



BRIEF



People play with colours during celebrations of the upcoming 'Basant Utsav, at Maidan in Kolkata, Saturday.

Overshoot

Jabalpur: An Alliance Air flight from Delhi carrying 55 passengers overshoot the runway while landing at the Jabalpur airport on Saturday afternoon, officials of aviation regulator DGCA said. None of the passengers or crew members were injured, they said, adding that the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has started an investigation. The Delhi-Jabalpur flight was operated using an ATR-72 aircraft, they mentioned.

Injured

Nagaon (Assam): A suspected drug peddler was injured when police fired on him after he allegedly attacked them and tried to flee in a bid to evade arrest in Assam's Nagaon district on early Saturday, police said. The man was hospitalised. Based on specific information, an operation was launched in an area under Juria police station. On being challenged, the accused allegedly attacked the police team with a sharp weapon and attempted to flee. In response, the police team fired on him injuring him on the right hand.

Arrested

Erode (TN): Police here on Saturday said they have arrested two people for making country bombs to poach wild boar, deer and rabbits. Also, the police said, the arrested two confessed to have left a bomb near Gobichettipalayam in the district that exploded on Friday when a cow chewed on it. The animal got injured and was taken to a veterinarian.

Shot dead

Bulandshahr: A 60-year-old jaggery trader was shot dead by unidentified assailants in Bulandshahr district of Uttar Pradesh on Saturday, police said. Pradeep Agarwal came under fire when he was going to the wholesale market from home on a motorcycle in the morning. He was rushed to a community health centre, from where he was referred to Meerut. He died on the way to Meerut, the police said. Police suspected that robbery was the motive behind the killing in the Syana police station area.

Inaugurated

Jammu: Union Minister Jitendra Singh on Saturday inaugurated the Satish Dhawan Centre for Space Sciences at the Central University of Jammu here, saying the first course with an intake capacity of 60 students will start this year. The Minister of State in the Prime Minister's office termed the inauguration of the centre a historic day for north India.

Weather
High 34 Low 19

ONE-SIDED LOVE TRAGEDY

Man shoots, injures woman for rejecting proposal; kills self

Surajpur, Mar 12:

A 24-year-old woman was shot and critically wounded by a man, who then shot himself dead on the campus of a government college in Surajpur district on Saturday, police said.

The incident took place around 10 am on the campus of a government college in Premnagar town of the district, where the victim was a student, sub-divisional officer of police Pankaj Kumar Soni said.

According to the police, the accused, Sanjay Bhagat, took the step after the victim Anamika Sahu refused to enter into a relationship with him. As per preliminary information, Sahu, a student of BSc, was with her classmates, when



The youth lying in a pool of blood after he pointed the gun to his forehead and shot himself.

Bhagat arrived at the campus on a motorcycle, he said. Bhagat asked the others accompanying her to leave the place and an argument ensued between the two. He suddenly took out a country-made revolver and fired at her abdomen, following which she fell. Assuming that she was dead, the accused then pointed the gun to his forehead and shot himself," Soni said. Sahu was rushed to a local hospital, from where she was

shifted to Ambikapur Medical College in neighbouring Surguja district. In view of her critical condition, she was later referred to the capital Raipur for further treatment, he said.

It was a one-sided love affair. Bhagat, who hailed from Kedarpur village of the area, had been stalking the woman for a long time and she had rejected his proposals in the past. Apparently in a fit of rage, he shot her, the official said.

About the incident

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CWC to meet today to discuss poll debacle

New Delhi, Mar 12 (PTI):

The Congress Working Committee (CWC) will meet on Sunday to discuss the outcome of the assembly elections in five states where the party received a drubbing, the sources said. Congress president Sonia Gandhi will chair the meeting of the party's top decision-making body at its headquarters here at 4 PM tomorrow, they said.

The Congress lost Punjab to the AAP and could not win any of the four other states - Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Goa and Manipur.

The Sunday meeting is likely to see some fireworks as the G-23 leaders had suggested corrective measures after the previous round of assembly polls, when the party lost Puducherry and failed to make

a mark in Kerala, Assam and West Bengal, but there had been little movement on that front. The leaders of G-23, who have been demanding an organisational overhaul, had met Friday evening at the residence of senior leader Ghulam Nabi Azad to evolve their strategy ahead of the crucial CWC meeting. Azad and senior leader Anand Sharma are the two leaders of the group who are part of the CWC. Mukul Wasnik had initially signed a letter from the group to Gandhi but has since kept his distance.

The 'Group of 23', at their Friday meeting, expressed shock at the party's defeat. Sources said the leaders discussed the way forward and steps for the revival of the Congress which has become even "more marginalised, weakened and isolated".

Seven killed as fire breaks out in shanties

New Delhi, Mar 12 (PTI):

Seven people, including three children, were killed in a blaze that ravaged through the shanties in northeast Delhi in the early hours of Saturday.

Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal announced a compensation of Rs 10 lakh for the kin of adult deceased, Rs 5 lakh in case of minor deceased, and Rs 25,000 to those whose shanties were gutted.

Two minors, Roshan (13) and his sister Dipika (9), of same family were killed in the fire. Five other deceased were from another family. They were identified as Babloo (32), Ranjit (25), Reshma (18), Priyanka (20), and Shahansha (10).

Santu, the 58-year-old grandfather of Roshan and Dipika, said, "The fire



Locals gather after a fire broke out in shanties at Gokulpuri area, in New Delhi, Saturday morning.

started around 12.30 am when we were sleeping. We have no idea from where and how it started. We have only one room. We came out of shanty when the fire broke out to save our lives." A senior official of the Delhi Fire Services said in

Railways to open over 100 food plazas

New Delhi, Mar 12 (PTI):

The railways will now open food plaza, fast food units and multi-cuisine restaurants, taking over from its catering arm IRCTC, in a bid to generate non-fare revenue, according to an order issued by the Railway Board.

The Indian Railway Tourism and Catering Corporation (IRCTC), which is responsible for serving food on board trains and in its static units, was set up primarily to segregate non-rail works from the railways, whose primary job is to run trains. With the IRCTC failing to set up such units, causing huge losses in revenue for the railways, it has now been decided to hand over this responsibility to zonal railways. The order, dated March 8, has given permission to the 17 zonal railways to use vacant space at stations for such units.

HEARTRENDING INCIDENT

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FOUR DECADE LOW

Interest rate on PF cut to 8.1%

New Delhi, Mar 12 (PTI):

Interest rate on employees' provident fund deposits on Saturday was proposed to be cut to a four-decade low of 8.1 per cent for the current 2021-22 fiscal from 8.5 per cent in the previous year, sources said.

This is the lowest interest rate since 1977-78 on deposits that employees make towards their retirement fund. Interest rate on employees provident fund that year stood at 8 per cent.

The interest rate for the current fiscal year ending March 31 was set by the retirement fund body EPFO for its about 5 crore subscribers.

"The Employees' Provident Fund Organisation's (EPFO's)

apex decision making body Central Board of Trustees has decided to provide 8.1 per cent rate of interest on Employees Provident Fund (EPF) for 2021-22 in its meeting held on Saturday," a source said.

The EPFO paid 8.5 per cent interest rate to its subscribers in 2020-21, the same as in the previous year. The EPF rate was 8.65 per cent in 2018-19 and 8.55 per cent in 2017-18.

Provident fund savings are mandatory under the Employees Provident Funds and Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 1952. At least 12 per cent of an employee's basic salary is compulsorily deducted to be saved in provident fund, while an employer co-contributes an equal amount.

PLAYING WITH CLOURS



Students play with colours during a cultural programme, organised ahead of the upcoming festival of Holi, at a school, in Moradabad, Saturday.

PHONE TAPPING CASE

Fadnavis to appear before Mumbai police

Mumbai, Mar 12 (PTI):

The Mumbai cyber police have issued a notice to senior BJP leader Devendra Fadnavis, asking him to appear before them on Sunday in connection with a case of alleged illegal tapping of phones, an official said on Saturday.

Fadnavis, however, said that a senior police officer called to inform him that police will visit his residence to take the required information and there was no need for him to visit the BKC cyber police station.

Phones of political leaders, including state Congress chief

Nana Patole, minister Bachchu Kadu, former MLA Ashish Deshmukh, former MP Sanjay Kakade and others were tapped illegally by IPS officer Rashmi Shukla, when she was the state intelligence chief, Maharashtra home minister Dilip Walse Patil had alleged last month.

"In the notice issued to Fadnavis, police have said that questionnaires were earlier sent to him in sealed envelopes in connection with the case, but he did not respond to them. Besides, notices were also issued to him twice to seek his reply, but he had again failed to reply," the police official said.

FIRST CONVOCATION OF RRU

'Need for reforms in internal security apparatus post-1947'

Stresses need for training

Gandhinagar, Mar 12 (PTI):

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday said there was a need for reforms in the internal security apparatus after Independence, but the country lagged behind in this area.

Addressing the first convocation of Rashtriya Raksha University (RRU) at Lavad in Gandhinagar district, he said during British rule internal security revolved around in-



stillling fear among the masses, which needed to be changed. After

Independence, there was a need for reforms, but unfortunately sufficient work was not done in this direction and we lagged behind," he said.

"Even now, the perception about police is that one should stay away from them..." the prime minister said. More than increasing the number of personnel, what was needed was trained officials who understand technology, human psyche, know how to communicate with the young generation and deal with the leaders of mass agitations, the prime minister said.

BIS seizes sub-standard pressure cookers, helmets

New Delhi, Mar 12 (PTI):

Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) has seized 1,032 pressure cookers and 936 helmets which were found to be without ISI mark and violated the Quality Control Orders (QCO), the government said on Saturday.

The BIS has conducted search and seizure operation for violation of QCO on helmets and pressure cookers, the Ministry of Consumer Affairs said in an official statement. The Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA) has also issued 15 notices against e-commerce entities and sellers selling non-standard pressure cookers online.

CBSE announces Term-1 exam results for Class X

New Delhi, Mar 12 (PTI):

The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) has communicated the results of the Term-I exams for Class 10 to the schools, it has said in an order.

Last year, the CBSE had announced that the board examinations for 2022 will be conducted in two terms. The Term-I exams for major subjects were held between November 30 and December 11 last year.

The weightage of Term-I and Term-II exams will be decided at the time of declaration of Term-II result and accordingly, final performance will be calculated, the

board said. "The Board is informing the schools only about the theory performance of their students of Class X in a collective manner. Hence, the performance of individual student will not be available on the website," the CBSE said in a circular on March 11.

It said it has communicated the results of only theory performance of the students since the information about practical/project/internal assessment is already with schools.

Since it was Term-I only, the board has not issued any mark sheet or passing certificate, which it said will be issued only after the Term-II exam. It has also

constituted an online dispute redressal mechanism for any disputes regarding the Term-I examinations, which it said was made available immediately.

The online link will stay live till March 26, it said, adding, that the disputes will be settled only after the Term II exams though.

The board said that no performance was shared for students who missed their Term-I exams due to COVID or due to their participating in any national or international exam or sport event.

Their final performance will be assessed on the basis of their performance in Term-II examinations, it said.

Russia strikes near Ukraine's capital

Mosque reported hit

Lviv, Mar 12 (AP):

Russian forces pounding the port city of Mariupol shelled a mosque sheltering more than 80 people, including children, the Ukrainian government said Saturday as fighting also raged on the outskirts of the capital, Kyiv.

There was no immediate word of casualties from the shelling of the mosque. Mariupol has seen some of the greatest misery from Russia's war in Ukraine as unceasing barrages have thwarted repeated attempts to bring in food and water and to evacuate trapped civilians. The Ukrainian

Embassy in Turkey said that a group of 86 Turkish nationals, including 34 children, were among the people who had sought safety in the mosque of Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent and his wife Roksolana. Elsewhere, air raid sirens rang out across the capital region and artillery barrages sent residents scurrying for shelter. Fighting erupted in multiple areas around Kyiv. Russia's slow, grinding apparent attempt to encircle the city and the bombardment of other population centers with artillery and air strikes mirror tactics that Russian forces have previously used in other campaigns, notably in Syria and Chechnya, to crush armed resistance.

Business ideas to be promoted through Startup India

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Mar 12: District Trade and Industries Centre hosted a day-long event to promote entrepreneurship in the state. During this programme, discussion was conducted in detail how startups and innovation can be promoted through incubation.

The speakers said that the youth have innovative ideas in their mind but due to lack of capital and the execution plan, they cannot materialise their ideas. Officials of the Central Government and State Government were present.

The chief guest, Sarojini Panigrahi, District Head, Laghu Udyog Bharati spoke about the new possibilities among youth and women and briefed how work is being done to motivate them. Joint Director (MSME) Rajeev S explained how the ideas of startups can be improved. People can contact the officials of the Industries Department for seeking expert advice and guidance.



Deputy Director Lokesh Parganiha shared the innovations of some entrepreneurs and how they managed their ventures in the best way after seeking technical advice from the Industries Department.

District Trade and Industries Center Manager Tushar Tripathi gave detailed information about PMEGP and Mukhyamantri Yuva Swarozgar Yojana. He also explained in detail about

the Industrial Policy 2014-19. He also elaborated on the scope of the enterprise in various fields.

Assistant Director MSME Umesh Prasad explained in detail about the Credit Link Investment Scheme of the Central Government. Professor Shailja Bahadur and Professor Swati Verma of Shankaracharya College also expressed their views.

The programme was organized to promote entrepreneurship in the state under the joint aegis of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Development Office, Raipur and District Trade and Industries Center Durg and in collaboration with Shri Shankaracharya Technical Campus.

Suspension bridge to be constructed on Sheonath at Mahmara Ghat

Bhilai, Mar 12: On the instructions of Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel, the water Resources Department has included the project of Laxman Jhula construction at Mahmara Ghat on Shivanth river in its departmental budget for 2022-23. Durg MLA Arun Vora had made special efforts in this direction. The officials of the Water Resources Department have started the survey work for construction of Laxman Jhula (suspension bridge) and Garden. Suresh Pandey, Executive Engineer of Tandula Water Resources Department said that after survey for the construction of world class Lakshman Jhula (suspension bridge) of about 300 meters length and 3.25 meters width, the estimate will be sent for administrative approval from the state government. Along with the construction of Lakshman Jhula, development of Mahmara Ghat area will be done by tree plantation and developing gardens on both the banks of the river for the purpose of promoting tourism.

DSCET honours Mitanins of IWD

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Mar 12: Dev Sanskriti College of Education and Technology (DSCET), Khapri organised a felicitation function on the occasion of International Women's Day on March 08. The institution has always tried to give higher status to the women.

In this sequel, the institution honoured the Mitanins of Aanganwadi centres located in Jeora Sirsa. Padmashri Phoolbasan Devi graced the function as chief guest. Special guest was Vidya Rajput, Chairman of Chhattisgarh Mitwa Sankalp Samiti, who works for community education, health, awareness and equal rights.

Mitanin Didis of Aanganwadi Centers from village Jeora Sirsa were also honoured. College Director Jyoti Sharma extended IWD greetings to



the entire college staff, teachers and non-teaching staff and honoured them with token gifts. The students presented colourful programmes.

The chief guest and the special guest delivered in-

spirational speeches and urged the women to realise their duties towards the society. Director Jyoti Sharma honoured the guests with mementos and proposed the vote of thanks.

Dr Sonali Chakraborty honoured with 'Rashtra Shakti Shiromani' award

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Mar 12: In view of her remarkable contributions in the field of social work and literature, Dr Sonali Chakraborty, the founder and director of Swayamsiddha NGO, was honoured in a grand event held at IMS Noida on the occasion of International Women's Day.

National Women's Summit was organised by the renowned literary, social and cultural organization Sampark Kranti Parivar, Delhi. She was honoured with Rashtra Shakti Shiromani award.

108 women working in different fields from all over the country were honoured. Padmashri Gulabo Sapera (India); educationist and international motivational speaker (London) Dr Parin Somani and astrologer



Rekha Vohra were among the prominent personalities honoured during the programme.

Padmashree Kamalini Asthana, Padmashree Nalini Asthana (Kathak dancer), Shilpa Gupta (Chairman and Managing Director IMS Noida), Dr Bina Budki (litterateur and educationist in Jammu and Kashmir), Acharya Didi A n a n d i s h u b h e

Saraswati, Sandhya Gupta (Social Worker), Folk singer Vijaya Bharti, Folk singer Dr Neetu Kumari Nutan, Orissa's woman entrepreneur and educationist Dr Chidattamika Kathua, Seema Agarwal from Kolkata (West Bengal), Senior journalist Monika Sharma and Shiv Vinayak Sharma (President Sampark Kranti Parivar) were specially present.

55000 people purchase medicines worth Rs 1 crore from Dhanwantri Medical Stores

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Mar 12: Under the state government's scheme - Shri Dhanvantari Generic Medical Store", a total of 18 Medical Stores are being run at different places in the district. At these stores, the citizens are able to purchase generic and branded medicines at a discount of 50 to 60 percent. Till now, 55222 beneficiaries of the district have purchased medicines worth about Rs One crore from Dhanwantri Medical Stores.

Had they purchased the same medicines from other medical stores, they would have spent 40 to 60 percent extra money. Dhanwantri Medical Stores being run within the limits of Durg and Bhilai Municipal Corporations as well as

other places are getting very good response.

Ravi Kumar, who visited the medical store, said that he was always worried about the price of medicines. But the Dhanwantri Medical Stores have reduced that tension. His parents are patients of hypertension and diabetes and he had to spend around Rs 3000 per month on medicines for them. His family is getting a lot of benefit from the Dhanwantri scheme run by the state government. Now, they are getting the same medicines for about Rs 1400 to Rs 1800.

Manish Khatri, operator of Dhanwantri Medical Store located near Naighar Complex of Durg, said that 251 types of generic medicines and 27 types of surgical products are available in the medical store. There



is a continuous increase in the demand of medicines for high blood pressure, diabetes, asthma and seasonal diseases etc.

He said that among these, blood pressure and diabetes medicines have highest demand. The sales figure of these medicines is between Rs 7000-9000 per

day. In the present era, the number of patients suffering from lifestyle diseases has increased. Accordingly, there has been a rise in the consumption of medicines. Sanjeevani products of the department are also available in the store, he added. Collector Dr

Sarveshwar Narendra Bhure appealed to the general public that Dhanwantri Medical Store has been opened in the interest of common people. The main objective of the government is to provide quality medicines at affordable rates. With this initiative of the state government, people are able to save their hard earned money.

To popularize generic drugs among the masses and to dispel the popular belief that low cost drugs are less effective, the district administration is continuously making efforts through publicity and other means. The citizens of the district are displaying their awareness and have started buying medicines from Dhanwantri Medical Stores.

BSF organises multifarious events under Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsava

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Mar 12: On the occasion of the 75th year of country's independence, the Border Security Force deployed in anti-naxal operations in Chhattisgarh is organising multifarious events under the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsava.

Various battalions of BSF working under the Frontier Headquarters (Special Operations, Chhattisgarh) are organising sports competitions, essay competitions, debate competitions and are also organising exhibition of weapons.



In this sequel, the office of Inspector General (Frontier Headquarters, Special Operations, Chhattisgarh), Risali Bhilai organised an essay competition for the students of the nearby schools. The topic of essay

writing competition was national security.

A video film on the BSF and its achievements was also screened for the students. An exhibition of weapons was organised at Hostel Number 01 at

Sector 3 in which large number of students got information about the popular weapons of the armed forces. These events were organised with the objectives of promoting patriotism among the students.

Rail & Strl Mill creates new records in production

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Mar 12: Bhilai Steel Plant's Rail & Structural Mill has created a new record of producing 1931 Tonnes (T) of R 260 grade and 60E1 profile rails on March 11, 2022, surpassing previous record of 1852 Tonnes on 17th June 2021.

Best-ever production of 1931 Tonnes (T) of R 260 grade and 60E1 profile on 11th March 2022 included best ever tonnage of 653 T of long rails from Rail & Structural Mill as against previous best of 651 T on 6th March 2022.

SAIL-BSP has been producing the exact specification based rails for the Indian Railways through-out its association of



more than six decades. The R260 grade of Rails is targeted to meet the requirements of Indian Railways for higher speed and higher axle load.

Indian Railways is moving towards higher speed and axle load rails for which it required SAIL to produce R 260 grade. The

new grade will not only ensure cleaner steel but will also provide better mechanical properties.

It is worth mentioning that the specifications given by RDSO for this new grade of rails are even more stringent than the specifications of rails used in European coun-

tries. As such the steel for this new grade of rails is cleaner and the rails have higher yield strength. Bhilai Steel Plant is producing this new grade and profile of rails from both its Universal Rail Mill and Rail & Structural Mill.

JLNH&RC hosts Neonatal Resuscitation Programme

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Mar 12: The Neonatal Resuscitation Programme is a structured, hands on training educational program based on recent-most guidelines laid by the "American Academy of Pediatrics & National Neonatology Forum" (IAP-NRP-FGM-Project) and is in alignment with India Newborn Action plan committed to reduce Neonatal Mortality Rate to single digit by 2030.

Preventable Newborn death accounts for 44% of all under 5 deaths globally, at least 50% of these deaths can be reduced through implementing educational interventions that includes neonatal resuscitation and essential elements of newborn care.



Goal of the program is to decrease Neonatal mortality rate focusing on accelerating the reduction of preventable newborn deaths related to Birth asphyxia. The program lays out a vision and plan for scaling up high impact yet cost effective interventions and has a clear vision supported by priority actions & monitoring frame-work.

The program was organized on Saturday by department of pediatrics & Neonatology JLN Hospital & RC Bhilai in guidance of Dr SK Issar (ED, Medical &

HS), Dr Ravindranath M (CMO, M & HS), Dr Pramod Binayake (CMO, M & HS) & Dr Sambita Panda (HoD pediatrics).

This program is designed to translate concerted efforts based on contin-

uum approach, knowledge & hands on skill training required for receiving and resuscitating newborns & the primary beneficiaries for the current program were post graduate resident doctors from

Pediatrics, Obstetrics & gynecology department & critical care staff working in NICU & labor room.

Scientific program was co-ordinated by Dr Mala Choudhary, (consultant, dept of pediatrics) in asso-

ciation with Dr Akash Lalwani (CG state coordinator for NRP), Dr Naresh P Motwani and Dr Seema Jain in collaboration with Ministry of Family Welfare Government of India.

Under the competent leadership of Dr Subodh Saha (I/c -neonatal unit) and team - Dr Sanjibani Patel & Dr Nootan Kumar Verma & Dr Mala Choudhary. This program was observed with commitment & consistent efforts towards reducing neonatal mortality rate at JLNH & RC Bhilai which is at par to some of the developed countries of western world.

Dr Nohar Singh Thakur, Dr Meeta Sachdeva, Dr Kausik Kishore, Dr Wrunda Sakhare, Dr Ruchika Tamrakar consultants have also contributed to make it a success.

OBITUARY

HM Masih

Bhilai: HM Masih, wife of Late CB Masih left for heavenly abode at the age of 86 years on Saturday.

Funeral procession will be taken out from her residence situated at MIG2/316, Hudco on March 13 around 15:00 hrs and last rites of the mortal remains will be performed at Nehru Nagar Christian Cemetery. She was the mother of Sanjeet Masih.

Pratap Madhyani

Bhilai: Senior Congress leader and businessman Pratap Madhyani left for heavenly abode at the age of 59 years on Saturday. He breathed last at a hospital in Hyderabad. Last rites of the mortal remains will be performed at Durg on March 13. He was elected thrice as Corporator of Durg Municipal Corporation. Political leaders have expressed condolences and mourned his death.

Will promote economic self-reliance in rural areas: Bhupesh

Chief Minister inaugurates International Agriculture Exhibition and Kisan Mela

Central Chronicle News

Raipur, Mar 12: Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel on Saturday inaugurated the four-day International Agricultural Exhibition and Kisan Mela organised at Indira Gandhi Agricultural University. In this international fair, 132 organizations of government, public and private sector are showcasing agricultural techniques and products. Inaugurating the fair, the Chief Minister said that it was the dream of the forefathers to properly distribute the amount received from the mineral reserves and natural resources of



the state. The Chief Minister said that his government never discriminated against any section and waived off the loans of all farmers.

The Chief Minister said that we started the Rajiv Gandhi Kisan Nyay Yojana to improve the economic condition of the farmers so that the rural economy remains gears up in the state. Chief Minister Mr. Baghel said that he had made a promise to the people of the state and fulfilled it, despite the decline

in the economy during Corona, released four installments to the farmers and the fourth installment of this financial year is also going to be released. Chief Minister Baghel said that Nyay Yojana has been started for the labourers as well and now they will get Rs 7000 instead Rs 6000 per year. The Chief Minister said that construction of Gauthans is not the plan of the government, but the plan of farmers and villagers, which we are preparing jointly.

Talking about the economic condition of the farmers of Chhattisgarh, Chief Minister Mr. Baghel said that in the last three years, Rs. 91 thousand crore has been deposited in the account of farmers and this is one third of the total budget which the farmers have got. Addressing the farmers at International Agriculture Exhibition and Kisan Mela, Chhattisgarh Agriculture Minister Ravindra Choubey said that Chhattisgarh is mainly a state based on agriculture and continuous development of agriculture is taking place in the state, the effect of which is visible now. Choubey appreciated the efforts of Agriculture University for continuous expansion of agriculture innovation in Chhattisgarh. On the occasion of the inauguration of International Agriculture Exhibition and Kisan Mela, Mr. Surendra

Sharma, Chairman of Chhattisgarh State Farmers Welfare Council, Mr. Agni Chandrakar, President of Chhattisgarh State Seeds and Agriculture Development Corporation, Agriculture Production Commissioner Mr. Kamalpreet Singh and Vice Chancellor of Indira Gandhi Agricultural University Mr. Girish Chandel was present.

Chhattisgarh sees 32 COVID-19 cases, no death; active tally now 422

Central Chronicle News

Raipur, Mar 12: Chhattisgarh reported 32 COVID-19 cases, taking the state's tally to 11,51,749 on Friday, while the death toll remained unchanged at 14,034, an official said.

The positivity rate, or cases detected per 100 tests, was 0.20 per cent, he said. The recovery count

stood at 11,37,293 after 18 people were discharged from hospitals and 98 completed home isolation during the day, leaving the state with 422 active cases, he said.

"Jashpur recorded four cases, followed by Raipur three, Raigarh two and Durg one, among other districts. No COVID-19 case was reported in 12

districts. With 16,283 samples examined during the day, the tally of tests carried out so far went up to 1,72,99,391," he added.

Chhattisgarh's coronavirus figures are as follows: Positive cases 11,51,749, new cases 32, death toll 14,034, recovered 11,37,293, active cases 422, today tests 16,283, total tests 1,72,99,391.

International webinar on role of Yoga Commission in Covid-19 infection



Yoga builds self-confidence: Minister Bhediya

Central Chronicle News

Raipur, Mar 12: An international webinar was organized on the topic of role of yoga in Covid-19 infection at Raipur Municipal Corporation Auditorium, today. Detailed information was given about various dimensions of yoga in the

programme organized by the Chhattisgarh Yoga Commission.

Social Welfare Minister Anila Bhediya attended the programme as the chief guest. Conveying her best wishes for organizing the programme, she said that programmes related to yoga should be organized at the panchayat level also, so that more and more people can join yoga. 'Yoga boosts confidence in life and enables us to adopt a disciplined lifestyle', she said.

According to her performing yoga in a proper way under the guidance of a skilled instructor will be more beneficial. Yoga has played an important role during Covid-19.

Giving information about the ancient yogic system, Rajya Sabha MP Chhaya Verma said that yoga made an important contribution in human life. Mayor of Raipur Municipal Corporation Aizaz Dhebar said that yoga or physical exercise should be performed regularly for at least one hour daily. Yoga boosts inner strength besides facilitating transmission of new energy in the body, he added.

According to Raipur Municipal Corporation Speaker Pramod Dubey people of many countries joined this international webinar today, in which the name of Chhattisgarh is spreading in many

countries. Yoga Commission chairman Gyanesh Sharma said that yoga should be included in daily routine. Yoga boosts immunity, he said. According to him Yoga has attracted the attention of all of us as a shield of protection in the corona pandemic.

Chief guest Bhedia presented a memento and medal to Tikeswar Patel, who performed 'Shirshasan' for one hour. Many speakers gave their lectures on the subject of Yoga on this occasion. Members of the Yoga Commission Ganesh Nath Yogi, Rajesh Nara, Ravindra Singh, Director-in-Charge of Social Welfare Department Pankaj Verma, Secretary of the Yoga Commission ML Pandey, Akhileshwar Tiwari, officers of the department including employees and students were present.

People get to know about govt schemes



At information camps and photo exhibitions

Raipur, Mar 12: Information about government schemes is being made available to the general public through the information camps and photo exhibitions of the Public Relations Department. The camp was organized on Saturday

in village Sakri of Abhanpur block.

Villagers visited the photo exhibition with enthusiasm and got information about government schemes through information camp. Publicity material was also distributed in the camp. Villagers told that Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel took many decisions in the interests of the general public. The citizens of all sec-

tions of the state are getting its benefits.

Information about government schemes was given in the camp. Villagers Bhuneshwar Sahu, Santram Sahu, Parmeshwar Sahu, Sugandha Sahu, Pyarelal Sai, Tikeswar, who came to Haat Bazar, said that farmers got great relief through Rajiv Gandhi Kisan Nyay Yojana. They said that cattle farmers were also getting encouragement through Godhan Yojana.

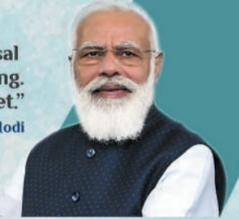
Narayan Prasad, Meghnath, Ghanshyam Sahu, Vinod Kumar, Premal, Yashwant Kumar told that the government's Godhan Nyay scheme gave impetus to the rural economy. Sarpanch of Village Sakri Pushpa Devi Sahu

said that Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel launched many schemes for the betterment of women. Deputy Sarpanch Dharmendra Sahu, Panchs Rameshwari Sahu, Santosh Sahu and Padmavati Manju Dhruv and a large number of villagers were present at the camp.

Baghel pays tribute to Swami Satyarupanand Ji Maharaj



Raipur, Mar 12: Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel paid tribute to Swami Satyarupanand Ji Maharaj at Vivekananda Vidyapeeth in Kota, Raipur today. The Chief Minister paid paying floral tributes to Swami Satyarupanand Ji Maharaj and offered prayers on the occasion at the Ramakrishna Prarthana Mandir located in the premises. Baghel also participated in the Bhandara (community meal) organized at Vivekananda Vidyapeeth.



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Prime Minister Narendra Modi

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Director, AcSIR

Agriculture based industries need to be promoted in Chhattisgarh: Choubey

Farmtech Asia International Agriculture exhibition launched

Central Chronicle News

Raipur, Mar 12: Agriculture Minister Ravindra Choubey has said that Chhattisgarh is being recognized as an agro-based developed state and instead of exodus and plight of farmers, discussions are held about the prosperity of the farmers. He said that there is a need to promote agro-based industries in Chhattisgarh to accelerate the development of agriculture sector. He said that after the formation of Chhattisgarh state, the condition of agriculture and farmers has improved a lot and Indira Gandhi Agricultural University has a great contribution in the betterment of farmers. Farmer-friendly agricultural technology, new varieties, agricultural research and its dissemination to the farmers, developed by the Agricultural University, have shown a new path of prosperity to the farmers of the state. Agriculture Minister Choubey said this while



inaugurating the four-day International Farmer's Fair and Agriculture Exhibition organised at the Agricultural University campus here. In the inauguration ceremony, Raipur Rural MLA Mr. Satyanarayan Sharma, Vice President of Farmers Welfare Council, Mahendra Chandrakar, Member of Indira Agricultural University Management Board, Mrs. Valri Chandrakar, Vice Chancellor of Indira Gandhi Agricultural University Dr. Girish Chandel, Director

Agriculture Mr. Yashwant Kumar and Director Horticulture, Mr. Matheswaran. V was also present. Addressing the function, Agriculture Minister, Ravindra Choubey said that under the leadership of the Registrar of the University G.K. Nirmam, Director Research Dr. P.K. Chandrakar, Director Extension Dr. R.K. Bajpai, Dean of Agriculture College, Dr. M.P. Thakur, Dean Student Welfare Dr. G.K. Srivastava and Heads of various departments, professors, scientists and a large number of farmers and students were present.

and Bari. This year a record 98 lakh metric tonnes of paddy has been procured from the farmers by the state government and Rs 20,000 crore been transferred in the accounts of the farmers. He said that events like Farmtech Asia International Agriculture Exhibition provide farmers an opportunity to be aware of latest farming techniques and products. Here farmers also get a chance to get information about the farmers welfare schemes of the state government and take advantage of them. Appreciating the contribution of Indira Gandhi Agricultural University in the development of agriculture in the state, Choubey congratulated the newly appointed Vice Chancellor of the university, Dr. Girish Chandel. On this occasion the Registrar of the University G.K. Nirmam, Director Research Dr. P.K. Chandrakar, Director Extension Dr. R.K. Bajpai, Dean of Agriculture College, Dr. M.P. Thakur, Dean Student Welfare Dr. G.K. Srivastava and Heads of various departments, professors, scientists and a large number of farmers and students were present.

Tourists increased in Jungle Safari as corona infection drops

Guide recruited by the Jungle Safari management so that the tourists do not face any problem and provide them information about wildlife



sand tourists are arriving in Jungle Safari on Saturday and Sunday, while one thousand tourists are reaching Moherenga Nature Safari. Jungle Safari Management said that the number of tourists is increasing day by day after corona infection rate has gone down. In the Asia's largest

man-made jungle safari, tourists can watch wildlife roaming in the open. Along with this, 58 enclosures are also being constructed by the Jungle Safari Management. In which at present the construction work of 40 enclosures has been completed. Wildlife like lion, bear, deer have been kept in the enclosure. Tourists going on safari can easily spot wildlife in the enclosure. A guide has also been recruited by the Jungle Safari management so that the tourists visiting the jungle safari do not face any problem. They

give information about the wildlife. Moherenga Nature Safari, situated at a distance of 40 km from the Raipur, is also witnessing heavy footfall of the tourists. Tourists are arriving in large numbers after the corona infection reduces. In nature safari, 600 to 700 tourists are reaching in a day. Tourists can see the deer roaming in the open, while on the banks of the pond, they can enjoy the nature. It is notable that Nature Safari is spread over 580 hectares. Its range is more than 16 kilometers.

CS issued a circular to the District Collectors and Chief Executive Officers of Zila Panchayats

Raipur, Mar 12: Chief Secretary Mr. Amitabh Jain has issued a circular to all District Collectors and Chief Executive Officer of Zila Panchayats regarding prevention of vector-borne diseases and mosquito control. He has directed to take necessary measures for mosquito control in villages and urban areas with the participation of Gram Panchayats and urban bodies. He has asked to install nets on doors and windows of all government buildings to prevent mosquitoes. It has been stated in the circular that vector-borne dis-

eases like malaria, dengue, and filariasis are spread by mosquitoes. Mosquito numbers are often low from the beginning of summer to the month of June. During this period, their growth can be stopped for the coming months. Besides, the work of control and eradication of vector-borne diseases can also be done. He has directed the urban bodies and Gram Panchayats to take necessary action in this regard. The Chief Secretary has asked to release Gambusia and Guppy fish—which feed on mosquito larvae—in all ponds in the

month of March and April to curb the growth of dengue-breeding mosquitoes. One Gambusia fish can eat up to 300 larvae of mosquito per day. These fishes can be easily obtained by contacting the Fisheries Department. He has also given instructions to make people aware regarding installation of nets for mosquito control in private houses. Besides, he has asked to ensure repair of the lid of the water tanks. The Chief Secretary has directed to ensure arrangements for fogging and indoor-spray by the local bodies in the coming May

and June month to prevent mosquitoes. He has asked to ensure immediate examination of the patients having fever and other symptoms of vector-borne disease. Chief Secretary Mr. Jain has also given instructions for cleaning of drains and streams. He has asked the Collectors and CEOs of Zila Panchayats to review availability and status of use of LLINs mosquito nets already distributed to the people. He has expressed hope that with effective implementation of all these activities, the number of cases of mosquito-borne diseases will reduce this year.

