



BRIEF



AICC General Secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra addresses a press conference after releasing party manifesto Unnati Vidhan Jan Ghosna Patra for the UP Assembly elections, in Lucknow, Wednesday.

Death sentence

New Delhi: The Supreme Court Wednesday commuted the death sentence, awarded to a man for raping and murdering a seven-year-old girl, to life imprisonment saying it cannot be said that there is no probability of the convict being reformed and rehabilitated. The apex court, while upholding his conviction for the offences including that of murder and rape under the Indian Penal Code and the provisions of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, said the convict shall not be entitled to premature release or remission before undergoing actual imprisonment for 30 years.

Summon

Kolkata: The Central Bureau of Investigation on Wednesday summoned Trinamool Congress MP and actor Deepak Adhikari, who is popularly known by his screen name Dev, in connection with its probe into a multi-crore cattle smuggling racket operating along the India-Bangladesh border in West Bengal, a source in the agency said.

Resign

Srinagar: Senior PDP leader Ghulam Nabi Hanjura on Wednesday resigned as the general secretary of the party but will continue as its basic member, a party leader said. Hanjura was not available for comment. The PDP leader said that Hanjura has resigned as the general secretary of the party but he will continue to be associated with the party.

Racket

Mumbai: The Railway Protection Force (RPF) has busted a 'hawala' racket at Dadar station in Mumbai and seized Rs 67.47 lakh from a person, officials said on Wednesday. Hawala denotes illegal transaction of funds by skirting the legal banking channels.

Mishap

Pathanamthitta(Ker): Three women of a family, who were on their way to attend a wedding ceremony, were killed as their car overturned and fell into a canal at Adoor in this district on Wednesday. Four others in the vehicle, including the driver, escaped with injuries and their condition was stable as of now, police said. The deceased were natives of Ayur in Kollam district, they said.

Weather
High 30 Low 18

MARKET
NIFTY 17,463.80
SENSEX 58,465.97

BULLION
GOLD 48,510
SILVER 62,421

CLOSE SHAVE

Alliance Air Mumbai-Bhuj flight flies without engine cover

DGCA launches probe

Mumbai, Feb 09 (PTI):

An Alliance Air flight from Mumbai to Bhuj, carrying 70 passengers, flew without engine cover that was later retrieved from the runway at the city airport on Wednesday, prompting aviation regulator DGCA to start a probe into the incident, according to an official.

The ATR aircraft landed safely at Bhuj in Gujarat. Alliance Air said that it has initiated a probe into the incident.

The incident happened on Wednesday morning and was brought to the notice of airport authorities by a Mumbai Air Traffic Controller (ATC). Subsequently, the Directorate General of



Civil Aviation (DGCA) started an investigation into the incident.

"Mumbai ATC informed the airport that Alliance Air ATR aircraft, operating flight 91-625 (Mumbai-Bhuj) took off without the left engine cowling (cover)," the official said.

Later, the airline's engineering team reached the site and retrieved the engine cover from the runway.

During the operation of Alliance Air flight 91-625

from Mumbai to Bhuj on February 9, the panel of the engine cowl was found on the runway post take off, Alliance Air said in a statement.

"We have taken strict note of the incident and a thorough investigation has been initiated. The findings of the same shall be shared with the regulatory authorities and we shall ensure that all required corrective actions are put in place," the government-owned airline

'Pilots weren't aware that plane's engine cover fell'

The Mumbai Air Traffic Control (ATC) had contacted the pilots of the Alliance Air flight, which flew from Mumbai to Bhuj without its engine cover on Wednesday, whether any object had fallen off the aircraft after its take-off from the airport in Maharashtra capital, an official here said. As per the preliminary reports, the pilots did not realise that the cowl (cover) of one of the engines had fallen on the runway in Mumbai as they told the ATC that everything was fine, the official said. The airport director said that as per the primary reports he has received, the pilots were not aware that a section of the engine's cowl had fallen during the take-off.

What expert says....

Officials said poor maintenance could be behind the incident. "Incidents of cowl separation usually occur post maintenance activity if latches are not secured. The crew is also expected to ensure that the engine cowl is sited before commencing the flight," news agency quoted aviation expert, Captain Amit Singh, as saying.

It also said that "we are grateful that all passengers and crew onboard the flight safely landed and there was no damage to the aircraft due to this unfortunate incident."

'1 crore adolescents in 15-18 yrs group fully vaccinated'

New Delhi, Feb 09 (PTI):

Over one crore adolescents in the 15-18 years age group nationwide are now fully vaccinated against the novel coronavirus infection, Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya said on Wednesday.

Over 5.04 crore beneficiaries in this age group have been administered the first dose of vaccine.

"What a historic feat by Young India! Over 1 crore youngsters between 15-18 age group are now fully vaccinated against COVID-19," Mandaviya

tweeted. With the administration of more than 53.61 lakh vaccine doses in a span of 24 hours, India's COVID-19 vaccination coverage has exceeded 170.87 crore (1,70,87,06,705), according to provisional reports till 7 am.

As per the Registrar General of India (RGI), the estimated population of beneficiaries in the age group of 15-18 years is 7.4 crore for 2021-22.

Vaccination of children in the age group of 15-18 years began from January 3 across the country.

BSF recovers 4 kg RDX, IED-making items

Dropped by Pak drone in Punjab

Amritsar, Feb 09 (PTI):

The Border Security Force (BSF) on Wednesday recovered over 4 kg of RDX, a pistol and bomb-making items dropped in two packets by a drone that flew from Pakistan into an Indian farm along the Punjab border.

A spokesperson of the paramilitary force said troops fired after they heard a "buzzing sound of a suspected flying object

coming from the Pakistani side to the Indian side" around 1 am in the Panjgrain area of Gurdaspur sector.

A search was later conducted in the wheat farms of Ghaggar and Singhoke villages along the border and the BSF party recovered two yellow-coloured packets, lying about 20 m apart embedded in the wet soil, he said.

Initially, it was thought that the packets may be containing narcotics but when they were opened, about 4.7 kg RDX, a China-made pistol, two maga-

zines with 22 bullets, three electronic detonators, timer device, detonating cord (cordtex wire), splinters, cells, steel container, nylon thread, plastic pipe, packing material and Rs 1 lakh cash were recovered, he said.

An official said the recovered items are used to make RDX powered improvised explosive devices (IEDs) or bombs like the ones recently used in a Ludhiana court in December last year and the one found in the Ghazipur flower market in Delhi last month.

UP trader attempts suicide on FB Live

Blames PM for his financial state; wife dies

Baghpat (UP), Feb 09 (PTI):

A local trader allegedly attempted suicide on Facebook Live, accusing Prime Minister Narendra Modi for his poor financial condition. His wife, who also consumed poison, died.

Superintendent of Police, Neeraj Kumar Jadaun, confirmed the incident on Wednesday and said the condition of Rajiv Tomar (40), who ran a shoe-shop, is serious.

The incident took place on Tuesday when Rajiv started a Facebook Live during which he consumed poison.

After failing to stop her husband, Tomar's wife, Poonam, also consumed poison. Both of them were rushed to a private hospital where Poonam died, while the trader's condition was stated to be critical, police said. In the purported video, Rajiv held

PM Modi responsible for his financial condition.

"Modiji will be responsible for my death. If Modi ji has any shame, he will change things. I am not saying he is wrong on everything but he is not a well-wisher (hitaishi) of small traders and farmers," he said.

When Poonam tried to stop him, Tomar said, "Government to sumti nahi tum hi sun lo" (the government doesn't hear us, at least you should hear).

Poonam tried to take out the poison from Tomar's mouth but after failing to do so, she also consumed it, the purported video showed. Rajiv was a resident of Subhash Nagar.

Rajiv ran a shoe shop and the lockdown in 2020 had ruined his business, his family members said.

A large number of shoes in his shop were damaged as the shop was closed for the long period, they said.

He also had taken loans which he could not pay off, they said, adding that Rajiv had two sons.

MONEY LAUNDERING CASE

ED attaches FDs of Assam Rifles officer

New Delhi, Feb 09 (PTI):

Fixed deposits worth Rs 2.22 crore of an officer of paramilitary force Assam Rifles have been attached under the anti-money laundering law as part of an alleged disproportionate assets case probe against him, the ED said on Wednesday. The officer against whom action of provisional attachment of assets under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) has been taken is second-in-command rank Rajdev Singh Yadav posted at the Assam Rifles training centre in Dimapur, Nagaland, the agency said in a

statement. The Enforcement Directorate (ED) booked the officer after taking cognisance of a July 2019 FIR and a charge sheet filed in March last year by the CBI against him. Probe found, the ED said, that Yadav while functioning as staff officer-II, establishment and drawing & disbursing officer (DDO) at the headquarters of the Assam Rifles in Shillong, "made huge cash deposits in his bank accounts and acquired huge assets, which were disproportionate to his all known sources of income". This was done during the period between 06.12.2012 and 31.07.2019, it said.

TRIBUTES TO MARTYRS



School teachers light candles to pay tribute to the army soldiers, in Jammu, Wednesday.

Shutdown in parts of Srinagar, Sopore

Srinagar, Feb 09 (PTI):

Parts of Srinagar and Sopore in Jammu and Kashmir witnessed a shutdown on Wednesday on the occasion of the ninth anniversary of Parliament attack convict Mohammad Afzal Guru's hanging in New Delhi's Tihar jail in 2013, officials said. However, there was no shutdown in other areas and the public transport was also plying normally, the officials said. Shops and other business establishments were shut in some areas in Downtown locality (old city areas) as well as in Maisuma area of the city here, and some areas of Sopore in north Kashmir's Baramulla district, they said.

CBSE second-term board exam from April 26

For classes 10, 12 in offline mode

New Delhi, Feb 09 (PTI):

The Central Board of Secondary Education will conduct second-term board examination for classes 10 and 12 in offline mode from April 26, officials said on Wednesday.

The board after discussion with various stakeholders and taking into consideration the COVID-19 situation in the country has decided to conduct second-term board exams in offline mode only, CBSE Examination Controller



Sanyam Bhardwaj said. The theory exams will begin from April 26, 2022. The datesheet for classes 10 and 12 will be released soon, he added.

In term-2 exams, students will answer both objective and subjective type questions. The term-1 papers only had objective or multiple-choice type questions. The board will follow the pattern of sample

question papers for the exam. Sample papers were released last month on the CBSE academic website.

The detailed date sheet will be released soon on cbse.nic.in, it added.

For the first time, the central education board is conducting Class 10 and Class 12 final exams in two terms. This has been done in view of the current Covid situation in the country.

Last year, during the second wave of Covid, the board could not conduct exams and had to come up with an alternative assessment scheme to prepare results.

UP ASSEMBLY POLLS

Promises galore as parties release manifestoes ahead of polls

Lucknow, Feb 09 (PTI):

It's raining promises to woo voters ahead of the Uttar Pradesh Assembly polls, with political parties pledging free power to farmers, lakhs of jobs, smartphones and laptops if voted to power.

After the release of manifestoes by the BJP and the Samajwadi Party (SP) the previous day, the Congress came up with its poll promises on Wednesday. BSP president Mayawati has already declared that like in the past, they will not issue any manifesto and will go to people with achievements of the party's past governments. To show that its manifesto is not just a piece

of paper, the BJP has named it as its "Lok Kalyan Sankalp Patra". The SP has called its manifesto "Samajwadi Vachan Patra" while the Congress named it as "Unnati Vidhan Jan Ghosna Patra". In a bid to lend credence to poll assurances, top leaders of the parties released the manifestoes. Their poll promises have a lot of things for farmers, youth, women and other sections of the society.

The BJP in its manifesto has announced free power to farmers for irrigation, grants for borewells and tubewells to marginal farmers in addition to the minimum support price (MSP) for potato, tomato and onion.

Four Naxals arrested with explosives

Dantewada, Feb 09:

Four Naxals were arrested and explosives were seized from their possession in Dantewada district, police said on Wednesday.

A patrolling team of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) was out on a search operation near its Kamarguda and Kondasavli camps on Tuesday, when it intercepted the cadres belonging to lower ranks near Durma village, an official said.

Two tiffin bombs, weighing 3 kg each, five gelatin rods, a wireless set, a Maoist uniform, electric wire and items of daily use were recovered from the ultras, he

About the recovery

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said.

During interrogation, the cadres "admitted" to their link with the outlawed CPI (Maoist), he said.

The arrested ultras were identified as Madvi Deva (36), a member of Dandakaranya Adivasi Kisan Majdoor Sangthan (DAKMS), Muchaki Nanda (35), Sodhi Lakhma (40) and Sukka Muchaki (35), who were active as militia members

Those arrested.....

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tia members, the official said.

The men are natives of Jagargunda area in neighbouring Sukma district, he added.

Prima facie, it seems that the Naxals had allegedly planned to plant the explosives to harm the security forces, the official said.

MAJOR ISSUE

'Centre examining comments received from states/UTs on IAS officers' deputation'

New Delhi, Feb 09 (PTI):

Union minister Jitendra Singh on Wednesday said the Centre is examining the comments received from the states/UTs on a proposal to amend rules on IAS officers' central deputation.

In a written reply in the Lok Sabha, he said, the Indian Administrative Service (Fixation of Cadre Strength) Regulations, 1955 provide for a central deputation reserve not exceeding 40 per cent of the senior duty posts of a cadre/joint cadre. However, state govern-

ments have not been sponsoring adequate number of officers for central deputation to meet the requirements of the government of India, said Singh, the minister of state for personnel.

Therefore, in order to address the above problem, comments have been sought from states/Union Territories, in terms of the provisions contained in Section 3 of All India Services Act, 1951 on a proposal to amend Rule 6(1) of IAS (Cadre) Rules, 1954, relating to the central deputation of IAS officers, the minister said.

Fraudster arrested from Raipur Airport

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Feb 09: Old Bhilai Police have arrested a fraudster from Raipur Airport. The accused had duped over Rs 62.85 lakhs from two traders on the promise of supplying scrap. The accused was continuously changing his mobile number and location to avoid arrest.

CSP Vishwas Chandrakar informed that the victims Govind Agrawal of SS Ventures and RS Trading Company and Hamid Siddhiqui of Jai Baba Steel Private Limited, Hathkhaj are involved in trading of various industrial materials. They complained that Anil Rai (Director) and Avinash Patil (CEO) of Orbit Electromake India Private Limited had accepted Rs 3737307 from Govind Agrawal and Rs 2548300 from Hamid Siddhiqui on the promise



of supplying scrap. But the accused did not deliver the scrap. On complaint of the victims, FIRs were lodged under sections 420, 409 of IPC.

Taking the matter into serious cognizance, SSP Badri Narayan Meena directed to trace and arrest the accused. Under the supervision of ASP (City) Sanjay Dhruv and CSP Vishwas Chandrakar, a special team of Old Bhilai Police Station was formed to search for the notorious fraudster who was contin-

uously changing his mobile phone and location.

Police collected information about the mobile phone locations which were regularly changing at different places in Maharashtra, Bangalore, Hyderabad, Delhi, Mumbai, etc. Police conducted technical analysis of hundreds of mobile calls and tracked the location of the accused at Raipur Airport. Old Bhilai Police immediately contacted its counterparts in Mana Police Station

and with the help of Airport Security, the accused was arrested from Raipur Airport.

During preliminary interrogation, the accused confessed to have committed the crime. The accused Anil Rai (40) son of Rajdayal Rai a resident of Bungalow Number 14, Vintage Vista, PS Hadapsar, Pune, Maharashtra was produced before the court and has been in police remand for further interrogation and collection of strong evidence.

Inspector Vinay Singh Baghel, Head Constable Rakesh Singh, Constable Sandeep Singh, Krishna Singh, Vijay Singh, Rajesh Chandraul, constable Vikrant Yadu of Cyber Cell; SHO (Mana) Inspector Sharad Chandra and Constable Amit Kerketta played vital role in arresting the accused.

Admissions open for Class 1 in Bhilai Ispat Vikas Vidyalaya

Bhilai, Feb 09: Admissions are open for Class 1 in Bhilai Ispat Vikas Vidyalaya (BIVV), Sector 06 and Bhilai Ispat Vikas Vidyalaya, Sector 11. These schools are run for BPL children by SAIL-Bhilai Steel Plant as part of CSR activities. Children from families who are BPL Card holders for Survey Year 2007-08 and Antodya card holders covered in socio-economic Census 2011 list are eligible for admission in the BIVV schools. The last date for registration has been extended from February 10, 2022 to February 16, 2022. Parents can come to BIVV, Sector 06 from 10 am to 2 pm and BIVV Sector 11 from 9 am to 1 pm except holidays. Children born between April 2015 to 31st March 2017 are eligible for admission in Class 1. Students from Sector 01 to Sector 10, Maroda, Ruabanda, Risali, Hospital Sector and HUDCO are eligible to apply admission in BIVV, Sector 06 while children of families living within vicinity of 1 km of the school in Sector 11 are eligible to apply in BIVV Sector 11.

With conclusion of paddy purchase, focus shifts on lifting

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Feb 09: After the successful completion of paddy procurement, now the administration is paying full attention towards lifting of paddy from procurement centres. 4.17 lakh metric tonnes of paddy has been procured in the district and lifting of paddy is going on from all the centres. Collector Dr Sarveshwar Narendra Bhure has given instructions to speed up the lifting of paddy in all the centres. On Wednesday, Collector inspected the paddy procurement center in Chandkhuri. He inquired about stock verification and other necessary procedures. The committee manager said that 12000 quintals of paddy is yet to be lifted. Paddy has been lifted at regular intervals. About 1300 farmers were regis-



tered in this committee. Collector asked how much stock was left for lifting after the paddy procurement. The committee manager replied that in the last season, 50000 quintals of paddy were left till the end of the purchase for lifting. Food controller Dipankar, who was present during the inspection, said that action is being taken for the lifting of paddy. A solid strategy has been prepared for this process and the lifting work will be completed by the date fixed by the government. Collector gave spe-

cial instructions for the storage of paddy and asked for speedy lifting. Collector also interacted with the farmers present at the centre. A farmer, Purendra stated that he has sold paddy worth Rs 3.75 lakh. He repaid the loan of Rs 2 lakh which was taken for purchasing cattle. Farmers stated that this year they used vermicompost. Production was improved with the use of vermicompost. Committee Manager stated that 240 quintals of vermicompost was sold from the committee.

Revenue Advisory Committee meeting held



Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Feb 09: A meeting of the Revenue Advisory Committee of Bhilai Municipal Corporation was held on Wednesday. The meeting chaired by in-charge Siju Anthony and members present were Abhay Kumar Soni, Suresh Verma, Sujata, Rajesh Choudhary, Girija Banchar, Veena Chandrakar, M Lakshmi Gopal, Secretary and Revenue Officer NR Ratnesh, Assistant Engineer Anil Singh,

Superintendent (Property Tax) BL Asati, Clerk Nahkar Yadav and Devraj Singh Rajput were present. The meeting keeping in view the beautification of the city, discussed to replace all the old hoardings with Unipole hoardings. Siju Anthony and members asked the zone commissioners to issue a final notice for immediate removal of the hoardings that are currently illegally installed in the city even after the completion of the stipulated time period. After this, it was decided

to put forth the amended terms and conditions for Unipole before the MiC. It has been recommended to constitute a committee under the chairmanship of the Superintending Engineer at the zone level for the site selection and specification of Unipole. It was considered to include the Executive Engineer, Assistant Engineer and Revenue In-charge of the zones as members in the committee and discussions were also held for income expenses sheet for the budget.

Baba Deep Singh Nagar residents deprived of permanent power connections

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Feb 09: About 18 families residing in Baba Deep Singh Nagar in New Vaishalinagar are deprived of permanent power connections. During construction of the houses, they had taken temporary connections and now after completion of the construction, they are being denied permanent power connections. Due to this reason, they have to pay bills on higher tariffs and are deprived of exemption provided by the state government.

Addressing media persons here at Supela on Wednesday, AAP District President Meharban Singh informed that a firm Vaishali Developers had sold these small plots



to 18 people. The Town and Country Planning Department states that layout of that area has not been approved. However, the local civic body accepted the fee and provided building permissions to these people. For granting building permission, the local civic body charged a hefty amount as development charges but did not conduct development works. A resident had applied for permanent power connection on February 25, 2021 but even after a

year, the power company has not provided the same. The residents had acquired temporary power connections while constructing the houses and even after several years, they have not received permanent connections. They are not only paying bills on higher tariffs but are also deprived of government's subsidy.

Singh further said that when the aggrieved residents demanded power connection, the CSPDCL officials stated that the

plots were sold by the Vaishali Developers and Colonisers and hence the firm has to apply for electrification. On the other hand, the Town and Country Planning Department states that any layout has not been approved. The power company has informed the residents that they have to bear the entire expenses of electrification including installation of transformers and electricity poles. Locals have applied for seeking information about

the expenses and are still waiting for CSPDCL's reply.

Singh questioned that when the company can regularise the power connections of illegal colonies by imposing nominal fee, then what the problem is with this colony. He alleged that the power company officials are unnecessarily harassing the locals for extracting bribes. The aggrieved locals have approached the District Collector with their complaint and have sought permanent power connections. Meharban Singh, Vaddu Alam, Balvinder Singh, Suman Sheel, Avinash, Rampal, Yogesh, Preetesh Sahi, Ashok Sabnani, Chandrakant Patel and others were present.

Divisional Commissioner conducts surprise inspection at offices



Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Feb 09: Following the implementation of new timings for functioning of government offices, Divisional Commissioner Mahadev Kavre conducted surprise inspections at various offices of the district. During inspection of the office of Assistant Director (Education), a total of 06 officers / employees were

found absent. Show cause notices were served to absent officers/employees including Kalpana Swami (Assistant Director), Madhulika Tiwari (District Education Officer-in-charge), Mahendra Kumar Chandrakar (Accountant), Arun Kumar Verma (Accountant), Khilavan Das Sahu (Assistant Grade 3) and Parmanand Thakur (Assistant Grade 3). The

present employees were also instructed to reach the office sharp at 10:00 am on all days. Kavre also instructed them to keep the nameplates on the tables of the officers/employees in the office.

During the inspection of the Water Resources Department, Divisional Commissioner Kavre expressed his displeasure over the absence of

Superintending Engineer Sameer George and a show cause notice was issued to RS Verma (Cartographer), Indu Agrawal (Junior Assistant) and other absent employees. During the inspection of the Water Resources Department, instructions were given to shift the files in the record room which were lying haphazardly on the table and cupboards. All the employees were instructed to have nameplates on the tables.

Divisional Commissioner inspected the notice board of Public Service Guarantee Act and instructed that the applications received under Public Service Guarantee Act should be resolved within the time limit.

Gold Medal winning Sportspersons feted



Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Feb 09: Sportspersons who won Gold Medals at national level were recently felicitated by Shikha Dubey, GM (Education) at a function organised by Education Dept of SAIL-Bhilai Steel Plant.

Mayank Kumar, student of Class XI, Bhilai Vidyalaya, Sector 02 and

son of Poshan Lal won gold medal in National Fencing Championship held at Panipat. Revati Kumari, student of Class 11, Senior Secondary School, Sector 04 and daughter of Shri Balachandran won gold medal at National Karate championship held at Kanpur.

Shikha Dubey, GM (Education) congratulat-

ed the winners and conveyed her best wishes for them to excel in future sports events. She assured that the players would get full support from Bhilai Steel Plant.

Rajendra Prasad, DGM and Arjun Award winner expressed his happiness on their performance and congratulated the winners for their achievement. RJ Raju,

AGM (Education), Madhuri Jaltare, Principal, Senior Secondary School, Sector 4, Anita Chacko, Principal, Bhilai Vidyalaya, Sector 02, RR Sunil Nair, Sr Sports coordinator, Shaili Bore, ex Sr Sports coordinator and Avinash Chandra Sheel, Sports coordinator were present on the occasion.

Shrimayee selected to judge in Jessup Moot



Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Feb 09: Shrimayee Puan, now an Assistant Professor (Law) in Jaipur National University, has been selected to judge the US national rounds of Phillip

C Jessup moot court competition. Jessup is the oldest moot court competition in the world and is considered to be the best in the world.

She is also a part of the panel of judges who will be judging the India rounds for the same competition. Being appointed as a judge for the U.S. rounds, at an early stage of the career, is a rare sight and a great honour.

She has completed her Masters in Law from the prestigious Rashtriya Raksha University, Gandhinagar, with a gold medal. She is the daughter of Anuradha Puan and EX BSP executive FM Puan.

Hamar Lab of District Hospital in final stages

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Feb 09: Durg District Hospital, which is gradually developing as a Hi-tech centre, will now become even cheaper for the pockets of the patients. The establishment of Hamar Lab is in the final stages. With its inauguration, 114 types of tests will be done free of cost in a single campus. Along with this, RTPCR lab will also start soon.

With the new facility, there will be no need to send samples to AIIMS, Raipur. Collector Dr Sarveshwar Narendra Bhure inspected the preparations at the district hospital on Wednesday. He instructed to complete the infrastructure work at the earliest and install all the apparatus.



The work of RTPCR lab is nearing completion and it will be made operational within a few days. Collector said that the priority would be to start the Hamar Lab at the earliest. With the inauguration of Hamar Lab, patients will not only get free testing fa-

cility, but the facility for the doctors will also increase as reports will be available on time.

It needs to be mentioned here that with the introduction of Virology Lab, the facility of RTPCR test of Covid will be available at Durg District Hospital.

If needed, it can be upgraded and other virus-based diseases can also be detected. Collector witnessed the ongoing renovation work in the district hospital.

He said that in the renovation work, it should be ensured that there is good connectivity of the building so that it is more convenient to go from one wing to the other. He added that for improving facilities for the patients, the necessary purchases and works can be conducted through the Jeevandeep Samiti.

He said that it is the top priority to upgrade the district hospital and provide the best level facilities. In view of the convenience of the relatives of the patients in the MCH building, he also directed to

construct a shed. He directed to complete all the construction works within the stipulated time frame. Collector said that health is the most important priority.

If the hospital requires any important work to be conducted through DME, the proposal can be sent for approval. Additional Collector Nupur Rashi Panna and CMHO Dr Gambhir Singh Thakur were also present. Additional Collector apprised about the progress of the ongoing construction works in various wings and also informed about the tentative date of completion. CMHO detailed the technical aspects regarding the availability of necessary medical equipment along with the infrastructure.

OBITUARY

Roshni Sharma



Bhilai: Fareed Nagar, Supela resident Roshni Sharma left for heavenly abode at the age of 46 years on Tuesday. Last rites of the mortal remains were performed at Ramnagar Muktidham. She was the wife of Raju Sharma and mother of Vicky Sharma.

220 questions submitted through online mode so far

Online submissions of questions get overwhelming response from MLAs

Central Chronicle News

Raipur, Feb 09: After initial hiccups, the online submission of Questions for the Question Hour session in the Chhattisgarh Legislative Assembly has gained momentum. More than 220 Questions submitted by the Members of Legislative Assembly (MLAs) have been on line mode whereas just 61 Questions were submitted through offline mode which too was on the first day of the submission of Questions for the upcoming Budget session.

