



BRIEF



Maharashtra Governor Bhagat Singh Koshiyari along with Mumbai Mayor Kishori Pednekar, pays tribute to Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj on his birth anniversary, in Mumbai, Saturday.

Electrocuted

Ghazabad: A lineman was electrocuted in a village here while repairing a fault in an 11,000 kilowatt power cable, police said on Saturday. Lineman Salim (40) of Kherapur village was charred to death on a pole in Manduli village of Muradnagar on Thursday evening, Superintendent of Police (rural) Iraj Raja said. Family members of the victim later blocked traffic on the Eastern Peripheral highway, demanding strict action against those responsible for switching on the line during a shutdown.

Mishap

Ambala: A 21-year-old teacher was killed while three others, including two students, were injured in an accident during a Ferris wheel ride at an amusement park here on Saturday, police said. A case of negligence has been registered against the owner of the amusement park, they said. Of the three injured, one was a teacher and the remaining two were girl students. They were rushed to MM Medical Hospital at Mullana.

Tributes

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday paid tributes to Tamil scholar U V Swaminatha Iyer on his birth anniversary, saying he popularised works from the Sangam era and helped conserve precious heritage. "Remembering 'Tamil Thatha' U. Ve. Swaminatha Iyer on his birth anniversary. "Admired for his contribution to Tamil culture and language, he popularised works from the Sangam era and helped conserve precious heritage," Modi said in a tweet.

Shot at

Imphal: A National People's Party (NPP) candidate's father has been shot at by unidentified people in Manipur's Imphal East district, Deputy Chief Minister Yumnam Joykumar Singh said on Saturday. The incident took place at the gates of the residence of the party's Andro candidate L Sanjoy Singh when he, his father and some supporters were having an election-related discussion on Friday, he said.

Fire

Madhubani: A fire broke out in an empty coach of a stationary train at Madhubani railway station in Bihar on Saturday, a Railway statement said. No casualty was reported in the blaze that erupted in the empty Swantantra Senani Superfast Express at 9.13 AM. It was doused by 9.50 AM, the statement issued by East Central Railway CPRO Virendra Kumar said.

Weather
High 29 Low 17

Two Army men, terrorist killed in encounter

In J-K's Shopian Srinagar, Feb 19 (PTI):

Two Army soldiers and an LeT terrorist were killed in an encounter in south Kashmir's volatile Shopian district, a senior police official said here on Saturday. The encounter took place after a joint search operation was launched Friday night in Chermarg in Zainpora of Shopian based on a specific intelligence input of the police about the presence of a terrorist there. Inspector General of Police (Kashmir Range) Vijay Kumar said. The security personnel involved in the search operation, following the standard operating procedure, closed in on a cluster of houses and started moving out civilians. When the search team reached the house of Gowhar Ahmed



Armed security personnel stand at guard, in Srinagar, Saturday.

Bhat, he intentionally misled them and denied providing shelter to any terrorist. As Bhat was being questioned, a terrorist opened fire on the search

team from inside the house, causing grievous injuries to two Army personnel. In the ensuing encounter, Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) terrorist Abdul

Qayoom Dar, a resident of Laroo Kakpora in Pulwama, was neutralised and arms and ammunition, including one AK rifle and a pistol, were recovered.

POLL CODE VIOLATION State CEO orders FIR against Kejriwal

Amritsar, Feb 19:

A day before Punjab goes to assembly polls, the state's chief electoral officer (CEO) Saturday directed the District Election Officer-cum-District Commissioner of Mohali and the SSP to register an FIR against Aam Aadmi Party chief Arvind Kejriwal and his party for violating the Model Code of Conduct and for "making false and frivolous allegations against other political parties." The direction was given on the complaint of Arshdeep Singh Kler, vice-president and spokesman of Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD). The complainant raised objection to a video uploaded on social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter by AAP Punjab. He alleged that the video maligned the image of SAD



and other political parties in the eyes of the general public. The video in question is a song "es vaar jhaadu challooga" which shows the photographs of Chief Minister Charanjit Singh Channi, Captain Amarinder Singh and Sukhbir Singh Badal and uses derogatory words for them. Speaking to media, Kler said AAP had been putting up such videos on social media pages earlier too by getting some other videos approved from the EC. "This is the third time that it has happened that some other video has been put up which is not the one cleared by EC," he said.

Kumar Vishwas gets 'Y' category security

New Delhi, Feb 19 (PTI):

The Centre on Saturday decided to give 'Y' category security to former leader of Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) Kumar Vishwas, official sources said. The central government had reviewed the security of Vishwas and the threat perception based on intelligence inputs in the wake of his allegations against AAP convenor and Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal. After the review, it was decided to give Vishwas 'Y' category security through the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), the sources said. Under the 'Y' category security, Vishwas will be protected by four personal security officers round the clock. Vishwas had accused Kejriwal of supporting separatists during the high-voltage campaign for the assembly elections in Punjab, but the AAP chief has dismissed the allegations.

'Garbage-filled lands will be green zones soon'

Indore, Feb 19 (PTI):

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday said the government is making efforts to free thousands of acres of land in the country's urban areas from piles of garbage, which was being dumped there for decades, and convert these places into green zones in the next couple of years. He said the garbage disposal capacity of the urban areas in the country has increased by four times since 2014. Barring for the use of bio-fuels to reduce India's dependence on other countries for petroleum products, he said that ethanol blending in petrol, which used to be only about two per cent eight years back, has now grown to around eight per cent. Modi was speaking after virtually inaugurating the Rs 150



Prime Minister Narendra Modi addresses a virtual conference for the inauguration of the municipal solid waste based Gobardhan plant in Indore, in New Delhi.

crore 550-tonne capacity 'gobar-dhan' Bio-CNG plant, which is based on the concept of waste-to-wealth innovation, in Indore city of Madhya Pradesh. "Lakhs of tonnes of garbage stood on thousands of acres of land for decades in cities across the country, which is a major

reason for the spread of diseases as it caused air and water pollution," Modi said. Therefore, in the second phase of the Swachh Bharat Mission, the government is making efforts to free such lands of the piles of garbage, he said. "The aim is that our cities should get rid of these piles of garbage in

the coming two-three years and such places can be converted into green zones. The state governments are being provided all possible help to achieve this aim," he said. Modi said the material recovery facilities are being developed in more than 1,600 civic bodies to get rid of single-use plastic. "Our efforts are on to develop such arrangements in every city of the country to give a boost to circular economy," he added. The prime minister said that cleanliness boosts tourism as every city of the country has historical and religious places. "If cities are clean, people from other places will prefer to visit. Cleanliness boosts tourism and it kick-starts a new economy," he said, adding that people visit Indore only to see the arrangements done for the purpose of cleanliness.

All 117 seats in Punjab, 59 in UP to go to polls today

New Delhi, Feb 19 (PTI):

All 117 Assembly seats in Punjab and 59 in Uttar Pradesh will go to the polls on Sunday, with the two states witnessing multi-cornered contests.

Punjab is currently ruled by the Congress and the BJP is in power in Uttar Pradesh.

In Uttar Pradesh, elections are being held in seven phases, the third of which will be held on Sunday.

Polling in Punjab will be held from 8 am to 6 pm. In Uttar Pradesh, the polling will take place between 7 am and 6 pm, according to the election authorities. The counting will take



An election official carrying polling materials waits to board a bus to a polling booth, on the eve of Punjab Assembly elections, at Polo Ground in Amritsar, Saturday.

place on March 10. Campaigning for the Sunday polls had ended on Friday, with senior leaders of the parties making a final effort to woo voters.

In Punjab, over 2.14 crore voters will decide the fate of 1,304 candidates, including 93 women. Punjab is witnessing a multi-cornered contest

among the Congress, AAP, SAD-BSP, BJP-PLC-SAD (Sanyukt) and the Sanyukt Samaj Morcha, a political front of various farmer bodies. The ruling Congress has come under severe attack from its political opponents over various issues, including the drug menace and corruption. The Congress is banking on decisions like reduction in electricity tariff and fuel prices. The decisions were taken during current CM Charanjit Singh Channi's 111-day tenure.

The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), which has emerged as a major contender, is eyeing to wrest power while projecting the Delhi model of governance.

Assam govt reverses renaming of Kamakhya temple road

Guwahati, Feb 19 (PTI):

The Assam government, which had announced that roads would be renamed to reflect the cultural ethos of the state, withdrew its decision to name a new road after Swami Muktananda Saraswati here in the face of public outcry against it. It had proposed to name a new alternate road leading to the Kamakhya temple atop Nilachal hill in the city after the monk, which had led to the general people taking to the social media to express their opposition to it. Most of

the people claimed that the person after whom the road is being named had no connection with Assam or its people. Reverting the decision, state Housing and Urban Affairs Department Minister Ashok Singhal wrote on Twitter on Friday: The naming of the alternate road to Kamakhya Dham through Pandu Ghat as Swami Muktananda Saraswati Path' has been withdrawn with immediate effect owing to public objections. We respect public opinions! Singhal added. A public notice issued by the

Commissioner of Guwahati Municipal Corporation and published in newspapers on February 14 had said that the residents of the road have "prayed" for naming it as Swami Muktananda Saraswati Road. It had sought objection, if any, from the public in this regard within 15 days of publication of the notice. National award winning film critic and filmmaker Utpal Borpujari, who had questioned the initial proposal, appreciated the government's decision to withdraw the new name.

'Guj blast verdict is testimony to hard work, team spirit of investigators'

Ahmedabad, Feb 19 (PTI):

The "historic" judgement in the 2008 Ahmedabad serial blasts case is a testimony to the hard work and the team spirit of investigators who painstakingly gathered evidence by busting separate modules and arresting accused from various states in a short time, senior police officials who probed the case said on Saturday. A special court on Friday sentenced to death 38 members of terror outfit Indian Mujahideen (IM) for the blasts that killed 56

Kin of convicts question judgment

The kin of the two of the people convicted in the 2008 Ahmedabad serial bomb blasts case have questioned the timing of the court judgment, expressing apprehensions that it may be politically motivated. A special court on Friday handed down the death penalty to 38 people and sentenced 11 others to life imprisonment for the 21 blasts that took place in a span of 70 minutes, killing 56 and injuring over 200. Five residents of Azamgarh have been sentenced to death while one has been given life imprisonment. Of these, two hail from Sanjarpur, one from Binapura village while three are from other places. Family members of those convicted alleged that an attempt has been made by the BJP to polarise the UP Assembly elections and questioned the timing of the judgment.

people and injured over 200. It also gave the life term to another 11 IM convicts in the case. The verdict goes down in the

Indian judicial history as the first such ruling wherein the maximum number of death sentences were handed down

by a court at one go. The investigation was handed over to the crime branch, which was at that time headed by Ashish Bhatia, who is now Gujarat DGP, while Abhay Chudasama, the then deputy commissioner of police (crime), also played a crucial role in the probe. According to officers who were part of the probe, detecting a crime that was committed with proper planning, involving different modules working separately for a common cause, was a challenging task.

Youth held for stealing valuables from wedding venue

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Feb 19: Police have arrested a 22-year-old youth on charges of committing theft at a wedding venue. The accused had stolen jewellery and cash worth Rs 1.5 lakh from a room in Anand Mangalam Resort, Pulgaon. Police got clues of the suspect in CCTV footage after which he was arrested within a few hours.

ASP (City) Sanjay Dhruv informed that one Anjani Kumar Rao of Raigarh had lodged a complaint at Pulgaon Police Station regarding theft of the belongings of his wife. The victims were staying at Anand Mangalam



Resort to attend the marriage of his acquaintance Naman Bhatt. Rao's wife was sleeping in Room Number 05 and in the meanwhile, some unidentified thief burgled a ladies purse from the room in which cash and

jewellery were kept. On his complaint, a case was lodged under sections 457, 380 of IPC.

Taking the matter into serious cognizance, SSP Badri Narayan Meena gave directions to SHO of Pulgaon Police Station

after which a special team was formed to investigate the matter. The team examined the CCTV Footage and a suspect was seen in it. Police team immediately started searching for the suspect and soon a local was rounded up. Initially he tried to mislead the cops but during sustained interrogation, he confessed to have committed the crime.

The accused Sourabh Sharma (22) son of Surendra Sharma a resident of Kayasthpara, Pulgaon disclosed that he also attended that marriage. While moving across the veranda, he found that a lady was sleeping in a room and her

purse was lying on the bed. Taking advantage of the situation, he lifted the purse and escaped. He took out the valuables and cash and threw the purse in the toilet. Police have recovered gold necklace, ear rings, silver ornaments and cash totaling Rs 1.5 lakh from the possession of the accused. He has been booked under the provisions mentioned in section 457, 380 of IPC.

Sub Inspector Duleshwar Chandravanshi, Head Constable Santosh Mishra, Shiv Tiwari, Constables Love Pandey, Shobhit Sinha and Jai Singh Yadav played vital role in solving the case.

Durg Police spreads awareness about 'Abhivyakti' App

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Feb 19: Under the guidance of Senior Superintendent of Police (Durg) BN Meena and supervision of Additional Superintendent of Police (IUCAW) Meeta Pawar, wide publicity of Abhivyakti App is being done in the district. In this sequel, an awareness event was held in the Newai area on Friday.

For using this app, women have to download the Abhivyakti app from the play store on their mobile phone. Thereafter, they have to sign in with the mobile number, followed by OTP verification and KYC update.

After this, women can get police help anytime by uploading their complaint



through this app.

In this application, women and girls can register their problems online and can also see the status of redressal of their complaints online. Information about this system was also given to the women. During the programme, Newai Police Station in-charge Bharti Markam, Mahila Thana in-charge V Tirkey, IUCAW Inspector V Prabha Rao, Inspector in-charge (Cyber Cell) Gaurav Tiwari, Raksha Team Sangeeta Mishra, Risali Municipal Corporation Mayor Shashi Sinha, Speaker Keshav Banchor, Mitranis and locals of Newai area were present.

BSP executives keep official 'sim cards' switched off

Bhilai, Feb 19: On Saturday, the executives of Bhilai Steel Plant kept their official mobile numbers switched off for the entire day. They are protesting against the delay in resolution of pending issues concerned with the benefits of the executives. On the call of Officers' Association of Bhilai Steel Plant, all the executives kept their official sim cards switched off during 06:00 hrs to 11:00 hrs on Saturday. They are demanding amicable resolution of pay-anomalies. During this period, the executives conducted their work without using mobile phones. BSP-OA General Secretary Parvinder Singh said that if the SAIL management fails in immediately resolving the pay-anomaly issues, the Officers Association will launch a struggle in a phased manner.

Favourable atmosphere for BJP in Punjab: Vijay Baghel

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Feb 19: Durg Lok Sabha MP Vijay Baghel has said that he has experienced encouraging atmosphere in favour of BJP, much more than expected during the election campaign in the state of Punjab.

There has been an increased inclination towards BJP among the denizens there, shared Vijay Baghel, during his brief visit to home town after campaigning in Jalandhar Lok Sabha Constituency (of which he is incharge for Assembly Polls 2022) Punjab.

He further revealed that for the first physical rally of Prime Minister Narendra Modi scheduled last week, preparations



Vijay Baghel

were made with an estimation of about ten thousand people attending the rally but a huge crowd turned up at the rally site and attended while standing and waiting for hours prior to the rally began.

It is noteworthy that MP Vijay Baghel was given the responsibility of

campaigning in the 9 assembly seats that come under Jalandhar Lok Sabha constituency in Punjab, where voting is going to take place. Based on the encouraging response, Baghel expected that BJP would win 5 seats in Jalandhar Lok Sabha Constituency.

He explained that the way Central Government has started public welfare programs under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, people have become attracted towards BJP.

A huge crowd of common people is gathering in every BJP rally. The Bharatiya Janata Party is fighting the elections on the issue of Nawa Punjab and it has sent a positive message to the common voters.

Lime Kiln 2 of RMP 3 lit up after capital repair

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Feb 19: Lime Kiln 2 of SAIL-Bhilai Steel Plant's Refractory Materials Plant 3 was lit up after Capital Repair by Anjani Kumar, ED (Works) on February 19, 2022.

The first capital repair to have taken place in Modex unit RMP 3, the repair was completed in a period of 100 days without any accident having taken place.

As part of capital repair, about 800 Tonnes of refractory bricks were used for changing of refractory lining. The Mechanical repairs included changing of shell of kiln, replacement of skip bucket and coking door.

Job of Shell Changing and replacement of skip bucket etc were carried out under supervision of operation section of RMP 3. Among other



shops and departments associated with the capital repair were Refractory Engineering Department, Instrumentation, INCOS and Civil Engineering Department. Executive Director (Works) congratulated

RMP 3 Team for successful and timely completion of the job. Present on the occasion were SN Abidi, CGM I/c Services, RK Shrivastav, CGM (RMP), K Bhattacharya, CGM, SMS 3, Chandwani, CGM, OHP, Nandanwar,

CGM, SP3, Shri Sorte, CGM Utilities, Shri Shrivastav, CGM, EMD, Tarun Kanrar, CGM, RED, SK Ghoshal, CGM Shops, Shri Ojha, CGM, PPC, Shri Shankar, Acting CGM (Electrical), Ratan Mukherji, GM (RMP 3).

New facilities inaugurated in Hirri Mines

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Feb 19: A new Komatsu Excavator 450 was handed over to SAIL-Bhilai Steel Plant's Hirri Mines Collective by Executive Director (Mines & Rowghat) Manas Biswas during his visit to Hirri on February 18, 2022. Biswas also performed bhoomipujan for shifting existing garage to a different location.

While the new Excavator 450 will be helpful in facilitating mining operations of dolomite from Hirri Mines, the shifting of existing garage is being done to make space for new and expanded area for mining better grade of dolomite from the Mines.



Executive Director (Mines & Rowghat) Biswas was accompanied by Kailash Malhotra, GM (Mines-Commercial) during the visit. Present were Sanjay Boratwar, GM I/c

Fluxes, Somnath Singh, DGM and Assistant Mines Manager, Chatradhari, DGM (Civil) and other members of the Hirri Mines Collective including Union representatives.

Ex-Army Foundation finds place in Star Record Book

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Feb 19: Ex-Army Foundation Bhilai - Durg has succeeded in gaining entry in the Star Record Book of International by continuously organising social and religious activities for the last five years. The foundation has organised musical Ramkatha and Bhandara events continuously for the last five years (2017-2021) at the same place and date (17 Dec to 26 Dec) every year. Entry in the record book is a matter of great pride not only for the foundation but all the ex-army and serving jawans/officers.

On Saturday, MLA Devendra Yadav in presence of Mayor Neeraj Pal



presented the certificate of this record to the office bearers of Ex-Army Foundation. Foundation's Bhilai - Durg Unit President Harpreet Bal, Vijay Kumar Singh, Dilip Kumar Bala, Pradeep Kumar, Rinku Pal, Ajan Vishwas, Sai Ram, Ali Khan, Kuldeep Rathi and others were present.

Vinod Nair selected as Referee in prime Volleyball League tournament

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Feb 19: Vinod Nair, an employee of Enforcement section of Town Services department of SAIL-Bhilai Steel Plant has brought laurels to Bhilai. He has been nominated as a Referee to conduct Prime Volleyball League being held at Hyderabad from February 05 to February 27, 2022. Nair has served as an NIS Coach and Referee in National as well as International matches.

Nair was bestowed with the 'Veer Hanuman Singh award' in 2014 by Chhattisgarh government for his contribution as an International referee. He



has officiated in the 1st and 2nd Match of Indo-Pak Men's Volleyball test Series at Visakhapatnam. He has officiated in the 2nd Common Wealth Volleyball Championship (Men) at Kolkata and at the 6th Asian Youth Girls Volleyball Championship at Thailand. He was also nominated as a Technical Official in the 13th World Men's U-21 Volleyball Championship at Visakhapatnam. Vinod Nair in his illustrious Sports career has served as a Referee, Technical officer and Coach in over 20 Volleyball championships. Bhilai collective wishes him the best for his achievements.

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Blessing ceremony organised at KH Memorial School

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Feb 19: KH Group of Schools organized a Blessing Ceremony to bid farewell to the students of class 12. This event was organised in the honour of all the students who are taking 12th board examination this year.

At the outset, teachers welcomed all the students by applying vermilion and showering flowers. Madam Vibha Jha, Principal of K H Memorial School, while motivating the students said that students will have to assess themselves. Not as a teacher but as a friend she reminded the students that exams are near. There is still time to be serious. Make a goal and focus on it.

If you want success in any work in life then hard work is needed. She added that imagine how you would feel at getting 98%. Get good marks and take admission in a good col-



lege so that you, your parents and we also feel proud.

Director Nischay Jha narrated inspirational biographies of many successful people to the students about how to be successful in life and how to touch new heights of life. Giving the example of Deer and Lion, he told the students that despite running faster than Lion, Deer loses? Because it kept looking back and wasting

time, while Lion's focus remains utmost.

He said that not everything is perfect in life, so focus on where it is not perfect. Work hard for just 2 hours a day. Instead of getting entangled in small things and wasting time, think high. He said that if you want to do something big in life, then planning will have to be done for it today. Whole life will change in the next 5 years. It depends on hard work.

Academic director Srishti Jha also gave many tips to the students to get success. She said that there is no need to fear in any way about the board examination. It is like a normal exam. Do not get discouraged and focus on your subject for 2 hours a day without any stress. Success will be on your feet.

Principal Madam Vibha Jha wished the students for their bright future



while offering them sweets and blessed them to get good marks in the examination. In the end the 12th students did a group photo with Principal Vibha Jha, Director Nischay Jha, Academic Director Srishti Jha and Class 12th teachers Monalisa Rai Choudhary, Rupesh Chaudhary, K Pooja, Saloni Jain, Bharat Manikpuri, Diljit Sidhu, TG Rao and Jigyasu Kaushal.

Shri Ram Chowk inaugurated in a devotional mood

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Feb 19: On Saturday, Shri Ram Square was inaugurated in Khursipar in a devotional mood. Eleven Maha Panditas performed Maha Aarti of Lord Shri Ram during the inauguration function. The entire traffic square was lit with 5100 earthen lamps started during this function.

The small lamps eliminated the darkness and created a heavenly atmosphere. Shri Ram Chowk of Khursipar was inaugurated on the occasion of the birthday of MLA Devendra Yadav. Public representatives and dignitaries attended the function. Mayor Neeraj Pal, Speaker Girwar Bunty Sahu, Bhilai District Congress Committee President Mukesh Chandrakar, MiC members Ekansh Banchoor, Aditya Singh, Neha Sahu, Rita Singh Gera, Malti



Thakur, Chandrashekhar Gavai, Keshav Choubey, Mannan Ghaffar Khan, Laxmipati Raju, Siju Anthony, Lal Chand Verma, Sandeep Nirankari, Saket Chandrakar, Meera Banjare, Zone Presidents Ramanand Maurya, Santosh Nath Singh alias Jalandhar, Bhupendra Yadav and Rajesh Chaudhary and other public representatives and Corporators were present. 'Mera Bhilai Mera Gaurav'

selfie point near the grand entrance on the way to Shri Ram Chowk was the center of attraction. On moving ahead, the roadside has been beautifully decorated with paintings of the life story of Lord Shri Ram. Beautification and development works have been done from the MLA fund. The entire look of Shri Ram Chowk has changed and now the entire traffic junction is now looking attractive.

Centre supplies only 2.12 lakh metric tonnes of chemical fertilizers to Chhattisgarh

Information regarding supply of 4.36 lakh metric tonnes of chemical fertilizers to Chhattisgarh is false and misleading: Choubey



Ravindra Choubey informed that Chhattisgarh Government has demanded 7.50 lakh metric tonnes of chemical fertilizers from the Government of India for the Rabi year 2021-22. However, Government of India has given approval to supply only 4.11 lakh metric tonnes of fertilizers to Chhattisgarh, which is just 55 per cent of the state's demand. The quantity of fertilizer demanded by the Chhattisgarh has already been reduced by 45

per cent by the Government of India. 4.11 lakh metric tonnes of chemical fertilizers approved by the Government of India to Chhattisgarh for the current Rabi season include 2 lakh metric tonnes Urea, 60,000 metric tonnes DAP, 50,000 metric tonnes NPK, 26,000 metric tonnes MOP and 75,000 metric tonnes SSP.

Agriculture Minister Mr. Choubey informed that against the approved quantity of 4.11 lakh metric tonnes, the Government of India has issued a plan to supply 3 lakh 46 thousand 225 metric tonnes of fertilizers to Chhattisgarh from October to February. Against the supply plan, only 2 lakh 12 thousand 162 metric tonnes of chemical fertilizers have been supplied to Chhattisgarh, which is only 52 per cent of the approved quantity for the state. He added that the in-

formation regarding providing 4.36 lakh metric tonnes of chemical fertilizers by Government of India, against the total requirement of Chhattisgarh, is false and misleading.

The Agriculture Minister also informed that in Rabi season 2021-22, even if the amount of chemical fertilizers saved in the state as on October 1, 2021, and the quantity of new supply by the Government of India are combined, the total quantity of chemical fertilizers is 3 lakh 69 thousand 817 metric tonnes, which is much less than 4 lakh 36 thousand metric tonnes of the quantity being informed by the Government of India. He said that the information regarding providing 4 lakh 36 thousand metric tonnes of fertilizers to the state of Chhattisgarh by the Government of India is completely untrue.