Meeting of the High Power Committee constituted concludes



For the establishment of C-Mart

Central Chronicle News

Raipur, Mar 12: The meeting of the high level committee constituted for the establishment of C-Mart through video conferencing was held under the chairmanship of Chief Secretary Amitabh Jain. In the meeting, extensive dis-

cussions were held on the operation of C-Mart to be established at the district and regional level, sale of various products in C-Mart, branding and other important issues. Principal Secretary, Village Industries Department, Dr. Alok Shukla and Principal Secretary, Forest, Commerce and Industry, Mr. Manoj Pingua also participated in the video conferencing. The Chief

Secretary directed the officers to take all necessary action for the establishment of C-Mart. He gave necessary directions to the Collectors of the districts regarding listing of operators, self-help groups preparing locally produced materials, craftsmen, potters, traditional and cottage industries for the operation of C-Mart to be established in their districts. In the meeting, Dr. Sanjay Shukla, Managing Director of Chhattisgarh Minor Forest Produce Association, shared the business experience of the State Minor Forest Produce Association for the establishment of C-Mart and gave comprehensive information regarding the operation of C-Mart. He said that C-Marts are being opened to make available the products manufactured by women self-help groups, craftsmen, traditional and cottage industries at one place under the schemes run under various departments of the government. This will benefit the local people.

Ch'garh gears up for Asia Art Festival on Apr 1-2



Raipur, Mar 12: This is the high time when people should start treating the creative field as a serious career option. There is a huge demand and supply gap. Artist need a platform where they can showcase the talent and make earnings. In times to come the modern art form will aesthetically win the hearts of many and will rule the career options segment. Chhattisgarh gears up for the first of its kind Asia Art Festival on April 1st and 2nd April at Gaurav Garden. "The biggest challenge to plan Asia Art Festival in Chhattisgarh was to identify a certain creative segment when there wasn't much enterprise in the arts field, and it was really a challenge to bring up a for-commercial creative model for the artists of Chhattisgarh as

well as create a social impact." says Ishan Bhalla, Ambassador of Indian Arts & Director of Asia Art Festival. "Asia Art Festival is an organisation which is committed to the provision of global platform to the artists of India and to mobilize resources through government schemes, direct investments, and collaborations." adds Mr Bhalla. Sharing the secret of previous successful editions of Art Festivals in different cities, he said "In today's world the paradigms are changing. People are finding creative ways of engagement, thus, I believe that being creative is what is the most important quality of an entrepreneur. The creativity and vision of an entrepreneur leads to the invention and discovery of new things." "We have received registration of over 300 artists from Chhattisgarh and our team are working with them to present a re-freshed curatorial approach." "Singers Jassie Gill and Babbal Rai will be performing live at the Asia Art Festival."

Students have immense potential to become entrepreneurs: V-C

CU makes two software for NAAC data capturing and Website of IQAC

Bilaspur, Mar 12: Vice-Chancellor of Guru Ghasidas Vishwavidyalaya (Central University), Professor Alok Kumar Chakrawal inaugurated two software and the website of Internal Quality Assurance Cell. In the program organized on March 7 in the meeting room of the administrative building, the Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Chakrawal launched the website of IQAC along with two software, SSR Data Capturing and AQAR Data Capturing Software associated with NAAC and created by the teachers and students of Department of Computer Science Engineering and Department of Information Technology Engineering under the University's School of Engineering and Technology. In this program organized under the aegis of Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC), the guests were welcomed with bouquets by Dr. Alok



Kushwaha and Dr. Rohit Raja. Vice-Chancellor of the University, Professor AK Chakrawal said that the creation of both these software and website by the students should be seen as entrepreneurship development. These young students have a great combination of technology and skills. It is noteworthy that the students of our University have created these specialized software to meet the arduous challenge of data capturing in SSR and AQAR of Internal Quality Assurance Cell. Our students have immense wealth of ability, courage, skill and knowledge. All these students will prove to be the entrepreneurs of the future only by providing professional form to this immense store of knowledge and technology. The Vice-Chancellor

also emphasized on commercially launching both these softwares in the market. On this occasion, a presentation was made by the students related to the software and the website. IQAC Assistant Director Dr. A.K. Soni conducted the program and at the end of the program vote of thanks was given by Dr. TG Reddy, Assistant Director, IQAC. The Registrar of the University, Prof. Shailendra Kumar, Director IQAC, Prof. AS Ranadive, NAAC Coordinator, Prof. LVKS Bhaskar, Deans of various Schools, Heads of Departments, Criteria Coordinators, and convenor of the Website and Software Development Committee, Dr. Rohit Raja Associate Professor, IT Engineering Department and team of students were present.

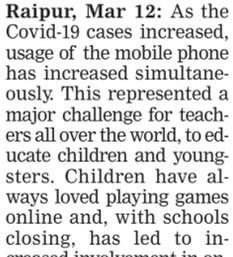
Tikeshwar creates world record through 'Sirsasana'



Raipur, Mar 12: Tikeshwar Patel, a third year student of B.Sc. Department of Yoga Science, Shri Rawatpura Sarkar University, Raipur Chhattisgarh in Yoga World Book of Records, program organized by the All India Yoga Federation (AIYF), the world record has been set for being present in the Sirsasana for a maximum time of 1 hour 44 minutes. This success of student Tikeshwar Patel has illuminated the name of Shri Rawatpura Sarkar University not only in our India but in the whole world. More than 150 participants from different countries of the world and different states of India participated in this program

The incredible success of Tikeshwar Patel at the global level has been highly appreciated by the university and it is said that today the name of Shri Rawatpura Sarkar University has been spread to 150 countries of the world. It is the fortune of our university that the university family congratulates him a lot for this achievement and wishes him a bright future. For this historic achievement of University student Tikeshwar Patel, Honorable Pro Chancellor Shri Rawatpura Sarkar University, Raipur, Dr. J.K. Upadhyay, Registrar Dr. Pratap Singh and all the members of the university family extended their congratulations and best wishes...

Gaming platform Quizbee enhancing skills of youth in Ch'garh



Raipur, Mar 12: As the Covid-19 cases increased, usage of the mobile phone has increased simultaneously. This represented a major challenge for teachers all over the world, to educate children and youngsters. Children have always loved playing games online and, with schools closing, has led to increased involvement in online gaming according to the India Mobile Gaming Report (IMGR) 2021, the number of online gamers in India's tier-III cities and towns would increase significantly in 2021. Big states like Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand, Haryana, Rajasthan, and Chhattisgarh itself have witnessed growth in the number of gamers. Following the issue of effect in education rate and



high interest in online gaming, Quizbee, an online educational gaming platform, proposed an effective method of Game-Based Learning (GBL) technique with the intention of engaging youngsters with educational materials in a playful and dynamic way, especially in states like Chhattisgarh, where the youth population dominates with 59.12 percent.

Quizbee is a knowledge & skill-based mobile gaming platform, with multiple challenges that vary across different genres like movies, cricket, travel, food, general knowledge & exciting puzzles. Quizbee is different from other chance-based games as in the game of skill, the player invests his time in learning, practicing, and honing a skill. Commenting on educating youth through Game-Based learning, Mr. Abhinav Anand, CTO of Intelligence Game Pvt. Ltd said that "We intend to turn a negative point into a positive one. Using fun and Competitive method to educate the youth is what Quizbee aims to provide. We want to attract youth, especially Gen-Z's interest towards increasing their

knowledge and skills. They will be prepared for the competitive exams as Quizbee is a time-based game application that perfectly captures the cognitive functioning of brain cells, i.e., how quickly your brain can perceive a task and complete it within a set amount of time. As a result, improve their general knowledge skills while also speeding up their brain cells to answer quiz questions." Quizbee is a B2C gaming platform that has created a welcoming, inclusive, and safe environment for friends, family, and students to play and learn together. It is a go-to destination for Quiz and Trivia fans who want to test their knowledge and intelligence with the possibility to win real-time money.

Irrigation area will increase by 3372 Hectares in Raipur, Durg, Bilaspur and Korba

Raipur, Mar 12: The Water Resources Department has given administrative approval of Rs 47.49 crore for various canal development works to increase irrigation facilities in Raipur, Bilaspur and Korba districts. Under the Mahanadi Godavari Chachar project, the Amner Motinala canal which is the main canal of the Dhamdha development block in Durg district will see an expansion from 9.90 km to 24.75 km and other minor canals will be remodeled for which administrative approval of Rs 8.14 crore has been given. Irrigation in an additional 1741 hectares of land will be made possible by this project. Similarly, Patan's Bhilai distributary and its 5 other minor canals falling under Durg district will undergo remodeling and relining for which an administrative approval of 13.61 crores has been granted. Due to this, the farmers will receive irrigation

facilities in an additional 1216 hectares of land. The Water Resource department, Hasdev Kachar of Korba has received an administrative approval of 6.22 crores for the Chirra diversion project. After the completion of this project, irrigation will be made possible in 270 hectares of land, 190 hectares Kharif and 80 hectares of rabi land. The Nagoi(Kotri) diversion project of Korba district under the Podi-Uproda development block has received administrative approval of 3.95 crores. Under this project, irrigation facilities will be provided to 145 hectares of Kharif land. Under the Mahanadi Project of the Water Resources Department, administrative approval of Rs.5.57 crore has also been given for the repair of the Turi Diversion Scheme of Narhapur development block of Kanker district.

Woman trying to steal baby arrested

From district hospital; handed over to police in Kotwali Thana

Surajpur, Mar 12:

A case of stealing of a newly born child of a couple has come to fore from District Hospital and it is on getting information about the child being lifted, the family members and hospital management were able to nab the woman running away with the child and handed her over to Kotwali Police thana.

As per information, a newly born child was born to Phulkunwar in Parsapara of district Hospital on Thursday. It is right since then the accused woman Sunita Pando tried to steal the baby and with such intentions she increased her rapport with family member and finding an opportunity moment on



Thursday, saying that the doctor is calling the baby, she took away the baby child and tried to escape.

With this news becoming viral, there was hue & cry about a baby being stolen from the Hospital and immediately the hospital management and parents of the baby be-

came active and were able to nab the accused woman running away with the baby near Mahgaon Chowk and took her to Kotwali Thana. The Police is investigating into the case. Accused woman was facing insults of being mother-less child:

In this entire case, the woman Sunita Pando is reported to be from Gram Karkoti and is a motherless child, facing charges that she cannot conceive. So since then she was targeting on Phulkunwar's daughter and finding a right moment, she ran away with the child from the district hospital and had even kept a milk bottle ready with her.

Since the baby was girl, she was stolen:

The accused woman informed that since she was not able to conceive, she decided to steal the baby girl of 'Phulkunwar', as she will not have to part with her property after her daughter's marriage and she still regrets being unable to become a biological mother of a child.

Women, girls given information about female issues

In a prog 'Abhivyakti' awareness prog

Gourela, Pendra, Marwahi, Mar 12: On third day of the state-level 'Abhivyakti Mahila Jagrookta week' programme, a programme was organised under guidance of Archana Jha on occasion of International Women's Day in Gram Andhiyar Khoh under Gourela thana here on March 10.

In this programme, women's cell in-Charge inspector Lata Choure gave information to women present about 'tonhi' prevention compensation to victim; human trafficking; cyber security; basic right to women under laws; POCSO Act and others in a



simple language. Along with this they were also informed about the security App by the state government for women and children and about the use of this App.

In this programme, Bhawana Arthor; Sushma Kumar; Shashibala Lal, Anamika Mandal presented a drama and song based upon de-addiction and gave counselling to stu-

dents present for further education.

The Dy. Director Amita Shiksha Niketan School, Gourela, Moni Chattopadhyay, teacher Ranu Namdeo, Pratibha Jain, Archana, Jailesh Singh, Vidya Rathore and school students through a drama gave information about 'child marriage', female foeticide, dowry, misbehaviour and other social

evils wide-spread in the society. They were also informed about the bad-touch and 'good-touch'.

It is notable here that till March 14, information about 'tonhi' atrocities act, dowry prohibition act; child marriage; healthy diet; victim's compensation scheme; domestic violence and will be given to people in different villages of the District.

VOCAL FOR LOCAL

Anuppur District Administration signs MoU with CIMAP

For conservation, marketing and production of medicinal and aromatic flowers by Tribal University.

Amarkantakh, Mar 12:

The university's 13 faculties and 35 subject teachers are fully committed to realizing the concept of 'Vocal for Local' by providing high quality education as well as doing research to solve local and regional problems. A three-stage MoU has been signed by the University on Saturday. In which CIMAP and Anuppur district administration jointly associated with the university, on this occasion, the Vice Chancellor of the university, Professor

Shriprakash Mani Tripathi, said in his speech that 'the aim of the university is to upgrade the tribal society and to upgrade the skill development of the tribal society and make it global. While establishing them on the platform, it is playing an important role in making them self-reliant. At the same time, it is paving the way to become the custodian and conductor of the glorious culture and tradition of the nation. This MoU will prove to be effective for the conservation, marketing and production of medicinal and aromatic flowers here. This MoU is an important step in this direction, medicines are helpful in human protection, so human should also protect medicines. Marketing and production of forest medicines



through this MoU will enable farmers and join the mainstream of development. The need today is to link traditional knowledge with modern knowledge.

Signing this MoU, Collector of Anuppur district, Ms. Sonia Meena described this MoU as a milestone. Aromatic and medicinal plants will be saved. They will be mar-

keted, agriculture will be done by modern method and the farmers here will join the main stream of development by producing medicinal plants, this area is known as Biosphere Reserve, which has various types of medicines and fragrant flowers, whose identification and protection is necessary. I am sure that this MoU will work in this di-

rection. On this occasion, Dr. Sanjay Kumar, Director, CIMAP, while signing this MoU said that "Today is a day of utmost pride, we have signed such MoUs many times but this three level MoU is wonderful, it not only helps The income of the farmers will increase, but the fragrant flowers and medicines will be marketed at the national and international level. It is a matter of pride for all the three institutions to sign this MoU. The MoU was signed on behalf of the University by the Registrar Shri P.Sulvenathan and Dean Academics Prof. Alok Shrotriya presented the development journey of the university in front of everyone and said that this MoU is unique in itself, it will make it easier

to preserve and market medicinal and aromatic flowers. The University's Department of Botany, Department of Biotechnology, Department of Tribal Studies, Department of Anthropology and Sociology, Innovation Club, Incubation Center will all work for the botanical world and will work to connect the farmers of the area with the basic stream, in which medicinal and fragrant flowers will be the main. The program was conducted by Dr. Ravindra Shukla and thanked Prof. Posted by Vijay Pramanik. On this occasion Professor Bhuminath Tripathi, Professor Manisha Sharma, Professor M.T.V. Nagaraju, Professor Murthy, Professor Poonam Sharma etc.

BJPians celebrate party's victory

Busting fire-crackers and distributing sweets



Dhamdha, Mar 12:

On historic win by BJP in four out of the five states in VS polls, the BJP Dhamdha Mandal celebrated the same by busting fire-crackers and distributing sweets among party workers and leaders. On this occasion the workers raised slogans 'Jai Jai Shri Ram', 'Narendra Modi Jindabad', 'Yogi Adityanath Jindabad' and made a small detour to the city.

On this occasion BJP former Mandal President Naresh Sahu, Nagar Panchayat corporator and former BJYM president Aruni Dani, BJP gen. secy. Harsh Sahu, V-P Deepak Chouhan, Pradeep Tamrakar, Montu Gupta, General secy. Dinshan Sinha, Secretary Tukesh Sonwani, V-P Tejeshwar Janghel, Media in-Charge Aditya Tamrakar, social media in-charge Jitendra Sahu, Yashwant Sonkar and others were present.

Employees express happiness over restoration of old pension scheme



Gourela-Pendra-Marwahi, Mar 12: A wave of happiness spread among the employees due to the restoration of the old pension scheme in the budget announcement by Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel. Employees gathered at the block headquarters, danced and celebrated by applying Rang Gual. The employees have expressed their grati-

tude towards Bhupesh Sarkar. Here it needs a mention that Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel presented the budget in the Chhattisgarh Legislative Assembly on Wednesday, in which he announced to restore the old pension scheme, fulfilling the biggest demand of all the NPS employees officers of the state. Teachers Congress District

President Surendra Singh Thakur described it as a historic decision taken in the interest of the employees. During this, employee leader Satya Narayan Jaiswal, District President of Contributory Pension Employees Welfare Association Piyush Gupta, District Convenor of Sangharsh Morcha Mukesh Kori, Durga Gupta, Mohan Mishra,

Tarun Namdev, Dinesh Rathore, Om Prakash Sonwani, Rashmi Namdev, Ajay Chaudhary and many others were present.

Responding to the restoration of the old pension scheme, employee leader Satya Narayan Jaiswal said that with this decision of Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel, the future of the employees of the state will be secured as well as the treasury of the government will be filled. He said that now billions of rupees deposited in the NSDL account will come to the state government's treasury, due to which development work will be done at a faster pace in the state. He said that all the NPS staff officers of the state are grateful to Bhupesh Sarkar.

CRPF 217th Battalion organized Civic Action Prog

While the Naxalites created a ruckus in broad daylight

Konta, Mar 12:

Naxalites have created an orgy in broad daylight in Konta block of Sukma district, a day earlier in Kistaram police station area, where a highway vehicle engaged in road construction work was set on fire by the Naxalites. On the other hand, according to the directions of Ashok Kumar, Commandant 217th Battalion of CRPF, on March 11, a civic action programme was organized for poor villagers and school children of intense Naxal affected area under police station-Kistaram in village Dharmapenta of Sukma district.

Under the Civic Action Programme, solar light, radio, mosquito net, saree, lungi, slippers, volleyball, volley ball net, cricket bat, cricket ball



and jeans and T-shirts were distributed to the boys and girls.

Along with this, the villagers were treated by organizing medical camps and free medicines were also distributed to the needy. In this medical camp, Dr. M. Genna Pratyusha (Medical Officer 217th Bt.) provided medical treatment to 5 pregnant women and

gave proper consultation.

On this auspicious occasion, Saroj Kumar (Second Commanding Officer, Operations) made the villagers aware against the exploitation, atrocities and hollow ideology of the Maoists and appealed to join the mainstream. The villagers of Dharmapenta and nearby villages were also assured that 217th Battalion is al-

ways ready in the service of you people.

Company Commander Ajit Kumar Choudhary (Assistant Commandant), Dr. M. Genna Pratyusha (Medical Officer, 217 Bt.), Dr. Siddheshwar Kalyan P. (Medical Officer, 217 Bt.), including subordinate officers and jawans, as well as dignitaries of Dharmapenta village were also present.

Govt not paying attention towards SCY: Janghel

Khairagarh, Mar 12:

Former MLA and ex-Parliamentary Secretary Komal Janghel has charged the state government of not paying attention towards 'Saraswati Cycle Yojana' (SCY).

Janghel informed that the earlier government has introduced SCY so as to ensure that students do not face problems in going to School, but the Congress government in the state is carrying out distribution of cycles to girl students at the end of the academic session.

Komal Janghel informed that this SCY was launched by former CM Dr Raman Singh in the state, so as to provide facility of conveyance to girl students going from villages to school

for studies. This scheme was launched in 2004-5 and under this the girl students were distributed cycles in the beginning of the session itself. But under Congress rule in the state, these cycles are being distributed at the end of the academic session and due to which the girl students are unable to draw benefit from the same.

Set aside this the cycles to be distributed in 2021-22 have not reached the Schools premises and Janghel termed it as highly unfortunate.

This scheme was launched with an objective to promote girl education and to which the state government has made it a subject of ridicule and is least bothered about the future and education of girls, he alleged.

BJP leader stage protest on issuing of challan

For failing to have any vehicle documents

Dongargarh, Mar 12: A senior BJP leader in protest against illegal recovery in Gram Mohalla during daily searching in chowks-triangle expressed resentment over a similar issue with him by a jawan on Thursday and staged dharna in the night.

Mohara Chowki Thana in-Charge Dinesh Yadav is of the opinion that Mr Kushwah is staging dharna on charges of illegal recovery in the name of traffic challan and clarified that at the time of checking, Mr. Kushwah was not owing any vehicle related documents and therefore the challan was cut.



During this he entered into controversy with the police jawan at the chowk and trying to show his political hold, reportedly misbehaved with him. What all the cases were registered in this drive, would be sorted out in the 'Lok Adalat' to be held on March 12.

CM's budget will fulfill dreams of people: Bhuneshwar

Hails the budget presented by CM in VS

Khairagarh, Mar 12:

Terming the budget presented by the Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel as historic budget, MLA Dongargarh and President SC Development Authority Bhuneshwar Baghel has termed as a budget, as per dreams of people of Chhattisgarh.

Baghel said that there is vision in the budget right from village to urban areas and there is provision of government schemes for general public, officers, employees, farmers, labourers, youth, women and all sections of the society.

Bhuneshwar said that this budget has brought relief to all sections of the society and in this age-old demand

of the officers and employees viz. Old Pension Scheme has been fulfilled and this will provide relief to lakhs of families. In the same way the MLA's fund has been increased from Rs 2 to Rs 4 crore. So now there will be development in all the Vidhan Sabha areas.

The very declaration of not opening mining in the villages without permission of Gram Panchayat and increasing the honorarium of the Sarpanchs from Rs 2000 per month to Rs 4000 per month, will strengthen the Panchayati Raj system.

Baghel in the budget had informed that to promote police personnel and Asst. constables and to provide them benefit of the salary and wages, a new cadre in the name of District Task Force has been declared and

it is an important step towards them. Similarly there is provision of Rs 50 cr under 'Mor Jameen, mor Makan' and 'Mor Makan, mor 'Chinhari' programme and this will provide relief to many without shelter.

The very declaration to reduce the offset rates of properties in the urban areas at 30% less than that of Collector's guideline and providing tap-water connection to all houses under 'Amrut Mission 2.0' with a provision of Rs 200 crore is also a pro-people decision.

Similarly many other important decisions have been taken in favour of District, Janpad Panchayats by increasing their honorarium and other such important decisions would give pace to development work and create healthier atmosphere.

AFFIDAVIT

I Devaki Bai, W/o Anjoriram do hereby make the following statements:

- That my actual and correct Date of Birth (DOB) is 01/01/1963 and it is registered in my Aadhar Card No. 4759 6246 7892 and other documents as well.
- That I am not having any school documents as proof related to my DOB.
- That the above information by me is true to the best of my knowledge and correct and would be solely stands responsible for it.

CERTIFY

I do hereby solemnly affirm that the statement made from Sl. No. 1-3 are true to the best of my knowledge and I stand by it.

DEPONENT

BRIEF

Portal

■ Jammu: The Jammu and Kashmir administration launched an online portal for granting permission for change of land use in master plan areas in the union territory. In exercise of powers conferred by the Jammu and Kashmir Development Act, the housing and urban development department launched the portal for granting permission under the scheme for levy of charges for use of land as permitted in the master plan areas.

Nod

■ Agartala: The state cabinet approved a proposal for setting up National Law University Tripura (NLUT), which will be self-sustained in five years after its inception. The chief justice of the High Court of Tripura will be the chancellor of the proposed varsity. Information and Cultural Affairs Minister Sushanta Chowdhury said the finance department has earmarked Rs 50 crore for establishment of the proposed NLUT and incurring all expenditure.

Alliance

■ Ranchi: AJSU Party and NCP along with two independent legislators forged an alliance, Jharkhand Loktantrik Morcha (JLM) stating that its purpose at present is to highlight issues faced by the tribal state. AJSU Party chief Sudesh Mahto and party MLA Lamodar Mahto, state NCP president Kamlesh Singh and its two MLAs Saryu Roy and Amit Yadav floated the new outfit.

Gang

■ New Delhi: Five members of a gang who had robbed Rs 91 lakh from cash collection agents here have been arrested from Punjab. They are members of the notorious Sonu Daryapur gang. Police said a case was registered at the DBG Road Police Station on the statement of an agent, who said that he along with his colleague were returning after collecting the cash from Kucha Ghassi Ram in Chandni Chowk.

Suicide

■ Kota: A 39-year-old engineer working for the Chhabra Thermal Power Plant in Rajasthan's Baran district near here was found hanging in his hostel room in the plant premises. A native of Begusarai in Bihar, Mohammad Hammad Husain is suspected to have died by suicide as he was upset over his transfer and taking medicines to fight depression, police said.

Arrested

■ New Delhi: Two men wanted in a double murder case in Gurugram were arrested from Dwarka here. Two pistols and eight live cartridges were also seized from them. Vikash Kant (21) and Hoshiyar (29), sharpshooters belonging to a group of gangsters Kala Jatheri, Lawrence Bishnoi and Naresh Sethi, were arrested.

Jharkhand to ensure dedicated beds for heatstroke patients



Ranchi, Mar 12 (PTI):

In view of the rising mercury, the Jharkhand health department has directed all districts to ensure dedicated beds for heatstroke patients in hospitals and follow standard treatment protocol for rapid assessment of suspected heat-related illness.

For the past one week, the maximum temperature has been on rise across Jharkhand. Capital Ranchi has witnessed a rise of about two degree Celsius in maximum temperature in past one week. Ranchi's maximum was recorded at 31.4 degrees Celsius, which

was at 29.6 degrees Celsius on March 6. Officer in-charge of Ranchi Meteorological Centre, Abhishek Anand, told PTI that the weather would remain dry this week. "Maximum temperature would now increase gradually. It may be observed normal to above normal over most parts of the state, which may fall in the range of 32 to 37 degree Celsius, till March 24," he said. In a detailed guideline for prevention and treatment of heat-related diseases, the health department said that daily reports by health institutions of all the districts under heat radiation ill-

ness (HRI) surveillance are important so that health complications caused by heatwave can be identified and treated in time, an official release said. Civil surgeons of all the districts have been asked to form rapid response teams at district and block level for emergency calls and make adequate arrangements for staff, bed, oral rehydration solution (ORS), essential medicine and equipment at district and community health centres.

Besides, arrangements should be made for outreach clinics for vulnerable population, the release said. According to experts, the main cause of heatstroke is the loss of water and minerals, mainly salt in the body due to prolonged exposure to strong sunlight and heat.

The civil surgeons have also been asked to ensure adequate arrangements for the treatment of children, old people, pregnant women and seriously ill persons suffering from extreme heat.

German ambassador slams Russia



German Ambassador to India Walter J Lindner (L) at Jaipur Literature Festival.

Jaipur, Mar 12 (PTI):

India would make alliances according to its history and neighbourhood, but as a general principle allowing Russian President Vladimir Putin to do what he is doing in Ukraine is "dangerous" for all, German Ambassador to India Walter J Lindner has said. He also called out the United Nations for its "outdated" Security Council structure and said India, the voice of 1.3 billion people, should be there as a permanent member. "Every country has its own right and its own reasons to make a

decision, whether abstention, vote in favour or against, no problem with this," Lindner told PTI at the sidelines of the 15th edition of Jaipur Literature Festival (JLF).

"India of course would make their own alliances according to their history and neighbourhood, we are just saying as a general principle it would be dangerous to allow Putin what he is doing."

India has abstained during voting on two resolutions on Ukraine in the 15-nation UN Security Council and one in the 193-member UN General Assembly.

Water quality of two Ganga stretches of bathing standard now

■ Passing via Bihar, Uttarakhand improved

New Delhi, Mar 12 (PTI):

The water quality of two stretches of the Ganga passing through Bihar and Uttarakhand, which were polluted earlier, has now improved and is of bathing standard with the biological oxygen demand (BOD), which ascertains the health of a river, found to be in check, according to official data. The BOD is an important parameter for assessing water quality. It deals with the amount of oxygen consumption by biological organisms. The lower the value, the better the water quality.

The water quality of the Ganga is assessed in accordance with the primary water quality standard for outdoor bathing, which is when the BOD is less than 3 mg per litre, along with other factors.

According to the data shared with PTI of the Ganga river water quality



Artisans start preparations for the annual handicrafts fair at Surajkund, in Faridabad, Saturday.



River Ganga in Haridwar.

comparison between 2015 and 2021, the BOD level of the river flowing through Uttarakhand (Haridwar to Sultanpur) and Bihar (Buxar to Bhagalpur) is below 3 mg per litre, which falls in the unpolluted category. Even in the other two stretches of the Ganga flowing in Uttar Pradesh (Kannauj to Varanasi) and West Bengal (Triveni to Diamond Harbour), the BOD level is in the lowest of the pollution category — category-5 (3-6 mg per litre), National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG)

Director General G Asok Kumar said. According to official data, there was an improvement in 2021 in comparison to 2015, when the BOD of the Ganga flowing through Bihar was in category-2 (7.8-27 mg per litre) and that of the stretch of the river flowing through Uttar Pradesh was in category 3 (3.8-16.9 mg per litre).

However, not much change was seen in the BOD level of the river flowing through West Bengal between 2015 and 2021.

Preventing participation in HLL bidding against coop federalism

■ Kerala tells Centre

Thiruvananthapuram, Mar 12 (PTI): Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan has said that "preventing" the state from participating in the open bidding of the city-headquartered Hindustan Lifecare Ltd, a central PSU, which is proposed to be disinvested by the Centre was against cooperative federalism.

Preventing a state government from participating in an open bidding process would not be in accordance with the principles of cooperative federalism and the state government has the competence accorded to it by the Constitution to take a decision on its own in such matters, the CM said in a letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

In his brief letter, Vijayan pointed out that he had already sent a letter in June, 2017 requesting the Centre not to proceed with the privatisation of HLL. Despite this, when the union government had decided to go ahead with the disinvestment, the state government expressed its interest to participate in the open bidding, he noted. Presently, the Department of Investment and



Pinarayi Vijayan

Public Asset Management has communicated to the state government that there is scope for government/ government PSEs to participate in the strategic disinvestment process in pursuance of the Preliminary Information Memorandum and Expression of Interest. As per the PIM and global invitation for the submission of Expression of Interest for the strategic disinvestment of HLL, CPSEs or Central Government owned Cooperative Societies are the only ones specified as being not eligible to participate in the proposed transaction, he said. "It is not specified anywhere that the state government/ state PSUs are not eligible to participate in the bidding process of HLL," Vijayan pointed out.

RS to get 19 hours of additional time in Budget session



New Delhi, Mar 12 (PTI):

With the Budget session of Parliament resuming on Monday, the Rajya Sabha will get 19 hours of additional time for business over the earlier schedule, officials said on Saturday.

The House will sit from 11 am till 6 pm with a one-hour lunch break during the 19 scheduled sittings, while it sat from 10 am till 3 pm during the first part of the session.

With this increase in the sitting time of one hour per sitting, the Upper House will get 64 hours and 30 minutes for transacting the government's legislative business and taking up the issues of public importance during the second part of the session, according to an official

statement. The House will have four days for Private Members' Business and the Question Hour will continue to be for an hour, while the Zero Hour, which was curtailed to half-an-hour during the first part of the session, will now be for an hour per sitting, the Rajya Sabha officials said.

The Budget session resumes after a 30-day recess during which the Department Related Parliamentary Standing Committees (DRSCs) examined the Demands for Grants of various ministries and departments.

Chairman M Venkaiah Naidu is likely to give an account of the working of the eight DRSCs of the Rajya Sabha during the recess in the House on Monday.

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BRIEF

Released

Montreal: Saudi Arabian blogger and activist Raif Badawi, whose conviction caused widespread international outrage, was released after a decade in prison for criticizing the country's conservative religious establishment, his Quebec based wife confirmed. Ensaf Haidar, who lives with the couple's three children in the city of Sherbrooke, tweeted that the 2015 winner of Europe's Sakharov human rights award is free from prison.

Overdose

Orlando: The US Military Academy said that cadets from that institution were involved in a situation in which six people overdosed on fentanyl-laced cocaine at a South Florida vacation home during Spring Break. Two of the six were in critical condition, rescue and emergency officials said. The New York academy's public affairs office released a statement saying its officials are aware of the situation involving West Point cadets.

Crackdown

Moscow: Russian regulators said that internet users will be blocked from accessing Instagram because it's being used to call for violence against Russian soldiers, in Moscow's latest move to tighten up access to foreign social platforms. The communications and media regulator, Roskomnadzor, said in a statement that it's restricting national access to Instagram because platform is spreading calls to commit violent acts against Russia.

Clashes

Cairo: At least 19 people have been killed in renewed tribal clashes in Sudan's volatile west Darfur region in the past 24 hours, a medical group said. Violence between Arabs and non-Arabs in the same area of Jebel Moon also killed at least 16 people earlier this week. The Sudan Doctors Committee of West Darfur called on local authorities to protect civilians in the area from attack.

Detects

Brasilia: Detected deforestation in the Brazilian Amazon reached a record high for the month of February following a similar record the prior month. Satellite alerts of deforestation in February corresponded to 199 square kilometers (77 square miles), the highest indicator for that month in seven years of record-keeping and 62% more than in the same month in 2021, according to data from Brazilian space agency's monitoring system.

Reporting

Washington: Companies critical to US national interests will now have to report when they're hacked or they pay ransomware, according to new rules approved by Congress. The rules are part of a broader effort by the Biden administration and Congress to shore up the nation's cyberdefenses after a series of high-profile digital espionage campaigns and disruptive ransomware attacks.

Concern grows over traffickers targeting Ukrainian refugees

Siret, Mar 12 (API):

One man was detained in Poland suspected of raping a 19-year-old refugee he'd lured with offers of shelter after she fled war-torn Ukraine. Another was overheard promising work and a room to a 16-year-old girl before authorities intervened.

Another case inside a refugee camp at Poland's Medyka border, raised suspicions when a man was offering help only to women and children. When questioned by police, he changed his story.

As millions of women and children flee across Ukraine's borders in the face of Russian aggression,



A volunteer at the international humanitarian group Save the Children camp at Ukrainian border, in Siret, Romania.

concerns are growing over how to protect the most vulnerable refugees from being targeted by human traffickers or becoming victims of other forms of exploitation. Obviously all the refugees are women and

children, said Joung-ah Ghedini-Williams, the UNHCR's head of global communications, who has visited borders in Romania, Poland and Moldova.

You have to worry about any potential risks for trafficking but also exploitation, and sexual exploitation and abuse. These are the kinds of situations that people like traffickers look to take advantage of, she said. The UN refugee agency says more than 2.5 million people, including more than a million children, have already fled war-torn Ukraine in what has become an unprecedented humanitarian crisis in Europe and its fastest exodus since World War II.

US will continue to support India with equipment along LAC

Washington, Mar 12 (PTI):

The US will continue to support India with equipment and other things it needs along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) with China, a top American admiral has told lawmakers, asserting that Washington and New Delhi share a "tremendous partnership".

Testifying before the Senate Armed Services Committee on Military Posture in the Indo-Pacific Region' this week, Admiral John Aquilino, Commander of US Indo-Pacific Command, said that the military-to-military relationship between the two countries is proba-



John Aquilino

bly at its highest point. He was responding to a question from Senator Gary Peters.

My question for you, Admiral, is can you speak to the relationship you have with our Indian counterparts and what more can we do to

strengthen our security relationship between our two countries? Peters asked. Senator, to start, I have no concerns. Our partners in India are tremendous partners, and the military-to-military relationship is probably at its highest point. We continue to do more together. Admiral Aquilino said in response. But when you talk about tremendous partnership, it's there. What more can we do? Continue the information sharing, continue to support them with the equipment they need upon the Line of Actual Control, and continue to partner and operate together throughout the region.

Student leader becomes Chile's youngest president



Chile's new President Gabriel Boric (L) and his Interior Minister Izkia Siches upon their arrival at La Moneda Palace in Santiago.

Santiago, Mar 12 (API):

Left-leaning former student leader Gabriel Boric was sworn in as Chile's new president, vowing to oversee a political and economic renovation of a nation shaken by repeated massive protests over inequality in

recent years despite a relatively vibrant economy. At 36, Boric is the youngest president in the history of the South American nation one who was only 4 years old when democracy returned following a 17-year military dictatorship that both bloodied and set the groundwork

for modern Chile. Boric has vowed that his young, inclusive government will attack nagging poverty and inequality that he said are the unacceptable underbelly of a free market model imposed decades ago by Gen. Augusto Pinochet, who ruled from 1973 to 1990.

His four-year term begins at a moment when a constituent assembly is drawing up a new constitution for the country to replace one adopted under Pinochet. The Socialist Party leader of the Senate, Ivano Elizalde, draped the presidential sash over Boric's shoulders during the ceremony in the legislative chambers in the port city of Valparaiso. Soon afterward, Boric swore in the leader of what he has called a "feminist" cabinet which includes 14 women and 10 men.

Court orders arrest of ex-El Salvador President Cristiani

San Salvador, Mar 12 (API):

A court in El Salvador ordered the capture of former President Alfredo Cristiani in relation to the 1989 massacre of six Jesuit priests and two others by soldiers.

Prosecutors allege that Cristiani knew of the military's plan to eliminate the priests and did nothing to stop them. In a statement released by Cristiani's daughter, the former leader denied the allegations.