It is notable that the functioning of Chhattisgarh Legislative Assembly went online with the initiatives taken by the Assembly Secretariat on the directives of Assembly Speaker Dr Charandas Mahant recently. According to the information received, all the Questions submitted by



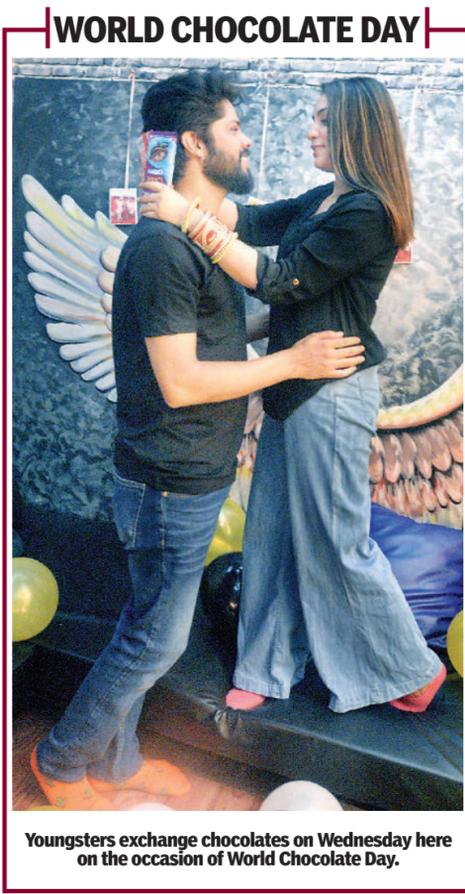
MLAs during the last three days are in online mode only. Above development makes it clear that the People's Representatives too have given overwhelming response to the fresh initiative which too would boost the paperless working of Assembly in future.

According to the information received, 281 Questions have been received by the Assembly Secretariat for the upcoming Budget Session of

Assembly scheduled to begin from March 7 onwards. It is notable that separate Login have been created by the Assembly Secretariat through which the MLAs can submit their Questions directly instead of making a physical visit to Assembly Secretariat.

While the Budget session would begin with Governor's Address, the Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel who also holds the Finance portfolio is likely to present the Annual Budget for the fiscal 2022-23 on March 11.

With just 13 days sitting during the Budget session, the MLAs are all set to submit call attention motion also apart from the Question Hour session. Principal opposition Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) too has several issues to corner the Treasury bench during the Budget session.



Youngsters exchange chocolates on Wednesday here on the occasion of World Chocolate Day.

Two arrested for making attempt on youth

Central Chronicle News

Raipur, Feb 09: Azad Chowk police on Wednesday arrested two assailants for making attempt on a youth last night. Police have also succeeded in recovering the knife used in the crime. According to police, complainant Anil Dadsena's elder brother Sunil Dadsena was walking with his friends last night. On way from Ashwini Nagar towards Dangania, Sunil was confronted by one of the assailant Tuleswar Sonkar and soon they started abusing each other over an old rivalry. Suddenly Tuleswar drew out a knife and stabbed Sunil on both his thighs after which both the assailants fled from the spot. Sunil's friend then rushed him to Azad Chowk police station and also called his brother Anil. Seeing Sunil bleeding profusely police rushed him to Ambedkar hospital where he was saved by immediate efforts of doctors. Police later registered an offence against assailants Tuleswar Sonkar and Aman Goswami and launched a search for them on Wednesday which resulted in tracking both of them also recovered the knife used in committing the crime.

BJP demands high-level probe into PM Housing Scheme scam

Delegation submit memo to Governor



Central Chronicle News

Raipur, Feb 09: Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on Wednesday submitted a memorandum to Governor Anusuiya Uike seeking high-level investigation into Prime Minister Housing Scheme reported in Bastar. A BJP delegation led by State BJP President Vishnu Deo Sai also registered complaint over reported misbehaviour of Police with the BJP workers at the alleged behest of state government. Sai said that Congress leaders get licences to carry out corruption whenever the Congress comes to power

and added that high-level investigation into the PM Housing Scheme should be carried in Bastar scam. Leader of Opposition in Chhattisgarh Legislative Assembly Dharmal Kaushik too registered complaint over undemocratic approach of Congress government. BJP MLA Brijmohan Agrawal alleged that the atrocities on the BJP workers is being carried out at the behest of Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel.

MLA Ajay Chandrakar, Raipur BJP President Shrichand Sundrani and other senior office-bearers of BJP were present on the occasion.

Police nabs three accused in theft incidents

Total 12 kg silver and 6 'tola' gold jewellery worth Rs 15 lakh recovered



Balod, Feb 09:

The Balod Police got a major breakthrough in solving theft cases in abandoned houses in Balod district and stealing of jewellery, motorcycles and other items by the thieves. In this case the Gunderdehi police nabbed three of interstate motorcycle and jew-

ellery thieves and they were produced in the Court on Wednesday and on interrogation came across surprising revelations.

The accused informed the Police that they used to keep the stolen jewellery as mortgage in the Bank, so that it cannot be traced and the Police seized a total of 12.500 kg



of stolen silver jewellery worth Rs 10 lakhs and gold jewellery of 57 gms worth Rs 3.25 lakhs from their possession. The Police is applying for claiming of the stolen jewellery kept as mortgage in the banks.

SP Balod Sadanand Kumar informed that a broad daylight theft was reported in a house in

Gram Bhatagaon of Gunderdehi thana few days back. During investigation the police came to know that one Arun Sahu just released from jail is involved in all these crimes along with his colleagues. So the Police was keeping a close watch on all his activities and nabbed him in Gunderdehi area and

brought him to thana for interrogation. He informed that he along with his colleague Manoj Kurre had broken lock of Jewellers and garment shops in Gram Bhatagaon, Pasoud in Gunderdehi area and from jeweller in Parpodi in Bemetara District and stolen the jewellery and clothes worth lakhs.

Jewellery shop burgled in Baikunth

Central Chronicle News

Raipur, Feb 09: Unidentified burglar on the intervening night of Tuesday-Wednesday broke into a jewellery shop in Baikunth and decamped with ornaments worth Rs 2.50 lakh. The burglary has since been complained in Tilda police station. According to police complainant Moti Ram Sahu is owner of Neha Jewellers situated at Stationpara locality in Baikunth. On Tuesday, he had closed his shop in the night at the usual time but when he arrived to open his shop on

Ornaments worth Rs 2.50 lakh stolen

Wednesday he found the shutter locks broken and missing. Further entering inside he found the almirah too was broken and the thief had taken away ornaments worth Rs 2.50 lakh. He immediately complained the burglary in Tilda police station where an offence has been registered under Section 457, 380 IPC against long burglar who has been spotted clearly in the CCTV recording. Further investigation in this regard is now underway.

Two arrested under Excise Act

Raipur: Two persons have been arrested under Excise Act from separate police station areas during last 24-hours. The first one, identified as Premlal Chelak, was arrested by Vidhan Sabha police from near Amaseoni locality after he was nabbed carrying 25 bottles of country liquor. The accused was later booked under Section 34-1 of Excise Act. The other one, identified as Raja Thakur, was arrested by DD Nagar police from Changorabhata locality after he was nabbed carrying 48 bottles of country liquor. The accused was later booked under Section 34-2 of Excise Act.

Two mobile phones snatched

Raipur: Two unidentified snatchers escaped with a mobile phone each from separate police station areas. The first one was lifted by complainant Pankaj Kumar Pathak near Ashirwad Weigh Bridge in Urla where he was talking over phone with some friend. The snatching was later complained in Urla police station. The other one was snatched by complainant Shiveshwar Diwan from Changorabhata vegetable market. The snatching was later complained in DD Nagar police station. Respective police stations have since registered offence under Section 379 IPC against unidentified snatchers and further investigations are now underway.

3 Maoists give up arms under Lon Varratu campaign in Dantewada

Both the rewarded Naxalites were involved in many incidents, seven Naxalites surrendered in Sukma

Raipur, Feb 09:

So far 515 Naxalites have surrendered in the Lon Varratu campaign being run in Dantewada. Dasarath alias Kotlo Mandavi (DKABS President) was involved in attacking a police party in the Police Station forest area in the year 2006, in which a jawan was martyred, in the year 2018 for attacking at Salwa Judum Camp, for assaulting,



killing a villager in the year 2009, was involved in killing a dedicated Naxalite in the year 2010, robbing a jawan's gun from Bhairamgarh fair in 2017, attacking a police party near Nelsnar in 2018 in which a jawan was also martyred in this Naxalite incident. The second

Maoist who surrender was involved in cutting the road going from Aranpur Sameli to Barrem, a resident of Gram Panchayat Rewali police station Aranpur Sameli, a one lakh rewarded Naxalite Mangadu Nuppo (KABS President) was involved in cutting the road from 10 to

Seven Naxalites surrendered in Sukma

Impressed by the government's Puna Narkom (homecoming) campaign in Sukma, 7 permanent warranty Naxalites surrendered before the district police and officers of CRPF 226. The surrendered Naxalites were associated with the Naxal organization for the last several years. Fed up with the discrimination of Naxalite leaders, they surrendered.

15 places, against whom a named offense is regis-

tered in Aranpur police station. The third Maoist who surrender, Motu Kuhadami was involved in 6 Naxalite incidents since the year 2017. He was involved in road-cutting, firing on Cherli CRPF camp. The three Maoists surrendered in the presence of DIG CRPF Vinay Kumar, Dantewada SP Siddharth Tiwari, Additional SP Rajendra Jaiswal, Additional Police CRPF's Second Commanding Officer Arun Kumar Sazza, Brajesh Kumar Pandey, Assistant Commandant, Asha Rani, Police Section Officer Barsoor and other police officers were present.

Governor offers prayers to Lord Mahakaleshwar at Ujjain



Raipur, Feb 09: Governor Anusuiya Uike had darshan of Mahakal Baba at Mahakaleshwar Temple in Ujjain and offered Abhishek and worship. Ms. Uike wished for the prosperity of the people of Chhattisgarh and progres-

sive progress of Chhattisgarh. She also prayed for freedom from the worldwide corona pandemic. The Governor was felicitated with a replica of the temple and a memento on behalf of the Mahakal Management Committee.

CMIE, party leadership all praise for Ch'garh model

Godhan Nyay Yojana gets listed in party election manifesto for UP polls

Central Chronicle News

Raipur, Feb 09: PCC Media department's President Sushil Anand Shukla informed that the Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel's Chhattisgarh model is all praise by the central agencies and independent institutions and by the party leadership at the Centre as well. In the party's election manifesto declared by the party High Command for UP polls, there is mention of 'Goudhan Nyay Yojana' to be implemented as per Chhattisgarh model. Along with this Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE) in its latest report has mentioned that the employment rate which has increased during BJP's rule has decreased during Congress rule in the state and all this is because of pro-people and pro-farmer policies adopted by the Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel and due to which the

schemes of Chhattisgarh state are being hailed all over the country. Sushil Anand Shukla charged that this report is a slap on the face of erstwhile BJP led state government and Modi-led Central government in leaving the youths of state and country unemployed. From CMIE report it is aptly clear that during the term of Raman government in Chhattisgarh, the rate of unemployment in state has increased manifold and avenues for employment too decreased. Whereas right since the Bhupesh Baghel led Congress government took to reins in the state, due attention has been paid towards employment. Apart from development oriented schemes, due emphasis was on creating employment avenues for the unemployed and its results is before all. At one time where the unemployment rate in the country was increasing and which during corona pandemic in

Chhattisgarh reduced. This stands testimony to the fact that the Baghel government gave top priority to employment during corona pandemic. Set aside this it is due to the policies of the Bhupesh Baghel government that the industrial production in the state went up and due to efforts of the state government, the rural economy got strengthened. So at one place where the Modi government's policies rendered many homeless and jobless during corona pandemic, on the other, the Chhattisgarh government increased avenues for employment and reduced the unemployment rate. PCC Media cell President Sushil Anand Shukla informed that in 2020 where the unemployment rate was 7.4% has now got reduced to 3.91%. In Sep 2018 the unemployment rate during Raman government was 22% and which was sheer outcome of its policies.

Construction work of the runway is complete, yet the runway cannot start without the boundary wall, Raipur Airport Authority sent a proposal for the land

Raipur, Feb 09: The biggest obstacle in starting international flights from the Swami Vivekananda Airport in Raipur, is the small runways. As per the airport officials even after the construction of the runway, the run-way cannot be started due to lack of boundary wall. For the boundary wall, the airport authority needs an additional 24 acres of land. Its proposal has also been sent to the state government, but till now no action is being taken on this issue. After the completion of the boundary wall around the runway, new airlines will also come here and flights will start for new destinations.



At present runway is 2,286 meters, will increase to 3,251 meters. Presently, the runway of Raipur Airport is 2,286 meters and its expansion work has been completed. After the expansion work, the length of the runway has increased to 3,251 metres. The biggest obstacle in the commencement of

the runway is the non-construction of the boundary wall. Aviation officials said that the runway cannot be started without the boundary wall. Right now people from the surrounding area are coming and going, whereas there will be restriction on this after the boundary wall is built.

Proposal sent for the boundary wall



Required land has been demanded for the boundary wall and for this a proposal has also been sent to the government, said Rakesh Ranjan Sahay, Airport Director, Swami Vivekananda Airport

International flight will start if length of runway increases. Aviation officials said that the biggest obstacle in starting international flights is the short run-way. After that comes the rest, the runway here is sufficiently 3,251 meters, but without a boundary wall it cannot be started.

Until the boundary wall work is not completed, no airlines can be invited to launch their international flights from here. Only after the run-way, the security arrangements will be increased along with increasing the manpower and the rest of the formalities for starting the international flight will be completed.

New ATC tower to start soon. The construction of ATC tower at Swami Vivekananda Airport is also nearing its completion. Airport officials said that it will be started soon. The work of connecting the cable and electronic system with the new tower is also being done with great speed. Modern equipment will be installed in this new ATC tower. After this, night landing will be done easily at Raipur airport. The new ATC tower is 43 meters high and is expected to cost around Rs 40 crore.

Center cuts chemical fertilizer demand quota of Ch'garh by 45%

Shortage of chemical fertilizers in the state due to low-allocation by the Center

Raipur, Feb 09:

Farmers across the state are facing troubles due to low-supply of chemical fertilizers by the Central Government to the state as per demand for the current Rabi season. A total of 7 lakh 50 thousand metric tonnes of chemical fertilizer has been demanded from the Government of India for the current Rabi season, but in today's situation, the state has got only 3 lakh 20 thousand metric tonnes of fertilizers.

Meanwhile, the Central Government has also cut the demand quota of chemical fertilizers of Chhattisgarh by 45 per cent. Against 7 lakh 50 thousand metric tonnes, the Center has given approval to supply only 4 lakh 11 thousand metric tonnes of chemical fertilizers. This has created a

- Ch'garh had demanded 7.50 lakh metric tonnes of chemical fertilizers
- Only 3.20 lakh metric tonnes of fertilizers have been received so far
- Distribution of chemical fertilizers to the farmers is being ensured as per the availability

situation of shortage of chemical fertilizers in the state. Despite this, all possible efforts are being made to make chemical fertilizers available to the farmers through societies. According to the information received from the Chhattisgarh State Marketing Association, the state of Chhattisgarh has so far received 1,17,522 metric tonnes of urea, which is only 34 per cent of the state's demand. Similarly, Chhattisgarh has got only 28 per cent of DAP, 53 per cent of Potash, and 43 per cent NPK complex. A target has been set in

Chhattisgarh of sowing various crops in 18 lakh 50 thousand hectares in the Rabi season. An area of 15 lakh 76 thousand hectares have been covered so far. Government of Chhattisgarh has sent a demand for 7.50 lakh metric tonnes of chemical fertilizers to the Government of India, including 3.50 lakh metric tonnes of urea, 2 lakh metric tonnes DAP, 50 thousand metric tonnes Potash, 75 thousand metric tonnes NPK Complex and 75 thousand metric tonnes super phosphate (ash). Against the demand only 4,11,000 metric

tonnes was approved by the Government of India, which is 55 per cent of the demand of the state of Chhattisgarh. This is very much less than the demand of the state.

The state has received only 93,214 metric tonnes of chemical fertilizers in the cooperative sector for the current Rabi season, which is 39 per cent less than the amount of 1,52,027 metric tonnes, received in the corresponding period last year. Chhattisgarh has got only 31,500 metric tonnes of urea, which is 15 per cent less than last year. Over 19,434 MT DAP has been received, which is 68 per cent less than last year. This year only 4,191 MT of potash has been received, which is 74 per cent less than last year's 15,847 MT. Similarly, there is less supply of NPK complex as compared to last year.

ACTION ON 'NO-MASK'



RMC authorities are taking action against the two-wheeler riders driving without mask here on Wednesday.

Collector instructs all officers, employees to reach office on time



Raipur, Feb 09:

Collector Sourabh Kumar has instructed officers to take necessary steps for quick disposal of pending cases of their departments, at a time limit meeting held at Red Cross Conference Hall of Collectorate here today.

The collector told the officers that five office days have been fixed by

the state government and all the officers and employees must come to their offices on time for the smooth office functioning. He asked the officers to get their subordinate offices run systematically as per the rules.

He inquired about the compensation amount given by the government to the kins of those died of COVID-19. He inquired

about illegal plotting, encroachment on government land and directed all SDMs to remove encroachment. The Collector asked the officials of the Revenue and Agriculture Departments to submit the report of assessment of crop damage at the earliest. He told revenue officers to prepare list of all pending cases of the period before

year 2020 and discuss with him regarding proper disposal of all such cases. The collector directed the officers to take information about the progress of Jal Jeevan Mission, entry of chit fund, compensation amount for land acquisition, electricity connection in illegal colony, Rajiv Gandhi Ashray Patta Yojana, positivity

rate of Covid and other subjects. He discussed with the officials of Education Department and Women and Child Development Department regarding opening of schools and Anganwadi centres.

He directed to resolve the applications of Mukhya Mantri Jan Chapal and Lok Seva Guarantee on a priority basis. Chief Executive Officer of District Panchayat Mayank Chaturvedi, Additional Collector NR Sahu, Additional Collector BB Panchbhai and BC Sahu, all Sub-Divisional Magistrates, Revenue and Departmental officers were present.

Holds time limit meeting

He directed to resolve the applications of Mukhya Mantri Jan Chapal and Lok Seva Guarantee on a priority basis. Chief Executive Officer of District Panchayat Mayank Chaturvedi, Additional Collector NR Sahu, Additional Collector BB Panchbhai and BC Sahu, all Sub-Divisional Magistrates, Revenue and Departmental officers were present.

CM offers financial assistance of Rs 10 lakh to SPES

It is a social service organization run by police family

Raipur, Feb 09: Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel has given a grant amount of Rs 10 lakh to Shri Prayas Education Society (SPES), a social service organization run by the police family, under voluntary donation. This organization provides free education to the children of poor, labour families from class IV to college. Free coaching is also given by the organization to the children for competitive examinations. On behalf of Chief Minister Mr. Baghel, a cheque of Rs. 10 lakh as voluntary donation amount was handed over by the public representative Mr. Sushil Ojha to the teachers and children of



Shri Prayas Education Society. This organization is functioning from May 14, 2018 in the building of Adivasi Nagarchi Gandwana Samaj located at Mathpuraina, Raipur.

At present 700 children are studying in this institution, where 15 teachers are doing the work of teaching free of cost. Education is given to the children through computer, projector. The institute

also has well equipped laboratory. Yoga classes are conducted here from 5.30 am to 6.30 am, followed by class room teachings in two shifts from 6.30 am to 9.30 am and from 5 pm to 7.30 pm. CBSE and Chhattisgarh Board of Secondary Education courses are conducted in the institution. Teachers and students of the institution were present on this occasion.

Corona's third wave is getting weaker, children are less affected

Raipur, Feb 09:

The third wave seems to be getting weaker in Chhattisgarh. At the same time, in the third wave, children were being expected to be more infected, but it is a matter of relief that so far only a maximum of 15 percent of children were infected out of the total infections have occurred. According to the Health Department, the third wave had started from January. About 1,17,680 lakh people were infected in this month. At the same time, 253 people have died due to corona. But, the pace of infection seems to be slow in February. From February 1 to 6, 13,312 infected have been reported. That is, 1.30 lakh infected have been found so far in the third wave. In this, the number of



children is being told up to 15 percent.

The new variant is less lethal than before

Nilay Mohankar, a pediatrician of the district hospital, said that this time the new variant of corona was less lethal than before. On the other hand, vaccination of adolescents between 15 and 18 years had also started. This is the

reason that corona infection has not been able to affect children much. The number of them being admitted in hospitals was also less than one percent.

Vaccine to more than 1.5 crore population

To prevent corona infection, more than 1.5 crore population of the state have been given both the vaccines. At the same time,

almost all the eligible people above 18 years of age have got the first vaccine of corona vaccine. One crore 95 lakh 89 thousand 893 citizens of this age group have been given the first dose of anti-coronavirus vaccine. The first vaccination has been done to 10.26 lakh adolescents in the age group of 15 to 18 years in the state. That is, 63 percent of the adolescents have been vaccinated for the first time. In the state, one crore 47 lakh 85 thousand citizens above 18 years and two lakh 21 thousand 982 adolescents of 15 to 18 years have been vaccinated against corona. This is 75 and 14 percent of the target of vaccination for these two categories, respectively. In this way, three crore 59 lakh 12 thousand 416 vaccines have been administered in the state.

In view of corona infection for CG Board Exam 2022

Raipur, Feb 09:

The preparation for class 10th-12th board examination of Chhattisgarh Board of Secondary Education has been completed. Confidential material will be distributed in the last week of February. Along with this, admit cards will also be issued. More than seven thousand examination centers have been set up this year. Chhattisgarh Board of Secondary Education, Secretary Professor VK



Goyal said that in view of the corona infection, Board has set up three thousand more centers this year. Last time 4,519 examination centers were set up for class 10th-12th board exams. This year the number of these centers has been increased to 7,600 which is an increase of 3,018 this year as compared to last year.

Examination centers increased in view of corona infection

Professor Goyal said that to save the children from corona infection, the examination center has been made in the school where the child is studying. This time more centers have been set up than last year. Admit card will be issued soon. It is worth mentioning that

the 10th-12th board exam in Chhattisgarh will start from March.

Class 12th examination from March 2 and 10th board examination from March 3

The 12th board exam will be conducted from March 2 to March 30, 2022. The exam timings will be from 9 am to 12.15 pm. Similarly, the 10th examination will be conducted from March 3 to 23, 2022. The exam timings will be from 9 am to 12.15 pm. Admit cards for this will be issued in the next week. Information for the admit card will be available on the board's website www.cgbse.nic.in.

MoU signed between WES and GGV

Bilaspur, Feb 09: Guru Ghasidas Vishwavidyalaya (GGV) (Central University) as a result of the vision and efficient management of the Vice-Chancellor, the University has signed MoUs with more than 40 eminent educational and non-educational institutions of the country and abroad. Along with this, MoU Monitoring Committee has been constituted to assess the progress being made in regarding various MoUs being executed by the University.

On Jan 18, 2022, after the post facto approval of the Standing Committee of the Academic Council, under the guidance of the Honorable Vice-Chancellor, regarding the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) be-

tween World Education Services (WES) and Guru Ghasidas Vishwavidyalaya (GGV), both the parties agreed on the Memorandum of Understanding document and signed it on behalf of both the organizations. The MoU document was signed on behalf of World Education Services (WES) by Mr. Holly Sandera, Sr. Director of Global Operations, WES and by the Registrar, Professor Shailendra Kumar on behalf of the university.

The past and current students of this university who are interested in or want to go for higher studies or jobs in the US and Canada are required to verify their educational documents received from this university. World Education Services (WES)

is a world reputed organization for evaluation of educational documents. Students of the university get the registration done on the portal of WES by depositing the prescribed fee (verification fee) and they are given a seven digit WES reference number. After that, the student gets his academic documents verified in the university and is sent those by post in a closed envelope by an officer of the Examination Section with signature and official seal on top of the envelope. It takes a long time for the documents to reach WES by Indian registered post.

The students also complain that a confusion persists whether their university attested educational certificates which have been sent by Indian regis-

tered post to World Education Services (WES) in a closed envelope by the University, when they were received and whether they were accepted or not.

Keeping the above problem in mind, under the direction of the Honorable Vice-Chancellor, after the continuous efforts of the Deputy Registrar (Examination) for the last two months, the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was executed between the University and World Education Services (WES) under which the verified academic documents of the students are uploaded successfully by the Examination Section on the portal of WES after opening SFTP account and using login ID and pass-

word. According to the conditions mentioned in the document, within 24 hours, the concerned officers of WES receive the said document. The information about the receipt of the document by WES is received by the Examination Section through SFTP Account Log box.

This work is being done successfully from January 19, 2022. Through the said MoU, not only is the verification of the attestation of educational documents done at an accelerated pace, but it is also a transparent and safe and to be operated digitally.

The former and current students of the university who want to go to America for higher studies or jobs are getting benefited from the said MoU.

CG College of Nursing observes 'World Cancer Day'



Raipur, Feb 09:

On the occasion of "World Cancer Day" with the theme "Close the Care Gap", an awareness rally was taken out by the students to prevent and spread awareness about cancer. To avoid the deadly disease, caution and vigilance were conveyed to the people. An appeal was

made by the students to the people to avoid the consumption of tobacco, gutkha, and cigarette etc. so that everyone can stay healthy and also online webinar was organized in which Central India recognize Cancer Specialists informed about what essential nutritious food should and should not be consumed to avoid cancer,

along with how cancer awareness campaign can be taken forward by nursing students. Dr. Naveen Bagrecha, Director, CG College of Nursing, informed the student to play an important role in cancer awareness campaign, describing the student as the cornerstone of the society, and inspired them to build a healthy society. In this program the administrative officer of the institution, Dr. Bharavi Vaishnav, Principal Mrs. Chennamma Bhaskar, Raipur, Mrs. Mayuri Martin, Bilaspur and all the staff and students participated. This information was given by the administrative officer of the college, Dr. Bharavi Vaishnav.

Collector expresses annoyance over applications with stamp tickets

- Being received with additional fees
- Directs authorities to accept it on plain A-4 size paper

Central Chronicle News

Koriya, Feb 08: Collector Kuldeep Sharma held 'Janchaupal' at Collector's office in 'Manthan' room and gave patient hearing to grievances and complaints by general public. A total of 38 applications were received in this 'Janchaupal' and in view of increasing corona pandemic this was postponed for a while and was resumed here on Tuesday.



Among the applications received from general public, Collector expressed annoyance over receiving of applications with stamp tickets and taking information from one of the applicants he informed that

they have been asked to submit it with stamp ticket and even had to pay additional fee as well.

Taking cognizance of the same, Collector directed the authorities to take

the application from villages on plain simple A-4 size paper and taking prompt decision in this regard gave necessary instructions to Time-Limit meeting in-charge Joint

Collector Ankita Som that duty of two employees be ensured for the 'Janchaupal' to be held from Tuesday and who in turn would help the people not capable of writing about their grievances.