BJP focuses on tribal belt to strengthen Organization

Purandeswari on three-day visit to Bastar

Central Chronicle News

Raipur, Feb 19: With an eye on the tribal belt, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has started the exercise to strengthen the Organization in the Sarguja and Bastar region. After the two-day marathon meeting held in presence of the BJP Secretary in-charge of

party affairs in Chhattisgarh Nitin Nabin, in Balrampur recently, the National BJP General Secretary in-charge D Purandeswari started meeting with the party rank and file in Bastar region from Saturday onwards.

Through these two visits, the BJP had made it clear that it wants to regain the lost ground among tribals as the Congress had successfully formed government in last Legislative Assembly

polls, due to clean victory in the tribal region.

Both the central leaders have given priority on the basis of the internal input received from the various organizations in Chhattisgarh. While all the key leaders are involved in the discussion process, the party high command is seriously vying to identify fresh faces who can win favour from the tribals in the region in the run up for the next polls. According to the information received,

the BJP in-charge Purandeswari would be interacting with the party leaders at the working committee meetings in Dantewada, Kondagaon and Kanker District separately. Primary focus of the party is to corner the ruling Congress on the issue of reported irregularities in the PM Housing Scheme in Bastar. Atrocities on tribal women would also be raked up against the state government to garner support from the people.

Electronic shop owner duped of Rs 99939

Raipur, Feb 19: In a cyber fraud complained in Moudhapara police station, unidentified holder of a phone number has duped an electronic shop owner of Rs 99939 on pretext of making payment of the ordered delivery.

According to police, complainant Mahesh Prasad Rai is owner of an electric goods shop situated at Jawahar Nagar by name M/s. Jai Hind Electrical. Couple of days ago he booked an online order for some electric motors. On Thursday, holder of phone number 90511-84955 called him and intimated that his

order has been received and that he needs to make payment of Rs 59355 over Google Pay.

Not suspecting the caller, the complainant made the payment in one installment. This turned out to be major mistake as the fraud instantly siphoned Rs 99939 from his account in five installments.

Moudhapara police meanwhile have registered an offence under Section 420 IPC against the holder of the above mentioned phone number and further investigation is now underway.

Three arrested under Arms Act

Raipur: Three persons have been arrested under Arms Act from separate police station areas during last 24-hours. The first one, identified as Deepak Tandi was arrested by Sejbahar police from near local water tank after he was arrested red-handed terrorizing the resident armed with a knife. The other one, identified as Javed Saifque was arrested by Tikrapara police from Gokul Nagar locality after he was arrested red-handed terrorizing the resident armed with a knife. The final one, identified as Subhan Khan, was also arrested by Tikrapara police from near Santoshi Nagar over bridge after he was arrested red-handed terrorizing the resident armed with a knife. All three were later booked under Section 25, 27 of Arms Act by respective police stations.

Collector directs officers for promotion of national voter awareness contest

Central Chronicle News

Raipur, Feb 19: In compliance with the letter of Chief Electoral Officer Chhattisgarh Raipur, Collector Sourabh Kumar has directed the officials regarding the promotion of National Voter Awareness Competition. The Collector has written a letter to the Chief Executive Officer, District Panchayat Raipur and the Nodal Officer (SVEEP) and the Electoral Registration Officer in

this regard.

The Collector informed that the Election Commission of India, New Delhi organized a national awareness campaign on the title "My Vote is My Future - Power of One Vote" based on voter awareness for all the citizens of the country to demonstrate the importance of each vote through creativity.

This competition has been proposed by the commission from 25 January to 15 March 2022 in 5 categories including quiz, video

making, poster design, singing and slogan. Each interested participant can send his/her creativity in the above categories directly to the Election Commission of India on the e-mail id contest@eci.gov.in by the stipulated date.

The Collector has directed that BLO should be organized for wide publicity of the competition and publicity material posters should be shared in various WhatsApp groups maintained by other election officers.

CEO inspects construction works of RDA projects

Directs officials to ensure timely completion of works

Central Chronicle News

Raipur, Feb 19: Raipur Development Authority (RDA) Chief Executive Officer Abhijit Singh on Saturday inspected the construction works of various projects of Kamal Vihar and Indraprasth Raipura scheme. During the inspection, he collected information from the Engineers and Officers over the delay in the construction work. He asked them to submit a fresh proposal to ensure immediate construction of the remaining works. He directed the officials to also recover the outstanding



amount from the flat owners and added that the allotment should be cancelled if they failed to deposit the outstanding

amount despite repeated reminders.

Contactor Brajesh Goel also informed the RDA CEO Abhijit Singh about

the long pending dues against the construction works of 768 LIG flats in Sector 4 of Kamal Vihar. He said that the remaining

construction works would be completed within 3-4 months if he gets the outstanding payment from the RDA. Similar complaints were also registered by the Contactors Vinod Pandey and Tripathi of 512 LIG Flats and 128 EWS Flats which has resulted in delay in several works including Underground Drainage and Water Supply as well as Electricity Transformer.

RDA CEO also visited the Indraprasth Raipura Phase II project. RDA Superintendent Engineer Anil Gupta informed him with the problems related with land acquisition as Boundary Wall could not be constructed on time.

CEO directed Revenue Officer Mukesh Bajaj to hold talks with Tehsildar for steps towards redressal of the problem.

Chh'garh defeats Jharkhand by 8 wickets in Ranji match



Central Chronicle News

Raipur, Feb 19: Opening batsman Akhil Hervadkar scored an unbeaten half century to ensure Chhattisgarh registers eight wickets win against Jharkhand in the Ranji

the innings from 62 runs for 2 wickets, the overnight batters Akhil Hervadkar scored unbeaten 62 runs with the help of 80 balls and All rounder Ajay Mandal remained unbeaten on 37 runs from just 47 balls to ensure an 8 wickets win for Chhattisgarh.

With the above victory, Chhattisgarh consolidated the position in the tournament after registering second win against Jharkhand. Earlier in the year 2019 also, Chhattisgarh had secured 3 points from the match in the tournament whereas Jharkhand had to settle with just one point.

Trophy encounter held at Guwahati on Saturday.

After taking lead in the first innings, the Chhattisgarh team required 125 runs for the victory in the inaugural match of the Ranji Trophy match. Resuming

Chhattisgarh sees 392 COVID-19 cases, 3 deaths, 589 recoveries

Central Chronicle News

Raipur, Feb 19: Chhattisgarh on Friday reported 392 COVID-19 cases, taking its tally to 11,48,693, while three deaths in the past 24 hours increased the toll to 14,021, an official said.

The state's positivity rate, or cases detected per 100 tests, was 1.33 per cent as on Friday, he said.

The number of recoveries reached 11,30,816 after 49 people were discharged from hospitals and 540 completed home isolation during the day, leaving the state with an active tally of

3,856, he said.

"Raipur recorded 41 cases, followed by Dhamtari 37, Balrampur 34, Bilaspur 31, Korba 30, Durg 27, Kanker 20 and Raigarh 11, among other districts. With 29,450 samples examined during the day, the number of COVID-19 tests in the state went up to 1,68,78,540," the official said.

Chhattisgarh's coronavirus figures are as follows: Positive cases 11,48,693, new cases 392, death toll 14,021, recovered 11,30,816, active cases 3,856, today tests 29,450, total tests 1,68,78,540.

Devyani chit-fund investors need to fill information through web link

Central Chronicle News

Raipur, Feb 19: In order to protect the interests of chit fund investors in district Raipur, applications were received from August 5 to August 20, 2021 in various tehsils under the provisions of the Protection of Interests in Deposits Act 2005.

District Administration Raipur after closely perusing the applications observed lack of various types of information in the applications. Many applications were found to be incomplete and the necessary documents

including receipts were not attached. Investors have been asked to provide desired information and upload documents through web link.

Some amount is to be distributed among the investors of Devyani Company by the District Administration Raipur; but due to incomplete and unclear information, a web link <https://niveshaknyay.com> has been prepared. The information that investors have to fill in this link is as follows - In the first page, the full name of the investor has to be filled and his mobile number which was filled while applying

in the concerned tehsil office.

After this, the complete address and district of the investor is to be filled and then information of the total amount deposited and all the receipts of the deposited amount, has to be uploaded by making a PDF file.

After this, the total maturity amount of the invested amount, whose bond has been received, has to be filled and the PDF file of the copy of the bond has to be uploaded. Applicants are requested to ensure to upload the desired information and documents in the above weblink.

Henry-Bharat win senior Tennis championship



Raipur, Feb 19: The pair of Henry Santiago and Bharat Patel defeated the pair of BL Maurya and Prashant with the score of 8-1 to win the above 35 years championship in the late Lawrence Santiago Memorial Tennis tournament being organized under the joint aegis of Chhattisgarh State Tennis

Association (CSTA) and Late Lawrence Santiago Memorial Tennis Academy Devendra Nagar here on Saturday. In the 45 plus category final match, the pair of Suryakant Khandelwal and Sachet from Dhamtari defeated the pair of Vikram Singh Sisodiya and Sunil Surana with the score of 8-4 whereas the

pair of Pradeep Mathani and Sudhir Verma defeated the pair of John Mathai from Bhilai and Prashant by 8-1 in the final match of 55 plus category. Similarly, the pair of Avtar Juneja and Brahma Jadwani defeated the pair of Radhe Verma and V Vishwakarma by 8-5 to win the 65 plus category title.

Narva Development Programme: Work for year 2019-20 under CAMPA nears completion

Raipur, Feb 19: Under the important "Narva Development Program" being run by the State Government under the Suraji Gaon Yojana, an amount of more than Rs 160 crore has been approved in the annual action plan 2019-20 of CAMPA. In this, 12 lakh 24 thousand structures related to groundwater conservation are being constructed in 4.84 lakh hectare watershed area of 863 small and large drains having with the length of 01 thousand 829 km. Out of these structures, construction of 12 lakh 697 structures has been completed by spending an amount of Rs 140 crore so far.

It is worth mentioning that under the special initiative of Chief Minister Mr. Bhupesh Baghel and Forest



and Climate Change Minister Mr. Mohammad Akbar, efforts are being made to revive a large number of water bodies, rivers, and ponds for conservation and promotion of groundwater recharge in the forest areas of the state. Forest Minister Mohammad Akbar informed in this regard that these water storage structures to be built under the head of Compensatory

Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority (CAMPA) (CAMPA) will ensure the availability of drinking water for the people living in the forest and wild animals. This will also help in retaining moisture of surrounding land due to water filling in drains. This is not only bringing convenience in farming, but also boosting source of income and

greenery. Principal Chief Conservator of Forests and Officer of Forest Force Mr. Rakesh Chaturvedi said in this regard that out of 79 thousand 293 structures under construction in Durg circle, construction of 69 thousand 442 structures has been completed so far, under the annual action plan 2019-20 of CAMPA under Narva Development Scheme, with a sanctioned amount of Rs.11 crore 56 lakh. Similarly 6 lakh 80 thousand 329 structures related to ground water harvesting are being constructed under Bilaspur circle with the sanctioned amount of Rs 43 crore. Of these, construction of 6 lakh 68 thousand 609 structures has been completed by spending an amount of Rs 35 crore so far. Work is in progress for con-

struction of 56 thousand 454 structures under Raipur circle with the sanctioned amount of Rs 17 crore. Of these, 56 thousand 421 structures have been completed by spending an amount of Rs 15 crore so far. Similarly, 2 lakh 78 thousand structures related to ground water conservation are being constructed under Jagdalpur circle with the sanctioned amount of Rs 17 crore. Out of these, construction of all 2 lakh 78 thousand structures has been completed by spending an amount of Rs.16 crore 66 lakh so far. Under the Surguja circle, out of 1 lakh 18 thousand structures under construction with a sanctioned amount of Rs 36 crore, 1 lakh 17 thousand structures have been completed so far.

GNY, RGKNY, SGY brought a huge change in the lives of farmers: CM

CM virtually released an amount of Rs 10.24 crore to cattle rearers, WSHGs and Gauthan committees under GNY

Rs 127.79 cr paid to cow dung vendors so far

In the presence of CM, MoU inked for the production of organic Gula and pooja materials in 10 Gauthans of Raipur and Durg districts



including purchase of cow dung and manufacturing of vermi-compost have financially empowered women belonging to Self-Help Groups. The Gauthans built at the village level across the state will be further strengthened in the coming time. Chief Minister Baghel was addressing a programme organized at his residence office today to transfer funds to beneficiaries under Godhan Nyay Yojana (GNY). On the occasion, he virtually released an amount of Rs 10.24 cr to cattle rearers, Gauthan committees, and women Self-Help Groups associated with state-run Gauthan. This includes payment of Rs 5.62 cr in lieu of purchase of cow dung in the last fortnight and Rs 1.88 crore and Rs 2.75 crore to Gauthan committees and women SHGs respectively as a dividend. So far, Rs 127.79 cr has been paid to cow dung vendors in lieu of purchase of cow dung. Similarly, a total of Rs 79.39 cr has been paid to Self-Help

Groups and Gauthan committees since the commencement of this scheme. In the program, MoU was inked between Director Horticulture and Farm Forestry and Shri Ganesh Global Private Limited to prepare organic Gula and pooja items through women self-help groups in Gauthans. Under this MoU, organic gula and pooja materials will be manufactured in as many as 10 Gauthans of Durg and Raipur districts in the first phase. Over 150 women self-help groups of both districts have been linked for this. In addition to manufacturing organic gula, the women Self-Help Groups will prepare materials like sandalwood powder, cotton wicks, 'kumkum', 'roli', and 'havan'.

On this occasion, Chief Minister Baghel launched 'Arth'—an integrated brand name for various types of organic products manufactured by women self-help groups in Gauthans of the state. With this, gift ham-

pers prepared by women self-help groups will be made available for sale in the market under the brand name 'Arth'. The chief minister also released the brand logo on this occasion. Chief Minister said that marketing of all these products would be done through the website www.arthcg.com. Women SHGs in gauthans are manufacturing variety of products including immunity-tea, essential oil, soap, organic gula, and pooja materials using natural ingredients. The work of manufacturing organic gula and pooja materials has been started already as pilot project in Rajnandgaon district. For this, an MoU has been signed between Sakhi Group Organization Somani and Shri Ganesh Global Pvt Ltd. Women of Rajnandgaon are reaping good benefits of this initiative. Now, the state government has further decided to expand this initiative in Gauthans of Raipur and Durg districts.

Baghel said adding that the positive changes bought in the lives of the farmers of Chhattisgarh through Rajiv Gandhi Kisan Nyay Yojana, Godhan Nyay Yojana and Suraji Gaon Yojana is being discussed in the whole country today. "I have visited many states including Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, and Uttarakhand in the last few days. I also feel very proud when the development of farmers of Chhattisgarh is discussed in other states", he said.

Farewell and felicitation ceremony held at Raj Bhavan

Raipur, Feb 19: Under the guidance of Governor Anusuiya Uikey, a farewell and honor ceremony of Chhattisgarh Private University Regulatory Commission Chairman Dr. Shivvaran Shukla was organized in the courtesy of Chhattisgarh Private University Association. The ceremony started with the national anthem and lighting of the lamp.



Chhattisgarh Governor Anusuiya Uikey, Higher Education Minister Umesh Patel, CGPURC President Dr. Shivvaran Shukla, CGPURC office-bearers, Gajraj Pagaria, President of Private University Association, Dr. Vinay Agrawal, Secretary of Private University Association, The Vice-Chancellor of Rawatpura Government University, Dr. J. Of. Upadhyay was accompanied by Registrar Dr. Pratap Singh, all the Vice Chancellors and Registrars of private universities of Chhattisgarh were present.

In the farewell and felicitation ceremony of Dr. Shivvaran Shukla, Dr. J. Of. Upadhyay, while summarizing good memories about his life, said that "Shukla ji has worshiped Mother Saraswati with mind, word and deed from the very beginning. In the first meeting, told that at the age of 35, he got the title of D.Lit. In those days the degree of Ph.D was also considered difficult. "Success is definitely achieved through hard work done by the mind", said Governor Anusuiya Uikey while addressing a function organized by Chhattisgarh Private University Association in the honor of Dr. Shivvaran Shukla, Chairman, Chhattisgarh Private University Regulatory Commission at Raj Bhavan today.

Dr. Shivvaran Shukla while thanking him for organizing the award ceremony said that as the chairman of the commission, I have always strived for the betterment of education and it has been possible only because of the cooperative spirit of everyone. On this occasion, Governor Uike and Higher Education Minister Umesh Patel honored Dr. Shukla by giving mementoes. Along with this, Chhattisgarh Private University Association also honored Governor Uike and Higher Education Minister Patel by giving mementoes. Souvenirs of various private universities were also released by Ms. Uike in the program.

Make children aware of the safety: Garg

Central Chronicle News

Raipur, Feb 19: Joint Secretary, Central School Education and Literacy Department, Manish Garg, attended the ongoing training programme on School Safety and Disaster Management in BEd College, Shankar Nagar, Raipur during his visit to Chhattisgarh on Wednesday. He interacted with the trainees from different districts in the training programme on school safety and personal security and disaster management.



Garg described this training as important in making the students and teachers aware about the safety of the schools as well as the personal safety. According to him the sense of security in children and teachers creates a positive atmosphere for studies.

Attendance of children in schools increases when their parents are also sure about their safety. Garg ad-

vised to educate children about good and bad, cleanliness and hygiene along with life safety. He also asked the teachers present to tell the methods of hand washing as well as the precautions to be adopted to avoid corona. Garg also advised to display the instructions and measures issued by the Government of India and the State Government from time to time for awareness about Corona through pictures and posters on the walls of the schools. The training programme is being organ-

ised by the State Council of Educational Research and Training and the State Project Office, Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan. The training programme of 150 block level master trainers is underway from 14 February to 18 February.

There will be discussion on personal safety for two days and school safety for three days. Assistant Block Education Officer, teachers of primary and secondary schools are participating in the training from different blocks.

Union Jt Secy inspects Swami Atmanand English School

Korba, Feb 19: Raghuraj Madhav Rajendran, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Power, Government of India, inspected Swami Atmanand English Medium School located at Pump House in Korba city. The Joint Secretary also visited the Digital Class Room, Physics, Chemistry Lab, Biology Lab and Library located at Swami Atmanand English Medium School. He also went to the chemical lab and saw the practicals being done by the students. Rajendran went to the classes and inquired about the studies from the students. He motivated the students studying in the school to study diligently and move forward. The Joint Secretary also visited the library and inspect-

ed the books kept for the students to read. He also suggested keeping all kinds of informative books in the library. Joint Secretary, Rajendran inspected the table cloth drawing machine model made by class XI student Jayesh Rathore. Along with this, he congratulated Simran Kant, a student of class XI, for good handwriting. Vidhi Agarwal, a student of class XI, informed the Joint Secretary that free education facility is being provided by the government through Swami Atmanand School. On this occasion, officers-employees of district administration including District Collector, Chief Executive Officer, District Panchayat were present.

Union Joint Secretary showed interest in 3-D printing technology

View products of Plastic Technologies done during the inspection of CIPET

Central Chronicle News



Raipur, Feb 19: Raghuraj Madhav Rajendran, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Power, Government of India, inspected the Central Institute of Plastic Technology at Education Hub, Inkmudi, Korba district. He took great interest in materials made with 3-D printing technology. The Joint Secretary was also presented an idol of Lord Ganesha made by 3-D printing technology by the officials of CIPET. CIPET officials briefed him about the 3-D printing technology in detail.

The Joint Secretary took information from the officer-in-charge about the

various training programs being conducted by CIPET to provide self-employment opportunities. Rajendran visited the molding workshop of CIPET and observed the process of manufacturing of bearing covers made of plastic. Also talked to the students taking training in plastic techniques. He also inquired about the plastic techniques course and employment prospects from the students. The officer-in-charge of CIPET informed the Joint Secretary in de-

tail about the diploma courses conducted in CIPET and placement of students etc. During this, the Joint Secretary also visited the Plastic Molding Center at CIPET. He viewed plastic products toys, buckets, soapcases, pipes, bottles, motorcycle mudguards, visors, etc., being made from various plastic techniques. During this, officers-employees of district administration including District Collector, Chief Executive Officer, District Panchayat were present.

IHM Raipur invites applications for B.Sc. and other diploma courses

Raipur, Feb 18: The admission process for the academic session 2022-23 has been started in "Institute of Hotel Management, Catering Technology and Applied Nutrition, Raipur" (IHM Raipur) established by the Government of Chhattisgarh. Chief Minister Mr. Bhupesh Baghel, Tourism Minister Mr. Tamradhwaj Sahu, Secretary of Government of Chhattisgarh Mr. P. Anbalan and Principal Mrs. Rekha Shukla are the main authorities of this institute.

Admission process has been started B.Sc. in Hospitality Hotel Administration (3 years) and 18 months long diploma courses including Diploma in Food Production, Diploma in Food and Beverage Services and Diploma in Housekeeping. The minimum qualification required is the candidate must have passed Senior Secondary (in 10+2 system) or its equivalent examination with English as one of the subjects. The maximum age limit is 25 years,

but there will be a relaxation of 3 years in the upper age limit for the candidates belonging to the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes.

IHM Raipur offers 100 per cent placement and training facility. IHM Raipur provides training facilities to the students in renowned hotels of the country. The institute offers world class educational facilities including computer lab, class room, front office lab, mock room, laundry lab, housekeeping lab, well-equipped library and hostel facility is also available for all the students.

The application for admission in IHM Raipur has started from February 12, 2022 and the last date to apply is May 3, 2022. The first merit list will be published on July 18, 2022. The first round of reporting will be conducted from July 19 to July 25 and the classes will start from August 1, 2022. Interested candidates can register themselves online and submit application form by visiting website: <https://nchmjee.nta.nic.in>.

No woman is witch: Dr Mishra

Raipur, Feb 19: Criticizing the death of an woman in Navada, Bihar, president of



A n d d h a S h r a d d h a N i r m o o l a n S a m i t i a n d r e n o w n e d o p h t h a l m o l o g i s t D r D i n e s h Mishra demanded action against those responsible for killing this woman alleging her as a witch. Elaborating the incident Dr Mishra said, the victim was tortured for any death in the village or in case any person fell ill. This time on the death of a man villagers secretly called a meeting in absence of the victim and passed a death sentence against here. The victim was killed by about 50 men and the woman killed named Sarita was the mother of two sons and a daughter. Dr Mishra confirmed that it is an extremely shameful incident and the accused must be immediately arrested. The family members of the deceased were also beaten up when they tried to save the victim. Dr Mishra has complained about this incident to National Woman Commission and National Human Rights Commission demanding justice for the victim.

Chhattisgarh is full of glorious history of folk art and culture: Sahu

Mahasamund, Feb 19: The two-day Sirpur festival concluded with a colorful program of Sirpur Mahotsav.

Chief Guest of the function was Minister in charge of Mahasamund district and the Home Minister, Tamradhwaj Sahu. At the conclusion of Sirpur Mahotsav, Panthi dance by local artists of Jai Satnam Panthi Party of Pachri, Jai Gaura Gauri Suda dance by the artists of Nandbaru Sirpur, Karma dance by Fuljharia Karma Party of Village Bilkhand, Basna, Drama by Disha Natya Manch of Mahasamund, Odissi solo dance was performed by Arya Nande and an enthralling performance was made by Anuj Sharma. Collector Nilesh Kumar Kshirsagar, Superintendent of Police, Vivek Shukla, CEO District Panchayat, S. Alok welcomed the chief guest. Home Minister Tamradhwaj Sahu, while addressing the concluding ceremony with the gusto of the chief guest, said that Sirpur Festival is a triveni confluence of cultures. Chhattisgarh has a glori-



ous history of folk art and culture. This is the reason why Sirpur is becoming the first choice of tourists on the world tourism scene. He said that the purpose of organizing the festival is to make the youth aware and publicity apart from saving different cultures and their traditions. The Home Minister said that as per the intention of Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel, tourism places would be developed a lot in the state. Its tourism policy has been prepared. Work is also being done to add it to the Buddhist circuit for tourism development. The feet of Lord Shri Ram are found in Sirpur. Ramgaman path is being developed here. Sirpur Mahotsav will be celebrat-

ed with more grandeur in the coming times. Minister Sahu congratulated the district administration for organizing the event. On this occasion, Home Minister Sahu also felicitated the artists. On the concluding occasion, MLA and Vice-Chairman Scheduled Caste Development Authority Mr. Qismatlal Nand also addressed. District Panchayat President Mrs. Usha Patel, District President of Scout Guide, Daulal Chandrakar, Member of Central Zone Tribal Authority, Mohit Dhruv, District Panchayat Member, Arun Amar Chandrakar, District Member's Representative Organization Officer Dr. Rashmi Chandrakar were present.