The truth is I never knew of the plans they had to commit those killings, Cristiani said.

They never informed me nor asked for my authorisation because they knew that I would never have authorized that that Father (Ignacio) Ellacur a or his brothers were harmed.

Cristiani and a former lawmaker, Rodolfo Parker, had been summoned to court Tuesday, but did not appear.

There is nothing left but to decree the detention against those persons because they did not appear in court and did not send lawyers, the court's resolution said.

Cristiani left El Salvador in June 2021 after appearing before a special congressional panel investigating overpayments to former government officials.

When prosecutors reopened the priests' case, his daughter, Claudia Cristiani, published some photos of her father and said they were in the land of the grandfather, meaning Italy, but it was unknown if

he is still there. El Salvador's Attorney General's Office has accused Cristiani, Parker and a number of former high-ranking military officers of being behind the murders.

SOUTH EAST CENTRAL RAILWAY TENDER NOTICE FOR ANNUAL MAINTENANCE WORK. Includes details for Sr.No. (1) E-Tender No.:- SrDEE-G-R-OTP-21-22-35, Date: 10.03.2022. Work: Annual Maintenance Contract for UPS/Inverters of Raipur Division for a period of Two years. Tender Value: Rs. 44,20,811.00/-, EMD: Rs. 88,500.00/-, Submission of Tender: upto 11.45 hours on 11.04.2022.

'Address matters on bio weapons convention through cooperation'

Alleged network of 30 bio labs in Ukraine

United Nations, Mar 12 (PTI):

India has told the UN Security Council that any matters relating to obligations under the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention should be addressed through consultation and cooperation between the parties concerned, as the top organ of the world body discussed the issue of alleged biological laboratories in Ukraine. The Russian request for the Security Council meeting followed a US rejection of Russian accusations that Ukraine is operating chemical and biological labs with American support. We



TS Tirumurti

have repeatedly expressed serious concern over the ongoing situation in Ukraine, India's Permanent Representative to the UN Ambassador TS Tirumurti said as Russia called for a Security Council meeting on the issue of biological laboratories in Ukraine.

Speaking at the UN Security Council briefing on Ukraine: Reports of

Biological Programmes, he said India has noted the recent statements by member states and wider information regarding biological activities relating to Ukraine. In this context, we would like to underline the importance attached by India to the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC) as a key global and non-discriminatory disarmament Convention, prohibiting an entire category of weapons of mass destruction, he said.

Tirumurti stressed that it is important to ensure full and effective implementation of the BTWC in letter and spirit. We also believe that any matters relating to obligations under the BTWC should be addressed as

per the provisions of the Convention, and through consultation and cooperation between the parties concerned, he said.

Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs Rosemary DiCarlo told the Council that Russian armed forces are pursuing their offensive operations and laying siege to several cities in the south, east and north of the country.

She said the situation is particularly alarming in Mariupol, Kharkiv, Sumy and Chernihiv, where there is the shelling of residential areas and civilian infrastructure, resulting in an increasing number of civilians killed and injured. "The utter devastation being visited on these cities is horrific.

Clouds over Merkel's legacy as Russian invasion lays flaws bare

Berlin, Mar 12 (AFP):

Up to the final hours before Russia began its invasion of Ukraine, former chancellor Angela Merkel had been touted as the person favoured by Germans to try to talk President Vladimir Putin out of the conflict.

But as Russian bombs fell on Ukrainian cities, a shadow has fallen on Merkel's 16 years in office, with some observers now questioning if her detente policies with Putin had in fact left Germany, and Europe, vulnerable.

Once hailed as the leader of the free world, the veteran centre-right leader has been accused by some of increasing Europe's reliance on Russian energy and neglecting Germany's defence in what appeared to be a devastating miscalculation of Putin's ambitions.

Merkel's push for diplo-

macy and bids to bind regimes to treaties and business contracts now look like "an error", conservative daily Die Welt, long critical of Merkel, charged.

"What Germany and Europe has experienced over the last days is nothing short of a reversal of Merkel's policies of guaranteeing peace and freedom through treaties with despots," it wrote.

Over the last decade, Germany's energy reliance on Russia rose from 36 percent of its total gas imports in 2014 to 55 percent currently, with the deal for the controversial Nord Stream 2 signed after the Kremlin's annexation of Crimea from Ukraine.

That has left Germany nearly helpless to follow allies like the United States and impose an oil and gas embargo against Russia.

And Germany's de-

fence profile had been blunted by successive years of under-investment. That has drawn the ire of the United States and allies which have repeatedly pressed Europe's biggest economy to meet the NATO defence spending target of 2 percent of national output.

One of Merkel's closest aides and former defence minister, Annegret Kramp-Karrenbauer, has

condemned Germany's "historical failure" to bolster its military over the years. "After Georgia, Crimea, and Donbas, we have not prepared anything that would have really deterred Putin," she tweeted, referring to incursions carried out by Russia while Merkel was in power. Merkel took power in 2005 after beating Social Democrat Gerhard Schroeder at the polls.

Table with 3 columns: S.No., निविदा क्रं. एवं दिनांक, जी. क्रमांक. Rows include 82051, 139/23.08.2021, 63406/3 and 82052, 140/23.08.2021, 63406/3.

संचालनालय महिला एवं बाल विकास, छत्तीसगढ़ ब्लॉक-1, द्वितीय तल, इन्द्रावती भवन, नवा रायपुर अटल नगर दूरभाष क्रमांक 0771-2234192, 2234188 (Fax) email: dirwcd.cg@nic.in

Table with 5 columns: क्र., सामग्री का नाम, मात्रा, ई-प्रोक्वोरमेंट पोर्टल पर निविदा प्रकाशन की तिथि, निविदा की अंतिम तिथि, जेम पोर्टल पर निविदा क्रमांक, अमानत राशि (रुपये में). Rows include Medicine kit - A and Medicine kit - B.

निविदा संबंधी सभी शर्तें बिड डाक्यूमेंट में उल्लेखित हैं। तथापि कतिपय मुख्य शर्तें निम्नानुसार हैं - 1. निविदाकार का छत्तीसगढ़ राज्य का जीएसटी पंजीकरण अनिवार्य है। 2. निविदाकार किसी भी सामग्री प्रदाय के लिये किसी भी राज्य में ब्लैकलिस्टेड न हो तथा ऐसी कोई कार्यवाही उसके विरुद्ध विचाराधीन न हो। निविदाकार को इस आशय का शपथपत्र अन्य दस्तावेज के साथ ऑनलाईन प्रस्तुत करना होगा। 3. राज्य में वेध MSME को सुसंगत दस्तावेज प्रस्तुत करने व क्रय समिति द्वारा मान्य करने की दशा में सुरक्षा निधि में नियमानुसार छूट देने पर विचार किया जाएगा। 4. निविदा की जा रही सामग्री के लिये केन्द्र/राज्य के संबंधित विभाग द्वारा निर्धारित वैधानिक प्रावधानों के अनुसार दस्तावेज के साथ ऑनलाईन प्रस्तुत करना होगा। निविदा संबंधी विवरण व सभी जानकारी https://eproc.cgstate.gove.in पर ऑनलाईन उपलब्ध है। (दिव्या उमेश मिश्रा) संचालक संचा. महिला एवं बाल विकास नवा रायपुर, छत्तीसगढ़ G-68630/5



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Missile misfire

India accidentally fired an unidentified missile into Pakistan. The incident was widely reported by unofficial channels but confirmed, with Ministry of Defence attributing the cause to a 'technical malfunction.' This was clearly a very serious incident and potentially one that could have triggered a military response from Pakistan, had it been misconstrued as an attack. Both countries possess nuclear arsenals, although the missile involved appears to not have been nuclear-capable and reportedly had no warhead of any kind fitted. Mishaps and misfirings with missiles have a long history. The best way for preventing missile mishaps is better training and safeguards. The fallen missile unless fully destroyed by impact and even if it is so wrecked, some of its more interesting parts would be recoverable, is a boon to the Pakistan and Chinese militaries. Ministry of Defense's statement about the incident, which took place on March 9, stated that the accidental firing took place during 'routine maintenance' and that an inquiry has now been launched to determine what went wrong. This is serious lapse in management of missiles and responsible personnel may face court martial. In 2016, Hsiung Feng III missile was accidentally launched from a Taiwan navy vessel from waters off Kaohsiung towards Penghu. The missile hit a fishing boat, killing one person and injuring three. Harpoon Missile Misfire Incident, in Danish dubbed 'Hovsa-Missilet' was an unintentional discharge of a live harpoon missile by Danish frigate HDMS Peder Skram during a training manoeuvre in the Kattegat on 6 September 1982. The missile travelled 34 kilometres at low altitude, severing several power lines before eventually striking a group of trees and exploding. Three US Air Force airmen were stripped of their nuclear certifications after a "mishap" caused approximately USD 1.8 million in damage to an intercontinental ballistic missile in 2014.

An unexploded subsonic Tomahawk land attack cruise missile fired from a US submarine in the Arabian Sea and on its way to a target in Afghanistan dropped down instead southwest of Quetta in August 1998. Pakistan army handed over to the Chinese. There have been similar instances of missile misfirings in Russia. The missile in question was not identified by India but the Pakistani Ministry of Defence described it as an 'unarmed supersonic missile,' suggesting that it may have been an example of the BrahMos, a ramjet-powered weapon. Jointly developed by India and Russia, the BrahMos has a range of up to 310 miles and can be fitted with a high-explosive or a submunitions warhead, there have been rumours of a potential nuclear-armed variant but there is no evidence that such a version is currently in service. It's unclear if the missile had been undergoing routine maintenance or whether it was being worked on as part of some kind of military exercise. It's notable that India and Pakistan have an agreement in place to notify each other ahead of flight tests of ballistic missiles and major exercises. With this in mind, it's possible that authorities in Pakistan had been forewarned that drills were taking place and possibly even that they involved this particular type of missile. Regardless, the Pakistan Air Force said it was able to track the missile's flight path from its 'point of origin near Sirsa in India. Pakistan claims that the missile was headed to the Mahajan Field Firing range in Rajasthan but veered westwards, entering Pakistani airspace, after what their authorities described as a 'sudden manoeuvre.' Based on timings provided by Pakistan, the missile was airborne for just seven minutes before impacting near Mian Channu. For use against ground targets, the BrahMos has a combined inertial navigation system (INS) and GPS guidance, with a radar seeker provided for the terminal phase.

Challenge for Mann

In his first directions to Aam Aadmi Party's new MLAs, Punjab chief minister-elect Bhagwant Mann asked them to spend maximum time in their constituencies, not in capital Chandigarh, and don't hanker for cabinet berths. The swearing-in ceremony will be held at native village of freedom fighter Bhagat Singh on March 16. Bhagwant Mann is a talented artist and now will have to prove himself to revive Punjab's economy, which is a huge challenge for a first-time chief minister. With AAP governments both in Delhi and Punjab, it will be interesting to see possible agreement regarding stubble burning after harvest season. Bhagwant Mann is taking charge in Punjab at a time when economic condition is in dire conditions. With withdrawal of farm bills, it will be difficult for Punjab government to seek support from central government. A World Bank report on Punjab's environment and social system assessment suggested gaps in the state's financial management capability because its administrative departments work in silos and the public procurement ecosystem is fragmented. Among Punjab's key development challenges, the bank listed slow growth, fiscal stress, and weak institutions.

The fiscal stress is compounded by weak institutions and capabilities in planning, budgeting, and policy-making particularly, while the scarce resources are spread too thin and targeting the policy priorities insufficiently, leading to low competitiveness and poor quality of infrastructure and service delivery. The bank's experts claim that public procurement had room for efficiency, transparency, competition, and system strengthening to monitor contractual commitments. Punjab's economy had underperformed for a decade and the state's gross domestic product (GDP) had grown at an annual average rate of 6 percent, while the national average was 7 percent. The fiscal deficit was a high 3.1 percent of gross state domestic product (GSDP). It increased debt and shrunk the fiscal space for investments in infrastructure and public services, the lower investment in cities especially, which held back the development of manufacturing and service sectors. Punjab has significantly low investment expenditures as a share of GSDP, with capital outlays averaging 0.8 percent over the past decade. These fiscal constraints are exacerbated by poor allocative and operational efficiency of spending. Besides, the gaps in transversal systems of public finance and investment management create systemic inefficiencies. The people of Punjab have put faith in a new politician to fulfil their expectations.

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

PAINTING DISPLAYS SPRING



Visitors stand in front of a painting by British artist Marc Quinn (Himalayan Spring) on display during 15th edition of Art Dubai at Madinat Jumeirah in Dubai.

India's agroforestry potential towards carbon neutral economy

DR VIVEK SAXENA

India's Commitments led by Hon'ble Prime Minister Sh Narendra Modi during COP26 of UNFCCC (UN Framework Convention on Climate Change) at Glasgow, United Kingdom in 2021 incorporated five nectar elements of 'Panchamrit', to address Climate Change related challenges. Promotion of Agroforestry and Trees Outside Forests have to play a pivotal role in meeting commitments related to, reduction of at least one billion tonnes of total projected emissions between now and 2030, Reduction of the country's carbon intensity to less than 45 percent, achieving net-zero emissions target by 2070. Union Budget-2022 emphasis on Agroforestry as one of the four interventions. It also reflects the seriousness of visionary leadership through shaping of 'Climate Action' roadmap towards meeting NDC targets of having additional 2.5 to 3 billion tonnes of Carbon Sequestration by 2030 and other National and International Goals related to Biodiversity Conservation, Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN), Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) under Convention on Biodiversity (CBD), UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) and other conventions. Enhancement of India's pledge under Bonn Challenge - Landscape Restoration to 26 mha from 21 mha by 2030 during UNCCD CoP-14, held in India in 2019 by Prime Minister Narendra Modi is the largest pledge by any Country.

The potential of Agroforestry and Trees Outside Forests (ToF) needs to be harnessed optimally in meeting these commitments and goals. Agroforestry also enhances provision of ecosystem

services, especially carbon sequestration, and increased inclusive economic opportunities. Agroforestry and TOFs also alleviate some pressure on natural forests by meeting fuelwood and wood product needs.

Agroforestry and ToF include trees growing on private land and farms; in urban areas; along linear infrastructure such as roads, railway lines, canals; plantations in and around industrial areas; shelterbelts; and in land belonging to government and other institutions; etc. TOFs on farms and other private lands provide income and sustenance for farmers from timber, fuelwood, fruits and other products. These TOFs play a critical role in the economy of many developing countries, including India. Additionally, TOFs are important in promoting cultural, social, and ecological functions that are important to human livelihoods. TOFs also sequester carbon, stabilize soil, filter water and air, regulate water flow, and perform other ecosystem services. When planted along roads and canals, in institutional areas or within urban landscapes, TOFs provide shade to cool microclimates, absorb some air pollutants, beautify green spaces, provide nesting and habitat for birds and other small animals, help to regulate stormwater, and contribute to human well-being.

Haryana State has demonstrated how a State deficient in forest and natural resources scarce with only about 3.5 percent area under Forests and more than 80 percent area under Agriculture can support the Nation's food security and also wood security. This is mainly due to promotion of Agroforestry friendly policies and encouraging plantation campaigns for planting Trees Outside Forests. Investor and Industry friendly climate for wood based industries, sourcing wood mainly from farm-lands and facilitating availability of high productivity and short rotation seedlings of Eucalyptus and Poplar to farmers have played a pivotal role in making Yamunanagar District the Plywood Capital of the Country. Clonal Eucalyptus and Poplar seedlings have short harvesting period of 4-6 years. Farmers' income is supplemented through farm wood based production along with agricultural crops.

Moreover, Agroforestry also ensures

economic security in supplementing income from trees in years of crop failures due to drought, frost, extreme temperatures, rainfall or other reasons. Strong formal and informal market linkages, marketing agencies and value chains linking producers, industries, consumers and end users have evolved. There are about 350 plywood units in the State. Yamunanagar Wood Market supports more than 50 percent of the India's Plywood Production. It is estimated that wood worth Rs 2500 to 3000 crores sourced from farmlands is traded in Yamunanagar and nearby region. Finished and value added wood products worth about Rs 6500 to 8000 crores in the form of plywood, particle board, poles etc have played a vital role in shaping the economy of the region. It is estimated, that about 0.1 million persons are annually employed in activities related to wood based harvesting, marketing and production.

Haryana State under the dynamic and visionary leadership of Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar has undertaken a number of initiatives in supporting National level Commitments. 'Oxy-Van' scheme launched in 2021 aims to have 'Mini Forests as natural oxygen factories' so that people can have better surroundings and availability of oxygen, especially in urban areas. This is especially important, keeping in view the Oxygen Crisis, everyone faced during COVID pandemic. The objective of 'Praan Yavu Devta' scheme aims to protect and conserve the trees having immense ecological and environmental value and to inculcate in the people sense for protection of old age trees which provide valuable intangible benefits and services to humanity including lifesaving oxygen. The scheme acknowledges and respects old and heritage trees, more than 75 years old by paying annual pension of Rs 2500 to the custodian of tree. Haryana State on the occasion of World Environment Day, June 5, 2021 has also initiated a scheme to promote Agroforestry and plantations on at least 10 percent of Gram Panchayat lands. For Soil and Moisture Conservation, 'Mera Paani Meri Virasat' scheme has been launched, that aims at crop diversification scheme for farmers. The scheme incentivises farmer or landowner for Rs 7000 per

acre to switch from paddy cultivation to other crops. This water conservation initiative will also protect depletion of natural resources such as water and soil. The success of Eucalyptus (Eucalyptus tereticornis) and Populus spp. (Populus Deltoides) based Agroforestry and the adoption of these species in Yamunanagar and Northern Plains is mainly due to short rotation of 5 to 7 years as compared to other species, linked established market supply chains through utilization in Plywood, Particle Board and Veneer and associated industries facilitating, value additions, supplementing economic returns and green livelihoods. The India plywood market reached a value of INR 195.8 billion in FY 2021-22. It is estimated that the Indian plywood market will reach RS 297.2 billion by 2027-28, exhibiting a CAGR of 7.4 percent during 2022-23 to 2027-28. (www.imarcgroup.com/indian-plywood-market/toc).

Agroforestry offers a huge opportunity in meeting the market demand of wood. Appropriate Policy measures, supported by technology transfer, diversification of wood based products, ensuring appropriate returns to wood grower for encouraging adoption of agroforestry, setting up of industries at strategic locations for balanced agroforestry based industrial development to absorb the available wood and continuous market research are needed. Agroclimatic regions based appropriate agroforestry and ToFs models need to be promoted to realize the potential in different States across the Country. The Haryana Model is a success story widely acknowledged globally. Appropriate State specific Agroforestry and ToFs models need to be formulated and adopted for enhancing ecosystem services, including biodiversity, hydrological services, including flood mitigation, and carbon sequestration, through improved landscape management. This will facilitate in harnessing the potential of Agroforestry and TOFs in shaping 'Climate Action' as per India's commitments for Carbon Neutral Economy by 2070.

(Dr Vivek Saxena, is IFS, APCCF and CEO of Haryana State Forest CAMPA Authority.)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Verdict aspects

Verdict is out and it is barring Punjab, four other states Goa, Manipur, Uttarakhand and particularly Uttar Pradesh (UP) fuels Modi-Yogi double engine not only delivering a body blow to the Samajwadi Party (SP) but have shown that the grand old party Indian National Congress is a spent force, with the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) only emerging stronger. Interestingly, as for UP, the interesting aspect is that the Opposition there is in so much shambles, that even after Unnao, Hathras and Lakhimpur Kheri were the weapons of the opposition from the very beginning in the UP elections. Opposition groups called for a boycott of the ruling BJP in Unnao and Hathras. The Congress even gave a ticket to the mother of the victim in the Unnao case (gets only 1453 votes). However, the BJP's victory could not be stopped only in this district, but it's been almost six decades since any party in UP has won two successive terms. The farmers' agitation and their supposed anger against the BJP didn't translate into anti-incumbency on the ground. In the border state Punjab where Aam Aadmi Party's (AAP) broom is so strong that it sweeps (wins 92 of 117) not only the Congress but all the other oppositions with its topmost leaders including four former CMs. AAP created history as 1st regional party to win outside 'Home State'. No doubt AAP win opens the door for churn in the Opposition. One has to agree that Punjab Congress has made a self-go by sacking Captain Amrinder Singh and trusting BJP sacked Navjot Singh Sidhu. Not only Punjab, even CM faces of BJP, Congress and AAP bite dust in Uttarakhand elections, even that in Uttarakhand, the BJP as it retained power; beat the general trend being that the reins of power alternate between the BJP and the Congress. The Manipur result was largely a foregone conclusion, credit must go to Amit Shah's personal assurances to the local populace on the AFSPA. Whereas, divided Opposition gifts Goa to BJP. Particularly the way AAP's Keirival and TMC's Mamata Banerjee and Abhishek Banerjee attack Congress is not the sign of the opposition unity and the people give its verdict in EVMS. After the whitewash of the Congress, its leader Rahul Gandhi said that Congress will learn from this loss and continue to work in the interest of the country's people. But when? But the humiliating defeats are also set to lead to further bloodletting in the party as the veteran dissident leader Ghulam Nabi Azad very rightly voiced thousands other Congress followers thought that 'situation alarming for Congress, can't watch party dying like this.' Without any doubt Congress party's defeat in this 'mini election' is a "huge setback" which can leave sibling Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra's "brand value diminished".

Bidyut K Chatterjee, Faridabad



WHAT THEY TWEET!

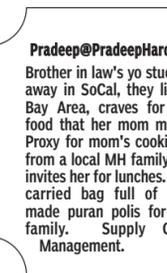


Vivek@MallufideIntent
Accidental Firing of Missile. What an embarrassment. Not even Pakistan has ever done accidental firing of a missile to my knowledge. I am sure calls were made at the highest level to pacify the Pakistan side before the missile even touched down.

Sridhar Vembu@sveumbu
I have met successful politicians (the ones who tend to win) from many parties and the one common factor is how hard they work. They are constantly on the move, in meetings and calls, all the time. Politics is not regular job and it is not easy. This is independent of ideology.



Wang@danwwang
Shanghai is really on edge right now over accelerating Covid cases; I haven't seen everyone this nervous since February 2020... a lot of rumors are swirling amidst the confirmed news that schools are now closed, flights are being diverted, and public events are getting canceled.



Pradeep@PradeepHardikar
Brother in law's yo studying away in SoCal, they live in Bay Area, craves for trad food that her mom makes. Proxy for mom's cooking is from a local MH family that invites her for lunches. B-I-L carried bag full of Pune made puran polis for that family. Supply Chain Management.



IFSParveen@ParveenKaswan
Scanning. A regular exercise where various teams move on foot to monitor the area.



Kunal Singh@d_extrovert
The assembly election results of five states in India are a puzzle to only those who have been completely absorbed in an echo-chamber. They had wrong priors, wrong analysis, and then they only listened to those who agree with them. But how long can you keep ignoring the voters?

Poorvi@plsappylogic
Yes, it happens and no one raises slightest doubt whether it is true or not. The level of brain washing is unimaginable. Now I feel that India's collapse is indispensable, so it better be sooner than later. Only that can awaken people, nothing else, nothing at all.

BRIEF

IPO

New Delhi: Sachin Bansal-led Navi Technologies has filed preliminary papers with Sebi to raise Rs 3,350 crore through an initial public offering (IPO). The proposed IPO is completely through a fresh issue of equity shares and there will be no offer-for-sale (OFS), according to the draft red herring prospectus (DRHP). Flipkart co-founder Bansal, who has invested around Rs 4,000 crore into Navi till date, is not diluting his stake in the IPO. According to people familiar with the matter, the initial share-sale is likely to open in June.

Funding

New Delhi: Gifting platform Ferns N Petals on Saturday said Lighthouse India Fund III has invested Rs 200 crore (USD 27 million) in it. The company plans to use the funds to invest in improving its systems and technology to enhance customer experience for all gifting occasions. "We are very excited to partner with Lighthouse and look forward to learning from their deep consumer insights, developed through a focused investment approach," FNP Founder & Managing Director Vikaas Gutgutia said.

Hub

New Delhi: Online accommodation platform Airbnb on Saturday announced the opening of a new technology hub in Bengaluru to help it serve its "global community". The Bengaluru technology hub will aim to create local, skilled jobs, with plans for the centre to cater to a few hundred people in the initial phases, followed by an expanded footprint in the future, the company said in a statement. "India is an incredibly important market for Airbnb. The opening of this technology hub will further our ongoing investment in the nation and is testament to our long-term vision for growing our business locally into the future," Airbnb Co-Founder and Chief Strategy Officer Nathan Blecharczyk said.

Aspiration

Mumbai: Adobe Chairman and CEO Shantanu Narayen on Saturday said the software major's aspirations for India are not just related to products but to run global businesses from the country. He also said the company's employees in India are responsible for major part of every aspect of Adobe's business. "Our aspirations for India are not just related to products, they are related to running global businesses out of India."

Partners

Mumbai: EV maker Omega Seiki Mobility (OSM) has formed a strategic partnership with Kathmandu-based MAW Vriddhi Commercial Vehicle to retail its vehicles in Nepal. This association will enable OSM to meet the evolving needs of a customer base, which is rapidly looking for a sustainable and zero-emission last-mile transportation solution in the growing Nepalese market.

Consumers can get un-hallmarked jewellery tested

At BIS recognised centres

New Delhi, Mar 12 (PTI):

Consumers can now get the purity of their un-hallmarked gold jewellery tested at assaying facilities recognised by the Bureau of Indian Standard (BIS).

"The charges for testing of gold jewellery upto 4 articles is Rs 200. For 5 or more articles, the charges are Rs 45 per article," an official statement said. The Ministry of Consumer Affairs said mandatory hallmarked gold jewellery has been successfully implemented wherein 3 lakh gold articles are being hallmarked with HUID (Hallmark



Unique Identification) every day. The BIS has "now made provision to allow a common consumer to get the purity of their unhallmarked gold jewellery tested at any of the BIS recognized Assaying and Hallmarking Centres (AHCs)." The AHC should undertake the testing of

gold jewellery from common consumers on priority and provide a test report to the consumer, it added. "The test report issued to the consumer will assure the consumer about the purity of their jewellery and will also be useful if the consumer wishes to sell the jewellery lying with him," it said.

The authenticity and purity of the hallmarked gold jewellery items with HUID number, purchased by consumer, can also be verified by using verify HUID' in BIS CARE app which can be downloaded from the Play Store.

Govt launches initiative to push start-ups in water sector

New Delhi, Mar 12 (PTI):

Union Minister Hardeep Singh Puri on Saturday launched the India WaterPitch-Pilot-Scale Start-up Challenge, under which the government will select 100 start-ups and they will be provided with Rs 20 lakh each as funding support as well as mentorship, a statement said. According to the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, the new initiative aims at empowering start-ups in the water sector to grow through innovation and design that will drive sustainable economic growth and generate employment opportunities.

The initiative was launched at an event here by Union Housing and Urban Affairs Minister Hardeep Singh Puri under the ministry's Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT)



Union Minister for Petroleum & Natural Gas, Housing and Urban Affairs Hardeep Singh Puri at the national level India Water Pitch-Pilot-Scale Start-up Conclave, in New Delhi.

2.0. Puri emphasised on the important role being played by the start-ups and assured them of full and active support from the government, according to a statement from the ministry.

Start-ups are the flavour of the season, as the number of unicorns' in the country has jumped, by leaps and bounds, the min-

ister said. He said that the success of the government's schemes hinges, to a large extent, to the role and contribution of stakeholders and others in the ecosystem, adding that the stakeholders' responses in the water sector are crucial for formulating government programmes.

Puri said AMRUT 2.0 is a transformative and

RERA implementation to improve post SC direction to Govt

New Delhi, Mar 12 (PTI):

Homebuyers' apex body FPCE expects the implementation of realty law RERA to improve following the Supreme Court's recent direction to the Centre to examine the rules framed by states and see whether those subserve the consumers' interest. Last month, the Supreme Court directed the Centre to examine whether the rules framed by various states under the Real Estate (Regulation and Development) Act, 2016 (RERA) are in conformity with the central legislation and subserve the interest of homebuyers. A bench of Justices DY Chandrachud and Surya



Kant gave three months to the Centre to examine if there are any deviations between the rules drawn up by the states and those framed by the Centre in 2016, and to place the report by the first week of May 2022.

When contacted, Forum for People's Collective Efforts' (FPCE) President Abhay Kumar Upadhyay said: "Despite five years of

On examining states' rules

its full implementation, RERA is yet to reach anywhere near its intended objective." The prime reason for this is that the states to whom responsibility has been given for its implementation did not follow any uniformity in their general real estate rules and rules for agreement for sale, he pointed out. "Their (states') rules

were not within the four corners of the provisions of RERA. This took sting out of the Act and homebuyers were deprived of the benefits of RERA," Upadhyay said.

On the other hand, the association's president said, builders took full advantage of this and the fear of RERA catching them faded.

"In view of this, though late, but still this ruling from the Supreme Court will set things right going forward and many homebuyers will then reap the benefit," he added.

Most importantly, this ruling would break the belief in most builders that they are above the law or that they can take the law for granted, he said.

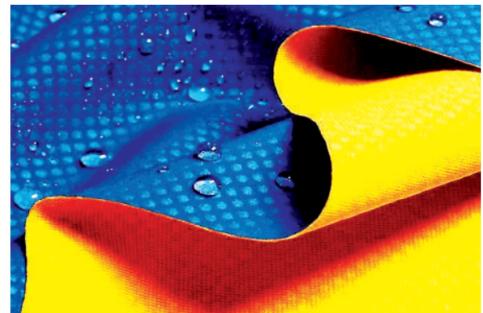
Textile min receives applications from 67 firms for PLI

In man-made fibres, tectex

New Delhi, Mar 12 (PTI):

The textile ministry has received applications from as many as 67 companies to avail benefits of the production linked incentive (PLI) scheme for man-made fibres and technical textile sectors, a top government official said on Saturday. The PLI scheme for textiles covers 40 man-made fibre (MMF) garment items, 14 MMF fabric goods and 10 technical textile products.

The government had approved the PLI scheme worth Rs 10,683 crore for the sector with an aim to boost domestic manufacturing, create jobs and promote exports. "We have taken a number of steps to promote growth of the



technical textile sector. There has been a very good response for the PLI scheme.

"As many as 67 companies have made applications for being a part of the PLI for MMF and technical textiles and against our expectations of over Rs 19,000 crore investments, these companies have shown that they would be investing like Rs

22,000-23,000 crore in the MMF and technical textiles," Textiles Secretary U B Singh said at a CII event.

The technical textiles (tectex) segment is a sunrise sector and holds huge potential for growth, he said.

It is used in different areas such as construction, road, railways, healthcare, automobile, and agriculture.

Exports cross USD 380 bn this fiscal so far



New Delhi, Mar 12 (PTI):

The country's merchandise exports have reached over USD 380 billion so far this fiscal till March 7 and are expected to reach USD 410 billion in 2021-22, Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said. He also said that India and Canada have formally re-launched negotiations for a free trade agree-

ment, which is officially dubbed as the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA). "As of March 7, 2022, our exports are over USD 380 billion and well poised to cross USD 400 billion and probably closing the year at USD 410 bn on merchandise. We will have a record services exports upward of USD 240 billion," Goyal said at a din-

ner hosted in honour of his Canadian counterpart Mary Ng. Talking about the India-Canada relationship, he said this economic partnership will strengthen efforts to take economic ties to the next level.

"This will help generate jobs, help each other in times of need and work with each other in several international forums... We have over 7,00,000 persons of Indian origin in Canada today slated to go up to 1.4 million in the next few years...." Goyal said.

He also urged the Canadian minister to be a "little more liberal" while negotiating the trade agreement.

The minister also sought investments from Canada in areas like infrastructure and manufacturing. The Canadian minister said that huge opportunities are there in India for businesses.

India's gold imports bounced back to 1,067 tons

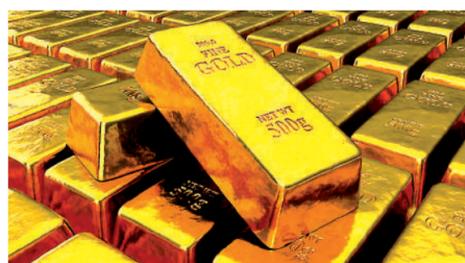
New Delhi, Mar 12 (PTI):

India's gold imports bounced back to 1,067.72 tonnes in 2021 from 430.11 tonnes during 2020 when the demand was hit due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Gem Jewellery Export Promotion Council (GJEPC) said.

The gold imports in 2021 were up by 27.66 per cent from 836.38 tonnes during 2019, it said in a statement.

The maximum quantity of gold was imported from Switzerland at 469.66 tonnes, followed by UAE (120.16 tonnes), South Africa (71.68 tonnes) and Guinea (58.72 tonnes) in 2021, it added.

Along with China, India is by far the world's largest importer and consumer of gold. According to GJEPC Chairman Colin Shah, "About 1,067 tonnes of gold imported in 2021 can be attributed to the abnormal



pandemic situation a year prior when imports had nosedived to 430.11 tonnes".

The past decade has seen India's gold imports coming close to the year-prior figure. For instance, the quantity of gold imported in 2021 is comparable to gold imports of 1,047 tonnes in 2015 and 1,032 tonnes in 2017, he said.

India's average monthly gold imports during April-February of 2021-22 fiscal stood at 76.57 tonnes, which is relatively at par

with the average gold imports that was undertaken in the same period in 2018-19 and 2019-20.

During April-February this fiscal, gold imports stood at 842.28 tonnes, which is below the usual imports in the same period i.e. ranging from 690 to 890 tonnes.

Overall, there isn't much deviation in the gold imported in January and February 2022 from the average imports of gold in quantity and value terms during the same period in

the previous three normal years — 2017-2018, 2018-2019 and 2019-2020, GJEPC added. In the case of exports, gold jewellery shipments from India rose 50 per cent to USD 8,807.50 million in 2021 on a sharp rise in demand for studded gold jewellery.

The country had exported gold jewellery valuing USD 5,876.39 million in the previous year.

GJEPC said the industry is witnessing a surge in exports and domestic sales of gold jewellery (plain and studded) post-pandemic.

Of the total exports, studded gold jewellery shipments rose sharply to USD 5,078.83 million in 2021 from USD 2,508.26 million in the previous year.

Export of plain gold jewellery increased to USD 3,728.66 million against USD 33,69.13 million, it noted.

Equal Hue project offers leg up for aspiring female cricketers



New Delhi, Mar 12:

The #EqualHue initiative has launched a first-of-its-kind outreach and excellence programme, comprising youth tournaments, financial assistance and technical opportunities, to support girls and women in India who aspire to play cricket. The Equal Hue project, a movement focussing on gender equity in sport, was founded in 2020 by former India cricketer Sneh Pradhan, author Karunya Keshav and The Sports Law and Policy Centre. Equal Hue Cricket, con-

ceived under the Equal Hue project, is a collaborative effort involving the #EqualHue team, GoSports Foundation and Meraki Sport & Entertainment. It is a pioneering initiative aimed at creating pathways for aspiring female cricketers from across the country, enabling them to start, stay in and succeed in the sport, while leaving a tangible impact on our country's socio-economic fabric. To coincide with Women's Day 2022, the initiative has launched a tri-pronged programme to: engage girls through Under-16 tournaments in 12 cities, enable those aged 16-23 with scholarships to continue in cricket by offering need-based financial assistance and career support, and enhance excellence through an elite development programme.

Realme introduces two new additions to 9 series

New Delhi, Mar 12:

Realme, world's fastest-growing smartphone brand and India's first brand to launch a 5G enabled smartphone, today introduced the latest set of products under its number series, realme 9 5G series, along with the realmeTechLife Buds N100 and realmeTechLife Watch S100. While the realme 9 5G series, which comprises two smartphones - realme 9 5G and realme 9 5G Speed Edition - is bound to enhance the user experience with the leading 5G processors in the segment, the additions to realme'sTechLife Ecosystem will further strengthen realme's commitment to offering an aspirational, trendsetting lifestyle in sync with the latest technological trends. Commenting on the



launch, MrMadhavSheth, CEO realme India, VP, realme, and President, realme International Business Group said, "For realme, India is a top priority market and we have received immense appreciation and adoration from our fans for our number series, and realme's commitment to bringing cutting-edge and industry-first products is exemplified by the inclusion of realme 9 5G and realme 9 5G Speed Edition. realmeTechLife Buds N100

is the brand's latest offering under its hearables category. Its 9.2mm dynamic bass boost driver accentuates the users' listening experience, and the 17-hour long battery life allows users to immerse themselves in music or work without being disturbed.

realmeTechLife Watch S100 comes with a 4.3cm (1.69") large color display with a high resolution of 240*280 pixels that can display vivid and lifelike visuals.

