



माँ कुष्मांडा

BRIEF



Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren plays the musical instrument Mandar, on the occasion of the Sarhul festival, in Ranchi, Monday.

Arrested

Rewa: The Madhya Pradesh police arrested qawwali singer Sharif Parvaz, booked for making "provocative" remarks, from Kanpur and brought him to Rewa district on Monday, a police officer said. A case was registered against the qawwali singer after he allegedly made provocative remarks against the country, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Home Minister Amit Shah and Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath during a musical event at Mangawa town in Rewa district of Madhya Pradesh on March 28.

Fire

Amritsar: A fire broke out in a multi-storey commercial building in Ranjit Avenue here on Monday, police said. Around one dozen fire fighting vehicles were pressed into service to douse the fire, said the police. However, there was no report of any casualty in the incident, they said. The electric wiring system of the building caught fire because of a short circuit and it took four hours for the fire fighting vehicles to douse the flames, they added.

Extended

Mumbai: A special court here on Monday extended the judicial custody of Maharashtra minister Nawab Malik till April 18 in connection with a money laundering case. Malik (62) was arrested on February 23 by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) in a money-laundering probe linked to the activities of fugitive gangster Dawood Ibrahim and his aides.

Watery grave

Kozhikode: A newly-wed man drowned and his wife injured after the two slipped and fell into a river in Kuttidiy, near here, on Monday, police said. The police identified the man as Rejjilal (27), a native of Paleri near here, and the wife as Kanika, who has been hospitalised, the police said. According to the police, the couple and their relatives reached the area this morning, where the mishap took place.

Weather
High 40 Low 26

MARKET
NIFTY 18053.40
SENSEX 60,611.74

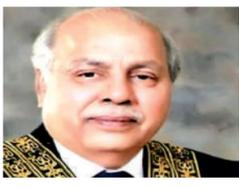
BULLION
GOLD 51,303
SILVER 66,489

Imran nominates former CJ of Pak as caretaker PM

Islamabad, Apr 04 (PTI):

Pakistan's former chief justice Gulzar Ahmed was on Monday nominated for the office of the caretaker prime minister by incumbent Imran Khan, amid ongoing political crisis in the country.

Former information minister and senior leader of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf party Fawad Chaudhry said that the premier made the decision after approval from the party's core committee. The announcement comes after President Arif Alvi



sent letters to Prime Minister Khan and Leader of the Opposition Shehbaz Sharif on Monday seeking suggestions for the appointment of a caretaker prime minister. "In response to the President's letter, after consultation and approval by the PTI Core Committee, Prime



Minister Imran Khan has nominated Pakistan's former chief justice Gulzar Ahmed for the post of caretaker Prime Minister," Chaudhry said. In his letter, President Alvi told them in case they do not agree on the appointment within three days of the dissolution of

the Parliament, they shall forward two nominees each to a committee to be constituted by the Speaker, comprising eight members of the outgoing assembly, or the Senate, or both, having equal representation from the treasury and the opposition.

The Constitution has empowered the president to appoint a caretaker prime minister in consultation with the prime minister and the leader of the Opposition in the outgoing National Assembly, the President's Secretariat said in a statement.

BJP's Raigarh unit chief booked for molestation

On colleague's complaint

Case registered

A case was registered against Umesh Agrawal on Monday with City Kotwali police station here based on the 21-year-old woman's complaint. As per the complaint, the alleged molestation incident took place in Agrawal's chamber in the BJP's Raigarh district unit office here on June 2 last year, The woman lodged a complaint in this connection on April 1 this year, following which an investigation was launched.

Agrawal's chamber in the BJP's Raigarh district unit office here on June 2 last year, The woman lodged a complaint in this connection on April 1 this year, following which an investigation was launched,

the police official said. Based on the preliminary probe, Agrawal was booked under Indian Penal Code section 354 (criminal assault with intent to outrage modesty), he added.

Doctor booked for extortion

Bilaspur, Apr 04:

A doctor hailing from neighbouring Madhya Pradesh has been booked for allegedly demanding money from a woman physician by threatening to circulate morphed photographs of her, police said on Monday. An extortion case under IPC and IT Act provisions has been registered against Dr Ashok Dante based on the complaint of the victim's husband who is also a doctor and runs a private hospital here, said JP Gupta, Station House Officer (SHO) of Civil Lines police. "As per the complaint lodged on Saturday, the

About the incident

As per the complaint lodged on Saturday, the woman doctor was in Chitrakoot in Satna district of neighbouring Madhya Pradesh between 2017 and 2020 for her medical studies during which she got acquainted with the accused Dr Ashok Dante. When the woman returned here after her studies, Dante allegedly demanded Rs 50 lakhs from her after threatening to circulate morphed images of her.

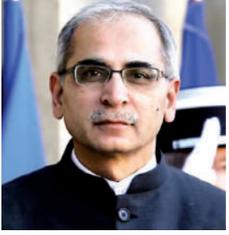
woman doctor was in Chitrakoot in Satna district of neighbouring Madhya Pradesh between 2017 and 2020 for her medical studies during which she got acquainted with Dante.

Vinay Mohan Kwatra appointed next FS

New Delhi, Apr 04 (PTI):

India's envoy to Nepal Vinay Mohan Kwatra was on Monday appointed as the new Foreign Secretary (FS), succeeding Harsh Vardhan Shringla who will retire at the end of this month, a personnel ministry order said. Announcing the appointment of Kwatra, a 1988-batch Indian Foreign Service (IFS) officer, the ministry said he will take charge as the foreign secretary on April 30. Kwatra's appointment was approved by the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet.