Bring more speed in depositing rice in FCI: CS

Raipur, Feb 19: Chief Secretary Amitabh Jain has instructed the collectors of all the districts to bring more speed in depositing the millers' rice in the Food Corporation of India. Instructions have also been given to transport the remaining paddy in the paddy procurement centers soon. The Chief Secretary was reviewing the Food Movement Work Plan under the Department of Food and Civil Supplies and Consumer Protection at Mantralaya Mahanadi here. Officials of Food Corporation of India, Railways and Food Department attended the meeting. Jain has instructed the collectors to work fast as per the target for depositing rice in the godowns of Food Corporation of India, so that the rice prepared by the millers can be deposited. He said that urgent action should be taken after reviewing the problems being faced in transportation and storage of rice. The Chief Secretary directed the Food Corporation of India to make available suf-

ficient quantity of rakes as per the target and plan in Rajnandgaon, Durg, Balod, Raipur, Bilaspur, Janjgir-Champa, Raigarh, Mahasamund, Surajpur in the major rake point districts. Similarly, instructions to ensure time bound work of rake movement by the Food Corporation of India. So that the vehicles can be arranged for the transport of the millers as per the requirement. The Chief Secretary directed the collectors of these districts to arrange adequate warehouses in Mungeli, Dhantari, Kawardha, Bemetara and Kanker districts to maintain the momentum in the rice procurement work by the FCI. Similarly, FCI talked about providing additional space for procurement of rice by renting additional godowns in the State Warehousing Corporation. Food Secretary Topeshwar Verma, Managing Director Marked, Ms. Kiran Kaushal, Managing Director, State Beverages Corporation, Niranjan Das and other officers were present in the meeting.

Tehsil Advocates Association concerned against corruption in Revenue Court

Central Chronicle News

Simga, Feb 19: Simga Tehsil Advocates Association is concerned against the corruption prevailing in the Revenue Court, and Tehsil advocate Sangh demonstrated a protest in Simga Tehsil premises on Thursday, supporting Raigad Advocates Association in the matter of registering false cases against the advocates in Raigad assault case.



The advocates further said that we are fighting the battle of the people, and if the government and administration does not pay attention to our movement, then we will make this movement a people's movement. Advocates Association Simga called the incident of Raigad condemnable and demanding the government

to curb the rampant corruption, demanded withdrawal of the case registered against the advocates in Raigad. Prominently in the demonstration, advocate association's patron Vishnu Prasad Sonwani, President Farid Khan, Parikshit Chaturvedi, Prashant Sen, Rajesh Jain, Hori Lal Devgan, Ramkumar Sonkar, Ashok Dare, Dhaniram Sonkar, Devcharan Nishad, TP Nayak, Prashant Tiwari, Prahlad Tiwari, Anil Kumbhakar, Vishram Chelak, Omprakash Verma, Ashish Sharma, Ashish Tamboli, Tikaram Devagan, Santal Gendre, Umesh Sharma, Purushottam Yadu, and other advocates were present.

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Ward No. 9 team wins Sarpanch Trophy

Central Chronicle News

Dhamdha, Feb 19: In the finals of ward-level Tennis Ball Sarpanch Trophy cricket match in Gram Titurghat near Dhamdha city on Feb 16, the cricket team of ward No.9 won the match just losing 9 wickets and achieving target of 56 runs by ward No. 8 team in 10 over match.



The first prize of Rs 3333 was won by ward No. 9 team was given by Sarpanch Laxman Sonkar and cup by Lalit Sonkar and the second prize of Rs 2222 was given by Komal Nishad and cup by Jhandu Ram Nishad. The third prize of Rs 1111 was won by ward No. 6 team and it was presented by Deepak Rajput and cup by Anil Mali. In this

final match, the man-of-the-match award and the man-of-the-series title was won by captain of Ward No. 9 Anil Sonkar and it was presented by Lokesh Gurui. In the prize distribution ceremony the public representatives of village and Sarpanch Laxman Sonkar, Deenbandhu Sonkar and other villagers were present.

PCC Chief visit Maa Bamleshwari temple

Central Chronicle News

Dongargarh, Feb 19: PCC Chief Mohan Markam after attending the Adivasi Sammelan visited 'Maa Bamleshwari Mata's temple' and offered prayers. During this the Congress workers accorded warm welcome to him.



PCC Chief held talks related to organisation with the party workers and directed them to speed-up membership campaign. Like a common devotee, PCC Chief Mohan Makam purchased a ticket and

went to Maa Bamleshwari's temple in the rope-way. Known for his simplicity and cordial behaviour, Markam stood in the queue for getting ticket from the ticket counter and then went to pay respects to the temple.

On this occasion Congress party workers DCC District President Padam Kothari, District co-op Bank President Navaz Khan, BCC President Sanjeev Gomasta, Suresh Sinha Nagar Panchayat President Sudesh Meshram, Sandhya Deshpandey, Sanjay Shrivastava, Anil Meshram, Rimmi Bhatia, Pramod Tembhurnikar, Sanjay Yadav, Jitendra Bhatia, Ravi Tiwari and others were present in large number.

Placement camp by DEGC Jagdalpur in March

Central Chronicle News

Jagdalpur, Feb 19: The District Employment and Guidance Centre (DEGC) Jagdalpur will be organising placement camp for vacant posts in private

firms in the month of March 2022.

Through this interested candidates can apply for vacant posts in firms, offices, shops by making application. Information about the vacant posts can

be obtained through post or email from the office of 'Parvatan cell' of District Employment and Self-Employment Guidance Centre.

In this post-wise vacant posts, eligibility require-

ments, experience and per month salary details is compulsory, so that the youths can be attracted for placement through camp for vacant posts and this service is being provided free of cost.

Bank of Baroda POSSESSION NOTICE. (As per Appendix IV read with rule 8(1) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002). Includes details of borrowers and guarantors, property descriptions, and demand notice dates.

UCO BANK (A Government of India Undertaking). Branch Office: UCO Bank Kohka, Bhillai, Dist. Durg C.G. Ph.: 0788-2290421. Email: kohka@ucobank.co.in

SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES

E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002. Notice is hereby given to the Public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged / Charged to the Secured Creditor the physical possession of which have been taken by the Authorised Officer of UCO Bank, Secured Creditor will be sold on "As is where is" and "Whatever there is" basis on 07-03-2022 between 11.00 AM to 4.00 PM.

Table with columns: Name of Borrower & Guarantor, Identified Properties Details, (A) Reserve Price, (B) Earnest Moeny, (C) Increase Sealed bid Amount, (A) Date of Demand Notice, (B) Type of Possession Notice, (C) Plus Further Interest and other Incidental Chages There after, (A) E-Auction Date & Time, (B) Date of Inspection of the property, (C) Contact Details with the Branch.

Details of known encumbrances: Not Known. Terms and condition: 1. The sale shall be subject to the Terms & Conditions prescribed in the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002. Detailed terms and conditions of the sale is available/published in the following websites/web portal: I) https://bipi.in/II) https://mstccomerce.com

OTHER TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF E-AUCTION SALE: The sale shall be subject to the Terms & Conditions prescribed in the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002 and to the following further conditions. 1. The auction sale will be "online through e-auction" portal https://www.mstccomerce.com.

THIS PUBLICATION IS ALSO A 15 DAYS NOTICE TO THE ABOVE MENTIONED BORROWERS / GUARANTORS / MORTGAGORS. Date: 20/02/2022 Place: Bhillai (C.G.) Authorised Officer, UCO BANK, KOHKA, Bhillai, Dist.Durg (C.G.)

Union Bank of India POSSESSION NOTICE [Rule - 8 (1)]. Includes details of borrowers and guarantors, property descriptions, and demand notice dates.

Bandhan Bank SYMBOLIC POSSESSION NOTICE. Includes details of borrower(s) and loan account no., description of property mortgaged (Secured Asset), date of demand notice, date of symbolic possession notice, and outstanding amt. as on date of demand notice.

BRIEF

Approves

New Delhi: The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs has approved proposals worth Rs 235 crore to Andhra Pradesh under the 'Garbage Free Cities' vision, the largest one-time approval of funds for legacy dumpsite remediation. The Centre's share in these proposals will be Rs 77.66 crore, a ministry official said, adding that rest of the amount will be borne by the state. Legacy dumpsites pose a major threat to the environment.

Concern

Chennai: The Tamil Nadu government opposed the Nuclear Power Corporation of India Limited's proposal to store spent nuclear fuel (SNF) at the Kudankulam Nuclear Power Plant (KNPP) site and suggested it be sent back to Russia, according to an earlier agreement or store it in an uninhabited area. Six nuclear power reactors of 1000 MW each are envisaged in this project. Out of the six, units 1 and 2 have already been commissioned.

Extortion

Jodhpur: Three policemen, including a station house officer of a police station in Rajasthan's Pali district, were arrested for allegedly extorting Rs 2 lakh from a Punjab-based businessman. Two others involved in the run and a search has been launched to nab them too, Pali Superintendent of Police Rajan Dushyant said. All five had been suspended earlier on the complain of the businessman and three of them were arrested after inquiry.

Removing

Aurangabad: Work to remove at least five tonnes of stones that have fallen over a long period in the Deogiri Fort caves complex was underway and would be completed in four months time, an Archeological Survey of India official said here. The work on the complex that has six Jain caves involves breaking the stones and removing them, giving support to the structure with six pillars and making a pathway for year-round accessibility.

Trapped

Ranchi: The Jharkhand government said 30 workers from the state are currently "trapped" in Malaysia, and the process to bring them home was underway. The workers, residents of Giridih, Hazaribag and Bokaro districts, had been working as linemen for a construction company since January 2019.

Bribery

New Delhi: The CBI has arrested an AAP municipal councillor in Delhi for allegedly accepting bribe for permitting laying of a building roof unhampered. Reacting to the arrest of Geeta Rawat, the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) said "strictest action" should be taken against her if she has done "anything wrong", and hoped that the CBI will investigate the case in an impartial manner.

'Need to remove quota limit to facilitate reservation to Marathas'

● Centre should take steps: Ajit Pawar

Pune, Feb 19 (PTI):S

Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar on Saturday said there is a need to remove the Supreme Court-mandated 50 per cent cap on quota so that the Maratha community can be granted reservation, and urged the central government to make changes in law to facilitate it.

The Maratha community should get reservation, but it should be done without disturbing the existing quota of other communities, the senior NCP leader said.

He was speaking at the Shivneri fort in Junnar tehsil of Pune district on the occasion of the birth anniversary of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj. The Maratha



Maharashtra Deputy CM Ajit Pawar at a function to mark birth anniversary of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj in Pune on Saturday.

warrior king was born on this fort in 1630.

Addressing a gathering on the occasion, Pawar said, "We all are on the same page for the reservation to the Maratha community. We (state government) had also formed a commission for that purpose. The Bombay High Court had given a favourable decision, but it

was rejected by the Supreme Court." "Just as there is a demand for the Maratha reservation in Maharashtra, other communities are seeking quota for themselves in some other states. The Maratha community should get reservation, but it should be done without disturbing the quota of other communities. There

is a need to remove the 50 per cent ceiling on reservation and the central government should make changes in the law to facilitate it," he said.

In May last year, the Supreme Court had struck down the Maharashtra law granting quota to Marathas in admissions and government jobs, terming it as "unconstitutional", and held there were no exceptional circumstances to breach the 50 per cent reservation cap set by the 1992 Mandal verdict.

Talking about the Alphonso mangoes grown in Junnar region, Pawar said, "Rs 27 lakh have been allotted by the district planning committee (DPC) so that this variety of mango, which is cultivated in and around Shivneri, gets the geographical indication (GI) tag, a long-pending demand of the local people."

NDMC panel gives nod to build 'waste-to-art' park

New Delhi, Feb 19 (PTI): The standing committee of the North Delhi Municipal Corporation approved a proposal to build a park on the 'waste-to-art' theme on the premises of the historic Ajmal Khan Park in Karol Bagh, officials said.

The South Delhi civic body had come up with a 'Waste-to-Wonder' Park in Sarai Kale Khan in February 2019. It has replicas of seven world-famous monuments, including the Taj Mahal and Eiffel Tower, fashioned out of mechanical waste.

"The standing committee of the North Delhi Municipal Corporation in its meeting approved a proposal to build a 'waste-to-art' park in the old Ajmal Khan Park in Karol Bagh area. The park is spread over nine to 10 acres," a senior official said. The approval now awaits the nod of the NDMC House. The move comes ahead of the civic polls in Delhi due in April. According to the proposal, 13 sculptural models of world-famous heritage landmarks will be set up in the park, including the Great Sphinx at Giza, the Great Wall of China, Opera House in Sydney, Sagrada Familia of Barcelona and Stonehenge of the United Kingdom.

Jharkhand withdraws Bhojpuri, Maghi as regional languages

● Protests in Dhanbad and Bokaro

Ranchi, Feb 19 (PTI):

The Jharkhand government withdrew Bhojpuri and Maghi from the list of regional languages of Dhanbad and Bokaro amid widespread protests.

The Department of Personnel, Administrative Reforms and Rajbhasha withdrew a notification dated December 24, 2021 that allowed these two languages in matric and intermediate-level for appearing in recruitment examinations of district-level posts, conducted by the Jharkhand State Staff Selection Commission.

The notification was withdrawn through a fresh order. People in both the districts have been agitating under the banner of the Jharkhandi Bhasa Bachao Sangharsh Samiti, stating that these languages were not widely spoken in the region.

Earlier, state minister Alamgir Alam, JMM MLA



Entry gate of Bokaro city.

Sabita Mahto and Congress state president Rajesh Thakur met Chief Minister Hemant Soren, demanding the withdrawal of the two languages from the list in view of the sentiments of the people.

Former Silli MLA Amit Kumar even threatened to quit the ruling JMM if the government failed to withdraw the notification.

Last year in September, Chief Minister Hemant Soren had courted controversy by claiming that the tribal individuals who fought for a separate Jharkhand State did it for regional languages and never for Bhojpuri and Maghi, and that those that allegedly raped girls throughout the statehood motion abused them in Bhojpuri. The Bihar models of the BJP described the feedback of Soren, who can also be Govt president of the Jharkhand Mukti

Morcha (JMM), as 'extremely objectionable' and alleged that they had been geared toward dividing the society.

The JMM, nevertheless, defended him saying promotion of regional languages is lengthy overdue within the State. Jharkhand was carved out of the southern part of Bihar in November 2000 and Soren's celebration, the JMM, performed a key function within the motion for the brand new State.

Claiming that Bhojpuri and Maghi are languages of Bihar, Soren stated that making a Bihar ('Biharikaran') in Jharkhand can't be allowed. The Hemant Soren authorities had determined to advertise regional languages within the State. Bhojpuri is spoken primarily in Bihar and sure different States of India together with Jharkhand and U.P., apart from Nepal and international locations akin to Suriname, Trinidad and Mauritius the place folks of Bihar origin reside. Maghi can also be spoken in Bihar, Jharkhand and Nepal.

Agartala to be connected with Dhaka, Chittagong through flights

Agartala, Feb 19 (PTI):

Agartala will be connected with Dhaka and Chittagong cities of Bangladesh through flights, Tripura Chief Minister Biplab Kumar Deb said on Saturday.

Services along the Agartala-Dhaka and Agartala-Chittagong international routes are expected to begin within the next six months, and the Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA) will soon float tenders inviting expression of interest from private airlines wishing to operate along the routes, a senior official said.

"Finally, MBB Airport in Agartala is now set to have international flight service with Dhaka & Chittagong. My heartfelt thanks to Hon'ble PM Shri @narendramodi ji & Civil Aviation Minister Shri @JM_Scindia ji for this initiative to fulfill the dream of the people of Tripura," Deb tweeted.

"The proposed international flight service with Bangladesh will surely boost Tripura tourism & take the state to a new height in terms of air connectivity. It will also benefit the people of Bangladesh in various ways and strengthen relation between two countries," he said in an

other Twitter post. The MoCA has included the proposed international routes under the UDAN scheme, Sanjoy Mishra, Officer on Special Duty (OSD) to the chief minister said.

"The MoCA will now float tenders inviting expression of interest from private airlines who wish to run their services along the two international routes," he said.

The international flight services from Maharaja Bir Bikram (MBB) Airport are expected to begin within the next six months as the MoCA has already identified the two routes, he said.

MBB Airport Director Rajiv Kapoor said that the chief minister has taken up with Union Civil Aviation Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia the commencement of international flights from the airport at the earliest. "Right now, I cannot say when the international flight services will kick-start from the airport but we are ready for it."

"The new terminal building, which was virtually inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on January 4, has all facilities, from customs to immigration and separate zones for arrival and departure, for handling international passengers," he said.

OFFERS PRAYERS



Uttar Pradesh Chief Secretary Durga Shankar Mishra offers prayers at the Vindhya Vasini temple in Mirzapur, Saturday.

Four more towers at Chintels Paradiso declared unfit

● Residents in limbo after buying expensive properties

Gurugram, Feb 19 (PTI):

Days after several houses at Chintels Paradiso here collapsed, the Department of Town and Country Planning has declared four more apartment towers unfit for living, leaving many residents in limbo.

Gurugram district's Town and Country Planner RS Bhat, who is currently stationed in the



Chintels Paradiso complex in Gurugram, Haryana.

society to oversee the repair and rehabilitation work, conducted a survey and declared towers E, F, G and H unfit for living.

In some houses, the iron roads in ceilings are entirely visible. In others, plaster is falling and there

are big cracks. The residents have been asked to shift to alternative accommodations, officials said.

Bhat said the cost of rehabilitation of these families will be borne by the builder of Chintels Paradiso.

'All rival 'dals' will be confined to 'daldal', lotus will bloom'

Kaushambi, Feb 19 (PTI):

Dismissing any challenge to the BJP from rival political parties in the Uttar Pradesh Assembly polls, Deputy Chief Minister Keshav Prasad Maurya on Saturday said all other 'dals (parties)' will be confined to a 'daldal (swamp)' after the results are declared and the lotus will bloom in it.

The BJP will win over 300 of the 403 assembly seats, he asserted. Dubbing himself as the "son of Sirathu", the assembly seat in Kaushambi from where he is contesting elections, Maurya also countered the Opposition's claims that the BJP is indulging in politics of polarisation, say-



UP Deputy CM Keshav Prasad Maurya lands for a rally.

ing all the poor are equal for the party, irrespective of their religion. "Almost all the parties had united against the BJP in the earlier (2019 Lok Sabha) elections. Now, they are fighting individually against the BJP. 'Yeh jo 3-4 dal hai, woh daldal mein simmat jayenge aur daldal mein hi kamal khilta hai (These

three-four-five parties will be confined to a swamp after the elections and the lotus blooms in a swamp)," Maurya told PTI in an interview, referring to the BJP's election symbol. "The BJP will win over 300 seats in the UP Legislative Assembly," he said. "Taking a swipe at the BJP's rivals, the deputy chief minister said, "The cycle (SP's symbol) has flown to Saifai, the 'panjaa' (palm — Congress' symbol) has gone to Italy and the elephant (BSP's symbol) has gone to the bungalow of Mayawati ji." He said there is no need for a hand pump (symbol of the Rashtriya Lok Dal) as water is reaching people through pipelines.

MATRIMONIAL

ब्राह्मण

वर चाहिये

वर चाहिये- सरयुपातिय ब्राह्मण वशिष्ठ गोत्र, 31 वर्ष (11:50 पीएम) भिलाई, शिक्षा बी.फार्मसी, नौकरी प्राइवेट आंशिक मार्गलिक. संपर्क करें- मो.-9406098732. (248270)

तमिल/तेलुगू

वर चाहिये

तेलुगू 26/5'2", बी.कॉम, रंग गोरा अत्यंत सुन्दर गृहकार्य में दक्ष कन्या, पिता व्यवसायी, मध्यम वर्गीय परिवार हेतु सुयोग्य वर चाहिए. अतिशुभ विवाह. (जाति बंधन नहीं) संपर्क- मो.-8815820463. (248428)

वधु चाहिये

वधु चाहिए - ब्राह्मण कश्यप गोत्र 31 वर्ष 5'11" पीजी डॉक्टर के लिए एमबीबीएस वधु चाहिए सम्पर्क - 79871-88218 (गंगापुर, अम्बिकापुर छग को प्राथमिकता N656462)

क्रिश्चन

वर चाहिये

क्रिश्चन वर चाहिए- शासकीय कर्मचारी सुकन्या हेतु (उरांव रोमन कार्थलिक) उम्र 34 वर्ष ऊंचाई 5'3" के लिये सनातीय वर चाहिए. सम्पर्क करें मोबाइल-9669462991. (53093)

गुजराती

वर चाहिये

वर चाहिए-गुजराती 26/5'1", बी.कॉम, रंग गोरा अत्यंत सुन्दर गृह कार्य में दक्ष कन्या, पिता व्यवसायी परिवार हेतु सुयोग्य वर चाहिए अतिशुभ विवाह (सभी गुजराती मान्य) मो.-08224906578. (248427)

सामान्य

वर चाहिये

कलार वर चाहिए- बी.ई. मैकेनिकल, उम्र 30 वर्ष 5'3", गोत्र-हाथी कन्या हेतु सुयोग्य वर चाहिए. छ.ग. कलार को प्राथमिकता. संपर्क करें- मो.-9300215445, 8871140084. (248414)

नवभारत

वैवाहिकी

जोड़ियां स्वर्ग में बनाई जाती है...

अब इनको हुंनना और भी आसान नवभारत वैवाहिकी के साथ...

NAVABHARAT METRIMONIAL

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Contact: 0771-3000139, 7389094574

BRIEF

Booting

Miami: The Biden administration is considering trying to expel Nicaragua from a lucrative regional free trade pact or allocate its valuable sugar quota to another country in Central America to retaliate against President Daniel Ortega's crackdown on his opponents. The economic impact of the action is still under analysis and no decision has been made, according to a US official speaking on the condition of anonymity to discuss conversations.

Decrees

Vatican City: Defence lawyers in the Vatican's fraud and extortion trial accused Pope Francis of violating their clients' human rights by issuing four secret, executive decrees that gave prosecutors free reign to investigate in ways that deprived the suspects of basic legal guarantees. The lawyers argued that the resulting trial into the Vatican's bungled 350 million euro investment in a London real estate deal is therefore illegitimate.

Ukraine rebels order troop mobilization amid invasion fears

Luhansk and Donetsk industrial regions of Ukraine

Kyiv, Feb 19 (AP):

A separatist leader in eastern Ukraine ordered a full military mobilization Saturday, a move that comes amid a spike in violence in the war-torn region that the West fears could be used as a pretext for an invasion by neighboring Russia.

Denis Pushilin, the head of the pro-Russian separatist government in the Donetsk region, released a statement Saturday announcing a full troop mobilization and urging reservists to show up at military enlistment offices.

The announcement came as a mass evacuation of women, children and the elderly from the rebel-held territories in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions to neighboring Russia was underway.

US President Joe Biden said he was not 'convinced' Russian President Vladimir Putin has decided to invade Ukraine and assault the capital.

After weeks of saying the US was not sure if Putin had made the final decision, Biden said that his judgment had changed, citing American intelligence.



People carry their belongings as they cross the Russian border check point near the town of Uspenka.

As further indication that the Russians are preparing for a major military push, a US defense official said an estimated 40% to 50% of the ground forces deployed in the vicinity of the Ukrainian border have moved into attack positions closer to the border. That shift has been underway for about a week, other officials have said, and does not necessarily mean Putin has decided to begin an invasion.

The defense official spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss internal US military assessments.

The official also said the number of Russian ground units known as battalion tactical groups in the border area had grown to as many as 125, up from 83 two weeks ago. Each group has 750 to 1,000 soldiers.

Lines of communication remain open: The US and Russian defense chiefs spoke. Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov agreed to meet next week.

Immediate worries focused on eastern Ukraine, where Ukrainian forces have been fighting pro-Russia rebels since 2014 in a conflict that has killed some 14,000 people. With an estimated 150,000 Russian troops now posted around Ukraine's borders, the long-simmering separatist conflict could provide the spark for a broader attack.

Fears of such escalation intensified amid violence. A bombing struck a car outside the main government building in the rebel-held city of Donetsk, according to an Associated Press journalist there. The head of the separatist forces, Denis Sinenkov, said the car was his, the Interfax news agency reported.

There were no reports of casualties and no independent confirmation of the circumstances of the blast. Shelling and shooting are common along the line that separates Ukrainian forces and the rebels, but targeted violence is unusual in rebel-held cities.

PROTEST BANNER



A banner with politicians cartoon during protest for salaries, pensions and employment in San Juan, Puerto Rico.

Hong Kong reeling under two years into pandemic

Hong Kong, Feb 19 (AFP):

Hong Kong is in the throes of its worst-ever coronavirus outbreak, as residents are suddenly confronted with a severely overstretched healthcare system and a tightening of restrictions even as much of the world opens up. The city's strict but successful "zero-Covid" policy had largely kept the virus out for months. But when the highly transmissible Omicron variant broke through Hong Kong's defences, authorities were caught flat-footed with a dangerously under-vaccinated population and few plans in place to deal with a mass outbreak. The extremely contagious



People enter a COVID-19 testing centre in Hong Kong.

Omicron variant was first discovered within Hong Kong's local community in late December — far later than much of the rest of the world. Authorities reacted quickly — banning flights, forbidding gatherings of more than two, and launching a mass hamster cull after coronavirus-positive pet store rodents were discovered. But these measures did little to curb Omicron's spread. Hong Kong had recorded more than 20,200 infections in less than two months — outstripping its cumulative two-year total of about 12,000.