Usha partners with GeM to introduce sewing as service

Mumbai, Mar 12:

On the occasion of International Women's Day, Usha International Ltd, one of India's leading household consumer durables company, announced its strategic partnership with Government of India's Government e-Marketplace (GeM), an online platform, for two years through its Silai School program. Via this partnership, Usha will support the setting up of a new vertical - sewing as a service - on the GeM portal which will open newer opportunities for forward integration for hundreds of Usha Silai Women and enhance their livelihood. With the Government mandating that at least 3% of the Rs 15000 crores worth sewing orders placed by government departments/agencies annually, be taken up by re-

gional rural women groups, this is a big step forward and will enhance the earning potential of the Usha Silai School women.

Launched by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India, with the objective to create an open and transparent procurement platform for government buyers, the GeM is an online platform for public procurement in India. Purchases through GeM by Government users has been authorized and made mandatory by the Ministry of Finance. Usha's strategic partnership with GeM will aid the Usha Silai School's structure to provide expertise for the service and will help in placement of sewing orders with women at the regional level.

Sara Ali Khan, the new face of Indian Fast fashion ethnic brand

Bollywood actress Sara Ali Khan is the first celebrity brand ambassador for ethnic wear brand Libas. Their Spring Summer 2022 campaign, #TheresAlwaysALibas features Sara in the brand's latest designs in a series of campaign films and stills.

Commenting on the association, Sara Ali Khan, said, "I am overjoyed to share this association with Libas; Libas has the most comfortable ethnic wear styles. The brand gives a refreshing outlook to Indian ethnic fashion and makes the category an effortless choice for all occasions."

Speaking of the association, Sidhant Keshwani, CEO & MD, Libas, added, "We are very excited to have Sara on board! Simple, confident and comfortable in her own skin, she perfectly embodies the spirit of Libas; she is someone whose personal style resonates with Libas' philosophy. She organically endorses wearing ethnic wear in her personal style which makes her a natural choice for the brand."

The campaign, celebrates a new perspective on Indian ethnic fashion. The brand understands the changing sartorial needs of the modern Indian woman and focuses on providing stylish, versatile, and functional ethnic wear wardrobe solutions for all occasions -- whether navigating a busy day at work, a coffee date with friends or celebrating a festive evening -- whatever the occasion!

The campaign was created in collaboration with The Script Room as the creative agency across digital platforms.



Vivek Oberoi's 'Verses of War' wins Best Film award at Expo 2020 Dubai

The short film 'Verses of War', produced by Vivek Oberoi, who also plays the lead role in it, bagged the Best Film award at The Great Indian Film Festival held at Expo 2020 Dubai. The Great Indian Film Festival was a three-day event where several short films and documentaries were showcased by global filmmakers under one roof. 'Verses of War', directed by Prasad Kadam, pits an Indian Army Major, Sunil Bhatia, against his Pakistan Army counterpart, after the former is ambushed by Pakistani forces. The short film plays out as a series of conversations and sheds

light on the psychology of the Indian soldier who pens poetry and fights for his motherland with the same passion. After winning the best film award, Oberoi said: "This is my first attempt at producing and acting in a short film. The subject of the film, which pays tribute to war heroes and emphasises their contribution to nation-building, is very close to my heart." He added: "The idea behind making this film was to present the Indian soldier as a man who manifests the same passion both for art and for his motherland. Now that it has won the Best Film award at The Great Indian Film Festival, it only goes to show that a good film will always find its audience and be appreciated."



Holi celebrations with &TV artists

The festival of colours, Holi, is celebrated across the country with great zeal and enthusiasm. And interestingly, the festival is celebrated in incredibly different ways with uniqueness by each Indian state with a beautiful blend of different cultures and traditions. In sync with the festive spirit of Khushiyonkeharang &TV ke sang, &TV artists talk about how the festival is celebrated differently in their hometowns. These include Varanasi native, Vidisha Srivastava (Anita Bhabi, Bhabiji Ghar Par Hai), Kolkata native, MouliGanguly (MahasatiAnusuya, Baal Shiv), Delhiite, Pawan Singh (Zafar Ali Mirza, Aur Bhai Kya Chal Raha Hai?), Indorian, Kamna Pathak (Rajesh, Happu Ki Ultan Paltan), Rajasthan native, Kapil Nirmal (Tarkasur, Baal Shiv), Mumbaikar, Akansha Sharma (Sakina Mirza, Aur Bhai Kya Chal Raha Hai?), Bihar native, Saanand Verma (Anokhe Lal Saxena, Bhabiji Ghar

Par Hai), Punjab native, Charrul Malik (Rusa, Happu Ki Ultan Paltan) and Gujarat native, Soma Rathod (Ammaji, Bhabiji Ghar Par Hai). Charrul Malik, essaying Rusain&TV's Happu Ki Ultan Paltan, shares, "We Punjabis are known for celebrating Holi in our style. In Punjab, they call it "Holi Mohalla," where they shout their hearts out and follow the unique tradition. There is also a show of martial arts, especially Kushti playing with colours. The mouth-watering delicacies people usually prepare include halwa-puris, gujiya, malpuas and raw jackfruit preparation. Holi announces the arrival of spring, with the warm weather and bright sunshine urging one and all to celebrate. After the morning of playing with colours and energetic dancing to the beats of dhols, the evening is a time to relax and exchange stories of fun. I always feel immense joy when celebrating this occasion. Wishing everyone a very Happy Holi."

Aanchal Singh: I feel happy and scared at the same time with success

Actor Aanchal Singh, who made her debut with web series 'Undekhi' and tasted success post the release of 'Yeh Kali Kali Ankhein', said the love, appreciation and success make her happy and scared at the same time.

"I have been working for quite some time but getting a good acting assignment was surely an uphill task as like many actors, I also faced multiple rejections. Post the release of 'Undekhi' even though people noticed me, but I was not recognised much. Post the release of 'Yeh Kaali Kaali Ankhe', life has changed."

"The love I get from social media fills my heart. Now, I am happy but also scared with the success I am getting," she said.

The actor, who began her career in 2013, said she has done a lot of hard work.

Aanchal claimed that she never takes her success too seriously but only her work.

Sharing more details on why the new season of 'Undekhi 2' is more special for her, Aanchal says: "I have got a chance to show my acting skill. This time, Teji(her character) is coming back to her element, fighting for justice and doing everything in a righteous manner. She is facing problem on all fronts. It's tough for Teji and it is interesting for me as an actor to bring out the conflict through acting."

Post the release of 'Undekhi 2', Aanchal will be gearing up for the shooting of the new season of 'Yeh Kaali Kaali Ankhein'.

Created by Sidharth Sengupta and produced by Applause Entertainment, 'Undekhi 2' -- featuring Harsh Chhaya, Dibyendu Bhattacharya, Apaksha Porwal, Nandish Sandhu and Meiyang Chang - is streaming on SonyLiv.

Hiba Nawab takes inspiration from her mother for 'Woh Toh Hai Albelaa'

The audience always gets to see some new content on Star Bharat. Similarly, the characters of the star cast included in the show 'Woh To Hai Albelaa' produced by Rajan Shahi are also being seen in a different light. Actress Hiba Nawab, who plays Sayuri Sharma in the series, has always been seen in a flirtatious and naughty style on TV. She is now going to have a different look and give a different experience to the audience in this show where she plays the character of a very strong, intelligent and today's girl for this powerful character. For this she has taken inspiration from her mother, from whom she learns a lot. Through this character, Hiba, wanting to do something different and taking inspiration from her mother, says, "As soon as Rajan sir called me for the briefing of this character and I understood Sayuri, somewhere I had my own take on it, I started to see myself in it and wanted to get creative with it. The character, to a large extent resembled my mother."



HOROSCOPE SUNDAY MARCH 13

Aquarius: Jan 21 - Feb 18

It always pays to have extra cash, and in that regard, you will be a happy person today! You may carefully update and crosscheck your financial position. Of course, there are people who don't share your happiness and will try to advise you to the contrary. Ignore them, says Ganesha.

Pisces: Feb 19 - Mar 20

A good day is in the offing, says Ganesha. You are likely to receive news you will be glad to share and celebrate with your family. A few pending deals are likely to be finalised in the afternoon, and there are indications you will need to go off on a short visit for business purposes later on in the day.

Aries: Mar 21 - Apr 20

Today you are going to have a great time, but only if you plan out the right things, says Ganesha. At the work place it will be business as usual with its highs and lows. But make some good plan for the evening and you will be surprised. Try something romantic.

Taurus: Apr 21 - May 21

This day your reasoning, speculations and conjectures could be letting you down. You may thus feel dejected because things are not working out the way you had planned and anticipated. Be prepared and forearmed.

Gemini: May 22 - June 21

A hectic and busy day awaits you. You need to think about how, where and in what proportion to concentrate your energies upon the numerous jobs thrust upon you. You will be able to successfully complete your tasks in the later half of the day, says Ganesha.

Cancer: June 22 - July 22

Today you are likely to be full of enthusiasm, both at work and home, predicts Ganesha. At work, your convictions will get the better of other people's vindictiveness, and your colleagues will come around to your viewpoints. But don't take any critical decision without prior approval.

Leo: July 23 - Aug 23

If you are the one who sets the corporate mantra each morning, then know that today, your mantra will be fabulous, and will be chanted by many in your organisation. Being a business magnate might not be the easiest thing, but you are who you are, and you are good at it.

Virgo: Aug 24 - Sept 22

Watch you step, warns Ganesha. Trouble is lurking just round the corner and waiting to waylay you. At work, you will find yourself in a high-spirited mood and will be helpful to your colleagues. You might end the day in the company of family members recollecting the happy days you have spent in each other's company.

Libra: Sept 23 - Oct 23

Today seems like a good day to take a break and go on a pleasure trip to revitalise yourself, says Ganesha. Even on the business front, it will do you a world of good to take a break from the usual routine. This evening, you are at your best winning the heart of the opposite sex at social gatherings.

Scorpio: Oct 24 - Nov 22

Today you are likely to remain the unvarying object of emotions and sentiments, predicts Ganesha. Your inking for performing arts may draw you to take up some lessons in classical music and traditional dance. A romantic, candlelit evening with your sweetheart may be on the cards to wrap up the day.

Sagittarius: Nov 23 - Dec 21

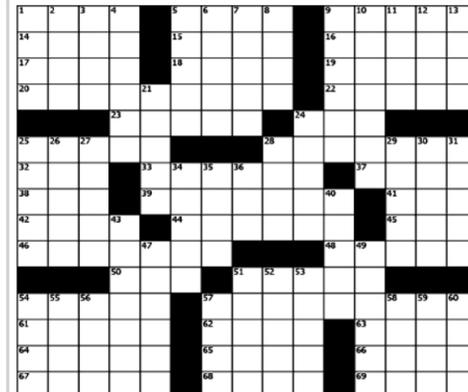
Simple living and high thinking, says Ganesha, will be your mantra today. Approach your work with innovative thoughts and diplomatic words. Later in the day, family, friends and relatives revel in the attention that you shower on them. Students will excel in their studies and marvel in leisure activities, says Ganesha.

Capricorn: Dec 22 - Jan 20

The day will have a bundle of things to offer today, some good, some not so good. At work, you are likely to overlook the most obvious things, and come across some unexpected ones. But as dawn turns to dusk, a pleasant surprise may get you all pepped up.

CROSSWORD

239



ACROSS

- Go-getter
- Right away (abbr.)
- Lucifer
- Singer _____ Fitzgerald
- Dr. _____ of TV
- Nimble
- Skin
- Took a cab
- Monikers
- Delayed

DOWN

- Phonograph records
- Country roads
- _____ Juan
- Jotted down
- Sports VIP (hyph.)
- Rainy mo.
- Rest
- Roman garb
- Behold
- Sooner
- Family
- Realm

- Until now (2 wds.)
- London's country (abbr.)
- Roped
- Sudden thrust
- Junior
- Glossy fabric
- Orally
- Pointed out
- Suez or Erie
- Chicken's home
- Donkey sound
- Cheek makeup
- Miscalculates
- Bait
- Road curves
- Refute
- Snaky fishes

DOWN

- Johnny _____ of "Finding Neverland"
- Butter's rival
- Building extensions
- Infant's toy
- Kitchen garment
- Glistened
- Assistants
- Begged
- Open shoe
- Opposed to
- Robbins and Allen
- A Baldwin
- Loch
- San Diego athlete
- Frozen raindrops
- Twangy
- Puccini work

- Forest growths
- India's locale
- Keepsake
- Maturing
- Kitchen stove
- Consumed
- Urge
- Aged
- Antique
- Relieve
- Gobs
- Incapable
- Night sound
- Embellish
- Drunk
- Land parcel
- Vietnam's neighbor
- Burden
- Chilled
- Test answer
- British nobleman
- Coloring agents

SOLUTION 238



Jhulan becomes highest wicket taker in women's WC history

Hamilton: Veteran India pacer Jhulan Goswami on Saturday surpassed yet another milestone in her illustrious 22-year-old career by becoming the all-time highest wicket-taker in the history of the ICC Women's World Cup here. With 40 scalps in her kitty, Goswami has surpassed Australia's Lynette Fullston, who took 39 wickets during her career spanning six years from 1982 to 1988. Goswami achieved the feat by dismissing Anisa Mohammed in the 36th over of the innings with West Indies chasing a mammoth target of 318 set by India. Goswami, thus, lead the chart ahead of Fullston, England duo of Carole Hodges (37 wickets) and Claire Taylor (36) and another Australian in Cathryn Fitzpatrick (33).



Mithali Raj breaks World Cup captaincy record



Hamilton: India's ODI skipper Mithali Raj on Saturday broke the record for most matches captained in the ICC Women's World Cup, surpassing former Australian counterpart Belinda Clark. Mithali, 39, led the country in 24 World Cup games, claiming 14 victories, 8 losses and one no result. Clark had captained her side in 23 matches. The India skipper achieved the feat when she stepped out to lead the country against the West Indies in a crucial match in the ongoing showpiece event here. Interestingly, Mithali and Clark are the only two cricketers to have led their country at more than two World Cups. Last Sunday, Mithali became only the third cricketer and the first woman to appear in six World Cups, joining the iconic Sachin Tendulkar and Pakistani great Javed Miandad.

Delhi Capitals unveils new jersey ahead of 2022 IPL season

New Delhi: Delhi Capitals on Saturday unveiled their new official jersey for the upcoming edition of the Indian Premier League, beginning March 26. According to a statement issued by the franchise, the first few jerseys were given to select DC fans at the team's home ground - the Arun Jaitley Stadium here. Additionally, select children from the city, the DC Cubs, were given official jerseys too, as part of a surprise activity curated specially for them. "It's a new cycle of the IPL, and we can't wait to see our players in this brand new jersey," said Vinod Bisht, Interim CEO, Delhi Capitals. "Supporting this team in its quest for glory is our fan army, so it's only fitting for us to make them a part of our journey in every step." Delhi Capitals will start their season on March 27 against Mumbai Indians at the Brabourne Stadium.

Murray outlasts Daniel at Indian Wells for 700th career win

Indian Wells (US): Andy Murray outlasted qualifier Taro Daniel 1-6 6-2 6-4 in the first round of the BNP Paribas Open for his 700th career victory. Murray, who received a wild card into the desert tournament, twice came from behind in the nearly two-hour match on Friday. He overcame a 1-3 deficit in the third set, winning five of the final six games. "I managed to start to improve as each set went on," Murray said, "and finished off well in the end." Murray broke Daniel to tie the set 3-all. The 34-year-old Scottish star led 40-love in the last game before closing it out on his third match point. "I'm old now so these 11 a.m. starts, it takes me a bit of time to get going," Murray said after the match. It was their third meeting this year. Ranked 106th, Daniel won at the Australian Open. Murray, who is 88th in the world, won in Doha last month.

Finch joins KKR as replacement for Hales

Mumbai: Two-time IPL champions Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) have roped in aggressive Australian batter Aaron Finch as a replacement for England's Alex Hales for the upcoming edition of the Indian Premier League. "Hales has cited bubble fatigue as his reason for withdrawal from the tournament," IPL stated in a media release. Finch, who led Australia to an ICC T20 World Cup win, has so far played 88 T20Is scoring 2,686 runs with the help of two hundreds and 15 half-centuries. "Finch, who has played 87 IPL games and has over 2000 IPL runs, will join KKR at the price of Rs 1.5 crore", it added. The Australian white-ball captain, who last played for Royal Challengers Bangalore (RCB) in the 2020 edition, was not picked by any team in the IPL mega auction last month. KKR will take on defending champions Chennai Super Kings in the IPL lung opener on March 26 at the Wankhede Stadium here.

Women's ODI World Cup



had 10 hits to the fence and two maximums in her 107-ball 109, which was her fourth ton and the first since hitting 171 not out

Mandhana, Harmanpreet sizzle as India whip WI

Hamilton, Mar 12 (PTI):

Smriti Mandhana and Harmanpreet Kaur slammed twin centuries as India produced a splendid batting display to notch up a comprehensive 155-run win over West Indies and bring their campaign back on track at the ICC Women's ODI World Cup here on Saturday.

While Mandhana smashed her fifth ODI hundred, a sensational 123 off 119 balls studded with 13 fours and two sixes, Kaur

got into the act, removing Shemaine Campbelle (11) and Chinelle Henry (7) as the Windies slumped to 134 for six.

Gayakwad and Rana then combined to run-out Aaliyah Alleyne (4), while Jhulan Goswami (1/43) returned to get rid of Anisa Mohammed (2) and become the all-time highest wicket-taker in the women's World Cup with 40 wickets in her kitty.

Earlier, opener Yastika Bhatia scored a quick 31 off 21 balls, laced with six boundaries, to give the team a good start along with Mandhana.

Bhatia and Mandhana put on 49 runs for the opening stand in 6.3 overs but once she departed, Mithali Raj (5) and Deepti Sharma (15) also followed suit, leaving India tottering at 78 for three. While Bhatia was caught and bowled by S

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Selman, Mithali was caught by Shamilia Connell at mid-wicket off Matthews in the 10th over. India scored 62 for

two in the powerplay with Deepti Sharma (15) making a promising start but Matthews took a one-hand-

ed stunner at first slip to get rid of the all-rounder.

Mandhana and Kaur then joined hands and steadied the innings

as India amassed 100 runs in 20 overs. The duo picked by the ones and twos and also got the boundaries regularly to keep the scoreboard ticking.

Mandhana scored her first fifty off 66 balls with five fours in the 27th over, while the second fifty came in 43 balls. The left-handed opener picked up her first maximum in the 33rd over when she produced a straight down the ground six off Selman. She smashed another six in the 37th over over long-on off Aaliyah Alleyne.

With the two batter scoring at a good pace, 200 was up in the 36th over.

Mandhana reached her 90s with a boundary and got a life when she was dropped by Alleyne on 96. She also survived an LBW appeal before reaching her century with another four off Matthews.

With Kaur also going great guns, India crossed the 250-mark in no time.

Mandhana was dismissed in the 43rd over when she found Selman at deep mid-wicket but Kaur took the onus on herself and steered the team across the 300-mark even as India kept losing wickets in pursuit of quick runs.

Kaur, who also got a reprieve on 20, reached her three-figures with a single in the 47th over before edging an Alleyne delivery to keeper Campbelle.

RCB appoints Faf du Plessis as new captain



Bengaluru, Mar 12 (PTI):

The Royal Challengers Bangalore on Saturday appointed former South Africa national team skipper Faf du Plessis as their new captain for the upcoming edition of Indian Premier League.

Du Plessis, one of the consistent performers for Chennai Super Kings, was an obvious choice after Virat Kohli decided to call time on his leadership role for the franchise after a decade during which their trophy

draught didn't end. He was bought for Rs 7 crore by RCB and is available for the whole season. Du Plessis was handed over the cap by team's chairman Prathmesh Mishra and director cricket operations Mike Hesson in a virtual event here.

"I'm deeply grateful for the opportunity I have played a lot of IPL and understand the dynamics of the game. It's no small thing to trust an overseas player," Du Plessis, who gave up South African captaincy across all formats in 2020, said.

India all out for 252 against SL in 2nd Test

Bengaluru, Mar 12 (PTI):

India were all out for 252 at the dinner break on the opening day of the second Test against Sri Lanka here on Saturday.

Shreyas Iyer was out on 92 off 98 deliveries while Jasprit Bumrah remained not out without scoring. The dinner break was taken once Iyer was dismissed.

Wicketkeeper-batter Rishabh Pant was the next highest contributor for India with a 26-ball 39 while Hanuma Vihari made 31.

Virat Kohli was out for 23 just before the tea break while captain Rohit Sharma scored 15.

For Sri Lanka, Lasith Embuldeniya and Praveen Jayawickrama took three wickets apiece while Dhananjaya de Silva got two.

Earlier, India made one change, bringing in a fit-again Axar Patel in place of Jayant Yadav in the playing XI.



Brief Scores:

India: 251 all out in 59.1 overs (Shreyas Iyer 91, Rishabh Pant 39, Hanuma Vihari 31; Lasith Embuldeniya 3/94, Praveen Jayawickrama 3/81, Dhananjaya de Silva 2/32.) vs Sri Lanka.

Sri Lanka, on the other hand, were forced to make two changes with Kusal Mendis and Praveen Jayawickrama replacing Pathum Nissanka and Lahiru Kumara, who were ruled out due to injuries.

India won the first Test by an innings and 222 runs.

Sprinters, including Hima Das, to headline Indian Grand Prix I



Thiruvananthapuram, Mar 12 (PTI):

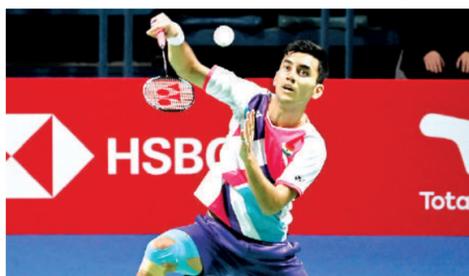
Indian sprinters, including the likes of Hima Das, will take centerstage for the first time this season in the Indian Grand Prix 1 Athletics Meet at the Chandrasekharan Nair Police Stadium here on Sunday. Amoj Jacob, Noah Nirmal Tom and Arokia Rajiv, who were part of the Indian 4x400m team that set the Asian record in the Tokyo Olympics in August last year, besides Amlan Borgogain and Nalubothu Srinivas will also be in action in the one-day meet. While Jacob and Nirmal Tom will headline the 400m race, others will battle it out in the 200m sprint.

Lakshya Sen enters semifinals, Srikanth bows out of German Open

Muelheim Am Der Ruhr, Mar 12 (PTI):

World Championships bronze medallist Lakshya Sen progressed to the semifinals but fellow Indian Kidambi Srikanth suffered a straight-game loss to Olympic champion Viktor Axelsen to bow out of the German Open Super 300 tournament here on Friday.

The 20-year-old Sen, who had claimed his maiden Super 500 title at the India Open in January, continued his rich vein of form as he saw off former top 10 player HS Prannoy 21-15 21-16 in an all-Indian quarterfinals that lasted 39 minutes. The world



number 14 had defeated Prannoy, currently ranked 24th, at the quarterfinals of India Open as well. Sen will now face top seed and former world champion Viktor Axelsen of Denmark in the semifinals on Saturday. World number 1 Axelsen proved

a tough customer for Srikanth as he went down 10-21 21-23 in 35 minutes. It was the Indian's sixth defeat on the trot to Axelsen, whom he had beaten thrice in the past, including en route to his 2017 Denmark Open title in Odense.

Crawley and Root lead England to 153-run lead and safety

St John's (Antigua), Mar 12 (AP):

An unbeaten partnership of 193 runs between Zac Crawley and Joe Root turned the tables on West Indies and gave England a lead of 153 in the first Test headed toward a draw.

Crawley, the opener, and captain Root, at first drop, patiently led England to 217-1 in its second innings at stumps on Day 4 at Sir Vivian Richards Stadium on Friday and relative safety. West Indies' first innings ended in the day's first over on 375 for a lead of 64. Yet another rout of England's top order was on the cards when Alex Lees was dismissed leg before wicket by fast bowler



Kemar Roach for the second time in his test debut, for 6 to go along with his

first-innings 4.

Crawley had been given out to Roach in the first over before scoring, but he overturned the umpire's decision on review.

Crawley didn't offer another chance for the rest of another day of grind, which came to an early end in England's 64th over due to a third and heavier rain interruption.

On a flat pitch, Crawley scored his second test century, 117 not out off 200 balls.

He survived the cull after the Ashes in Australia, where he was exposed by seam and swing, but has fully exploited a friendly Antigua pitch.

FAAG MAHOTSAV



Devotees dress as Krishna and Radha for a performance during the Faag Mahotsav ahead of the upcoming festival of Holi, in Ajmer, Saturday.

Govt launches initiative to push start-ups in water sector

New Delhi, Mar 12 (PTI):

Union Minister Hardeep Singh Puri on Saturday launched the India WaterPitch-Pilot-Scale Start-up Challenge, under which the government will select 100 start-ups and they will be provided with Rs 20 lakh each as funding support as well as mentorship, a statement said.

According to the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, the new initiative aims at empowering start-ups in the water sector to grow through innovation and design that will drive sustainable economic growth and generate employment opportunities.

The initiative was launched at an event here by Union Housing and Urban Affairs Minister Hardeep Singh Puri under the ministry's Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT) 2.0.

Puri emphasised on the important role being played by the start-ups and assured them of full and active support from the government, according to a statement from the ministry.

Start-ups are the flavour of the season, as the num-



Hardeep Singh Puri

ber of unicorns in the country has jumped, by leaps and bounds, the minister said. He said that the success of the govern-

ment's schemes hinges, to a large extent, to the role and contribution of stakeholders and others in the ecosystem, adding that the stakeholders' responses in the water sector are crucial for formulating government programmes.

Puri said AMRUT 2.0 is a transformative and unique scheme, with a huge outlay of over Rs 2.77 lakh crore. He said that the scheme will ensure water security in the country, reduce its transportation costs, reduce ground-water contamination, and

increase water utilisation capacity.

The Union minister also said that for the success of the mission, start-ups will have to play a meaningful role by bringing in innovative ideas, technology, novel delivery mechanisms, etc.

At the event, several start-ups from various parts of the country engaged in water gave their presentations with innovative ideas and cutting edge technologies, the statement mentioned.

The minister and other officials also saw the exhibition on the water sector, organised by various stakeholders engaged in water management, it added.

'UP voters chose development over Ram temple, Hindutva'

Lucknow, Mar 12 (PTI):

Development and government functioning were among the top priorities for voters in the Uttar Pradesh Assembly elections while the Ram temple and Hindutva did not weigh much in the minds of people while exercising their franchise, a post-poll survey has highlighted.

The study said the net satisfaction with the Narendra Modi government at the Centre was three times higher than that of the Yogi Adityanath government in Uttar Pradesh, indicating the Modi magic helped the BJP return to power for the sec-

ond consecutive term.

The Lokniti-CSDS poll survey also points to a new group of beneficiaries of welfare schemes such as Kisan Samman Nidhi, Ujjwala Scheme, PM Awas Yojna and free ration routing for the ruling coalition, irrespective of caste and religious considerations.

Another important fact that emerged in the comprehensive data collection was that allaying all pre-poll apprehensions, the BJP got more support among farmers, Brahmins, and also increased its outreach among Scheduled Castes, even among Mayawati's core vote bank Jatavs.

The BJP-led coalition

broke over three decades old record by getting re-elected for a second consecutive time in UP under Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath.

On how reliable the survey was in terms of size and geographical coverage, Sanjay Kumar, Professor and Co-Director of Lokniti programme at the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies, told PTI that it was a comprehensive sample, an important factor for any survey to be accurate.

Thirty-eight per cent of responders said development topped their priority, 12 per cent said changing or removing the government guided them to the polling booth and 10 per

cent listed functioning of the government as their consideration.

Surprisingly the Ram Mandir and Hindutva issue found favour only among 2 per cent of the responders and so was the case with the topic of stray animal menace raised by the opponents prominently to put the Adityanath government on the mat.

Even during campaigning, it was noticed that though the construction of the Rama temple in Ayodhya was talked about but it was not a dominant poll narrative even in Ayodhya, where the competing parties raised the issue of development more prominently.

Senior Cong leader Ibrahim resigns from party, likely to join JD(S)

Bengaluru, Mar 12 (PTI):

Senior Congress leader and MLC C M Ibrahim on Saturday said he has resigned from the primary membership of the party, and was inclined to join the JD(S). The senior politician, however, said he will announce his decision to join the regional party after discussing with the JD(S) leadership, including former Prime Minister H D Deve Gowda, in a couple of days.

Reacting to the possibility of Ibrahim joining JD(S), Deve Gowda said the party will discuss and take a decision. "I'm resigning from the primary membership of the Congress. I have sent a signed letter to Sonia Gandhi (Congress National

President)," Ibrahim told reporters here. Stating that he is also resigning as MLC, he said, "I have sent in the letter addressed to Chairman Legislative Council to Leader of Opposition (Assembly) Siddaramaiah, he can get it accepted by submitting."

I have done this because, in case my resignation is accepted, BJP will get majority in the council and can easily get the anti-conversion bill (which is pending in the Council) passed. I leave it to them." "I'm a free



C M Ibrahim

man now and have freedom to make any decision," he added, as he thanked national and state Congress leaders, including Sonia Gandhi, Rahul Gandhi, Siddaramaiah and PCC chief D K Shivakumar. Ibrahim, a former Union minister and one-time close associate of Deve Gowda, had joined Congress in 2008, and had been sulking for some time now, upset with the party and Siddaramaiah.

His decision to quit the Congress comes in the wake of the party appoint-

ing B K Hariprasad as the Leader of Opposition in the Legislative Council, the post which he was eyeing. He has also accused the Congress of neglecting the minority community leaders, and using the community only as vote bank.

Noting that he has resigned from Congress for the sake of "self-esteem", Ibrahim said he will be meeting JD(S) patriarch Deve Gowda and former chief minister H D Kumaraswamy in a couple of days and will announce his decision.

"Though I had pressure from other friends (from various parties), my wish is JD(S) as Deve Gowda knows me and I know him. Instead of taking an unknown path, it's better to take a known path...I will discuss with them and make an announcement," he said, adding that the JD(S) has all the possibility of coming to power in the state in the 2023 assembly polls.

'Maha govt must contribute 50% share for development of railways'

Jalna, Mar 12 (PTI):

Union Minister Raosaheb Danve on Saturday said for development of the railways in Maharashtra, the Maha Vikas Aghadi government has to contribute 50 per cent of its share for projects. The Union minister of state for railways was speaking at the inauguration of railway electrification from Manmad to Mukhed at Jalna railway station. Danve inaugurated the sub-station and electric pole for railway electrification from Manmad to Mukhed.

Union Minister of State for finance Dr Bhagwat Karad, MP Sanjay Jadhav, MLAs Kailash Gorantyal, Santosh Danve, Narayan Kuche, Atul Save and Prashant Bamb and railway and district officials



Raosaheb Danve

were present at the function.

There are demands for railway development from various quarters in the state. The Centre is ready to bring railway projects and new lines, but as per policy, the state has to contribute 50 per cent of its share, Danve said.

The minister further said that the works on the much-awaited Nagpur-

Mumbai bullet train will soon begin as the development project report (DPR) will be issued in a few days. With this, commuters from Mumbai to Aurangabad will cover the distance in just 1 hour and 40 minutes, he said.

To reduce carbon emission, the Centre has planned electrification of railways across the country, he said. Speaking about development of railway stations across the country, Danve said at least 75 railway stations, including Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus, will be developed in the first phase.

He further said that the Railways has taken up the dedicated freight corridor (DFC) project to improve efficiency and fast movement of freight transportation system.

HOLI CELEBRATIONS BEGIN



Students smear colour on each other, in celebration of the upcoming festival of Holi at Magadh Mahila College, in Patna, Saturday.

Marwari horse show kicked off in Jodhpur with 2,000 studs

Jodhpur, Mar 12 (PTI):

Over 2,000 Marwari horses, a native breed of Rajasthan, congregated in Jodhpur from across country for the two-day Marwari Horse Show, which was kicked off on Saturday. The show was inaugurated by Gaj Singh II, the erstwhile ruler and patron of the All India Marwari Horse Society.

The event has been organised jointly by the Marwari Horse Society and the Marwari Horse Stud Book Registration Society of India. This is the seventh edition of the show since 2013.

The show was initiated with a view to preserve



and promote the breed of the horse, which is native to western Rajasthan and is known worldwide for its agility and elegance.

Jagjeet Singh, Secretary of the society, said that the objective of the event is to maintain the identity and quality of the Marwari

breed. Horses registered in the stud book from all across the country will be participating in the show over the weekend, and will participate in activities and competitions, Singh said.

Over 2,000 horse owners have got their horses registered for the event from different states for the event being held at the Polo Ground. Only registered horses have been allowed to take part in the activities and competitions.

The show has emerged as a major event to have such a large and unique gathering of Marwari horses, also known as Malani horse.

HC grants conditional bail to nine ex-officials of private medical colleges

Jabalpur, Mar 12 (PTI):

The Madhya Pradesh High Court has granted conditional bail to nine former officials of private medical colleges accused of cheating, forgery among other offences related to pre-medical test PMT-2013 for admissions to MBBS course under the multi-crore Vyapam scam.

The court in its order stated that in the event of arrest, the petitioners may be released on their furnishing a personal bond amount of Rs 1 lakh.

A division bench of Justices S Nagu and M S

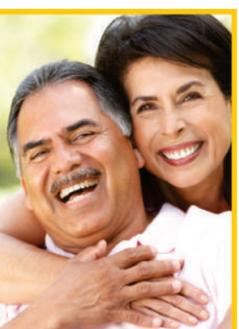
Bhatti on Friday imposed certain conditions on the accused persons, including that they will not seek unnecessary adjournments during the trial.

The court allowed bail applications of S N Vijaywargiya, the former chairman of Peoples College of Medical Science and Research Centre in Bhopal, Dr Ajay Goenka, the then secretary of Chirayu Charitable Foundation Bhopal and Suresh Singh Bhadoria, the then chairman of Mayank Welfare Society Indore.

The others granted bail were former members of Chirayu Medical College and Hospital's admission committee Dr

Ravi Saxena, S N Saxena and Dr V H Bhavsar, former dean of Peoples College of Medical Science and Research Centre Dr Vijay Kumar Pandya, Arun Kumar Arora, a former employee of Index Medical College Indore and former dean of Chirayu Medical College and Hospital Dr Virendra Mohan.

As per the order, the petitioners cannot seek unnecessary adjournments during the trial, cannot leave India without permission of the trial court, investigating officer, cannot indulge in extending inducement, threat or promise to any person acquainted with the facts of the case.



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BRIEF



People play with colours during celebrations of the upcoming 'Basant Utsav, at Maidan in Kolkata, Saturday.

Overshoot

Jabalpur: An Alliance Air flight from Delhi carrying 55 passengers overshoot the runway while landing at the Jabalpur airport on Saturday afternoon, officials of aviation regulator DGCA said. None of the passengers or crew members were injured, they said, adding that the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has started an investigation. The Delhi-Jabalpur flight was operated using an ATR-72 aircraft, they mentioned.

Injured

Nagaon (Assam): A suspected drug peddler was injured when police fired on him after he allegedly attacked them and tried to flee in a bid to evade arrest in Assam's Nagaon district on early Saturday, police said. The man was hospitalised. Based on specific information, an operation was launched in an area under Juria police station. On being challenged, the accused allegedly attacked the police team with a sharp weapon and attempted to flee. In response, the police team fired on him injuring him on the right hand.

Arrested

Erode (TN): Police here on Saturday said they have arrested two people for making country bombs to poach wild boar, deer and rabbits. Also, the police said, the arrested two confessed to have left a bomb near Gobichettipalayam in the district that exploded on Friday when a cow chewed on it. The animal got injured and was taken to a veterinarian.

Shot dead

Bulandshahr: A 60-year-old jaggery trader was shot dead by unidentified assailants in Bulandshahr district of Uttar Pradesh on Saturday, police said. Pradeep Agarwal came under fire when he was going to the wholesale market from home on a motorcycle in the morning. He was rushed to a community health centre, from where he was referred to Meerut. He died on the way to Meerut, the police said. Police suspected that robbery was the motive behind the killing in the Syana police station area.

