percent of highways are only two-lane. Roads are congested and road maintenance is under-funded. At the same time, 40 percent of the roads are dirt roads, and over 30 percent of villages have no access to all-weather roads. Many explanations have been given for India's inadequate road investment, including lack of funds and poor project management. An Economist article from 2017 blamed a litigious system that makes it hard for the government to requisition land, as well many public-private partnerships stalling. We recently published a paper arguing that India's political system is another factor. Road-building is jointly the responsibility of the central government and each state. The central government rewards states which are politically aligned with the ruling party, particularly the core supporters. In addition, road building re-

states and central government to get around obstacles like land acquisition, planning permission and vetting of tenders all of which can delay projects and lead to huge cost overruns. The need for green transport infrastructure is another issue. All this requires the central government to cooperate with states from across the political spectrum. Investing in road infrastructure can catalyse growth in two ways. Like all Keynesian investments, it increases employment, incomes and therefore demand throughout an economy. For a country like India with relatively low incomes and an excess supply of labour, road-building can unlock growth quickly particularly as a way of recovering from the COVID collapse. As John Maynard Keynes famously said of the importance of governments increasing spending during difficult times: 'The government should pay people to dig holes in the ground and then fill them up.' Roads also make economies more productive. They make it easier for people to get to work, for supply chains to function, and for companies to

bring goods to market. Roads bring down transport costs, make everyone more confident that things will move from A to B, and reduce the need for companies to store costly inventory to avoid running out of sup plies. According to a 2014 World Bank survey, one in ten Indian firms thought inadequate transportation infrastructure was a major obstacle to their growth. It is worth pointing out that improvements to India's roads have already increased productivity for companies over the past two decades despite the poor quality of the network as a whole. We found that a 1 percent increase in road density raised productivity by about 0.25 percent. This gives a sense of what could be achieved with greater investment. Indeed, India is now investing more in its road network for exactly these reasons though the US and China are too. India is planning to construct 40km of highways every day in the current financial year, and intends to increase its highways by a third in the next few years. Given a large pool of unemployed labour, the conditions are ideal to do this. But the worry is that the same old obstacles get in the way: a report earlier this year by a parliamentary standing committee suggested that more than 800 road projects had been delayed, for instance.

Then there are carbon emissions, which have the potential to significantly increase both from road-building and increased traffic. Modi's announcement at COP26 that India would not aim for net zero until 2070 signals that, in the short run, growth is likely to come first and it is obviously difficult for wealthier nations to argue that India should not have a world-class road network. Having said that, roadbuilding has to go hand in hand with investing in technology to reduce emissions, including more electric and hybrid vehicles and a charging network to make electric cars viable. This needs to not only be an investment priority for India but for players like the US who have been working to assist developing countries to decarbonise. If India is to tap the potential of infrastructure development to stimulate growth, it needs to both make the green transition part of the programme and to look at the obstacles to making road-building succeed. With a state-of-theart road network, India could achieve so much more.

### Mamata's ambition

Merciless Mamata Banerjee, also fondly known as Didi is no doubt the undisputed political leader of West Bengal. Her recent triumph in Assembly election in the state of West Bengal has propelled her to be chief of opposition alliance for the 2024 Lok Sabha polls. Seeing her propulsion into the national politics Mamata Banerjee has become overambitious. From West Bengal's state politics, she is now trying to form a united front against ruling BJP-led NDA, minus the Congress at the Centre. In this process, she has already started visiting non-BJP ruled states like Maharashtra, Punjab, Rajasthan etc., in recent time. She minces no words to attack her bete noire Narendra Modi in any issue fair or foul. For her information I want to remind her that an exact similar type of attempt was made by one Chandra Babu Naidu, ex-CM o Andhra Pradesh, (son in law of NT Rama Rao) the then blue-eyed boy of the oppositions to topple the then government with the support of the opposition, which later on came down crashing into the ground. In present date Chandra Babu Naidu is a non-entity in state as well as nation's politics, in simple words he has become history. To be ambitious is good, but to be over ambitious it can boomerang badly. I wish Didi all the best.