Before his diplomatic posting to Nepal in 2020, he served as the Ambassador of India to France from August 2017 to February 2020. A career diplomat with over 32 years of experience, Kwatra has also held



the position of a Joint Secretary in the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) for two years between October 2015 to August 2017. Kwatra headed the policy planning & research division of the Ministry of External Affairs between July 2013 and October 2015 and later served as the head of the Americas Division in the Foreign Ministry where he dealt with India's relations

with the United States and Canada. He served as Minister (Commerce) in the Embassy of India, Washington from May 2010 till July 2013.

Between 2003 and 2006, he served as a Counsellor and later as the Deputy Chief of Mission in the Embassy of India, Beijing, China.

After joining the service, he served as Third Secretary and then Second Secretary in the Permanent Mission of India in Geneva until 1993, where apart from learning the French language, he handled work relating to the UN specialized agencies, as also the Human Rights Commission. During this period, he also obtained a diploma in International Relations from the Graduate School of International Studies in Geneva.

Amitabh Bachchan to revive meet-and-greet with fans

Two years after suspending due to COVID

Mumbai, Apr 04 (PTI): Megastar Amitabh Bachchan on Monday teased that he is planning to restart his routine Sunday meet-and-greet with his fans as COVID-19 restrictions have been lifted in Maharashtra.

Bachchan, who used to meet-and-greet his fans every Sunday at his house Jalsa in Juhu, had called off the weekly activity in March 2020 due to the pandemic, putting an end to a 38-year-old tradition.

Now that the Maharashtra government has lifted all pandemic-related restrictions, includ-

ing the mandatory wearing of masks, the 79-year-old actor said the fan activity might resume.

"Alright .. the news about the city of Mumbai is that no more masks and protocol of COVID .. which comes as a blessing .. and the restrictions of flights in the International to be given operations as normal ..

"So hopefully travel from far off lands shall be in permission .. and perhaps the Sunday meets at the Jalsa gate on the Sunday to be revived, albeit with given precautions.

Buzz over Shivpal-BJP 'bonhomie' in UP

Shivpal may get Deputy Speaker's post

Lucknow, Apr 04 (PTI):

Amid reports of growing bonhomie between Pragatisheel Samajwadi Party-Lohia president Shivpal Yadav and the BJP, there is speculation that he may become Deputy Speaker in the Uttar Pradesh Assembly with the backing of the ruling party. "Such speculation is doing the rounds. The sky has no limits, nor does politics. The door of possibilities is never closed in politics, PSPL spokesperson Deepak Mishra told PTI.

Shivpal Yadav had floated his own party in 2019 after a rift with his nephew, Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav. But ahead of the recent assembly polls, the two were back together and Shivpal Yadav won from Jaswantnagar on an SP ticket. Strains appeared to have developed again between the two again after

the election results, with the BJP returning to power for a second consecutive term. The PSPL spokesperson recalled Shivpal Yadav's experience as a legislator. If the MLAs give him this responsibility, it will increase the dignity of the assembly," Mishra said.

Asked why Yadav is eyeing the Deputy Speaker's post, he said, "Which post is left now for him? He cannot become the Speaker. Neither can he become the Leader of the House or the Leader of Opposition."

Mishra said there has been no official proposal on PSPL leader's election to the Deputy Speaker's post. "But if such a proposal comes, Shivpal Yadav will be the first choice of the ruling party and the opposition," he added. When asked about the possibility, UP's Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs

Jaswant Singh Saini said, "I have no information in this regard." Earlier, there was speculation that Yadav would be sent to the Rajya Sabha by the BJP and his son Aditya Yadav would contest from the Jaswantnagar assembly seat vacated by him.

In October 2021, BJP-backed SP rebel Nitin Agarwal was elected as Deputy Speaker of the UP Legislative Assembly.

In recent days, there have been signs of strain within the opposition alliance headed by Akhilesh Yadav, and his uncle Shivpal Yadav has thrown hints that he is moving towards the BJP.

He has met Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath and begun following Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath and former deputy chief minister Dinesh Sharma on Twitter.

HC allows journalist Ayyub to travel abroad

Questions ED on LOC against her

New Delhi, Apr 04 (PTI):

The Delhi High Court Monday allowed journalist Rana Ayyub to travel abroad while questioning the Enforcement Directorate (ED) over a Look Out Circular (LOC) issued against her barring her from travelling abroad.

Justice Chandra Dhari Singh said the permission is subject to appropriate conditions and a detailed order will follow.

Deposit some money. Also, inform agencies as to where you are staying. Share your phone number, the court said.

The court was hearing Ayyub's plea seeking to quash a LOC issued against her barring her from travelling abroad.

The plea, however, was opposed by the ED which



alleged that she was involved in a serious offence regarding funds involving over Rs one crore and that there was an apprehension that she might not return to India.

During the hearing, the judge asked the ED as to how do you defend your LOC? It is an admitted fact that whenever a summons was issued, she replied and she appeared before officers. How do you say that she is avoiding investigation? Because for LOC, evidence should be satisfactory.

'Low number of COVID-19 cases'

Pune, Apr 04 (PTI):

Serum Institute of India CEO Adar Poonawalla on Monday said the low number of COVID-19 cases at the moment was because the country chose the right vaccine. Speaking to reporters on the sidelines of the 'Alternate Fuel Conclave', he said the fourth wave, if at all it occurs, will hopefully be mild. Speaking on the booster dose, he said, "About the booster dose, we have appealed to the government, because everyone who needs to travel, needs the booster dose. They (government) are having internal discussions and a policy on booster dose may be announced soon." All other countries are doing it and it was now time for India to have a look at it (booster dose), Poonawalla said, adding that the Centre had done a fantastic job by covering most of eligible adult population with two vaccine doses.