Inaugurated

Jammu: Union Minister Jitendra Singh on Saturday inaugurated the Satish Dhawan Centre for Space Sciences at the Central University of Jammu here, saying the first course with an intake capacity of 60 students will start this year. The Minister of State in the Prime Minister's office termed the inauguration of the centre a historic day for north India.

Weather
High 34 Low 19

ONE-SIDED LOVE TRAGEDY

Man shoots, injures woman for rejecting proposal; kills self

Surajpur, Mar 12:

A 24-year-old woman was shot and critically wounded by a man, who then shot himself dead on the campus of a government college in Surajpur district on Saturday, police said.

The incident took place around 10 am on the campus of a government college in Premnagar town of the district, where the victim was a student, sub-divisional officer of police Pankaj Kumar Soni said.

According to the police, the accused, Sanjay Bhagat, took the step after the victim Anamika Sahu refused to enter into a relationship with him. As per preliminary information, Sahu, a student of BSc, was with her classmates, when



The youth lying in a pool of blood after he pointed the gun to his forehead and shot himself.

Bhagat arrived at the campus on a motorcycle, he said. Bhagat asked the others accompanying her to leave the place and an argument ensued between the two. He suddenly took out a country-made revolver and fired at her abdomen, following which she fell. Assuming that she was dead, the accused then pointed the gun to his forehead and shot himself," Soni said. Sahu was rushed to a local hospital, from where she was

shifted to Ambikapur Medical College in neighbouring Surguja district. In view of her critical condition, she was later referred to the capital Raipur for further treatment, he said.

It was a one-sided love affair. Bhagat, who hailed from Kedarpur village of the area, had been stalking the woman for a long time and she had rejected his proposals in the past. Apparently in a fit of rage, he shot her, the official said.

About the incident

The incident took place around 10 am on the campus of a government college in Premnagar town of the district, where the victim was a student. According to the police, the accused, Sanjay Bhagat, took the step after the victim Anamika Sahu refused to enter into a relationship with him. As per preliminary information, Sahu, a student of BSc, was with her classmates, when Bhagat arrived at the campus on a motorcycle. Bhagat asked the others accompanying her to leave the place and an argument ensued between the two. He suddenly took out a country-made revolver and fired at her abdomen, following which she fell. Assuming that she was dead, the accused then pointed the gun to his forehead and shot himself.

CWC to meet today to discuss poll debacle

New Delhi, Mar 12 (PTI):

The Congress Working Committee (CWC) will meet on Sunday to discuss the outcome of the assembly elections in five states where the party received a drubbing, the sources said. Congress president Sonia Gandhi will chair the meeting of the party's top decision-making body at its headquarters here at 4 PM tomorrow, they said.

The Congress lost Punjab to the AAP and could not win any of the four other states - Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Goa and Manipur.

The Sunday meeting is likely to see some fireworks as the G-23 leaders had suggested corrective measures after the previous round of assembly polls, when the party lost Puducherry and failed to make

a mark in Kerala, Assam and West Bengal, but there had been little movement on that front. The leaders of G-23, who have been demanding an organisational overhaul, had met Friday evening at the residence of senior leader Ghulam Nabi Azad to evolve their strategy ahead of the crucial CWC meeting. Azad and senior leader Anand Sharma are the two leaders of the group who are part of the CWC. Mukul Wasnik had initially signed a letter from the group to Gandhi but has since kept his distance.

The 'Group of 23', at their Friday meeting, expressed shock at the party's defeat. Sources said the leaders discussed the way forward and steps for the revival of the Congress which has become even "more marginalised, weakened and isolated".

HEARTRENDING INCIDENT

Seven killed as fire breaks out in shanties

New Delhi, Mar 12 (PTI):

Seven people, including three children, were killed in a blaze that ravaged through the shanties in northeast Delhi in the early hours of Saturday.

Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal announced a compensation of Rs 10 lakh for the kin of adult deceased, Rs 5 lakh in case of minor deceased, and Rs 25,000 to those whose shanties were gutted.

Two minors, Roshan (13) and his sister Dipika (9), of same family were killed in the fire. Five other deceased were from another family. They were identified as Babloo (32), Ranjit (25), Reshma (18), Priyanka (20), and Shahansha (10).

Santu, the 58-year-old grandfather of Roshan and Dipika, said, "The fire



Locals gather after a fire broke out in shanties at Gokulpuri area, in New Delhi, Saturday morning.

started around 12.30 am when we were sleeping. We have no idea from where and how it started. We have only one room. We came out of shanty when the fire broke out to save our lives." A senior official of the Delhi Fire Services said in

Railways to open over 100 food plazas

New Delhi, Mar 12 (PTI):

The railways will now open food plaza, fast food units and multi-cuisine restaurants, taking over from its catering arm IRCTC, in a bid to generate non-fare revenue, according to an order issued by the Railway Board.

The Indian Railway Tourism and Catering Corporation (IRCTC), which is responsible for serving food on board trains and in its static units, was set up primarily to segregate non-rail works from the railways, whose primary job is to run trains. With the IRCTC failing to set up such units, causing huge losses in revenue for the railways, it has now been decided to hand over this responsibility to zonal railways. The order, dated March 8, has given permission to the 17 zonal railways to use vacant space at stations for such units.

FATAL MISHAP

Three killed in car-truck collision

On highway in Korba

Korba, Mar 12:

Three persons were killed when the car they were travelling in collided with a truck on a highway in Korba district on Saturday, police said.

The accident occurred on Bilaspur-Katghora-Ambikapur National Highway near Lamna village, in the limits of Bango police station, in the early hours of the day, said Rajesh Patel, station house officer of Bango police station said.

The victims were travelling to Ambikapur from Raipur, when their four-wheeler collided with a truck coming from the opposite direction, he said. Two of the victims, Ramesh Kumar Singh (59) and Pankaj Jha (45), were killed on the spot, while Budhinath Jha (35) died on the way to the hospital, the

About the mishap

The accident occurred on Bilaspur-Katghora-Ambikapur National Highway near Lamna village, in the limits of Bango police station, in the early hours of the Saturday. The victims were travelling to Ambikapur from Raipur, when their four-wheeler collided with a truck coming from the opposite direction. Two of the victims, Ramesh Kumar Singh (59) and Pankaj Jha (45), were killed on the spot, while Budhinath Jha (35) died on the way to the hospital.

official said. Singh was a resident of Surajpur district and the Jhas were from Raipur, he said. Bodies of the deceased have been sent for autopsy, and an offence has been registered under relevant provisions of the IPC, the official added.

FOUR DECADE LOW

Interest rate on PF cut to 8.1%

New Delhi, Mar 12 (PTI):

Interest rate on employees' provident fund deposits on Saturday was proposed to be cut to a four-decade low of 8.1 per cent for the current 2021-22 fiscal from 8.5 per cent in the previous year, sources said.

This is the lowest interest rate since 1977-78 on deposits that employees make towards their retirement fund. Interest rate on employees provident fund that year stood at 8 per cent.

The interest rate for the current fiscal year ending March 31 was set by the retirement fund body EPFO for its about 5 crore subscribers.

"The Employees' Provident Fund Organisation's (EPFO's)

apex decision making body Central Board of Trustees has decided to provide 8.1 per cent rate of interest on Employees Provident Fund (EPF) for 2021-22 in its meeting held on Saturday," a source said.

The EPFO paid 8.5 per cent interest rate to its subscribers in 2020-21, the same as in the previous year. The EPF rate was 8.65 per cent in 2018-19 and 8.55 per cent in 2017-18.

Provident fund savings are mandatory under the Employees Provident Funds and Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 1952. At least 12 per cent of an employee's basic salary is compulsorily deducted to be saved in provident fund, while an employer co-contributes an equal amount.

PLAYING WITH CLOURS



Students play with colours during a cultural programme, organised ahead of the upcoming festival of Holi, at a school, in Moradabad, Saturday.

PHONE TAPPING CASE

Fadnavis to appear before Mumbai police

Mumbai, Mar 12 (PTI):

The Mumbai cyber police have issued a notice to senior BJP leader Devendra Fadnavis, asking him to appear before them on Sunday in connection with a case of alleged illegal tapping of phones, an official said on Saturday.

Fadnavis, however, said that a senior police officer called to inform him that police will visit his residence to take the required information and there was no need for him to visit the BKC cyber police station.

Phones of political leaders, including state Congress chief

Nana Patole, minister Bachchu Kadu, former MLA Ashish Deshmukh, former MP Sanjay Kakade and others were tapped illegally by IPS officer Rashmi Shukla, when she was the state intelligence chief, Maharashtra home minister Dilip Walse Patil had alleged last month.

"In the notice issued to Fadnavis, police have said that questionnaires were earlier sent to him in sealed envelopes in connection with the case, but he did not respond to them. Besides, notices were also issued to him twice to seek his reply, but he had again failed to reply," the police official said.

FIRST CONVOCATION OF RRU

'Need for reforms in internal security apparatus post-1947'

Stresses need for training

Gandhinagar, Mar 12 (PTI):

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday said there was a need for reforms in the internal security apparatus after Independence, but the country lagged behind in this area.

Addressing the first convocation of Rashtriya Raksha University (RRU) at Lavad in Gandhinagar district, he said during British rule internal security revolved around in-



stillling fear among the masses, which needed to be changed. After

Independence, there was a need for reforms, but unfortunately sufficient work was not done in this direction and we lagged behind," he said.

"Even now, the perception about police is that one should stay away from them..." the prime minister said. More than increasing the number of personnel, what was needed was trained officials who understand technology, human psyche, know how to communicate with the young generation and deal with the leaders of mass agitations, the prime minister said.

BIS seizes sub-standard pressure cookers, helmets

New Delhi, Mar 12 (PTI):

Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) has seized 1,032 pressure cookers and 936 helmets which were found to be without ISI mark and violated the Quality Control Orders (QCO), the government said on Saturday.

The BIS has conducted search and seizure operation for violation of QCO on helmets and pressure cookers, the Ministry of Consumer Affairs said in an official statement. The Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA) has also issued 15 notices against e-commerce entities and sellers selling non-standard pressure cookers online.

CBSE announces Term-1 exam results for Class X

New Delhi, Mar 12 (PTI):

The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) has communicated the results of the Term-I exams for Class 10 to the schools, it has said in an order.

Last year, the CBSE had announced that the board examinations for 2022 will be conducted in two terms. The Term-I exams for major subjects were held between November 30 and December 11 last year.

The weightage of Term-I and Term-II exams will be decided at the time of declaration of Term-II result and accordingly, final performance will be calculated, the

board said. "The Board is informing the schools only about the theory performance of their students of Class X in a collective manner. Hence, the performance of individual student will not be available on the website," the CBSE said in a circular on March 11.

It said it has communicated the results of only theory performance of the students since the information about practical/project/internal assessment is already with schools.

Since it was Term-I only, the board has not issued any mark sheet or passing certificate, which it said will be issued only after the Term-II exam. It has also

constituted an online dispute redressal mechanism for any disputes regarding the Term-I examinations, which it said was made available immediately.

The online link will stay live till March 26, it said, adding, that the disputes will be settled only after the Term II exams though.

The board said that no performance was shared for students who missed their Term-I exams due to COVID or due to their participating in any national or international exam or sport event.

Their final performance will be assessed on the basis of their performance in Term-II examinations, it said.

Russia strikes near Ukraine's capital

Mosque reported hit

Lviv, Mar 12 (AP):

Russian forces pounding the port city of Mariupol shelled a mosque sheltering more than 80 people, including children, the Ukrainian government said Saturday as fighting also raged on the outskirts of the capital, Kyiv.

There was no immediate word of casualties from the shelling of the mosque. Mariupol has seen some of the greatest misery from Russia's war in Ukraine as unceasing barrages have thwarted repeated attempts to bring in food and water and to evacuate trapped civilians. The Ukrainian

Embassy in Turkey said that a group of 86 Turkish nationals, including 34 children, were among the people who had sought safety in the mosque of Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent and his wife Roksolana. Elsewhere, air raid sirens rang out across the capital region and artillery barrages sent residents scurrying for shelter. Fighting erupted in multiple areas around Kyiv. Russia's slow, grinding apparent attempt to encircle the city and the bombardment of other population centers with artillery and air strikes mirror tactics that Russian forces have previously used in other campaigns, notably in Syria and Chechnya, to crush armed resistance.

Business ideas to be promoted through Startup India

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Mar 12: District Trade and Industries Centre hosted a day-long event to promote entrepreneurship in the state. During this programme, discussion was conducted in detail how startups and innovation can be promoted through incubation.

The speakers said that the youth have innovative ideas in their mind but due to lack of capital and the execution plan, they cannot materialise their ideas. Officials of the Central Government and State Government were present.

The chief guest, Sarojini Panigrahi, District Head, Laghu Udyog Bharati spoke about the new possibi-



ties among youth and women and briefed how work is being done to motivate them. Joint Director (MSME) Rajeev S explained how the ideas of startups can be improved. People can contact the officials of the Industries Department for seeking expert advice and guidance.

Deputy Director Lokesh Parganiha shared the in-

novations of some entrepreneurs and how they managed their ventures in the best way after seeking technical advice from the Industries Department.

District Trade and Industries Center Manager Tushar Tripathi gave detailed information about PMEGP and Mukhyamantri Yuva Swarozgar Yojana. He also explained in detail about

the Industrial Policy 2014-19. He also elaborated on the scope of the enterprise in various fields.

Assistant Director MSME Umesh Prasad explained in detail about the Credit Link Investment Scheme of the Central Government. Professor Shailja Bahadur and Professor Swati Verma of Shankaracharya College also expressed their views.

The programme was organized to promote entrepreneurship in the state under the joint aegis of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Development Office, Raipur and District Trade and Industries Center Durg and in collaboration with Shri Shankaracharya Technical Campus.

Suspension bridge to be constructed on Sheonath at Mahmara Ghat

Bhilai, Mar 12: On the instructions of Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel, the water Resources Department has included the project of Laxman Jhula construction at Mahmara Ghat on Shivanth river in its departmental budget for 2022-23. Durg MLA Arun Vora had made special efforts in this direction. The officials of the Water Resources Department have started the survey work for construction of Laxman Jhula (suspension bridge) and Garden. Suresh Pandey, Executive Engineer of Tandula Water Resources Department said that after survey for the construction of world class Lakshman Jhula (suspension bridge) of about 300 meters length and 3.25 meters width, the estimate will be sent for administrative approval from the state government. Along with the construction of Lakshman Jhula, development of Mahmara Ghat area will be done by tree plantation and developing gardens on both the banks of the river for the purpose of promoting tourism.

DSCET honours Mitanins of IWD

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Mar 12: Dev Sanskriti College of Education and Technology (DSCET), Khapri organised a felicitation function on the occasion of International Women's Day on March 08. The institution has always tried to give higher status to the women.

In this sequel, the institution honoured the Mitanins of Aanganwadi centres located in Jeora Sirsa. Padmashri Phoolbasan Devi graced the function as chief guest. Special guest was Vidya Rajput, Chairman of Chhattisgarh Mitwa Sankalp Samiti, who works for community education, health, awareness and equal rights.

Mitanin Didis of Aanganwadi Centers from village Jeora Sirsa were also honoured. College Director Jyoti Sharma extended IWD greetings to



the entire college staff, teachers and non-teaching staff and honoured them with token gifts. The students presented colourful programmes.

The chief guest and the special guest delivered in-

spirational speeches and urged the women to realise their duties towards the society. Director Jyoti Sharma honoured the guests with mementos and proposed the vote of thanks.

Dr Sonali Chakraborty honoured with 'Rashtra Shakti Shiromani' award

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Mar 12: In view of her remarkable contributions in the field of social work and literature, Dr Sonali Chakraborty, the founder and director of Swayamsiddha NGO, was honoured in a grand event held at IMS Noida on the occasion of International Women's Day.

National Women's Summit was organised by the renowned literary, social and cultural organization Sampark Kranti Parivar, Delhi. She was honoured with Rashtra Shakti Shiromani award.

108 women working in different fields from all over the country were honoured. Padmashri Gulabo Sapera (India); educationist and international motivational speaker (London) Dr Parin Somani and astrologer



Rekha Vohra were among the prominent personalities honoured during the programme.

Padmashree Kamalini Asthana, Padmashree Nalini Asthana (Kathak dancer), Shilpa Gupta (Chairman and Managing Director IMS Noida), Dr Bina Budki (litterateur and educationist in Jammu and Kashmir), Acharya Didi A n a n d i s h u b h e

Saraswati, Sandhya Gupta (Social Worker), Folk singer Vijaya Bharti, Folk singer Dr Neetu Kumari Nutan, Orissa's woman entrepreneur and educationist Dr Chidattamika Kathua, Seema Agarwal from Kolkata (West Bengal), Senior journalist Monika Sharma and Shiv Vinayak Sharma (President Sampark Kranti Parivar) were specially present.

55000 people purchase medicines worth Rs 1 crore from Dhanwantri Medical Stores

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Mar 12: Under the state government's scheme - Shri Dhanvantari Generic Medical Store", a total of 18 Medical Stores are being run at different places in the district. At these stores, the citizens are able to purchase generic and branded medicines at a discount of 50 to 60 percent. Till now, 55222 beneficiaries of the district have purchased medicines worth about Rs One crore from Dhanwantri Medical Stores.

Had they purchased the same medicines from other medical stores, they would have spent 40 to 60 percent extra money. Dhanwantri Medical Stores being run within the limits of Durg and Bhilai Municipal Corporations as well as

other places are getting very good response.

Ravi Kumar, who visited the medical store, said that he was always worried about the price of medicines. But the Dhanwantri Medical Stores have reduced that tension. His parents are patients of hypertension and diabetes and he had to spend around Rs 3000 per month on medicines for them. His family is getting a lot of benefit from the Dhanwantri scheme run by the state government. Now, they are getting the same medicines for about Rs 1400 to Rs 1800.

Manish Khatri, operator of Dhanwantri Medical Store located near Naighar Complex of Durg, said that 251 types of generic medicines and 27 types of surgical products are available in the medical store. There



is a continuous increase in the demand of medicines for high blood pressure, diabetes, asthma and seasonal diseases etc.

He said that among these, blood pressure and diabetes medicines have highest demand. The sales figure of these medicines is between Rs 7000-9000 per

day. In the present era, the number of patients suffering from lifestyle diseases has increased. Accordingly, there has been a rise in the consumption of medicines. Sanjeevani products of the department are also available in the store, he added. Collector Dr

Sarveshwar Narendra Bhure appealed to the general public that Dhanwantri Medical Store has been opened in the interest of common people. The main objective of the government is to provide quality medicines at affordable rates. With this initiative of the state government, people are able to save their hard earned money.

To popularize generic drugs among the masses and to dispel the popular belief that low cost drugs are less effective, the district administration is continuously making efforts through publicity and other means. The citizens of the district are displaying their awareness and have started buying medicines from Dhanwantri Medical Stores.

BSF organises multifarious events under Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsava

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Mar 12: On the occasion of the 75th year of country's independence, the Border Security Force deployed in anti-naxal operations in Chhattisgarh is organising multifarious events under the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsava.

Various battalions of BSF working under the Frontier Headquarters (Special Operations, Chhattisgarh) are organising sports competitions, essay competitions, debate competitions and are also organising exhibition of weapons.

In this sequel, the office



of Inspector General (Frontier Headquarters, Special Operations, Chhattisgarh), Risali Bhilai organised an essay competition for the students of the nearby schools. The topic of essay

writing competition was national security.

A video film on the BSF and its achievements was also screened for the students. An exhibition of weapons was organised at Hostel Number 01 at

Sector 3 in which large number of students got information about the popular weapons of the armed forces. These events were organised with the objectives of promoting patriotism among the students.

Rail & Strl Mill creates new records in production

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Mar 12: Bhilai Steel Plant's Rail & Structural Mill has created a new record of producing 1931 Tonnes (T) of R 260 grade and 60E1 profile rails on March 11, 2022, surpassing previous record of 1852 Tonnes on 17th June 2021.

Best-ever production of 1931 Tonnes (T) of R 260 grade and 60E1 profile on 11th March 2022 included best ever tonnage of 653 T of long rails from Rail & Structural Mill as against previous best of 651 T on 6th March 2022.

SAIL-BSP has been producing the exact specification based rails for the Indian Railways through-out its association of



more than six decades. The R260 grade of Rails is targeted to meet the requirements of Indian Railways for higher speed and higher axle load.

Indian Railways is moving towards higher speed and axle load rails for which it required SAIL to produce R 260 grade. The

new grade will not only ensure cleaner steel but will also provide better mechanical properties.

It is worth mentioning that the specifications given by RDSO for this new grade of rails are even more stringent than the specifications of rails used in European coun-

tries. As such the steel for this new grade of rails is cleaner and the rails have higher yield strength. Bhilai Steel Plant is producing this new grade and profile of rails from both its Universal Rail Mill and Rail & Structural Mill.

JLNH&RC hosts Neonatal Resuscitation Programme

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Mar 12: The Neonatal Resuscitation Programme is a structured, hands on training educational program based on recent-most guidelines laid by the "American Academy of Pediatrics & National Neonatology Forum" (IAP-NRP-FGM-Project) and is in alignment with India Newborn Action plan committed to reduce Neonatal Mortality Rate to single digit by 2030.

Preventable Newborn death accounts for 44% of all under 5 deaths globally, at least 50% of these deaths can be reduced through implementing educational interventions that includes neonatal resuscitation and essential elements of newborn care.

Goal of the program is to decrease Neonatal mortality rate focusing on ac-



celerating the reduction of preventable newborn deaths related to Birth asphyxia. The program lays out a vision and plan for scaling up high impact yet cost effective interventions and has a clear vision sup-

ported by priority actions & monitoring frame-work.

The program was organized on Saturday by department of pediatrics & Neonatology JLN Hospital & RC Bhilai in guidance of Dr SK Issar (ED, Medical &

HS), Dr Ravindranath M (CMO, M & HS), Dr Pramod Binayake (CMO, M & HS) & Dr Sambita Panda (HoD pediatrics).

This program is designed to translate concerted efforts based on contin-

uum approach, knowledge & hands on skill training required for receiving and resuscitating newborns & the primary beneficiaries for the current program were post graduate resident doctors from

Pediatrics, Obstetrics & gynecology department & critical care staff working in NICU & labor room.

Scientific program was co-ordinated by Dr Mala Choudhary, (consultant, dept of pediatrics) in asso-

ciation with Dr Akash Lalwani (CG state coordinator for NRP), Dr Naresh P Motwani and Dr Seema Jain in collaboration with Ministry of Family Welfare Government of India.

Under the competent leadership of Dr Subodh Saha (I/c -neonatal unit) and team - Dr Sanjibani Patel & Dr Nootan Kumar Verma & Dr Mala Choudhary. This program was observed with commitment & consistent efforts towards reducing neonatal mortality rate at JLNH & RC Bhilai which is at par to some of the developed countries of western world.

Dr Nohar Singh Thakur, Dr Meeta Sachdeva, Dr Kausik Kishore, Dr Wrunda Sakhare, Dr Ruchika Tamrakar consultants have also contributed to make it a success.

OBITUARY

HM Masih

Bhilai: HM Masih, wife of Late CB Masih left for heavenly abode at the age of 86 years on Saturday.

Funeral procession will be taken out from her residence situated at MIG2/316, Hudco on March 13 around 15:00 hrs and last rites of the mortal remains will be performed at Nehru Nagar Christian Cemetery. She was the mother of Sanjeet Masih.

Pratap Madhyani

Bhilai: Senior Congress leader and businessman Pratap Madhyani left for heavenly abode at the age of 59 years on Saturday. He breathed last at a hospital in Hyderabad. Last rites of the mortal remains will be performed at Durg on March 13. He was elected thrice as Corporator of Durg Municipal Corporation. Political leaders have expressed condolences and mourned his death.

Will promote economic self-reliance in rural areas: Bhupesh

Chief Minister inaugurates International Agriculture Exhibition and Kisan Mela

Central Chronicle News

Raipur, Mar 12: Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel on Saturday inaugurated the four-day International Agricultural Exhibition and Kisan Mela organised at Indira Gandhi Agricultural University. In this international fair, 132 organizations of government, public and private sector are showcasing agricultural techniques and products. Inaugurating the fair, the Chief Minister said that it was the dream of the forefathers to prop-



erly distribute the amount received from the mineral reserves and natural resources of the state. The Chief Minister said that his government never discriminated against any section and waived off the loans of all farmers.

The Chief Minister said that we started the Rajiv Gandhi Kisan Nyay Yojana to improve the economic condition of the farmers so

that the rural economy remains gears up in the state. Chief Minister Mr. Baghel said that he had made a promise to the people of the state and fulfilled it, despite the decline in the economy during Corona, released four installments to the farmers and the fourth installment of this financial year is also going to be released. Chief Minister Baghel said that

Nyay Yojana has been started for the labourers as well and now they will get Rs 7000 instead Rs 6000 per year. The Chief Minister said that construction of Gauthans is not the plan of the government, but the plan of farmers and villagers, which we are preparing jointly. Talking about the economic condition of the farmers of Chhattisgarh, Chief Minister Mr. Baghel said that in the last three years, Rs. 91 thousand crore has been deposited in the account of farmers and this is one third of the total budget which the farmers have got. Addressing the farmers at International Agriculture Exhibition and Kisan Mela, Chhattisgarh Agriculture Minister Ravindra Choubey said that Chhattisgarh is mainly a

state based on agriculture and continuous development of agriculture is taking place in the state, the effect of which is visible now. Choubey appreciated the efforts of Agriculture University for continuous expansion of agriculture innovation in Chhattisgarh. On the occasion of the inauguration of International Agriculture Exhibition and Kisan Mela, Mr. Surendra Sharma, Chairman of Chhattisgarh State Farmers Welfare Council, Mr. Agni Chandrakar, President of Chhattisgarh State Seeds and Agriculture Development Corporation, Agriculture Production Commissioner Mr. Kamalpreet Singh and Vice Chancellor of Indira Gandhi Agricultural University Mr. Girish Chandel was present.

Governor inaugurates three day art exhibition organized by Sadhna Kala Sansthan

Central Chronicle News

Raipur, Mar 12: Governor Ms. Anusuiya Uikey visited the three-day art-cum-photograph exhibition organized by Sadhna Kala Sansthan at Town Hall located in the Collectorate campus. During this, Governor Ms. Uikey inaugurated the exhibition by lighting the lamp and garlanding the idol of Lord Ganesha. The Governor visited and appreciated the artefacts of Sadhna Kala Sansthan installed in the Town Hall. Governor Ms. Anusuiya Uikey visited the three-day art-cum-photograph exhibition organised by Sadhna Kala Sansthan at Town Hall located in the Collectorate campus. On this occasion, Governor Ms. Uikey inaugurated the exhibition by lighting the lamp and garlanding the idol of Lord Ganesha. The Governor visited and appreciated the artefacts of Sadhna Dhandh has made her name a reality by practicing art with her tireless hard work. They are synonymous with struggle. She did not let her disability become her weakness.



For the last 40 years, by using her creative potential, she not only earned a name in the art world, but has also become an inspiration for thousands of art lovers, giving them art education. She is also constantly refining her art through creative genres such as sculpture, bonsai and photography. The noble work of training children through Sadhna Kala Sansthan is certainly a commendable effort. Ms. Uikey said that her contribution in the field of art of meditation would encourage the people of the state and the country. She will always remain an inspiration for the disabled people. Ms Uikey wished her a healthy life and a bright future. Mokshada Chandrakar, Vice Chancellor of Indira Kala

Sangeet Vishwavidyalaya, Khairagarh, said that God gives only lines in our hands, but we have to fill them with color ourselves. She said that Sadhna Dhandh is such a person who has achieved this position today through her struggles despite her physical infirmity. She is such an artist who has engraved his feelings, imaginations in colors very intimately. At the end of the program, Ms. Sadhna Dhandh presented a photo of Lord Ganesha based on Tanjore art to the Governor. Governor Ms. Uikey also honoured Sadhna Dhandh with a memento. On this occasion, RERA President, Vivek Dhand, Hemchand Yadav University Vice Chancellor Dr. Aruna Palta were present.

Baghel pays tribute to Swami Satyarupanand Ji Maharaj



Raipur, Mar 12: Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel paid tribute to Swami Satyarupanand Ji Maharaj at Vivekananda Vidyapeeth in Kota, Raipur today. The Chief Minister paid paying floral tributes to Swami Satyarupanand Ji Maharaj and offered prayers on the occasion at the Ramakrishna Prarthana Mandir located in the premises. Baghel also participated in the Bhandara (community meal) organized at Vivekananda Vidyapeeth.

Khairagarh assembly by-poll schedule announced

Raipur, Mar 12: The Election Commission has announced the by-election date for the Khairagarh assembly seat of Rajnandgaon district. According to the announcement polling will be held on April 12 for the by-election on this seat and counting of votes will be held on April 16. With this announcement by the Election Commission, the election code of conduct has come into force in the state.

According to the announcement of the commission, the last date for nomination will be March 24. Scrutiny of nomination papers will be done on March 25. Nominations can be

withdrawn till March 28. After that the election symbols will be allotted. Voting will be held on April 12. The notification for the by-election will be issued on March 17. Khairagarh assembly seat is vacant after death of Janta Congress Chhattisgarh (J) MLA Devvrat Singh on 4 November 2021 due to heart attack. Devvrat Singh, who was a member of the Khairagarh royal family was in the Congress for a long time and later joined the Janata Congress Chhattisgarh, the party of former CM Ajit Jogi. The party also gave him a ticket and managed to register a victory.

Chhattisgarh sees 32 COVID-19 cases, no death; active tally now 422

Raipur, Mar 12: Chhattisgarh reported 32 COVID-19 cases, taking the state's tally to 11,51,749 on Friday, while the death toll remained unchanged at 14,034, an official said. The positivity rate, or cases detected per 100 tests, was 0.20 per cent, he said. The recovery count stood at 11,37,293 after 18 people

were discharged from hospitals and 98 completed home isolation during the day, leaving the state with 422 active cases, he said. "Jashpur recorded four cases, followed by Raipur three, Raigarh two and Durg one, among other districts. No COVID-19 case was reported in 12 districts. With 16,283 samples exam-

ined during the day, the tally of tests carried out so far went up to 1,72,99,391," he added. Chhattisgarh's coronavirus figures are as follows: Positive cases 11,51,749, new cases 32, death toll 14,034, recovered 11,37,293, active cases 422, today tests 16,283, total tests 1,72,99,391.

International webinar on role of Yoga Commission in Covid-19 infection



Yoga builds self-confidence: Minister Bhediya

Central Chronicle News

Raipur, Mar 12: An international webinar was organized on the topic of role of yoga in Covid-19 infection at Raipur Municipal Corporation Auditorium, today. Detailed information was given about various dimensions of yoga in the

programme organized by the Chhattisgarh Yoga Commission. Social Welfare Minister Anila Bhediya attended the programme as the chief guest. Conveying her best wishes for organizing the programme, she said that programmes related to yoga should be organized at the panchayat level also, so that more and more people can join yoga. 'Yoga boosts confidence in life and enables us to adopt a disciplined lifestyle', she said.

According to her performing yoga in a proper way under the guidance of a skilled instructor will be more beneficial. Yoga has played an important role during Covid-19. Giving information about the ancient yogic system, Rajya Sabha MP Chhaya Verma said that yoga made an important contribution in human life. Mayor of Raipur Municipal Corporation Aizaz Dhebar said that yoga or physical exercise should be performed regularly for at least one hour daily. Yoga boosts inner strength besides facilitating transmission of new energy in the body, he added.

According to Raipur Municipal Corporation Speaker Pramod Dubey people of many countries joined this international webinar today, in which the name of Chhattisgarh is spreading in many

countries. Yoga Commission chairman Gyanesh Sharma said that yoga should be included in daily routine. Yoga boosts immunity, he said. According to him Yoga has attracted the attention of all of us as a shield of protection in the corona pandemic.

Chief guest Bhediya presented a memento and medal to Tikeswar Patel, who performed 'Shirshasan' for one hour. Many speakers gave their lectures on the subject of Yoga on this occasion. Members of the Yoga Commission Ganesh Nath Yogi, Rajesh Nara, Ravindra Singh, Director-in-Charge of Social Welfare Department Pankaj Verma, Secretary of the Yoga Commission ML Pandey, Akhileshwar Tiwari, officers of the department including employees and students were present.

People get to know about govt schemes



At information camps and photo exhibitions

Raipur, Mar 12: Information about government schemes is being made available to the general public through the information camps and photo exhibitions of the Public

Relations Department. The camp was organized on Saturday in village Sakri of Abhanpur block.

Villagers visited the photo exhibition with enthusiasm and got information about government schemes through information camp. Publicity material was also distributed in the camp. Villagers told

that Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel took many decisions in the interests of the general public. The citizens of all sections of the state are getting its benefits.

Information about government schemes was given in the camp. Villagers Bhuneshwar Sahu, Santram Sahu,

Parmeshwar Sahu, Sugandha Sahu, Pyarelal Sai, Tikeswar, who came to Haat Bazar, said that farmers got great relief through Rajiv Gandhi Kisan Nyay Yojana. They said that cattle farmers were also getting encouragement through Godhan Yojana.

Narayan Prasad, Meghnath, Ghanshyam Sahu, Vinod Kumar, Premalal, Yashwant Kumar told that the government's Godhan Nyay scheme gave impetus to the rural economy. Sarpanch of Village Sakri Pushpa Devi Sahu said that Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel launched many schemes for the betterment of women. Deputy Sarpanch Dharmendra Sahu, Panchs Rameshwari Sahu, Santosh Sahu and Padmavati Manju Dhruv and a large number of villagers were present at the camp.

"Yoga is a symbol of universal aspiration for health and well-being. It is health assurance at zero budget."
Prime Minister Narendra Modi

International Day of Yoga, 2022

100 DAYS TO GO

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Agriculture based industries need to be promoted in Chhattisgarh: Choubey

Farmtech Asia International Agriculture exhibition launched

Central Chronicle News

Raipur, Mar 12: Agriculture Minister Ravindra Choubey has said that Chhattisgarh is being recognized as an agro-based developed state and instead of exodus and plight of farmers, discussions are held about the prosperity of the farmers. He said that there is a need to promote agro-based industries in Chhattisgarh to accelerate the development of agriculture sector. He said that after the formation of Chhattisgarh state, the condition of agriculture and farmers has improved a lot and Indira Gandhi Agricultural University has a great contribution in the betterment of farmers. Farmer-friendly agricultural technology, new varieties, agricultural research and its dissemination to the farmers, developed by the Agricultural University, have shown a new path of prosperity to the farmers of the state. Agriculture Minister Choubey said this while



inaugurating the four-day International Farmer's Fair and Agriculture Exhibition organised at the Agricultural University campus here. In the inauguration ceremony, Raipur Rural MLA Mr. Satyanarayan Sharma, Vice President of Farmers Welfare Council, Mahendra Chandrakar, Member of Indira Agricultural University Management Board, Mrs. Valri Chandrakar, Vice Chancellor of Indira Gandhi Agricultural University Dr. Girish Chandel, Director

Agriculture Mr. Yashwant Kumar and Director Horticulture, Mr. Matheswaran. V was also present. Addressing the function, Agriculture Minister, Ravindra Choubey said that under the leadership of the Registrar of the University G.K. Nirmam, Director Research Dr. P.K. Chandrakar, Director Extension Dr. R.K. Bajpai, Dean of Agriculture College, Dr. M.P. Thakur, Dean Student Welfare Dr. G.K. Srivastava and Heads of various departments, professors, scientists and a large number of farmers and students were present.

and Bari. This year a record 98 lakh metric tonnes of paddy has been procured from the farmers by the state government and Rs 20,000 crore been transferred in the accounts of the farmers. He said that events like Farmtech Asia International Agriculture Exhibition provide farmers an opportunity to be aware of latest farming techniques and products. Here farmers also get a chance to get information about the farmers welfare schemes of the state government and take advantage of them. Appreciating the contribution of Indira Gandhi Agricultural University in the development of agriculture in the state, Choubey congratulated the newly appointed Vice Chancellor of the university, Dr. Girish Chandel. On this occasion the Registrar of the University G.K. Nirmam, Director Research Dr. P.K. Chandrakar, Director Extension Dr. R.K. Bajpai, Dean of Agriculture College, Dr. M.P. Thakur, Dean Student Welfare Dr. G.K. Srivastava and Heads of various departments, professors, scientists and a large number of farmers and students were present.