#### Lanu Dutt, via emai **Exam experiments**

Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) current objective type exams have brought in a lot of criticism from the student community as the papers were found very tricky, confusing and 'stress creating'. Students of class twelfth had the shock of their life when the English paper had them bewildered because of questions that were confusing and the option to be chosen, the students opine, were all similar and each answer was a valuable point in itself making the students very difficult to get the right one! Mathematics also had them tensed as it was lengthy and took time to get the answers! The problem was even raised in the parliament and a request was made to the Education Ministry to make evaluation liberal. He also expressed anguish as the students were totally depressed and mentally down and this can even affect their prospects also. The board had gone for such innovations in the past too and though some of its novelties had gone well with the students some did not. Now the board's experimentation of two semesters, as public examinations, and with difficult papers making the round undoubtedly has caused anxiety and apprehension among parents and students. The papers have caused a furore among the students, parents and teachers community spreading a sort of fear and panic and disappointment even among the very bright ones who are under severe pressure. Students who aimed for a centum now doubt whether they would be able to even score a pass mark in the subjects and what makes them tenser is the fact that the board had announced earlier that in a future situation if Covid crisis becomes critical and the exam in April is cancelled then the first-semester mark would be taken. The students cry that it would be a tough time for them when the results come as they would have to sweat a lot to get high marks in the second-semester exam if there is one. They also may find it hard to compete with state syllabus scorers who score more owing to a much easier set of questioning. What teachers and parents are worried about is that the board's new ideas and experimentation in question papers might result in more students opting for the state syllabus in the plus 2 levels in future. It is high time the board minimized its way of exploring and experimenting

M Pradyu, via email

quires coordination between (Uma Kambhampati is Professor of Economics and Subham Kailthya is Teaching Fellow at University of Warwick, UK.)



Arvind Virmani@dravirmani 'Debt trap education,' and 'Debt trap diplomacy', share the problem of asymmetric information and Moral hazard; ie one side of the market has institutionally greater information and knowledge than the other, and can easily cheat the latter in the absence of an independent regulator!

Anil Talwar@aniltalwar2

As young offrs we were always upto some prank or the other to unnerve our NCO instrs. During YO's, the tech classes were taken by NCO instrs. They always asked an initial question to link up to the main subke hotey hain, koi ek'? Talwar saab.



Raj Singh@ RajSingNiranjan Setting up of Hydro power plant below 25 MW is delicenced in India. Hence all states in India must be encouraged to set up as many hydro projects with MUST RUN status to help produce clean energy during monsoon. We must run such campaign to discuss with all stockholders.

Bhatia@m\_bhatia19 Success is the product of daily habits-not once in a lifetime transformations. Your outcomes are a lagging measure of your habits. Your networth is a

lagging measure of your

financial habits. James

Clear-Atomic Habits.





# Bharati Chaturvedi@Bharati09



#### Harini Calamur@calamur

Those tableaux (wtf don't we call them floats) remain about as interesting as they were when I was in the 3rd standard (a long time ago), why do we even have them? random people doing folk dances from the early days of DD such a supreme waste of time, energy, effort and bandwidth.

## Amar Sidhu@amarsidhu

Blindly aping the western way of life without thought and deliberation and running down your indigenous culture and calling it 'progressive' is resulting in chaos and will have its own pitfalls and consequences. Being in, and causing misery is hardly 'progressive'!

**MASS PRAYER** 



Devotees belonging to Brahmin community conduct a mass prayer for speedy recovery of those infected with COVID-19, in Varanasi, Wednesday,

#### **FINMIN TO MINISTRIES**

# 'Restrict expenses within prescribed limit'

**New Delhi, Jan 19 (PTI):** 

In a bid to maintain fiscal deficit within the targeted limit, the finance ministry has asked ministries and departments to restrict their expenses with the revised estimates. The communication comes ahead of the Union Budget 2022-23, likely to be unveiled on February 1.

In an office memorandum seeking proposals for the third and final batch of Supplementary Demands for Grants, the economic affairs department under the finance ministry asked the ministries and departments to submit their proposals

posals for supplementary grants, the grant-controlling authority must invariably identify savings available within the grant so that the infructuous or inflated supplementary demands are weeded out and the eventuality of surrender after obtaining supplementary grant is avoided," it said.

The proposal for Supplementary Demands for Grants may be projected after a thorough and objective assessment of additional requirements of funds, it said. "All the ministries and departments have been requested to contain the expenditure within the approved Revised Estimate ceilment estimates a fiscal deficit of 6.8 per cent of the gross domestic product (GDP) in the current financial year ending on March 31. Fiscal deficit is an indi-

cation of the government's  $% \left( \frac{1}{2}\right) =\left( \frac{1}{2}\right) \left( \frac{1}{2}\right)$ borrowing to meet the shortfall between expenditure and receipts from taxes and other sources. The memorandum further said the demand proposal should be made after a thorough review of savings within the Grant.

"In cases where re-appropriation can be made without the requirement of Supplementary as per the extant provisions, no Supplementary proposal, including for a token posed. "Such requirement may be met by re-appropriation of savings after obtaining approval of competent authority," it

The cases that will be eligible to be incorporated under such demands include those where adfrom Contingency Fund of India have been granted.

payments Besides, against court decree will be included as well in cases where the finance ministry has specifically advised moving of supplementary demand in the budget session, it said. The two-phase Budget session begins on January 31 and continues till April 8.