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Nutrient	Diseases due to Deficiency	To replenish
Vitamin A	Weak eyesight, fatigue, dry skin and frequently falling sick can occur due to Vitamin A deficiency.	
Vitamin C	Deficiency of Vitamin C can cause muscle weakness, pain in joints and muscles, gum bleeding etc.	
Vitamin D	Helpful for regulating calcium and phosphate in the body. Its deficiency can cause fatigue and bone weakness.	
Vitamin E	Useful antioxidant and helpful in stability of cell membrane. Its deficiency can cause skin problems and hairfall.	
Vitamin K	Vitamin K is beneficial for blood circulation. Its deficiency causes low bone density.	
Vitamin B1	Vitamin B1 converts food to energy. Its deficiency can cause dementia, alzheimer's, cancer and metabolism related problems.	
Vitamin B2	Vitamin B2 is important to increase immunity. Its deficiency can cause nerve diseases, anemia and problems related to the heart.	
Vitamin B12	Deficiency of Vitamin B12 can effect the brain, nervous system and blood pressure. It helps in building red blood cells in the body.	

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Eight arrested for operating online cricket betting racket

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Apr 04: In a bid to tighten noose around the people involved in the innovative online betting, Durg Police took its third consecutive major action on Monday. They have arrested eight persons who were operating online cricket betting racket through Mahadev Online Book.

Police are investigating the inter-state and international connections of this gang. Police seized Rs 54,730 cash, 8 nos mobile phones worth Rs 1,70,700, one ATM card, 05 nos betting records and ball point pen total worth Rs 2,25,430. Police are collecting information about various bank accounts of the accused.

ASP (city) Sanjay Dhruv informed that under the guidance of SSP (Durg) BN Meena, teams of various police stations are conducting special operation against the illegal activities of



betting and gambling. The team of Chhawani Police Station led by Inspector Vishal Sone achieved a major breakthrough in this direction. Immediately after the launch of IPL season, Chhawani Police has been conducting a continuous campaign to curb the illegal betting. The network of informers has been activated for the purpose. In this sequel, Chhawani Police received a tip off regard-

ing some people who were operating an illegal online betting racket. Acting on this tip off, Police team conducted raid at Satnam Bhavan in Camp-2 and rounded up eight persons. They were caught red-handed while operating the online cricket betting racket through their social media accounts like Instagram, WhatsApp and Telegram. They were providing the ID / password to the interest-

ed people and were receiving online payments against the bets. Police recovered Rs 54,730 cash, eight nos Mobile phones worth Rs 1,70,700, one ATM card; 05 nos betting records and ball point pen total worth Rs 2,25,430. They have been booked under the provisions mentioned in section 4 (a) of Gambling Act. The accused are identified as Rahul Mudgare alias Aman Khan (26) son

of Wahad Khan a resident of Shardapara, Chhawani; Jaishankar Prasad (42) son of Kanta Prasad a resident of Santoshipara, Milan Chowk Camp 2; Sagar Singh (27) son of Sarvjit Singh a resident of EWS 671, Vaishali Nagar; Vikas Singh alias Babu (30) son of Sajawal Singh a resident of Ghasidas Nagar, Jamul; Sunny Choudhary (26) son of Ramesh Choudhary a resident of Rajiv nagar; ACC Chowk, Jamul; N Sunil (32) son of N Srinivas Rao a resident of Kailash Nagar; Jamul; Saurabh Shukla (27) son of Omprakash Shukla a resident of Babadeep Singh Nagar, Vaishali Nagar; and Anil Singh alias Jhumru (29) son of Late Harjit Singh a resident of Ruabandha, Bhilai. Inspector Vishal Sone, SI Naresh Sarva, Head Constable Jaspal Singh, Constable Jeet Narayan Yadav, Amit Singh, Trilok Bhati and Dharmendra Singh played vital role in arresting the accused.

Two held with psychotropic drugs



Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Apr 04: Police have arrested two persons on charges of illegal trade of psychotropic drugs. About 2012 tablets of the scheduled drugs were seized from their possession. The accused were illegally selling these tablets to the addicts. Jamul Police arrested the accused and booked them under the provisions of Narcotics Act. ASP (City) Sanjay Dhruv informed that the accused

are identified as Rahul Srivastava (32) son of Shankar Kumar Srivastava a resident of Camp 2 Power House and Shailabh Sharma (45) son of Laxmi Kumar Sharma a resident of Mukut Nagar, Durg. ASP Dhruv informed that under the guidance of Senior Superintendent of Police (Durg) Badri Narayan Meena (IPS), effective action is being taken against illegal drug dealers and peddlers in the district. In this sequence, the

Jamul police had received information about the trade of illegal narcotic pills. After verifying the information, Jamul Police team led by Inspector Gaurav Pandey conducted a raid and rounded up two persons. On searching, police recovered 2012 nos tablets of scheduled psychotropic drugs from their possession. An offense was registered against the accused under section 08/22B of Narcotics Act.

Life skills and mental skills training imparted to Govt Primary School students

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Apr 04: The students of Government Primary School, Ruabandha, Bhilai were given training on life skills and mental health by the members of Psychology department of St Thomas College. Training on increase of memory skills, positive physical and mental health and personal hygiene were given.

This work was done under the successful guidance of the Head Master of the school and his teachers. Head of the department Dr Debjani Mukherjee, Assistant Professor Dr Sumita Singh and Dr Ankita Deshmukh helped their students to carry out the programme. Training was given to the students of class III to V of Government Primary



School. Along with the training, stationery, food items and sanitizers were also distributed to them. The primary school students very enthusiastically participated in all events. These extension programs were also conducted under the

aegis of 'Aahan', initiative of the 50th year celebrations of St Thomas Mission, Bhilai. The administrator of the college, Father Dr Joshi Varghese appreciated the efforts taken and the Principal Dr MG Royman encouraged the

department to organize such awareness programmes. Faculty of the department Dr Sumita Singh, Assistant Professor and Dr Ankita Deshmukh, Assistant Professor, accompanied the students and took the guidance sessions.