Indian-American Engg to be next Houston METRO chairman

Houston, Feb 19 (PTI):

Noted Indian-American engineer Sanjay Ramabhadran has been named as the next chairman of the Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County, becoming the first from the community to lead the major public transportation agency in the US state of Texas. Ramabhadran, 51, a

registered engineer and a graduate of BITS Pilani and later Texas A&M university, has served on the METRO Board since 2015 and currently serves as the Chair of the Capital & Strategic Planning Committee, a member of the Finance & Audit Committee.

He was tapped by Houston Mayor Sylvester Turner as the next chair-

man of Houston METRO.

The Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County is a major public transportation agency based in Houston, Texas, United States. It operates bus, light rail, bus rapid transit, High Occupancy Vehicle lane and High Occupancy Toll lanes, and paratransit service in the city as well as most of Harris County.

US Surgeon General, family test positive for COVID-19

Washington, Feb 19 (PTI):

US Surgeon General Dr Vivek Murthy has announced that he along with his wife and two young children have tested positive for COVID-19 despite best efforts to stay safe and urged fellow Americans to get vaccinated against the deadly disease that has claimed over nine lakh lives in the

country. In a series of tweets, the Indian-American physician said that his 4-year-old daughter last week tested positive for the virus first with fever and sore throat.

"My 5-year-old son, my wife Alice, and I have all tested positive for COVID-19.

Our son has a runny nose and low grade fever but is otherwise eating, drinking, playing with his sister, and watching his favourite cartoons," Murthy said.

Murthy, 44, said that the family tried to be safe but it becomes difficult when children get sick.

"You want to comfort them when they're unwell. That often requires being close physically. We'd make that choice again, but I feel for those who struggle to balance protecting themselves with caring for family," he said. Murthy said that he and his wife, Alice Chen, have mild symptoms. "She has a headache and fatigue. I'm experiencing muscle aches, chills, and sore throat.

UN urges accountability for escalating violence in Haiti

United Nations, Feb 19 (AP):

The UN Security Council called for those responsible for violence in Haiti to be held accountable and expressed deep concern at the Caribbean nation's "ongoing and protracted crises" including escalating gang violence. The UN's most powerful body urged all political stakeholders "to engage constructively to address Haiti's underlying drivers of instability (and) to enable a path towards elections." Council members also expressed concern at Haiti's humanitarian situation and called for continued international support for its people. The Security Council issued the press statement after a briefing by Helen La Lime, the UN special envoy for Haiti, who said the situation in Latin America's poorest country "remains fraught and highly politicized," warning that "gang violence continues to plunge major urban centres into lawlessness

and grief." "Criminal armed groups have a strong hold on the economic and social lives of millions of children, women and men," she said. "Their indiscriminate use of ab-

duction, murder, as well as sexual and gender-based violence as a means to terrorize local populations in the fight to extend their territorial control is particularly abhorrent."

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

CORRIGENDEM No. 1

The following corrigendum has been issued to Notice Inviting Tender No. 08/SAC/2021-22, Dated 09.02.22 System Tender No. 92098, CONSTRUCTION OF BANKIGHAT-2 ANICUT SCHEME.

Table with 4 columns: S.No., Item, Previous issue, Amendment. Contains details of bid start and due dates.

All other terms and conditions of NIT are remain unchanged. Executive Engineer Water Resources Division, Kota Distt. Bilaspur (C.G.) G-67996/8

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

CORRIGENDEM No. 1

The following corrigendum has been issued to Notice Inviting Tender No. 07/SAC/2021-22, Dated 07.02.22 System Tender No. 91843, CONSTRUCTION OF KOPRA TANK FEEDER CANAL OFFTAKING FROM R.D. 60.00 M. OF CHAKARBHATA DISTY OF ARPA BHAI SAJHAR BARRAGE PROJECT.

Table with 4 columns: S.No., Item, Previous issue, Amendment. Contains details of bid start and due dates.

All other terms and conditions of NIT are remain unchanged. Executive Engineer Water Resources Division, Kota Distt. Bilaspur (C.G.) G-67997/1

कार्यालय कार्यपालन अभियंता लोक स्वास्थ्य यांत्रिकी खाण्ड अम्बिकापुर जिला सरगुजा (छ.ग.)

// Notice Inviting Tender //

एकीकृत पंजीयन प्रणाली अंतर्गत उपयुक्त श्रेणी में पंजीकृत ठेकेदारों से निम्नलिखित कार्य हेतु निम्नलिखित कार्य हेतु स्वच्छता मिशन सरगुजा (जल जीवन मिशन अंतर्गत) ऑनलाईन (Online) निविदा आमंत्रित की जाती है।

Table with 5 columns: Sr No., Tender No. (System No.) & Date, Last Date (Bid Due Date), Name of Work, P.A.C (Rs. in Lakh). Lists various pipeline work items.

उपरोक्त निर्माण कार्यों की ऑनलाईन (Online Tender) टेण्डर आमंत्रित की जाती है। धरोहर राशि एवं अन्य जानकारी ई-प्रोक्योरमेंट वेब पोर्टल (https://eproc.cgstate.gov.in) पर देखी जा सकती है। कार्यपालन अभियंता लोक स्वास्थ्य यांत्रिकी खाण्ड अम्बिकापुर G-67963/2

छत्तीसगढ़ शासन, जल संसाधन विभाग कार्यालय मुख्य अभियंता महानदी गोदावरी कछार, रायपुर (छ.ग.)

ई-प्रोक्योरमेंट निविदा सूचना eProcurement Portal: https://eproc.cgstate.gov.in (प्रथम आमंत्रण)

सिस्टम निविदा क्र. 93104/निविदा सूचना क्र. 27/वलेलि/2021-22, बेमेतरा, दिनांक 18.02.2022

निम्नलिखित कार्यों के लिए दिनांक 11.03.2022 17:30 तक ऑनलाईन निविदाएं आमंत्रित की जाती हैं:-

कार्य का नाम : बेमेतरा जिले के विकासखण्ड साजा की डोडू व्यपवर्तन योजना के शीर्ष कार्य का मजबूतीकरण एवं मरम्मत कार्य, बायो तट नहर एवं दांयी तट नहर तथा लघु नहरों की रिमाडलिंग एवं लाईनिंग कार्य एवं 14 नग स्लैब की आर.बी. 31 नग पाईप की आर.बी., 08 नग डी.सी., 01 नग हेड स्ट्रुक्स, 16 नग माईनर हेड, 13 नग फाल, 03 फूट ब्रिज, 03 नग स्केप, 02 नग स्केप कम क्रॉस रेयुलेटर, 05 नग डायरेक्ट आउटलेट, 24 नग इनलेट, 26 नग गेट सहित कुलावा, 68 नग कुलावा का निर्माण कार्य, 05 नग डी.सी., 12 नग की.आर.बी. का मरम्मत कार्य, आर.डी. 13500 मी. से 14300 मी. तक लाईनिंग का मरम्मत कार्य।

अनुमानित लागत : ₹. 3658.54 लाख

अन्य विवरण एवं विस्तृत निविदा छत्तीसगढ़ शासन की ई-प्रोक्योरमेंट वेब साइट https://eproc.cgstate.gov.in पर दिनांक 25.02.2022 समय 17.31 बजे से देखे तथा डाउनलोड किये जा सकते हैं।

नोट : निविदा में भाग लेने हेतु ठेकेदारों को ई-प्रोक्योरमेंट वेबसाइट https://eproc.cgstate.gov.in पर नामांकित/पंजीयन तथा लोक निर्माण विभाग की एकीकृत पंजीयन प्रणाली के अंतर्गत ठेकेदार को उपयुक्त श्रेणी में पंजीयन कराना अनिवार्य है।

कार्यपालन अभियंता जल संसाधन संभाग, बेमेतरा कृते - मुख्य अभियंता, महानदी गोदावरी कछार जल संसाधन विभाग, रायपुर (छ.ग.) G-68002/8

Office of the Executive Engineer, (E/M) Division Public Health Engineering Department Bilaspur (C.G.)

NOTICE INVITING TENDERS

Sealed tenders are invited behalf of the Governor of Chhattisgarh in form "C" for the supply of following materials from the manufacturers of State of Chhattisgarh registered with District Trade & Industries Centre (DTIC) having valid BIS license.

Table with 5 columns: S. No, Name of Supply, Quantity (In Set), Probable amount of contract (Rs. in Lakh), Earnest Money (in Rs.). Lists items like ISI marked Extra Deep well Hand Pump MK-II.

1. Last Date of Receipt of Application issue of tender Documents 21.03.2022 up to 5.00 PM 2. Last Date of Sale of Tender Documents 22.03.2022 up to 5.30 PM 3. Last date of Receipt of Tender Documents 23.03.2022 up to 3.00 PM 4. Date of Opening of Tender 23.03.2022 at 4.00 PM 5. Cost of Tender document 750=00 6. Period of supply 30 days from date of supply order Terms & Conditions :- 7. The material must be inspected by SGS / RITES/ EII/ DGS&D. Inspection certificate must be submitted at the time of delivery. Inspection charge will be borne by the Department. Executive Engineer (E&M) Division Public Health Engg. Deptt. Bilaspur (C.G.) Ph. No.-07752-419539 G-67977/1

कार्यालय कार्यपालन अभियंता लोक स्वास्थ्य यांत्रिकी खाण्ड बलरामपुर जिला बलरामपुर (छ.ग.)

निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना

एकीकृत पंजीयन प्रणाली अंतर्गत उपयुक्त श्रेणी में पंजीकृत ठेकेदारों से निम्नलिखित कार्य हेतु ऑनलाईन (Online) निविदा आमंत्रित की जाती है :- कार्य का नाम SVS OF PIPED WATER SUPPLY SCHEME under Jai Jeevan Mission as per NIT निविदा डाउनलोड करने की अंतिम तिथि 09-03-2022

Table with 5 columns: S. क्र., सिस्टम क्र., निविदा सूचना क्र./दिनांक, ग्राम का नाम, अनुमानित लागत. Lists items for MITHLAPUR and VREDRANAGAR-I.

उपरोक्त कार्य की निविदा की सामान्य शर्तें, धरोहर राशि, विस्तृत निविदा विज्ञापन दस्तावेज व अन्य जानकारी ई-प्रोक्योरमेंट वेब पोर्टल http://eproc.cgstate.gov.in से डाउनलोड की जा सकती है।

कार्यपालन अभियंता लोक स्वास्थ्य यांत्रिकी खाण्ड बलरामपुर (छ.ग.) G-67983/2

कार्यालय - कार्यपालन अभियंता लोक स्वास्थ्य यांत्रिकी, खाण्ड - जशपुर (छत्तीसगढ़)

ई-प्रोक्योरमेंट निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना

एकीकृत पंजीयन प्रणाली अंतर्गत उपयुक्त श्रेणी में पंजीकृत ठेकेदारों से निम्नलिखित कार्य हेतु ऑनलाईन (Online) निविदा आमंत्रित की जाती है :- कार्य का नाम : जशपुर जिले के निम्नलिखित विकासखण्डों में एकल ग्राम नलजल प्रदाय योजना FHTC 320 नग अनुमति 83 से 75 मी. व्यास के HDPE पाईप 20 मि व्यास के कंबोयिड पाईप एवं 80 मि. व्यास के यू. पी.डी.सी. पाईप 6&10 kg/cm², स्टेरिल सहित प्रदाय कर जोड़ने, बिजली, इन्टरकनेक्शन टेस्टिंग क्लोरोनेटर स्थापना, क्लोरोनेटर रूम, स्वीच रूम, रेवेनेज, धरलू नल कनेक्शन एवं अन्य संबंधित समस्त कार्य, 6 माह ड्रायल रन सहित स्वीकृत शेड्यूल अनुसार।

Table with 5 columns: क्र., निविदा क्र./दिनांक/सिस्टम नम्बर, योजना का नाम, अनुमानित लागत (राशि ₹. लाख में), अमानत (राशि ₹. में). Lists various FHTC projects.

उपरोक्त निर्माण कार्य की ऑनलाईन (Online) निविदा दिनांक 04.03.2022 तक आमंत्रित की जाती है। जल जीवन मिशन कार्य की सामान्य शर्तें, विस्तृत निविदा विज्ञापन, निविदा दस्तावेज व अन्य जानकारी ई-प्रोक्योरमेंट वेब पोर्टल https://eproc.cgstate.gov.in पर देखी जा सकती है। कार्यपालन अभियंता लोक स्वास्थ्य यांत्रिकी खाण्ड, जशपुर (छत्तीसगढ़) G-67966/2



CENTRAL Chronicle

Established 1974 Volume 47 No. 138

Singapore's flawed democracy

India objected to Singapore prime minister Lee Hsien Loong's remarks referring to criminal charges on Indian lawmakers. The high commissioner of Singapore to India, Simon Wong was called by the ministry of external affairs over Loong's remarks. The Singapore PM had invoked Jawaharlal Nehru while highlighting how democracy should work in the city-state during a debate in parliament. He said each succeeding generation must protect and build upon the system that Singapore has inherited. Apparently, the dynastic Singapore PM gave examples of India and Israel regarding instability in politics and justify his People's Action Party rule in a flawed democracy. Technically Singapore is a democratic country but when we go to the roots of it we realize that it is not a democracy. The election department is not an independent body. It depends upon the Prime Minister Office which is controlled by the Cabinet and Prime Minister. No consideration of people's point of view or opinion is considered or preferred. The government of Singapore makes huge profits, it's totally not like India. In the whole of Southeast Asia, Singapore is the only country that practiced uninterrupted elections. In 1959, after World War II, Singapore became an independent government but it was still a part of Malaysia. In 1965, it became fully self-independent. This self government means that governance everywhere only not in the matters of foreign policy and defence. Singapore got its independence from British ruling in 1963 as a federation of Malaysia. The Singapore government takes concern regarding the laws and hence punishes them as the place value more towards the ideology. After the UK Westminster, the Singapore parliament was set up. Singapore does not follow Western Liberal Democracy. A better aspect of democracy is called illiberal democracy and this is what Singapore follows.

It means governance, the citizens are not aware of the real power and without knowing that they took part in the election every time. According to EIU Democracy Index, Singapore is at the bottom of the list of 'flawed democracies' below Thailand and above Guyana. Guyana is the last state in the flawed democracies list. The next closest category is 'hybrid regime,' with Bangladesh and El Salvador topping the list. But while Singapore remains an alluring success story to much of the outside world, Singaporeans themselves are starting to question the long-term viability of their longstanding adherence to elite governance, meritocracy, the primacy of growth and state paternalism. The Singapore consensus has been underpinned by the notion of vulnerability, that because of its small size, lack of natural resources, ethnic and religious diversity, and geographic location in a potentially volatile region, the city-sized nation is inherently and immutably vulnerable. From this existentially anguished reality, a developmental belief system emerged. Its tenets include a strict academic meritocracy as the best way to sort talent, elite governance insulated from the short-termism and myopia of ordinary democratic pressures, the primacy of growth, delivered through a heavy dependence on foreign labour and capital, an acceptance of the need to equalize opportunities but not outcomes and an indifference to inequality, as reflected in the state's aversion to welfare. Income and wealth inequalities in Singapore are among the highest in the developed world, while the cost of living has spiralled in recent years. For many of its residents, the country's impressive material achievements have not translated into higher levels of happiness or well-being. In various surveys, Singaporeans are found to work some of the longest hours in the developed world and are described as one of the world's least happy peoples. Almost three-quarters are afraid to get sick because of perceived high healthcare costs. By failing to adapt to these new socioeconomic and political realities, Singapore has set the scene for a fierce clash between competing societal and political visions.

Putin's demands

The United States and other NATO countries are yet unwilling to perceive Russia's key security demands adequately. Russian President Vladimir Putin said after talks with his Belarusian counterpart Alexander Lukashenko. Russia's draft "Treaty between the United States of America and the Russian Federation on Security Guarantees" listed more than a dozen demands, including no NATO membership to all states of the former USSR, including the Baltic states which have been members of the alliance since 2004, it prohibits NATO to expand further eastward. Further, the US can't fly bombers or deploy warships, armed forces or armaments, in areas outside of its national airspace and national territorial waters, including within the framework of NATO respectively, such deployment could be perceived by Russia as a threat to its national security. It asks the US to remove all its nuclear weapons from Europe, and halt deploying ground-launched intermediate-range and shorter-range missiles outside of its territory. While Russia expects NATO and the US to comply with its demands, Moscow, in return, has offered only a vague commitment to "not create conditions or situations that threaten the national security of the other parties".

The draft treaty imposes no requirements for Moscow to redeploy Russian forces. The Geneva talks between Russia and the US were followed by other sessions in Brussels with NATO and Vienna with Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) delegates, aimed at averting a crisis. But at all three meetings, there was no sign of progress from either side. It seems that Putin's obsession with Ukraine is due to both strategic and historical factors. The Russian-Ukrainian ties date back to even before the emergence of the Soviet Union and even before the days of the Russian Empire beginning in the 18th century, which was the birthplace of the first Russian state in the 9th Century. Further, Putin wants to stem his country's decline in global influence. Moscow's leverage in places like Ukraine is one way to preserve that influence. Ukraine is also a key component of Russia's plans for a Eurasian customs union with some other former Soviet states. Ukraine's move toward the Western bloc in the name of having a democratic state has made the Russian establishment feel betrayed.

CARPET OF SNOWDROPS



People walk amongst a carpet of snowdrop flowers in the grounds of Burton Agnes Hall, near Bridlington, northern England.

New era of prosperity for India-UAE trade

TA AL ZEYUDI & PIYUSH GOYAL



India and UAE have decided for a shared vision for a better future. As we look back on 2021 and forward through 2022, it is clear that our two nations are at a historic inflection point. The UAE is celebrating its Year of the 50th and has laid out its vision for the next 50 years of growth. India is also celebrating Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav on the 75th anniversary of its independence and is marching ahead on its long-term development journey with renewed vigour and enthusiasm. Not long ago in 2017, a historic decision was taken by the leaders of our two countries to elevate our relationship into a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership. Since then, our time-tested relationship, rooted in a similar outlook, a deep affinity and enduring understanding, has blossomed into a strong and multi-faceted bilateral cooperation, positively impacting the lives of millions of our peoples.

This special relationship continues to evolve and adapt to the challenges of a complex and uncertain world, particularly in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. The fortitude and resilience of our nations, and more importantly the depth of our friendship, has shone through in the face of adversity. We have worked together to promote peace, harmony, co-existence and prosperity for all communities. Our resolute focus has been on making progress for our peoples and the wider world

through efficient utilization of trade, technology, talent and tourism. An example is the UAE's successful hosting of Expo 2020 despite the pandemic, with India playing its role with an inspirational pavilion that has captured the national spirit and captivated visitors.

Today, our strategic partnership is on the verge of a paradigm shift. As we explore the multitude of possibilities for collaborative growth and development in a post-COVID era, we, once again, have a shared vision to take our partnership to the next level. Our shared vision will forge a partnership that is future ready with a special focus on cooperation in newer and emerging areas like sustainability, climate action, innovation, digitalization, startups, food and energy security, health, fin-tech and skilling. India and UAE are making a share history. Just five months ago, we came together with a shared sense of hope and optimism for the historic task at hand: commencing talks on a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) that would not just create enormous opportunities for trade, commerce and investments but also contribute to a sustained global recovery at a tough but potentially transformative time.

The mutual desire for progress and an unwavering commitment to deliver far-reaching benefits to people in both countries ran deep on both sides. This joint sense of pur-

pose inspired the trajectory of talks, which progressed at an exceptionally quick pace even against the challenges of the prevailing pandemic. Today, the agreement stands signed, sealed and delivered. The stage is set for a new era of prosperity and strategic cooperation between the UAE and India that will take both nations to a new level. India and UAE are on path to unlocking immediate and future growth. The direct rewards are clear for both nations. Bilateral trade will grow to USD 100 billion in five years, twice the pre-pandemic level. Enhanced market access will benefit all stakeholders, including exporters, importers and consumers alike; essential, high-skilled professionals will enjoy greater flexibility; and hundreds of thousands of new employment opportunities will be created for the benefit of the people of our two countries.

Indian businesses will gain improved market access in many product lines, particularly in labour-intensive sectors such as gems and jewellery, textiles, leather, footwear, plastics, agricultural products, engineering goods, and pharmaceuticals. On the other hand, exporters from the UAE will gain enhanced access to India's large market especially for products like petroleum, metals, minerals, chemicals and petrochemicals. Downstream industries in India like plastics, gems and jewellery, will in turn derive benefits from lower priced inputs. Our people have enjoyed centuries of seamless movement between our two countries. This CEPA will enable India's professionals to find enhanced opportunities in the UAE and shine on the global stage. Both sides will also benefit from UAE's location as a strategic gateway to the Middle East, Africa, Europe and other regions. All forms of capital, financial, technological and human will flow in both directions with a new and more efficient framework. India's focus on

public capital investment helping to bring in private investment as reflected in its latest Budget should provide good opportunities for UAE investments to benefit from India's growth.

Micro, small and medium-sized enterprises will also find it easier to go global. India and the UAE have attractive, competitive and complementary startup ecosystems, and a golden era of entrepreneurship is emerging from various States and cities of India, including Bangalore, Mumbai, New Delhi, to business hubs in the UAE like Abu Dhabi and Dubai. Our CEPA offers startups access to new customers, networks and opportunities, and provides improved mechanisms as launchpads to scale at speed. India and UAE are committed to an energizing future. Our two countries share a very close relationship in the energy sector. We remain committed to a timely, equitable and just energy transition for a cleaner and greener future. Our relationship in the petroleum and natural gas sector is unique with mutual investments in both countries. The UAE is also the only country to participate in India's strategic petroleum reserves.

We are both pursuing dynamic new trade and investment policies. India hopes to see its exports exceed USD 400 billion in 2022. Our growing bilateral trade will play an integral role in the UAE's efforts to double the size of its economy by 2030. The destinies of the UAE and India have been inextricably intertwined for centuries. A closer collaboration, anchored in friendship, trust and the spirit of entrepreneurship, will create limitless opportunities for our economies, for our industries, our cities and our people, now and for generations to come. This is the Vision that we aspire to.

(TA Al Zeyoudi is UAE's MoS for Foreign Trade and Piyush Goyal is India's Commerce Minister.)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Cannot blame

I can't blame the Assam Chief Minister (CM) Himanta Biswa Sarma, who has kicked up a storm at an election rally in Uttarakhand by hit out at Congress leader Rahul Gandhi for allegedly questioning the 2016 surgical strike against terrorists across the Line of Control (LoC), and 'demanded proof of the strike. Did we ever ask you for proof of whether you are Rajiv Gandhi's son or not?' Because, it's the tradition of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and its leaders like Prime Minister (PM) Narendra Modi or CM, ministers and leaders. Then how would Himanta Sarma be an exception? How one forgets that on November, 2017 this Sarma as an Assam health minister shocked by saying that people suffer from life-threatening cancer diseases because of sins committed in the past which he called "divine justice". Hence there is nothing wrong if one believes that BJP should give some classes to its Ministers, MPs and MLAs about where they should speak. Whatsoever, what Sarma said is not only highly deplorable but makes a personal attack on Rahul Gandhi, his father Rajiv Gandhi and his mother Sonia Gandhi! Is there any need to provoke family in a political agenda? It shows how low BJP party members can go for the sake of power and what a rogue mindset they have. People wonder as an opposition leader, if one doubts, is Rahul not right to ask for the proof of anything that the government claims? Actually, Himanta Biswa Sarma, a political turncoat still tries to appease their masters (even after becoming CM) by being very hostile to his earlier bosses (particularly Rahul Gandhi, his political foe). That's the essence of the present diatribe.

Bidyut K Chatterjee, Faridabad

Rich people survive

We all have seen the horror created by the two waves of Covid-19. Along with that, we have also suffered economic and social problems due to the pandemic. So, we were not ready to face the third wave. The two lockdowns taught us that, the rich people survive, but the poor lose their lives. The price of essential goods and even car fare increased during the lockdown. But the ruling party did not stand with the public. So it's easily predicted how the situation will be in future. The government has issued some restrictions regarding Covid. Had the strictness been implemented at the beginning of the third wave, we could have got respite to some extent. The last two years have been a bad experience for us but we have not learnt anything from that. A fine is imposed for not wearing a mask in many states. Some educated people don't use masks here. We dream of the classroom more than online learning. More than the election campaign, we are sensitive to those families whose members committed suicide during the lockdown due to poverty. So, we hope to not see the bad days again. In a democratic country, people create pressure on the government. But sometimes, we can bring the change by ourselves. If we boycott election rallies, campaigns the chances of a new restrictions will decrease at least a little.

Liza, via email



WHAT THEY TWEET!



Shubhangi@ItsShubhangi
Trudeau's unprecedented move to invoke national emergency powers in peacetime has not been received well by the Canadian Civil Liberties Association which condemned his moves. 'Emergency legislation should not be normalized. It threatens our democracy and our civil liberties.'