Collector holding discussions upon the grievances received through 'Janchaupal' said that people are reaching with applications related to Revenue and Forest department and on this the officers from these two respective departments should pay due attention, so that the people from far-flung areas do not have to come all the way to district headquarters for such small jobs and do not face so much of inconvenience.

One arrested with 5 'satta-pattis'



Khairagarh, Feb 09: A youth writing 'satta-patti' in Gram Hardua under Ghumka thana was taken into arrest by the Police. It was on drive by the police against such illegal activities including 'satta-patti', a youth Phulchand Yadav (42) from Gram Hardua under Ghumka Thana was arrested and total 5 no's 'satta-patti', one dot-pen, and cash of Rs 2630 was seized from his possession. A case under 4 (K) of Gambling Act was filed against him and under section 151 of IPC.

Sanjeevni Blood Donors save 200 lives

By donating blood

Rohit Verma



Omprakash Chauhan

Kharora, Feb 09: Blood donation is considered to be the highest donation possible by any human beings. In this context there is an organization named 'Sanjeevni Raktadata Sangh' which is active in the field of human service. This organization has members both from urban and rural background. Its members in between January 01, 2021 and December 31, 2021, have created a new record by donating blood to 200 people suffering from different ailments across different sections of the society.

Omprakash Chauhan, president of 'Sanjeevni Raktadata Sangh' expressing happiness on this achievement has congratulated its members and as-

sured of many more milestones to be achieved in 2022. Vice President of the organization Kapil Nishad has donated blood 12 times till date and appealed to the youths for donating bloods in order to save life. This organization has completed 18 years and is working towards creating awareness in the society for voluntary blood donation.

Total 65653.60 quintal paddy purchased

Central Chronicle News

Anwari, Feb 09: A total of 1780 farmers have made registration in Primary Agriculture Sakh Sahakari Sansthan Maryadit (PASSSM) Anwari with registration No. 227 of Paddy Procurement Centre (PPC) Anwari for 2021-22.

Out of which 1739 farmers sold 65653.60 quintal paddy till 1 Dec 2021 to 7/2/2022. Out of which the Linking recovery was Rs. 3,17,15,229.70. On the last day of the paddy purchase, four farmers sold 160 'katta' of paddy and it was done in a peaceful manner.



On this occasion Samiti Manager of PPC Hanuman Singh Siha, clerk Asst. Computer operator Poonamchand Jngad Jangade, daily clerk Nankumar,

Radheshyam Jangade, Rahul Gaikwad, contractor Lekh Ram Sahu, rural folks Bandhu, Gaindral Patel, Bhuneswar Ram Sahu, Ashwini Gaikwad were present.

24.40 lakh man-days created under MGNREGA

Central Chronicle News

Konta / Sukma, Feb 09: Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme is proving to be a milestone in the district in the direction of providing employment to the workers.

As a result of giving top priority to the availability of employment opportunities at the local level in the district, under Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme, construction of dubri, well construction, canal lining, plantation, etc. Employment is being provided to the villagers through employment ori-

ented works.

In Sukma district, 82.5 percent of the target achieved till February in the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme financial year 2021-22 has been achieved. Against the target of 29.55 lakh man-days received from the state government, total employment of 24.40 lakh man-days has been provided in the district so far.

In which 38 thousand 057 job card holder families got employment. Not only this, 100 days employment was provided to 8127 families. In this financial year, 78 thousand 263



workers including 877 Divyangians of the district were provided employment, in which 50 percent

women got employment. Dobri construction work in Gram Panchayat Golapalli under Konta

block, land leveling and group shed construction work in Kistaram, earthen road and wire fencing work in Gram Panchayat Karigundam and Palodi is in progress.

Apart from the above mentioned works under MNREGA, works like construction of new panchayat building, construction of Anganwadi center building, construction of well, fair price shop cum warehouse etc. are in progress in the district. Through all these infrastructure development works, permanent assets will be created, which will boost development in rural areas.

Young literary poet Ashutosh bags Sahitya Bhushan Alankaran Award

Central Chronicle News

Gourela-Pendra-Marwahi, Feb 09: Young literary poet Ashutosh Anand Dubey, who has made a continuous effort to promote literature by planting the seeds of literature on the soil of the region will be honoured with Sahitya Bhushan Alankaran by Nirala Sahitya Mandal. Nirala Sahitya Mandal has been working continuously for literature for 61 years.

Saraswati Jayanti, Nirala Jayanti and Sahitya Bhushan Alankaran ceremony are organized every year on the occasion of Basant Panchami under the auspices of the organization working in the name of Nirala in the field of literature.

On the occasion of Basant Panchami, on 05 February, young literary poet Ashutosh Anand Dubey of the district was honoured with the Sahitya Bhushan Alankaran Samman. It is worth mentioning that



Ashutosh has been working continuously in the field of literature and poetry for the last many years with a dedication and spirit. Ashutosh is working for the awareness of literature in the field with true spiritual practice.

He has proved his poetic talent on the forums of Kavi Sammelan in Delhi, Vrindavan, Bhopal and most of the districts of Chhattisgarh. He has also composed song on newly formed district Gaurela Pendra Marwahi.

His works are continuously published in various poetry collections and magazines. He has also recited poetry from All India Radio. The Sahitya Bhushan Alankaran Samman has been marked as a new chapter in the literature for the region. Achievement of Ashutosh created joy among the residents of the area.

One arrested with illicit liquor worth Rs 4400

Central Chronicle News

Khairagarh, Feb 09: The Police arrested an illicit liquor seller on charges of selling illicit liquor from Gram Patewa with 55 quarter bottles of country liquor and was sent to jail. As per information in this regard, a police team under leadership of TI G h u m k a S h a s h i k a n t Sinha as part of anti-illicit liquor drive, arrested the accused Devnath Singh alias Kashi Singh S/o Late G o v a r d h a n Singh (59) from Gram Patewa with 55 quarter bottles of liquor worth Rs 4400

and sent him to sub-jail in Rajnandgaon under section 34 (2) of Excise Act.



YC workers hold chakka-jam, fast-unto-death

- On charges of encroachment by a person on Nazul and Forest land for last 8 yrs

Central Chronicle News

Balod, Feb 09: With demand to remove encroachment upon Nazul and Forest land in Gram Jhalmala under Balod Block, YC and people from Gram Jhalmala staged chakka-jam on Balod-Jhalmala-Gotia road and after which they sit on fast-unto-death.

The Congmen continued on their fast-unto-death strike for about three hours at the protest venue and raised slogans



against Vikas Shri Shrimal who had encroached upon the land.

Those staging protest informed that on about 1.52 acre land of Nazul and Forest land in Gram Jhalmala, the city's Vikas Shri Shrimal has done encroachment for last 8 yrs.

Seeing the hunger strike, the local administration has to intervene and after which long talks were held and it was informed that the government land encroached upon by the above

person should be sealed and due action be taken against him. After this ex-MLA Bhaiya Ram Sinha offered juice to YC workers on fast-unto-death strike and broke their fast.

आम सुरुवात
(आम-अमलीबीही, प.ह.नं. 114, रायपुर छ.ग.)
श्रीमती रत्ना शर्मा (अभिज्ञान)
प्रा.सं. 09.02.2022

AFFIDAVIT
I Mrs. Pari Gulani, W/o Shri Bipin Gulani, age 32 yrs, R/o Nemichand Gali, near Kanhaiya Kirana, Ganjpara, Raipur Tehsil and District Raipur, (C.G.), do hereby make the following statements:
1. That my name and address is as mentioned above.
2. That I was married to Bipin Gulani, R/o Nemichand Gali, near Kanhaiya Kirana, Ganjpara, Raipur, (C.G.), on 15/12/2014 as per Hindu rituals.
3. That prior to marriage my name was Ritu Hundraj Chhattani D/o Hundraj Chhattani, R/o Nagpur Maharashtra.
4. That after the marriage my name got changed to Mrs. Pari Gulani, W/o Shri Bipin Gulani and now I should be known and identified by this name and it should be registered in all the government and semi-government records.
5. That this affidavit is being produced to the concerned officer, so that I can be known and identified as Pari Gulani, W/o Bipin Gulani and for which this affidavit has been produced.
CERTIFY
I do hereby solemnly affirm that the statements made from Sl. No. 1-5 are true to the best of my knowledge and that I stand by it.
Place: Raipur
Date: 7/02/2022
DEPONENT

NAME CHANGE
It is informed to the general public that I Anil Kumar Masih S/o Prem Masih resident of Village - dhourabhatha, Tahsil - Bilha, District - Bilaspur C.G. have changed my old name Anil Masih S/o Prem Masih so in future I should be recognized by my new name that is Anil Kumar Masih S/o Prem Masih in all government and other documents.
Anil Kumar Masih
resident of Village - dhourabhatha, Tahsil - Bilha, District - Bilaspur C.G.

NAME CHANGE
It is informed to the general public that I, Purvasha D/o Deep Kumar Sirmor, Resident of H.No. 117, Ward No. 42, Trimurti Chowk, Sunder Nagar, Raipur (C.G.) have changed my old name Purvasha D/o Deep Kumar Sirmor, So in future I should be recognized by my new name that is PURVASHA SIRMOR D/o Deep Kumar Sirmor in all Government and other documents.
PURVASHA SIRMOR
H.No. 117, Ward No. 42, Trimurti Chowk, Sunder Nagar, Raipur (C.G.)

CFM ASSET RECONSTRUCTION PRIVATE LIMITED (CFM-ARC)
Registered Office: A/3, 5th Floor, Safal Profile, Near Pralhad Nagar Garden, Ahmedabad-380015
Corporate Office: 1st Floor, Wakefield House, Sprout Road, Ballard Estate, Mumbai-400038. EMAIL: nidhi.domadia@cfm-arc.in / knipa.lal@cfm-arc.in
CONTACT: 7506377322 / 8879890338

Appendix - IV
Possession Notice [see rule 8(1)]
(For Immovable Property)

Whereas, The Authorized Officer of the Indusind Bank Ltd. (IBL) under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13 (12) read with rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued Demand Notice dated 17th April 2018 calling upon the Borrowers/Co-Borrowers/Mortgagors (i) M/S Shree Sai Agencies through its Proprietor Mr. Nilesh Mishra (Borrower) (ii) Mr. Nilesh Mishra (Co-Borrower) (iii) Mr. Jitendra Kumar Mishra (Co-Borrower) (iv) Ms. Kiran Mishra (Co-borrower) to repay the amount mentioned in the notice being Rs.75,31,446.72/- (Rupees Seventy Five Lakh Thirty One Thousand Four Hundred Forty Six and Paise Seventy Two Only) due as on 16.04.2018 together with further interest plus cost, charges and expenses, etc. thereon within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.
Pursuant to the Assignment Agreement dated 12th July 2018, Indusind Bank Limited (IBL) has under Section 5 of the SARFAESI Act assigned to CFM Asset Reconstruction Pvt. Ltd. acting in capacity of Trustee of CFMARC Trust - 3 Indusind Bank (hereinafter referred to as "CFM-ARC"), the financial assistance granted by IBL to the borrower, together with all security interest in respect thereof and all IBL's rights in respect thereof. Therefore CFMARC has stepped into the shoes of IBL.
The Borrowers and Co-Borrowers having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrowers/Co-borrowers and the public in general that the undersigned has taken the possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/her under section 13(4) of the SARFAESI Act read with rule 8 of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 on this 4th Day of February of the year 2022 and in terms of DM, Raipur order dated 27th September, 2021.
The borrowers and co-borrowers in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of CFMARC for an amount of being Rs. 75,31,446.72/- (Rupees Seventy Five Lakh Thirty One Thousand Four Hundred Forty Six and Paise Seventy Two Only) due as on 16.04.2018 together with further interest plus penal interest, cost, charges and expenses, etc. thereon till the realisation of the entire outstanding dues.
The borrower and co-borrower's attention is invited to provisions of sub section (8) of section 13 of the said Act, in respect of the time available, to redeem the secured asset/s.

DESCRIPTION OF THE IMMOVABLE PROPERTY
All that piece and parcel of property bearing Municipal House No. 20/17(New) and 18/79, 479/2(Old), within ABADI survey, admeasuring area 475 Sq Ft. (together with construction thereon), situated at Narmadapara, Indira Gandhi Ward No. 20, Village Raipur Khas, P. H. No. 106-A, R.I. Circle- Raipur-1, City, Tehsil and District Raipur (Chhattisgarh) and which is bounded as follows:- On or Towards North: Property of Mohan Sindi, On or Towards West: Boundary Wall of Railways, On or Towards, South: Property of Shri Balvinder Singh And Shri Sukvinder Singh, On or Towards East- Main Road.

Authorised Officer
CFM Asset Reconstruction Pvt. Ltd.
(Acting as trustee of CFMARC Trust - 3 Indusind Bank)

Date: 04.02.2022
Place: Raipur

TATA CAPITAL HOUSING FINANCE LIMITED
Regd. Address: 11th Floor, Tower A, Peninsula Business Park, Ganpat Rao Kadam Marg, Lower Parel, Mumbai 400 013
CIN No. U67190MH2008PLC187552

DEMAND NOTICE
Under Section 13 (2) of the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 ("Act") read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 ("Rules").
Whereas the undersigned being the Authorised Officer of Tata Capital Housing Finance Limited (TCHFL) under the Act and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13 (12) read with Rule 3 of the Rules already issued detailed Demand Notice dated below under Section 13(2) of the Act, calling upon the Borrower(s)/Co-Borrower(s)/Guarantor(s) (all singularly or together referred to "Obligors")/Legal Heir(s)/Legal Representative(s) listed hereunder, to pay the amount mentioned in the respective Demand Notice, within 60 days from the date of the respective Notice, as per details given below. Copies of the said Notices are served by Registered Post A.D. and are available with the undersigned, and the said Obligor(s)/Legal Heir(s)/Legal Representative(s), may, if they so desire, collect the respective copy from the undersigned on any working day during normal office hours.
In connection with the above, Notice is hereby given, once again, to the said Obligor(s)/Legal Heir(s)/Legal Representative(s) to pay to TCHFL, within 60 days from the date of the respective Notice(s), the amount indicated herein below against their respective names, together with further interest as detailed below from the respective dates mentioned below in column (d) till the date of payment and / or realisation, read with the loan agreement and other documents/writings, if any, executed by the said Obligor(s). As security for due repayment of the loan, the following Secured Asset(s) have been mortgaged to TCHFL by the said Obligor(s) respectively.

S. No.	Loan Account No.	Name of Obligor(s)/ Legal Heir(s)/ Legal Representative(s)	Total Outstanding Dues (Rs.)	Date of Demand Notice & Date of NPA
1.	9172685 & 10114154	JAI KUMAR SONI (Borrower) DEEPMALA SONI (Co-Borrowers)	Rs. 17,73,166/- as on 21-02-2022	21-01-2022 08-12-2021

Description Of The Secured Assets/ Immovable Properties/mortgaged Properties:
All That Piece And Parcel Of The Immovable Property Being Flat No. 22, Measuring 670 Sq. Ft. of Built-up Area, On The 5th Floor, of Block - G-6, In The Complex Known As Chouhan Housing Company, Situated At Chouhan Town, Junwani, Bilhai, Tehsil And District Durg, In The State Of Chhattisgarh. Property Bounded As: North: Open Land of Seller; South: Flat No. G6-23; East: Open Space and Block G7; And West: Flat No. G6-21
*with further interest, additional interest at the rate as more particularly stated in respective Demand Notices dated mentioned above, incidental expenses, costs, charges etc incurred till the date of payment and/or realization. If the said Obligor(s) shall fail to make payment to TCHFL as aforesaid, then TCHFL shall proceed against the above Secured Asset(s)/ Immovable Property (ies) under Section 13(4) of the said Act and the applicable Rules entirely at the risk of the said Obligor(s)/Legal Heir(s)/Legal Representative(s) as to the costs and consequences.
The said Obligor(s)/Legal Heir(s)/Legal Representative(s) are prohibited under the said Act to transfer the aforesaid Secured Asset(s)/Immovable Property(ies), whether by way of sale, lease or otherwise without the prior written consent of TCHFL. Any person who contravenes or abets contravention of the provisions of the Act or Rules made thereunder shall be liable for imprisonment and/or penalty as provided under the Act.

Date: 10.02.2022
Place : Bilhai, Chhattisgarh
Authorised Officer
For Tata Capital Housing Finance Limited

BRIEF

Surrender

■ Itanagar: A 38-year-old cadre of the NSCN-IM surrendered before security forces in Arunachal Pradesh's Tirap district. The member of the Isak Muivah faction of the National Socialist Council of Nagaland has been identified as Thaisi Raomai, a self-styled private of the outfit, Tirap Deputy Commissioner Taro Mize said. The rebel along with a pistol and ammunition surrendered before Assam Rifles personnel and Tirap district police.

Raided

■ Gurugram: The Haryana Chief Minister's Flying Squad has raided a diagnostic lab accused of preparing fake coronavirus reports, officials said. The team nabbed a lab assistant while the operator managed to flee. The lab allegedly charged Rs 2,000 to Rs 5,000 to issue COVID-19 positive or negative reports. They also charged Rs 900 for Covid test even as rate of test is capped at Rs 299 when a person opts to get it done at a lab.

Seized

■ Diphu: A huge consignment of heroin, concealed in 15 soap boxes, was seized in Assam's Karbi Anglong district and two persons, including a woman, were arrested in this connection. Police also destroyed 1,500 kg of drugs, worth several crores of rupees, in Kokrajhar. Acting on specific information, a patrolling police team set up check posts at Panbari forest gate in Karbi Anglong and intercepted an auto-rickshaw, carrying two persons.

Violation

■ Jajpur: The administration in Odisha's Jajpur district placed two teachers of government-run schools under suspension on the charges of breaching Model Code of Conduct, which has come into force in the state for panchayat elections. Jajpur collector Chakravarty Singh Rathore suspended Kumar Chandra Sukla of Gamu Nodal High School, and Nakula Chandra Rout of Serapur Primary School in Bari block after they allegedly campaigned.

Guidelines

■ New Delhi: The Delhi Jal Board (DJB) has issued new guidelines to streamline the process of approval for shifting of sewerage network and avoid leakages during execution of development projects by agencies. Due to rapid pace of development, several agencies (e.g. DMRC, PWD, NHAI) are working for their projects in creation of new roads, metro networks etc.

Orders

■ Chandigarh: Haryana Deputy Chief Minister Dushyant Chautala said orders have been given to initiate action against over 200 officials, mostly "patwaris", for the violation of rules. Chautala said corruption will not be tolerated under any circumstances in the matter of land registration by any patwari (revenue official), clerk or any other officer.

Raut writes to VP claiming ED's misuse to topple MVA Govt



Venkaiah Naidu and Sanjay Raut

Mumbai, Feb 09 (PTI):

Shiv Sena MP Sanjay Raut has written a letter to Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu, claiming he was approached by certain people who asked him to assist in toppling the MVA government in Maharashtra so that the state could be forced into mid-term elections.

Raut, who is the Rajya Sabha member, asserted that the Shiv Sena-led

Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) government will complete its five-year term, and said he will not bow down and will continue to speak the truth.

He claimed that the Enforcement Directorate (ED) and other central agencies were being used with the "oblique motive" of toppling democratically elected governments.

In the letter to Naidu, who is also the chairman of the Rajya Sabha, Raut

■ Raut accused ED of threatening people

said central agencies like the ED were systematically targeting Shiv Sena leaders, after the party formed the (MVA) government in Maharashtra with the NCP and Congress after severing ties with its old ally BJP.

Raut requested Naidu to take note of the abuse of power and alleged harassment of Rajya Sabha members, and said the vice president should also speak up and take action in this connection.

Seeking to put up a brave face, the Rajya Sabha member also said he is "not scared and will not bow down, and will continue to speak truth both inside and outside the House.

Domino's, Honda apologise for hurting sentiments of Indians

After Pakistan arm's Kashmir solidarity post



New Delhi, Feb 09 (PTI):

Pizza chain Domino's and Japanese auto major Honda have apologised for hurting sentiments of Indians by social media posts of their business associates in Pakistan supporting separatists in Kashmir. In a social media post, Domino's India said it is committed to the

Indian market, "having called it home for more than 25 years, and has the utmost respect for the people, culture and spirit of nationalism of the country". "... We stand here to protect its legacy forever. We respect and honour everything the country has to offer," the pizza chain said.

It further said, "We regret and apologise for the unsolicited social media post published on Domino's social media handles outside the country." The company further said, "as a brand we honour and respect India and remain deeply committed to serving our customers and communities with humility, gratitude and pride."

Seventy percent of foreign prisoners in India under-trials

New Delhi, Feb 09 (PTI):

Seven in every 10 prisoners of foreign-origin in Indian jails at the end of 2020 were under-trials, with nearly half of such inmates being from Bangladesh, according to data released by the government. The recently released annual 'Prison Statistics India 2020' of the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) shows there were 4,926 foreigners lodged in jails of the country in 2020, as against 5,203 in 2019 and 5,157 in 2018.

The number of Indian prison inmates in the country stood at 4.83 lakh by the end of 2020, stated the NCRB, which functions under the Union Ministry of Home Affairs. "Among 4,926 prisoners of



foreign nationality at the end of 2020, 4,135 were males and 791 were females. Among these foreign national prisoners, 23.1 per cent (1,140 inmates) were convicts, 70.4 per cent (3,467 inmates) were under-trials and 0.8 per cent (41 inmates) were detainees," the report showed. "Among the foreign convicts, the highest

number of foreign convicts were from Bangladesh (46.4 per cent, 529 convicts) followed by Nepal (18.1 per cent, 206 convicts), Nigeria (8.2 per cent, 94 convicts) and Myanmar (7.3 per cent, 83 convicts) at the end of 2020," it noted.

According to the NCRB, West Bengal has reported the highest number of foreign convicts lodged in its jails at 466 (40.9 per cent) followed by Uttar Pradesh with 127 (11.1 per cent) and Delhi with 73 (6.4 per cent) at the end of 2020.

"Among the foreign under-trials, the highest number was from Bangladesh (47 per cent, 1,630) followed by Nigeria (17.7 per cent, 615) and Nepal (13.4 per cent, 463)," the report showed.

DU lecturer quits job to contest Punjab election

Chandigarh, Feb 09 (PTI):

An English literature lecturer at a Delhi college, Anuroop Kaur Sandhu quit her job to take the plunge into politics after being part of the farmers' movement and is contesting the Punjab assembly polls on a Sanyukt Samaj Morcha ticket. The Sanyukt Samaj Morcha (SSM), headed by Balbir Singh Rajewal, is a political front launched by 22 farmer unions in December 2021 for the February 20 elections to the 117-member Punjab Assembly. It has fielded candidates from varied backgrounds, including agriculturists, activists, teachers and doctors. Kaur said following her association with the farmers'



Anuroop Kaur Sandhu

movement, she applied for the ticket from Muktsar when the SSM was floated and was selected. She is actively campaigning in the assembly segment these days. During the farmers' stir against the Centre's now-repealed farm laws, Sandhu got in touch with the Sanyukt Kisan Morcha and visited the protest sites at Delhi borders.

Due process of law being followed in encounters: Assam Govt

■ PIL said people killed or injured were not dreaded criminals

Guwahati, Feb 09 (PTI):

Due process of law and all guidelines issued by the NHRC are being followed in all cases of police encounters that have taken place in Assam since May last year, the state government claimed in an affidavit filed before the Gauhati High Court. In the affidavit filed in connection with a PIL, the Assam government informed the court that 28 people have been killed and 73 others injured in police action from May 10 last year, when Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma as-



Gauhati High Court

sumed charge, till January 28 this year. The Assam government on February 7 filed the "detailed affidavit", a copy of which is available with PTI, as sought by the Gauhati High Court, which deferred the hearing of the PIL related to the encounters till February 10. "due process of law and procedure estab-

lished by law, including the guidelines issued by the NHRC, are being complied with by the district police," Home & Political Department Additional Secretary Ashim Kumar Bhattacharyya said in the affidavit. He said that as per the directions of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), the

six-monthly "return" is also being regularly submitted and the last such report was submitted by the Assam Police on September 2 last year. "FIRs have been registered in each and every case and investigations are being carried out to take the cases to logical conclusions. In all total, 28 nos. of death and 73 nos. of injuries have taken place in police action, since May 2021 till 28-01-2022," the affidavit said. In a table annexed with the affidavit, the government provided district-wise details of these encounters. It showed that the incidents of police firing took place across 27 districts and the highest number of 10 people were killed in Karbi Anglong, while a maximum of nine injuries were reported in Guwahati.

MILMA against Centre's move to induct private nominee in NDDB

Thiruvananthapuram, Feb 09 (PTI): The Kerala Co-operative Milk Marketing Federation (KCMMF), which owns the popular dairy brand Milma, has come out strongly against the Centre's move to bring in private sector representation in the National Dairy Development Board (NDDB), terming it as an 'attempt to infringe' on the autonomy of the body.

The proposal to induct representatives from private dairies in the board of directors of NDDB will seriously harm the co-operative dairy movement in the country, said KS Mani, Chairman, KCMMF.

The ministry has sought suggestions and comments on the proposed amendments, which also includes a proposal to appoint an additional direc-



KS Mani

tor representing the private dairy industry, to be nominated for three years. The directors nominated to NDDB will also be ex-officio directors in the boards of subsidiary companies. Milma will convey to the Centre its strong reservations against the proposed amendments as they would seriously affect the autonomy of NDDB and harm the interests of

millions of dairy farmers and the dairy cooperative movement as a whole. Milma will also seek the intervention of the state government to exert pressure on the Centre to abandon the move by putting across its stand on the issue. "Despite being a largely agrarian population, India became the world's leading milk producing nation purely due to the systematic, scientific and visionary initiatives of NDDB", said Mani. Instead of inducting representatives from the private sector dairies into NDDB, the central government should urge the private dairies to utilize the vast technical knowledge and rich domain expertise and experience of NDDB, by drafting in top officials of NDDB into their director boards, he suggested.

Five tainted officers given forced retirement

Bhubaneswar, Feb 09 (PTI):

The Odisha government has given forced retirement to five officers on charges of corruption and inefficiency, officials said on Wednesday. An engineer, CDPO, anganwadi supervisor, police inspector and revenue supervisor were among those given compulsory retirement. Since 2019, the state government has either dismissed or given forced retirement to 146 tainted officers under its "zero-tolerance against corruption" policy. Two IAS and IFS officers were recently dismissed from service.

Santosh Kumar Das, an Assistant Engineer in Integrated Tribal Development Agency (ITDA), Baripada in Mayurbhanj district, had

amassed assets worth Rs 2.8 crore more than his known sources of income.

Das, who was arrested and produced before a court, owns a two-storey house in Bargarh area of Bhubaneswar, a flat in Shailshree Vihar, an under-construction building in Kalinga Vihar in the capital city, and three plots in Balasore. Rs 41.77 lakh in cash was also confiscated from his house.

Sarala Dey, the Community Development Project Officer (CDPO) of Balikudar block in Jagatsinghpur district, was caught red-handed while accepting a bribe of Rs 20,000.

As per the Anti-corruption Department, she has five plots in Bhubaneswar, one in Pipili and two in Jagatsinghpur.