Durg Police seeks Look Out Circular against absconding

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Apr 04: Senior Superintendent of Police (Durg) has written a letter to Intelligence Bureau seeking Look Out Circular against the people involved in illegal online betting.

During Police is carrying out a special campaign "Hunter" to crack down on people involved in online cricket betting through Mahadev Online Book IDs. There are some high profile offenders who have escaped and are likely to leave the country.

Durg Police is sending its report against such accused to the Intelligence Bureau for getting Look Out Circulars issued against them. In this sequel, Police have sought Look Out Circulars



Abhishek Gaur



Pushpendra Kumar Parakh

against Abhishek Gaur; an accused of section 306 IPC of Smriti Nagar and Pushpendra alias Ricky Parakh, an accused of extortion.

ASP (city) Sanjay Dhruv informed that under the guidance of Senior Superintendent of Police (Durg) BN Meena, Durg Police is conducting "Operation Hunter" against the illegal activi-

ties of Gambling, Online Betting on IPL Cricket matches, etc. After the commencement of the IPL tournament, Police is continuously taking action against the bookies, operators, etc.

Police are conducting search operations against the two well off people who have links with the online betting racket. It is suspected that the accused

are planning to flee to some foreign country. Considering the situation, Police have sought look out circulars from IB against the accused.

The first accused is Abhishek Gaur on of Bharat Gaur, who is wanted in connection with a abetment to suicide case registered at Smriti Nagar Police Station.

The second accused is Pushpendra Kumar Parakh alias Ricky Parakh son of Ropchand Parakh who is wanted in extortion case registered at Bhilai Nagar Police Station under sections 342, 384, 386, 34 of IPC. Durg Police has requested the Intelligence Bureau (IB) to issue Look Out Circulars against the accused to prevent them from escaping abroad.

Government invites bids to disinvest FSNL; employees launch protest

Central Chronicle News



ernment's decision. They staged demonstrations in the morning and evening as well and wore black ribbons at the workplace. They are expecting solidarity from the employees and Trade Unions of Bhilai Steel Plant.

It needs to be mentioned here that the Union Government had made a failed attempt to disinvest FSNL in the year 2017. As the total assets of the company are the equipment and earth movers, the private and corporate players did not show interest.

Apart from the Bhilai Headquarters, FSNL has its offices in Hyderabad, Rourkela, Burnpur, Bokaro, Visakhapatnam, Durgapur, Duburi,

Haridwar, Bhadravati, Salem, Mumbai and Hazira. FSNL offers services in the recovery and processing of scrap from slag and refuse generated during iron and steel making across different steel plants.

They offer services for dig and haul of blast furnaces and steel melting shop slag at slag yards, processing of iron and steel skulls, mill rejects and maintenance scrap as per the specific requirements of its customers. The Company also undertakes scarfing of metal slabs, crushing and screening of LD slag to be used in sinter plant, blast furnace, steel melting shop and rail ballast. It removes sludge and

ash deposit from sludge compartments and ash ponds. It handles and neutralizes acid sludge in open hearth muck dump. The company is the largest recycler in India in terms of the volume of scrap and slag handled across various steel plants. The company was incorporated on March 28, 1979 to provide steel mill services.

At present 23 officers, 145 employees and 170 contract workers are working in Bhilai Headquarters. While a total of 1451 officers and contract workers, including 130 officers, 490 employees, are employed in FSNL all over the country.

Equipment, earth

movers, cranes, etc constitute the total assets of FSNL. Most of the equipment used by FSNL in scrap processing and transportation are very old. The company is conducting most of the work by outsourcing. Hence, the company's asset valuation will not be very high.

But the government is trying to attract the bidders by displaying the existing orders and contracts of FSNL. Even in the absence of assets, the Mini Ratna PSU has continuously generated profit over years. In the year 2020-21, where the company earned a profit before tax (PBT) of Rs 32 crore, its net profit was Rs 23 crore.

Sahu Samaj playing vital role in state's development: Guru Rudra Kumar

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Apr 04: PHE Minister Guru Rudra Kumar on Monday said that the Sahu Samaj, through its positive activities, is not only ensuring progress of its people, but is also making significant contributions in development and progress of the state. Minister of PHE and Village Industries, Guru Rudra Kumar was addressing the Karma Jayanti celebrations at village Devaloda.

Extending greetings on Karma Jayanti, the Minister said that Bhakt Mata Karma is revered by the Sahu Samaj. Prominent speakers gave detailed information about her biography. Members of Sahu Samaj are preserving the social traditions. Guru Rudra Kumar said that the Chhattisgarh government has declared a holiday on the occasion of Karma Jayanti. This shows that the Government of Chhattisgarh is deeply interested in keeping the cul-



tural concerns intact. The Minister further said that he is constantly working with the people and is resolving their problems in every possible way. Based on the feedback received from the people, various works have been approved. The most important work is being done for ensuring supply of drinking water. Through Jaljeevan Mission, the state government ensured supply of clean drinking water to every household. For the first time, on such a large scale, a campaign is being conducted to provide pure water in every village through the Jaljeevan Mission. He added that their aim is to help improve

the skills of the people further and enhance them through modern technology. Arrangements for such training are being made through the Department of Village Industries. People are getting skilled and are starting their own business. The traditional art of Chhattisgarh is very beautiful. The state government is working to provide markets for the traditional art forms and make its identity reach far and wide.