Rosie Roti@supriyan
If an Indian company worked on producing a cheap effective sunscreen for Indian skin, for women who walk/take public transit to work, that doesn't make your face feel like it's bathed in oil OR rubbed in chalk, I feel like it would be a fairly exciting healthcare innovation?



Devinder Sharma @Devinder_Sharma
A annoyed farmer called from Shamli in Uttar Pradesh to say that he had gone to the lead bank to check the status of 3% interest subvention due on his #KisanCreditCard. He has been told that the interest subvention stands withdrawn. Now they have to pay back at 7% interest.

Bharati Chaturvedi @Bharati09

Young gent frm Bihar borrowd Rs. 2 lakh frm d village moneylender in Motihari, #bihar. In 1 yr, he's paid 1,20,000 interest. No bank gave him a loan. I lent him money to close this. The rich steal crores, d poor can't get a tiny sum to save them frm selling their land n cows.



rockma@rockyandmayur
Wanna guess where our next lunch video is going to be.



Jeff M@Cold_Peace_
Many Indian accounts I follow are mostly quiet on the Ukraine crisis. They feel some sense of loyalty to their old friend, Russia, but don't believe the nonsense that Moscow is the victim here or that an invasion of Ukraine is justified. So they're mostly trying to stay out of it.

Amey@AmeyVNamjoshi
Kaka this is reality. My youngest daughter lives in New York. My youngest son lives in Chicago. My eldest son and daughter-in-law live in Toronto. Wow, great! You are so lucky! Where do you live? I live in the old age home! Reality in cities like Pune and Bengaluru.

BRIEF

Appointed



New Delhi: Japanese auto major Honda on Saturday said it has appointed Takuya Tsumura as the new President & CEO of Honda Cars India Ltd (HCIL) with effect from April 1, 2022. The appointment comes as part of the management changes announced annually by Honda Motor Co Ltd. Tsumura, 54, will take over from Gaku Nakanishi, who moves from India to regional headquarters in Asia and Oceania region - Asian Honda as General Manager, Automobile Business for the region.

Doorstep

New Delhi: As the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) enters the seventh year of implementation with the upcoming Kharif season, the government said it will launch a doorstep distribution drive to deliver crop insurance policies to farmers. The doorstep campaign 'Meri Policy Mere Hath' aims to ensure all farmers are well aware and equipped with all information on their policies, land records, the process of claim and grievance redressal under the PMFBY, the Agriculture Ministry said. The doorstep campaign will be launched in all implementing states in the upcoming Kharif season beginning June, the ministry said in a statement.

Domestic

Mumbai: Focus on domestic business will help the tourism and hospitality sector recover from the adverse impact of the pandemic, Indian Hotels Company Ltd (IHCL) Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer Puneet Chhatwal said. "We need to focus more and more on domestic business, leisure or non-leisure. If we do that, this opportunity that has come because of COVID, will make India a 12-month destination. "Our industry has always operated on 40 per cent business in H1 and 60 per cent in H2 and I think both this 40 per cent and 60 per cent can go up significantly and narrow the gap with the focus on domestic (business)," Chhatwal said at the virtual 4th edition of CII Real Estate Confluence.

Long-distance

Mumbai: The Mahindra group, Tiger Global and Sequoia-backed Porter, an on-demand intra-city last-mile logistics aggregator, is entering the long distance, inter-city segment as well as offering packers & movers service. It also plans to expand to 25 cities this year from 15 cities now. The Uber of last-mile logistics was founded by three IIT-Kharagpur graduates - Pranav Goel, Uttam Digga, and Vikas Choudhary - in 2014 in Bengaluru, and has more than doubled its footprint in 2021 to 15 cities from just six cities in the previous year.

EV charging stations expand 2.5 times in 9 mega cities

New Delhi, Feb 19 (PTI):

Electric vehicle (EV) charging stations have expanded by two-and-a-half times across nine mega cities, including Delhi, Mumbai and Chennai, in the last four months, the power ministry said on Saturday.

Efforts by the government resulted in 2.5 times increase in charging stations in Surat, Pune, Ahmedabad, Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Delhi, Kolkata, Mumbai, and Chennai in the last four months, a power ministry statement said.

According to the statement, additional 678 public EV charging stations were installed between October 2021 and January 2022 in these nine cities. About 940 of India's 1,640 public EV chargers are located in these cities.



The government has increased its focus initially on the nine mega cities with population of over 4 million.

The Ministry of Power recently issued the revised consolidated Guidelines and Standards for EV charging infrastructure on January 14, 2022.

The Government of India has undertaken multiple initiatives to promote the manufacturing and adoption of electric vehicles in the country.

With the considerable expansion in the public EV charging infrastructure, the electric vehicles have started penetrating the Indian market, it stated.

The government has made 360-degree efforts to enhance public charging infrastructure by involving private and public agencies (BEE, EESL, PGCL, NTPC, etc.). Many private organisations have

also come forward to install EV charging stations to develop convenient charging network grid to gain consumers' confidence.

After the saturation of EV infrastructure in these mega cities, the government has plans to expand the coverage to other cities in a phased manner.

Oil marketing companies have announced the setting up of 22,000 EV charging stations in prominent cities and on national highways across the country.

Out of 22,000 EV charging stations, 10,000 will be installed by IOCL (Indian Oil), 7,000 will be installed by Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd. (BPCL), and the rest of 5,000 will be installed by Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd. (HPCL).

Duty-free access for jewellery sector to get huge export boost

New Delhi Feb 19 (PTI):



The domestic jewellery sector will get a huge export boost in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) market as it would get duty-free access there, while the gulf nation will get greater access to the gold market here as India will give duty concessions on import of up to 200 tonnes, Commerce Secretary B V R Subrahmanyam said on Saturday.

India has agreed to concessional import duties on gold imports of up to 200 tonnes per year. India imported about 70 tonnes of gold from the UAE in 2020-21. "We are a major importer of gold. India imports about 800 tonnes of gold every year. In this particular agreement, we have given them (UAE) a TRQ (tariff rate quota) of 200 tonnes where the tariff (or import duty) in perpetuity will be one per cent less

than whatever is the tariff charged for the rest of the world.

"Therefore, the UAE has a one per cent price advantage in gold bars. That one per cent tariff difference means those 200 tonnes will be diverted to the UAE," the secretary told reporters here. He said the biggest gain for India is "that we get zero duty access" to the UAE market for domestic jewellery. There was a five per cent duty on Indian jewellery and now, "it's gone to zero", so the gem and jewellery sector is "gung-ho", he added. TRQ is a quota for a volume of imports that enter India at specified tariffs. After the quota is

reached, a higher tariff applies on additional imports. TRQ would also be there for copper, polyethylene and polypropylene.

India and the UAE signed a comprehensive economic partnership agreement (CEPA), under which a number of domestic goods will get zero duty access to the UAE market. The pact may come into force in April or May. When asked about the inclusion of the digital trade chapter in the agreement, the secretary said that for the first time, this sector is there in the trade agreement signed by India and it shows that India is ready to talk on this bilaterally. "There will be a lot of harmonisation in regulatory standards on how you manage digital trade between India and UAE... We (India) are discussing digital trade or e-commerce with the European Union, Australia, UK and Canada," he said.

Disclosure framework proposed for IPOs of loss-making cos

New Delhi, Feb 19 (PTI):

Markets watchdog Sebi proposed that loss-making new age technology companies planning to list their shares should make disclosures about their key performance indicators considered for arriving at the basis of issue price in offer documents.

Besides, such companies should make disclosures about their valuations based on issuance of new shares and acquisition of shares in the past 18 months before filing draft offer documents, according to a consultation paper. The move comes against the backdrop of many new age companies, that do not have a track record of having an oper-



ating profit at least in the preceding three years, tapping the Initial Public Offering (IPO) route to raise funds.

Such firms generally remain loss-making for a longer period before achieving break-even as they opt for ways to gain scale of operations rather than profits in the initial years. The Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) has sought comments from the public on

the consultation paper till March 5.

At present, the 'Basis of Issue Price' section in an offer document covers disclosures of traditional parameters such as key accounting ratios. These include Earnings Per Share (EPS), price to earnings, return on net worth and net asset value of the company as well as comparison of such accounting ratios with its peers.

According to Sebi, these parameters are typically descriptive of companies which are profit making and do not relate to a loss-making firm. These parameters may not aid investors in taking investment decisions with respect to an loss-making issuer.

Global demand boosts cotton price

Coimbatore, Feb 19 (PTI):

The farm gate price of good quality cotton during March to June this year would be between Rs 7,500 to Rs 8,000 per quintal, according to a market survey conducted by Tamil Nadu Agricultural University here. Increase in demand due to higher consumption estimates across the globe, increased exports from India along with minimal opening stock caused the price of cotton to rule on the higher side from November 2021 till date. Since there are good chances for prices to increase, considering the continuation of current market sentiments, the farmers can store and sell the cotton during March-June and encouraged to take their Maasipattam (Feb-March) sowing decision based on the market advisory.

RRA recommends withdrawal of 100 more circulars

Mumbai, Feb 19 (PTI):

The Reserve Bank said the Regulations Review Authority has recommended withdrawing about 100 more redundant circulars, besides elimination of certain paper based returns, a move expected to ease compliance for regulated entities.

The Reserve Bank of India has set up the Regulations Review Authority (RRA 2.0) with an objective to reduce the compliance burden on regulated entities (REs).

Meanwhile, the central bank also issued several notifications withdrawing the circulars, and discontinuation/merger/online submissions of returns.

The RRA had recom-



mended withdrawal of 150 circulars in the first tranche of recommendations in November last year. "In continuation of the exercise, RRA has now recommended withdrawal of additional 100 circulars in the second tranche of recommendations," the RBI said in a statement.

Further, on the suggestions of an internal group (chairman - O P Mall, executive director) the RRA

has recommended elimination of paper-based returns and has identified 65 regulatory returns which would either be discontinued/ merged with other returns or would be converted into online returns.

The RRA has also recommended creation of a separate web page 'Regulatory Reporting' in the RBI website to consolidate information relating to regulatory reporting and return submission by the regulated entities at a single source.

"These recommendations are expected to ease regulatory compliance for the regulated entities while improving the accuracy, speed and quality of data submission," the central bank said.

PLI scheme to unlock India's manufacturing capacity

New Delhi, Feb 19 (PTI):

The government's ambitious production-linked incentive (PLI) scheme will look to unlock manufacturing capacity as well as support in attracting about Rs 4 lakh crore of capital expenditure over the next five years, rating agency Icra said. With an aim to boost manufacturing, employment generation, import reduction and exports growth, the PLI scheme covers strategically significant sectors that have seen surging demand (solar, semiconductors/electronics, automobiles etc), and are critical to developing manufacturing capabilities (semiconductors, telecom gears, medical devices). Rohit Ahuja, Head of Research and Outreach, Icra, said, "Manufacturing capex forms around 20-25 per cent of the total capex in India currently.



The PLI scheme, launched with the aim of incentivising manufacturing, is estimated to attract a capex of approximately Rs 4 lakh crore over the next five years."

It has the potential to generate employment for millions (skilled and unskilled labour) in India, Icra said. Also, incremental revenues of Rs 35-40 lakh crore are expected over the next five years due to a reduction in net imports. Sectors under which the PLI scheme has been announced currently constitute 40 per cent of the total imports.

Metaverse to push data usage by 20 times in next 10 years

New Delhi, Feb 19 (PTI):

The transition of digital ecosystem to metaverse, where a person will feel immersed in a virtual world, will push data usage by 20 times across the globe by 2032 and telecom operators Bharti Airtel and Reliance Jio are suitably placed to benefit from the surge in India, a Credit Suisse report has said.

The report said metaverse has enormous potential to further expand screen time and drive more bandwidth consumption. "Internet traffic is already 80 per cent video and has been growing at a 30 per cent CAGR (compound annual growth rate). Our team projects that even modest metaverse usage could drive a



further 37 per cent CAGR in the next decade to 20x current data usage," the report said. Augmented reality and virtual reality technologies are expected to see a boom as these are the technologies that are required for accessing the metaverse.

According to the report, while 5G will support the metaverse ecosystem, the emergence of 6G will enhance metaverse use cases. It said the gaming segment is one of the segments where early use cases of metaverse are ex-

pected. The report mentioned that gaming is at an early stage in India and mobile gaming is being driven by mobile phones due to the emergence of affordable smartphones and 4G data services.

"Mobile internet remains the key medium for Indian users to go online, given relatively low fixed broadband penetration. The share of mobile gaming in online games is expected to increase in future," the report said.

The report added that India is one of the leading countries in the world in terms of number of hours spent on mobile per day but it has low penetration of fixed broadband compared to global peers, which will be key to realise the full potential of metaverse.

KSUM partners with Google for startups to foster global links

Thiruvananthapuram, Feb 19 (PTI):

Kerala Startup Mission (KSUM) has announced a collaboration with tech giant Google for local startups to connect with the global startup community.

This wider network enables local startups to leverage Google's programme comprising mentorship and training of startup teams to help scale up their solutions.

The partnership was announced Paul Ravindranath, Head of Google for Startups Accelerator, India, at the Huddle Global' conclave of KSUM that kicked off here on Saturday.

The collaboration will enable Kerala's startups to join a wider network to leverage Google's programme comprising men-

torship and training of startup teams for scaled-up solutions, an official statement said here.

The pact comes when markets outside of Silicon Valley are expected to increasingly impact the global startup and technology ecosystem in the coming years. While it is easier than ever to start a firm, access to successful methodologies, expert mentors and best practices for building companies remain unevenly distributed.

Ravindranath, who is also Google's Programme Manager (Developer Relations), said the company's path-breaking programme is about empowering startup communities around the world and help them leverage each other for insights and resource sharing.

Dollar millionaires in India rise 11% in pandemic-hit 2021

■ Less happy than last year

Mumbai, Feb 19 (PTI):

Dollar millionaires or those possessing a personal wealth of over Rs 7 crore rose by 11 per cent to 4.58 lakh households in India at the end of the pandemic-hit 2021, as per a survey.

The survey of 350 such dollar millionaires also indicated that the number of those who classify themselves as happy in personal and professional lives slipped to 66 per cent in 2021, down from 72 per cent in the previous year.

The Hurun Report findings on the dollar millionaires come at a time when



there is rising concern about the growing inequality in the country with a population of over 130 crore. A recently released report by non-profit Oxfam pegged the wealth of top 100 richest Indians at USD 775 billion, and added that India accounted for 4.6 crore or half of the overall people on the planet falling into extreme poverty in 2021.

The report estimated the number of Indian dol-

lar millionaires to increase by 30 per cent to touch 6 lakh households by 2026.

Mumbai is home to the largest number of dollar millionaires at 20,300 households, followed by Delhi at 17,400 and Kolkata with 10,500, it said.

At a time when calls for taxing the super-rich are growing Oxfam advocated higher taxation to save lives - less than a third among those surveyed felt paying taxes is a determinant of social responsibility, the report by Hurun said. Similarly, when calls for greater help through philanthropy are growing, only 19 per cent of the millionaires surveyed by Hurun said they believe in giving back to society.

Guidelines on EPR for plastic packaging notified

New Delhi, Feb 19 (PTI):

Taking forward the clarion call given by Prime Minister Narendra Modi to eliminate single-use plastics, the environment ministry has notified comprehensive guidelines on Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) for plastic packaging, Union Environment Minister Bhupendra Yadav said.

Announcing the notification of the new Plastic Waste Management (Amendment) Rules, 2022 through social media, Yadav said the guidelines provide a framework to strengthen the circular economy of plastic packaging waste and promote alternatives to plastic.

Industry welcomes National Hydrogen Policy

New Delhi, Feb 19 (PTI):

Renewable energy companies have welcomed National Hydrogen Policy but sought clarity on charges for intra-state wheeling of electricity.

Manoj K Upadhyay, founder and chairman, ACME Group said, the policy is the first concrete step in the direction of creating a favourable regulatory and enabling environment for the green hydrogen and ammonia sector in India.

"The government has tried to address some of the key demands of the industry in terms of open access, grid banking and faster approvals for green hydrogen and ammonia



projects," he said welcoming the provisions to set up bunkers near ports for the export of green ammonia.

Going forward, it will be important to build upon the first phase of the policy and for the government to subsequently come up with policy measures for initial demand creation by means of mandatory green hydrogen and ammonia purchase obliga-

tions and at the same time, an equivalent of PLI scheme for green ammonia to make India competitive globally, he added.

ReNew Power Chief Commercial Officer Mayank Bansal said the policy is "a very good step in the right direction as India looks to become a net-zero economy by 2070 and will add to the momentum to that crucial goal."



He has ruled the silver screen for over three decades and is now set to step into the digital world with the upcoming series 'Rudra - The Edge of Darkness', an Indian adaptation of the Idris Elba-starrer 'Luther'. Bollywood superstar Ajay Devgn does not worry about comparisons between the two as he says he has never aped anyone.

The 52-year-old star revealed the reason on why he chose 'Rudra - The Edge of Darkness' by Rajesh Mapuskar for his digital debut.

Ajay, who has given back-to-back blockbusters such as 'Singham', 'Golmaal', 'Tanhaji: The Unsung Warrior', 'Ishq' and 'Gangaajal' to name a few, said that Rudra is cool and super sharp.

Ajay said: "I like the idea of a cop who beat criminals at their game because he's able to stay ahead of them. He's not a gun-toting guy, he's more a mind-game kind of policeman. Rudra is cool, yet super-sharp."

Helmed by ace director Rajesh Mapuskar, this riveting psychological crime drama. The six-episode series is an Indian rendition of the globally successful British series, 'Luther'.

The series has a dark and complex narrative that is an idiosyncratic race-against-the-clock thriller delving into the psyche of highly-intelligent criminals and the detective who hunts them. Since it is a remake of 'Luther', comparisons would follow.

Does that come as an added pressure?

Ajay said that it is a "re-imagined Indian version" of 'Luther'.

The actor added: "I like the original and I liked Idris Elba in it. As far as comparisons go, I have never aped anyone. After 30 years of acting, you can only be yourself. So, it's ridiculous to draw parallels. But I can hardly change the way people think. It's their prerogative."

Ajay feels no pressure about his work in the upcoming series.

"My job is doing something with complete honesty. Honesty doesn't come with any kind of pressure," he concluded. Produced by Applause Entertainment in association with

BBC Studios India, the crime drama starring Ajay Devgn, Raashi Khanna, Esha Deol, Atul Kulkarni, Ashwini Kalsekar, Tarun Gahlot, Ashish Vidyarthi, and Satyadeep Misra in pivotal roles, is set to release on March 4 on Disney+ Hotstar. It will be released in Hindi, Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, Marathi, Malayalam, and Bengali.

Ajay Devgn: I have never aped anyone

I do not want to repeat myself as an actor: Huma Qureshi

Huma Qureshi, who has some versatile roles lined up in her upcoming projects, including the just-released web series 'Mithya', says she has a strategy of not repeating herself or playing the same kind of character in the projects she signs.

Whether playing an accidental politician Rani Bharti in the web series 'Maharani', a pivotal part in the Hollywood flick 'Army of the Dead', Shalini in Deepa Mehta's web series 'Leila', a Hindi teacher in 'Mithya', making a special appearance in the Alia Bhatt-starrer 'Gangubai Kathiawadi', or landing a role in south superstar Ajith's upcoming film 'Valimai' -- Huma is consistently choosing different kind of characters for each of her projects.

Huma said, "That is the whole idea, I do not want to repeat myself as an actor. When I interact with the media or my fans, they get to see how I am in real life. When they

see me on-screen, every time I want them to say, 'Hey but this is not Huma!' Because I want to put myself out of my comfort zone and find challenge in every character I play."

She went on to add, "I have no other drive but to prove myself in every film and series that I do, because I am living my dream. I am still that girl from Delhi with the dream of pretending to be someone else, wearing different clothes, posing in front of the mirror, using her mother's dupatta and lipstick!"

"I used to do that as a child, and I am still doing the same. To become someone else was the most fascinating part for me, and that's why I wanted to be an actor. The child inside me is just as alive as she was."

The actress is also working on the new season of the web series 'Maharani', Netflix series 'Monica, O My Darling' and the film 'Double XL'.



Salman Khan, Katrina Kaif resume shooting for 'Tiger 3' in Delhi

Bollywood stars Salman Khan and Katrina Kaif have started shooting for a new schedule for the third installment of the 'Tiger' franchise in the national capital. The actors have been pictured during their shoot.

Their images have taken social media and fan clubs across platforms have been sharing pictures of the superstar.

A fan named @katter_salmania shared a picture where the 'Dabangg' star and Katrina are seen taking a shot for the film. The two are fully dressed in their spy costumes. It seems they were shooting for an action sequence in the capital.

The third instalment in the 'Tiger' franchise, which is directed by Maneesh Sharma, was put on hold due to the global outbreak of Covid-19.

The first instalment 'Ek Tha Tiger' directed by Kabir Khan released in 2012. The second 'Tiger Zinda Hai' released in 2017 and was directed by Ali Abbas Zafar.



Pooja Entertainment announce their film in the Metaverse

From being the most talked about subject in 2021 to actually becoming present day reality, Metaverse is the new big thing that uses AR and VR to create spaces for rich user interaction mimicking the real world. Paris Hilton, Snoop Dogg have been a few celebs who have bought virtual space in the Metaverse. Pioneering the movement in India and Indian entertainment is none other than Pooja Entertainment. Pooja Entertainment has bought their first virtual land in the Metaverse becoming the first ever production house to have stepped into this exciting new universe.

Called Poojaverse - this space will be a virtual space for the makers to create first-of-its-kind quality immersive experiences for viewers starting with their recently announced project "BadeMiyan ChoteMiyan" making it the first ever Indian film to be announced within the Metaverse.

Being the visionaries and industry leaders that they are, head honchos Deepshikha Deshmukh and Jacky Bhagnani have left no stone unturned not just to own this pioneering digital endeavor but also to make the experience a power-packed one for audiences. While other players globally are still contemplating this new avenue, Pooja Entertainment has already owned this exciting prospect and brought it to life in their own inimitable manner.

The announcement video of 'Bade Miyan Chote Miyan' has "blockbuster" written all over it and has created major buzz across all platforms, leaving its fans enthralled.

Dharmendra graces the sets of 'India's Got Talent'

Mumbai : This weekend, get ready for a special 'Yaadon ki Baarat' and go back to the good old days of Bollywood with a 'Yamla Pagla Deewana' episode!

Sony Entertainment Television's talent reality show, India's Got Talent, will be welcoming its very first celebrity guest of the season! Take a trip down nostalgia lane with a special guest - the celebrated and veteran Bollywood actor, Dharmendra ji for the 'Dharam ji Special' episode!

Whether it be Shilpa Shetty Kundra who literally gives her heart to the 'Romance King' of Bollywood or the Demolition Crew destroying the stage with their dhamakedaar perform-



ance, the weekend episodes will make you want to glue your eyes to your television screens! Watch on as the Top 14 contestants give tribute to Dharam Ji by performing on some of his

heartfelt moment, judges Shilpa Shetty Kundra and Badshah will be seen getting teary-eyed as contestant Rishabh Chaturvedi croons to 'Aaj Mausam Bada Baeiman Hai' from the 1973 classic 'Loafer'.

Not only this, Dharam ji and Kirron Kher will also be seen recreating the famous scene from the 1975 blockbuster film Sholay where Dharam Ji aka Veeru teaches Kirron Kher as Basanti to aim. The show will also pay homage to the late singer, composer, and 'King of Disco', the late Bappi Lahiri. So be sure to tune in to the 'Dharam Ji Special' on India's Got Talent, this Saturday & Sunday at 8:00 PM only on Sony Entertainment Television!

HOROSCOPE SUNDAY FEBRUARY 20

Aquarius: Jan 21 - Feb 18

The day begins on high note. You work hard, put your best foot forward and at the end get the final output as per your requirements. Romantic and beautiful, the setting Sun will bring the softer side of your personality to the fore as you will spend the evening with your sweetheart, predicts Ganesh.

Gemini: May 22 - June 21

Today, you may encounter unusual challenges, says Ganesh. You will come up with new thoughts and tactics, which will bring about positive changes and results. Avoid any confrontation with those living around you. Ganesh advises you to keep your cool during the day.

Libra: Sept 23 - Oct 23

Ganesh says that today you shall be very careful in money matters. It is nothing to do with miserliness at all. When buying things you will be careful while spending money and will stick to your budget. On the other hand when you are out with your loved ones you will not think about holding back and will spend lavishly.

Pisces: Feb 19 - Mar 20

For you, today may all be work and no play, says Ganesh. This, however, will not stop you from putting in extra efforts to finish your pending projects and to meet your deadlines. But then who else but a Pisces is known to handle the pain nonchalantly without bemoaning the lack of pleasure?

Cancer: June 22 - July 22

Financially, you may be in a bit of a bother today. Payment of bills, taxes and loans may keep you busy for most part of the day. You may even contemplate borrowing money to meet the demands. However, you are likely to receive one of your pending payments, which will be enough to get you out of the fix.

Scorpio: Oct 24 - Nov 22

It is likely that you shall learn an important lesson in life today. Remember that spite and envy beget enemies. Ganesh advises you to display some errors so as to make you seem more human and approachable.