Baghel confident of victory in Yadav fortress of Karhal

■ Karhal has Yadav caste constituting about 40 percent

Karhal, Feb 09 (PTI):

Pitted against Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav in Karhal seat of Mainpuri district, Union Minister SP Singh Baghel says no area can be termed as a "fortress" or "stronghold" as personalities like Rahul Gandhi and Mamata Banerjee have also tasted defeat in their bastions. He claimed the fight in the high-profile seat is not "one-sided" as a journey across the constituency would show that there is a BJP wave.

Brought in politics by former chief minister Mulayam Singh Yadav, the



SP Singh Baghel

BJP leader advised his principal opponent to try his luck from some assembly segment of Azamgarh too. When asked whether he could demolish the fortress of the Yadav family, Baghel told PTI, "There is nothing like fortress or stronghold in democracy. We have seen demolition of such fortress. You have seen Rahul Gandhi get de-

feated in Amethi and Mamata Banerjee in West Bengal."

Besides Dimple Yadav got defeated twice in Firozabad (2009 bypolls) and Kannauj (2019). In 2019, Akshay Yadav lost from Firozabad while Dharmendra Yadav lost from Budaun, he said.

Banerjee had tasted defeat in last year's assembly polls from Nandigram from where she had shot into limelight after launching the anti-land acquisition stir against Tata's Nano project in 2007 during CPI-M rule.

Since the day of nomination on January 31, Baghel has been residing in BJP leader Govind Bhaduria's house in Ghior, where he has also made his election office.

Jaishankar to visit Australia, Philippines

New Delhi, Feb 09:

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar will begin a six-day visit to Australia and the Philippines beginning.

His visit to Australia from February 10 to 13 will be his first trip to that country as external affairs minister. The visit to the Philippines from February 13 to 15 comes over two weeks after the Southeast Asian country signed a USD 375 million deal (one million is equal to Rs 10 lakh) with India to buy three batteries of the BrahMos cruise missile.

Announcing the two-nation visit by Jaishankar, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said he will participate in the fourth Quad foreign ministers'

meeting on February 11 in Melbourne along with his counterparts from Australia, Japan and the US. The MEA said it will be an opportunity for the ministers to follow up on their virtual meeting held in February last year and exchange views on regional strategic issues given their shared vision of a free, open and inclusive Indo-Pacific region.

"The ministers will review ongoing Quad cooperation and build on the positive and constructive agenda announced by the leaders at the two summits in 2021, to address contemporary challenges such as the COVID-19 pandemic, supply chains, critical technologies, climate change, infrastructure etc," it said in a statement.

BRIEF

Seizure

Washington: US Justice Department announced its largest ever financial seizure more than USD 3.5 billion and the arrests of a New York couple accused of conspiring to launder billions of dollars in cryptocurrency stolen from the 2016 hack of a virtual currency exchange. Officials said they recovered roughly USD 3.6 billion in cryptocurrency linked to hack of Bitfinex, a virtual currency exchange whose systems were breached six years ago.

Launches

Warsaw: Poland's defence minister appointed an army general to head a new Cyber Defence Force to officially launch the unit's operation. Defense Minister Mariusz Blaszczak said the force's mission includes defense, reconnaissance and, if need be, offensive actions to protect Poland's Armed Forces from cyberattacks. Canadian experts found that a farmer who was trying to start a political party in Poland was hacked.

Tackle

The Hague: The Dutch government appointed a commissioner to tackle abuse and intimidation, after recent high-profile #MeToo cases shocked the European Union nation. In recent weeks, the popular television talent show The Voice of Holland has been taken off the air amid complaints of unwanted behavior ranging from WhatsApp messages to an allegation of rape involving presenters. A senior executive had to quit recently.

Raids

Brussels: Police in Belgium detained 13 people following raids in and around the port city of Antwerp as part of an investigation into alleged terror activities. According to the federal prosecutor's office, the suspects were all part of the same group, which it described as close to Salafist circles. About 100 police officers were involved in operation.

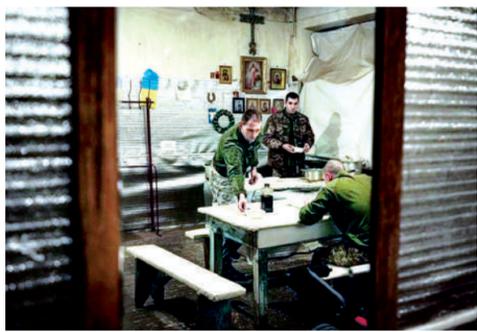
Trip

Tel Aviv: Israel's police commissioner cut short an official foreign trip and rushed home to deal with a growing scandal over reports of illegal spying, including on members of former Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's inner circle. Under mounting pressure, Kobi Shabtai returned early from the United Arab Emirates. The decision came a day after report that police illegally used spyware, including on the phones of Netanyahu's son.

Arrested

Spokane: A man suspected of opening fire inside a grocery store in Washington state, killing one person and injuring another, was arrested on Interstate 90 near Spokane. Aaron Christopher Kelly, 39, was arrested on the freeway between the town of Sprague and Spokane, Richland police said.

Ukraine projects calm over Russia fears despite US rhetoric



Ukrainian serviceman Ivan Skuratovskiy, left, prepares to have lunch before patrolling Donetsk region, eastern Ukraine.

Adiivka, Feb 09 (AP):

In the trenches of eastern Ukraine, across the lines from some of the 100,000 Russian troops amassed north and east of the country, Ivan Skuratovskiy's calm verges on numbness even after a sniper's bullet recently killed one of the 50 or so men under his command. It is the sort of thing that has happened from time to time over the

eight years he's been deployed up and down the 250-mile (400-kilometer) front line a soldier in a war he never imagined when he enlisted in 2013. He grieves, but death and conflict have become an inescapable part of his life. "The war has put pressure on me and broken my soul," said Skuratovskiy, 30. "I'm becoming more cold-hearted, some would say dead-hearted. I have a tough

sense of humor. It's a protective reaction to extreme situations.' US officials say the threat of a Russian invasion in Ukraine is more serious than others that have come and gone during nearly a decade of trench warfare. The White House national security advisor warned that an all-out invasion could happen any day, and President Joe Biden said 'it would be wise' for Americans other than essential diplomats to leave Ukraine and ordered the deployment of 1,700 troops to neighboring Poland. But even as the rhetoric ramps up, a sense of calm prevails in the Eastern European nation among soldiers and citizens alike, from relatives of those in the trenches on up to President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, who campaigned on a promise of ending the drawn-out conflict and has repeatedly called for diplomacy to carry the day.

Australia, Lithuania to unite in countering China pressures



Australian Foreign Affairs Minister Marise Payne, right, and Lithuania's counterpart Gabrielius Landsbergis in Canberra, Australia, Wednesday.

Canberra, Feb 09 (AP):

The foreign ministers of Australia and Lithuania agreed Wednesday to step up cooperation on strategic challenges, in particular pressures from China. Lithuania's Foreign Minister Gabrielius Landsbergis and his Australian counterpart Marise Payne met Wednesday at Parliament House. Australian exporters have lost tens of billions of dollars to official and unof-

ficial Chinese trade barriers covering coal, wine, beef, crayfish and barley that have coincided with deteriorating relations with Beijing. Lithuania, a country of 2.8 million in the Baltic region, more recently drew Beijing's ire after breaking with diplomatic custom by agreeing that Taiwan's office in its capital Vilnius would bear the name Taiwan instead of Chinese Taipei, a term used by other countries to avoid offending Beijing.

Apollo 16 spaceship cleaned ahead of fiftieth anniversary

Workers plan to further seal capsule's case

Huntsville, Feb 09 (AP):

The Apollo 16 capsule is dusty all these decades after it carried three astronauts to the moon. Cobwebs cling to the spacecraft. Business cards, a pencil, money, a spoon and even a tube of lip balm litter the floor of the giant case that protects the space antique in a museum.

The COVID-19 pandemic meant a break in the normal routine of cleaning the ship's display at the US Space and Rocket Center, located near NASA's Marshall Space Flight Center. But workers are sprucing up the spacecraft for the 50th anniversary of its April 1972 flight.

Delicately using microfibre towels, extension poles, brushes, dust-catching wands and vacuums, a

VISIT TO TAIWAN



Somaliland's Foreign Minister Essa Kayd Mohamoud (L) posing with Taiwan's President Tsai Ing-wen (R) after receiving memento during his visit to the Presidential Office in Taipei.

EU welcomes Lanka's action to amend anti-terror law

Colombo, Feb 09 (PTI): The European Union has welcomed Sri Lanka's action to amend its draconian counter-terrorism law but noted that important elements are not included in the gazette issued and urged Colombo to undertake further

practical and administrative steps to release on bail those detained under the law without charges. Sri Lanka is under pressure from the EU to reform the controversial Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA), which allows detention up to 90 days

without being charged with provisions for further extension of the time.

The Sri Lankan government by a gazette notification on January 27 announced amendments to PTA, which the officials described as its bid to

make the law fall in line with international standards of counter-terror legislation.

"The EU welcomed the submission by the Government of Sri Lanka of amendments to the Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA).

South African justice hero isn't afraid of riots

Cape Town, Feb 09 (AFP):

Even after the riots that shook South Africa last year, anti-apartheid hero and former top judge Albie Sachs believes the progressive constitution he helped draft will protect the country. He is not naive about the challenges facing his admittedly imperfect nation. But at 87, he has lived through enough of the arc of history to see the bend toward justice.

In 1988, two years before Nelson Mandela was released from prison, he lost an arm and the use of one eye when South Africa's white supremacist regime staged a car bombing against him in neighbouring Mozambique. He was in exile there with fellow members of the African National Congress. After Mandela was elected to become South Africa's first



Albie Sachs

black president in 1994, he left the ANC so that he could ascend to the constitutional court, the highest in the land. "I am not politically active, but the values I was fighting for are in the constitution," he said. As a young law student in the 1950s, Sachs liked to visit Mandela and Oliver Tambo in Johannesburg, where they had set up the country's first black law firm.

COVID-19 protests threaten border trade between Canada, US

Ottawa, Feb 09 (AP):

Canadian lawmakers have expressed increasing worry about the economic effects of disruptive demonstrations after the busiest border crossing between the US and Canada became partially blocked by truckers protesting vaccine mandates and other COVID-19 restrictions.

The blockade at the Ambassador Bridge between Detroit and Windsor, Ontario, prevented traffic from entering Canada while some US-bound traffic was still moving, Public Safety Minister Marco Mendicino said, calling the bridge one of the most important border crossings in the world". It carries 25% of all trade

between Canada and the United States. Canadian Transport Minister Omar Alghabra said such blockades will have serious implications on the economy and supply chains.

"I've already heard from automakers and food grocers. This is really a serious cause for concern," he said in Ottawa, the capital.

Elon Musk helping restore internet to Tonga

Wellington, Feb 09 (AP): Entrepreneur Elon Musk is helping reconnect Tonga to the internet after a volcanic eruption and tsunami cut off the South Pacific nation more than three weeks ago, according to officials, while repairs on an undersea cable are proving more difficult than first thought.

The tsunami severed the sole fiber-optic cable that connects Tonga to the rest of the world and most people remain without reliable connections. A top official in neighboring Fiji tweeted that a team from Musk's SpaceX company was in Fiji establishing a station that would help reconnect Tonga through SpaceX satellites. SpaceX runs a network of nearly 2,000 low-orbit satellites called Starlink, which provides internet service to remote places around the world.

GOVERNMENT OF CHHATTISGARH, WATER RESOURCES DEPARTMENT OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, WATER RESOURCES DIVISION, PENDRAROAD DISTT. - BILASPUR (C.G.)

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

SYSTEM TENDER NO. 91845 / NOTICE INVITING TENDER NO. 16 / SAC/2021-22 DATED: 07.02.2022

Online Tenders are invited for the following works up to 28-02-2022 (17.30 hours IST).

System Tender No.	Group No.	Name of Work	Probable amount of contract
91845		RENOVATION OF HEAD WORK AND C.C. LINING OF CANALS OF AURAPANI TANK SCHEME.	Rs. 245.72 Lakhs

The details can be viewed & downloaded online directly from the Govt. of Chhattisgarh Integrated e-Procurement portal (<https://eproc.cgstate.gov.in>) from dated 14-02-2022 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 approval on specific vendor class from PWD under centralized contractor/supplier registration in order to download the tender documents and participate in the subsequent bidding process.

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

EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
WATER RESOURCES DIVISION, PENDRAROAD (C.G.)
For, Chief Engineer
Hasdeo Basin Water Resources Deptt.,
Bilaspur (C.G.)
G-67605/1

बैंक ऑफ बड़ोदा Bank of Baroda
Regional Office, First Floor, Zonal Market, Sector-10, Bhilai (C.G.) - 490006
PH: 0788 - 2261892, 2264992, E-mail: recovery.durg@bankofbaroda.com

POSSESSION NOTICE

(As per Appendix IV read with rule 8(1) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002)

Whereas, The undersigned being the Authorised Officer of the Bank of Baroda under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(2) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a Demand Notice to the following borrowers / guarantors calling upon the Borrowers to repay the amount mentioned in the respective notices within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.

The under mentioned Borrower / Guarantor having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrowers/Guarantors and the Public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him under sub-section (4) of section 13 of the Act read with Rule 8 and under section 14 of the Act of the Security Interest Enforcement Rules, 2002 .

S. N.	Branch Name / Ph.No.	Name of Borrower / Guarantor	Description of Property	Demand Notice Date, Amount & Symbolic / Physical Possession Date
01	Gurudwara, Kawardha Branch Kawardha 6232020418	M/s Punam Gud Udyog proprietor Mr. Nilesh Sahu S/o Mr. Shrawan Kumar Sahu. Guarantor: Mr. Shrawan Kumar Sahu	1. Diverted Land situated at Survey No. - 517/2, Area - 0.364 Hectar at Village Mohtarakala P.H.No. 47 R.I Circle Mohgoan Tah - Pandaria, Distt.-Kabirdham (C.G.) in the name of Mr.Nilesh Sahu S/o of Mr.Shrawan Sahu. Boundaries of the property : North : Property of Mr. Gurau (Rajkumar), South : Property of Mr. Rajkumar, East : Property of Mr. Bhulau, West: Road / Dharsa. 2. Sugar Cane Crushing Machine and stocks/work in progress	30.11.2021 Rs. 7,37,950.83 + interest + other charges 09.02.2022 Physical Possession

The Borrowers / Guarantors / Mortgagees in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the above mentioned property and any dealings with the property/ies will be subject to the charge of Bank of Baroda for above mentioned amount interest and other charges thereon.
The Borrower's attention is invited to provision of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.
Date: 10.02.2022, Place: Bhilai, Chhattisgarh
Authorised Officer, Bank of Baroda



CENTRAL Chronicle

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Caution about branding

The outrage over multinational corporations (MNCs) affiliate brands in Pakistan publishing social media posts on Kashmir spilled into the diplomatic space, with the South Korean foreign minister reportedly expressing regret after India summoned the Republic of Korea envoy to lodge 'strong displeasure'. Several brands of MNCs in Pakistan were forced by Pakistani government to post messages about 'Kashmir solidarity day' through social media accounts. Several brands of MNCs have issued apology in India for unsolicited social media posts published on social media handles outside India. The India's Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson elaborated that the South Korean foreign minister 'conveyed that they regretted the offence caused to the people and Government of India by the social media post. As Pakistan observed 'Kashmir solidarity day' last week, Union Minister Jitendra Singh said India cannot be intimidated by 'new experimentation' being done by 'our hostile neighbour' by preparing toolkits to garner support across the globe. He said if there is any pending issue between Pakistan and India it is that part of Jammu and Kashmir which continues to be under the illegal occupation of the neighbouring country. MNCs operate as global brands. Branding is part of marketing to connect with consumers. Brands engage in messaging to remain relevant in minds of potential consumers and branding process often involves virtue signalling about major causes of concern in a country. MNC brands were caught as Pakistani Govt forced local affiliates to follow a narrative about Kashmir. Because MNC brands wield such power; in some cases, more power than a small country, people quite rightly are holding them accountable because how they do business has an outside impact on people and communities.

But MNC brands across every sector of the consumer landscape are communicating their social purpose in a bid to connect with customers. Such instances, however, show that many brands eventually faced a backlash for being unacceptable to some. MNCs shall exercise caution how their brands are operated in jurisdiction of different countries. Past research studies on identity-based consumption and negativity bias suggest that the net effect will be negative even if consumers overall are evenly divided in their support or opposition. When brands match activist messaging, purpose, and values with prosocial corporate practice, they engage in authentic brand activism, but when they practice inauthentic brand activism through the practice of 'woke washing', potentially misleading consumers with their claims, they are damaging both their brand equity and potential for social change. Attitudes towards the brand decreased substantially among consumers who disagreed with a brand's stand and a brand faced public backlash because of its stand. However, when the brand subsequently withdrew its stand and apologized, the brand attitude decreased among both the proponents and opponents of the stand. Contested or controversial issues have competing values and interests, engender disagreements about assertions or actions, are politically sensitive, and arouse strong emotions. Brands try hard to create a special place in consumers' minds by standing firm with any relevant cause related to potential socio-political changes. But MNCs should understand that branding is borderless on social media and a message in one country can have consequences across borders in other countries.

China-Russia relations

As Chinese President Xi Jinping and Russian President Vladimir Putin declared there are 'no limits' to Russia-China ties, Beijing has made it increasingly clear it supports Moscow's position on Ukraine. With influence of China, Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan will visit Russia. Pakistan hopes to scuttle India's ties with Russia using money power of China. US President Joe Biden has clarified that any offensive actions in Ukrainian territory would be considered as an invasion. This is where the China factor becomes very important. The biggest question is whether China can truly serve as an economic substitute for the West, dampening some of the cost of an invasion. After all, the United States and European Union (EU) have made clear that Russia would face major Western sanctions if it invades Ukraine, along with the inevitable reduction of trade flows and perhaps even the cancellation of major projects like the Nord Stream 2 natural gas pipeline. As such, it is crucial to look at the structural nature of Russia's economic relationships with both the West and with China, both in terms of trade flows and the infrastructure that underpins them. To be sure, Russian-Chinese trade is far higher than Russia's overall trade with the United States, which was around USD 34 billion for the same time period.

However, Russia's trade with the EU totalled nearly USD 220 billion in 2021, roughly 1.5 times the size of Russian-Chinese trade. Russia serves as a major energy exporter to the EU, accounting for 26 percent of the European bloc's oil imports and 40 percent of its natural gas imports. Although many have pointed to the EU's energy dependence as a major source of leverage and a geopolitical tool for the Kremlin, the reality is that this dependence goes both ways, with energy revenues accounting for nearly 40 percent of Russia's budget revenues. And while Russia's energy exports to China have been increasing, the overall volumes are much lower in absolute terms than to the EU. Of course, Russia could decide to increase its energy exports to China at the expense of its supplies to the EU. But that would be a costly project for Moscow. It would mean building expanded infrastructure from its distant Siberian deposits to China to match the extensive oil and gas pipeline network Russia has had in place with Europe for decades an investment that would cost tens of billions of dollars. Another is the price premium for energy exports that Russia would forego, as Europe currently pays much higher prices for Russian natural gas via spot markets than China does via its 30-year contract with Gazprom, signed in 2014 just before the original conflict in Ukraine broke out. Russia ultimately needs money with export of fossil fuels and weapons, which China has but not India. India should reduce its dependence for weapons from Russia.

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 e-mail at: editor@centralchronicle@gmail.com
The letters can be edited or rewritten for clarity of thoughts.

SERENITY OF STEP-WELL

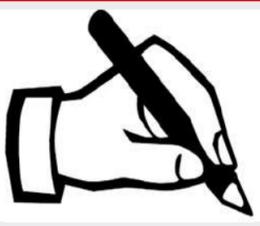


A monkey sits besides a serene step-well in Mathura, Uttar Pradesh.

Another strong step towards 'Atmanirbhar Ashtalakshmi'



G KISHAN REDDY



As India celebrates its 75th year of independence through 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav', Prime Minister Narendra Modi has often spoken about setting a vision for India in its 100th year. The planning and the groundwork for 'Amrit Kaal' needed to start from this year and the Budget for the financial year 2022-23, while brilliantly balancing fiscal and social priorities and providing limitless possibilities to unleash innovation and animal spirits in the Indian economy, has provided the right foundation for it. Without a doubt, the 'Ashtalakshmi' states of the North Eastern Region stand to gain tremendously from the Budget 2022-23. Envisioned as India's growth engine and gateway to ASEAN, the 8 States have remained central to the government's developmental agenda for 'Atmanirbhar Bharat'. This Budget further brightens the path for growth and adds more muscle to all the developmental efforts for setting up an 'Atmanirbhar Arthyavastha' in the region. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has always had a special focus for the Northeast region and has been working on mission mode towards its development since 2014. Be it the first freight train connectivity in 75 years for Manipur, adding Arunachal Pradesh and Meghalaya to the railway map for the first time, the construction of the Bogibeel bridge - India's longest railroad bridge, the world's tallest bridge pier in Manipur (Jiribam-Imphal), the first-ever petrochemical project in the North East inaugurated in Assam, Sikkim's first

Airport or the recent inauguration of the new terminal at the international airport of Agartala, North East is charting its unprecedented course to growth and prosperity under his visionary leadership.

Budget 2022-23 pumps even more energy to this mission. Since 2014, this Government has spent more than Rs 2.65 lakh crore in the North Eastern Region to accelerate its march towards growth and development. The political will towards the development of North East Region is evinced by the fact that the budget for North Eastern Region has gone up by over 110 percent in last 7 and half years, i.e., from 36,108 crores in 2014-15 to 76,040.07 crores allocated in FY 2022-23. In one fiscal year, i.e., from last year's 68,020.24 crores, the budgetary allocations have risen by 12 percent to 76,040.07 crores. Continuing on the impetus of bridging the infrastructure gap, more than 15 percent of this allocation has been towards Highways, Information ways, Railways and Airways (the HIRA model of development that the Prime Minister passionately espouses). In fact, for strengthening the rail transport system alone, Rs 39,000 crore have been spent by railways between 2014 and 2021 in the Northeast. The recent Budget's launch of a new scheme for the Northeast, the Prime Minister's Development Initiative for North-East (PM-DevINE), with an initial allocation of Rs 1,500 crore is another historic step in the rapid development journey of the Northeast. The scheme adopts a holistic approach to

wards development in the region and would cater to diverse developmental needs along with filling critical gaps aiding rapid employment generation and enhancing livelihood support in the region. Among the carefully selected initial projects of PM-DevINE, the Bamboo Link Road in Mizoram and the promotion of Scientific Organic Agriculture harness the natural assets of the region for developmental goals, while, the dedicated services for the Management of Paediatric and Adult Haematolympoid Cancers in Guwahati and the North East Centre For Technology Application and Reach (NECTAR) Livelihood Improvement Projects go a long way towards the enhancing welfare of the people of the Northeast.

Along with the much-needed impetus on the green economy in this Budget, the Parvatamala Ropeway development plan has the potential of becoming the next mass transportation revolution which is both environmentally friendly and more amenable to the difficult topography of the Northeast. This is yet another avenue for the North East region to generate new employment opportunities. The North Eastern States hold immense strategic value, both from the security and economic point of view for India. With over 5,182 kilometers of the international border, they are the focal point of the Government's Act East policy. The recent Budget's announcement of Vibrant Villages scheme will take development and connectivity to villages at the frontiers along the country's borders including in the Northeast and offer equal opportunities for their development and growth as in the mainland villages. In his address, President Ram Nath Kovind had said his government is committed to ensuring better infrastructure and connectivity in the northeastern states. Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced that it will fund infrastructure, in the spirit of PM GatiShakti, and social development projects

based on felt needs of the northeast. This will enable livelihood activities for youth and women, filling the gaps in various sectors. She said it will not be a substitute for existing Central or State schemes. While the Central Ministries may also pose their candidate projects, priority will be given to those posed by the States. An initial allocation of Rs 1,500 crore will be made.

Union law and justice minister Kiren Rijju, who hails from Arunachal Pradesh, said the new initiative will be implemented through the Northeast Council. Union Minister Sarbananda Sonowal who hails from Assam, hailed the Union Budget as "pro-development and inclusive" and said it will immensely contribute towards the growth of India's economy. He said the people of the Northeast are happy for the sustained focus received under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and it has already made significant progress which is only going to continue. Sonowal thanked the Prime Minister for his focussed attention for the development of the Northeast. The budget will lead to generation of employment opportunities in the country, he said. He said under the leadership of Prime Minister Modi, the Finance Minister had presented an all-inclusive budget which touched a wide spectrum of sectors. Sonowal said the hallmark of the budget is that nearly every announcement or initiative reflected in the budget has a strong bearing on people's welfare. The Prime Minister has rightly given the epithet to the 8 North Eastern States as 'Ashtalakshmi' of India, for their immense inherent potential and their indispensability in India's growth story of brighter future for its billion plus population. It is time for all of us to make most of this progressive and positive Budget 2022-23 and ensure giant leaps in the growth and prosperity of the North East Region.

(G Kishan Reddy is Union Minister of Development of Northeastern Region, Tourism and Culture.)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

New Zealand exception

In a country where a top profile leader, holding a Constitutional post meant to represent the whole population, can scandalously announce that "criminals can be identified by their dress", thereby demonizing a large section of Indians who are as indigenous to India as the die-hard saffronites; there lies hardly any surprise that hijab-clad girls are currently being forced to stay out of their classes in various colleges of Karnataka. Indeed what a "crime" these girls have committed by wearing dresses of their own choice or culture in their own country. In contrast New Zealand Prime minister Jacinda Ardern ensures promotion of a dress associated with people who are basically settlers in New Zealand. When sporting of hijab is being prohibited discouraged or frowned upon by India and many non-Islamic countries around the world, New Zealand has proved itself as a bright exception in this regard and through the decision of inducting the hijab as part of its police uniform, it has shown to the world what the essence of democracy is all about. Far from trying to kill diversity so as to establish a homogeneous way of life in the society which is actually nothing but crude desire of ensuring cultural dominance of majority or "mainstream" be it through language race or religion; an ideal democracy strives to literally accord equal status to each and every linguistic religious cultural groups residing within the country respecting their ethos sentiments sensitivities attire to dietary habits. India, under the ever increasing grasp of forces practicing the parochial imperialist philosophy in a democratic country by making a mockery of diversities, and all other believers of majoritarian mindset around the world should learn from New Zealand and Jacinda Ardern what respect towards diversity and sentiment of minorities are all about. India should learn to choose its leaders and role models instead of remaining in awe of closed-minded orthodox nations.

Kajal Chatterjee, Kolkata

Losing forests

India is fast losing its forests cover. The Global Forest Watch, which is an open-source web application to monitor global forests in real-time, says that India has lost 354-kilo hectares of tree cover over the last two decades. Given that millions in rural India depend on forests for their livelihood, there is a need for regular monitoring to ensure a balance between the development and conservation of forests. In this context, satellite data and analysis help in the fight against deforestation. You cannot stop deforestation if you cannot 'see'. Though forest guards play a critical role in the fight against deforestation, it is expensive and time-consuming for monitoring extensive areas, let alone stop deforestation on time. Satellites, on the other hand, are a more effective tool for deforestation as they image vast areas of forests in a short time. For example, the earth scanner can capture an area of up to 40,000 sq. km with wide-swath imagery in a single pass, making it ideal for monitoring extensive forest areas.