Tourists increased in Jungle Safari as corona infection drops

Guide recruited by the Jungle Safari management so that the tourists do not face any problem and provide them information about wildlife



sand tourists are arriving in Jungle Safari on Saturday and Sunday, while one thousand tourists are reaching Moherenga Nature Safari. Jungle Safari Management said that the number of tourists is increasing day by day after corona infection rate has gone down. In the Asia's largest

man-made jungle safari, tourists can watch wildlife roaming in the open. Along with this, 58 enclosures are also being constructed by the Jungle Safari Management. In which at present the construction work of 40 enclosures has been completed. Wildlife like lion, bear, deer have been kept in the enclosure. Tourists going on safari can easily spot wildlife in the enclosure. A guide has also been recruited by the Jungle Safari management so that the tourists visiting the jungle safari do not face any problem. They

give information about the wildlife. Moherenga Nature Safari, situated at a distance of 40 km from the Raipur, is also witnessing heavy footfall of the tourists. Tourists are arriving in large numbers after the corona infection reduces. In nature safari, 600 to 700 tourists are reaching in a day. Tourists can see the deer roaming in the open, while on the banks of the pond, they can enjoy the nature. It is notable that Nature Safari is spread over 580 hectares. Its range is more than 16 kilometers.

CS issued a circular to the District Collectors and Chief Executive Officers of Zila Panchayats

Raipur, Mar 12: Chief Secretary Mr. Amitabh Jain has issued a circular to all District Collectors and Chief Executive Officer of Zila Panchayats regarding prevention of vector-borne diseases and mosquito control. He has directed to take necessary measures for mosquito control in villages and urban areas with the participation of Gram Panchayats and urban bodies. He has asked to install nets on doors and windows of all government buildings to prevent mosquitoes. It has been stated in the circular that vector-borne dis-

eases like malaria, dengue, and filariasis are spread by mosquitoes. Mosquito numbers are often low from the beginning of summer to the month of June. During this period, their growth can be stopped for the coming months. Besides, the work of control and eradication of vector-borne diseases can also be done. He has directed the urban bodies and Gram Panchayats to take necessary action in this regard. The Chief Secretary has asked to release Gambusia and Guppy fish—which feed on mosquito larvae—in all ponds in the

month of March and April to curb the growth of dengue-breeding mosquitoes. One Gambusia fish can eat up to 300 larvae of mosquito per day. These fishes can be easily obtained by contacting the Fisheries Department. He has also given instructions to make people aware regarding installation of nets for mosquito control in private houses. Besides, he has asked to ensure repair of the lid of the water tanks. The Chief Secretary has directed to ensure arrangements for fogging and indoor-spray by the local bodies in the coming May

and June month to prevent mosquitoes. He has asked to ensure immediate examination of the patients having fever and other symptoms of vector-borne disease. Chief Secretary Mr. Jain has also given instructions for cleaning of drains and streams. He has asked the Collectors and CEOs of Zila Panchayats to review availability and status of use of LLINs mosquito nets already distributed to the people. He has expressed hope that with effective implementation of all these activities, the number of cases of mosquito-borne diseases will reduce this year.

Meeting of the High Power Committee constituted concludes



For the establishment of C-Mart

Central Chronicle News

Raipur, Mar 12: The meeting of the high level committee constituted for the establishment of C-Mart through video conferencing was held under the chairmanship of Chief Secretary Amitabh Jain. In the meeting, extensive dis-

cussions were held on the operation of C-Mart to be established at the district and regional level, sale of various products in C-Mart, branding and other important issues. Principal Secretary, Village Industries Department, Dr. Alok Shukla and Principal Secretary, Forest, Commerce and Industry, Mr. Manoj Pingua also participated in the video conferencing. The Chief

Secretary directed the officers to take all necessary action for the establishment of C-Mart. He gave necessary directions to the Collectors of the districts regarding listing of operators, self-help groups preparing locally produced materials, craftsmen, potters, traditional and cottage industries for the operation of C-Mart to be established in their districts. In the meeting, Dr. Sanjay Shukla, Managing Director of Chhattisgarh Minor Forest Produce Association, shared the business experience of the State Minor Forest Produce Association for the establishment of C-Mart and gave comprehensive information regarding the operation of C-Mart. He said that C-Marts are being opened to make available the products manufactured by women self-help groups, craftsmen, traditional and cottage industries at one place under the schemes run under various departments of the government. This will benefit the local people.

Ch'garh gears up for Asia Art Festival on Apr 1-2



Raipur, Mar 12: This is the high time when people should start treating the creative field as a serious career option. There is a huge demand and supply gap. Artist need a platform where they can showcase the talent and make earnings. In times to come the modern art form will aesthetically win the hearts of many and will rule the career options segment. Chhattisgarh gears up for the first of its kind Asia Art Festival on April 1st and 2nd April at Gaurav Garden. "The biggest challenge to plan Asia Art Festival in Chhattisgarh was to identify a certain creative segment when there wasn't much enterprise in the arts field, and it was really a challenge to bring up a for-commercial creative model for the artists of Chhattisgarh as

well as create a social impact." says Ishan Bhalla, Ambassador of Indian Arts & Director of Asia Art Festival. "Asia Art Festival is an organisation which is committed to the provision of global platform to the artists of India and to mobilize resources through government schemes, direct investments, and collaborations." adds Mr Bhalla. Sharing the secret of previous successful editions of Art Festivals in different cities, he said "In today's world the paradigms are changing. People are finding creative ways of engagement, thus, I believe that being creative is what is the most important quality of an entrepreneur. The creativity and vision of an entrepreneur leads to the invention and discovery of new things." "We have received registration of over 300 artists from Chhattisgarh and our team are working with them to present a re-freshed curatorial approach." "Singers Jassie Gill and Babbal Rai will be performing live at the Asia Art Festival."

Students have immense potential to become entrepreneurs: V-C

CU makes two software for NAAC data capturing and Website of IQAC

Bilaspur, Mar 12: Vice-Chancellor of Guru Ghasidas Vishwavidyalaya (Central University), Professor Alok Kumar Chakrawal inaugurated two software and the website of Internal Quality Assurance Cell. In the program organized on March 7 in the meeting room of the administrative building, the Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Chakrawal launched the website of IQAC along with two software, SSR Data Capturing and AQAR Data Capturing Software associated with NAAC and created by the teachers and students of Department of Computer Science Engineering and Department of Information Technology Engineering under the University's School of Engineering and Technology. In this program organized under the aegis of Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC), the guests were welcomed with bouquets by Dr. Alok



Kushwaha and Dr. Rohit Raja. Vice-Chancellor of the University, Professor AK Chakrawal said that the creation of both these software and website by the students should be seen as entrepreneurship development. These young students have a great combination of technology and skills. It is noteworthy that the students of our University have created these specialized software to meet the arduous challenge of data capturing in SSR and AQAR of Internal Quality Assurance Cell. Our students have immense wealth of ability, courage, skill and knowledge. All these students will prove to be the entrepreneurs of the future only by providing professional form to this immense store of knowledge and technology. The Vice-Chancellor

also emphasized on commercially launching both these softwares in the market. On this occasion, a presentation was made by the students related to the software and the website. IQAC Assistant Director Dr. A.K. Soni conducted the program and at the end of the program vote of thanks was given by Dr. TG Reddy, Assistant Director, IQAC. The Registrar of the University, Prof. Shailendra Kumar, Director IQAC, Prof. AS Ranadive, NAAC Coordinator, Prof. LVKS Bhaskar, Deans of various Schools, Heads of Departments, Criteria Coordinators, and convenor of the Website and Software Development Committee, Dr. Rohit Raja Associate Professor, IT Engineering Department and team of students were present.

Tikeshwar creates world record through 'Sirsasana'



Raipur, Mar 12: Tikeshwar Patel, a third year student of B.Sc. Department of Yoga Science, Shri Rawatpura Sarkar University, Raipur Chhattisgarh in Yoga World Book of Records, program organized by the All India Yoga Federation (AIYF), the world record has been set for being present in the Sirsasana for a maximum time of 1 hour 44 minutes. This success of student Tikeshwar Patel has illuminated the name of Shri Rawatpura Sarkar University not only in our India but in the whole world. More than 150 participants from different countries of the world and different states of India participated in this program

The incredible success of Tikeshwar Patel at the global level has been highly appreciated by the university and it is said that today the name of Shri Rawatpura Sarkar University has been spread to 150 countries of the world. It is the fortune of our university that the university family congratulates him a lot for this achievement and wishes him a bright future. For this historic achievement of University student Tikeshwar Patel, Honorable Pro Chancellor Shri Rawatpura Sarkar University, Raipur, Dr. J.K. Upadhyay, Registrar Dr. Pratap Singh and all the members of the university family extended their congratulations and best wishes...

Gaming platform Quizbee enhancing skills of youth in Ch'garh

Raipur, Mar 12: As the Covid-19 cases increased, usage of the mobile phone has increased simultaneously. This represented a major challenge for teachers all over the world, to educate children and youngsters. Children have always loved playing games online and, with schools closing, has led to increased involvement in online gaming according to the India Mobile Gaming Report (IMGR) 2021, the number of online gamers in India's tier-III cities and towns would increase significantly in 2021. Big states like Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand, Haryana, Rajasthan, and Chhattisgarh itself have witnessed growth in the number of gamers. Following the issue of effect in education rate and



high interest in online gaming, Quizbee, an online educational gaming platform, proposed an effective method of Game-Based Learning (GBL) technique with the intention of engaging youngsters with educational materials in a playful and dynamic way, especially in states like Chhattisgarh, where the youth population dominates with 59.12 percent.

Quizbee is a knowledge & skill-based mobile gaming platform, with multiple paid challenges that vary across different genres like movies, cricket, travel, food, general knowledge & exciting puzzles. Quizbee is different from other chance-based games as in the game of skill, the player invests his time in learning, practicing, and honing a skill. Commenting on educating youth through Game-Based learning, Mr. Abhinav Anand, CTO of Intelligence Game Pvt. Ltd said that "We intend to turn a negative point into a positive one. Using fun and Competitive method to educate the youth is what Quizbee aims to provide. We want to attract youth, especially Gen-Z's interest towards increasing their

knowledge and skills. They will be prepared for the competitive exams as Quizbee is a time-based game application that perfectly captures the cognitive functioning of brain cells, i.e., how quickly your brain can perceive a task and complete it within a set amount of time. As a result, improve their general knowledge skills while also speeding up their brain cells to answer quiz questions." Quizbee is a B2C gaming platform that has created a welcoming, inclusive, and safe environment for friends, family, and students to play and learn together. It is a go-to destination for Quiz and Trivia fans who want to test their knowledge and intelligence with the possibility to win real-time money.

Irrigation area will increase by 3372 Hectares in Raipur, Durg, Bilaspur and Korba

Raipur, Mar 12: The Water Resources Department has given administrative approval of Rs 47.49 crore for various canal development works to increase irrigation facilities in Raipur, Bilaspur and Korba districts. Under the Mahanadi Godavari Chachar project, the Amner Motinala canal which is the main canal of the Dhamdha development block in Durg district will see an expansion from 9.90 km to 24.75 km and other minor canals will be remodeled for which administrative approval of Rs 8.14 crore has been given. Irrigation in an additional 1741 hectares of land will be made possible by this project. Similarly, Patan's Bhilai distributary and its 5 other minor canals falling under Durg district will undergo remodeling and relining for which an administrative approval of 13.61 crores has been granted. Due to this, the farmers will receive irrigation

facilities in an additional 1216 hectares of land. The Water Resource department, Hasdev Kachar of Korba has received an administrative approval of 6.22 crores for the Chirra diversion project. After the completion of this project, irrigation will be made possible in 270 hectares of land, 190 hectares Kharif and 80 hectares of rabi land. The Nagoi(Kotri) diversion project of Korba district under the Podi-Uproda development block has received administrative approval of 3.95 crores. Under this project, irrigation facilities will be provided to 145 hectares of Kharif land. Under the Mahanadi Project of the Water Resources Department, administrative approval of Rs.5.57 crore has also been given for the repair of the Turi Diversion Scheme of Narharpur development block of Kanker district.

Woman trying to steal baby arrested

From district hospital; handed over to police in Kotwali Thana

Surajpur, Mar 12:

A case of stealing of a newly born child of a couple has come to fore from District Hospital and it is on getting information about the child being lifted, the family members and hospital management were able to nab the woman running away with the child and handed her over to Kotwali Police Thana.

As per information, a newly born child was born to Phulkunwar in Parsapara of district Hospital on Thursday. It is right since then the accused woman Sunita Pando tried to steal the baby and with such intentions she increased her rapport with family member and finding an opportunity moment on



Thursday, saying that the doctor is calling the baby, she took away the baby child and tried to escape.

With this news becoming viral, there was hue & cry about a baby being stolen from the Hospital and immediately the hospital management and parents of the baby be-

came active and were able to nab the accused woman running away with the baby near Mahgaon Chowk and took her to Kotwali Thana. The Police is investigating into the case. Accused woman was facing insults of being mother-less child:

In this entire case, the woman Sunita Pando is reported to be from Gram Karkoti and is a motherless child, facing charges that she cannot conceive. So since then she was targeting on Phulkunwar's daughter and finding a right moment, she ran away with the child from the district hospital and had even kept a milk bottle ready with her.

Since the baby was girl, she was stolen:

The accused woman informed that since she was not able to conceive, she decided to steal the baby girl of 'Phulkunwar', as she will not have to part with her property after her daughter's marriage and she still regrets being unable to become a biological mother of a child.

Women, girls given information about female issues

In a prog 'Abhivyakti' awareness prog

Gourela, Pendra, Marwahi, Mar 12: On third day of the state-level 'Abhivyakti Mahila Jagrookta week' programme, a programme was organised under guidance of Archana Jha on occasion of International Women's Day in Gram Andhiyar Khoh under Gourela thana here on March 10.

In this programme, women's cell in-Charge inspector Lata Choure gave information to women present about 'tonhi' prevention compensation to victim; human trafficking; cyber security; basic right to women under laws; POCSO Act and others in a



simple language. Along with this they were also informed about the security App by the state government for women and children and about the use of this App.

In this programme, Bhawana Arthor; Sushma Kumar; Shashibala Lal, Anamika Mandal presented a drama and song based upon de-addiction and gave counselling to stu-

dents present for further education.

The Dy. Director Amita Shiksha Niketan School, Gourela, Moni Chattopadhyay, teacher Ranu Namdeo, Pratibha Jain, Archana, Jailesh Singh, Vidya Rathore and school students through a drama gave information about 'child marriage', female foeticide, dowry, misbehaviour and other social

evils wide-spread in the society. They were also informed about the bad-touch and 'good-touch'.

It is notable here that till March 14, information about 'tonhi' atrocities act, dowry prohibition act; child marriage; healthy diet; victim's compensation scheme; domestic violence and will be given to people in different villages of the District.

VOCAL FOR LOCAL

Anuppur District Administration signs MoU with CIMAP

For conservation, marketing and production of medicinal and aromatic flowers by Tribal University.

Amarkantakh, Mar 12:

The university's 13 faculties and 35 subject teachers are fully committed to realizing the concept of 'Vocal for Local' by providing high quality education as well as doing research to solve local and regional problems. A three-stage MoU has been signed by the University on Saturday. In which CIMAP and Anuppur district administration jointly associated with the university, on this occasion, the Vice Chancellor of the university, Professor

Shriprakash Mani Tripathi, said in his speech that 'the aim of the university is to upgrade the tribal society and to upgrade the skill development of the tribal society and make it global. While establishing them on the platform, it is playing an important role in making them self-reliant. At the same time, it is paving the way to become the custodian and conductor of the glorious culture and tradition of the nation. This MoU will prove to be effective for the conservation, marketing and production of medicinal and aromatic flowers here. This MoU is an important step in this direction, medicines are helpful in human protection, so human should also protect medicines. Marketing and production of forest medicines



through this MoU will enable farmers and join the mainstream of development. The need today is to link traditional knowledge with modern knowledge.

Signing this MoU, Collector of Anuppur district, Ms. Sonia Meena described this MoU as a milestone. Aromatic and medicinal plants will be saved. They will be mar-

keted, agriculture will be done by modern method and the farmers here will join the main stream of development by producing medicinal plants, this area is known as Biosphere Reserve, which has various types of medicines and fragrant flowers, whose identification and protection is necessary. I am sure that this MoU will work in this di-

rection. On this occasion, Dr. Sanjay Kumar, Director, CIMAP, while signing this MoU said that "Today is a day of utmost pride, we have signed such MoUs many times but this three level MoU is wonderful, it not only helps The income of the farmers will increase, but the fragrant flowers and medicines will be marketed at the national and international level. It is a matter of pride for all the three institutions to sign this MoU. The MoU was signed on behalf of the University by the Registrar Shri P.Sulvenathan and Dean Academics Prof. Alok Shrotriya presented the development journey of the university in front of everyone and said that this MoU is unique in itself, it will make it easier

to preserve and market medicinal and aromatic flowers. The University's Department of Botany, Department of Biotechnology, Department of Tribal Studies, Department of Anthropology and Sociology, Innovation Club, Incubation Center will all work for the botanical world and will work to connect the farmers of the area with the basic stream, in which medicinal and fragrant flowers will be the main. The program was conducted by Dr. Ravindra Shukla and thanked Prof. Posted by Vijay Pramanik. On this occasion Professor Bhuminath Tripathi, Professor Manisha Sharma, Professor M.T.V. Nagaraju, Professor Murthy, Professor Poonam Sharma etc.

BJPians celebrate party's victory

Busting fire-crackers and distributing sweets



Dhamdha, Mar 12:

On historic win by BJP in four out of the five states in VS polls, the BJP Dhamdha Mandal celebrated the same by busting fire-crackers and distributing sweets among party workers and leaders. On this occasion the workers raised slogans 'Jai Jai Shri Ram', 'Narendra Modi Jindabad', 'Yogi Adityanath Jindabad' and made a small detour to the city.

On this occasion BJP former Mandal President Naresh Sahu, Nagar Panchayat corporator and former BJYM president Aruni Dani, BJP gen. secy. Harsh Sahu, V-P Deepak Chouhan, Pradeep Tamrakar, Montu Gupta, General secy. Dinshan Sinha, Secretary Tukesh Sonwani, V-P Tejeshwar Janghel, Media in-Charge Aditya Tamrakar, social media in-charge Jitendra Sahu, Yashwant Sonkar and others were present.

Employees express happiness over restoration of old pension scheme



Gourela-Pendra-Marwahi, Mar 12: A wave of happiness spread among the employees due to the restoration of the old pension scheme in the budget announcement by Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel. Employees gathered at the block headquarters, danced and celebrated by applying Rang Gual. The employees have expressed their grati-

tude towards Bhupesh Sarkar. Here it needs a mention that Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel presented the budget in the Chhattisgarh Legislative Assembly on Wednesday, in which he announced to restore the old pension scheme, fulfilling the biggest demand of all the NPS employees officers of the state. Teachers Congress District

President Surendra Singh Thakur described it as a historic decision taken in the interest of the employees. During this, employee leader Satya Narayan Jaiswal, District President of Contributory Pension Employees Welfare Association Piyush Gupta, District Convenor of Sangharsh Morcha Mukesh Kori, Durga Gupta, Mohan Mishra,

Tarun Namdev, Dinesh Rathore, Om Prakash Sonwani, Rashmi Namdev, Ajay Chaudhary and many others were present.

Responding to the restoration of the old pension scheme, employee leader Satya Narayan Jaiswal said that with this decision of Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel, the future of the employees of the state will be secured as well as the treasury of the government will be filled. He said that now billions of rupees deposited in the NSDL account will come to the state government's treasury, due to which development work will be done at a faster pace in the state. He said that all the NPS staff officers of the state are grateful to Bhupesh Sarkar.

CRPF 217th Battalion organized Civic Action Prog

While the Naxalites created a ruckus in broad daylight

Konta, Mar 12:

Naxalites have created an orgy in broad daylight in Konta block of Sukma district, a day earlier in Kistaram police station area, where a highway vehicle engaged in road construction work was set on fire by the Naxalites. On the other hand, according to the directions of Ashok Kumar, Commandant 217th Battalion of CRPF, on March 11, a civic action programme was organized for poor villagers and school children of intense Naxal affected area under police station-Kistaram in village Dharmapenta of Sukma district.

Under the Civic Action Programme, solar light, radio, mosquito net, saree, lungi, slippers, volleyball, volley ball net, cricket bat, cricket ball



and jeans and T-shirts were distributed to the boys and girls.

Along with this, the villagers were treated by organizing medical camps and free medicines were also distributed to the needy. In this medical camp, Dr. M. Genna Pratyusha (Medical Officer 217th Bt.) provided medical treatment to 5 pregnant women and

gave proper consultation.

On this auspicious occasion, Saroj Kumar (Second Commanding Officer, Operations) made the villagers aware against the exploitation, atrocities and hollow ideology of the Maoists and appealed to join the mainstream. The villagers of Dharmapenta and nearby villages were also assured that 217th Battalion is al-

ways ready in the service of you people.

Company Commander Ajit Kumar Choudhary (Assistant Commandant), Dr. M. Genna Pratyusha (Medical Officer, 217 Bt.), Dr. Siddheshwar Kalyan P. (Medical Officer, 217 Bt.), including subordinate officers and jawans, as well as dignitaries of Dharmapenta village were also present.

Govt not paying attention towards SCY: Janghel

Khairagarh, Mar 12:

Former MLA and ex-Parliamentary Secretary Komal Janghel has charged the state government of not paying attention towards 'Saraswati Cycle Yojana' (SCY).

Janghel informed that the earlier government has introduced SCY so as to ensure that students do not face problems in going to School, but the Congress government in the state is carrying out distribution of cycles to girl students at the end of the academic session.

Komal Janghel informed that this SCY was launched by former CM Dr Raman Singh in the state, so as to provide facility of conveyance to girl students going from villages to school

for studies. This scheme was launched in 2004-5 and under this the girl students were distributed cycles in the beginning of the session itself. But under Congress rule in the state, these cycles are being distributed at the end of the academic session and due to which the girl students are unable to draw benefit from the same.

Set aside this the cycles to be distributed in 2021-22 have not reached the Schools premises and Janghel termed it as highly unfortunate.

This scheme was launched with an objective to promote girl education and to which the state government has made it a subject of ridicule and is least bothered about the future and education of girls, he alleged.

CM's budget will fulfill dreams of people: Bhuneshwar

Hails the budget presented by CM in VS

Khairagarh, Mar 12:

Terming the budget presented by the Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel as historic budget, MLA Dongargarh and President SC Development Authority Bhuneshwar Baghel has termed as a budget, as per dreams of people of Chhattisgarh.

Baghel said that there is vision in the budget right from village to urban areas and there is provision of government schemes for general public, officers, employees, farmers, labourers, youth, women and all sections of the socie-

ty. Bhuneshwar said that this budget has brought relief to all sections of the society and in this age-old demand of the officers and employees viz. Old Pension Scheme has been fulfilled and this will provide relief to lakhs of families. In the same way the MLA's fund has been increased from Rs 2 to Rs 4 crore. So now there will be development in all the Vidhan Sabha areas.

The very declaration of not opening mining in the villages without permission of Gram Panchayat and increasing the honorarium of

the Sarpanchs from Rs 2000 per month to Rs 4000 per month, will strengthen the Panchayati Raj system.

Baghel in the budget had informed that to promote police personnel and Asst. constables and to provide them benefit of the salary and wages, a new cadre in the name of District Task Force has been declared and it is an important step towards them. Similarly there is provision of Rs 50 cr under 'Mor Jameen, mor Makan' and 'Mor Makan, mor 'Chinhari' programme and this will provide relief to many

without shelter. The very declaration to reduce the offset rates of properties in the urban areas at 30% less than that of Collector's guideline and providing tap-water connection to all houses under 'Amrut Mission 2.0' with a provision of Rs 200 crore is also a pro-people decision. Similarly many other important decisions have been taken in favour of District, Janpad Panchayats by increasing their honorarium and other such important decisions would give pace to development work and create healthier atmosphere.

BJP leader stage protest on issuing of challan

For failing to have any vehicle documents

Dongargarh, Mar 12: A senior BJP leader in protest against illegal recovery in Gram Mohalla during daily searching in chowks-triangle expressed resentment over a similar issue with him by a jawan on Thursday and staged dharna in the night.

Mohara Chowki Thana in-Charge Dinesh Yadav is of the opinion that Mr Kushwah is staging dharna on charges of illegal recovery in the name of traffic challan and clarified that at the time of checking, Mr. Kushwah was not owing any vehicle related documents and therefore the challan was cut.



During this he entered into controversy with the police jawan at the chowk and trying to show his political hold, reportedly misbehaved with him. What all the cases were registered in this drive, would be sorted out in the 'Lok Adalat' to be held on March 12.

BRIEF

Portal

■ Jammu: The Jammu and Kashmir administration launched an online portal for granting permission for change of land use in master plan areas in the union territory. In exercise of powers conferred by the Jammu and Kashmir Development Act, the housing and urban development department launched the portal for granting permission under the scheme for levy of charges for use of land as permitted in the master plan areas.

Nod

■ Agartala: The state cabinet approved a proposal for setting up National Law University Tripura (NLUT), which will be self-sustained in five years after its inception. The chief justice of the High Court of Tripura will be the chancellor of the proposed varsity. Information and Cultural Affairs Minister Sushanta Chowdhury said the finance department has earmarked Rs 50 crore for establishment of the proposed NLUT and incurring all expenditure.

Alliance

■ Ranchi: AJSU Party and NCP along with two independent legislators forged an alliance, Jharkhand Loktantrik Morcha (JLM) stating that its purpose at present is to highlight issues faced by the tribal state. AJSU Party chief Sudesh Mahto and party MLA Lamodar Mahto, state NCP president Kamlesh Singh and its two MLAs Saryu Roy and Amit Yadav floated the new outfit.

Gang

■ New Delhi: Five members of a gang who had robbed Rs 91 lakh from cash collection agents here have been arrested from Punjab. They are members of the notorious Sonu Daryapur gang. Police said a case was registered at the DBG Road Police Station on the statement of an agent, who said that he along with his colleague were returning after collecting the cash from Kucha Ghassi Ram in Chandni Chowk.

Suicide

■ Kota: A 39-year-old engineer working for the Chhabra Thermal Power Plant in Rajasthan's Baran district near here was found hanging in his hostel room in the plant premises. A native of Begusarai in Bihar, Mohammad Hammad Husain is suspected to have died by suicide as he was upset over his transfer and taking medicines to fight depression, police said.

Arrested

■ New Delhi: Two men wanted in a double murder case in Gurugram were arrested from Dwarka here. Two pistols and eight live cartridges were also seized from them. Vikash Kant (21) and Hoshiyar (29), sharpshooters belonging to a group of gangsters Kala Jatheri, Lawrence Bishnoi and Naresh Sethi, were arrested.

Jharkhand to ensure dedicated beds for heatstroke patients



Ranchi, Mar 12 (PTI):

In view of the rising mercury, the Jharkhand health department has directed all districts to ensure dedicated beds for heatstroke patients in hospitals and follow standard treatment protocol for rapid assessment of suspected heat-related illness.

For the past one week, the maximum temperature has been on rise across Jharkhand. Capital Ranchi has witnessed a rise of about two degree Celsius in maximum temperature in past one week. Ranchi's maximum was recorded at 31.4 degrees Celsius, which

was at 29.6 degrees Celsius on March 6. Officer in-charge of Ranchi Meteorological Centre, Abhishek Anand, told PTI that the weather would remain dry this week. "Maximum temperature would now increase gradually. It may be observed normal to above normal over most parts of the state, which may fall in the range of 32 to 37 degree Celsius, till March 24," he said. In a detailed guideline for prevention and treatment of heat-related diseases, the health department said that daily reports by health institutions of all the districts under heat radiation ill-

ness (HRI) surveillance are important so that health complications caused by heatwave can be identified and treated in time, an official release said. Civil surgeons of all the districts have been asked to form rapid response teams at district and block level for emergency calls and make adequate arrangements for staff, bed, oral rehydration solution (ORS), essential medicine and equipment at district and community health centres.

Besides, arrangements should be made for outreach clinics for vulnerable population, the release said. According to experts, the main cause of heatstroke is the loss of water and minerals, mainly salt in the body due to prolonged exposure to strong sunlight and heat.

The civil surgeons have also been asked to ensure adequate arrangements for the treatment of children, old people, pregnant women and seriously ill persons suffering from extreme heat.

German ambassador slams Russia



German Ambassador to India Walter J Lindner (L) at Jaipur Literature Festival.

Jaipur, Mar 12 (PTI):

India would make alliances according to its history and neighbourhood, but as a general principle allowing Russian President Vladimir Putin to do what he is doing in Ukraine is "dangerous" for all, German Ambassador to India Walter J Lindner has said. He also called out the United Nations for its "outdated" Security Council structure and said India, the voice of 1.3 billion people, should be there as a permanent member. "Every country has its own right and its own reasons to make a

decision, whether abstention, vote in favour or against, no problem with this," Lindner told PTI at the sidelines of the 15th edition of Jaipur Literature Festival (JLF).

"India of course would make their own alliances according to their history and neighbourhood, we are just saying as a general principle it would be dangerous to allow Putin what he is doing."

India has abstained during voting on two resolutions on Ukraine in the 15-nation UN Security Council and one in the 193-member UN General Assembly.

Water quality of two Ganga stretches of bathing standard now

■ Passing via Bihar, Uttarakhand improved

New Delhi, Mar 12 (PTI):

The water quality of two stretches of the Ganga passing through Bihar and Uttarakhand, which were polluted earlier, has now improved and is of bathing standard with the biological oxygen demand (BOD), which ascertains the health of a river, found to be in check, according to official data. The BOD is an important parameter for assessing water quality. It deals with the amount of oxygen consumption by biological organisms. The lower the value, the better the water quality.

The water quality of the Ganga is assessed in accordance with the primary water quality standard for outdoor bathing, which is when the BOD is less than 3 mg per litre, along with other factors.

According to the data shared with PTI of the Ganga river water quality



Artisans start preparations for the annual handicrafts fair at Surajkund, in Faridabad, Saturday.



River Ganga in Haridwar.

comparison between 2015 and 2021, the BOD level of the river flowing through Uttarakhand (Haridwar to Sultanpur) and Bihar (Buxar to Bhagalpur) is below 3 mg per litre, which falls in the unpolluted category. Even in the other two stretches of the Ganga flowing in Uttar Pradesh (Kannauj to Varanasi) and West Bengal (Triveni to Diamond Harbour), the BOD level is in the lowest of the pollution category — category-5 (3-6 mg per litre), National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG)

Director General G Asok Kumar said. According to official data, there was an improvement in 2021 in comparison to 2015, when the BOD of the Ganga flowing through Bihar was in category-2 (7.8-27 mg per litre) and that of the stretch of the river flowing through Uttar Pradesh was in category 3 (3.8-16.9 mg per litre).

However, not much change was seen in the BOD level of the river flowing through West Bengal between 2015 and 2021.

Preventing participation in HLL bidding against coop federalism

■ Kerala tells Centre

Thiruvananthapuram, Mar 12 (PTI): Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan has said that "preventing" the state from participating in the open bidding of the city-headquartered Hindustan Lifecare Ltd, a central PSU, which is proposed to be disinvested by the Centre was against cooperative federalism.

Preventing a state government from participating in an open bidding process would not be in accordance with the principles of cooperative federalism and the state government has the competence accorded to it by the Constitution to take a decision on its own in such matters, the CM said in a letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

In his brief letter, Vijayan pointed out that he had already sent a letter in June, 2017 requesting the Centre not to proceed with the privatisation of HLL. Despite this, when the union government had decided to go ahead with the disinvestment, the state government expressed its interest to participate in the open bidding, he noted. Presently, the Department of Investment and



Pinarayi Vijayan

Public Asset Management has communicated to the state government that there is scope for government/ government PSEs to participate in the strategic disinvestment process in pursuance of the Preliminary Information Memorandum and Expression of Interest. As per the PIM and global invitation for the submission of Expression of Interest for the strategic disinvestment of HLL, CPSEs or Central Government owned Cooperative Societies are the only ones specified as being not eligible to participate in the proposed transaction, he said. "It is not specified anywhere that the state government/ state PSUs are not eligible to participate in the bidding process of HLL," Vijayan pointed out.

RS to get 19 hours of additional time in Budget session



New Delhi, Mar 12 (PTI):

With the Budget session of Parliament resuming on Monday, the Rajya Sabha will get 19 hours of additional time for business over the earlier schedule, officials said on Saturday.

The House will sit from 11 am till 6 pm with a one-hour lunch break during the 19 scheduled sittings, while it sat from 10 am till 3 pm during the first part of the session.

With this increase in the sitting time of one hour per sitting, the Upper House will get 64 hours and 30 minutes for transacting the government's legislative business and taking up the issues of public importance during the second part of the session, according to an official

statement.

The House will have four days for Private Members' Business and the Question Hour will continue to be for an hour, while the Zero Hour, which was curtailed to half-an-hour during the first part of the session, will now be for an hour per sitting, the Rajya Sabha officials said.

The Budget session resumes after a 30-day recess during which the Department Related Parliamentary Standing Committees (DRSCs) examined the Demands for Grants of various ministries and departments.

Chairman M Venkaiah Naidu is likely to give an account of the working of the eight DRSCs of the Rajya Sabha during the recess in the House on Monday.

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BRIEF

Released

Montreal: Saudi Arabian blogger and activist Raif Badawi, whose conviction caused widespread international outrage, was released after a decade in prison for criticizing the country's conservative religious establishment, his Quebec based wife confirmed. Ensaf Haidar, who lives with the couple's three children in the city of Sherbrooke, tweeted that the 2015 winner of Europe's Sakharov human rights award is free from prison.

Overdose

Orlando: The US Military Academy said that cadets from that institution were involved in a situation in which six people overdosed on fentanyl-laced cocaine at a South Florida vacation home during Spring Break. Two of the six were in critical condition, rescue and emergency officials said. The New York academy's public affairs office released a statement saying its officials are aware of the situation involving West Point cadets.

Crackdown

Moscow: Russian regulators said that internet users will be blocked from accessing Instagram because it's being used to call for violence against Russian soldiers, in Moscow's latest move to tighten up access to foreign social platforms. The communications and media regulator, Roskomnadzor, said in a statement that it's restricting national access to Instagram because platform is spreading calls to commit violent acts against Russia.

Clashes

Cairo: At least 19 people have been killed in renewed tribal clashes in Sudan's volatile west Darfur region in the past 24 hours, a medical group said. Violence between Arabs and non-Arabs in the same area of Jebel Moon also killed at least 16 people earlier this week. The Sudan Doctors Committee of West Darfur called on local authorities to protect civilians in the area from attack.

Detects

Brasilia: Detected deforestation in the Brazilian Amazon reached a record high for the month of February following a similar record the prior month. Satellite alerts of deforestation in February corresponded to 199 square kilometers (77 square miles), the highest indicator for that month in seven years of record-keeping and 62% more than in the same month in 2021, according to data from Brazilian space agency's monitoring system.

Reporting

Washington: Companies critical to US national interests will now have to report when they're hacked or they pay ransomware, according to new rules approved by Congress. The rules are part of a broader effort by the Biden administration and Congress to shore up the nation's cyberdefenses after a series of high-profile digital espionage campaigns and disruptive ransomware attacks.

Concern grows over traffickers targeting Ukrainian refugees

Siret, Mar 12 (API):

One man was detained in Poland suspected of raping a 19-year-old refugee he'd lured with offers of shelter after she fled war-torn Ukraine. Another was overheard promising work and a room to a 16-year-old girl before authorities intervened.

Another case inside a refugee camp at Poland's Medyka border, raised suspicions when a man was offering help only to women and children. When questioned by police, he changed his story.

As millions of women and children flee across Ukraine's borders in the face of Russian aggression,



A volunteer at the international humanitarian group Save the Children camp at Ukrainian border, in Siret, Romania.

concerns are growing over how to protect the most vulnerable refugees from being targeted by human traffickers or becoming victims of other forms of exploitation. Obviously all the refugees are women and

children, said Joung-ah Ghedini-Williams, the UNHCR's head of global communications, who has visited borders in Romania, Poland and Moldova.

You have to worry about any potential risks for trafficking but also exploitation, and sexual exploitation and abuse. These are the kinds of situations that people like traffickers look to take advantage of, she said. The UN refugee agency says more than 2.5 million people, including more than a million children, have already fled war-torn Ukraine in what has become an unprecedented humanitarian crisis in Europe and its fastest exodus since World War II.