Aries: Mar 21 - Apr 20

Good news may bring cheer to you today! A job, a wedding, some profit... it could be personal or professional. Giving your best is almost a habit with you, says Ganesh, and it will pay off today.

Leo: July 23 - Aug 23

Today, Ganesh advises you to keep the Bhagavad Gita's verses in mind, and persist in fulfilling your duties without bothering about the fruits of your labour. Put in some extra effort to finish off whatever you undertake today. Patience bears its fruits and they are always sweet.

Sagittarius: Nov 23 - Dec 31

Today shall be a rather decisive day, speculates Ganesh. Situations that have pushed you into a corner will force you to make rash decisions. But take stock of the situation and assess the long-term consequences of your actions beforehand, advises Ganesh.

Taurus: Apr 21 - May 21

It is more than likely that you will emerge victorious in all your meetings and outings today, predicts Ganesh. Your calm temperament will not let you flinch in the face of pressure. It is in your best interest to take some time to cope with all the stress, advises Ganesh.

Virgo: Aug 24 - Sept 22

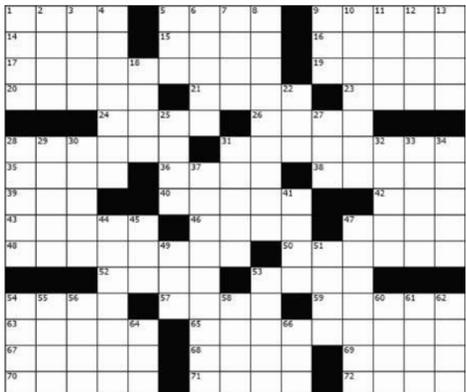
A heady mixture of work and partying is on the cards today. You will make the right decisions today which will prove to be vital in putting you on the road to success. Ganesh says people will profit by engaging you in their work.

Capricorn: Dec 22 - Jan 20

You are a bighearted person and you love to help others in every possible way. But, people may take you for a ride, warns Ganesh. You may realise that if you would have been extra careful, you could have stopped others take advantage of you.

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ACROSS

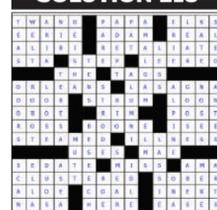
- RR terminals
- Roman garment
- Below
- Feeble, as an excuse
- Baking place
- Home of the Dolphins
- Constitution addition
- Sudden fright
- Pavarotti, e.g.
- Enjoy a book
- Turnstile
- Attentive
- Songstress _____ McEntire
- Canada's capital
- Free from error
- Church seats
- Hide
- Appointments
- Vane letters
- Elude
- Pacino and Gore
- _____ Witherspoon of "Sweet Home Alabama"
- Ancient Peruvian

- She, in Marseille
- Frame of mind
- School playtime
- Summit
- Negotiate
- Look
- Actress _____ Bancroft
- Synagogue figure
- Concerned one
- Plotted
- Ascend
- Long story
- _____ of passage
- Run, as colors
- _____ Moore of "Indecent Proposal"
- Oceans

DOWN

- _____ Carvey of "Wayne's World"
- Send out
- Paddy grain
- Sketch
- Christmas mo.
- Dad
- Baby flower
- Puccini work
- Principle
- Bird sound
- Unattended
- Start of a Dickens title (2 wds.)
- Narrates
- Snaky letters
- Exemplified
- Risk
- Thai
- List abbr.
- Creamy pastries
- _____ Thurman of "Paycheck"
- Marshal Wyatt _____
- Jeans material
- Wound covering
- English nobleman
- Buffalo's lake
- Slangy refusal
- French cheese
- Phi _____ Kappa
- 15th of March
- Apple color
- Physics, e.g. (abbr.)

SOLUTION 218



Sania-Hradecka lose in semifinals



Dubai: Trailblazing Indian tennis star Sania Mirza and her Czech partner Lucie Hradecka fritted away a great opportunity to lose the Dubai Tennis Championships doubles semifinal here. After dominating the first set, Sania and Hradecka lost 6-2 2-6 7-10 to Lyudmyla Kichenok of Ukraine and Latvia's Jelena Ostapenko on Friday night. The Indo-Czech duo, which had received a wild card for the tournament, saved 11 break points while converting two of the three in the first set to take a 1-0 lead in the WTA 500 tournament. However, the two were unable to keep the momentum going as Kichenok and Ostapenko levelled the proceedings in the second set and then eventually sealed the match in their favour. The veteran Indian had won the doubles title here in 2013 with USA's Bethanie Mattek-Sands.

India remain 5th in WTC standings

Dubai: India continued to remain in the fifth spot in the latest World Test Championship standings released by the ICC on Saturday. India, the runners up of the inaugural edition of the WTC, are currently placed fifth in second cycle with a 49.07 percentage of points won (PCT), which is taken into account rather than the points earned. India have played nine Tests in the second cycle of WTC, winning four, losing three and drawing two. They have 53 points, the highest among all teams so far. They will have a chance to improve their standings next month when they host Sri Lanka for two Tests. Sri Lanka lead the standings with 100 PCT, having won both the Tests they have played in this cycle.

Norrie holds off Korda to reach Delray Beach semifinals



Delray Beach: Top-seeded Cameron Norrie reached the semifinals of the Delray Beach Open, beating No. 5 seed Sebastian Korda 6-2, 1-6, 7-6 (4). Korda won the first two points of the deciding tiebreaker, then lost six of the next seven points and couldn't recover. He was a finalist last year. Norrie will face fourth-seeded Tommy Paul in the semifinals. Paul who has dropped only six games in his two matches at Delray so far this year eased past Stefan Kozlov 6-3, 6-1. No. 2 seed and 2020 Delray champion Reilly Opelka also made the semifinals, beating Adrian Mannarino 7-6 (2), 3-6, 6-1. Opelka will face unseeded John Millman, who upset No. 3 seed Grigor Dimitrov 6-4, 6-4 in the last match Friday night. Both semifinal matches are Saturday.

Mumbai to host IOC session in 2023

Mumbai: The International Olympic Committee on Saturday awarded India the right to host the IOC Session in Mumbai next year. Nita Ambani, the Indian representative on the committee, described it as "a significant development for the country's Olympic aspiration". India will host the session for the first time since 1983. The session will be hosted at the state-of-the-art, brand new Jio World Convention Centre. Mumbai received a historic 99% of the votes in favour of its bid from the delegates participating in the process, with 75 members endorsing its candidature in the session held at Beijing. An IOC session is the annual meeting of the members of the IOC, comprising 101 voting members and 45 honorary members. It discusses and decides on the key activities of the global Olympics movement including adoption or amendment of the Olympic Charter, election of IOC members and office bearers and election of the host city of Olympics.

Chandni goes down to Shin Bo in WBO Asia Pacific title clash



New Delhi: Indian professional boxer Chandni Mehra lost to local favourite Shin Bo Mi Re by a TKO (technical knockout) in the WBO Asia Pacific Title fight in Gangwan-do, Korea on Saturday. The 20-year-old Indian took the more fancied Shin Bo all the way until the eighth round before the referee stopped the contest. Both boxers started the fight aggressively with an intent to clearly lay down a marker in the early rounds. It was Chandni's maiden 10 round fight and was always going to be an uphill task considering the Korean had already had over three 10 rounders prior to this clash. The Korean was faster with a wider repertoire of combinations that she could throw. She led with a left hook and followed with solid right hooks which almost every time pierced through Chandni's defences.

Chance for Shreyas and Ruturaj as India look to test bench strength



Kolkata, Feb 19 (PTI):

The series in their bag, India will have the liberty to experiment in the third and final T20I against the West Indies here on Sunday. With Virat Kohli and Rishabh Pant given a 10-day break, the home team is set to finally include the gifted Shreyas Iyer and Ruturaj Gaikwad in the playing XI. Under

Rohit Sharma's captaincy, India secured their third successive series win with an eight-run win over the West Indies in the second T20I here on Friday. With the T20 World Cup scheduled in less than eight months time in Australia, Rohit would look to try out new options, beginning with finding a reserve opener.

New-look middle-order sans Kohli and Pant

With the Sri Lanka T20I series up next, it may not be a bad idea to give Ishan a longer run. In the middle-order, Shreyas will replace Kohli, who has been given a much-needed break ahead of his landmark 100th Test. The former India captain will miss the T20I series against Sri Lanka and return for the Tests against the islanders. Shreyas, who was the third biggest buy at the IPL auction but could not fit into India's T20 combination for the first two matches against the West Indies, will be the obvious choice. Recently appointed as Kolkata Knight Riders skipper, Shreyas had played a match-winning knock during the ODI in Ahmedabad, and he would look to grab the opportunity of playing at the Eden Gardens -- his new "home ground".

Hooda, Avesh, Siraj waiting in the pipeline

Deepak Hooda also impressed after making his debut in the preceding ODI series and it remains to be seen if the big-hitting all-rounder is tried out in the T20Is. In the absence of Jasprit Bumrah and Mohammed Shami, India have so far fielded the pace duo of Bhuvneshwar Kumar and Harshal Patel. Both Bhuvneshwar and Patel have so far delivered the goods, especially in the second match when the former bowled a game-changing penultimate over before the rookie seamer defended 25 runs in the final over to secure a series-clinching win. It remains to be seen whether Rohit would look to alter his bowling combination by bringing in Mohammed Siraj. The uncapped Avesh Khan, too, gives him an option.

Teams (from):

India: Rohit Sharma (captain), Ishan Kishan, Virat Kohli, Shreyas Iyer, Surya Kumar Yadav, Rishabh Pant (wicket-keeper), Venkatesh Iyer, Deepak Chahar, Shardul Thakur, Ravi Bishnoi, Yuzvendra Chahal, Mohammed Siraj, Bhuvneshwar Kumar, Avesh Khan, Harshal Patel, Ruturaj Gaikwad, Deepak Hooda, Kuldeep Yadav and Harpreet Brar.
West Indies: Kieron Pollard (captain), Nicholas Pooran (vice-captain), Fabian Allen, Darren Bravo, Roston Chase, Sheldon Cottrell, Dominic Drakes, Jason Holder, Shai Hope, Akeal Hosein, Brandon King, Rovman Powell, Romario Shepherd, Odean Smith, Kyle Mayers, Hayden Walsh Jr.

Match starts: 7 am IST.

In pursuit of their first win of the tour

Fresh from their thrilling 3-2 victory at home over England, the Windies are yet to win a match in the ongoing tour of India, having lost the preceding ODI series 0-3. In their favourite format, the Kieron Pollard-led side has failed to impress in the first match but, on Friday, the duo of Rovman Powell and Nicholas Pooran threatened to chase down India's 187 with explosive half-centuries. Wicketkeeper-batter Pooran has been in imperious form, scoring a second successive half-century, and off-spinning all-rounder Roston Chase too has been impressive.

Rohit named Test captain; Rahane, Pujara axed

Jadeja returns and Saurabh Kumar gets maiden call-up; Rohit named captain



New Delhi, Feb 19 (PTI):

White-ball skipper Rohit Sharma was on Saturday officially named captain of the Indian Test team for the upcoming two-match series against Sri Lanka, starting March 4.

Senior batsmen Ajinkya Rahane and Cheteshwar Pujara, who are battling poor form, were dropped. Senior wicket-keeper Wriddhiman Saha and experienced pacer Ishant Sharma were also left out of the Tests as the All

Sri Lanka Test series

India Test squad: Rohit Sharma (C), Mayank Agarwal, Priyank Panchal, Virat Kohli, Shreyas Iyer, Hanuma Vihari, Shubman Gill, Rishabh Pant, KS Bharat, R Ashwin (fitness), Ravi Jadeja, Jayant Thakur, Kuldeep Yadav, Jasprit Bumrah, Mohammed Shami, Mohammad Siraj, Umesh Yadav, Saurabh Kumar.

India T20 squad: Rohit Sharma (C), Ruturaj Gaikwad, Ishan Kishan, Suryakumar yadav, Shreyas Iyer, Venkatesh Iyer, Deepak Hooda, Jasprit Bumrah (vc), Bhuveshwar Kumar, Harshal Patel, Mohammad Siraj, Sanju Samson, Yuzvendra Chahal, Ravindra Jadeja, Kuldeep Yadav, Ravi Bishnoi, Avesh Khan.

India senior selection committee named squads for the Sri Lanka series. Sri Lanka's tour will begin with a three-match T20 series starting February 24 and will be followed by the five-day matches from March 4. Rookie Uttar Pradesh left-arm spinner Saurabh Kumar was the only new face in the 18-member squad. Ahead of the T20 series, the selection committee, headed by Chetan Sharma, decided to give Virat Kohli and Rishabh Pant a break, while Shardul Thakur was rested for the entire Sri Lanka series. Meanwhile,

Washington Sudar and KL Rahul were ruled out of the entire series. Ravichandran Ashwin will be available subject to his fitness, while Axar Patel is still recovering and is expected to be fit for the second Test.

"The selection committee deliberated a lot on Rahane and Pujara. We told them we will not consider them against Sri Lanka but doors are open for them. We told them to go and play Ranji Trophy," Selection Committee chairman Chetan Sharma told reporters during a virtual press conference.

We are improving with every series: Powell

Kolkata, Feb 19 (PTI):

West Indies' explosive middle order batter Rovman Powell says his side is improving with every series in run up to the World Cup and the ongoing T20 contest against India is a proof of that.

West Indies threatened to chase down a stiff 187 set by India in the second T20 on Friday before falling short by eight runs to concede the series.

"If you look at the last series, and this series, there are a lot of areas we can identify that the guys have improved," Powell said in the post-match media interaction. "We are slowly building towards the World Cup and it's important to keep improving series by series."

Powell smashed an unbeaten 36-ball 68 and was engaged in an entertaining 100-run partnership from 60 balls with wicketkeeper-batter Nicholas Pooran (62).

But the duo could not take the team home with Indian bowlers led by



Bhuvneshwar Kumar coming out on top in the final two overs. West Indies in their last T20I series, defeated England 3-2 at home but fell woefully short in the ODIs to go down 0-3.

We plan to try out as many options as possible before T20 World Cup: Pant

Kolkata, Feb 19 (PTI):

India wicketkeeper-batter Rishabh Pant says the team is looking at exploring as many options as possible in the build-up to the T20 World Cup, which is to take place in eight month's time.

Pant, who was appointed vice-captain in the absence of KL Rahul for the ongoing T20 series against the West Indies, smashed a brisk half-century in the team's win in the second game here on Friday night.

Among other questions, he was also asked about the plans for the T20 World Cup in Australia. "There's still time for the World Cup, so the plan is to try out as many options as possible," the 24-year-old said at the post-match media interaction. "We are trying to find out which positions suit whom and how they can benefit the team. So we're trying out several options, whatever seems



right for the team eventually will be final." In the absence of the rested pace duo of Jasprit Bumrah and Mohammed Shami, seamer Harshal Patel held his nerves to help India emerge winner after West Indies big hitter Rovman Powell threatened to take the game away with back-to-back sixes in the final over. Pant said the plan was to keep the ball outside off stump.

IPL contract feels unreal like a computer game, says Wood



London, Feb 19 (PTI):

Delighted to find takers at the IPL auction, England pacer Mark Wood said receiving a contract was similar to playing a computer game like 'Football Manager' "almost not real".

Wood was bought by new franchise Lucknow Super Giants for Rs 7.50 crore on the first day of the IPL auction last week.

"As soon as the final amount was confirmed Sarah asked what it was in pounds I might have to freeze all our accounts so it doesn't disappear," Wood told 'The Guardian.'

New Zealand emphatically ends 18-year drought vs SAfrica

Christchurch, Feb 19 (AP):

New Zealand needed only an extended session to complete an innings and 276-run win over South Africa in the first test on Saturday, its first test victory over the Proteas in 18 years. Tim Southee took 5-35 as New Zealand bowled out South Africa for 111 in its second innings after only 32 overs on the third day at Hagley Oval in Christchurch.

South Africa started the day at 34-3, trailing New Zealand by 353 runs after making only 95 in its first innings. New Zealand batted once and made 482 with Henry Nicholls making 105 and Tom Blundell 96. Matt Henry was man of the match for his 7-23 in South Africa's first innings and his 58, batting at No. 11. Henry took 2-32 in the second innings, finishing with match figures of 9-



New Zealand captain Tom Latham celebrates with his team after winning the 1st test on day three of the first cricket test between South Africa and New Zealand at Hagley Oval in Christchurch, New Zealand, Saturday.

55. It was pretty to come here and for us all to have a performance like that, said Henry who only played in the absence of Trent Boult who is on paternity leave. It's been brilliant. It is pretty special to get man of the match here on such a great occasion and in a great win like

that. Never out of the spotlight, Henry took the first wicket on Saturday with only the second ball of the day, accelerating New Zealand's progress to a victory which now puts it in a strong position to win a test series over South Africa for the first time.

SNOW-COVERED LAKE



View of the snow-covered Prashar lake and temple area, in Mandi, Saturday.

RSS-linked body to Muslims

'Rise above orthodox thinking, education more important than hijab'

New Delhi, Feb 19 (PTI):

RSS-linked Muslim Rashtriya Manch (MRM) on Saturday appealed to the minority community to rise above orthodox thinking and embrace progressive ideas, saying education is more important for its progress than wearing hijab at educational institutions.

While Muslims in India have the highest rate of illiteracy at 43 per cent, the rate of unemployment in the community is also very high, the organisation said. "Muslims should think about why they have the

lowest literacy rate. The Muslims of India should adopt a progressive approach. They have to understand that they need a book, not a hijab. They should rise above orthodox thinking and focus on education and progress," MRM national convener and spokesperson Shahid Sayeed told PTI.

Only 2.75 per cent of the total Muslim population in India is graduate or above this level of education. Of them, the percentage of women is just 36.65 per cent. The dropout rate among Muslims is the highest and the dropout rate of

girls in rural areas is higher than that of the boys, he said.

"We must think why do we have such a low percentage of graduates when the population of Muslims in the country is at least 20 crore," he said.

Whether it's the government sector or private sector, the representation of Muslims in employment is very less, he said.

"And this is not because of any bias against the minority community members. When a community has such a low percentage of graduates and higher drop of rates, it is obvious

that its members will be left behind," he added.

The MRM convener said the scrapping of triple talaq and its criminalisation during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's regime has freed Muslim women from the pain of this age-old practice.

"This is the law of self-respect and dignity of Muslim women. Today there has been a lot of change in their condition. Since the law came into force, a large number of Muslim women have got relief. People are giving their family the right to live with dignity," he said.

Another milestone

NTPC surpasses 2020-21 power generation of 314 BU

New Delhi, Feb 19 (PTI):

State-run power giant NTPC on Saturday said it surpassed the maximum annual electricity generation of 314 billion units achieved in 2020-21 on February 18. NTPC has recorded a generation of 314.89 billion units upto 18th February 2022, surpassing the maximum annual generation of 314 BU achieved in 2020-21, a company statement said.

Last year, the generation was 270.0 BU till 18th February, indicating improved performance and an increase in demand for power in the current year, it stated. NTPC Korba (2600 MW plant) in Chattisgarh is the top performing thermal power plant in India



NTPC Korba top performing

NTPC Korba (2600 MW plant) in Chattisgarh is the top performing thermal power plant in India with 94.32 per cent plant load factor (PLF or capacity utilisation) between April 2021 and January 2022, according to the data published by the Central Electricity Authority.

with 94.32 per cent plant load factor (PLF or capacity utilisation) between April 2021 and January 2022, according to the data published by the Central Electricity Authority.

This demonstrates the expertise of NTPC in operation and maintenance of the power plants and the

high levels of operational excellence, it stated. The total installed capacity of the company is 67,832.30 MW having 23 coal-based, 7 gas-based, 1 hydro, 19 renewable energy projects. Under JV, NTPC has 9 coal-based, 4 gas-based, 8 hydro and 5 renewable energy projects.

Power to quash criminal proceedings should be used very sparingly: SC

New Delhi, Feb 19 (PTI):

The power to quash criminal proceedings should be exercised very sparingly and with circumspection and that too in the rarest of rare cases, it has specified certain category of cases wherein such power can be exercised for quashing proceedings," the bench said. The apex court said that one of the categories where this power can be used is where a criminal proceeding is manifestly mala fide or maliciously instituted with an ulterior motive for wreaking vengeance on the accused and with a view to spite him due to private and personal grudge. The top court said

sparingly and with circumspection and that too in the rarest of rare cases, it has specified certain category of cases wherein such power can be exercised for quashing proceedings," the bench said. The apex court said that one of the categories where this power can be used is where a criminal proceeding is manifestly mala fide or maliciously instituted with an ulterior motive for wreaking vengeance on the accused and with a view to spite him due to private and personal grudge. The top court said

that in the present case, the complaint has been filed against the accused with an ulterior motive of harassing the appellants.

The apex court said that the magistrate while passing the order under Section 156 (3) of the CrPC has totally failed to consider the law laid down by the highest court. The power under Section 156 (3) of the Criminal Procedure Code, 1973 (CrPC) can be exercised by the magistrate to direct the police to conduct investigation only in respect of a cognisable offence.

'SC nullifies 'gender cap' on performers in orchestra bars in Maha'

Says stereotypical view has no place

New Delhi, Feb 19 (PTI): The Supreme Court has scrapped the condition imposed by Maharashtra authorities that limited the number of female and male performers in orchestra bars to four each, saying rules based on gender stereotypes have no place in the society.

"While the overall limit of performers in any given performance cannot exceed eight, the composition (i.e., all-female, majority female or male, or vice versa) can be of any combination," it said in an order.

A bench of justices K M Joseph and S Ravindra Bhat, which set aside the Bombay High Court judgement, said the "gender-cap" appears to be the product of a stereotypical view that women who perform in bars and establishments belong to a certain class of society.

CHEETAH REINTRODUCTION PLAN

Indian team in Namibia for discussions

Bhopal, Feb 19 (PTI):

A delegation from India, which includes Madhya Pradesh forest department personnel, has reached Namibia in southern Africa in connection with a plan to reintroduce the cheetah in the country in Kuno National Park, some 340 kilometres from here, officials said on Saturday.

The cheetah, the world's fastest land animal, had gone extinct in India some 70 years ago and the plans to reintroduce the majestic big cat into the wild here again has been in the works for over a decade now, they added.

"The delegation includes officials of National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA), Wildlife Institute of India (WII), the Government of India and Madhya Pradesh Forest Department. It left for Namibia on February 17 to

discuss issues like relocation logistics etc. They are scheduled to return by February 25," Rajnish Singh, Deputy Conservator of Forest (DCF) with MP Principal Chief Conservator of Forest (Wildlife), told PTI.

The plan is to introduce 50 cheetahs over the next five years, possibly 10 each year, with some 10-12 big cats being brought in from Namibia and South Africa as "founder stock" during the first year, officials explained. The country's last cheetah died in 1947 in present day Korea district of Chhattisgarh, which was once part of MP. The cheetah was declared extinct from India in 1952.

The 'African Cheetah Introduction Project in India' was conceived in 2009 under the Congress-led UPA regime, with Jairam Ramesh as Union Environment and Forests

Minister, but it failed to take off for over a decade.

The plan to introduce the cheetah by November last year in MP's Kuno, spread over 750 kilometres in the state's Chambal region, suffered a setback due to the COVID-19 pandemic, officials said.

The Kuno national park has good prey base for cheetahs, comprising the four-horned antelope, chinkara, neelgai, wild pig, spotted deer and sambhar, they added.

Experts from the premier Dehradun-based Wildlife Institute of India had visited sites in Madhya Pradesh in 2020 to look for the best habitat for the introduction of the African cheetah, the visit coming after the Supreme Court, in January that year, approved the plan to introduce cheetahs in a suitable habitat on an experimental basis, they added.

ARTWORK WITH A MESSAGE



Interpretation Department makes a sculptured artwork to create voter awareness at Motijheel selfie point, in Kanpur, Saturday.

'PM meets Afghan Sikh-Hindu delegation'

New Delhi, Feb 19 (PTI):

A delegation of Sikhs and Hindus from Afghanistan met Prime Minister Narendra Modi at his residence here on Saturday and thanked him for bringing about the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) as well as standing up for them in times of distress. Welcoming the delegation, Prime Minister Modi said they are not guests, but that India is their home.

The meeting comes a day after Prime Minister Modi hosted a number of prominent Sikhs at his residence, and a day before the Punjab Assembly polls. Prime Minister Modi talked about the im-



Prime Minister Narendra Modi with members of a delegation comprising of Afghan Sikhs and Hindus, during their meeting at his residence, in New Delhi.

mense difficulties faced by the Hindus and Sikhs in Afghanistan and the help provided by the government to bring them to India safely, a statement issued by the Prime Minister's Office said.

In this light, he also talked about the significance of the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) and its benefits for the community, the statement said. Prime Minister Modi assured them of continu-

ous support in the future as well to resolve all issues and address the difficulties faced by them.

The prime minister also talked about the significance of honouring the Guru Granth Sahib, in light of which special arrangements were made to bring back 'Swaroop' of Guru Granth Sahib from Afghanistan.

Modi also talked about the immense love he has received from Afghans over the years and fondly recalled his visit to Kabul, according to the statement.