# 'Book throws light on lives of prisoners in Indian jails'

New Delhi, Jan 19 (PTI):

Bringing prisoners' lives and liberties to the heart of public debate and policies, a new collection of essays, "Hope Behind Bars: Notes from Indian Prisons", gives readers valuable insights into the vexed idea of incarceration.

The collection of essays written by a retired Supreme Court judge, former prison administrators, lawyers, journalists, academicians, searchers, a former prisoner and leaders of grassroots organisations -- is ed-

ited by Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative (CHRI) director Sanjoy Hazarika and head of CHRI's prison reforms programme Madhurima

Published by PAN Macmillan India, the book aims to shed light on the "opaqueness of the system, making it not just more humane but also showing what can be achieved within the current ambits of the law, despite the infirmities of creaky and ineffective

"A prison is a world of its own, where residents

live without the support systems that those on the outside take for granted. Prisoners hope and will each day to be their last in confinement. We believe that the stories in 'Hope Behind Bars' provide insight into lives less ordinary," wrote the editors in the introduction of the

Retired Supreme Court judge Madan B Lokur, celebrated SC human rights lawyer Vrinda Grover, iournalist Sunetra Choudhury and CHRI researchers Sabika Abbas, Sugandha Mathur and Amrita Paul are among the authors whose works are featured in the book.

It includes a powerful essay on the rights of vulnerable prisoners, write up on the challenges of establishing a prison training institute, the critical need to train prison officials and the gut-wrenching story of Wahid - who spent ten years in prison on a terrorism case before a court pronounced him innocent -- where he talks of custodial violence, torture and police arbitrari-

"Vrinda Grover traces how she navigated the ups and downs, twists and turns of the Hashimpura killings case, which took thirty years to conclude: the case involved the Uttar Pradesh Provincial Constabulary Armed (PAC), which was charged with gunning down fortytwo Muslims in the Hashimpura area of Muzaffarnagar, less than a hundred kilometres from New Delhi.

"The perils of prolonged judicial delays were underlined in this case three of the accused died during this period," wrote the editors while talking about one of the chapters in the

# TMC trade union removes leader after disruption in Exide plant

Kolkata, Jan 19 (PTI):

The trade union arm of the Trinamool Congress, INTTUC, on Wednesday said its Purba Medinipur district president has been removed in a message of "zero tolerance" towards anyone disrupting smooth functioning of the industries in West Bengal.

The action was taken against Sanjay Banerjee after authorities of Exide plant in Haldia alleged that production was hampered due to protests by casual labours on Monday.

Some contract workers created chaos and prevented others from joining work leading to the disruption in production.

Without disclosing further details, Exide officials said production is back to normal on Wednesday. Cabinet minister Moloy

Ghatak and Indian Trinamool National Trade Union Congress (INTTUC) state president Ritabrata Banerjee went to Haldia following the in-

We have suspended the

district INTTUC leader (Sanjay Banerjee) on corruption charges. We want to reiterate the stand of our Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee about zero tolerance towards anyone who will try to disrupt smooth functioning of industry in the state, Banerjee told PTI.

Sanjay Banerjee was also removed from his post and was replaced by sibnath Sarkar, he said. Operations at Exide's Haldia plant have been normalised Ritabrata Banerjee said.

Volunteers distribute food among the needy at Centenary Wesley Church in Hyderabad, Wednesday.

# **AIG HOSPITALS STUDY**

# '30 % individuals lose vaccineacquired immunity against COVID-19'

After 6 months

Hyderabad, Jan 19 (PTI):

As much as 30 per cent individuals lose vaccineacquired immunity after six months, according to a study conducted by AIG Hospitals along with the Healthcare Foundation on Vaccine Immunity.

The study was conducted on 1,636 healthcare workers who were fully vaccinated against COVID-19, a press release from AIG Hospitals said.

"Our study results were at par with other global studies where we found that almost 30 per cent individuals had antibody levels below protective immunity level of 100 AU/ml after six months. These individuals were majorly above 40 vears with co-morbidities like hypertension and diabetes. Out of the develop any immune protection at all," Dr D Nagesnwar кеаау Chairman. Hospitals said.

The results clearly indicated that with age, immunity waning is directly proportional which means that younger people have more sustained antibody levels than the elderly population.

One of the most important results of the study showed that people above 40 years with co-morbidities like hypertension and diabetes have significantly less antibody response after six months of getting fully vaccinated, the release further

Individuals above 40 years with diabetes and hypertension of both genders may be at a hightotal, 6 per cent did not er risk of SARS-CoV-2 infection and these individuals should be prioritised tor a booster dose after six months, AIG said.

At present, the ninemonth gap for a precaution dose benefits 70 per cent of the population who can retain enough antibody levels beyond six months.