Speaking on the occasion, the Minister said that Gauthans are being developed as Rural Livelihood Centers in the villages. Such local products which can be produced at the village level only, are being produced in Gauthans. Special arrangements are being made in C-mart for the sale of such products. Senior public representatives of Bhilai 3 and office bearers of Sahu Samaj also addressed the function and expressed their gratitude to the Minister for the rapid development of the area.



Collectors directed to stop arbitrary collection of fees

In pvt schools

Fees can be increased up to a maximum of 8% once by school fee committee

District Collectors have right to hear appeals against decision of School Fee Committee

Central Chronicle News

Raipur, Apr 04: Chhattisgarh government has asked all the collectors of the state to constitute district level fee regulation committees and ensure strict compliance of the provisions of Chhattisgarh Non-Government School Fee Regulation Act-2020 in order to strictly stop arbitrary

collection of fees in private schools being run in the state.

Principal Secretary School Education Dr Alok Shukla has asked the collectors to take necessary action under the provisions of the Act after obtaining information regarding the fees of all private schools in their districts, so that the fees are not increased by private schools in an uncontrolled manner and parents should not face any difficulty. In letters to all the Collectors the Principal Secretary Dr Shukla referred to information received from various sources about difficulties being faced by parents due to hike in fees in non-government schools against provisions of the Act.

Drawing the attention of the District Collectors to the sub-section 8 of Section 10 of the Act, he

said that there is a provision in this that the school fees can be increased by the committee at a time by a maximum of 8%. To increase the fee beyond this, the school fee committee will have to present its proposal before the district fee committee.

A reasonable decision will be taken on this proposal by the Fee Regulation Committee at the district level. Under Section-13 of the Act, the District Committee has the right to hear appeals against the School Fee Committee. According to Section 4 of the Act, the District Fee Committee is headed by the District Collector and the District Education Officer is the Secretary. The District Collectors have been empowered enough in the Act to regulate the uncontrolled fee hike by private schools.

PRECAUTIONS



Girls are taking all necessary precautions from heat-wave that has started just in the first week of April.

Three fencing players from the state selected for the Junior World Championship

Raipur, Apr 04: Three players from Chhattisgarh have been selected for the Fencing Junior and Cadet World Championships. The office bearers of Chhattisgarh Fencing Association including Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel have extended their congratulations and best wishes to these players. The players who have been selected for the Junior World Championship are Sukham Ningthuba, K. Denny Singh and S.N. Shiva Magesh is involved. Member of Chhattisgarh Fencing Association Mr. Sameer Khan has been appointed as Team Manager by Fencing Association of India.

It is worth mentioning that the Junior and Cadet World Fencing Championships (Boys and Girls) organised by the United Arab Emirates, Fencing, Federation at Dubai Hamdan Sports Complex, Dubai, UAE. It is being organised under the aegis of International Fencing Federation from April 02 to April 10, 2022 in which a 47-member fencing team of Indian Junior and Cadet Boys and Girls Fencing Team is being sent by the Fencing Association of India. As Team Manager of Indian



Junior and Cadet Fencing Team, former General Secretary of Chhattisgarh Pradesh Fencing Association and presently member Mr. Sameer Khan has been appointed as Team Manager by Fencing Association of India. Three players from Chhattisgarh have been selected in the said World Championship. The players have been selected for winning medals in individual event held at 29th Junior National Fencing Championship (Boys and Girls), Sonapat, Haryana from December 25 to 28, 2022, in which Mr. Sukham Ningthoba (Silver Medal- Foil Event), Mr. K. Denny Singh (Bronze Medal - File Event) and Shri S.N. Shiva Magesh (Gold Medal - File Event). Chhattisgarh Fencing Association, President, Dr.

Bharti Dasan, Executive, President, Sunil Kumar Agarwal, Senior Vice President, Ajit Singh Patel, Treasurer, Ram Pratap Gupta, Prince Bhatia, General Secretary and Treasurer of the Fencing Federation of India, Bashir Ahmed Khan, all the office bearers of the Association and office bearers of various sports associations. Expressed happiness over being selected from Chhattisgarh for Fencing Junior World Championship and said that this would create a better environment for fencing in the state. A positive environment will be created for the sports talents of the state to move forward. Congratulating the players and team manager of the state, Mr. Sameer Khan, he has given best wishes for getting the medal by performing excellently in the World Championship.

New Legislative Assembly Secretary Sharma takes over charge

Speaker congratulates Sharma for new responsibility

Raipur, Apr 04: Newly appointed Chhattisgarh Legislative Assembly Secretary Dinesh Sharma took over the charge today morning in front of the Speaker Dr Charandas Mahant. Dr Mahant extended greetings and best wishes to Dinesh Sharma for new responsibility. Senior officers of Assembly Secretariat too extended greetings and



best wishes to Dinesh Sharma for new responsibility. Sharma assured Dr Mahant that he would always work for maintaining the dignity and prestige of the Legislative Assembly Secretariat.

People, who had to migrate to Telangana-AP are welcome if they want to return: CM



After being displaced from Sukma, Bijapur, Dantewada during Salwa Judum

Raipur, Apr 04: Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel has said that those people of Chhattisgarh who migrated to Telangana and Andhra Pradesh after being displaced from Bastar, Sukma, Bijapur, Dantewada during Salwa Judum, will be wholeheartedly welcomed by Chhattisgarh Government, if they decide to come back. State Government will chalk out an action plan to create a conducive environment for their rehabilitation. Chief Minister Baghel expressed aforementioned views, during his discussion with the delegation of people from Telangana at his residence office today. Members of this delegation were the people who had migrated from

Sukma, Bijapur and Dantewada districts of Chhattisgarh to Telangana during the Salwa Judum. Industries Minister Mr. Kawasi Lakhma, Chhattisgarh State Scheduled Tribes Commission Chairman Bhanupratap Singh were also present on the occasion.