BJP leader Manjinder Singh Sirsa, who was present on the occasion, thanked the prime minister for sending help from India for bringing back

members of the community safely, and said that when no one stood with them, the prime minister ensured constant support and timely help.

Other members of the delegation also thanked the Prime Minister for standing up for them in times of distress, the statement said.

They said that they had tears in their eyes when they heard him talking about making special arrangements to bring back 'Swaroop' of Guru Granth Sahib from Afghanistan to India with proper reverence, according to the statement. The delegation members also thanked him for bringing about the CAA, which will be of immense help for members of their commu-

nity, the statement said.

Praising Modi, the delegation members said he is not just the prime minister of India, but the "prime minister of the world" as he understands the difficulties faced especially by Hindus and Sikhs across the world and makes all out efforts to provide immediate help in all such cases.

Union Minister Hardeep Singh Puri and Union Minister of State Meenakshi Lekhi were also present on the occasion. The delegation members presented the PM with traditional Afghani attire and a headgear, which he wore and remarked that former Afghan President Hamid Karzai would be very happy to see him in that attire.

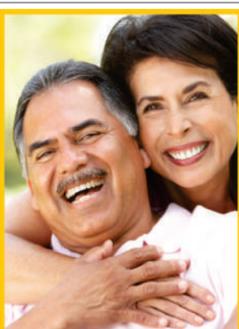
No forearms but paints like pro

21-yr-old from Uttarakhand is fighting all odds

New Delhi, Feb 19 (PTI): Losing her forearms at the age of nine did not deter Bharti Saini from pursuing her passion, and now at the age of 21, she has her paintings mounted in an exhibition in the national capital.

It is a week of two firsts for Saini, a fine arts student from Ramnagar town of Nainital -- she has come to Delhi for the first time and has her very first exhibition mounted at the famed India Habitat Centre.

She is among the 20 students whose paintings are part of the exhibition, and despite her obvious disability, her works are no less a work of art than her peers'.



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BRIEF



Maharashtra Governor Bhagat Singh Koshiyari along with Mumbai Mayor Kishori Pednekar, pays tribute to Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj on his birth anniversary, in Mumbai, Saturday.

Electrocuted

Ghazabad: A lineman was electrocuted in a village here while repairing a fault in an 11,000 kilowatt power cable, police said on Saturday. Lineman Salim (40) of Kherapur village was charred to death on a pole in Manduli village of Muradnagar on Thursday evening, Superintendent of Police (rural) Iraj Raja said. Family members of the victim later blocked traffic on the Eastern Peripheral highway, demanding strict action against those responsible for switching on the line during a shutdown.

Mishap

Ambala: A 21-year-old teacher was killed while three others, including two students, were injured in an accident during a Ferris wheel ride at an amusement park here on Saturday, police said. A case of negligence has been registered against the owner of the amusement park, they said. Of the three injured, one was a teacher and the remaining two were girl students. They were rushed to MM Medical Hospital at Mullana.

Tributes

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday paid tributes to Tamil scholar U V Swaminatha Iyer on his birth anniversary, saying he popularised works from the Sangam era and helped conserve precious heritage. "Remembering 'Tamil Thatha' U. Ve. Swaminatha Iyer on his birth anniversary. 'Admired for his contribution to Tamil culture and language, he popularised works from the Sangam era and helped conserve precious heritage,'" Modi said in a tweet.

Shot at

Imphal: A National People's Party (NPP) candidate's father has been shot at by unidentified people in Manipur's Imphal East district, Deputy Chief Minister Yumnam Joykumar Singh said on Saturday. The incident took place at the gates of the residence of the party's Andro candidate L Sanjoy Singh when he, his father and some supporters were having an election-related discussion on Friday, he said.

Fire

Madhubani: A fire broke out in an empty coach of a stationary train at Madhubani railway station in Bihar on Saturday, a Railway statement said. No casualty was reported in the blaze that erupted in the empty Swantantra Senani Superfast Express at 9.13 AM. It was doused by 9.50 AM, the statement issued by East Central Railway CPRO Virendra Kumar said.

Weather
High 29 Low 17

Two Army men, terrorist killed in encounter

In J-K's Shopian Srinagar, Feb 19 (PTI):

Two Army soldiers and an LeT terrorist were killed in an encounter in south Kashmir's volatile Shopian district, a senior police official said here on Saturday. The encounter took place after a joint search operation was launched Friday night in Chermarg in Zainpura of Shopian based on a specific intelligence input of the police about the presence of a terrorist there. Inspector General of Police (Kashmir Range) Vijay Kumar said.

The security personnel involved in the search operation, following the standard operating procedure, closed in on a cluster of houses and started moving out civilians. When the search team reached the house of Gowhar Ahmed



Armed security personnel stand at guard, in Srinagar, Saturday.

Bhat, he intentionally misled them and denied providing shelter to any terrorist. As Bhat was being questioned, a terrorist opened fire on the search

team from inside the house, causing grievous injuries to two Army personnel. In the ensuing encounter, Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) terrorist Abdul

Qayoom Dar, a resident of Laroo Kakpora in Pulwama, was neutralised and arms and ammunition, including one AK rifle and a pistol, were recovered.

POLL CODE VIOLATION State CEO orders FIR against Kejriwal

Amritsar, Feb 19:

A day before Punjab goes to assembly polls, the state's chief electoral officer (CEO) Saturday directed the District Election Officer-cum-District Commissioner of Mohali and the SSP to register an FIR against Aam Aadmi Party chief Arvind Kejriwal and his party for violating the Model Code of Conduct and for "making false and frivolous allegations against other political parties." The direction was given on the complaint of Arshdeep Singh Kler, vice-president and spokesman of Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD). The complainant raised objection to a video uploaded on social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter by AAP Punjab. He alleged that the video maligned the image of SAD



and other political parties in the eyes of the general public. The video in question is a song "es vaar jhaadu challooga" which shows the photographs of Chief Minister Charanjit Singh Channi, Captain Amarinder Singh and Sukhbir Singh Badal and uses derogatory words for them. Speaking to media, Kler said AAP had been putting up such videos on social media pages earlier too by getting some other videos approved from the EC. "This is the third time that it has happened that some other video has been put up which is not the one cleared by EC," he said.

Kumar Vishwas gets 'Y' category security

New Delhi, Feb 19 (PTI):

The Centre on Saturday decided to give 'Y' category security to former leader of Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) Kumar Vishwas, official sources said. The central government had reviewed the security of Vishwas and the threat perception based on intelligence inputs in the wake of his allegations against AAP convenor and Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal. After the review, it was decided to give Vishwas 'Y' category security through the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), the sources said. Under the 'Y' category security, Vishwas will be protected by four personal security officers round the clock. Vishwas had accused Kejriwal of supporting separatists during the high-voltage campaign for the assembly elections in Punjab, but the AAP chief has dismissed the allegations.

'Garbage-filled lands will be green zones soon'

Indore, Feb 19 (PTI):

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday said the government is making efforts to free thousands of acres of land in the country's urban areas from piles of garbage, which was being dumped there for decades, and convert these places into green zones in the next couple of years.

He said the garbage disposal capacity of the urban areas in the country has increased by four times since 2014.

Battling for the use of bio-fuels to reduce India's dependence on other countries for petroleum products, he said that ethanol blending in petrol, which used to be only about two per cent eight years back, has now grown to around eight per cent. Modi was speaking after virtually inaugurating the Rs 150



Prime Minister Narendra Modi addresses a virtual conference for the inauguration of the municipal solid waste based Gobardhan plant in Indore, in New Delhi.

crore 550-tonne capacity 'gobar-dhan' Bio-CNG plant, which is based on the concept of waste-to-wealth innovation, in Indore city of Madhya Pradesh. "Lakhs of tonnes of garbage stood on thousands of acres of land for decades in cities across the country, which is a major

reason for the spread of diseases as it caused air and water pollution," Modi said. Therefore, in the second phase of the Swachh Bharat Mission, the government is making efforts to free such lands of the piles of garbage, he said. "The aim is that our cities should get rid of these piles of garbage in

DRDO SCIENTIST TO YOUNG RESEARCHERS

'Develop indigenous technologies'

Amaravati, Feb 19 (PTI):

Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) Director General Tessa Thomas took part in the fourth annual Research Day event organised by the SRM University-AP here on Saturday and asked young research scholars to contribute to the country's growth by developing indigenous technologies.

Popularly known as the 'Missile Woman of India', Thomas elaborated DRDO's efforts that positioned India among the top few countries in the world with multi-level strategic capability.

These included the Agni series, anti-ballistic missile programmes, underwater weapon systems, main battle tanks, multi-range radar systems, electronic warfare, fighter aircraft, Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) and

its variants, and airborne early warning and control systems, she said.

SRM Vice-Chancellor D Narayana Rao said India needed to gradually move from a net consumer to a net producer of knowledge as it emerged as one of the world's largest economies.

He outlined SRM University-AP's 25-year vision in research and development beginning this year. "In the next 25 years, the faculty members and research scholars of SRM AP will pursue significant and outstanding research in the areas of water resources and management, blue economy, self-diagnostic medical devices, new-age medicine, hydrogen as a potential replacement of fossil fuels and many more branches of scientific knowledge, Narayana Rao added.

All 117 seats in Punjab, 59 in UP to go to polls today

New Delhi, Feb 19 (PTI):

All 117 Assembly seats in Punjab and 59 in Uttar Pradesh will go to the polls on Sunday, with the two states witnessing multi-cornered contests.

Punjab is currently ruled by the Congress and the BJP is in power in Uttar Pradesh.

In Uttar Pradesh, elections are being held in seven phases, the third of which will be held on Sunday.

Polling in Punjab will be held from 8 am to 6 pm. In Uttar Pradesh, the polling will take place between 7 am and 6 pm, according to the election authorities. The counting will take



An election official carrying polling materials waits to board a bus to a polling booth, on the eve of Punjab Assembly elections, at Polo Ground in Amritsar, Saturday.

place on March 10. Campaigning for the Sunday polls had ended on Friday, with senior leaders of the parties making a final effort to woo voters.

In Punjab, over 2.14 crore voters will decide the fate of 1,304 candidates, including 93 women.

Punjab is witnessing a multi-cornered contest

among the Congress, AAP, SAD-BSP, BJP-PLC-SAD (Sanyukt) and the Sanyukt Samaj Morcha, a political front of various farmer bodies. The ruling Congress has come under severe attack from its political opponents over various issues, including the drug menace and corruption. The Congress is banking on decisions like reduction in electricity tariff and fuel prices. The decisions were taken during current CM Charanjit Singh Channi's 111-day tenure.

The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), which has emerged as a major contender, is eyeing to wrest power while projecting the Delhi model of governance.

Assam govt reverses renaming of Kamakhya temple road

Guwahati, Feb 19 (PTI):

The Assam government, which had announced that roads would be renamed to reflect the cultural ethos of the state, withdrew its decision to name a new road after Swami Muktananda Saraswati here in the face of public outcry against it.

It had proposed to name a new alternate road leading to the Kamakhya temple atop Nilachal hill in the city after the monk, which had led to the general people taking to the social media to express their opposition to it. Most of

the people claimed that the person after whom the road is being named had no connection with Assam or its people. Reverting the decision, state Housing and Urban Affairs Department Minister Ashok Singhal wrote on Twitter on Friday: The naming of the alternate road to Kamakhya Dham through Pandu Ghat as Swami Muktananda Saraswati Path' has been withdrawn with immediate effect owing to public objections. We respect public opinions! Singhal added. A public notice issued by the

Commissioner of Guwahati Municipal Corporation and published in newspapers on February 14 had said that the residents of the road have "prayed" for naming it as Swami Muktananda Saraswati Road.

It had sought objection, if any, from the public in this regard within 15 days of publication of the notice.

National award winning film critic and filmmaker Utpal Borpujari, who had questioned the initial proposal, appreciated the government's decision to withdraw the new name.

'Guj blast verdict is testimony to hard work, team spirit of investigators'

Ahmedabad, Feb 19 (PTI):

The "historic" judgement in the 2008 Ahmedabad serial blasts case is a testimony to the hard work and the team spirit of investigators who painstakingly gathered evidence by busting separate modules and arresting accused from various states in a short time, senior police officials who probed the case said on Saturday.

A special court on Friday sentenced to death 38 members of terror outfit Indian Mujahideen (IM) for the blasts that killed 56

Kin of convicts question judgment

The kin of the two of the people convicted in the 2008 Ahmedabad serial bomb blasts case have questioned the timing of the court judgment, expressing apprehensions that it may be politically motivated. A special court on Friday handed down the death penalty to 38 people and sentenced 11 others to life imprisonment for the 21 blasts that took place in a span of 70 minutes, killing 56 and injuring over 200. Five residents of Azamgarh have been sentenced to death while one has been given life imprisonment. Of these, two hail from Sanjarpur, one from Binapura village while three are from other places. Family members of those convicted alleged that an attempt has been made by the BJP to polarise the UP Assembly elections and questioned the timing of the judgment.

people and injured over 200. It also gave the life term to another 11 IM convicts in the case. The verdict goes down in the

Indian judicial history as the first such ruling wherein the maximum number of death sentences were handed down

by a court at one go.

The investigation was handed over to the crime branch, which was at that time headed by Ashish Bhatia, who is now Gujarat DGP, while Abhay Chudasama, the then deputy commissioner of police (crime), also played a crucial role in the probe.

According to officers who were part of the probe, detecting a crime that was committed with proper planning, involving different modules working separately for a common cause, was a challenging task.

DISPLAY OF COURAGE



Police personnel perform a demonstration of their Maoist searching operations on the occasion of 14th raising day of the Jharkhand Jaguar (A special task force of Jharkhand police unit) at Tender Gram village, in Ranchi, Saturday.

PCC Chief visit Maa Bamleshwari temple

Central Chronicle News

Dongargarh, Feb 19: PCC Chief Mohan Markam after attending the Adivasi Samaj sammelan visited 'Maa Bamleshwari Mata's temple' and offered prayers. During this the Congress workers accorded warm welcome to him. PCC Chief held talks related to organisation with the party workers and directed them to speed-up membership campaign.

Like a common devotee, PCC Chief Mohan Makam purchased a ticket and went to Maa Bamleshwari's temple in the rope-way. Known for his simplicity



and cordial behaviour, Markam stood in the queue for getting ticket from the ticket counter and then went to pay respects to the temple.

On this occasion Congress party workers DCC District President Padam Kothari, District co-op Bank President Navaz Khan, BCC PResident

Sanjeev Gomasta, Suresh Sinha Nagar Panchayat President Sudesh Meshram, Sandhya Deshpandey, Sanjay Shrivastava, Anil Meshram, Rimmi Bhatia, Pramod Tembhornikar, Sanjay Yadav, Jitendra Bhatia, Ravi Tiwari and others were present in large number.

42nd Urs Mubarak of Mastan Baba celebrated

Central Chronicle News

Konta/Sukma, Feb 19: 42nd Urs of Mastan Baba at Patnampara in Sukma district was celebrated with great pomp. After noon on this holy occasion, sandal and chadar sharif were taken out from the place of Khadim Bashir Ahmed in Masjid Chowk, who patrolled the whole city with great pride and reached the dargah of Mastan Baba located in the cemetery.

In the evening, Chadarposhi was done in Baba's Dargah. According to the tradition that has been going on for years, the Anjuman Islamia Committee first prayed for peace in the district by laying a sheet at Baba's tomb.



Every year in Sukma, this year also the Urs Mubarak of Waliye Kamil Hazrat Baba Syed Mastan Ali was celebrated with great honor. After the evening fafia, the process of chadarposhi by the common people started.

Meanwhile, District Panchayat President Parichay Kawasi and Sukma Municipality

President Jagannath Raju Sahu also reached Baba's Dargah and offered Chadar and prayed for the development and happiness of the district.

A common langar was arranged for the devotees from outside by the Mastana Urs Committee. Abdul Habib Ajmeri, the famous Qawal of Maharashtra, presented a splendid Qawwali.



Along with them, Congress District General Secretary Sheikh Ghulam Murtaza, Congress City President Sheikh Sajjar, District Spokesperson Mo Husain, Sheikh Sadiq, Abdullah Khan along with members of Anjuman Islamia Committee and Mastana Urs Committee were present.

Sukma SP also prayed for happiness

Sukma district superintendent of police Sunil Sharma also reached Baba's dargah during this period and prayed for the prosperity of the district. During this, ASP Om Chandel, DSP Shyam Madhukar, DSP Rohit Shukla, DSP Rajat Nag, DSP Vijay Rajput and Kotwali in-charge Sanjay Singh were also present.

Tehsil Advocates Association concerned against corruption in Revenue Court

Central Chronicle News

Simga, Feb 19: Simga Tehsil Advocates Association is concerned against the corruption prevailing in the Revenue Court, and Tehsil advocate Sangh demonstrated a protest in Simga Tehsil premises on Thursday, supporting Raigad Advocates Association in the matter of registering false cases against the advocates in Raigad assault case. The advocates demonstrated by boycotting the Revenue Court and against corruption prevailing in the Revenue Department.

The Advocate Sangh have alleged that the Revenue Court has become the center of corrup-



tion, due to which the common people are facing a lot of problems due to the attitude of the Revenue Officers and the employees of the Revenue Department. The Sangh has alleged that transfer of money, undisputed division, demarcation, and even in simple cases like conversion, common people are falling prey to corruption.

The advocates further said that we are fighting the battle of the people, and if the government and administration does not pay attention to our movement, then we will make this movement a people's movement. Advocates Association Simga called the incident of Raigadh condemnable and demanding the government to curb the rampant corrup-

tion, demanded withdrawal of the case registered against the advocates in Raigadh.

Prominently in the demonstration, advocate association's patron Vishnu Prasad Sonwani, President Farid Khan, Parikshit Chaturvedi, Prashant Sen, Rajesh Jain, Hori Lal Devgan, Ramkumar Sonkar, Ashok Dare, Dhaniram Sonkar, Devcharan Nishad, TP Nayak, Prashant Tiwari, Prahlad Tiwari, Anil Kumbhakar, Vishram Chelak, Omprakash Verma, Ashish Sharma, Ashish Tamboli, Tikaram Devagan, Santlal Gendre, Umesh Sharma, Purushottam Yadu, and other advocates were present.

Blacksmith encroaches upon fellow blacksmiths land forcefully

Victim family forced to approach the court

Central Chronicle News

Anwari, Feb 19: Lakhan Lohar of village Katholi, owned ancestral land in his name and after his demise, his sons and wife are legal heir to the land, but after his death, his sons Umesh, Ghanshyam, Tikes and wife Raimat Bai are deprived of their own land, as another villager Devraj Lohar, by name has forcefully encroached upon their land and is reaping and harvesting crops, much to the dismay of Lakhan Lohar's widow and sons.



Devraj S/O Pritram Lohar is also in the terms of abusing and threatening the family, over the land dispute and he is harvesting paddy in the land which rightfully belongs to Raimat Bai and her sons. The old Khasra number of the disputed land was 1371 which is currently 1401. One of his sons Umesh says that the fami-

ly has khasra number 864/3 and 864/5 jumla acreage is 1.04 acres, of village Kathauli Patwari Halka No. 9 Tehsil Kurud District Dhamtari, belonging to his father Lakhan Lohar.

In 2017 the court has also given judgment in our favor, but even after that the land is not being released on the advice of the

BJP leader of the village, Umesh said. He also said that the family approached the Birjhar police post to write the report, but no action was taken against Devraj, saying it is a court case.

We are compelled and are constantly making rounds of the court, due to the hearing, about half an acre of our land has been sold and its registry has also been done. But when he went to the patwari for the transfer, he said that the as the case is in court, further proceedings can't be done. Meanwhile Birejhar outpost in-charge says that paddy sown by Devraj in the victims land, will be confiscated only after the order of the court.

Ward No. 9 team wins Sarpanch Trophy

Central Chronicle News



Dhamdha, Feb 19: In the finals of ward-level Tennis Ball Sarpanch Trophy cricket match in Gram Titurgat near Dhamdha city on Feb 16, the cricket team of ward No.9 won the match just losing 9 wickets and achieving target of 56 runs by ward No. 8 team in 10 over match.

The first prize of Rs 3333 was won by ward No. 9 team was given by Sarpanch Laxman Sonkar and cup by Lalit Sonkar and the second prize of Rs 2222 was given by Komal Nishad and cup by Jhandu Ram Nishad.

The third prize of Rs 1111 was won by ward No. 6 team and it was presented by Deepak Rajput and cup by Anil Mali. In this

final match, the man-of-the-match award and the man-of-the-series title was won by captain of Ward No. 9 Anil Sonkar and it was presented by Lokesh Guruji.

In the prize distribution ceremony the public representatives of village and Sarpanch Laxman Sonkar, Deenbandhu Sonkar and other villagers were present.

NSUI stages demonstration against offline examination

Central Chronicle News

Bilaspur, Feb 19: NSUI staged a demonstration, in Bilaspur opposing the offline examination of law students. On Wednesday afternoon, the NSUI gheraoed the Atal Bihari Vajpayee University and raised slogans and during this, the student leaders alleged that due to the apathy shown by the university, one semester of the students has already been delayed and in such a situation, there is a need to start the next semester by taking early examinations.

The students union after this submitted a memorandum, to the Vice-Chancellor and demanded to conduct the exams online instead of the proposed offline mode. The Vice Chancellor of the University, Acharya ADN



Vajpayee, decided to take the examinations online, in the interest of the students.

NSUI District President Tanmeet Chhabra said that the state's other universities, namely Pt. Ravi Shankar and Nandkumar Patel University has issued a notification to take online examinations, and

in such a situation, online examinations will also be conducted here in March. The university is delaying the preparation of the offline exam, due to which the semester of the students is behind.

NSUI officials told that there are six law colleges under Atal Bihari Vajpayee University and

about two thousand students are studying her and for the last two years, due to Corona, classes have not been held properly in colleges.

In submitting memorandum NSUI District President Tanmeet Chhabra, State Secretary Lucky Mishra, State Secretary Abhilash Rajak and Youth Leader Jitendra Singh, District Secretary Amitesh Shukla, Bilha Assembly Speaker Vikas Tiwari, Nazim Hussain, Siddhant Batra, Vivek Sahu, Kamran Memon, Rishi Patel, Shubham Soni, Rostin Masih, Honey M a g a r, P r a s h a n t P a n d e y, R i s h i t a Sharma, Vedansh, Samanjsya, Pankaj, Adarsh, Mihir, Mahendra, Avneesh, Manasi, Uma and other students were involved.

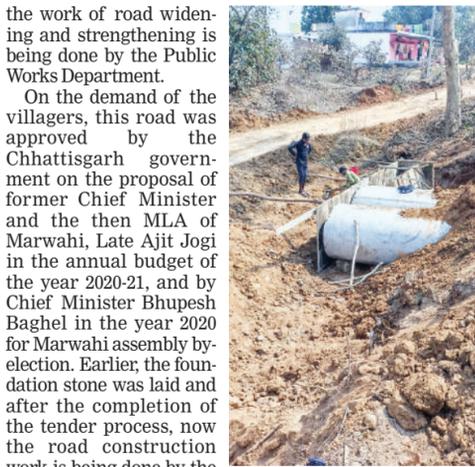
Corruption in the construction of road

Central Chronicle News

Gaurella-Pendra-Marwahi, Feb 19: Reports of corruption in the construction of road under PWD Pendra Division, from Basantpur to Basti Bagra, at a stretch of 27 Km of an approximate cost of 39 crores, has come to fore.

The work is being done by the contractor in an arbitrary manner keeping the quality at bay and the villagers have complained that the culverts of the pipes are being made by keeping the concrete base in the soil without doing the casting work, which is affecting the strength of the culverts.

This much awaited road connects Pendra to Korba via Basti Bagra, Pali. This road was constructed under the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana about 21 years ago, after which



the work of road widening and strengthening is being done by the Public Works Department.

On the demand of the villagers, this road was approved by the Chhattisgarh government on the proposal of former Chief Minister and the then MLA of Marwahi, Late Ajit Jogi in the annual budget of the year 2020-21, and by Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel in the year 2020 for Marwahi assembly by-election. Earlier, the foundation stone was laid and after the completion of the tender process, now the road construction work is being done by the contractor Shri Ram Construction Company.

Villagers like Sumer Singh have alleged that the road was dug for the culvert in village Kodgar by the contract company and

tract company placed the culvert over the soil without casting the concrete.

The villagers have also questioned the procurement of sand for the work by the contractor, when in the entire district sand mining has been stalled. No sign board has been installed anywhere by the department or the contractor in this road of 27 km under construction from Basantpur to Basti Bagra, while mentioning the name of the work, cost, length, name of the contractor etc is a mandatory provision. Meanwhile In-charge SDO Sanjay Bharilya said that due to the deteriorating health of the SDO of this road, he has been taken charge of this road only a week ago, so he cannot tell much in this regard, but he will make efforts to get quality work done.

Weaker students offered alternative education

Central Chronicle News

Pandaria, Feb 19: The teachers of Government High School, Somnapur

Principal of School informed that it is after factual valuation of the weaker and backward students, that they are offered education through 'alternative teaching' method (Upcharatmak shikshan) in the area they are weak.