US will continue to support India with equipment along LAC

Washington, Mar 12 (PTI):

The US will continue to support India with equipment and other things it needs along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) with China, a top American admiral has told lawmakers, asserting that Washington and New Delhi share a "tremendous partnership".

Testifying before the Senate Armed Services Committee on Military Posture in the Indo-Pacific Region' this week, Admiral John Aquilino, Commander of US Indo-Pacific Command, said that the military-to-military relationship between the two countries is proba-



John Aquilino

bly at its highest point. He was responding to a question from Senator Gary Peters.

My question for you, Admiral, is can you speak to the relationship you have with our Indian counterparts and what more can we do to

strengthen our security relationship between our two countries? Peters asked. Senator, to start, I have no concerns. Our partners in India are tremendous partners, and the military-to-military relationship is probably at its highest point. We continue to do more together. Admiral Aquilino said in response. But when you talk about tremendous partnership, it's there. What more can we do? Continue the information sharing, continue to support them with the equipment they need upon the Line of Actual Control, and continue to partner and operate together throughout the region.

Student leader becomes Chile's youngest president



Chile's new President Gabriel Boric (L) and his Interior Minister Izkia Siches upon their arrival at La Moneda Palace in Santiago.

Santiago, Mar 12 (API):

Left-leaning former student leader Gabriel Boric was sworn in as Chile's new president, vowing to oversee a political and economic renovation of a nation shaken by repeated massive protests over inequality in

recent years despite a relatively vibrant economy. At 36, Boric is the youngest president in the history of the South American nation one who was only 4 years old when democracy returned following a 17-year military dictatorship that both bloodied and set the groundwork

for modern Chile. Boric has vowed that his young, inclusive government will attack nagging poverty and inequality that he said are the unacceptable underbelly of a free market model imposed decades ago by Gen. Augusto Pinochet, who ruled from 1973 to 1990.

His four-year term begins at a moment when a constituent assembly is drawing up a new constitution for the country to replace one adopted under Pinochet. The Socialist Party leader of the Senate, Ivano Elizalde, draped the presidential sash over Boric's shoulders during the ceremony in the legislative chambers in the port city of Valparaiso. Soon afterward, Boric swore in the leader of what he has called a "feminist" cabinet which includes 14 women and 10 men.

Court orders arrest of ex-El Salvador President Cristiani

San Salvador, Mar 12 (API):

A court in El Salvador ordered the capture of former President Alfredo Cristiani in relation to the 1989 massacre of six Jesuit priests and two others by soldiers. Prosecutors allege that Cristiani knew of the military's plan to eliminate the priests and did nothing to stop them. In a statement released by Cristiani's daughter, the former leader denied the allegations.

The truth is I never knew of the plans they had to commit those killings, Cristiani said. They never informed me nor asked for my authorisation because they knew that I would never have authorized that that Father (Ignacio) Ellacur a or his brothers were harmed.

Cristiani and a former lawmaker, Rodolfo Parker, had been summoned to court Tuesday, but did not appear.

There is nothing left but to decree the detention against those persons because they did not appear in court and did not send lawyers, the court's resolution said. Cristiani left El Salvador in June 2021 after appearing before a special congressional panel investigating overpayments to former government officials.

he is still there. El Salvador's Attorney General's Office has accused Cristiani, Parker and a number of former high-ranking military officers of being behind the murders.

SOUTH EAST CENTRAL RAILWAY TENDER NOTICE FOR ANNUAL MAINTENANCE WORK. Sr.No. (1) E-Tender No.: SrDEE-G-R-OTP-21-22-35. Date: 10.03.2022. Work: Annual Maintenance Contract for UPS/Inverters of Raipur Division for a period of Two years. Tender Value: Rs. 44,20,811.00/-, EMD: Rs. 88,500.00/-, Submission of Tender: upto 11.45 hours on 11.04.2022.

'Address matters on bio weapons convention through cooperation'

Alleged network of 30 bio labs in Ukraine

United Nations, Mar 12 (PTI):

India has told the UN Security Council that any matters relating to obligations under the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention should be addressed through consultation and cooperation between the parties concerned, as the top organ of the world body discussed the issue of alleged biological laboratories in Ukraine. The Russian request for the Security Council meeting followed a US rejection of Russian accusations that Ukraine is operating chemical and biological labs with American support. We



TS Tirumurti

have repeatedly expressed serious concern over the ongoing situation in Ukraine, India's Permanent Representative to the UN Ambassador TS Tirumurti said as Russia called for a Security Council meeting on the issue of biological laboratories in Ukraine.

Speaking at the UN Security Council briefing on Ukraine: Reports of

Biological Programmes, he said India has noted the recent statements by member states and wider information regarding biological activities relating to Ukraine. In this context, we would like to underline the importance attached by India to the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC) as a key global and non-discriminatory disarmament Convention, prohibiting an entire category of weapons of mass destruction, he said.

Tirumurti stressed that it is important to ensure full and effective implementation of the BTWC in letter and spirit. We also believe that any matters relating to obligations under the BTWC should be addressed as

per the provisions of the Convention, and through consultation and cooperation between the parties concerned, he said.

Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs Rosemary DiCarlo told the Council that Russian armed forces are pursuing their offensive operations and laying siege to several cities in the south, east and north of the country.

She said the situation is particularly alarming in Mariupol, Kharkiv, Sumy and Chernihiv, where there is the shelling of residential areas and civilian infrastructure, resulting in an increasing number of civilians killed and injured. "The utter devastation being visited on these cities is horrific.

Clouds over Merkel's legacy as Russian invasion lays flaws bare

Berlin, Mar 12 (AFP):

Up to the final hours before Russia began its invasion of Ukraine, former chancellor Angela Merkel had been touted as the person favoured by Germans to try to talk President Vladimir Putin out of the conflict.

But as Russian bombs fell on Ukrainian cities, a shadow has fallen on Merkel's 16 years in office, with some observers now questioning if her detente policies with Putin had in fact left Germany, and Europe, vulnerable.

Once hailed as the leader of the free world, the veteran centre-right leader has been accused by some of increasing Europe's reliance on Russian energy and neglecting Germany's defence in what appeared to be a devastating miscalculation of Putin's ambitions.

Merkel's push for diplo-

macy and bids to bind regimes to treaties and business contracts now look like "an error", conservative daily Die Welt, long critical of Merkel, charged.

"What Germany and Europe has experienced over the last days is nothing short of a reversal of Merkel's policies of guaranteeing peace and freedom through treaties with despots," it wrote.

Over the last decade, Germany's energy reliance on Russia rose from 36 percent of its total gas imports in 2014 to 55 percent currently, with the deal for the controversial Nord Stream 2 signed after the Kremlin's annexation of Crimea from Ukraine.

That has left Germany nearly helpless to follow allies like the United States and impose an oil and gas embargo against Russia.

And Germany's de-

fence profile had been blunted by successive years of under-investment. That has drawn the ire of the United States and allies which have repeatedly pressed Europe's biggest economy to meet the NATO defence spending target of 2 percent of national output.

One of Merkel's closest aides and former defence minister, Annegret Kramp-Karrenbauer, has

condemned Germany's "historical failure" to bolster its military over the years. "After Georgia, Crimea, and Donbas, we have not prepared anything that would have really deterred Putin," she tweeted, referring to incursions carried out by Russia while Merkel was in power. Merkel took power in 2005 after beating Social Democrat Gerhard Schroeder at the polls.

कार्यालय कार्यपालन अभियंता, लोक स्वास्थ्य यांत्रिकी विभाग छण्ड गौरला-पेण्डू-मरवाही जिला - गौरला-पेण्डू-मरवाही (छ.ग.) Email id: eegpm-phe@cg.gov.in. निविदा निरस्तकरण. इस कार्यालय द्वारा आमंत्रित ऑनलाईन निविदा अपरिहार्य कारणों उक्त निविदा को निरस्त किया जाता है।

कार्यालय, कार्यपालन अभियंता, ग्रामीण यांत्रिकी सेवा, रायपुर संभाग-रायपुर (छ.ग.) आनलाईन प्रथम बार निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना क्रमांक - 371. क्रमांक 596/निविदा/ग्रा.यां.सेवा/2021-22 रायपुर, दिनांक 07/03/2022. छत्तीसगढ़ के राज्यपाल की ओर से एकीकृत पंजीयन प्रणाली के अंतर्गत (लोक निर्माण विभाग में) "द" एवं उच्च श्रेणी में पंजीकृत ठेकेदारों से प्रथम- "अ" पर दर्शित विधिल कार्य हेतु निविदा दर प्राप्त करने आनलाईन ई-निविदा दिनांक 23/03/2022 तक आमंत्रित की जाती है :-



CENTRAL Chronicle

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Missile misfire

India accidentally fired an unidentified missile into Pakistan. The incident was widely reported by unofficial channels but confirmed, with Ministry of Defence attributing the cause to a 'technical malfunction.' This was clearly a very serious incident and potentially one that could have triggered a military response from Pakistan, had it been misconstrued as an attack. Both countries possess nuclear arsenals, although the missile involved appears to not have been nuclear-capable and reportedly had no warhead of any kind fitted. Mishaps and misfirings with missiles have a long history. The best way for preventing missile mishaps is better training and safeguards. The fallen missile unless fully destroyed by impact and even if it is so wrecked, some of its more interesting parts would be recoverable, is a boon to the Pakistan and Chinese militaries. Ministry of Defense's statement about the incident, which took place on March 9, stated that the accidental firing took place during 'routine maintenance' and that an inquiry has now been launched to determine what went wrong. This is serious lapse in management of missiles and responsible personnel may face court martial. In 2016, Hsiung Feng III missile was accidentally launched from a Taiwan navy vessel from waters off Kaohsiung towards Penghu. The missile hit a fishing boat, killing one person and injuring three. Harpoon Missile Misfire Incident, in Danish dubbed 'Hovsa-Missilet' was an unintentional discharge of a live harpoon missile by Danish frigate HDMS Peder Skram during a training manoeuvre in the Kattegat on 6 September 1982. The missile travelled 34 kilometres at low altitude, severing several power lines before eventually striking a group of trees and exploding. Three US Air Force airmen were stripped of their nuclear certifications after a "mishap" caused approximately USD 1.8 million in damage to an intercontinental ballistic missile in 2014.

An unexploded subsonic Tomahawk land attack cruise missile fired from a US submarine in the Arabian Sea and on its way to a target in Afghanistan dropped down instead southwest of Quetta in August 1998. Pakistan army handed over to the Chinese. There have been similar instances of missile misfirings in Russia. The missile in question was not identified by India but the Pakistani Ministry of Defence described it as an 'unarmed supersonic missile,' suggesting that it may have been an example of the BrahMos, a ramjet-powered weapon. Jointly developed by India and Russia, the BrahMos has a range of up to 310 miles and can be fitted with a high-explosive or a submunitions warhead, there have been rumours of a potential nuclear-armed variant but there is no evidence that such a version is currently in service. It's unclear if the missile had been undergoing routine maintenance or whether it was being worked on as part of some kind of military exercise. It's notable that India and Pakistan have an agreement in place to notify each other ahead of flight tests of ballistic missiles and major exercises. With this in mind, it's possible that authorities in Pakistan had been forewarned that drills were taking place and possibly even that they involved this particular type of missile. Regardless, the Pakistan Air Force said it was able to track the missile's flight path from its 'point of origin near Sirsa in India. Pakistan claims that the missile was headed to the Mahajan Field Firing range in Rajasthan but veered westwards, entering Pakistani airspace, after what their authorities described as a 'sudden manoeuvre.' Based on timings provided by Pakistan, the missile was airborne for just seven minutes before impacting near Mian Channu. For use against ground targets, the BrahMos has a combined inertial navigation system (INS) and GPS guidance, with a radar seeker provided for the terminal phase.

Challenge for Mann

In his first directions to Aam Aadmi Party's new MLAs, Punjab chief minister-elect Bhagwant Mann asked them to spend maximum time in their constituencies, not in capital Chandigarh, and don't hanker for cabinet berths. The swearing-in ceremony will be held at native village of freedom fighter Bhagat Singh on March 16. Bhagwant Mann is a talented artist and now will have to prove himself to revive Punjab's economy, which is a huge challenge for a first-time chief minister. With AAP governments both in Delhi and Punjab, it will be interesting to see possible agreement regarding stubble burning after harvest season. Bhagwant Mann is taking charge in Punjab at a time when economic condition is in dire conditions. With withdrawal of farm bills, it will be difficult for Punjab government to seek support from central government. A World Bank report on Punjab's environment and social system assessment suggested gaps in the state's financial management capability because its administrative departments work in silos and the public procurement ecosystem is fragmented. Among Punjab's key development challenges, the bank listed slow growth, fiscal stress, and weak institutions.

The fiscal stress is compounded by weak institutions and capabilities in planning, budgeting, and policy-making particularly, while the scarce resources are spread too thin and targeting the policy priorities insufficiently, leading to low competitiveness and poor quality of infrastructure and service delivery. The bank's experts claim that public procurement had room for efficiency, transparency, competition, and system strengthening to monitor contractual commitments. Punjab's economy had underperformed for a decade and the state's gross domestic product (GDP) had grown at an annual average rate of 6 percent, while the national average was 7 percent. The fiscal deficit was a high 3.1 percent of gross state domestic product (GSDP). It increased debt and shrunk the fiscal space for investments in infrastructure and public services, the lower investment in cities especially, which held back the development of manufacturing and service sectors. Punjab has significantly low investment expenditures as a share of GSDP, with capital outlays averaging 0.8 percent over the past decade. These fiscal constraints are exacerbated by poor allocative and operational efficiency of spending. Besides, the gaps in transversal systems of public finance and investment management create systemic inefficiencies. The people of Punjab have put faith in a new politician to fulfil their expectations.

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

PAINTING DISPLAYS SPRING



Visitors stand in front of a painting by British artist Marc Quinn (Himalayan Spring) on display during 15th edition of Art Dubai at Madinat Jumeirah in Dubai.

India's agroforestry potential towards carbon neutral economy

DR VIVEK SAXENA

India's Commitments led by Hon'ble Prime Minister Sh Narendra Modi during COP26 of UNFCCC (UN Framework Convention on Climate Change) at Glasgow, United Kingdom in 2021 incorporated five nectar elements of 'Panchamrit', to address Climate Change related challenges. Promotion of Agroforestry and Trees Outside Forests have to play a pivotal role in meeting commitments related to, reduction of at least one billion tonnes of total projected emissions between now and 2030, Reduction of the country's carbon intensity to less than 45 percent, achieving net-zero emissions target by 2070. Union Budget-2022 emphasis on Agroforestry as one of the four interventions. It also reflects the seriousness of visionary leadership through shaping of 'Climate Action' roadmap towards meeting NDC targets of having additional 2.5 to 3 billion tonnes of Carbon Sequestration by 2030 and other National and International Goals related to Biodiversity Conservation, Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN), Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) under Convention on Biodiversity (CBD), UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) and other conventions. Enhancement of India's pledge under Bonn Challenge - Landscape Restoration to 26 mha from 21 mha by 2030 during UNCCD CoP-14, held in India in 2019 by Prime Minister Narendra Modi is the largest pledge by any Country.

The potential of Agroforestry and Trees Outside Forests (ToF) needs to be harnessed optimally in meeting these commitments and goals. Agroforestry also enhances provision of ecosystem

services, especially carbon sequestration, and increased inclusive economic opportunities. Agroforestry and TOFs also alleviate some pressure on natural forests by meeting fuelwood and wood product needs.

Agroforestry and ToF include trees growing on private land and farms; in urban areas; along linear infrastructure such as roads, railway lines, canals; plantations in and around industrial areas; shelterbelts; and in land belonging to government and other institutions; etc. TOFs on farms and other private lands provide income and sustenance for farmers from timber, fuelwood, fruits and other products. These TOFs play a critical role in the economy of many developing countries, including India. Additionally, TOFs are important in promoting cultural, social, and ecological functions that are important to human livelihoods. TOFs also sequester carbon, stabilize soil, filter water and air, regulate water flow, and perform other ecosystem services. When planted along roads and canals, in institutional areas or within urban landscapes, TOFs provide shade to cool microclimates, absorb some air pollutants, beautify green spaces, provide nesting and habitat for birds and other small animals, help to regulate stormwater, and contribute to human well-being.

Haryana State has demonstrated how a State deficient in forest and natural resources scarce with only about 3.5 percent area under Forests and more than 80 percent area under Agriculture can support the Nation's food security and also wood security. This is mainly due to promotion of Agroforestry friendly policies and encouraging plantation campaigns for planting Trees Outside Forests. Investor and Industry friendly climate for wood based industries, sourcing wood mainly from farm-lands and facilitating availability of high productivity and short rotation seedlings of Eucalyptus and Poplar to farmers have played a pivotal role in making Yamunanagar District the Plywood Capital of the Country. Clonal Eucalyptus and Poplar seedlings have short harvesting period of 4-6 years. Farmers' income is supplemented through farm wood based production along with agricultural crops.

Moreover, Agroforestry also ensures

economic security in supplementing income from trees in years of crop failures due to drought, frost, extreme temperatures, rainfall or other reasons. Strong formal and informal market linkages, marketing agencies and value chains linking producers, industries, consumers and end users have evolved. There are about 350 plywood units in the State. Yamunanagar Wood Market supports more than 50 percent of the India's Plywood Production. It is estimated that wood worth Rs 2500 to 3000 crores sourced from farmlands is traded in Yamunanagar and nearby region. Finished and value added wood products worth about Rs 6500 to 8000 crores in the form of plywood, particle board, poles etc have played a vital role in shaping the economy of the region. It is estimated, that about 0.1 million persons are annually employed in activities related to wood based harvesting, marketing and production.

Haryana State under the dynamic and visionary leadership of Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar has undertaken a number of initiatives in supporting National level Commitments. 'Oxy-Van' scheme launched in 2021 aims to have 'Mini Forests as natural oxygen factories' so that people can have better surroundings and availability of oxygen, especially in urban areas. This is especially important, keeping in view the Oxygen Crisis, everyone faced during COVID pandemic. The objective of 'Praan Yavu Devta' scheme aims to protect and conserve the trees having immense ecological and environmental value and to inculcate in the people sense for protection of old age trees which provide valuable intangible benefits and services to humanity including lifesaving oxygen. The scheme acknowledges and respects old and heritage trees, more than 75 years old by paying annual pension of Rs 2500 to the custodian of tree. Haryana State on the occasion of World Environment Day, June 5, 2021 has also initiated a scheme to promote Agroforestry and plantations on at least 10 percent of Gram Panchayat lands. For Soil and Moisture Conservation, 'Mera Paani Meri Virasat' scheme has been launched, that aims at crop diversification scheme for farmers. The scheme incentivises farmer or landowner for Rs 7000 per

acre to switch from paddy cultivation to other crops. This water conservation initiative will also protect depletion of natural resources such as water and soil. The success of Eucalyptus (Eucalyptus tereticornis) and Populus spp. (Populus Deltoides) based Agroforestry and the adoption of these species in Yamunanagar and Northern Plains is mainly due to short rotation of 5 to 7 years as compared to other species, linked established market supply chains through utilization in Plywood, Particle Board and Veneer and associated industries facilitating, value additions, supplementing economic returns and green livelihoods. The India plywood market reached a value of INR 195.8 billion in FY 2021-22. It is estimated that the Indian plywood market will reach RS 297.2 billion by 2027-28, exhibiting a CAGR of 7.4 percent during 2022-23 to 2027-28. (www.imarcgroup.com/indian-plywood-market/toc).

Agroforestry offers a huge opportunity in meeting the market demand of wood. Appropriate Policy measures, supported by technology transfer, diversification of wood based products, ensuring appropriate returns to wood grower for encouraging adoption of agroforestry, setting up of industries at strategic locations for balanced agroforestry based industrial development to absorb the available wood and continuous market research are needed. Agroclimatic regions based appropriate agroforestry and ToFs models need to be promoted to realize the potential in different States across the Country. The Haryana Model is a success story widely acknowledged globally. Appropriate State specific Agroforestry and ToFs models need to be formulated and adopted for enhancing ecosystem services, including biodiversity, hydrological services, including flood mitigation, and carbon sequestration, through improved landscape management. This will facilitate in harnessing the potential of Agroforestry and TOFs in shaping 'Climate Action' as per India's commitments for Carbon Neutral Economy by 2070.

(Dr Vivek Saxena, is IFS, APCCF and CEO of Haryana State Forest CAMPA Authority.)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Verdict aspects

Verdict is out and it is barring Punjab, four other states Goa, Manipur, Uttarakhand and particularly Uttar Pradesh (UP) fuels Modi-Yogi double engine not only delivering a body blow to the Samajwadi Party (SP) but have shown that the grand old party Indian National Congress is a spent force, with the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) only emerging stronger. Interestingly, as for UP, the interesting aspect is that the Opposition there is in so much shambles, that even after Unnao, Hathras and Lakhimpur Kheri were the weapons of the opposition from the very beginning in the UP elections. Opposition groups called for a boycott of the ruling BJP in Unnao and Hathras. The Congress even gave a ticket to the mother of the victim in the Unnao case (gets only 1453 votes). However, the BJP's victory could not be stopped only in this district, but it's been almost six decades since any party in UP has won two successive terms. The farmers' agitation and their supposed anger against the BJP didn't translate into anti-incumbency on the ground. In the border state Punjab where Aam Aadmi Party's (AAP) broom is so strong that it sweeps (wins 92 of 117) not only the Congress but all the other oppositions with its topmost leaders including four former CMs. AAP created history as 1st regional party to win outside 'Home State'. No doubt AAP win opens the door for churn in the Opposition. One has to agree that Punjab Congress has made a self-go by sacking Captain Amrinder Singh and trusting BJP sacked Navjot Singh Sidhu. Not only Punjab, even CM faces of BJP, Congress and AAP bite dust in Uttarakhand elections, even that in Uttarakhand, the BJP as it retained power; beat the general trend being that the reins of power alternate between the BJP and the Congress. The Manipur result was largely a foregone conclusion, credit must go to Amit Shah's personal assurances to the local populace on the AFSPA. Whereas, divided Opposition gifts Goa to BJP. Particularly the way AAP's Keirjari and TMC's Mamata Banerjee and Abhishek Banerjee attack Congress is not the sign of the opposition unity and the people give its verdict in EVMS. After the whitewash of the Congress, its leader Rahul Gandhi said that Congress will learn from this loss and continue to work in the interest of the country's people. But when? But the humiliating defeats are also set to lead to further bloodletting in the party as the veteran dissident leader Ghulam Nabi Azad very rightly voiced thousands other Congress followers thought that 'situation alarming for Congress, can't watch party dying like this.' Without any doubt Congress party's defeat in this 'mini election' is a "huge setback" which can leave sibling Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra's "brand value diminished".

Bidyut K Chatterjee, Faridabad



WHAT THEY TWEET!

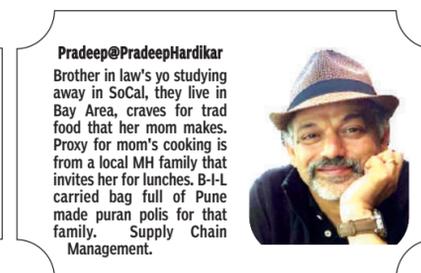


Vivek@Mallufideint
Accidental Firing of Missile. What an embarrassment. Not even Pakistan has ever done accidental firing of a missile to my knowledge. I am sure calls were made at the highest level to pacify the Pakistan side before the missile even touched down.

Sridhar Vembu@svenbu
I have met successful politicians (the ones who tend to win) from many parties and the one common factor is how hard they work. They are constantly on the move, in meetings and calls, all the time. Politics is not regular job and it is not easy. This is independent of ideology.



Wang@danwwang
Shanghai is really on edge right now over accelerating Covid cases; I haven't seen everyone this nervous since February 2020... a lot of rumors are swirling amidst the confirmed news that schools are now closed, flights are being diverted, and public events are getting canceled.



Pradeep@PradeepHardikar
Brother in law's yo studying away in SoCal, they live in Bay Area, craves for trad food that her mom makes. Proxy for mom's cooking is from a local MH family that invites her for lunches. B-I-L carried bag full of Pune made puran polis for that family. Supply Chain Management.



IFSParveen@ParveenKaswan
Scanning. A regular exercise where various teams move on foot to monitor the area.



Kunal Singh@d_extrovert
The assembly election results of five states in India are a puzzle to only those who have been completely absorbed in an echo-chamber. They had wrong priors, wrong analysis, and then they only listened to those who agree with them. But how long can you keep ignoring the voters?

Poorvi@plsappylogic
Yes, it happens and no one raises slightest doubt whether it is true or not. The level of brain washing is unimaginable. Now I feel that India's collapse is indispensable, so it better be sooner than later. Only that can awaken people, nothing else, nothing at all.

BRIEF

IPO

New Delhi: Sachin Bansal-led Navi Technologies has filed preliminary papers with Sebi to raise Rs 3,350 crore through an initial public offering (IPO). The proposed IPO is completely through a fresh issue of equity shares and there will be no offer-for-sale (OFS), according to the draft red herring prospectus (DRHP). Flipkart co-founder Bansal, who has invested around Rs 4,000 crore into Navi till date, is not diluting his stake in the IPO. According to people familiar with the matter, the initial share-sale is likely to open in June.

Funding

New Delhi: Gifting platform Ferns N Petals on Saturday said Lighthouse India Fund III has invested Rs 200 crore (USD 27 million) in it. The company plans to use the funds to invest in improving its systems and technology to enhance customer experience for all gifting occasions. "We are very excited to partner with Lighthouse and look forward to learning from their deep consumer insights, developed through a focused investment approach," FNP Founder & Managing Director Vikaas Gutgutia said.

Hub

New Delhi: Online accommodation platform Airbnb on Saturday announced the opening of a new technology hub in Bengaluru to help it serve its "global community". The Bengaluru technology hub will aim to create local, skilled jobs, with plans for the centre to cater to a few hundred people in the initial phases, followed by an expanded footprint in the future, the company said in a statement. "India is an incredibly important market for Airbnb. The opening of this technology hub will further our ongoing investment in the nation and is testament to our long-term vision for growing our business locally into the future," Airbnb Co-Founder and Chief Strategy Officer Nathan Blecharczyk said.

Aspiration

Mumbai: Adobe Chairman and CEO Shantanu Narayen on Saturday said the software major's aspirations for India are not just related to products but to run global businesses from the country. He also said the company's employees in India are responsible for major part of every aspect of Adobe's business. "Our aspirations for India are not just related to products, they are related to running global businesses out of India."

Partners

Mumbai: EV maker Omega Seiki Mobility (OSM) has formed a strategic partnership with Kathmandu-based MAW Vriddhi Commercial Vehicle to retail its vehicles in Nepal. This association will enable OSM to meet the evolving needs of a customer base, which is rapidly looking for a sustainable and zero-emission last-mile transportation solution in the growing Nepalese market.

Consumers can get un-hallmarked jewellery tested

At BIS recognised centres

New Delhi, Mar 12 (PTI):

Consumers can now get the purity of their un-hallmarked gold jewellery tested at assaying facilities recognised by the Bureau of Indian Standard (BIS).

"The charges for testing of gold jewellery upto 4 articles is Rs 200. For 5 or more articles, the charges are Rs 45 per article," an official statement said. The Ministry of Consumer Affairs said mandatory hallmarking has been successfully implemented wherein 3 lakh gold articles are being hallmarked with HUID (Hallmark



Unique Identification) every day. The BIS has "now made provision to allow a common consumer to get the purity of their unhallmarked gold jewellery tested at any of the BIS recognized Assaying and Hallmarking Centres (AHCs)." The AHC should undertake the testing of

gold jewellery from common consumers on priority and provide a test report to the consumer, it added. "The test report issued to the consumer will assure the consumer about the purity of their jewellery and will also be useful if the consumer wishes to sell the jewellery lying with him," it said.

The authenticity and purity of the hallmarked gold jewellery items with HUID number, purchased by consumer, can also be verified by using verify HUID' in BIS CARE app which can be downloaded from the Play Store.

Govt launches initiative to push start-ups in water sector

New Delhi, Mar 12 (PTI):

Union Minister Hardeep Singh Puri on Saturday launched the India WaterPitch-Pilot-Scale Start-up Challenge, under which the government will select 100 start-ups and they will be provided with Rs 20 lakh each as funding support as well as mentorship, a statement said. According to the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, the new initiative aims at empowering start-ups in the water sector to grow through innovation and design that will drive sustainable economic growth and generate employment opportunities.

The initiative was launched at an event here by Union Housing and Urban Affairs Minister Hardeep Singh Puri under the ministry's Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT)



Union Minister for Petroleum & Natural Gas, Housing and Urban Affairs Hardeep Singh Puri at the national level India Water Pitch-Pilot-Scale Start-up Conclave, in New Delhi.

2.0. Puri emphasised on the important role being played by the start-ups and assured them of full and active support from the government, according to a statement from the ministry.

Start-ups are the flavour of the season, as the number of unicorns' in the country has jumped, by leaps and bounds, the min-

ister said. He said that the success of the government's schemes hinges, to a large extent, to the role and contribution of stakeholders and others in the ecosystem, adding that the stakeholders' responses in the water sector are crucial for formulating government programmes.

Puri said AMRUT 2.0 is a transformative and

RERA implementation to improve post SC direction to Govt

New Delhi, Mar 12 (PTI):

Homebuyers' apex body FPCE expects the implementation of realty law RERA to improve following the Supreme Court's recent direction to the Centre to examine the rules framed by states and see whether those subserve the consumers' interest. Last month, the Supreme Court directed the Centre to examine whether the rules framed by various states under the Real Estate (Regulation and Development) Act, 2016 (RERA) are in conformity with the central legislation and subserve the interest of homebuyers. A bench of Justices DY Chandrachud and Surya



Kant gave three months to the Centre to examine if there are any deviations between the rules drawn up by the states and those framed by the Centre in 2016, and to place the report by the first week of May 2022.

When contacted, Forum for People's Collective Efforts' (FPCE) President Abhay Kumar Upadhyay said: "Despite five years of

On examining states' rules

its full implementation, RERA is yet to reach anywhere near its intended objective." The prime reason for this is that the states to whom responsibility has been given for its implementation did not follow any uniformity in their general real estate rules and rules for agreement for sale, he pointed out. "Their (states') rules

were not within the four corners of the provisions of RERA. This took sting out of the Act and homebuyers were deprived of the benefits of RERA," Upadhyay said.

On the other hand, the association's president said, builders took full advantage of this and the fear of RERA catching them faded.

"In view of this, though late, but still this ruling from the Supreme Court will set things right going forward and many homebuyers will then reap the benefit," he added.

Most importantly, this ruling would break the belief in most builders that they are above the law or that they can take the law for granted, he said.

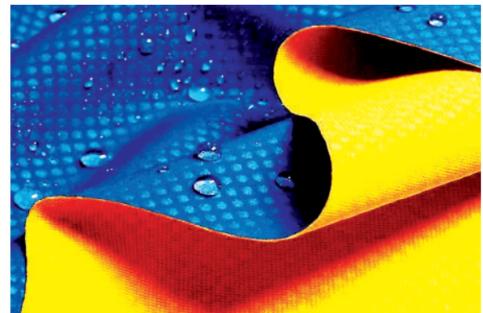
Textile min receives applications from 67 firms for PLI

In man-made fibres, tectex

New Delhi, Mar 12 (PTI):

The textile ministry has received applications from as many as 67 companies to avail benefits of the production linked incentive (PLI) scheme for man-made fibres and technical textile sectors, a top government official said on Saturday. The PLI scheme for textiles covers 40 man-made fibre (MMF) garment items, 14 MMF fabric goods and 10 technical textile products.

The government had approved the PLI scheme worth Rs 10,683 crore for the sector with an aim to boost domestic manufacturing, create jobs and promote exports. "We have taken a number of steps to promote growth of the



technical textile sector. There has been a very good response for the PLI scheme.

"As many as 67 companies have made applications for being a part of the PLI for MMF and technical textiles and against our expectations of over Rs 19,000 crore investments, these companies have shown that they would be investing like Rs

22,000-23,000 crore in the MMF and technical textiles," Textiles Secretary U B Singh said at a CII event.

The technical textiles (tectex) segment is a sunrise sector and holds huge potential for growth, he said.

It is used in different areas such as construction, road, railways, healthcare, automobile, and agriculture.

Exports cross USD 380 bn this fiscal so far



New Delhi, Mar 12 (PTI):

The country's merchandise exports have reached over USD 380 billion so far this fiscal till March 7 and are expected to reach USD 410 billion in 2021-22, Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said. He also said that India and Canada have formally re-launched negotiations for a free trade agree-

ment, which is officially dubbed as the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA). "As of March 7, 2022, our exports are over USD 380 billion and well poised to cross USD 400 billion and probably closing the year at USD 410 bn on merchandise. We will have a record services exports upward of USD 240 billion," Goyal said at a din-

ner hosted in honour of his Canadian counterpart Mary Ng. Talking about the India-Canada relationship, he said this economic partnership will strengthen efforts to take economic ties to the next level.

"This will help generate jobs, help each other in times of need and work with each other in several international forums... We have over 7,00,000 persons of Indian origin in Canada today slated to go up to 1.4 million in the next few years...." Goyal said.

He also urged the Canadian minister to be a "little more liberal" while negotiating the trade agreement.

The minister also sought investments from Canada in areas like infrastructure and manufacturing. The Canadian minister said that huge opportunities are there in India for businesses.

India's gold imports bounced back to 1,067 tons

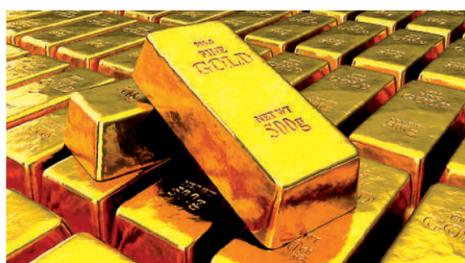
New Delhi, Mar 12 (PTI):

India's gold imports bounced back to 1,067.72 tonnes in 2021 from 430.11 tonnes during 2020 when the demand was hit due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Gem Jewellery Export Promotion Council (GJEPC) said.

The gold imports in 2021 were up by 27.66 per cent from 836.38 tonnes during 2019, it said in a statement.

The maximum quantity of gold was imported from Switzerland at 469.66 tonnes, followed by UAE (120.16 tonnes), South Africa (71.68 tonnes) and Guinea (58.72 tonnes) in 2021, it added.

Along with China, India is by far the world's largest importer and consumer of gold. According to GJEPC Chairman Colin Shah, "About 1,067 tonnes of gold imported in 2021 can be attributed to the abnormal



pandemic situation a year prior when imports had nosedived to 430.11 tonnes".

The past decade has seen India's gold imports coming close to the year-prior figure. For instance, the quantity of gold imported in 2021 is comparable to gold imports of 1,047 tonnes in 2015 and 1,032 tonnes in 2017, he said.

India's average monthly gold imports during April-February of 2021-22 fiscal stood at 76.57 tonnes, which is relatively at par

with the average gold imports that was undertaken in the same period in 2018-19 and 2019-20.

During April-February this fiscal, gold imports stood at 842.28 tonnes, which is below the usual imports in the same period i.e. ranging from 690 to 890 tonnes.

Overall, there isn't much deviation in the gold imported in January and February 2022 from the average imports of gold in quantity and value terms during the same period in

the previous three normal years — 2017-2018, 2018-2019 and 2019-2020, GJEPC added. In the case of exports, gold jewellery shipments from India rose 50 per cent to USD 8,807.50 million in 2021 on a sharp rise in demand for studded gold jewellery.

The country had exported gold jewellery valuing USD 5,876.39 million in the previous year.

GJEPC said the industry is witnessing a surge in exports and domestic sales of gold jewellery (plain and studded) post-pandemic.

Of the total exports, studded gold jewellery shipments rose sharply to USD 5,078.83 million in 2021 from USD 2,508.26 million in the previous year.

Export of plain gold jewellery increased to USD 3,728.66 million against USD 33,69.13 million, it noted.