During the meeting with Chief Minister Baghel, the delegation requested for suitable location for rehabilitation of the people returning from the aforementioned states and to provide them land for agriculture. In response to their request, Chief Minister said that people who desire to come back to Chhattisgarh will be provided all kinds of basic facilities including ration shop, school, employment, along with the land. Additional Chief Secretary, Home Department Subrat Sahoo and Director General of Police Ashok Juneja were also present on the occasion.

Dacoits run away with cash, jewellery worth lakhs

Dacoity in a house of pharma trader in Sai Vatika, Devpuri

Raipur, Apr 04: There are reports that a pharma trader from Sai Vatika Colony in Tikrapara area of capital city was held hostage late at night on Monday and dacoity was conducted. Dacoits ran away with cash and jewellery worth above Rs 10 lakhs. When the Police came to know about it in the morning they reached the site and taken the matter under investigation.



son in Sai Vatika in Devpuri under Tikrapara thana, 6-7 dacoits entered his house on intervening night of Monday-Tuesday and held his wife as hostage and ran away with cash and jewellery worth lakhs.

On hearing about this dacoity, SSP Prashant Agrawal, Addl. SP Crime Abhishek Maheshwari, Addl. SP (West) Aakash Rao Girepunje, along with

all TIs and other officers reached the site. The Police started its investigation in to the matter and brought sniffer dog to the site and took finger prints as well. It is learnt that in this theft, there are few old and new gold jewellery. The Police is interrogating with the family members and victim DK Sahu, who is supplier of medical items and medicines.

Reverting to the old pension scheme has put an end to retirement worries: CM

Officers and employees are strength of the government: Mr. Baghel

Ch'garh Employees-Officers Federation honour CM Bhupesh Baghel

Raipur, Apr 04: Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel on Monday attended the "Mukhyamantri Pension Drishta Samman Samaroh" organized by Chhattisgarh Employees-Officers Federation at Indr'vati Bhawan, Nava Raipur. The federation expressed gratitude to Chief Minister for restoration of the old pension scheme. Industries Minister Kawasi Lakhma, Commissioner C.R. Prasanna, Chief



Executive Officer of NRDA and Commissioner Housing Board Dr. Ayyaz Tamboli, Heads of Departments, Chhattisgarh Staff Officers Federation's Provincial Convener Kamal Verma, office-bearers of federation along with a large number of officers and employees were also present on the occasion.

Extending Navratri wishes to everyone on the occasion, the Chief Minister said that I am glad to know there is a wave of joy among you all due to the restoration old pension scheme. Now no more worries retirement worries. He assured that the problems of employee organizations will be resolved. "I was aware of the difficulty that you people were facing due to the

Contributory Pension Scheme. Everyone wants to lead a dignified life post-retirement. Officers-employees are the strength of government and the work is adversely affected by constant worries. Therefore, the old pension scheme has been restored to boost the morale of officers-employees", said the Chief Minister.

Heaping praise on the officers-employees for working with utmost dedication during the Covid-19 pandemic times, Chief Minister said that you all have worked hard during the pandemic period, many lost their lives, yet you all stood firm and worked in solidarity. As a result, the management of Chhattisgarh during the pandemic was appreciated all across the country. Meanwhile, we also took care of the families of those who lost their lives

due to Covid-19. Showing sensitivity towards such families, the government abolished the exemption of compassionate appointment deadline.

He added that many states witnessed salary deduction during the pandemic period; however, our government did not undertake any such step. I had bluntly told my officers that there would be no salary deduction at all.

It is worth mentioning that Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel has undertaken a historic decision to restore the old pension scheme in place of new pension scheme in the state. About 3 lakh government servants of the state will get benefited from this decision. Chief Minister Mr. Baghel was honored with 'Pension Drishta Samman' by the Federation.

Alertness of traffic police and patrolling party avoids situation of traffic jam

In and around Bhatagaon Inter-State Bus Stand

Central Chronicle News

Raipur, Apr 04: With continuous patrolling of the traffic police and patrolling party in the area around the inter-state bus stand of the capital Raipur, people are not facing any kind of inconvenience in commuting to and from the inter-state bus stand. Traffic police personnel are working continuously to manage the traffic pressure in and around the inter-state bus stand in Bhatagaon area.

According to Raipur Senior Superintendent of Police Prashant Agrawal,

action has been taken against 397 vehicles parked in no parking zone in that area in three months from November 2021 to February 2022 after the bus stand was started. Action has been taken on buses, 91 cars, 28 auto rickshaws, 11 small goods vehicles, 246 two wheelers and 01 truck. He said that the traffic and police personnel are systematically organizing traffic in the inter-state bus stand and the surrounding area besides giving necessary advice to the drivers to follow the traffic rules.

Buses are operating from the Inter-State Bus Terminal at Bhatagaon. There are separate routes for the buses to enter and exit the bus stand. Buses ply on the

designated routes and passengers are allowed to board the buses from the bus stand itself. After coming out on exit route the buses pass through service road under Bhatagaon bridge towards destinations. Buses at Bhatagaon Chowk do not stop for boarding.

Frequent movement of buses at the bus stand leads to jam on the service road. Traffic personnel and patrolling team have been deployed at Bhatagaon Chowk for patrolling. Due to entry and exit movement of buses near the under-bridge, the speed of traffic remains slow but the situation of jam is not created because of patrolling by the traffic and police teams.