However, considering the scale of our country, the 30 per cent people especially those with comorbid conditions like hypertension, diabetes, etc., who are more prone to develop an infection after six months of getting fully vaccinated should also be considered for the prevention dose, Dr Reddy added.

# Rebel SP MLA, elected assembly dy speaker quits his party

Lucknow, Jan 19 (PTI): Uttar Pradesh assembly's Deputy Speaker Nitin Agarwal, a Samajwadi Party MLA who had been elected to the House's post on the BJP's support, formally quit the SP's membership.

The SP MLA from Hardoi Sadar assembly seat said he has also quoit as the MLA and deputy speaker of the House.

"I have sent my resignation from the SP to its president national Akhilesh Yadav. I have also resigned from the assembly membership and from the post of deputy speaker," Nitin Agarwal told reporters here.

Agarwal, who was elected the assembly deputy speaker on the BJP's support had not formally joined the party and was technically still an SP MLA.

# **OBC RESERVATION**

# SC directs Maha govt to submit data before SBCC

New Delhi, Jan 19 (PTI):

The Supreme Court Wednesday directed the Maharashtra government to submit data on Other Backward Classes (OBCs) to the SBCC to examine its correctness and make recommendations on their representation in elections for the local bodies.

The top court also directed the State Backward Classes Commission (SBCC) to submit the interim report to the authorities concerned in two weeks of receiving information from the state government.

"Maharashtra has asked this court to permit elections based on data already available to the state

ward classes. Instead of examining the data, the appropriate step would be to present this data before a state appointed dedicated commission which can examine the correctness... "If it deems it appropri-

concerning other back-

ate, make recommendations to the state based on which further steps can be taken by the state or State Election Commission... The commission may submit the interim report if so advised to concerned authorities in two weeks from receipt of information/data from the state government," a bench headed by Justice A M

Khanwilkar said. The apex court clarified, however, that the list to be

prepared by the state government concerning socially and educationally backward classes would be independent of the census carried out by the Centre. "The information and

data available to the state can be furnished to the dedicated commission which can take decisions about efficacy thereof and make recommendations to state government as may be necessary. This obviously would not complete the triple test exercise which has to be completed (as per 2010 judgement) before providing reservation of seats in local government for OBC category," said the bench, also comprising Justices Dinesh

Maheshwari and C T

Ravikumar. This observation must also govern different states which are to proceed for elections of local govt, the top court, adding that until the triple test is complete, these seats will be treated as open category.

advocate Senior Shekhar Naphade, appearing for Maharashtra, submitted that the state has some data on the basis of which reservation can be sustained. He said there are elections in March and data is already before the commission.

'Your lordship may tell the commission to submit a report in two weeks so we can act on the March elections. Otherwise a large section of the community might go unrepresented," he said. With regard to Madhya

Pradesh, Additional Solicitor General K M Nataraj, appearing for the state, stated that the Election Commission has cancelled the Madhya Pradesh Panchayat Raj Evam Gram Swaraj (Amendment) Ordinance 2021 and assured that the new ordinance would be in accordance with apex court's directions.

Senior advocate P Wilson, appearing for one of the intervenors, said the OBC category does not have adequate representation. "We are happy with your lordship's decision to leave it to the commis-

# Punjab CM Channi alleges conspiracy' to 'trap' him

hatched to trap me in this

handigarh, Jan 19 (PTD:

Chief Punjab Minister Charanjit Singh Channi on Wednesday accused the BJP-led central government

hatching a conspiracy to trap him in the case in which raids were conducted by the Enforcement Directorate at many places in the state. He alleged that whenever elections are to take place, the BJP government at the Centre uses **Enforcement Directorate** (ED), Income Tax and others against political opponents to target and armtwist them.

A conspiracy has been

case, claimed Channi, referring to the ED raids conducted at the residence of his nephew on Tuesday. He alleged that attempts were being made by the federal probe agency sleuths to trap him in the case. Channi, accompanied by some ministers including Sukhjinder Singh Randhawa, was addressing a press conference. ED sources said on Wednesday about Rs 10 crore cash has been seized during the raids conducted in an anti-money laundering investigation against illegal sand mining operations in Punjab that included about Rs 8 crore from the

linked

Bhupinder Singh alias

premises

Honey, a nephew of Channi. Another about Rs 2 crore has been seized from the premises linked to a person identified as Sandeep Kumar, they said.

Reacting to the ED raid at his nephew's premises, Channi claimed that he was not even named in a 2018 FIR of the Nawanshahr (Shaheed Bhagat Singh Nagar district) Police. However, officials said the action has been initiated after taking cognisance of the 2018 FIR of the Nawanshahr Police and some other such police complaints against some companies and individuals alleged to be involved in the business of illegal sand mining in the state.

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