Equal Hue project offers leg up for aspiring female cricketers



New Delhi, Mar 12:

The #EqualHue initiative has launched a first-of-its-kind outreach and excellence programme, comprising youth tournaments, financial assistance and technical opportunities, to support girls and women in India who aspire to play cricket. The Equal Hue project, a movement focussing on gender equity in sport, was founded in 2020 by former India cricketer Sneh Pradhan, author Karunya Keshav and The Sports Law and Policy Centre. Equal Hue Cricket, con-

ceived under the Equal Hue project, is a collaborative effort involving the #EqualHue team, GoSports Foundation and Meraki Sport & Entertainment. It is a pioneering initiative aimed at creating pathways for aspiring female cricketers from across the country, enabling them to start, stay in and succeed in the sport, while leaving a tangible impact on our country's socio-economic fabric. To coincide with Women's Day 2022, the initiative has launched a tri-pronged programme to: engage girls through Under-16 tournaments in 12 cities, enable those aged 16-23 with scholarships to continue in cricket by offering need-based financial assistance and career support, and enhance excellence through an elite development programme.

Realme introduces two new additions to 9 series

New Delhi, Mar 12:

Realme, world's fastest-growing smartphone brand and India's first brand to launch a 5G enabled smartphone, today introduced the latest set of products under its number series, realme 9 5G series, along with the realmeTechLife Buds N100 and realmeTechLife Watch S100. While the realme 9 5G series, which comprises two smartphones - realme 9 5G and realme 9 5G Speed Edition - is bound to enhance the user experience with the leading 5G processors in the segment, the additions to realme'sTechLife Ecosystem will further strengthen realme's commitment to offering an aspirational, trendsetting lifestyle in sync with the latest technological trends. Commenting on the



launch, MrMadhavSheth, CEO realme India, VP, realme, and President, realme International Business Group said, "For realme, India is a top priority market and we have received immense appreciation and adoration from our fans for our number series, and realme's commitment to bringing cutting-edge and industry-first products is exemplified by the inclusion of realme 9 5G and realme 9 5G Speed Edition. realmeTechLife Buds N100

is the brand's latest offering under its hearables category. Its 9.2mm dynamic bass boost driver accentuates the users' listening experience, and the 17-hour long battery life allows users to immerse themselves in music or work without being disturbed.

realmeTechLife Watch S100 comes with a 4.3cm (1.69") large color display with a high resolution of 240*280 pixels that can display vivid and lifelike visuals.

Usha partners with GeM to introduce sewing as service

Mumbai, Mar 12:

On the occasion of International Women's Day, Usha International Ltd, one of India's leading household consumer durables company, announced its strategic partnership with Government of India's Government e-Marketplace (GeM), an online platform, for two years through its Silai School program. Via this partnership, Usha will support the setting up of a new vertical - sewing as a service - on the GeM portal which will open newer opportunities for forward integration for hundreds of Usha Silai Women and enhance their livelihood. With the Government mandating that at least 3% of the Rs 15000 crores worth sewing orders placed by government departments/agencies annually, be taken up by re-

gional rural women groups, this is a big step forward and will enhance the earning potential of the Usha Silai School women.

Launched by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India, with the objective to create an open and transparent procurement platform for government buyers, the GeM is an online platform for public procurement in India. Purchases through GeM by Government users has been authorized and made mandatory by the Ministry of Finance. Usha's strategic partnership with GeM will aid the Usha Silai School's structure to provide expertise for the service and will help in placement of sewing orders with women at the regional level.

Sara Ali Khan, the new face of Indian Fast fashion ethnic brand

Bollywood actress Sara Ali Khan is the first celebrity brand ambassador for ethnic wear brand Libas. Their Spring Summer 2022 campaign, #TheresAlwaysALibas features Sara in the brand's latest designs in a series of campaign films and stills.

Commenting on the association, Sara Ali Khan, said, "I am overjoyed to share this association with Libas; Libas has the most comfortable ethnic wear styles. The brand gives a refreshing outlook to Indian ethnic fashion and makes the category an effortless choice for all occasions."

Speaking of the association, Sidhant Keshwani, CEO & MD, Libas, added, "We are very excited to have Sara on board! Simple, confident and comfortable in her own skin, she perfectly embodies the spirit of Libas; she is someone whose personal style resonates with Libas' philosophy. She organically endorses wearing ethnic wear in her personal style which makes her a natural choice for the brand."

The campaign, celebrates a new perspective on Indian ethnic fashion. The brand understands the changing sartorial needs of the modern Indian woman and focuses on providing stylish, versatile, and functional ethnic wear wardrobe solutions for all occasions -- whether navigating a busy day at work, a coffee date with friends or celebrating a festive evening -- whatever the occasion!

The campaign was created in collaboration with The Script Room as the creative agency across digital platforms.



Vivek Oberoi's 'Verses of War' wins Best Film award at Expo 2020 Dubai

The short film 'Verses Of War', produced by Vivek Oberoi, who also plays the lead role in it, bagged the Best Film award at The Great Indian Film Festival held at Expo 2020 Dubai. The Great Indian Film Festival was a three-day event where several short films and documentaries were showcased by global filmmakers under one roof. 'Verses of War', directed by Prasad Kadam, pits an Indian Army Major, Sunil Bhatia, against his Pakistan Army counterpart, after the former is ambushed by Pakistani forces. The short film plays out as a series of conversations and sheds

light on the psychology of the Indian soldier who pens poetry and fights for his motherland with the same passion. After winning the best film award, Oberoi said: "This is my first attempt at producing and acting in a short film. The subject of the film, which pays tribute to war heroes and emphasises their contribution to nation-building, is very close to my heart." He added: "The idea behind making this film was to present the Indian soldier as a man who manifests the same passion both for art and for his motherland. Now that it has won the Best Film award at The Great Indian Film Festival, it only goes to show that a good film will always find its audience and be appreciated."



Holi celebrations with &TV artists

The festival of colours, Holi, is celebrated across the country with great zeal and enthusiasm. And interestingly, the festival is celebrated in incredibly different ways with uniqueness by each Indian state with a beautiful blend of different cultures and traditions. In sync with the festive spirit of Khushiyonkehar rang &TV ke sang, &TV artists talk about how the festival is celebrated differently in their hometowns. These include Varanasi native, Vidisha Srivastava (Anita Bhabi, Bhabiji Ghar Par Hai), Kolkata native, MouliGanguly (MahasatiAnusuya, Baal Shiv), Delhiite, Pawan Singh (Zafar Ali Mirza, Aur Bhai Kya Chal Raha Hai?), Indorian, Kamna Pathak (Rajesh, Happu Ki Ultan Paltan), Rajasthan native, Kapil Nirmal (Tarkasur, Baal Shiv), Mumbaikar, Akansha Sharma (Sakina Mirza, Aur Bhai Kya Chal Raha Hai?), Bihar native, Saanand Verma (Anokhe Lal Saxena, Bhabiji Ghar

Par Hai), Punjab native, Charrul Malik (Rusa, Happu Ki Ultan Paltan) and Gujarat native, Soma Rathod (Ammaji, Bhabiji Ghar Par Hai). Charrul Malik, essaying Rusain&TV's Happu Ki Ultan Paltan, shares, "We Punjabis are known for celebrating Holi in our style. In Punjab, they call it "Holi Mohalla," where they shout their hearts out and follow the unique tradition. There is also a show of martial arts, especially Kushti playing with colours. The mouth-watering delicacies people usually prepare include halwa-puris, gujiya, malpuas and raw jackfruit preparation. Holi announces the arrival of spring, with the warm weather and bright sunshine urging one and all to celebrate. After the morning of playing with colours and energetic dancing to the beats of dhols, the evening is a time to relax and exchange stories of fun. I always feel immense joy when celebrating this occasion. Wishing everyone a very Happy Holi."

Aanchal Singh: I feel happy and scared at the same time with success

Actor Aanchal Singh, who made her debut with web series 'Undekhi' and tasted success post the release of 'Yeh Kali Kali Ankhein', said the love, appreciation and success make her happy and scared at the same time.

"I have been working for quite some time but getting a good acting assignment was surely an uphill task as like many actors, I also faced multiple rejections. Post the release of 'Undekhi' even though people noticed me, but I was not recognised much. Post the release of 'Yeh Kaali Kaali Ankhe', life has changed."

"The love I get from social media fills my heart. Now, I am happy but also scared with the success I am getting," she said.

The actor, who began her career in 2013, said she has done a lot of hard work.

Aanchal claimed that she never takes her success too seriously but only her work.

Sharing more details on why the new season of 'Undekhi 2' is more special for her, Aanchal says: "I have got a chance to show my acting skill. This time, Teji(her character) is coming back to her element, fighting for justice and doing everything in a righteous manner. She is facing problem on all fronts. It's tough for Teji and it is interesting for me as an actor to bring out the conflict through acting."

Post the release of 'Undekhi 2', Aanchal will be gearing up for the shooting of the new season of 'Yeh Kaali Kaali Ankhein'.

Created by Sidharth Sengupta and produced by Applause Entertainment, 'Undekhi 2' -- featuring Harsh Chhaya, Dibyendu Bhattacharya, Apaksha Porwal, Nandish Sandhu and Meiyang Chang - is streaming on SonyLiv.

Hiba Nawab takes inspiration from her mother for 'Woh Toh Hai Albelaa'

The audience always gets to see some new content on Star Bharat. Similarly, the characters of the star cast included in the show 'Woh To Hai Albelaa' produced by Rajan Shahi are also being seen in a different light. Actress Hiba Nawab, who plays Sayuri Sharma in the series, has always been seen in a flirtatious and naughty style on TV. She is now going to have a different look and give a different experience to the audience in this show where she plays the character of a very strong, intelligent and today's girl for this powerful character. For this she has taken inspiration from her mother, from whom she learns a lot. Through this character, Hiba, wanting to do something different and taking inspiration from her mother, says, "As soon as Rajan sir called me for the briefing of this character and I understood Sayuri, somewhere I had my own take on it, I started to see myself in it and wanted to get creative with it. The character, to a large extent resembled my mother."



HOROSCOPE SUNDAY MARCH 13

Aquarius: Jan 21 - Feb 18

It always pays to have extra cash, and in that regard, you will be a happy person today! You may carefully update and crosscheck your financial position. Of course, there are people who don't share your happiness and will try to advise you to the contrary. Ignore them, says Ganesha.

Pisces: Feb 19 - Mar 20

A good day is in the offing, says Ganesha. You are likely to receive news you will be glad to share and celebrate with your family. A few pending deals are likely to be finalised in the afternoon, and there are indications you will need to go off on a short visit for business purposes later on in the day.

Aries: Mar 21 - Apr 20

Today you are going to have a great time, but only if you plan out the right things, says Ganesha. At the work place it will be business as usual with its highs and lows. But make some good plan for the evening and you will be surprised. Try something romantic.

Taurus: Apr 21 - May 21

This day your reasoning, speculations and conjectures could be letting you down. You may thus feel dejected because things are not working out the way you had planned and anticipated. Be prepared and forearmed.

Gemini: May 22 - June 21

A hectic and busy day awaits you. You need to think about how, where and in what proportion to concentrate your energies upon the numerous jobs thrust upon you. You will be able to successfully complete your tasks in the later half of the day, says Ganesha.

Cancer: June 22 - July 22

Today you are likely to be full of enthusiasm, both at work and home, predicts Ganesha. At work, your convictions will get the better of other people's vindictiveness, and your colleagues will come around to your viewpoints. But don't take any critical decision without prior approval.

Leo: July 23 - Aug 23

If you are the one who sets the corporate mantra each morning, then know that today, your mantra will be fabulous, and will be chanted by many in your organisation. Being a business magnate might not be the easiest thing, but you are who you are, and you are good at it.

Virgo: Aug 24 - Sept 22

Watch you step, warns Ganesha. Trouble is lurking just round the corner and waiting to waylay you. At work, you will find yourself in a high-spirited mood and will be helpful to your colleagues. You might end the day in the company of family members recollecting the happy days you have spent in each other's company.

Libra: Sept 23 - Oct 23

Today seems like a good day to take a break and go on a pleasure trip to revitalise yourself, says Ganesha. Even on the business front, it will do you a world of good to take a break from the usual routine. This evening, you are at your best winning the heart of the opposite sex at social gatherings.

Scorpio: Oct 24 - Nov 22

Today you are likely to remain the unvarying object of emotions and sentiments, predicts Ganesha. Your inking for performing arts may draw you to take up some lessons in classical music and traditional dance. A romantic, candlelit evening with your sweetheart may be on the cards to wrap up the day.

Sagittarius: Nov 23 - Dec 21

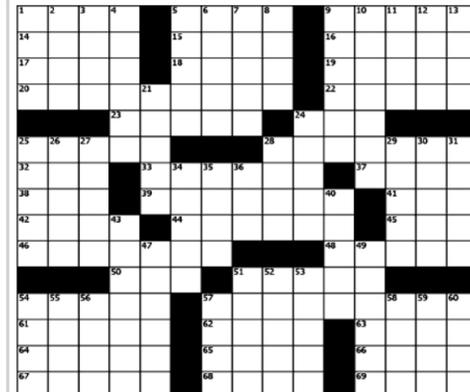
Simple living and high thinking, says Ganesha, will be your mantra today. Approach your work with innovative thoughts and diplomatic words. Later in the day, family, friends and relatives revel in the attention that you shower on them. Students will excel in their studies and marvel in leisure activities, says Ganesha.

Capricorn: Dec 22 - Jan 20

The day will have a bundle of things to offer today, some good, some not so good. At work, you are likely to overlook the most obvious things, and come across some unexpected ones. But as dawn turns to dusk, a pleasant surprise may get you all pepped up.

CROSSWORD

239



ACROSS

- Go-getter
- Right away (abbr.)
- Lucifer
- Singer _____ Fitzgerald
- Dr. _____ of TV
- Nimble
- Skin
- Took a cab
- Monikers
- Delayed

DOWN

- Phonograph records
- Country roads
- _____ Juan
- Jotted down
- Sports VIP (hyph.)
- Rainy mo.
- Rest
- Roman garb
- Behold
- Sooner
- Family
- Realm

- Until now (2 wds.)
- London's country (abbr.)
- Roped
- Sudden thrust
- Junior
- Glossy fabric
- Orally
- Pointed out
- Suez or Erie
- Chicken's home
- Donkey sound
- Cheek makeup
- Miscalculates
- Bait
- Road curves
- Refute
- Snaky fishes

DOWN

- Johnny _____ of "Finding Neverland"
- Butter's rival
- Building extensions
- Infant's toy
- Kitchen garment
- Glistened
- Assistants
- Begged
- Open shoe
- Opposed to
- Robbins and Allen
- A Baldwin
- Loch
- San Diego athlete
- Frozen raindrops
- Twangy
- Puccini work

- Forest growths
- India's locale
- Keepsake
- Maturing
- Kitchen stove
- Consumed
- Urge
- Aged
- Antique
- Relieve
- Gobs
- Incapable
- Night sound
- Embellish
- Drunk
- Land parcel
- Vietnam's neighbor
- Burden
- Chilled
- Test answer
- British nobleman
- Coloring agents

SOLUTION 238



Jhulan becomes highest wicket taker in women's WC history

Hamilton: Veteran India pacer Jhulan Goswami on Saturday surpassed yet another milestone in her illustrious 22-year-old career by becoming the all-time highest wicket-taker in the history of the ICC Women's World Cup here. With 40 scalps in her kitty, Goswami has surpassed Australia's Lynette Fullston, who took 39 wickets during her career spanning six years from 1982 to 1988. Goswami achieved the feat by dismissing Anisa Mohammed in the 36th over of the innings with West Indies chasing a mammoth target of 318 set by India. Goswami, thus, lead the chart ahead of Fullston, England duo of Carole Hodges (37 wickets) and Claire Taylor (36) and another Australian in Cathryn Fitzpatrick (33).



Mithali Raj breaks World Cup captaincy record



Hamilton: India's ODI skipper Mithali Raj on Saturday broke the record for most matches captained in the ICC Women's World Cup, surpassing former Australian counterpart Belinda Clark. Mithali, 39, led the country in 24 World Cup games, claiming 14 victories, 8 losses and one no result. Clark had captained her side in 23 matches. The India skipper achieved the feat when she stepped out to lead the country against the West Indies in a crucial match in the ongoing showpiece event here. Interestingly, Mithali and Clark are the only two cricketers to have led their country at more than two World Cups. Last Sunday, Mithali became only the third cricketer and the first woman to appear in six World Cups, joining the iconic Sachin Tendulkar and Pakistani great Javed Miandad.

Delhi Capitals unveils new jersey ahead of 2022 IPL season

New Delhi: Delhi Capitals on Saturday unveiled their new official jersey for the upcoming edition of the Indian Premier League, beginning March 26. According to a statement issued by the franchise, the first few jerseys were given to select DC fans at the team's home ground - the Arun Jaitley Stadium here. Additionally, select children from the city, the DC Cubs, were given official jerseys too, as part of a surprise activity curated specially for them. "It's a new cycle of the IPL, and we can't wait to see our players in this brand new jersey," said Vinod Bisht, Interim CEO, Delhi Capitals. "Supporting this team in its quest for glory is our fan army, so it's only fitting for us to make them a part of our journey in every step." Delhi Capitals will start their season on March 27 against Mumbai Indians at the Brabourne Stadium.

Murray outlasts Daniel at Indian Wells for 700th career win

Indian Wells (US): Andy Murray outlasted qualifier Taro Daniel 1-6 6-2 6-4 in the first round of the BNP Paribas Open for his 700th career victory. Murray, who received a wild card into the desert tournament, twice came from behind in the nearly two-hour match on Friday. He overcame a 1-3 deficit in the third set, winning five of the final six games. "I managed to start to improve as each set went on," Murray said, "and finished off well in the end." Murray broke Daniel to tie the set 3-all. The 34-year-old Scottish star led 40-love in the last game before closing it out on his third match point. "I'm old now so these 11 a.m. starts, it takes me a bit of time to get going," Murray said after the match. It was their third meeting this year. Ranked 106th, Daniel won at the Australian Open. Murray, who is 88th in the world, won in Doha last month.

Finch joins KKR as replacement for Hales

Mumbai: Two-time IPL champions Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) have roped in aggressive Australian batter Aaron Finch as a replacement for England's Alex Hales for the upcoming edition of the Indian Premier League. "Hales has cited bubble fatigue as his reason for withdrawal from the tournament," IPL stated in a media release. Finch, who led Australia to an ICC T20 World Cup win, has so far played 88 T20Is scoring 2,686 runs with the help of two hundreds and 15 half-centuries. "Finch, who has played 87 IPL games and has over 2000 IPL runs, will join KKR at the price of Rs 1.5 crore", it added. The Australian white-ball captain, who last played for Royal Challengers Bangalore (RCB) in the 2020 edition, was not picked by any team in the IPL mega auction last month. KKR will take on defending champions Chennai Super Kings in the IPL lung opener on March 26 at the Wankhede Stadium here.

Women's ODI World Cup



had 10 hits to the fence and two maximums in her 107-ball 109, which was her fourth ton and the first since hitting 171 not out

Mandhana, Harmanpreet sizzle as India whip WI

Hamilton, Mar 12 (PTI):

Smriti Mandhana and Harmanpreet Kaur slammed twin centuries as India produced a splendid batting display to notch up a comprehensive 155-run win over West Indies and bring their campaign back on track at the ICC Women's ODI World Cup here on Saturday. While Mandhana smashed her fifth ODI hundred, a sensational 123 off 119 balls studded with 13 fours and two sixes, Kaur

got into the act, removing Shemaine Campbelle (11) and Chinelle Henry (7) as the Windies slumped to 134 for six. Gayakwad and Rana then combined to run-out Aaliyah Alleyne (4), while Jhulan Goswami (1/43) returned to get rid of Anisa Mohammed (2) and become the all-time highest wicket-taker in the women's World Cup with 40 wickets in her kitty. Earlier, opener Yastika Bhatia scored a quick 31 off 21 balls, laced with six boundaries, to give the team a good start along with Mandhana. Bhatia and Mandhana put on 49 runs for the opening stand in 6.3 overs but once she departed, Mithali Raj (5) and Deepti Sharma (15) also followed suit, leaving India tottering at 78 for three. While Bhatia was caught and bowled by S

flier with openers Deandra Dottin (62) and Hayley Matthews (43) putting up 100 runs in 12.1 overs but the spin-pace duo of Sneha Rana (3/22) and Meghna Singh (2/27) put the breaks by rocking the top-order, as the Caribbean slumped to 114 for four in 19th over. Pooja Vastrakar (1/21) and Rajeshwari Gayakwad (1/24) then



Selman, Mithali was caught by Shamilia Connell at mid-wicket off Matthews in the 10th over. India scored 62 for

ed stunner at first slip to get rid of the all-rounder. Mandhana and Kaur then joined hands and steadied the innings

as India amassed 100 runs in 20 overs. The duo picked by the ones and twos and also got the boundaries regularly to keep the scoreboard ticking.

Mandhana scored her first fifty off 66 balls with five fours in the 27th over, while the second fifty came in 43 balls. The left-handed opener picked up her first maximum in the 33rd over when she produced a straight down the ground six off Selman. She smashed another six in the 37th over over long-on off Aaliyah Alleyne.

With the two batter scoring at a good pace, 200 was up in the 36th over.

Mandhana reached her 90s with a boundary and got a life when she was dropped by Alleyne on 96. She also survived an LBW appeal before reaching her century with another four off Matthews.

With Kaur also going great guns, India crossed the 250-mark in no time.

Mandhana was dismissed in the 43rd over when she found Selman at deep mid-wicket but Kaur took the onus on herself and steered the team across the 300-mark even as India kept losing wickets in pursuit of quick runs.

Kaur, who also got a reprieve on 20, reached her three-figures with a single in the 47th over before edging an Alleyne delivery to keeper Campbelle.

RCB appoints Faf du Plessis as new captain



Bengaluru, Mar 12 (PTI):

The Royal Challengers Bangalore on Saturday appointed former South Africa national team skipper Faf du Plessis as their new captain for the upcoming edition of Indian Premier League.

Du Plessis, one of the consistent performers for Chennai Super Kings, was an obvious choice after Virat Kohli decided to call time on his leadership role for the franchise after a decade during which their trophy

draught didn't end. He was bought for Rs 7 crore by RCB and is available for the whole season. Du Plessis was handed over the cap by team's chairman Prathmesh Mishra and director cricket operations Mike Hesson in a virtual event here.

"I'm deeply grateful for the opportunity I have played a lot of IPL and understand the dynamics of the game. It's no small thing to trust an overseas player," Du Plessis, who gave up South African captaincy across all formats in 2020, said.

India all out for 252 against SL in 2nd Test

Bengaluru, Mar 12 (PTI):

India were all out for 252 at the dinner break on the opening day of the second Test against Sri Lanka here on Saturday.

Shreyas Iyer was out on 92 off 98 deliveries while Jasprit Bumrah remained not out without scoring. The dinner break was taken once Iyer was dismissed.

Wicketkeeper-batter Rishabh Pant was the next highest contributor for India with a 26-ball 39 while Hanuma Vihari made 31.

Virat Kohli was out for 23 just before the tea break while captain Rohit Sharma scored 15.

For Sri Lanka, Lasith Embuldeniya and Praveen Jayawickrama took three wickets apiece while Dhananjaya de Silva got two.

Earlier, India made one change, bringing in a fit-again Axar Patel in place of Jayant Yadav in the playing XI.



Brief Scores:

India: 251 all out in 59.1 overs (Shreyas Iyer 91, Rishabh Pant 39, Hanuma Vihari 31; Lasith Embuldeniya 3/94, Praveen Jayawickrama 3/81, Dhananjaya de Silva 2/32.) vs Sri Lanka.

Sri Lanka, on the other hand, were forced to make two changes with Kusal Mendis and Praveen Jayawickrama replacing Pathum Nissanka and Lahiru Kumara, who were ruled out due to injuries.

India won the first Test by an innings and 222 runs.

Sprinters, including Hima Das, to headline Indian Grand Prix I



Thiruvananthapuram, Mar 12 (PTI):

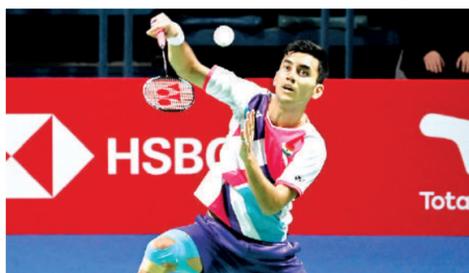
Indian sprinters, including the likes of Hima Das, will take centerstage for the first time this season in the Indian Grand Prix 1 Athletics Meet at the Chandrasekharan Nair Police Stadium here on Sunday. Amoj Jacob, Noah Nirmal Tom and Arokia Rajiv, who were part of the Indian 4x400m team that set the Asian record in the Tokyo Olympics in August last year, besides Amlan Borgogain and Nalubothu Srinivas will also be in action in the one-day meet. While Jacob and Nirmal Tom will headline the 400m race, others will battle it out in the 200m sprint.

Lakshya Sen enters semifinals, Srikanth bows out of German Open

Muelheim Am Der Ruhr, Mar 12 (PTI):

World Championships bronze medallist Lakshya Sen progressed to the semifinals but fellow Indian Kidambi Srikanth suffered a straight-game loss to Olympic champion Viktor Axelsen to bow out of the German Open Super 300 tournament here on Friday.

The 20-year-old Sen, who had claimed his maiden Super 500 title at the India Open in January, continued his rich vein of form as he saw off former top 10 player HS Prannoy 21-15 21-16 in an all-Indian quarterfinals that lasted 39 minutes. The world



number 14 had defeated Prannoy, currently ranked 24th, at the quarterfinals of India Open as well. Sen will now face top seed and former world champion Viktor Axelsen of Denmark in the semifinals on Saturday. World number 1 Axelsen proved

a tough customer for Srikanth as he went down 10-21 21-23 in 35 minutes. It was the Indian's sixth defeat on the trot to Axelsen, whom he had beaten thrice in the past, including en route to his 2017 Denmark Open title in Odense.

Crawley and Root lead England to 153-run lead and safety

St John's (Antigua), Mar 12 (AP):

An unbeaten partnership of 193 runs between Zac Crawley and Joe Root turned the tables on West Indies and gave England a lead of 153 in the first Test headed toward a draw.

Crawley, the opener, and captain Root, at first drop, patiently led England to 217-1 in its second innings at stumps on Day 4 at Sir Vivian Richards Stadium on Friday and relative safety. West Indies' first innings ended in the day's first over on 375 for a lead of 64. Yet another rout of England's top order was on the cards when Alex Lees was dismissed leg before wicket by fast bowler



Kemar Roach for the second time in his test debut, for 6 to go along with his

first-innings 4. Crawley had been given out to Roach in the first over before scoring, but he overturned the umpire's decision on review.

Crawley didn't offer another chance for the rest of another day of grind, which came to an early end in England's 64th over due to a third and heavier rain interruption.

On a flat pitch, Crawley scored his second test century, 117 not out off 200 balls.

He survived the cull after the Ashes in Australia, where he was exposed by seam and swing, but has fully exploited a friendly Antigua pitch.

FAAG MAHOTSAV



Devotees dress as Krishna and Radha for a performance during the Faag Mahotsav ahead of the upcoming festival of Holi, in Ajmer, Saturday.

Govt launches initiative to push start-ups in water sector

New Delhi, Mar 12 (PTI):

Union Minister Hardeep Singh Puri on Saturday launched the India WaterPitch-Pilot-Scale Start-up Challenge, under which the government will select 100 start-ups and they will be provided with Rs 20 lakh each as funding support as well as mentorship, a statement said.

According to the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, the new initiative aims at empowering start-ups in the water sector to grow through innovation and design that will drive sustainable economic growth and generate employment opportunities.

The initiative was launched at an event here by Union Housing and Urban Affairs Minister Hardeep Singh Puri under the ministry's Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT) 2.0.

Puri emphasised on the important role being played by the start-ups and assured them of full and active support from the government, according to a statement from the ministry.

Start-ups are the flavour of the season, as the num-



Hardeep Singh Puri

ber of unicorns in the country has jumped, by leaps and bounds, the minister said. He said that the success of the govern-

ment's schemes hinges, to a large extent, to the role and contribution of stakeholders and others in the ecosystem, adding that the stakeholders' responses in the water sector are crucial for formulating government programmes.

Puri said AMRUT 2.0 is a transformative and unique scheme, with a huge outlay of over Rs 2.77 lakh crore. He said that the scheme will ensure water security in the country, reduce its transportation costs, reduce ground-water contamination, and

increase water utilisation capacity.

The Union minister also said that for the success of the mission, start-ups will have to play a meaningful role by bringing in innovative ideas, technology, novel delivery mechanisms, etc.

At the event, several start-ups from various parts of the country engaged in water gave their presentations with innovative ideas and cutting edge technologies, the statement mentioned.

The minister and other officials also saw the exhibition on the water sector, organised by various stakeholders engaged in water management, it added.

'UP voters chose development over Ram temple, Hindutva'

Lucknow, Mar 12 (PTI):

Development and government functioning were among the top priorities for voters in the Uttar Pradesh Assembly elections while the Ram temple and Hindutva did not weigh much in the minds of people while exercising their franchise, a post-poll survey has highlighted.

The study said the net satisfaction with the Narendra Modi government at the Centre was three times higher than that of the Yogi Adityanath government in Uttar Pradesh, indicating the Modi magic helped the BJP return to power for the sec-

ond consecutive term.

The Lokniti-CSDS poll survey also points to a new group of beneficiaries of welfare schemes such as Kisan Samman Nidhi, Ujjwala Scheme, PM Awas Yojna and free ration routing for the ruling coalition, irrespective of caste and religious considerations.

Another important fact that emerged in the comprehensive data collection was that allaying all pre-poll apprehensions, the BJP got more support among farmers, Brahmins, and also increased its outreach among Scheduled Castes, even among Mayawati's core vote bank Jatavs.

The BJP-led coalition

broke over three decades old record by getting re-elected for a second consecutive time in UP under Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath.

On how reliable the survey was in terms of size and geographical coverage, Sanjay Kumar, Professor and Co-Director of Lokniti programme at the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies, told PTI that it was a comprehensive sample, an important factor for any survey to be accurate.

Thirty-eight per cent of responders said development topped their priority, 12 per cent said changing or removing the government guided them to the polling booth and 10 per

cent listed functioning of the government as their consideration.

Surprisingly the Ram Mandir and Hindutva issue found favour only among 2 per cent of the responders and so was the case with the topic of stray animal menace raised by the opponents prominently to put the Adityanath government on the mat.

Even during campaigning, it was noticed that though the construction of the Rama temple in Ayodhya was talked about but it was not a dominant poll narrative even in Ayodhya, where the competing parties raised the issue of development more prominently.

Senior Cong leader Ibrahim resigns from party, likely to join JD(S)

Bengaluru, Mar 12 (PTI):

Senior Congress leader and MLC C M Ibrahim on Saturday said he has resigned from the primary membership of the party, and was inclined to join the JD(S). The senior politician, however, said he will announce his decision to join the regional party after discussing with the JD(S) leadership, including former Prime Minister H D Deve Gowda, in a couple of days.

Reacting to the possibility of Ibrahim joining JD(S), Deve Gowda said the party will discuss and take a decision. "I'm resigning from the primary membership of the Congress. I have sent a signed letter to Sonia Gandhi (Congress National

President)," Ibrahim told reporters here. Stating that he is also resigning as MLC, he said, "I have sent in the letter addressed to Chairman Legislative Council to Leader of Opposition (Assembly) Siddaramaiah, he can get it accepted by submitting."

I have done this because, in case my resignation is accepted, BJP will get majority in the council and can easily get the anti-conversion bill (which is pending in the Council) passed. I leave it to them." "I'm a free



C M Ibrahim

man now and have freedom to make any decision," he added, as he thanked national and state Congress leaders, including Sonia Gandhi, Rahul Gandhi, Siddaramaiah and PCC chief D K Shivakumar. Ibrahim, a former Union minister and one-time close associate of Deve Gowda, had joined Congress in 2008, and had been sulking for some time now, upset with the party and Siddaramaiah.

His decision to quit the Congress comes in the wake of the party appoint-

ing B K Hariprasad as the Leader of Opposition in the Legislative Council, the post which he was eyeing. He has also accused the Congress of neglecting the minority community leaders, and using the community only as vote bank.

Noting that he has resigned from Congress for the sake of "self-esteem", Ibrahim said he will be meeting JD(S) patriarch Deve Gowda and former chief minister H D Kumaraswamy in a couple of days and will announce his decision.

"Though I had pressure from other friends (from various parties), my wish is JD(S) as Deve Gowda knows me and I know him. Instead of taking an unknown path, it's better to take a known path...I will discuss with them and make an announcement," he said, adding that the JD(S) has all the possibility of coming to power in the state in the 2023 assembly polls.

'Maha govt must contribute 50% share for development of railways'

Jalna, Mar 12 (PTI):

Union Minister Raosaheb Danve on Saturday said for development of the railways in Maharashtra, the Maha Vikas Aghadi government has to contribute 50 per cent of its share for projects. The Union minister of state for railways was speaking at the inauguration of railway electrification from Manmad to Mukhed at Jalna railway station. Danve inaugurated the sub-station and electric pole for railway electrification from Manmad to Mukhed.

Union Minister of State for finance Dr Bhagwat Karad, MP Sanjay Jadhav, MLAs Kailash Gorantyal, Santosh Danve, Narayan Kuche, Atul Save and Prashant Bamb and railway and district officials



Raosaheb Danve

were present at the function.

There are demands for railway development from various quarters in the state. The Centre is ready to bring railway projects and new lines, but as per policy, the state has to contribute 50 per cent of its share, Danve said.

The minister further said that the works on the much-awaited Nagpur-

Mumbai bullet train will soon begin as the development project report (DPR) will be issued in a few days. With this, commuters from Mumbai to Aurangabad will cover the distance in just 1 hour and 40 minutes, he said.

To reduce carbon emission, the Centre has planned electrification of railways across the country, he said. Speaking about development of railway stations across the country, Danve said at least 75 railway stations, including Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus, will be developed in the first phase.

He further said that the Railways has taken up the dedicated freight corridor (DFC) project to improve efficiency and fast movement of freight transportation system.

HOLI CELEBRATIONS BEGIN



Students smear colour on each other, in celebration of the upcoming festival of Holi at Magadh Mahila College, in Patna, Saturday.

Marwari horse show kicked off in Jodhpur with 2,000 studs

Jodhpur, Mar 12 (PTI):

Over 2,000 Marwari horses, a native breed of Rajasthan, congregated in Jodhpur from across country for the two-day Marwari Horse Show, which was kicked off on Saturday. The show was inaugurated by Gaj Singh II, the erstwhile ruler and patron of the All India Marwari Horse Society.

The event has been organised jointly by the Marwari Horse Society and the Marwari Horse Stud Book Registration Society of India. This is the seventh edition of the show since 2013.

The show was initiated with a view to preserve



and promote the breed of the horse, which is native to western Rajasthan and is known worldwide for its agility and elegance.

Jagjeet Singh, Secretary of the society, said that the objective of the event is to maintain the identity and quality of the Marwari

breed. Horses registered in the stud book from all across the country will be participating in the show over the weekend, and will participate in activities and competitions, Singh said.

Over 2,000 horse owners have got their horses registered for the event from different states for the event being held at the Polo Ground. Only registered horses have been allowed to take part in the activities and competitions.

The show has emerged as a major event to have such a large and unique gathering of Marwari horses, also known as Malani horse.

HC grants conditional bail to nine ex-officials of private medical colleges

Jabalpur, Mar 12 (PTI):

The Madhya Pradesh High Court has granted conditional bail to nine former officials of private medical colleges accused of cheating, forgery among other offences related to pre-medical test PMT-2013 for admissions to MBBS course under the multi-crore Vyapam scam.

The court in its order stated that in the event of arrest, the petitioners may be released on their furnishing a personal bond amount of Rs 1 lakh.

A division bench of Justices S Nagu and M S

Bhatti on Friday imposed certain conditions on the accused persons, including that they will not seek unnecessary adjournments during the trial.

The court allowed bail applications of S N Vijaywargiya, the former chairman of Peoples College of Medical Science and Research Centre in Bhopal, Dr Ajay Goenka, the then secretary of Chirayu Charitable Foundation Bhopal and Suresh Singh Bhadoria, the then chairman of Mayank Welfare Society Indore.

The others granted bail were former members of Chirayu Medical College and Hospital's admission committee Dr

Ravi Saxena, S N Saxena and Dr V H Bhavsar, former dean of Peoples College of Medical Science and Research Centre Dr Vijay Kumar Pandya, Arun Kumar Arora, a former employee of Index Medical College Indore and former dean of Chirayu Medical College and Hospital Dr Virendra Mohan.

As per the order, the petitioners cannot seek unnecessary adjournments during the trial, cannot leave India without permission of the trial court, investigating officer, cannot indulge in extending inducement, threat or promise to any person acquainted with the facts of the case.



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