CM unveils statue of former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi

Central Chronicle News

Raipur, Apr 04: Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel unveiled the statue of the country's first woman Prime Minister, Late Indira Gandhi in village Jarve in Balodabazar district. Unveiling the statue of Mrs. Indira Gandhi. It is worth noting that in the early years of the 80s, when she was the Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi had come

on a tour to village Jarve. He laid the foundation stone of Old Jerve Minor to give relief to the people suffering from the problem of famine. During the unveiling of the statue, Chief Minister Baghel felicitated the Iron Lady Late Mrs Indira Gandhi. Remembering the personality and work of Indira Gandhi, Chief Minister Baghel congratulated the entire team of Gram Panchayat includ-

ing local public representatives, villagers. On this occasion Parliamentary Secretary and MLA Shakuntala Sahu, District Panchayat President Rakesh Verma, District President Hitendra Thakur, District Panchayat President Khilendra Verma, Sarpanch of the village Mrs. Munni Verma, all Panchs and senior officials of Kurmi Samaj were present.

Raipur, Apr 04: On the instructions of Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel, the Commissioner Bastar Division, Jagdalpur has been appointed as the nodal officer for coordination with different states for the purpose of rehabilitation of the migrant people of Bastar region. In the instructions issued by the State Government, it has been mentioned that the Nodal Officer shall ensure that Forest Rights are being provided to the

Big initiative has been taken for the rehabilitation of migrant population of Bastar region: CM

Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers under (Recognition of Forest Rights Act 2006) in the border state of Bastar division to Telangana and other provinces. According to the provisions of the Recognition of Rights Amendment Rules 2012, the Nodal officer will coordinate for the rehabilitation of the Scheduled Tribes community. For the rehabilitation action, the Commissioner, Bastar

division has been directed to coordinate with the local public representatives and has been asked to issue separate telephone numbers or mobile numbers for easy contact with the migrants. The mobile number for contact will also be uploaded in the government website.

It is noteworthy that a delegation of people of Chhattisgarh who came from Telangana had a discussion with Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel

at his residence office here on Monday. During the meeting, the delegation urged the Chief Minister to settle them in a suitable place and provide land for agriculture. On their demand, the Chief Minister said that along with giving land to the people who want to come back to Chhattisgarh, they would be provided with basic facilities including access to ration shops, school and employment.

Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel has said that the people of Chhattisgarh who went to Telangana and Andhra Pradesh after being displaced from Bastar region Sukma, Bijapur, Dantewada during Salwa Judum, the state government is ready to welcome them wholeheartedly if they want to come back. A conducive environment will be created for their rehabilitation by making an action plan.

3006 Gauthans of the state have become self-sufficient

Self-supporting Gauthan has started purchasing cow dung using their own funds

Cow dung worth Rs 13.18 cr purchased so far

Central Chronicle News

Raipur, Apr 04: The Gauthans built under the 'Suraji Gaon Yojana'—one of the flagship schemes of the Government of Chhattisgarh, are rapidly heading towards becoming self-sufficient. As many as 3006 Gauthans have become self-supporting in the state so far. These self-supporting Gauthans have now started procuring cow dung using their own funds under the Godhan Nyay Yojana. Cow dung worth Rs 13 crore 18 lakh has



been purchased so far. The number of self-supporting Gauthans is more than one third of the number of Gauthans built and operated in the state. As many as 8366 Gauthans have built and operated in the state. Raigarh district has the highest number of self-sufficient gauthans i.e. 279, while Rajnandgaon ranks second with the 221

self-supporting Gauthans and Janjgir-Champa district has the third highest number of self-sufficient gauthans i.e. 190.

According to the information received from the Agriculture Department, 26 Gauthans in Gariyaband district, 130 in Dhamtari, 101 in Balodabazar, 170 in Mahasamund, 85 in

Raipur district, 141 in Kabirdham, 185 in Durg, 67 in Balod, 78 in Bemetara, 175 in Korba, 28 in Gaurela-Pendra-Marwahi, 101 in Bilaspur, 82 in Mungeli, 121 in Korea, 75 in Jashpur, 80 in Balrampur, 105 in Surguja, 94 in Surajpur, 144 in Kanker, 80 in Kondagaon, 64 in Dantewada, 7 in

Narayanpur, 102 in Bastar, 23 in Bijapur and 52 in Sukma district have become self-supporting.

It is worth mentioning that in order to promote the conservation and promotion of livestock in the state, the state government has so far approved the construction of Gauthan in around 10,591 villages. Out of which the construction of 8,366 Gauthans has been completed. Purchase of cow dung, manufacturing of vermi compost and other income-generating activities are being conducted in these Gauthans. At present, construction work of 1750 Gauthans are being done at a rapid pace and the work of construction of remaining 475 Gauthans is yet to be started. Arrangements of quality fodder, care, treatment, and water for livestock have been ensured in the Gauthans.

RELIEF FROM SCORCHING HEAT



Citizens are taking a break near sugarcane juice shop to take relief from scorching heat here on Tuesday.

Dr Shailesh Sharma takes charge as Principal, GEMS



Central Chronicle News

Raipur, Apr 04: In a glittering ceremony Dr Shailesh Sharma took over the charge of new principal of Shri Gujarati English Medium School (SGEMS) from the new academic session. He succeeded Vishnu Kumar Mishra who achieved age

of superannuation and by virtue of his experience has been relocated as Administrator of Shri Gujarati Shikshan Sangh (GSS).

Dr Sharma was given charge by the outgoing principal in presence of Ramji Bhai, president of patron committee, Jayanti Bhai Patel and Kirti Bhai

Vyas, both vice presidents of executive committee, Tushi Bhai Patel and Ashok Bhai Patel, both secretaries of executive committee, Jayant Bhai Taunk, treasurer and other committee members. The programme started with lighting of ceremonial lamp and formal welcome of the guests. Thereafter outgoing principal handed over charge to Dr Sharma on the stage and registrar Ashok Jachak made formal announcement to this regard. New Principal addressed the gathering and outgoing principal too delivered his address. The programme ended with vote of thanks by the Vice Principal S V Chandrasekhar.