It is through this system, the institution provides chance to such students to improve in their weaker areas and progress. The teachers keeping constantly in touch with the parents are making efforts to ensure association of students with mainstream of education. In this work principal of School SK Sahu, teacher YK Gurudiwan, Mahendra Kanthle, Jyoti Dhruv, Shakun Patle and others are giving valuable contribution.

taking additional classes are making weaker backward students more stronger in subjects of Mathematics, Science and English by teaching them simpler methods and alternative means of education. By doing so they are making them prepared for the Board exams.

NAME CHANGE

The general public is hereby informed that my old name was **Neetish Kumar S/o Gokul Patle** and has now changed it to **Neetish Kumar Patle, S/o Gokul Patle, R/o Gram Pachpedi, Post-Pachpedi, Tehsil-Masturi, District Bilaspur (C.G.)**. In the near future in all the government, semi-government and other documents, I should be known and identified as **Neetish Kumar Patle, S/o Gokul Patle**.

Deponent
Neetish Kumar Patle, S/o Gokul Patle R/o Gram Pachpedi, Post-Pachpedi Tehsil-Masturi, District Bilaspur- C.G.



CENTRAL Chronicle

Since 1974 Volume 9 No. 320

Singapore's flawed democracy

India objected to Singapore prime minister Lee Hsien Loong's remarks referring to criminal charges on Indian lawmakers. The high commissioner of Singapore to India, Simon Wong was called by the ministry of external affairs over Loong's remarks. The Singapore PM had invoked Jawaharlal Nehru while highlighting how democracy should work in the city-state during a debate in parliament. He said each succeeding generation must protect and build upon the system that Singapore has inherited. Apparently, the dynastic Singapore PM gave examples of India and Israel regarding instability in politics and justify his People's Action Party rule in a flawed democracy. Technically Singapore is a democratic country but when we go to the roots of it we realize that it is not a democracy. The election department is not an independent body. It depends upon the Prime Minister Office which is controlled by the Cabinet and Prime Minister. No consideration of people's point of view or opinion is considered or preferred. The government of Singapore makes huge profits, it's totally not like India. In the whole of Southeast Asia, Singapore is the only country that practiced uninterrupted elections. In 1959, after World War II, Singapore became an independent government but it was still a part of Malaysia. In 1965, it became fully self-independent. This self government means that governance everywhere only not in the matters of foreign policy and defence. Singapore got its independence from British ruling in 1963 as a federation of Malaysia. The Singapore government takes concern regarding the laws and hence punishes them as the place value more towards the ideology. After the UK Westminster, the Singapore parliament was set up. Singapore does not follow Western Liberal Democracy. A better aspect of democracy is called illiberal democracy and this is what Singapore follows.

It means governance, the citizens are not aware of the real power and without knowing that they took part in the election every time. According to EIU Democracy Index, Singapore is at the bottom of the list of 'flawed democracies' below Thailand and above Guyana. Guyana is the last state in the flawed democracies list. The next closest category is 'hybrid regime,' with Bangladesh and El Salvador topping the list. But while Singapore remains an alluring success story to much of the outside world, Singaporeans themselves are starting to question the long-term viability of their longstanding adherence to elite governance, meritocracy, the primacy of growth and state paternalism. The Singapore consensus has been underpinned by the notion of vulnerability, that because of its small size, lack of natural resources, ethnic and religious diversity, and geographic location in a potentially volatile region, the city-sized nation is inherently and immutably vulnerable. From this existentially anguished reality, a developmental belief system emerged. Its tenets include a strict academic meritocracy as the best way to sort talent, elite governance insulated from the short-termism and myopia of ordinary democratic pressures, the primacy of growth, delivered through a heavy dependence on foreign labour and capital, an acceptance of the need to equalize opportunities but not outcomes and an indifference to inequality, as reflected in the state's aversion to welfare. Income and wealth inequalities in Singapore are among the highest in the developed world, while the cost of living has spiralled in recent years. For many of its residents, the country's impressive material achievements have not translated into higher levels of happiness or well-being. In various surveys, Singaporeans are found to work some of the longest hours in the developed world and are described as one of the world's least happy peoples. Almost three-quarters are afraid to get sick because of perceived high healthcare costs. By failing to adapt to these new socioeconomic and political realities, Singapore has set the scene for a fierce clash between competing societal and political visions.

Putin's demands

The United States and other NATO countries are yet unwilling to perceive Russia's key security demands adequately. Russian President Vladimir Putin said after talks with his Belarusian counterpart Alexander Lukashenko. Russia's draft "Treaty between the United States of America and the Russian Federation on Security Guarantees" listed more than a dozen demands, including no NATO membership to all states of the former USSR, including the Baltic states which have been members of the alliance since 2004, it prohibits NATO to expand further eastward. Further, the US can't fly bombers or deploy warships, armed forces or armaments, in areas outside of its national airspace and national territorial waters, including within the framework of NATO respectively, such deployment could be perceived by Russia as a threat to its national security. It asks the US to remove all its nuclear weapons from Europe, and halt deploying ground-launched intermediate-range and shorter-range missiles outside of its territory. While Russia expects NATO and the US to comply with its demands, Moscow, in return, has offered only a vague commitment to "not create conditions or situations that threaten the national security of the other parties".

The draft treaty imposes no requirements for Moscow to redeploy Russian forces. The Geneva talks between Russia and the US were followed by other sessions in Brussels with NATO and Vienna with Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) delegates, aimed at averting a crisis. But at all three meetings, there was no sign of progress from either side. It seems that Putin's obsession with Ukraine is due to both strategic and historical factors. The Russian-Ukrainian ties date back to even before the emergence of the Soviet Union and even before the days of the Russian Empire beginning in the 18th century, which was the birthplace of the first Russian state in the 9th Century. Further, Putin wants to stem his country's decline in global influence. Moscow's leverage in places like Ukraine is one way to preserve that influence. Ukraine is also a key component of Russia's plans for a Eurasian customs union with some other former Soviet states. Ukraine's move toward the Western bloc in the name of having a democratic state has made the Russian establishment feel betrayed.

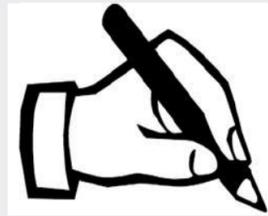
CARPET OF SNOWDROPS



People walk amongst a carpet of snowdrop flowers in the grounds of Burton Agnes Hall, near Bridlington, northern England.

New era of prosperity for India-UAE trade

TA AL ZEYUDI & PIYUSH GOYAL



India and UAE have decided for a shared vision for a better future. As we look back on 2021 and forward through 2022, it is clear that our two nations are at a historic inflection point. The UAE is celebrating its Year of the 50th and has laid out its vision for the next 50 years of growth. India is also celebrating Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav on the 75th anniversary of its independence and is marching ahead on its long-term development journey with renewed vigour and enthusiasm. Not long ago in 2017, a historic decision was taken by the leaders of our two countries to elevate our relationship into a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership. Since then, our time-tested relationship, rooted in a similar outlook, a deep affinity and enduring understanding, has blossomed into a strong and multifaceted bilateral cooperation, positively impacting the lives of millions of our peoples.

This special relationship continues to evolve and adapt to the challenges of a complex and uncertain world, particularly in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. The fortitude and resilience of our nations, and more importantly the depth of our friendship, has shone through in the face of adversity. We have worked together to promote peace, harmony, co-existence and prosperity for all communities. Our resolute focus has been on making progress for our peoples and the wider world

through efficient utilization of trade, technology, talent and tourism. An example is the UAE's successful hosting of Expo 2020 despite the pandemic, with India playing its role with an inspirational pavilion that has captured the national spirit and captivated visitors.

Today, our strategic partnership is on the verge of a paradigm shift. As we explore the multitude of possibilities for collaborative growth and development in a post-COVID era, we, once again, have a shared vision to take our partnership to the next level. Our shared vision will forge a partnership that is future ready with a special focus on cooperation in newer and emerging areas like sustainability, climate action, innovation, digitalization, startups, food and energy security, health, fin-tech and skilling. India and UAE are making a share history. Just five months ago, we came together with a shared sense of hope and optimism for the historic task at hand: commencing talks on a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) that would not just create enormous opportunities for trade, commerce and investments but also contribute to a sustained global recovery at a tough but potentially transformative time.

The mutual desire for progress and an unwavering commitment to deliver far-reaching benefits to people in both countries ran deep on both sides. This joint sense of pur-

pose inspired the trajectory of talks, which progressed at an exceptionally quick pace even against the challenges of the prevailing pandemic. Today, the agreement stands signed, sealed and delivered. The stage is set for a new era of prosperity and strategic cooperation between the UAE and India that will take both nations to a new level. India and UAE are on path to unlocking immediate and future growth. The direct rewards are clear for both nations. Bilateral trade will grow to USD 100 billion in five years, twice the pre-pandemic level. Enhanced market access will benefit all stakeholders, including exporters, importers and consumers alike; essential, high-skilled professionals will enjoy greater flexibility; and hundreds of thousands of new employment opportunities will be created for the benefit of the people of our two countries.

Indian businesses will gain improved market access in many product lines, particularly in labour-intensive sectors such as gems and jewellery, textiles, leather, footwear, plastics, agricultural products, engineering goods, and pharmaceuticals. On the other hand, exporters from the UAE will gain enhanced access to India's large market especially for products like petroleum, metals, minerals, chemicals and petrochemicals. Downstream industries in India like plastics, gems and jewellery, will in turn derive benefits from lower priced inputs. Our people have enjoyed centuries of seamless movement between our two countries. This CEPA will enable India's professionals to find enhanced opportunities in the UAE and shine on the global stage. Both sides will also benefit from UAE's location as a strategic gateway to the Middle East, Africa, Europe and other regions. All forms of capital, financial, technological and human will flow in both directions with a new and more efficient framework. India's focus on

public capital investment helping to bring in private investment as reflected in its latest Budget should provide good opportunities for UAE investments to benefit from India's growth.

Micro, small and medium-sized enterprises will also find it easier to go global. India and the UAE have attractive, competitive and complementary startup ecosystems, and a golden era of entrepreneurship is emerging from various States and cities of India, including Bangalore, Mumbai, New Delhi, to business hubs in the UAE like Abu Dhabi and Dubai. Our CEPA offers startups access to new customers, networks and opportunities, and provides improved mechanisms as launchpads to scale at speed. India and UAE are committed to an energizing future. Our two countries share a very close relationship in the energy sector. We remain committed to a timely, equitable and just energy transition for a cleaner and greener future. Our relationship in the petroleum and natural gas sector is unique with mutual investments in both countries. The UAE is also the only country to participate in India's strategic petroleum reserves.

We are both pursuing dynamic new trade and investment policies. India hopes to see its exports exceed USD 400 billion in 2022. Our growing bilateral trade will play an integral role in the UAE's efforts to double the size of its economy by 2030. The destinies of the UAE and India have been inextricably intertwined for centuries. A closer collaboration, anchored in friendship, trust and the spirit of entrepreneurship, will create limitless opportunities for our economies, for our industries, our cities and our people, now and for generations to come. This is the Vision that we aspire to.

(TA Al Zeyoudi is UAE's MoS for Foreign Trade and Piyush Goyal is India's Commerce Minister.)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Cannot blame

I can't blame the Assam Chief Minister (CM) Himanta Biswa Sarma, who has kicked up a storm at an election rally in Uttarakhand by hit out at Congress leader Rahul Gandhi for allegedly questioning the 2016 surgical strike against terrorists across the Line of Control (LoC), and 'demanded proof of the strike. Did we ever ask you for proof of whether you are Rajiv Gandhi's son or not?' Because, it's the tradition of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and its leaders like Prime Minister (PM) Narendra Modi or CM, ministers and leaders. Then how would Himanta Sarma be an exception? How one forgets that on November, 2017 this Sarma as an Assam health minister shocked by saying that people suffer from life-threatening cancer diseases because of sins committed in the past which he called "divine justice". Hence there is nothing wrong if one believes that BJP should give some classes to its Ministers, MPs and MLAs about where they should speak. Whatsoever, what Sarma said is not only highly deplorable but makes a personal attack on Rahul Gandhi, his father Rajiv Gandhi and his mother Sonia Gandhi! Is there any need to provoke family in a political agenda? It shows how low BJP party members can go for the sake of power and what a rogue mindset they have. People wonder as an opposition leader, if one doubts, is Rahul not right to ask for the proof of anything that the government claims? Actually, Himanta Biswa Sarma, a political turncoat still tries to appease their masters (even after becoming CM) by being very hostile to his earlier bosses (particularly Rahul Gandhi, his political foe). That's the essence of the present diatribe.

Bidyut K Chatterjee, Faridabad

Rich people survive

We all have seen the horror created by the two waves of Covid-19. Along with that, we have also suffered economic and social problems due to the pandemic. So, we were not ready to face the third wave. The two lockdowns taught us that, the rich people survive, but the poor lose their lives. The price of essential goods and even car fare increased during the lockdown. But the ruling party did not stand with the public. So it's easily predicted how the situation will be in future. The government has issued some restrictions regarding Covid. Had the strictness been implemented at the beginning of the third wave, we could have got respite to some extent. The last two years have been a bad experience for us but we have not learnt anything from that. A fine is imposed for not wearing a mask in many states. Some educated people don't use masks here. We dream of the classroom more than online learning. More than the election campaign, we are sensitive to those families whose members committed suicide during the lockdown due to poverty. So, we hope to not see the bad days again. In a democratic country, people create pressure on the government. But sometimes, we can bring the change by ourselves. If we boycott election rallies, campaigns the chances of a new restrictions will decrease at least a little.

Liza, via email

WHAT THEY TWEET!

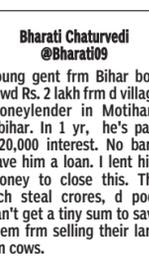


Shubhangi@ItsShubhangi
Trudeau's unprecedented move to invoke national emergency powers in peacetime has not been received well by the Canadian Civil Liberties Association which condemned his moves. 'Emergency legislation should not be normalized. It threatens our democracy and our civil liberties.'

Rosie Roti@supriyan
If an Indian company worked on producing a cheap effective sunscreen for Indian skin, for women who walk/take public transit to work, that doesn't make your face feel like it's bathed in oil OR rubbed in chalk, I feel like it would be a fairly exciting healthcare innovation?



Devinder Sharma @Devinder_Sharma
A annoyed farmer called from Shamli in Uttar Pradesh to say that he had gone to the lead bank to check the status of 3% interest subvention due on his #KisanCreditCard. He has been told that the interest subvention stands withdrawn. Now they have to pay back at 7% interest.



Bharati Chaturvedi @Bharati09
Young gent frm Bihar borrowd Rs. 2 lakh frm d village moneylender in Motihari, #bihar. In 1 yr, he's paid 1,20,000 interest. No bank gave him a loan. I lent him money to close this. The rich steal crores, d poor can't get a tiny sum to save them frm selling their land n cows.



Jeff M@Cold_Peace_
Many Indian accounts I follow are mostly quiet on the Ukraine crisis. They feel some sense of loyalty to their old friend, Russia, but don't believe the nonsense that Moscow is the victim here or that an invasion of Ukraine is justified. So they're mostly trying to stay out of it.



Amey@AmeyVNamjoshi
Kaka this is reality. My youngest daughter lives in New York. My youngest son lives in Chicago. My eldest son and daughter-in-law live in Toronto. Wow, great! You are so lucky! Where do you live? I live in the old age home! Reality in cities like Pune and Bengaluru.

SNOW-COVERED LAKE



View of the snow-covered Prashar lake and temple area, in Mandi, Saturday.

RSS-linked body to Muslims

'Rise above orthodox thinking, education more important than hijab'

New Delhi, Feb 19 (PTI):

RSS-linked Muslim Rashtriya Manch (MRM) on Saturday appealed to the minority community to rise above orthodox thinking and embrace progressive ideas, saying education is more important than wearing hijab at educational institutions.

While Muslims in India have the highest rate of illiteracy at 43 per cent, the rate of unemployment in the community is also very high, the organisation said. "Muslims should think about why they have the

lowest literacy rate. The Muslims of India should adopt a progressive approach. They have to understand that they need a book, not a hijab. They should rise above orthodox thinking and focus on education and progress," MRM national convenor and spokesperson Shahid Sayeed told PTI.

Only 2.75 per cent of the total Muslim population in India is graduate or above this level of education. Of them, the percentage of women is just 36.65 per cent. The dropout rate among Muslims is the highest and the dropout rate of

girls in rural areas is higher than that of the boys, he said.

"We must think why do we have such a low percentage of graduates when the population of Muslims in the country is at least 20 crore," he said.

Whether it's the government sector or private sector, the representation of Muslims in employment is very less, he said.

"And this is not because of any bias against the minority community members. When a community has such a low percentage of graduates and higher drop of rates, it is obvious

that its members will be left behind," he added.

The MRM convenor said the scrapping of triple talaq and its criminalisation during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's regime has freed Muslim women from the pain of this age-old practice.

"This is the law of self-respect and dignity of Muslim women. Today there has been a lot of change in their condition. Since the law came into force, a large number of Muslim women have got relief. People are giving their family the right to live with dignity," he said.

Another milestone

NTPC surpasses 2020-21 power generation of 314 BU

New Delhi, Feb 19 (PTI):

State-run power giant NTPC on Saturday said it surpassed the maximum annual electricity generation of 314 billion units achieved in 2020-21 on February 18. NTPC has recorded a generation of 314.89 billion units upto 18th February 2022, surpassing the maximum annual generation of 314 BU achieved in 2020-21, a company statement said.

Last year, the generation was 270.0 BU till 18th February, indicating improved performance and an increase in demand for power in the current year, it stated. NTPC Korba (2600 MW plant) in Chattisgarh is the top performing thermal power plant in India



NTPC Korba top performing

NTPC Korba (2600 MW plant) in Chattisgarh is the top performing thermal power plant in India with 94.32 per cent plant load factor (PLF or capacity utilisation) between April 2021 and January 2022, according to the data published by the Central Electricity Authority.

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This demonstrates the expertise of NTPC in operation and maintenance of the power plants and the

high levels of operational excellence, it stated. The total installed capacity of the company is 67,832.30 MW having 23 coal-based, 7 gas-based, 1 hydro, 19 renewable energy projects. Under JV, NTPC has 9 coal-based, 4 gas-based, 8 hydro and 5 renewable energy projects.

Power to quash criminal proceedings should be used very sparingly: SC

New Delhi, Feb 19 (PTI):

The power to quash criminal proceedings should be exercised very sparingly and with circumspection and that too in the rarest of rare cases, the Supreme Court said. A bench of Justices B R Gavai and S Ravindra Bhat made the observation while quashing a case of forgery and cheating against three individuals in a property dispute.

"This court has cautioned that, power to quash criminal proceedings should be exercised very

sparingly and with circumspection and that too in the rarest of rare cases, it has specified certain category of cases wherein such power can be exercised for quashing proceedings," the bench said. The apex court said that one of the categories where this power can be used is where a criminal proceeding is manifestly mala fide or maliciously instituted with an ulterior motive for wreaking vengeance on the accused and with a view to spite him due to private and personal grudge. The top court said

that in the present case, the complaint has been filed against the accused with an ulterior motive of harassing the appellants.

The apex court said that the magistrate while passing the order under Section 156 (3) of the CrPC has totally failed to consider the law laid down by the highest court. The power under Section 156 (3) of the Criminal Procedure Code, 1973 (CrPC) can be exercised by the magistrate to direct the police to conduct an investigation only in respect of a cognisable offence.

'SC nullifies 'gender cap' on performers in orchestra bars in Maha'

Says stereotypical view has no place

New Delhi, Feb 19 (PTI): The Supreme Court has scrapped the condition imposed by Maharashtra authorities that limited the number of female and male performers in orchestra bars to four each, saying rules based on gender stereotypes have no place in the society.

"While the overall limit of performers in any given performance cannot exceed eight, the composition (i.e., all-female, majority female or male, or vice versa) can be of any combination," it said in an order.

A bench of justices K M Joseph and S Ravindra Bhat, which set aside the Bombay High Court judgement, said the "gender-cap" appears to be the product of a stereotypical view that women who perform in bars and establishments belong to a certain class of society.

CHEETAH REINTRODUCTION PLAN

Indian team in Namibia for discussions

Bhopal, Feb 19 (PTI):

A delegation from India, which includes Madhya Pradesh forest department personnel, has reached Namibia in southern Africa in connection with a plan to reintroduce the cheetah in the country in Kuno National Park, some 340 kilometres from here, officials said on Saturday.

The cheetah, the world's fastest land animal, had gone extinct in India some 70 years ago and the plans to reintroduce the majestic big cat into the wild here again has been in the works for over a decade now, they added.

"The delegation includes officials of National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA), Wildlife Institute of India (WII), the Government of India and Madhya Pradesh Forest Department. It left for Namibia on February 17 to

discuss issues like relocation logistics etc. They are scheduled to return by February 25," Rajnish Singh, Deputy Conservator of Forest (DCF) with MP Principal Chief Conservator of Forest (Wildlife), told PTI.

The plan is to introduce 50 cheetahs over the next five years, possibly 10 each year, with some 10-12 big cats being brought in from Namibia and South Africa as "founder stock" during the first year, officials explained. The country's last cheetah died in 1947 in present day Korea district of Chhattisgarh, which was once part of MP. The cheetah was declared extinct from India in 1952.

The 'African Cheetah Introduction Project in India' was conceived in 2009 under the Congress-led UPA regime, with Jairam Ramesh as Union Environment and Forests

Minister, but it failed to take off for over a decade.

The plan to introduce the cheetah by November last year in MP's Kuno, spread over 750 kilometres in the state's Chambal region, suffered a setback due to the COVID-19 pandemic, officials said.

The Kuno national park has good prey base for cheetahs, comprising the four-horned antelope, chinkara, neelgai, wild pig, spotted deer and sambhar, they added.

Experts from the premier Dehradun-based Wildlife Institute of India had visited sites in Madhya Pradesh in 2020 to look for the best habitat for the introduction of the African cheetah, the visit coming after the Supreme Court, in January that year, approved the plan to introduce cheetahs in a suitable habitat on an experimental basis, they added.

ARTWORK WITH A MESSAGE



Interpretation Department makes a sculptured artwork to create voter awareness at Motijheel selfie point, in Kanpur, Saturday.

'PM meets Afghan Sikh-Hindu delegation'

New Delhi, Feb 19 (PTI):

A delegation of Sikhs and Hindus from Afghanistan met Prime Minister Narendra Modi at his residence here on Saturday and thanked him for bringing about the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) as well as standing up for them in times of distress. Welcoming the delegation, Prime Minister Modi said they are not guests, but that India is their home.

The meeting comes a day after Prime Minister Modi hosted a number of prominent Sikhs at his residence, and a day before the Punjab Assembly polls. Prime Minister Modi talked about the im-



Prime Minister Narendra Modi with members of a delegation comprising of Afghan Sikhs and Hindus, during their meeting at his residence, in New Delhi.

mense difficulties faced by the Hindus and Sikhs in Afghanistan and the help provided by the government to bring them to India safely, a statement issued by the Prime Minister's Office said.

In this light, he also talked about the significance of the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) and its benefits for the community, the statement said. Prime Minister Modi assured them of continu-

ous support in the future as well to resolve all issues and address the difficulties faced by them.

The prime minister also talked about the significance of honouring the Guru Granth Sahib, in light of which special arrangements were made to bring back 'Swaroop' of Guru Granth Sahib from Afghanistan.

Modi also talked about the immense love he has received from Afghans over the years and fondly recalled his visit to Kabul, according to the statement.

BJP leader Manjinder Singh Sirsa, who was present on the occasion, thanked the prime minister for sending help from India for bringing back

members of the community safely, and said that when no one stood with them, the prime minister ensured constant support and timely help.

Other members of the delegation also thanked the Prime Minister for standing up for them in times of distress, the statement said.

They said that they had tears in their eyes when they heard him talking about making special arrangements to bring back 'Swaroop' of Guru Granth Sahib from Afghanistan to India with proper reverence, according to the statement. The delegation members also thanked him for bringing about the CAA, which will be of immense help for members of their commu-

nity, the statement said.

Praising Modi, the delegation members said he is not just the prime minister of India, but the "prime minister of the world" as he understands the difficulties faced especially by Hindus and Sikhs across the world and makes all out efforts to provide immediate help in all such cases.

Union Minister Hardeep Singh Puri and Union Minister of State Meenakshi Lekhi were also present on the occasion. The delegation members presented the PM with traditional Afghani attire and a headgear, which he wore and remarked that former Afghan President Hamid Karzai would be very happy to see him in that attire.

No forearms but paints like pro

21-yr-old from Uttarakhand is fighting all odds

New Delhi, Feb 19 (PTI): Losing her forearms at the age of nine did not deter Bharti Saini from pursuing her passion, and now at the age of 21, she has her paintings mounted in an exhibition in the national capital.

It is a week of two firsts for Saini, a fine arts student from Ramnagar town of Nainital -- she has come to Delhi for the first time and has her very first exhibition mounted at the famed India Habitat Centre.

She is among the 20 students whose paintings are part of the exhibition, and despite her obvious disability, her works are no less a work of art than her peers'.



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