Ranganathan, via email

WHAT THEY TWEET!



Commander Vikram@w_karve
#Education #Food Basic Cooking must be introduced as a compulsory subject in Class 10 for Board Exams. Passing Cooking Practicals should be mandatory and Marks for Practical Exam should be counted for final grade. Advanced Cooking can be optional subject for Class 12 Board Exam.

Shefali Merchant@Merc
I think you are talking about me. I am just expressing an opinion. Home schooling is probably a great idea in theory, like Communism, but there may be practical challenges in making it mainstream. It can work if parents are aware, informed & committed. I think not all parents are.

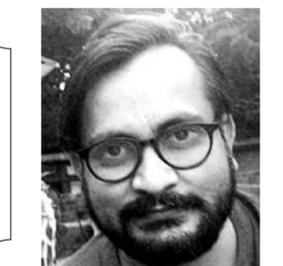


Mitalee@mitaleechatter
One should devote a thesis on this. Businesses have had one office covering Bihar, Bengal, Odisha and... Sikkim, etc. Well I say, etc, because that's how politicians, corporates & everyone else seem to regard the region. The less they know the less they want to know!!

Siddharth Bakaria@Siddbakaria
Not Switzerland but Gulmarg of India.



Happy@Happymon
- At the WTO, India has 8 officers, while China is believed to house a staff of 1,000. - India's Permanent Mission at the UN has 14 officers, while its Chinese counterpart has 12 separate divisions, with many more officers serving in each of them.



Anurag Shukla@Anuraag
While there are many parties that might accrue political gain from this whole #HijabRow, the only losers in this whole debate are going to be women. This competitive communalism is going to reverse the gains (in gender equality) made in the last few decades.

Nirupama@NMenonRao
One of my lasting memories is a trip to a Chinese village in 1990, accompanying the then Deputy Prime Minister Devi Lal, and of a group of kindergarten children greeting him with the song by Lataji&Mukesh: 'Ichak dana Beechak dana'. Their lilting, innocent voices echo in my mind.

BRIEF

Acquires



New Delhi: KFin Technologies on Wednesday announced the acquisition of Hexagram Fintech. KFin Technologies CEO Sreekanth Nadella said fund accounting has been a strong focus area for us and the acquisition will bring together some of the best minds.

Launch

New Delhi: AXIS-CADES Technologies on Wednesday said it has launched a temperature screening solution to help entry of people into offices, factories, schools and restaurants amid the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The solution - WeCareEST - comprises a self-serving temperature measuring device, an app for device management and monitoring, and a web app to access digital logs.

Raises



Mumbai: Xpressbees on Wednesday said it has raised USD 300 million (about Rs 2,250 crore) in a Series-F funding round led by Blackstone Growth, TPG Growth and ChrysCapital. CEO Amitava Saha said we will further fuel our efforts in pursuing new opportunities.

Investment

Mumbai: Bahrain-based Investcorp, a global investment manager specializing in alternative investments, said it has led a USD 55 million (around Rs 411.45 crore) investment in NDR Warehousing. NDR has a well-diversified asset portfolio comprising 18 logistics parks across Chennai, Mumbai, the National Capital Region, Bengaluru, Coimbatore and Kolkata.

Reduce

New Delhi: GE Power India on Wednesday said that GE Steam Power plans to reduce stake and part ways with the company as its promoter within the next three years. GE Power India has received a letter from GE Steam Power, wherein the latter has stated its intent to reduce its stake in the company and de-promoterise within 36 months, which will be implemented in a staggered manner. This aligns with GE's previous announcement.

Funding

New Delhi: Sistema.bio has raised USD 15.6 million (about Rs 115 crore) through a Series-B investment round that included a mix of equity, debt and non-dilutive capital. Sistema.bio provides access to innovative biogestor technology, training and financing to farmers to address the challenges of poverty, food security and climate change.

Govt to look into restaurant demands of higher GST with ITC benefit

New Delhi, Feb 09 (PTD):



The government is open to looking into the restaurant industry demands of going back to a higher GST rate, along with the benefit of the tax credit on their inputs, Revenue Secretary Tarun Bajaj said on Wednesday.

Currently, a 5 per cent tax is levied on restaurant services, irrespective of whether it is air-conditioned or non-AC, without the benefit of the input tax credit (ITC). Also, restaurants in starred-hotels that charge Rs 7,500 or more per day room tariff will be levied 18 per cent GST but ITC is allowed for them. Those restaurants in hotels charging less than Rs 7,500 room tariff will charge five per cent GST but will not get ITC.

"I also got this suggestion from the restaurant

industry that they would like to go back to a higher rate of taxation with ITC being allowed to them, rather than (be) only on five per cent tax rate. Which is very fine. We would be open to look into this," Bajaj said at a CII event here.

A final decision on the reversal in the tax rate for the restaurant industry will be taken by the GST Council, chaired by the Union finance minister and state FMs.

When the goods and services tax was rolled out

on July 1, 2017, a 12 per cent tax on food bill was levied in the case of non-AC restaurants and 18 per cent in air-conditioned ones. All these got an input tax credit, a facility to set off tax paid on inputs with final tax.

The GST Council later in November 2017 withdrew the ITC facility and levied a uniform five per cent tax on all restaurants without the distinction of AC or non-AC, after it felt that the restaurants were not passing on the ITC benefits to the customers.

Bajaj said this year, the attempt would be to bring some changes in the GST framework so that there is stability and trade knows the tax rates and can plan accordingly.

The GST Council has already set up a panel of state ministers under Karnataka Chief Minister

Basavaraj Bommai to suggest changes in GST rate structure, trimming of exemption list and correction in inverted duty structure to expand a tax base. The panel is expected to submit its report by the end of the month. With regards to trade and industry demand of rationalising rates, Bajaj said, "I want to sensitise the industry that the RNR was 15.3 but right now, the rate is 11.6 per cent. So, there is a huge gap." He added that while there may be a case and "I appreciate that the GST rates on some of the items need to be brought down to bring parity with others but there is a need to look at the other side because states this year, once the compensation ends on June 30, are going to face a massive shortfall of funds, maybe exceeding Rs 1 lakh crore".

GAIL pre-pones US gas supplies, eyes new deals

New Delhi, Feb 09 (PTD):

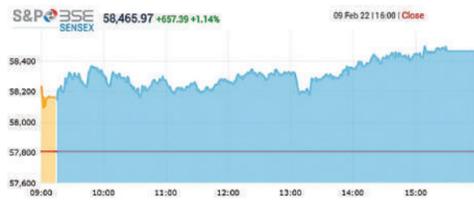
GAIL (India) Ltd has pre-poned the supply of gas from the US and is looking to contract more LNG next year as it doubles down efforts to secure affordable energy supplies to meet the needs of Asia's third-largest economy, chairman Manoj Jain said.

India's No.1 gas transporting and marketing firm has long-term liquefied natural gas (LNG) supply contracts from the US to Australia and with Russia, supplementing domestic gas supplies.

"In 3Q (October-December 2021) we pre-poned a couple of cargoes (LNG shiploads) from supplies that we were to receive next year and we did it again in the current quarter," Jain told PTL.

This because US LNG costs one-third of the price of gas available in the spot or current market.

Sensex rallies over 650 pts, Nifty above 17,400



Mumbai, Feb 09 (PTD):

Equity benchmark Sensex surged 657 points on Wednesday to reclaim the 58,000-mark following robust buying in auto, metal and banking stocks.

Strong global cues also supported the domestic indices, traders said. The 30-share BSE Sensex closed 657.39 points or 1.14 per cent higher at 58,465.97. Likewise, the NSE Nifty jumped 197.05 points or 1.14 per cent to end at 17,463.80.

Maruti was the top gainer in the Sensex pack, rising over 4 per cent, followed by IndusInd Bank, HDFC Bank, Bajaj Finserv, Titan, Wipro, and Bharti Airtel. On the other hand, Sun Pharma, ITC and PowerGrid were the lag-

gards. Elsewhere in Asia, bourses in Hong Kong, Tokyo, Seoul and Shanghai ended in the positive territory. Stock exchanges in Europe were trading with significant gains in mid-session deals. In early trading, the FTSE 100 in London rose 0.6% to 7,612.25 and the DAX in Frankfurt added 0.7% to 15,359.40. The CAC 40 in Paris advanced 0.9% to 7,095.45. In Asia, the Shanghai Composite Index advanced 0.8% to 3,479.95 and the Nikkei 225 in Tokyo gained 1.1% to 27,579.87. The Hang Seng in Hong Kong was 2.1% to 24,829.99. The Kospi in Seoul rose 0.8% to 2,768.85 and Sydney's S&P-ASX 200 added 1.1% to 7,268.30. New Zealand and Southeast Asia markets rose.

Rupee slips 5 paise at 74.79 against USD, gold jumps Rs 247

Mumbai, Feb 09 (PTD):

The rupee declined by 5 paise to close at 74.79 (provisional) against the US dollar on Wednesday amid persistent foreign fund outflows and elevated crude oil prices.

At the interbank foreign exchange, the rupee opened at 74.70 against the American dollar, and later witnessed an intra-day high of 74.68 and a low of 74.87 against the greenback.

The local unit finally ended the day at 74.79, down 5 paise from the previous close of 74.74.

"Rupee remained fairly

subdued ahead of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) monetary policy but slow depreciation has been seen in the last two days on back of foreign fund outflows from domestic equities and bonds," said Dilip Parmar, Research Analyst, HDFC Securities.

On the overseas front, dollar bulls remained in control with the greenback rallying from its 100-days moving average while equities managing to recover some lost ground.

"Spot USDINR is likely to consolidate in the range of 74.60 to 75.10 in the next

couple of days," Parmar said. Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, was trading 0.14 per cent lower at 95.51.

Gold prices spurred by Rs 247 to Rs 48,403 per 10 grams in the local market here on Wednesday amid gains in the metal in international markets, according to HDFC Securities.

In the previous trade, the precious metal had settled at Rs 48,156 per 10 grams.

Silver also rallied by Rs 825 to Rs 62,417 per kg from Rs 61,592 per kg in the previous trade.

Shift in mobility trends with focus on electric, hybrid vehicles

New Delhi, Feb 09 (PTD):



India is witnessing a shift in mobility trends with more and more consumers expressing interest in electrified and hybrid vehicles, as per Deloitte's Global Automotive Consumer Study 2022.

More than a third of Indian consumers have expressed interest in electrified and hybrid vehicles, as the segment sets steam with India's focus on environment friendly, self-manufactured and sustainable solutions post pandemic, as per the findings of the annual report.

According to the study, 59 per cent of the Indian consumers were concerned about climate

change, pollution levels and gasoline/diesel vehicles emissions, indicating that consumers interest in the electric vehicles (EVs) is due to the perception of lower fuel costs, environmental consciousness, and a better driving experience, it noted.

The push for green mobility in the Union Budget with focus on battery swapping and charging infrastructure has also aided the interest in green mobility, the report stated.

Tata Motors launches Altroz Dark edition starting at Rs 7.96 lakh

New Delhi, Feb 09 (PTD):



Tata Motors on Wednesday said it has launched the 'DARK' edition of its premium hatchback Altroz, priced at Rs 7.96 lakh (ex-showroom Delhi), to mark two years of launch of the model in the country.

The company said it has added the DARK edition to its XT and XZ+ (diesel) trims. This extension is aimed at expanding customer base and introducing premium styling and popular features, Tata Motors said in a statement. Altroz has created its own mark in the premium hatchback market with more than 1.2 lakh happy owners. With over 20 per cent market share (YTD) in its segment, it

has been very popular amongst customers. The addition of the #DARK to its portfolio last year further enhanced its style quotient, Tata Motors Passenger Vehicles Vice President (Sales, Marketing and Customer Care) Rajan Amba stated.

The auto major would like to celebrate the brand's second anniversary with these product extensions, making it more accessible, he added.

Altroz comes in six variants with both petrol and diesel engine options.

Housing finance players loan portfolio to grow at 8-10%

Mumbai, Feb 09 (PTD):



Housing finance companies are likely to witness a portfolio growth at 8-10 per cent in the current fiscal and 9-11 per cent in FY 2022-23, according to a report.

After an impact on their disbursements in Q1 FY2022, non-banking financial companies-housing finance companies (NBFC-HFC) saw a sharp recovery in the second quarter. Their on-book portfolio is estimated at Rs 11.6 lakh crore, up 9 per cent year-on-year, in the first half of FY2022.

Going forward, the growth trend is expected to continue, driven by healthy demand in the industry, increasing level of economic activity and increasing vaccination in the country, IcrA Ratings

said in the report released on Wednesday.

We retain our growth estimate of 8-10 per cent for the on-book portfolio of HFCs in FY2022. Further, HFCs on-book portfolio is estimated to grow by 9-11 per cent in FY2023, the agency's Vice President and Sector Head (Financial Sector Ratings) Sachin Sachdeva said.

As for the gross NPAs (GNPAs), the second wave of infections and the prolonged weakness in the operating environment challenged the recovery since Q3 FY2021, which led to a

decline in collection efficiency (CE) and hence deterioration in the asset quality metrics in Q1 FY2022, the agency said in a release.

However, the industry saw a sharp recovery in CE in Q2 FY2022 and the (GNPAs) reduced by around 50 basis points (bps) in the same quarter. Sachdeva said the reported GNPA ratio of HFCs is estimated to increase to 3.6-3.8 per cent as of March 31, 2022, compared to an earlier estimate of 3.3-3.6 per cent.

Thereafter, some recovery is expected in FY2023 with the GNPA ratio declining to 3.2-3.5 per cent by March 31, 2023, he said.

The report said the stress on cash flows of borrowers caused by the pandemic also renewed demand for restructuring.

Equity mutual funds log Rs 14,888-cr net inflow in Jan

New Delhi, Feb 09 (PTD):



Equity mutual funds attracted a net sum of Rs 14,888 crore in January, making it the 11th consecutive monthly net inflow.

However, this was much lower than the net inflow of Rs 25,077 crore witnessed in December, data from the Association of Mutual Funds in India (Amfi) showed on Wednesday.

Equity schemes have been witnessing net inflow since March 2021 and the segment has received a net inflow of over Rs 1 lakh crore during this period highlighting the positive sentiments among investors.

Prior to this, such schemes had consistently witnessed outflows for eight months from July 2020 to February 2021 losing Rs 46,791 crore.

Overall, the mutual fund industry registered a net inflow of Rs 35,252 crore during the period under review compared to a net outflow of Rs 4,350 crore in December.

The average under management (AUM) of the industry rose to Rs 38.88 lakh crore at January-end from Rs 37.72 lakh crore at December-end.

Within the equity segment, all categories saw net inflows barring value funds. While the flexi-cap fund category saw the highest net inflow to the tune of Rs 2,527 crore, followed by thematic funds at Rs 2,073 crore during the period under review.

Highway projects of Rs 3.36 lakh cr sanctioned in 3 yrs to FY-21

New Delhi, Feb 09 (PTD):

The Road Transport and Highways Ministry has sanctioned highway projects of about Rs 3,36,661 crore during the three years to 2020-21, Union minister Nitin Gadkari said on Wednesday.

In a written reply to the Rajya Sabha, the Road Transport and Highways Minister said that time for the completion of a project is generally kept two-three years from the date of the award.

Replying to a separate question, Gadkari said some stretches or sections in about 100 National Highways are falling in or passing through forest areas declared as Wildlife Sanctuary/National Park or its Eco Sensitive Zone (ESZ). According to the minister, in order to minimize the impact of highway development on wildlife, the MoRTH has issued instructions to

implementing agencies to make all efforts to avoid any road alignment through National Parks or Wildlife Sanctuaries, even if it requires taking a longer route/bypass. To another question, he said the total number of de-registered vehicles for 2021 by Government of NCT of Delhi is 22,753.

In compliance of orders of the NGT and the Supreme Court of India, de-registration of 10 year old diesel vehicles is being carried out by the transport department of Government of NCT, Delhi. Explaining further, the minister said with regard to 15 year old petrol vehicles, it is informed that a motor vehicle other than transport vehicle shall not be deemed to be validly registered after the expiry of validity entered in the certificate of registration as per rule 52(3) of CMVR, 1989.

Budget capex not as high as it sounds

Mumbai, Feb 09 (PTD):



Amid FY23 Union Budget's focus on investments, leading domestic credit rating agency Crisil on Wednesday said that the capital expenditure is "not as high as it sounds".

It, however, was quick to add that considering that governments usually tend to cut capex during a crisis, the government has maintained its focus on growth-spurring initiatives amid the pandemic.

The research wing of the agency said, if one excludes the Rs 1 lakh crore of loans to states for capex included in the headline figure of Rs 7.50 lakh crore or 2.91 per cent, the actual spend in FY23, will go down to 2.58 per cent of GDP, which is barely at par with the revised estimate of FY22.

The report also pointed out that the overall num-

ber showing a rise has been 'offset' through a reduction in internal and extra budgetary resources (IEBR), which funds capex of central public sector enterprises (CPSEs).

IEBR has been budgeted at 1.82 per cent of GDP for the next fiscal, much lower than the pre-pandemic average (fiscals 2018-20) of 3.33 per cent, it said, attributing the same to poor capex execution by CPSEs lately.

The overall central capex for FY22 which is the sum of effective budgetary capex and IEBR, would remain intact at 5.96 per cent of GDP for next fiscal, the same as pre-pandemic average between 2018-20.

It can be noted that many quarters had hailed Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman for her budget speech that mentioned an over 35 per cent jump in capex for FY23, to help reverse growth, which has suffered in the pandemic.

Additionally, on the revised estimates for FY22, showing a rise in capex to 2.60 per cent from the budget estimate of 2.39 per cent, the Crisil report explained that this is due to a one-time expenditure of Rs 51,971 crore towards Air India's liabilities.

Noting that the government has been able to fully spend its capex budget, the report said in the last two fiscal, a bulk of expenditure happened in the last quarter and made a plea for frontloading of the committed money to help the demand process.

Finance minister to address RBI board on Feb 14

New Delhi, Feb 09 (PTD):

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman is scheduled to address the post-budget meeting of the RBI's central board on Monday and highlight key points of the Union Budget 2022-23, including the fiscal consolidation roadmap and high capex plan.

It has been a custom that the finance minister addresses the RBI board, consisting of RBI Governor and existing four deputy governors, after the budget.

The meeting has been scheduled for February 14 where she would be addressing the board members and talk about announcements made in the Budget to perk up growth hit by three waves of COVID-19, sources said.

The Budget 2022-23 presented earlier this month es-

timates a nominal gross domestic product (GDP) growth of 11.1 per cent.

The government expects this growth to be fuelled by a massive capital spending programme outlined in the Budget with a view to crowd-in private investment by reinvigorating economic activities and creating demand. The finance minister raised capital expenditure (capex) by 35.4 per cent for the financial year 2022-23 to Rs 7.5 lakh crore to continue the public investment-led recovery of the pandemic-battered economy. The capex this year is pegged at Rs 5.5 lakh crore.

The spending on building multimodal logistics parks, metro systems, highways, and trains is expected to create demand for the private sector as all the projects are to be implemented through contractors.

Actress Kajal Agarwal, who seems to be enjoying her first pregnancy with her husband Gautam Kitchlu, wrote a lengthy post, slamming body shamers who commented on her pregnant look.

Earlier, when Kajal Aggarwal's fully-pregnant photos were out, some people on the Internet had started commenting on her looks. There were a few memes, which were spread on social media sites, making fun of her not-so-glamorous looks. Kajal, who wanted to shut the body-shamers once for all, had written a long post on her Instagram. Kajal Aggarwal's post reads, "I've been dealing with the most amazing new developments in my life, my body, my home and most importantly my work place. Additionally, certain comments/ body shaming messages/ memes don't really help :) let's learn to be kind and if that's too hard, maybe, just live and let live!". Throwing some light into what her thoughts are, Kajal mentions what it is to be like, to take such negativity, when women are in the most important phase of their lives.

"Here are a few of my thoughts for all those who are going through similar life situations and need to read this and most definitely the self-absorbed morons who just don't seem to understand", Kajal wrote. Going further, Kajal explained that it is not something weird that a body undergoes physical changes during pregnancy. "Hormonal changes cause our stomach and breasts to get larger as the baby grows and our body prepares for nursing".

"We may also be much more tired than usual and have mood swings more often. A negative mood may make us more likely to have unhealthy or negative thoughts about our bodies". "Also, after giving birth, we may take a while to get back to the way we were before, or may never completely return to the way we looked before pregnancy. And THAT'S OK", Kajal affirms. Ending on a high note, Kajal states that there is no need to feel abnormal for the changes that take place during pregnancy. She also advises other pregnant women not to stress over anything that makes them even slightly upset.

"We don't need to fit in a box or a stereotype and we don't need to be made uncomfortable or pressured during the most beautiful, miraculous and precious phase of our lives". "We must remember that the whole process of birthing a little infant, is a celebration that we are privileged to experience", the 'Acharya' actress wrote, as she even gave many tips to women who are in the same phase in life.

It is really unfortunate that any woman undergoes this situation, where she has to remind her body shamers, about what difficulties she has been facing, as she prepares to bring a new life into the world.

Kajal Aggarwal takes on body shamers who commented on her pregnant look



Additi Gupta share her views on 'Dhadkan Zindaggi Kii'

Sony Entertainment Television's 'Dhadkan Zindaggi Kii' has been engaging its viewers with its thought provoking storyline and relatable characters. While the show is taking on narratives that challenge the perspective of an orthodox society like gender disparity at the workplace since its premiere, will also shed light on an important topic of women standing up for women, a viewpoint that is mostly absent when it comes to Indian daily soaps. In the on-going track, we see women in the same field come together to support each other in the face of adversity. While Dr Deepika (played by the celebrated actor Additi Gupta), will become the target of gossips, viewers will see Dr Sia and junior resident Dr Chakraborty stand up for her.

Sharing her viewpoint on this, Additi Gupta gave her two cents about why



such stories are important for viewers of Indian television, "Women supporting each other should not come as a surprise but it does, we need to change that. Indian television's modus operandi has al-

ways been the "vamp and victim" narrative which is not ideal for today's day and age." Watch 'Dhadkan: Zindaggi Kii' every Mon-Fri at 10 pm only on Sony Entertainment Television!

Disha Parmar talks about response to 'Bade Achhe Lagte Hain 2'



'Bade Achhe Lagte Hain 2' actress Disha Parmar gets candid about the love of viewers for the show. She is seen playing the lead role of Priya Kapoor. The story depicts how true love finds its way and becomes one of the important aspects of life. As Disha says: "The viewers can't get enough of #Ramya, which is overwhelming. Finally, Ram has confessed his love for Priya and it was as heartwarming as it gets. But what lies ahead will be an interesting turn and I hope viewers enjoy the development." The lead actors Disha Parmar and Nakul Mehta have vowed the audience with their performances as Priya and Ram. "It's been a treat for all the fans who have been constantly sending sweet messages sharing how much they love our equation and they had been waiting for this time for Ram and Priya to come together. I guess it's all because of the viewers and their love so it's definitely a return gift to them to finally see #Ramya together," she adds. 'Bade Ache Lagte Hai 2' airs on Sony Entertainment Television.

Deepika Padukone's key to successful relationship: Communication

As her film 'Gehraiyaan' is all set to release just days before Valentine's Day, Bollywood superstar Deepika Padukone, who has time and again redefined romance with her actor-husband Ranveer Singh, has shared the key to a good and healthy rela-

tionship. The actress, who in 2018 was named as one of the 100 most influential people in the world by TIME, has also talked about what it feels like to be in love. She says for her love is trust, friendship, companionship and where one can just be themselves.

Talking to IANS in a candid chat about what it takes to make a relationship healthy and successful, pat came the reply from Deepika: "Communication."

She added: "I think honest communication in a relationship is extremely important and it's not necessary that two people in a relationship are always on the same page. They may not necessarily have to agree with each other on all points but I think to communicate the way you feel about certain things and to be honest about that." Deepika says "communication is extremely key and important."

"Even if there are arguments and disagreements. The fact that you feel a cer-

tain way and to communicate is that I think is important. So, I think a key to a good or a healthy relationship is communication," added the doe-eyed actress. Deepika and Ranveer have set the benchmark of what love is with their constant romance-filled exchanges on social media. Asked what it feels like to be in love, Deepika shared: "Well, I think love in itself is a very loaded and complicated word to use like that I think. Also, because love just means so many different things to different people."

She added: "But as far as I am concerned, for me love is trust, friendship, companionship, love is where you can just be yourself, love is adjustment. I think when you are 19 or 21, the definition of love is very different and when you get older the definition changes."



Twists and turns in &TV shows

&TV's shows Baal Shiv, Aur Bhai Kya Chal Raha Hai, Happu Ki Ultan Paltan and Bhabiji Ghar Par Hai are set to entertain the viewers with several pyaar and takraar moments this week.

Devi Parvati (Shivya Pathania) from Baal Shiv shares, "Devi Parvati, who is narrating the story of Shiv and Sati to Baal Shiv (Aan Tiwari), mentions that Sati is waiting for Shiv to return from meditation but soon her patience breaks and she screams in pain. After



which, Mahadev (Siddharth Arora) comes out of his meditation and Sati asks him about the person he thinks in his meditation to which he

replies, Vishnu's Ram Swaroop. Hearing this, Sati takes the form of Sita and reaches Rameshwaram to test Lord Rama, and Nandi informs Mahadev about the same leaving him furious. What will Mahadev's anger lead to and will Sati be able to bear the brunt of it?"

Tune in to watch Baal Shiv, Aur Bhai Kya Chal Raha Hai?, Happu Ki Ultan Paltan and Bhabiji Ghar Par Hai from 8 PM to 10:30 PM, airing every Monday to Friday only on &TV.

HOROSCOPE THURSDAY FEBRUARY 10

Aquarius: Jan 21 - Feb 18

Bursting with new ideas, you want to make the world a better place! You will give your best in a team and will come up with great schemes and solutions. At gatherings and social dos, says Ganesha, you will remain your charming self, impressing people with an amazing social grace.

Pisces: Feb 19 - Mar 20

Home is where the heart is, in which the troubles you need to deal with today are smouldering. Running away from your problems will simply have you out of breath; it would be wiser to take a stand and find solutions to petty conflicts without losing your perspective. Make no mountains out of mole hills, says Ganesha.

Aries: Mar 21 - Apr 20

So, busy bee, you finally realise you've been ignoring your near and dear. And now, it's going to cost you a lot of effort to make it up to them. Dinner at the finest restaurant, a trip to the theatre, shopping at a posh boutique... be ready to splurge, says Ganesha!

Taurus: Apr 21 - May 21

Today you are going to focus on enhancing your looks and appearances, says Ganesha. Instead of trying to seek satisfaction from within yourself you will be flaunting your fine clothes, your hairstyles. A visit to a beauty parlour cannot be ruled out. Your new looks will make you tremendously confident and impressive and will make others see you in a new light.

Gemini: May 22 - June 21

The day promises sensitivity and compassion for you, predicts Ganesha. You may plan a trip with your family members. You may also invest your money in various financial companies, as securing the future of your family will be foremost on your mind. Moreover, you will also save some hefty amount to meet future needs.

Cancer: June 22 - July 22

It is high time that you dedicated yourself to your work. If you are looking to try new things, today may not be a very good day to do so. Stick to doing things the way you have been doing them so far, advises Ganesha. All you need is a little attitude adjustment. Today, you are likely to meet an old friend and you will get busy reminiscing about your time together.

Leo: July 23 - Aug 23

When it comes to maintaining a balance in any relationship, you set an example for others to follow. It is like an inner light guides you towards joyful coexistence, though, at times, it may entail making certain acts of sacrifice, says Ganesha. You may choose to lose an argument in order to win hearts.

Virgo: Aug 24 - Sept 22

Open the mind gates and let your imagination flow, says Ganesha. At your creative best, you will pursue innovation and creativity today. Luck will be on your side and even those things that you took a risk on may lean your way. You energy levels will be unusually high and you will feel passionate about all that you undertake.

Libra: Sept 23 - Oct 23

Everyone has a dream, but only few have the fortune to realise them. Be among the lucky ones today as you see your dream project materialise and take its first steps towards a successful future. But all good things have humble beginnings. What matters is that you had a dream, and dreaming it was the hardest part, reminds Ganesha.

Scorpio: Oct 24 - Nov 22

You are a visionary and today you work towards building a successful future. But, expecting an instant result would be unfair. You need to have patience to bring in those dynamic changes in your life. Wait and watch, the patience would reap sweet fruits!

Sagittarius: Nov 23 - Dec 21

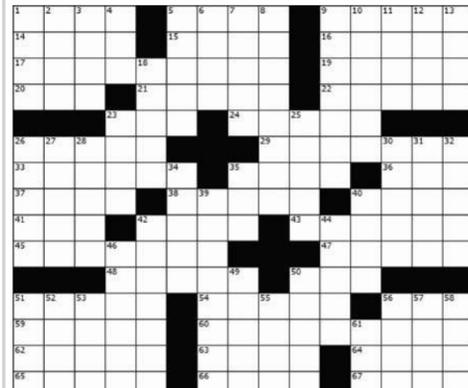
As Ganesha foresees, you will be religiously inclined today. Listening to soft, instrumental music will soothe your nerves. You also feel like going back to school days and dig into detective and suspense stories of Nancy Drew or Hardy Boys. It was fun being kid, isn't it?

Capricorn: Dec 22 - Jan 20

Not everyday is the same day. And, today is one of those days when you feel extremely confused, feels Ganesha. While you won't be able to get rid of negative emotions, your hard work will be paid off and lay a strong foundation for future. You'll not understand whether to feel good about your achievements or experience sadness of confusion.

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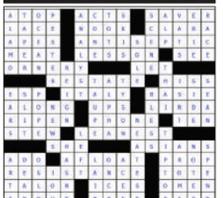
- Barbie, e.g.
- 18-wheeler
- Wear down
- Inspiration
- Related
- Military award
- Without meaning
- Small particles
- FDR's successor
- Put back to zero

DOWN

- Plate
- Poems of praise
- Fasting time
- ____ Vegas, Nevada
- Massachusetts city
- Makes do
- Tightwad
- Case
- Radiate
- Witty reply
- Smell
- Beaver projects
- Or ____!
- Delete
- Twirl
- Thickly populated

- Ravens' calls
- Phonograph inventor
- Make like new
- Occasion
- Artist's tripod
- Sheep's cry
- Drummer Ringo ____
- ____ wave
- Fruit drink
- Fables
- Patched a ceiling
- Got out of bed
- Roof overhang
- Green citrus fruit
- Asparagus unit
- Scored on serve
- Most important
- ____ energy
- Wed secretly
- Revises copy
- Rent contract
- Rock star ____ John
- Slope
- Singes
- Mule's father
- Climbing flower (2 wds.)
- Opera singer
- Less refined
- Distributed cards
- Mother ____
- Blooming bush
- Stationed
- Amtrak depots (abbr.)
- Canvas cover
- Burn hair
- Humorist ____ Barry
- Diva's forte
- ____ Moore of "Indecent Proposal"
- Genesis garden
- Shade tree

SOLUTION 208



Pace greets Anderson, Broad part of England cull for Windies



London (AP): James Anderson and Stuart Broad, England's two leading test wicket-takers of all time, were the headline names in a ruthless post-Ashes cull for next month's tour of the West Indies. The fast-bowling greats received no assurances that they still had test careers, either: England, on the heels of an off-field clear-out that accounted for the head coach, assistant coach and director of cricket, also dropped eight players following the 4-0 loss in the series in Australia. As well as Anderson, Broad and vice-captain Jos Buttler, the following players were also omitted: Dawid Malan, Sam Billings, Dom Bess, Rory Burns and Haseeb Hameed.

India U19 heroes feted on sidelines of second ODI



Ahmedabad: India's U-19 World Cup winning squad was on Wednesday felicitated by the BCCI on the sidelines of the second ODI here on Wednesday. The U-19 heroes, wearing blazers, first watched the second ODI at the Narendra Modi stadium from the stands, as they had a joyous time seeing their stars in presence of head coach Hrishikesh Kanitkar and other members of the support staff. Former India batter and National Cricket Academy head VVS Laxman, who was with the team in the Caribbean, was also present on occasion. And so was BCCI secretary Jay Shah, treasurer Arun Dhumal and few other senior officials of the state cricket bodies.

Bangladesh set to tour SA for ODI

Johannesburg: Bangladesh are set to tour South Africa for three ODIs and two Tests as CSA on Wednesday confirmed the date and venues of the fixtures, starting March 18. The tour, set to be played across four venues from March 18 to April 12, will be a part of ICC's ODI Super League and the World Test Championships. "SuperSport Park will host two of the ODI matches, with the third taken by the Imperial Wanderers, while the coastal cities of Durban and Gqeberha will take on the Test fixtures," CSA said in statement. The two teams will begin the tour with the ODI series.

Inter beats Roma 2-0 in Cup

Milan (AP): A pair of brilliant goals from Edin Dzeko and Alexis Sanchez ruined Jose Mourinho's return to his former club as Inter Milan beat Roma 2-0 to reach the Italian Cup semifinals. The match marked the first time Mourinho faced Inter at San Siro since he left after leading the club to the Serie A-Italian Cup-Champions League treble in 2010. Mourinho received a warm welcome from the fans, who deployed a banner that read: "Welcome back home, Jose." Roma players did not receive the same friendly treatment. Inter got off a perfect start to open the scoring on its first move.

Del Potro exits Argentina Open



Buenos Aires: 2009 U.S. Open champion Juan Martin del Potro lost in what appeared to be a farewell match in front of his home fans at the Argentina Open tournament. The 33-year-old, who had not played since 2019 due to injuries, was eliminated by compatriot and friend Federico Delbonis 6-1, 6-3 in an emotional match in Buenos Aires on Tuesday. Del Potro was already in tears as the final game unravelled. The Argentinian said in a press conference he will decide on Wednesday whether he will play at the Rio Open tournament in Brazil next week.

Kerala and Jamshedpur lock horns in search of top spot

Bambolim: Two teams vying for a place at the top of the table will cross paths when Jamshedpur FC and Kerala Blasters meet in an Indian Super League match here on Thursday. Jamshedpur were stopped in their tracks in the last outing with Bengaluru FC, ending their three-game winning streak. They are now out of the top four, placed fifth with 22 points from 13 games. But, head coach Owen Coyle will know all too well that a win will bring them right back into the fray. Like Jamshedpur, Kerala have also played 13 games and are sitting second in the table with 23 points.

Prasidh's miserly four-for leads India to series win

Ahmedabad, Feb 09:

India beat West Indies by 44 runs in the second ODI at Narendra Modi Stadium which also meant they win the three match series 2-0. Prasidh Krishna led India's bowlers as they successfully defended a small total of 237. Windies really pushed India with some stunning batting from their lower-middle order, but Men in Blue kept their calm and eventually had the last laugh. India defend a total in a manner that will satisfy them no end. They have backed a hit-the-deck bowler over a swing bowler, and it has produced tangible results on the night even though the intangible shift and impact was plain to see in the last two games too. Krishna ends up with figures of 9-3-12-4.

Earlier the hosts were reeling at 43 for three after a top-order collapse but then Surya forged a crucial 91-run stand with vice-captain KL Rahul (49) to bring the team back on track.

The elegant Surya, who notched up his second fifty, mixed caution with aggression and hammered five fours in his 83-ball knock, on a track, where batting wasn't easy.



India's Prasidh Krishna (3R) celebrates with his teammates after the dismissal of West Indies' Brandon King (not pictured).

India lost skipper Rohit Sharma (5) cheaply when tried to chase a wishy delivery off pacer Kumar Roach (1/42) and edged to Shai Hope after West Indies opted to field.

Virat Kohli (18), who is

playing his 100th ODI in India, then joined Rishabh Pant (18), who opened for first-time in the 50-over format.

Kohli's first boundary was an elegant cover drive in the fifth over, off Roach

and off the same bowler he cut behind square to get his second.

The pace duo of Roach and Alzarri Joseph (2/36) bowled a tight line as India could hit only two fours in the first seven overs and

crawled to 22/1.

Pant got his first boundary, his trademark pull shot over deep mid-wicket and then hammered two more fours. But pacer Odean Smith (2/29) pegged back the hosts by removing

both Pant and Kohli in the 12th over as India slipped to 43/3. First Smith removed Pant, who mistimed a pull and gave a sitter to Jason Holder and then dismissed a well-set Kohli, after the former captain edged to Hope.

Surya, who got his first four through a drive, was initially the aggressive one but Rahul then freed his arms, starting with a towering maximum, a pull shot, off left-arm spinner Akeal Hosein (1/39).

The two kept ticking the scoreboard, as India were poised at 91/3 after 25 overs.

Rahul struck four fours and two sixes in his 48-ball knock. But just when it looked that they would score big, Rahul was run out in the 30th over.

Surya then found an ally in Washington Sundar (24), as the duo added 43 runs for the fifth wicket.

However, Surya perished in the 39th over, giving an easy catch to Joseph, as Fabian Allen (1/50) got his only wicket. Sundar too was unable to convert his start. Then Deepak Hooda's 29 off 25 deliveries helped India go past the 225-run mark. The hosts could add only 54 runs in the last 10 overs.

India begin FIH Pro League campaign with 5-0 thrashing of France



Potchefstroom, Feb 09 (PTI):

Olympic bronze medalist India began their FIH Pro League Hockey campaign with a bang as they thrashed France 5-0 in a thoroughly dominant display here on Tuesday.

After a barren first quarter, India slammed three goals in the second before finding the target twice in the third.

India got four penalty corners in the match from which they scored two. France got three PCs but wasted all of them.

Harmanpreet Singh and Varun Kumar scored from penalty corners in the 21st and 24th minutes respectively before Shamsher

Singh made it 3-0 in the 28th minute with a field goal.

Mandeep Singh (32nd) and Akashdeep Singh (41st) completed the tally for India who had won a historic Olympic bronze after 41 years in the Tokyo Games.

Playing in their first match of the year, world number three India took some time to settle down in the first 15-minute quarter. But once they had got a measure of their opponents, the Manpreet Singh-led side upped their ante and dominated their opponents in the remaining three quarters.

Nilakanta Sharma got a chance early in the match

but he shot over. India got back-to-back penalty corners in the first quarter but France defence stood firm and defended them well.

India began their domination in the second quarter and got their third penalty corner from which they took the lead in the 21st minute. Drag-flicker Harmanpreet made no mistake from the PC, drilling a low shot at the right of France goalie.

Three minutes later, India got another penalty corner; their fourth of the match, and this time Varun Kumar scored to make it 2-0, sending a low shot almost exactly as the first goal.

Indian women lose to NZ in one-off T20I

Queenstown, Feb 09 (PTI):

Batting let India down as they suffered an 18-run defeat to hosts New Zealand in the one-off women's T20 International here on Wednesday.

Senior opener and vice-captain Smriti Mandhana did not play and her absence was felt badly as India fell short by 18 runs while chasing 156 for a win.

Rookie Yastika Bhatia, who opened in place of Mandhana along with young Shafali Verma, did reasonably well with a run-a-ball 26 (2x4; 1x6) but India never looked like they could chase down the target against an impressive New Zealand bowling attack.

The opening stand was worth 41 runs in 6.3 overs and that was the highest partnership for India.

Shafali was not at her best as she contributed just 13 runs from 14 balls with the help of two boundaries. Captain Harmanpreet Kaur, who made 12 from 13 balls, also looked off colour. The onus was then on the lower order to give a



push for the target. Inexperienced Sabbhineni Meghana, who top-scored for India, did well with a 30-ball 37, which had six fours in it, stitching 34 runs with Richa Gosh (12) for the fourth wicket.

That stand was the last flicker of hope for India and once Meghana was out, there was a batting collapse and the visiting side could only reach 137 for 8 in their allotted 20 overs.

When Meghana was out, India needed 55 runs from 5.1 overs which proved a tough ask for the lower order. Jess Kerr, Amelia

Kerr and Hayley Jensen took two wickets apiece for New Zealand, while Lea Tahuu and Sophie Devine got one each.

Earlier, experienced all-rounder Deepti Sharma and Pooja Vastrakar scalped two wickets apiece to help India restrict New Zealand to 155 for 5 after Harmanpreet opted to field after winning the toss.

Vastrakar was tidy with her medium pace as she conceded just 16 runs from her four overs, while Sharma gave away 26 runs from her four overs of off-spin.

Petra Vlhova wins Slovakia's 1st Alpine gold at Olympics

Beijing, Feb 09 (AP):

Petra Vlhova added an Olympic gold medal to her growing list of achievements, winning the women's slalom at the Beijing Games on Wednesday.

It was Slovakia's first Olympic medal in Alpine skiing and helped Vlhova atone for her poor performance in Monday's giant slalom. Her biggest rival, two-time Olympic champion Mikaela Shiffrin, went out in the first run of that race and the American again failed to finish her opening run on Wednesday.

Vlhova, who already has clinched the World Cup slalom title, finished an unexpected 14th in the giant slalom and looked set for more disappointment when she completed the first slalom run down the Ice River course in eighth, 0.72 seconds behind leader Lena D r. But last season's overall World Cup champion made it up on the second run which was set by her coach, Mauro Pini. She finished in a combined time of 1 minute, 44.98 seconds.



Honestly, it was really difficult to be calm and focused on my skiing," Vlhova said.

"But I had a lot of power from my team. They trusted me, they believed in me and they repeated to me, You are so strong. Just ski free. Enjoy and focus on your skiing, nothing else." They were always repeating this to me in between the two runs. I gave everything I had and at the end I am Olympic champion.

Cummins praised Langer, but wanted change

Brisbane, Feb 09 (AP):

After describing Justin Langer as a legend with a fierce love of Australia and praising his influence on the national men's cricket team, new captain Pat Cummins ended weeks of speculation about a player-led push for change on Wednesday by saying Australia needed a new style of head coach.

Cummins, who took over as Australia's test captain immediately before the recent Ashes series against England, was heavily criticized by some star ex-players for not publicly endorsing Langer ahead of the coach's contract negotiations with the board last Friday. Langer quit Saturday, announcing the decision via his management company as he traveled home across the country from Melbourne to Perth, after declining a six-month contract extension.

Four days later, Cummins issued a statement to provide some clarity shortly before commenting further at a news con-



ference in Sydney, where the team is preparing for a Twenty20 series against Sri Lanka.

To speak about a decision, which was yet to be made and which is for Cricket Australia to make, would have put Cricket Australia and the team in an impossible position, Cummins said in the statement Wednesday.

I'd never do that. I believe in respecting the sanctity of the change room and the proper process.

Media reports last year suggested that some players were unhappy with Langer's traditional coaching methods and mood changes.

Man United out of the top 4 as Ronaldo's dry spell continues



Ronaldo didn't even start the 1-1 draw at last-place Burnley on Tuesday, only appearing as a second-half substitute and failing to score for a fifth straight game. That's his worst run without a goal at club level since 2010.

The problems run deeper than the scoring slump of one of the world's great strikers, though.

The way United dropped off in the second half was alarming, just like the team did in the second half of its FA Cup game at home to second-tier Middlesbrough on Friday. United lost a penalty shootout on that occasion.

Also alarming was the defending by England center back Harry Maguire that allowed lanky striker Wout Weghorst, Burnley's new signing, to turn him in the middle of the field and play in Jay Rodriguez for the equalizer in the 47th minute.

That canceled out the 18th-minute opener by Paul Pogba, starting for the second game after a long injury layoff and probably United's best player in the first half.

Manchester, Feb 09 (AP):

Manchester United is going through a rough spell under Ralf Rangnick and Cristiano Ronaldo currently isn't in good enough scoring form to get the team out of it.

GATEWAY OF KASHI VISHWANATH CORRIDOR



The Gateway of Kashi Vishwanath corridor at Lalita Ghat, in Varanasi, Wednesday.

Single judge refers case K'taka HC CJ citing constitutional questions

Bengaluru, Feb 09 (PTI):

The single judge of the Karnataka High Court hearing the case related to the Hijab ban in school-college campuses referred the matter to Chief Justice Ritu Raj Awasthi on Wednesday with a view that he may decide on constituting a larger bench to look into it, as the state cabinet, which met earlier before the HC order came in, decided to await the verdict before taking any decision on the issue which has snowballed into a major row.

Calm prevailed today in the educational institutions which witnessed tense moments over the

Hijab row earlier, as the state government had on Tuesday ordered closure of all high schools and colleges in the state for three days. Most of them returned to the online mode of teaching, sources said. Primary schools functioned as usual across the state without any interruption.

Justice Krishna S Dixit who was hearing since Tuesday a batch of petitions against Hijab ban in classrooms filed by Muslim students from Udupi district, maintained that these matters give rise to certain constitutional questions of seminal importance in view of certain aspects of personal law.

"In view of the enormity of questions of importance which were debated, the court is of the considered opinion that the Chief Justice should decide if a larger bench can be constituted in the subject matter," Justice Dixit said.

The bench was also of the view that the interim prayers should also be placed before larger bench that may be constituted by Chief Justice Awasthi exercising his discretion, Justice Dixit noted in the order.

The petitions were filed by some Muslim girls studying in Government Pre-University colleges in Udupi district against a ban on their entry into classrooms with their hi-

jabs on.

The Karnataka cabinet, which met on Wednesday morning before the High Court order came in, decided to wait for its verdict on the 'hijab' row, before taking any further decision on the matter, which has snowballed into a major controversy.

"We (at the cabinet) discussed the Hijab row, but as the High Court is hearing the matter, we felt it is not appropriate for the cabinet to take any further decisions on the issue today. It was decided to wait for the court's verdict before taking any decision," Law and Parliamentary Affairs Minister J C Madhuswamy said.

Instagram restores page of Chinar Corps; Facebook in process

Srinagar, Feb 09 (PTI):

After blocking for over a week, social media giant Instagram restored the handle of Chinar Corps, the Indian Army's strategically located formation in the Kashmir valley, while Facebook has assured a timely solution, officials said here on Wednesday.

As the issue of Instagram and Facebook taking off the pages was highlighted, the social media website got in touch with the officials at the Kashmir-based XV Corps, popularly known as Chinar Corps, following which the Instagram page, having around four lakh followers, was restored this morning. The company had objected to some of the posts, alleging that they were against the rules laid down.

Question in Tamil, reply in Hindi

Heated exchanges in Lok Sabha between Oppn, treasury benches

New Delhi, Feb 09 (PTI):

A question asked in Tamil triggered heated exchanges in Lok Sabha on Wednesday between the Opposition and Treasury benches that spilled over to the issue of ministers giving replies in Hindi.

It all started during Question Hour, with DMK member A Ganeshamurthi asking a supplementary question about FDI inflow in Tamil and Union minister Piyush Goyal saying that he missed the first part in Tamil and wanted to know which project was he referring to.

"If I ask a question in English, then the ministers should respond in English



Marumalarchi Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (MDMK) MP A. Ganeshamurthi speaks in the Lok Sabha during ongoing Budget Session of Parliament, in New Delhi, Wednesday.

only... a member asks a question in Tamil and the minister replies in Hindi," the member remarked and Goyal responded by saying that he can answer in

Hindi while the translation is available for the member. Some opposition members shouted as they also apparently sought to raise the issue of ministers replying

in Hindi to questions asked in English. In recent times, there have been instances in the House when opposition members, especially from southern states, have protested against such a trend.

Speaker Om Birla asked Ganeshamurthi to repeat the question and the member asked the same in Tamil. A visibly peeved Goyal asked the Chair for a ruling on whether there is any rule that a question asked in a language should be replied to in the same language. "I will give the reply in Hindi... I also listened to the translation (of the question that was asked in Tamil)," the minister said.

'Omicron: Hybrid immunity effective, aborted surge'

Kochi (Kerala), Feb 09 (PTI):

Hybrid immunity is effective in preventing the spread of the Omicron, a variant of coronavirus, according to the findings of the study conducted by a team led by a Kerala doctor.

"The impact caused by Omicron in India was less compared to the crisis created in countries such as the US and the UK. Hybrid immunity present in Indian population is the one of the main reasons for low death rate compared to other countries," said clinical immunologist and rheumatologist Dr Padmanabha Shenoy who headed the re-

search. Dr Sakir Ahmed of Kalinga Institute of Medical Sciences, Bhubaneswar, was co-researcher.

"Human body gains immunity through natural infection or vaccination. Hybrid immunity is the immunity generated when a person with prior infection receives a vaccine," Dr Shenoy told reporters here.

The research included about 2,000 patients with auto-immune rheumatic diseases at the Centre for Arthritis & Rheumatism Excellence (CARE).

It was found during the initial studies that hybrid immunity generated antibody levels 30

times higher than those who have received two doses of vaccines.

While 60 per cent patients who had received two vaccine doses were able to neutralise the original Wuhan strain of virus, 90 per cent of people with hybrid immunity could neutralise the original strain. Even in Delta variant also, the figures were almost similar.

The research data was published in Lancet Rheumatology in November. But when it comes to Omicron variant, patients who had received two doses of vaccines either Covaxin or Covishield were not able to neutralise the Omicron variant.

'CPPs facing coal shortages; several industrial units may close'

New Delhi, Feb 09 (PTI):

The captive power plants in various sectors including steel and aluminium are facing coal shortages and if the situation does not improve soon, then it might lead to closure of several industrial units, creating unemployment on a large scale, INTUC National General Secretary Sanjay Kumar Singh said on Wednesday.

"The captive power plants in various sectors including steel and aluminium are facing coal shortages. The priority is being given to independent power producers (IPPs) and not captive power plants (CPPs)," the Indian National Trade Union Congress (INTUC) National General Secretary told PTI. Singh further said that "if our



Sanjay Kumar Singh

coal-bearing states, including Chhattisgarh, and then supply coal outside the states.

"We have also written to the Prime Minister and said that if coal demand of the industries operating in the coal-bearing areas are not fulfilled and instead the coal is supplied to industries outside the state, then the people may be forced to go on protest.

"So, first cater to the coal needs of the industries operating in the coal bearing states and then send the dry-fuel outside the state," he said. It is totally unjust that the industries operating in a state like Chhattisgarh are getting the coal from outside to meet their need and the coal produced in Chhattisgarh is being sent to Uttar Pradesh, he explained.

utilisation of coal is 100 per cent, then we are just getting 20 per cent... If this situation continues, then the small companies will reach a level where they will have to close down."

Singh said that the situation has worsened in the past two months and made a plea to the government to give priority for supply of coal to the industries operating in the



Polling officials check EVMs and other polling material, ahead of the first phase of UP Assembly elections, at a distribution center, in Muzaffarnagar, Wednesday.

POLL ARRANGEMENTS

Book reproduces 60 miniature Nathdwara paintings for first time

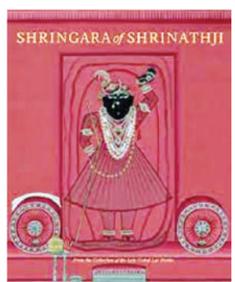
New Delhi, Feb 09 (PTI):

A new limited-edition collector's book, "Shringara of Shrinathji", catalogues 60 previously unpublished miniature paintings of the centuries-old Pushtimarg tradition. The coffee-table book, a majestic visual anthology of late Gokal Lal Mehta's family collection of miniature Nathdwara paintings, is conceptualised by design pioneer Vikram Goyal and authored by celebrated scholar Amit Ambalal. It is published by Mapiin.

"While growing up, I often heard my late grandfather wishfully romanticize how the family collection of these paintings be

published in a book for all to see. These works were very dear to him. The opportunity came when I ran into Mapiin's Bipin Shah at a dinner and we got talking. "In many ways, the book is an extension of my work in providing a contemporary perspective to India's traditional arts," said conceptualiser Goyal, who is also the eldest grandchild of late Gokal Lal Mehta.

Pushtimarg, a Vaishnava sect founded by Vallabhacharya in the 15th century, lays great stress on worship of the deity Shrinathji through the joys of life and living and devotion through kirtan (devotional poem-songs), bhog



'Shringara of Shrinathji'

(offerings of sumptuous food and beverages), shringara (offerings of adornment, through dressing and ornamentation), and decoration and painting. The artworks are from the Nathdwara school,

named after the deity in the Nathdwara temple in Rajasthan.

According to the publishers, the 60 splendid artworks reproduced for the first time in this book were executed during the dynamic stewardship of Tilakayat Govardhanlalji (1862-1934), who was a great patron of the arts.

"Documenting the high degree of skill in draughtsmanship, portraiture and in composition, exhibitions by artist Amit Ambalal accompany the exceptional, high-quality photographic reproductions of these beautiful paintings in this volume," wrote the publishers in its description of the book.

'87 % of people in TN have anti-bodies against Covid-19'

Chennai, Feb 09 (PTI):

The overall seroprevalence in Tamil Nadu among the people over and above the age of 18 has increased to 87 per cent in December 2021, the Health Department said on Wednesday. The seropositivity rate in Chennai stood at 88 per cent, the study conducted in December 2021 across the State revealed.

According to the data shared by the Health Department, the seroprevalence which was at 32 per cent in November 2020 (first sero survey) dropped to 29 per cent in April 2021

(second sero survey) and again surged to 70 per cent in August 2021 (third sero survey). "In December 2021, it grew to 87 per cent," the findings said. A 30-member team was formed into 1,076 groups which examined 32, 245 people in rural and urban areas for the study.

Accordingly, the seroprevalence among the people aged above 18 grew to 87 per cent, it said. However, the study revealed those individuals between the age of 11 and 18 and the unvaccinated had just 68 per cent of sero-prevalence.

The findings revealed that among the 27,324 people who received the vaccination shots, the sero-

prevalence was at 90 per cent (24,667 people) while 4,921 people who did not receive the vaccination, the sero-prevalence was at 69 per cent. As per the study, sero-prevalence stood at 89.5 per cent for people between the age of 18 and 44 while it was 88.6 per cent for people between the age of 45 and 59.

For those above the age of 60, the sero-prevalence stood at 84.5 per cent. For children between 10 and 18, it stood at 68.4 per cent. All the districts reported seroprevalence of over 82 per cent with Tiruvarur topping the list at 93 per cent while Tirupathur was at the bottom of table at 82 per cent, it said.

Youth trapped in mountain cleft rescued by Army teams

Palakkad(Ker), Feb 09 (PTI):

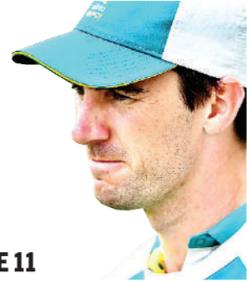
A trekker trapped in a cleft on a mountain face in Kerala's Palakkad district for nearly two days was rescued on Wednesday by Army teams, which provided him food and water and then hauled him up to safety.

After the rescue, the Army's Southern Command tweeted, "#OP_PalakkadIn a daring mission Indian Army Team from #SouthernCommand has rescued the stranded trekker, Mr Babu to safety from the dangerous cliff, across the treacherous rocky mountain face. #WeCare @adgpi."

"#OP_Palakkad In a spectacular action, highly qualified Teams of Indian Army have successfully rescued Mr Babu who slipped off a cliff & was stranded in a steep gorge for over 48 hours. The operation was coordinated by #DakshinBharatArea under the aegis of #SouthernCommand @adgpi."

After his rescue, the efforts to airlift him to a hospital also saw some drama with the Mi-17 Helicopter of the Indian Air Force, which arrived to take him, being unable to land on the mountain top, as per the visuals on news channels.

The visuals showed the chopper attempting to land on the mountain top and when that could not be done, it gained altitude and circled the mountain before coming back for a second landing attempt.



BRIEF



AICC General Secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra addresses a press conference after releasing party manifesto Unnati Vidhan Jan Ghosna Patra for the UP Assembly elections, in Lucknow, Wednesday.

Death sentence

New Delhi: The Supreme Court Wednesday commuted the death sentence, awarded to a man for raping and murdering a seven-year-old girl, to life imprisonment saying it cannot be said that there is no probability of the convict being reformed and rehabilitated. The apex court, while upholding his conviction for the offences including that of murder and rape under the Indian Penal Code and the provisions of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, said the convict shall not be entitled to premature release or remission before undergoing actual imprisonment for 30 years.

Summon

Kolkata: The Central Bureau of Investigation on Wednesday summoned Trinamool Congress MP and actor Deepak Adhikari, who is popularly known by his screen name Dev, in connection with its probe into a multi-crore cattle smuggling racket operating along the India-Bangladesh border in West Bengal, a source in the agency said.

Resign

Srinagar: Senior PDP leader Ghulam Nabi Hanjura on Wednesday resigned as the general secretary of the party but will continue as its basic member, a party leader said. Hanjura was not available for comment. The PDP leader said that Hanjura has resigned as the general secretary of the party but he will continue to be associated with the party.

Racket

Mumbai: The Railway Protection Force (RPF) has busted a 'hawala' racket at Dadar station in Mumbai and seized Rs 67.47 lakh from a person, officials said on Wednesday. Hawala denotes illegal transaction of funds by skirting the legal banking channels.

Mishap

Pathanamthitta(Ker): Three women of a family, who were on their way to attend a wedding ceremony, were killed as their car overturned and fell into a canal at Adoor in this district on Wednesday. Four others in the vehicle, including the driver, escaped with injuries and their condition was stable as of now, police said. The deceased were natives of Ayur in Kollam district, they said.

Weather
High 30 Low 18

MARKET
NIFTY 17,463.80
SENSEX 58,465.97

BULLION
GOLD 48,510
SILVER 62,421

CLOSE SHAVE

Alliance Air Mumbai-Bhuj flight flies without engine cover

DGCA launches probe

Mumbai, Feb 09 (PTI):

An Alliance Air flight from Mumbai to Bhuj, carrying 70 passengers, flew without engine cover that was later retrieved from the runway at the city airport on Wednesday, prompting aviation regulator DGCA to start a probe into the incident, according to an official.

The ATR aircraft landed safely at Bhuj in Gujarat. Alliance Air said that it has initiated a probe into the incident.

The incident happened on Wednesday morning and was brought to the notice of airport authorities by a Mumbai Air Traffic Controller (ATC). Subsequently, the Directorate General of



Civil Aviation (DGCA) started an investigation into the incident.

"Mumbai ATC informed the airport that Alliance Air ATR aircraft, operating flight 91-625 (Mumbai-Bhuj) took off without the left engine cowling (cover)," the official said.

Later, the airline's engineering team reached the site and retrieved the engine cover from the runway.

During the operation of Alliance Air flight 91-625

from Mumbai to Bhuj on February 9, the panel of the engine cowl was found on the runway post take off, Alliance Air said in a statement.

"We have taken strict note of the incident and a thorough investigation has been initiated. The findings of the same shall be shared with the regulatory authorities and we shall ensure that all required corrective actions are put in place," the government-owned airline

'Pilots weren't aware that plane's engine cover fell'

The Mumbai Air Traffic Control (ATC) had contacted the pilots of the Alliance Air flight, which flew from Mumbai to Bhuj without its engine cover on Wednesday, whether any object had fallen off the aircraft after its take-off from the airport in Maharashtra capital, an official here said. As per the preliminary reports, the pilots did not realise that the cowl (cover) of one of the engines had fallen on the runway in Mumbai as they told the ATC that everything was fine, the official said. The airport director said that as per the primary reports he has received, the pilots were not aware that a section of the engine's cowl had fallen during the take-off.

What expert says....

Officials said poor maintenance could be behind the incident. "Incidents of cowl separation usually occur post maintenance activity if latches are not secured. The crew is also expected to ensure that the engine cowl is sited before commencing the flight," news agency quoted aviation expert, Captain Amit Singh, as saying.

It also said that "we are grateful that all passengers and crew onboard the

flight safely landed and there was no damage to the aircraft due to this unfortunate incident.

'1 crore adolescents in 15-18 yrs group fully vaccinated'

New Delhi, Feb 09 (PTI):

Over one crore adolescents in the 15-18 years age group nationwide are now fully vaccinated against the novel coronavirus infection, Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya said on Wednesday.

Over 5.04 crore beneficiaries in this age group have been administered the first dose of vaccine.

"What a historic feat by Young India! Over 1 crore youngsters between 15-18 age group are now fully vaccinated against COVID-19," Mandaviya

tweeted. With the administration of more than 53.61 lakh vaccine doses in a span of 24 hours, India's COVID-19 vaccination coverage has exceeded 170.87 crore (1,70,87,06,705), according to provisional reports till 7 am.

As per the Registrar General of India (RGI), the estimated population of beneficiaries in the age group of 15-18 years is 7.4 crore for 2021-22.

Vaccination of children in the age group of 15-18 years began from January 3 across the country.

BSF recovers 4 kg RDX, IED-making items

Dropped by Pak drone in Punjab

Amritsar, Feb 09 (PTI):

The Border Security Force (BSF) on Wednesday recovered over 4 kg of RDX, a pistol and bomb-making items dropped in two packets by a drone that flew from Pakistan into an Indian farm along the Punjab border.

A spokesperson of the paramilitary force said troops fired after they heard a "buzzing sound of a suspected flying object

coming from the Pakistani side to the Indian side" around 1 am in the Panjgrain area of Gurdaspur sector.

A search was later conducted in the wheat farms of Ghaggar and Singhoke villages along the border and the BSF party recovered two yellow-coloured packets, lying about 20 m apart embedded in the wet soil, he said.

Initially, it was thought that the packets may be containing narcotics but when they were opened, about 4.7 kg RDX, a China-made pistol, two maga-

zines with 22 bullets, three electronic detonators, timer device, detonating cord (cordtex wire), splinters, cells, steel container, nylon thread, plastic pipe, packing material and Rs 1 lakh cash were recovered, he said.

An official said the recovered items are used to make RDX powered improvised explosive devices (IEDs) or bombs like the ones recently used in a Ludhiana court in December last year and the one found in the Ghazipur flower market in Delhi last month.

Shutdown in parts of Srinagar, Sopore

Srinagar, Feb 09 (PTI):

Parts of Srinagar and Sopore in Jammu and Kashmir witnessed a shutdown on Wednesday on the occasion of the ninth anniversary of Parliament attack convict Mohammad Afzal Guru's hanging in New Delhi's Tihar jail in 2013, officials said. However, there was no shutdown in other areas and the public transport was also plying normally, the officials said. Shops and other business establishments were shut in some areas in Downtown locality (old city areas) as well as in Maisuma area of the city here, and some areas of Sopore in north Kashmir's Baramulla district, they said.

CBSE second-term board exam from April 26

For classes 10, 12 in offline mode

New Delhi, Feb 09 (PTI):

The Central Board of Secondary Education will conduct second-term board examination for classes 10 and 12 in offline mode from April 26, officials said on Wednesday.

The board after discussion with various stakeholders and taking into consideration the COVID-19 situation in the country has decided to conduct second-term board exams in offline mode only, CBSE Examination Controller

UP trader attempts suicide on FB Live

Blames PM for his financial state; wife dies

Baghpat (UP), Feb 09 (PTI):

A local trader allegedly attempted suicide on Facebook Live, accusing Prime Minister Narendra Modi for his poor financial condition. His wife, who also consumed poison, died.

Superintendent of Police, Neeraj Kumar Jadaun, confirmed the incident on Wednesday and said the condition of Rajiv Tomar (40), who ran a shoe-shop, is serious. The incident took place on Tuesday when Rajiv started a Facebook Live during which he consumed poison.

After failing to stop her husband, Tomar's wife, Poonam, also consumed poison. Both of them were rushed to a private hospital where Poonam died, while the trader's condition was stated to be critical, police said. In the purported video, Rajiv held

PM Modi responsible for his financial condition.

"Modiji will be responsible for my death. If Modi ji has any shame, he will change things. I am not saying he is wrong on everything but he is not a well-wisher (hitaishi) of small traders and farmers," he said.

When Poonam tried to stop him, Tomar said, "Government to sumti nahitum hi sun lo" (the government doesn't hear us, at least you should hear).

Poonam tried to take out the poison from Tomar's mouth but after failing to do so, she also consumed it, the purported video showed. Rajiv was a resident of Subhash Nagar.

Rajiv ran a shoe shop and the lockdown in 2020 had ruined his business, his family members said.

A large number of shoes in his shop were damaged as the shop was closed for the long period, they said.

He also had taken loans which he could not pay off, they said, adding that Rajiv had two sons.

MONEY LAUNDERING CASE

ED attaches FDs of Assam Rifles officer

New Delhi, Feb 09 (PTI):

Fixed deposits worth Rs 2.22 crore of an officer of paramilitary force Assam Rifles have been attached under the anti-money laundering law as part of an alleged disproportionate assets case probe against him, the ED said on Wednesday. The officer against whom action of provisional attachment of assets under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) has been taken is second-in-command rank Rajdev Singh Yadav posted at the Assam Rifles training centre in Dimapur, Nagaland, the agency said in a

statement. The Enforcement Directorate (ED) booked the officer after taking cognisance of a July 2019 FIR and a charge sheet filed in March last year by the CBI against him. Probe found, the ED said, that Yadav while functioning as staff officer-II, establishment and drawing & disbursing officer (DDO) at the headquarters of the Assam Rifles in Shillong, "made huge cash deposits in his bank accounts and acquired huge assets, which were disproportionate to his all known sources of income". This was done during the period between 06.12.2012 and 31.07.2019, it said.



School teachers light candles to pay tribute to the army soldiers, in Jammu, Wednesday.

TRIBUTES TO MARTYRS

UP ASSEMBLY POLLS

Promises galore as parties release manifestoes ahead of polls

Lucknow, Feb 09 (PTI):

It's raining promises to woo voters ahead of the Uttar Pradesh Assembly polls, with political parties pledging free power to farmers, lakhs of jobs, smartphones and laptops if voted to power.

After the release of manifestoes by the BJP and the Samajwadi Party (SP) the previous day, the Congress came up with its poll promises on Wednesday. BSP president Mayawati has already declared that like in the past, they will not issue any manifesto and will go to people with achievements of the party's past governments. To show that its manifesto is not just a piece

of paper, the BJP has named it as its "Lok Kalyan Sankalp Patra". The SP has called its manifesto "Samajwadi Vachan Patra" while the Congress named it as "Unnati Vidhan Jan Ghosna Patra". In a bid to lend credence to poll assurances, top leaders of the parties released the manifestoes. Their poll promises have a lot of things for farmers, youth, women and other sections of the society.

The BJP in its manifesto has announced free power to farmers for irrigation, grants for borewells and tubewells to marginal farmers in addition to the minimum support price (MSP) for potato, tomato and onion.

Four Naxals arrested with explosives

Dantewada, Feb 09:

Four Naxals were arrested and explosives were seized from their possession in Dantewada district, police said on Wednesday.

A patrolling team of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) was out on a search operation near its Kamarguda and Kondasavli camps on Tuesday, when it intercepted the cadres belonging to lower ranks near Durma village, an official said.

Two tiffin bombs, weighing 3 kg each, five gelatin rods, a wireless set, a Maoist uniform, electric wire and items of daily use were recovered from the ultras, he

About the recovery

Two tiffin bombs, weighing 3 kg each, five gelatin rods, a wireless set, a Maoist uniform, electric wire and items of daily use were recovered from the ultras.

said.

During interrogation, the cadres "admitted" to their link with the outlawed CPI (Maoist), he said.

The arrested ultras were identified as Madvi Deva (36), a member of Dandakaranya Adivasi Kisan Majdoor Sangthan (DAKMS), Muchaki Nanda (35), Sodhi Lakhma (40) and Sukka Muchaki (35), who were active as mili-

Those arrested.....

The arrested ultras were identified as Madvi Deva (36), a member of Dandakaranya Adivasi Kisan Majdoor Sangthan (DAKMS), Muchaki Nanda (35), Sodhi Lakhma (40) and Sukka Muchaki (35), who were active as militia members

tia members, the official said.

The men are natives of Jagargunda area in neighbouring Sukma district, he added.

Prima facie, it seems that the Naxals had allegedly planned to plant the explosives to harm the security forces, the official said.

MAJOR ISSUE

'Centre examining comments received from states/UTs on IAS officers' deputation'

New Delhi, Feb 09 (PTI):

Union minister Jitendra Singh on Wednesday said the Centre is examining the comments received from the states/UTs on a proposal to amend rules on IAS officers' central deputation.

In a written reply in the Lok Sabha, he said, the Indian Administrative Service (Fixation of Cadre Strength) Regulations, 1955 provide for a central deputation reserve not exceeding 40 per cent of the senior duty posts of a cadre/joint cadre. However, state govern-

ments have not been sponsoring adequate number of officers for central deputation to meet the requirements of the government of India, said Singh, the minister of state for personnel.

Therefore, in order to address the above problem, comments have been sought from states/Union Territories, in terms of the provisions contained in Section 3 of All India Services Act, 1951 on a proposal to amend Rule 6(1) of IAS (Cadre) Rules, 1954, relating to the central deputation of IAS officers, the minister said.

Collector expresses annoyance over applications with stamp tickets

- Being received with additional fees
- Directs authorities to accept it on plain A-4 size paper

Central Chronicle News

Koriya, Feb 08: Collector Kuldeep Sharma held 'Janchaupal' at Collector's office in 'Manthan' room and gave patient hearing to grievances and complaints by general public. A total of 38 applications were received in this 'Janchaupal' and in view of increasing corona pandemic this was postponed for a while and was resumed here on Tuesday.



Among the applications received from general public, Collector expressed annoyance over receiving of applications with stamp tickets and taking information from one of the applicants he informed that

they have been asked to submit it with stamp ticket and even had to pay additional fee as well.

Taking cognizance of the same, Collector directed the authorities to take

the application from villages on plain simple A-4 size paper and taking prompt decision in this regard gave necessary instructions to Time-Limit meeting in-charge Joint

Collector Ankita Som that duty of two employees be ensured for the 'Janchaupal' to be held from Tuesday and who in turn would help the people not capable of writing about their grievances.

Collector holding discussions upon the grievances received through 'Janchaupal' said that people are reaching with applications related to Revenue and Forest department and on this the officers from these two respective departments should pay due attention, so that the people from far-flung areas do not have to come all the way to district headquarters for such small jobs and do not face so much of inconvenience.

One arrested with 5 'satta-pattis'



Khairagarh, Feb 09: A youth writing 'satta-patti' in Gram Hardua under Ghumka thana was taken into arrest by the Police. It was on drive by the police against such illegal activities including 'satta-patti', a youth Phulchand Yadav (42) from Gram Hardua under Ghumka Thana was arrested and total 5 no's 'satta-patti', one dot-pen, and cash of Rs 2630 was seized from his possession. A case under 4 (K) of Gambling Act was filed against him and under section 151 of IPC.

Sanjeevni Blood Donors save 200 lives

By donating blood

Rohit Verma



Omprakash Chauhan

Kharora, Feb 09: Blood donation is considered to be the highest donation possible by any human beings. In this context there is an organization named 'Sanjeevni Raktadata Sangh' which is active in the field of human service. This organization has members both from urban and rural background. Its members in between January 01, 2021 and December 31, 2021, have created a new record by donating blood to 200 people suffering from different ailments across different sections of the society.

Omprakash Chauhan, president of 'Sanjeevni Raktadata Sangh' expressing happiness on this achievement has congratulated its members and as-

ured of many more milestones to be achieved in 2022. Vice President of the organization Kapil Nishad has donated blood 12 times till date and appealed to the youths for donating bloods in order to save life. This organization has completed 18 years and is working towards creating awareness in the society for voluntary blood donation.

Total 65653.60 quintal paddy purchased

Central Chronicle News

Anwari, Feb 09: A total of 1780 farmers have made registration in Primary Agriculture Sakh Sahakari Sansthan Maryadit (PASSM) Anwari with registration No. 227 of Paddy Procurement Centre (PPC) Anwari for 2021-22.

Out of which 1739 farmers sold 65653.60 quintal paddy till 1 Dec 2021 to 7/2/2022. Out of which the Linking recovery was Rs. 3,17,15,229.70. On the last day of the paddy purchase, four farmers sold 160 'katta' of paddy and it was done in a peaceful manner.



On this occasion Samiti Manager of PPC Hanuman Singh Siha, clerk Asst. Computer operator Poonamchand Jngad Jangade, daily clerk Nankumar,

Radheshyam Jangade, Rahul Gaikwad, contractor Lekh Ram Sahu, rural folks Bandhu, Gaidlral Patel, Bhuneswar Ram Sahu, Ashwini Gaikwad were present.

Central Chronicle News

Konta / Sukma, Feb 09: Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme is proving to be a milestone in the district in the direction of providing employment to the workers.

As a result of giving top priority to the availability of employment opportunities at the local level in the district, under Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme, construction of dubri, well construction, canal lining, plantation, etc. Employment is being provided to the villagers through employment ori-

ented works.

In Sukma district, 82.5 percent of the target achieved till February in the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme financial year 2021-22 has been achieved. Against the target of 29.55 lakh man-days received from the state government, total employment of 24.40 lakh man-days has been provided in the district so far.

In which 38 thousand 057 job card holder families got employment. Not only this, 100 days employment was provided to 8127 families. In this financial year, 78 thousand 263



workers including 877 Divyangians of the district were provided employment, in which 50 percent

women got employment. Dobri construction work in Gram Panchayat Golapalli under Konta

block, land leveling and group shed construction work in Kistaram, earthen road and wire fencing work in Gram Panchayat Karigundam and Palodi is in progress.

Apart from the above mentioned works under MNREGA, works like construction of new panchayat building, construction of Anganwadi center building, construction of well, fair price shop cum warehouse etc. are in progress in the district. Through all these infrastructure development works, permanent assets will be created, which will boost development in rural areas.

One arrested with illicit liquor worth Rs 4400

Central Chronicle News

Khairagarh, Feb 09: The Police arrested an illicit liquor seller on charges of selling illicit liquor from Gram Patewa with 55 quarter bottles of country liquor and was sent to jail. As per information in this regard, a police team under leadership of TI Ghumka Shashikant Sinha as part of anti-illicit liquor drive, arrested the accused Devnath Singh alias Kashi Singh S/o Late Govardhan Singh (59) from Gram Patewa thana Ghumka with 55 quarter bottles of liquor



worth Rs 4400 and sent him to sub-jail in Rajnandgaon under section 34 (2) of Excise Act.

YC workers hold chakka-jam, fast-unto-death

- On charges of encroachment by a person on Nazul and Forest land for last 8 yrs

Central Chronicle News

Balod, Feb 09: With demand to remove encroachment upon Nazul and Forest land in Gram Jhalmala under Balod Block, YC and people from Gram Jhalmala staged chakka-jam on Balod- Jhalmala- Gotia road and after which they sit on fast-unto-death.

The Congmen continued on their fast-unto-death strike for about three hours at the protest



venue and raised slogans against Vikas Shri Shrimal who had encroached upon the land.

Those staging protest informed that on about 1.52 acre land of Nazul and Forest land in Gram Jhalmala, the city's Vikas

Shri Shrimal has done encroachment for last 8 yrs.

Seeing the hunger strike, the local administration has to intervene and after which long talks were held and it was informed that the govern-

ment land encroached upon by the above person should be sealed and due action be taken against him. After this ex-MLA Bhairavi Ram Sinha offered juice to YC workers on fast-unto-death strike and broke their fast.

Young literary poet Ashutosh bags Sahitya Bhushan Alankaran Award

Central Chronicle News

Gourela-Pendra-Marwahi, Feb 09: Young literary poet Ashutosh Anand Dubey, who has made a continuous effort to promote literature by planting the seeds of literature on the soil of the region will be honoured with Sahitya Bhushan Alankaran by Nirala Sahitya Mandal. Nirala Sahitya Mandal has been working continuously for literature for 61 years.

Saraswati Jayanti, Nirala Jayanti and Sahitya Bhushan Alankaran ceremony are organized every year on the occasion of Basant Panchami under the auspices of the organization working in the name of Nirala in the field of literature.

On the occasion of Basant Panchami, on 05 February, young literary poet Ashutosh Anand Dubey of the district was honored with the Sahitya Bhushan Alankaran Samman. It is worth mentioning that



Ashutosh has been working continuously in the field of literature and poetry for the last many years with a dedication and spirit. Ashutosh is working for the awareness of literature in the field with true spiritual practice.

He has proved his poetic talent on the forums of Kavi Sammelan in Delhi, Vrindavan, Bhopal and most of the districts of Chhattisgarh. He has also composed song on newly formed district Gaurela Pendra Marwahi.

His works are continuously published in various poetry collections and magazines. He has also recited poetry from All India Radio. The Sahitya Bhushan Alankaran Samman has been marked as a new chapter in the literature for the region. Achievement of Ashutosh created joy among the residents of the area.

M.I.C approves to various development works of KMC

Central Chronicle News

Korba, Feb 09: In the meeting held here by the Mayor in Council of the Korba Municipal Corporation (KMC), approval was given to various development works in the corporation, related to the municipal services and facilities related to the public. The meeting was chaired by Mayor Rajkishore Prasad and Commissioner Prabhakar Pandey.

Mayor Rajkishore Prasad reviewed the progress of various construction works and works related to water, electricity, sanitation etc. and gave necessary guidelines to the officers for the improvement of the works. During the meeting, repair and maintenance of machinery related to various subjects of Municipal Corporation Korba such as various vehicles and construction works of the corporation,



drainage under all 08 zones of the corporation, building, cement concrete road sewer line, repair maintenance item and works of councilor were discussed in de-

tail. Necessary decisions were taken unanimously by the Mayor in Council on proposals relating to annual rate fixing as well as works related to various other

civic services and facilities, while preparation of Micro Action Plan for the city of Korba as well as other important proposals were given a unanimous approval by the MIC.

During the meeting Mayor in Council members Santosh Rathore, Sapna Chouhan, Sunil Patel, Kriparam Sahu, Paluram Sahu, Pradeep Jaiswal, Phoolchand Sonwani, Mastul Singh Kanwar, Sunita Rathore,

Surti Kuldeep, Superintending Engineer MK Verma, Deputy Commissioner and Corporation Secretary Pawan Verma, Zone Commissioner RK Maheshwari, MN Sarkar, Vinod Shandilya, Bhushan Uravan, Tapan Tiwari, NK Nath, Akhilesh Shukla, Health Officer Dr Sanjay Tiwari, Property Officer Shridhar Banafar, Accounts Officer Anand Gupta, Rameshwar Kanwar and other officers were present.

Car dashes against tree after driver was hit by a stone

- By a mentally retarded person near Chopda Petrol Pump

Central Chronicle News

Khairagarh, Feb 09: The driver of car losing control on the steering dashed against a tree on Kawardha-Rajnandgaon road and the senior person driving it got seriously injured.



ing for some private work.

It was at the petrol pump near Sonsarar near Khairagarh, a mentally retarded person threw

stone on Ashok and which hit him on his head and he got seriously injured. On hitting the head the stone bounced towards the front screen

of the car and the screen got badly smashed with cracks in it.

After the stone hitting the main screen, the driver lost the balance on the steering and directly hit a tree nearby. Due to this hitting, the right side portion of the car got badly damaged and Ashok got seriously injured.

He was immediately rushed to Khairagarh Civil Hospital and the doctors informed that the aged person was given around 15-18 stitches on his head in order to stop bleeding and was put under observation for next 48 hours about likely head injury.

Basant Panchami celebrated in IGCC



- By Ajit Jogi Student Organization

Pandaria, Feb 09: On the occasion of Basant Panchami in Indira Gandhi Government College of the city, the students welcomed the spring season by celebrating the festival of Basant Panchami with great en-

thusiasm while offering prayers to Mother Saraswati in the college premises. Former students union president Ravi Chandravanshi, who reached the college on the request of the students, said that the arrival of spring season brings thousands of happiness like colors in our lives. He said that on this auspicious occasion, I consider

myself fortunate to have got an auspicious opportunity to worship the goddess of learning Saraswati. All the students, professors, young colleagues were greeted on the occasion of Basant Panchami by Chandrabhan Koshale, the first elected student union president of the college. Ravi Chandravanshi, Chandrabhan Koshale, Anju Yadav, Pradeep Chandravanshi, Rahul Chandravanshi, Nisha Ratre, Komal Chandrakar, Jasmine Kurre, Sampati Khunte, Jagriti Thakur, Pulita Khunte, Jyoti Lahare, Lomash Patel, Virendra Sahu, Saurav Sharma, Students including Manish Patel, Jalesh Patre and others were present.

PUBLIC NOTICE

I put forth following information for publication in favour of my client Lavkant Divedi, father Kerdamath Divedi, resident Takhatpur District Bilaspur (C.G.). It is stated that at Mauja-Belsari Bilaspur on land/house Khasra no 375/3, 375/29, Sheet No. 11, Plot No. 01, 1090 Sq. feet land/house is situated and was received by me on 02.11.2021 vide document no 1590 from my brothers Ramkant Divedi and Chandrakant Divedi after they gave up their claim on it. On this basis I got loan sanctioned from LICHL Bilaspur. Earlier original registry papers in which we three brothers Ramkant Divedi, Chandrakant Divedi and Lavkant Divedi purchased this property from Narendra Singh father Amar Singh as per sale deed dated 02.08.1986 vide document no 758, was in my possession and in January month while I visited Takhatpur Tehsil Chowk for getting photocopy of this original paper, it got lost somewhere. A certified true copy of this registry paper has been received from Registry Office Bilaspur.

The mentioned original registry paper if received by any individual, organization, government private banks, corporation or by any person who wishes in my interest, may return this document to the below mentioned address within 15 days from the publication of this public notice.

Please Take Notice
Place : Bilaspur
Date : 09.02.2022
Vishnukant Gupta
Advocate
Kapil Nagar, Sarkanda, Bilaspur
Mobile No 7583005180, 6267304045



CENTRAL Chronicle

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Caution about branding

The outrage over multinational corporations (MNCs) affiliate brands in Pakistan publishing social media posts on Kashmir spilled into the diplomatic space, with the South Korean foreign minister reportedly expressing regret after India summoned the Republic of Korea envoy to lodge 'strong displeasure'. Several brands of MNCs in Pakistan were forced by Pakistani government to post messages about 'Kashmir solidarity day' through social media accounts. Several brands of MNCs have issued apology in India for unsolicited social media posts published on social media handles outside India. The India's Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson elaborated that the South Korean foreign minister 'conveyed that they regretted the offence caused to the people and Government of India by the social media post. As Pakistan observed 'Kashmir solidarity day' last week, Union Minister Jitendra Singh said India cannot be intimidated by 'new experimentation' being done by 'our hostile neighbour' by preparing toolkits to garner support across the globe. He said if there is any pending issue between Pakistan and India it is that part of Jammu and Kashmir which continues to be under the illegal occupation of the neighbouring country. MNCs operate as global brands. Branding is part of marketing to connect with consumers. Brands engage in messaging to remain relevant in minds of potential consumers and branding process often involves virtue signalling about major causes of concern in a country. MNC brands were caught as Pakistani Govt forced local affiliates to follow a narrative about Kashmir. Because MNC brands wield such power; in some cases, more power than a small country, people quite rightly are holding them accountable because how they do business has an outside impact on people and communities.

But MNC brands across every sector of the consumer landscape are communicating their social purpose in a bid to connect with customers. Such instances, however, show that many brands eventually faced a backlash for being unacceptable to some. MNCs shall exercise caution how their brands are operated in jurisdiction of different countries. Past research studies on identity-based consumption and negativity bias suggest that the net effect will be negative even if consumers overall are evenly divided in their support or opposition. When brands match activist messaging, purpose, and values with prosocial corporate practice, they engage in authentic brand activism, but when they practice inauthentic brand activism through the practice of 'woke washing', potentially misleading consumers with their claims, they are damaging both their brand equity and potential for social change. Attitudes towards the brand decreased substantially among consumers who disagreed with a brand's stand and a brand faced public backlash because of its stand. However, when the brand subsequently withdrew its stand and apologized, the brand attitude decreased among both the proponents and opponents of the stand. Contested or controversial issues have competing values and interests, engender disagreements about assertions or actions, are politically sensitive, and arouse strong emotions. Brands try hard to create a special place in consumers' minds by standing firm with any relevant cause related to potential socio-political changes. But MNCs should understand that branding is borderless on social media and a message in one country can have consequences across borders in other countries.

China-Russia relations

As Chinese President Xi Jinping and Russian President Vladimir Putin declared there are 'no limits' to Russia-China ties, Beijing has made it increasingly clear it supports Moscow's position on Ukraine. With influence of China, Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan will visit Russia. Pakistan hopes to scuttle India's ties with Russia using money power of China. US President Joe Biden has clarified that any offensive actions in Ukrainian territory would be considered as an invasion. This is where the China factor becomes very important. The biggest question is whether China can truly serve as an economic substitute for the West, dampening some of the cost of an invasion. After all, the United States and European Union (EU) have made clear that Russia would face major Western sanctions if it invades Ukraine, along with the inevitable reduction of trade flows and perhaps even the cancellation of major projects like the Nord Stream 2 natural gas pipeline. As such, it is crucial to look at the structural nature of Russia's economic relationships with both the West and with China, both in terms of trade flows and the infrastructure that underpins them. To be sure, Russian-Chinese trade is far higher than Russia's overall trade with the United States, which was around USD 34 billion for the same time period.

However, Russia's trade with the EU totalled nearly USD 220 billion in 2021, roughly 1.5 times the size of Russian-Chinese trade. Russia serves as a major energy exporter to the EU, accounting for 26 percent of the European bloc's oil imports and 40 percent of its natural gas imports. Although many have pointed to the EU's energy dependence as a major source of leverage and a geopolitical tool for the Kremlin, the reality is that this dependence goes both ways, with energy revenues accounting for nearly 40 percent of Russia's budget revenues. And while Russia's energy exports to China have been increasing, the overall volumes are much lower in absolute terms than to the EU. Of course, Russia could decide to increase its energy exports to China at the expense of its supplies to the EU. But that would be a costly project for Moscow. It would mean building expanded infrastructure from its distant Siberian deposits to China to match the extensive oil and gas pipeline network Russia has had in place with Europe for decades an investment that would cost tens of billions of dollars. Another is the price premium for energy exports that Russia would forego, as Europe currently pays much higher prices for Russian natural gas via spot markets than China does via its 30-year contract with Gazprom, signed in 2014 just before the original conflict in Ukraine broke out. Russia ultimately needs money with export of fossil fuels and weapons, which China has but not India. India should reduce its dependence for weapons from Russia.

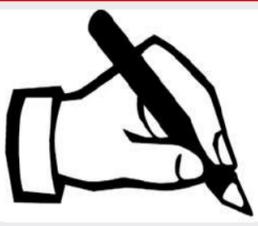
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The letters can be edited or rewritten for clarity of thoughts.

SERENITY OF STEP-WELL



A monkey sits besides a serene step-well in Mathura, Uttar Pradesh.

Another strong step towards 'Atmanirbhar Ashtalakshmi'

**G KISHAN REDDY**

As India celebrates its 75th year of independence through 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav', Prime Minister Narendra Modi has often spoken about setting a vision for India in its 100th year. The planning and the groundwork for 'Amrit Kaal' needed to start from this year and the Budget for the financial year 2022-23, while brilliantly balancing fiscal and social priorities and providing limitless possibilities to unleash innovation and animal spirits in the Indian economy, has provided the right foundation for it. Without a doubt, the 'Ashtalakshmi' states of the North Eastern Region stand to gain tremendously from the Budget 2022-23. Envisioned as India's growth engine and gateway to ASEAN, the 8 States have remained central to the government's developmental agenda for 'Atmanirbhar Bharat'. This Budget further brightens the path for growth and adds more muscle to all the developmental efforts for setting up an 'Atmanirbhar Arthyavastha' in the region. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has always had a special focus for the Northeast region and has been working on mission mode towards its development since 2014. Be it the first freight train connectivity in 75 years for Manipur, adding Arunachal Pradesh and Meghalaya to the railway map for the first time, the construction of the Bogibeel bridge - India's longest railroad bridge, the world's tallest bridge pier in Manipur (Jiribam-Imphal), the first-ever petrochemical project in the North East inaugurated in Assam, Sikkim's first

Airport or the recent inauguration of the new terminal at the international airport of Agartala, North East is charting its unprecedented course to growth and prosperity under his visionary leadership.

Budget 2022-23 pumps even more energy to this mission. Since 2014, this Government has spent more than Rs 2.65 lakh crore in the North Eastern Region to accelerate its march towards growth and development. The political will towards the development of North East Region is evinced by the fact that the budget for North Eastern Region has gone up by over 110 percent in last 7 and half years, i.e., from 36,108 crores in 2014-15 to 76,040.07 crores allocated in FY 2022-23. In one fiscal year, i.e., from last year's 68,020.24 crores, the budgetary allocations have risen by 12 percent to 76,040.07 crores. Continuing on the impetus of bridging the infrastructure gap, more than 15 percent of this allocation has been towards Highways, Information ways, Railways and Airways (the HIRA model of development that the Prime Minister passionately espouses). In fact, for strengthening the rail transport system alone, Rs 39,000 crore have been spent by railways between 2014 and 2021 in the Northeast. The recent Budget's launch of a new scheme for the Northeast, the Prime Minister's Development Initiative for North-East (PM-DevINE), with an initial allocation of Rs 1,500 crore is another historic step in the rapid development journey of the Northeast. The scheme adopts a holistic approach to

wards development in the region and would cater to diverse developmental needs along with filling critical gaps aiding rapid employment generation and enhancing livelihood support in the region. Among the carefully selected initial projects of PM-DevINE, the Bamboo Link Road in Mizoram and the promotion of Scientific Organic Agriculture harness the natural assets of the region for developmental goals, while, the dedicated services for the Management of Paediatric and Adult Haematolympoid Cancers in Guwahati and the North East Centre For Technology Application and Reach (NECTAR) Livelihood Improvement Projects go a long way towards the enhancing welfare of the people of the Northeast.

Along with the much-needed impetus on the green economy in this Budget, the Parvatamala Ropeway development plan has the potential of becoming the next mass transportation revolution which is both environmentally friendly and more amenable to the difficult topography of the Northeast. This is yet another avenue for the North East region to generate new employment opportunities. The North Eastern States hold immense strategic value, both from the security and economic point of view for India. With over 5,182 kilometers of the international border, they are the focal point of the Government's Act East policy. The recent Budget's announcement of Vibrant Villages scheme will take development and connectivity to villages at the frontiers along the country's borders including in the Northeast and offer equal opportunities for their development and growth as in the mainland villages. In his address, President Ram Nath Kovind had said his government is committed to ensuring better infrastructure and connectivity in the northeastern states. Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced that it will fund infrastructure, in the spirit of PM GatiShakti, and social development projects

based on felt needs of the northeast. This will enable livelihood activities for youth and women, filling the gaps in various sectors. She said it will not be a substitute for existing Central or State schemes. While the Central Ministries may also pose their candidate projects, priority will be given to those posed by the States. An initial allocation of Rs 1,500 crore will be made.

Union law and justice minister Kiren Rijju, who hails from Arunachal Pradesh, said the new initiative will be implemented through the Northeast Council. Union Minister Sarbananda Sonowal who hails from Assam, hailed the Union Budget as "pro-development and inclusive" and said it will immensely contribute towards the growth of India's economy. He said the people of the Northeast are happy for the sustained focus received under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and it has already made significant progress which is only going to continue. Sonowal thanked the Prime Minister for his focussed attention for the development of the Northeast. The budget will lead to generation of employment opportunities in the country, he said. He said under the leadership of Prime Minister Modi, the Finance Minister had presented an all-inclusive budget which touched a wide spectrum of sectors. Sonowal said the hallmark of the budget is that nearly every announcement or initiative reflected in the budget has a strong bearing on people's welfare. The Prime Minister has rightly given the epithet to the 8 North Eastern States as 'Ashtalakshmi' of India, for their immense inherent potential and their indispensability in India's growth story of brighter future for its billion plus population. It is time for all of us to make most of this progressive and positive Budget 2022-23 and ensure giant leaps in the growth and prosperity of the North East Region.

(G Kishan Reddy is Union Minister of Development of Northeastern Region, Tourism and Culture.)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

New Zealand exception

In a country where a top profile leader, holding a Constitutional post meant to represent the whole population, can scandalously announce that "criminals can be identified by their dress", thereby demonizing a large section of Indians who are as indigenous to India as the die-hard saffronites; there lies hardly any surprise that hijab-clad girls are currently being forced to stay out of their classes in various colleges of Karnataka. Indeed what a "crime" these girls have committed by wearing dresses of their own choice or culture in their own country. In contrast New Zealand Prime minister Jacinda Ardern ensures promotion of a dress associated with people who are basically settlers in New Zealand. When sporting of hijab is being prohibited discouraged or frowned upon by India and many non-Islamic countries around the world, New Zealand has proved itself as a bright exception in this regard and through the decision of inducting the hijab as part of its police uniform, it has shown to the world what the essence of democracy is all about. Far from trying to kill diversity so as to establish a homogeneous way of life in the society which is actually nothing but crude desire of ensuring cultural dominance of majority or "mainstream" be it through language race or religion; an ideal democracy strives to literally accord equal status to each and every linguistic religious cultural groups residing within the country respecting their ethos sentiments sensitivities attire to dietary habits. India, under the ever increasing grasp of forces practicing the parochial imperialist philosophy in a democratic country by making a mockery of diversities, and all other believers of majoritarian mindset around the world should learn from New Zealand and Jacinda Ardern what respect towards diversity and sentiment of minorities are all about. India should learn to choose its leaders and role models instead of remaining in awe of closed-minded orthodox nations.

Kajal Chatterjee, Kolkata

Losing forests

India is fast losing its forests cover. The Global Forest Watch, which is an open-source web application to monitor global forests in real-time, says that India has lost 354-kilo hectares of tree cover over the last two decades. Given that millions in rural India depend on forests for their livelihood, there is a need for regular monitoring to ensure a balance between the development and conservation of forests. In this context, satellite data and analysis help in the fight against deforestation. You cannot stop deforestation if you cannot 'see'. Though forest guards play a critical role in the fight against deforestation, it is expensive and time-consuming for monitoring extensive areas, let alone stop deforestation on time. Satellites, on the other hand, are a more effective tool for deforestation as they image vast areas of forests in a short time. For example, the earth scanner can capture an area of up to 40,000 sq. km with wide-swath imagery in a single pass, making it ideal for monitoring extensive forest areas.

Ranganathan, via email



WHAT THEY TWEET!



Commander Vikram@w_karve
#Education #Food Basic Cooking must be introduced as a compulsory subject in Class 10 for Board Exams. Passing Cooking Practicals should be mandatory and Marks for Practical Exam should be counted for final grade. Advanced Cooking can be optional subject for Class 12 Board Exam.

Shefali Merchant@Merc
I think you are talking about me. I am just expressing an opinion. Home schooling is probably a great idea in theory, like Communism, but there may be practical challenges in making it mainstream. It can work if parents are aware, informed & committed. I think not all parents are.

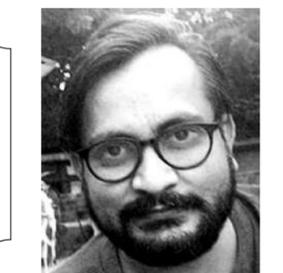


Mitalee@mitaleechatter
One should devote a thesis on this. Businesses have had one office covering Bihar, Bengal, Odisha and... Sikkim, etc. Well I say, etc, etc, because that's how politicians, corporates & everyone else seem to regard the region. The less they know the less they want to know!!

Siddharth Bakaria@Siddbakaria
Not Switzerland but Gulmarg of India.



Happy@Happymon
- At the WTO, India has 8 officers, while China is believed to house a staff of 1,000. - India's Permanent Mission at the UN has 14 officers, while its Chinese counterpart has 12 separate divisions, with many more officers serving in each of them.



Anurag Shukla@Anuraag
While there are many parties that might accrue political gain from this whole #HijabRow, the only losers in this whole debate are going to be women. This competitive communalism is going to reverse the gains (in gender equality) made in the last few decades.

Nirupama@NMenonRao
One of my lasting memories is a trip to a Chinese village in 1990, accompanying the then Deputy Prime Minister Devi Lal, and of a group of kindergarten children greeting him with the song by Lataji&Mukesh: 'Ichak dana Beechak dana'. Their lilting, innocent voices echo in my mind.

GATEWAY OF KASHI VISHWANATH CORRIDOR



The Gateway of Kashi Vishwanath corridor at Lalita Ghat, in Varanasi, Wednesday.

Single judge refers case K'taka HC CJ citing constitutional questions

Bengaluru, Feb 09 (PTI):

The single judge of the Karnataka High Court hearing the case related to the Hijab ban in school-college campuses referred the matter to Chief Justice Ritu Raj Awasthi on Wednesday with a view that he may decide on constituting a larger bench to look into it, as the state cabinet, which met earlier before the HC order came in, decided to await the verdict before taking any decision on the issue which has snowballed into a major row.

Calm prevailed today in the educational institutions which witnessed tense moments over the

Hijab row earlier, as the state government had on Tuesday ordered closure of all high schools and colleges in the state for three days. Most of them returned to the online mode of teaching, sources said. Primary schools functioned as usual across the state without any interruption.

Justice Krishna S Dixit who was hearing since Tuesday a batch of petitions against Hijab ban in classrooms filed by Muslim students from Udupi district, maintained that these matters give rise to certain constitutional questions of seminal importance in view of certain aspects of personal law.

"In view of the enormity of questions of importance which were debated, the court is of the considered opinion that the Chief Justice should decide if a larger bench can be constituted in the subject matter," Justice Dixit said.

The bench was also of the view that the interim prayers should also be placed before larger bench that may be constituted by Chief Justice Awasthi exercising his discretion, Justice Dixit noted in the order.

The petitions were filed by some Muslim girls studying in Government Pre-University colleges in Udupi district against a ban on their entry into classrooms with their hi-

jabs on.

The Karnataka cabinet, which met on Wednesday morning before the High Court order came in, decided to wait for its verdict on the 'hijab' row, before taking any further decision on the matter, which has snowballed into a major controversy.

"We (at the cabinet) discussed the Hijab row, but as the High Court is hearing the matter, we felt it is not appropriate for the cabinet to take any further decisions on the issue today. It was decided to wait for the court's verdict before taking any decision," Law and Parliamentary Affairs Minister J C Madhuswamy said.

Instagram restores page of Chinar Corps; Facebook in process

Srinagar, Feb 09 (PTI):

After blocking for over a week, social media giant Instagram restored the handle of Chinar Corps, the Indian Army's strategically located formation in the Kashmir valley, while Facebook has assured a timely solution, officials said here on Wednesday.

As the issue of Instagram and Facebook taking off the pages was highlighted, the social media website got in touch with the officials at the Kashmir-based XV Corps, popularly known as Chinar Corps, following which the Instagram page, having around four lakh followers, was restored this morning. The company had objected to some of the posts, alleging that they were against the rules laid down.

Question in Tamil, reply in Hindi

Heated exchanges in Lok Sabha between Oppn, treasury benches

New Delhi, Feb 09 (PTI):

A question asked in Tamil triggered heated exchanges in Lok Sabha on Wednesday between the Opposition and Treasury benches that spilled over to the issue of ministers giving replies in Hindi.

It all started during Question Hour, with DMK member A Ganeshamurthi asking a supplementary question about FDI inflow in Tamil and Union minister Piyush Goyal saying that he missed the first part in Tamil and wanted to know which project was he referring to.

"If I ask a question in English, then the ministers should respond in English



Marumalarchi Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (MDMK) MP A. Ganeshamurthi speaks in the Lok Sabha during ongoing Budget Session of Parliament, in New Delhi, Wednesday.

only... a member asks a question in Tamil and the minister replies in Hindi," the member remarked and Goyal responded by saying that he can answer in

Hindi while the translation is available for the member. Some opposition members shouted as they also apparently sought to raise the issue of ministers replying

in Hindi to questions asked in English. In recent times, there have been instances in the House when opposition members, especially from southern states, have protested against such a trend.

Speaker Om Birla asked Ganeshamurthi to repeat the question and the member asked the same in Tamil. A visibly peeved Goyal asked the Chair for a ruling on whether there is any rule that a question asked in a language should be replied to in the same language. "I will give the reply in Hindi... I also listened to the translation (of the question that was asked in Tamil)," the minister said.

'Omicron: Hybrid immunity effective, aborted surge'

Kochi (Kerala), Feb 09 (PTI):

Hybrid immunity is effective in preventing the spread of the Omicron, a variant of coronavirus, according to the findings of the study conducted by a team led by a Kerala doctor.

"The impact caused by Omicron in India was less compared to the crisis created in countries such as the US and the UK. Hybrid immunity present in Indian population is the one of the main reasons for low death rate compared to other countries," said clinical immunologist and rheumatologist Dr Padmanabha Shenoy who headed the re-

search. Dr Sakir Ahmed of Kalinga Institute of Medical Sciences, Bhubaneswar, was co-researcher.

"Human body gains immunity through natural infection or vaccination. Hybrid immunity is the immunity generated when a person with prior infection receives a vaccine," Dr Shenoy told reporters here.

The research included about 2,000 patients with auto-immune rheumatic diseases at the Centre for Arthritis & Rheumatism Excellence (CARE).

It was found during the initial studies that hybrid immunity generated antibody levels 30

times higher than those who have received two doses of vaccines.

While 60 per cent patients who had received two vaccine doses were able to neutralise the original Wuhan strain of virus, 90 per cent of people with hybrid immunity could neutralise the original strain. Even in Delta variant also, the figures were almost similar.

The research data was published in Lancet Rheumatology in November. But when it comes to Omicron variant, patients who had received two doses of vaccines either Covaxin or Covishield were not able to neutralise the Omicron variant.

'CPPs facing coal shortages; several industrial units may close'

New Delhi, Feb 09 (PTI):

The captive power plants in various sectors including steel and aluminium are facing coal shortages and if the situation does not improve soon, then it might lead to closure of several industrial units, creating unemployment on a large scale, INTUC National General Secretary Sanjay Kumar Singh said on Wednesday.

"The captive power plants in various sectors including steel and aluminium are facing coal shortages. The priority is being given to independent power producers (IPPs) and not captive power plants (CPPs)," the Indian National Trade Union Congress (INTUC) National General Secretary told PTI. Singh further said that "if our



Sanjay Kumar Singh

coal-bearing states, including Chhattisgarh, and then supply coal outside the states.

"We have also written to the Prime Minister and said that if coal demand of the industries operating in the coal-bearing areas are not fulfilled and instead the coal is supplied to industries outside the state, then the people may be forced to go on protest.

"So, first cater to the coal needs of the industries operating in the coal bearing states and then send the dry-fuel outside the state," he said. It is totally unjust that the industries operating in a state like Chhattisgarh are getting the coal from outside to meet their need and the coal produced in Chhattisgarh is being sent to Uttar Pradesh, he explained.

utilisation of coal is 100 per cent, then we are just getting 20 per cent... If this situation continues, then the small companies will reach a level where they will have to close down."

Singh said that the situation has worsened in the past two months and made a plea to the government to give priority for supply of coal to the industries operating in the

POLL ARRANGEMENTS



Polling officials check EVMs and other polling material, ahead of the first phase of UP Assembly elections, at a distribution center, in Muzaffarnagar, Wednesday.

Youth trapped in mountain cleft rescued by Army teams

Palakkad(Ker), Feb 09 (PTI):

A trekker trapped in a cleft on a mountain face in Kerala's Palakkad district for nearly two days was rescued on Wednesday by Army teams, which provided him food and water and then hauled him up to safety.

After the rescue, the Army's Southern Command tweeted, "#OP_PalakkadIn a daring mission Indian Army Team from #SouthernCommand has rescued the stranded trekker, Mr Babu to safety from the dangerous cliff, across the treacherous rocky mountain face. #WeCare @adgpi."

"#OP_Palakkad In a spectacular action, highly qualified Teams of Indian Army have successfully rescued Mr Babu who slipped off a cliff & was stranded in a steep gorge for over 48 hours. The operation was coordinated by #DakshinBharatArea under the aegis of #SouthernCommand @adgpi."

After his rescue, the efforts to airlift him to a hospital also saw some drama with the Mi-17 Helicopter of the Indian Air Force, which arrived to take him, being unable to land on the mountain top, as per the visuals on news channels.

The visuals showed the chopper attempting to land on the mountain top and when that could not be done, it gained altitude and circled the mountain before coming back for a second landing attempt.

Book reproduces 60 miniature Nathdwara paintings for first time

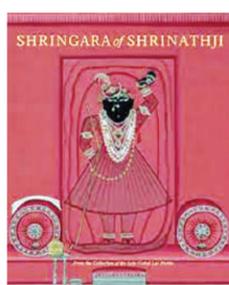
New Delhi, Feb 09 (PTI):

A new limited-edition collector's book, "Shringara of Shrinathji", catalogues 60 previously unpublished miniature paintings of the centuries-old Pushtimarg tradition. The coffee-table book, a majestic visual anthology of late Gokal Lal Mehta's family collection of miniature Nathdwara paintings, is conceptualised by design pioneer Vikram Goyal and authored by celebrated scholar Amit Ambalal. It is published by Mapin.

"While growing up, I often heard my late grandfather wishfully romanticize how the family collection of these paintings be

published in a book for all to see. These works were very dear to him. The opportunity came when I ran into Mapin's Bipin Shah at a dinner and we got talking. "In many ways, the book is an extension of my work in providing a contemporary perspective to India's traditional arts," said conceptualiser Goyal, who is also the eldest grandchild of late Gokal Lal Mehta.

Pushtimarg, a Vaishnava sect founded by Vallabhacharya in the 15th century, lays great stress on worship of the deity Shrinathji through the joys of life and living and devotion through kirtan (devotional poem-songs), bhog



'Shringara of Shrinathji'

(offerings of sumptuous food and beverages), shringara (offerings of adornment, through dressing and ornamentation), and decoration and painting. The artworks are from the Nathdwara school,

named after the deity in the Nathdwara temple in Rajasthan.

According to the publishers, the 60 splendid artworks reproduced for the first time in this book were executed during the dynamic stewardship of Tilakayat Govardhanlalji (1862-1934), who was a great patron of the arts.

"Documenting the high degree of skill in draughtsmanship, portraiture and in composition, exhibitions by artist Amit Ambalal accompany the exceptional, high-quality photographic reproductions of these beautiful paintings in this volume," wrote the publishers in its description of the book.

Chennai, Feb 09 (PTI):

The overall sero-prevalence in Tamil Nadu among the people over and above the age of 18 has increased to 87 per cent in December 2021, the Health Department said on Wednesday. The sero-positivity rate in Chennai stood at 88 per cent, the study conducted in December 2021 across the State revealed.

According to the data shared by the Health Department, the sero-prevalence which was at 32 per cent in November 2020 (first sero survey) dropped to 29 per cent in April 2021

(second sero survey) and again surged to 70 per cent in August 2021 (third sero survey). "In December 2021, it grew to 87 per cent," the findings said. A 30-member team was formed into 1,076 groups which examined 32, 245 people in rural and urban areas for the study.

Accordingly, the sero-prevalence among the people aged above 18 grew to 87 per cent, it said. However, the study revealed those individuals between the age of 11 and 18 and the unvaccinated had just 68 per cent of sero-prevalence.

The findings revealed that among the 27,324 people who received the vaccination shots, the sero-

prevalence was at 90 per cent (24,667 people) while 4,921 people who did not receive the vaccination, the sero-prevalence was at 69 per cent. As per the study, sero-prevalence stood at 89.5 per cent for people between the age of 18 and 44 while it was 88.6 per cent for people between the age of 45 and 59.

For those above the age of 60, the sero-prevalence stood at 84.5 per cent. For children between 10 and 18, it stood at 68.4 per cent. All the districts reported sero-prevalence of over 82 per cent with Tiruvarur topping the list at 93 per cent while Tirupathur was at the bottom of table at 82 per cent, it said.