BJYM accorded warm welcome to Abhishek Singh



Dhamdha, Apr 04: BJPians accorded warm welcome to former LSMP of Rajnandgaon Abhishek Singh and BJYM State President Amit Sahu at city's Gandai Chowk here

on Monday. In this hundreds of BJYM workers under leadership of BJYM former President and corporator Aaruni Dani welcomed the leader duo with slogans of 'Jai Shri Ram'. In

this welcome rally, former Mandal President BJP Naresh Sahu, General Secretary Harsh Sahu, Pradeep Tamrakar, Pawan Dewangan, Montu Gupta, Prabhakar Sharma, BJYM Gen. Secy. Dishan Sinha, V-P Tamradhwaj Verma, Tulesh Sonwami, Shubhank Sharma, Sonu Chandel, Sanju Dheemar, Tulesh Verma, Pankaj Patel Bori, Chotu Bori, Rajaram Verma, Manoj Sahu, Mohan Yadav, Vicky Dheemar, Ballu Sinha, Jitendra Sahu, Dinesh Yadav, Sanjay Thakur, Birebhet and other party workers were present.

CM pays tribute to Makhanlal Chaturvedi

● On his birth anniversary

Raipur, Apr 04: Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel has paid homage to the famous poet, writer, journalist and Padma Bhushan Award recipient Makhanlal Chaturvedi on his birth anniversary on April 4. Baghel said that he awakens the spirit of patriotism with his impressive writing and inspired people to active-

ly participate in the freedom struggle. In his works, a unique confluence of love for nature, sacrifice and patriotism is seen. His popular work 'Pushpa Ki Abhilasha' written by him in Central Jail Bilaspur during the freedom struggle is filled with patriotism. Baghel said that the work of Makhanlal Chaturvediji and his invaluable contribution will always inspire people.

Ch'garh's unemployment rate drops to 0.6% in March, lowest so far

'Ch'garh Model' of development giving major boost to state's economic growth

Ch'garh tops the list of states with lowest unemployment rate in the country

Raipur, Apr 04: According to the latest data released by the Center for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE), the unemployment rate in Chhattisgarh has fallen to 0.6 per cent in March, which is the lowest so far. Chhattisgarh ranks first in the country with the lowest unemployment rate. Meanwhile, in March, India's unemployment rate stood at 7.5 per cent.

Chhattisgarh's economy is scaling new heights of growth and progress with the effective implementation of Chhattisgarh Model of development Under the leadership of Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel. According to the data, Chhattisgarh tops the states with the lowest unemployment rate in the country with 0.6 per cent. The State Government has undertaken several steps and formulated new policies for generating employment opportunities especially for the youth, resulting in constant decline in the unemployment rate. According to the data released by CMIE as on 2 April 2022, Haryana has the highest unemployment rate at 26.7 per cent, followed by Rajasthan and Jammu and Kashmir at 25 per cent each, Jharkhand at 14.5 per cent, Bihar at

14.4 per cent, Tripura at 14.1 per cent, and Himachal Pradesh at 12.1 per cent.

The Chhattisgarh government adopted a new model of development three years ago in line with Mahatma Gandhi's vision of 'Gram Swaraj', with a goal of inclusive development of the state. Under this model, schemes and programmes like Suraji Gaon Yojana, Narva-Garva-Ghurva-Bari programme, Godhan Nyay Yojana, Rajiv Gandhi Kisan Nyay Yojana, Rajiv Gandhi Grameen Bhumihreen Krishi Mazdoor Nyay Yojana, establishment of Rural Industrial Parks, procurement of collection and value addition of Minor Forest Produce are being implemented for boosting rural economy. New employment opportunities

are being created in rural areas with the effective implementation of these schemes which are giving impetus to the holistic development of the state. Even during the first and second wave of Covid-19 pandemic, the economy of Chhattisgarh remained untouched by the nationwide economic slowdown. Even then the unemployment rate in Chhattisgarh remained completely under control. The State Government has formed "Chhattisgarh Employment Mission" with an aim to create around 15 lakh new employment opportunities in the coming five years. According to the latest report, India's unemployment rate stood at 7.5%. The urban unemployment rate at 8.5% and the rural unemployment rate at 7.1%.

ERP Samarth Portal training in CU

Bilaspur, Apr 04: The training for Samarth Online Portal of the Ministry of Education, Government of India took place in Guru Ghasidas Vishwavidyalaya (Central University), on April 4, 2022. Under the able leadership and efficient guidance of Vice-Chancellor, Professor Alok Kumar Chakrawal, emphasis is being laid on the implementation of Samarth Online Portal at a rapid pace in the university.

On April 4, 2022, the implementation of the modules was discussed in detail in the training program organized from 11.00 am in the meeting room of the administrative building of the university in which the problems being faced in implementation of main User Management System, Student Feedback Management, and Knowledge Management System were resolved through online medium by subject experts associated



with the Samarth Project. On behalf of the University, suggestions were given to the members of IIC, UDSC New Delhi for partial modifications according to the working and procedures of the University. The meeting was mainly attended by, Director of IQAC, Prof. AS Ranadive, The Registrar,

Prof. Shailendra Kumar and the Deans of various Schools of Study, Heads of Departments and other teachers and officers.

This training meeting was organized by the Coordinator of the University's Samarth Online Portal, Senior Professor, Prof. Amit

Saxena and Assistant Coordinator Dr. Rohit Raja, Dr. Amit Khaskalam and Dr. Vinay Singh. Mr. Alok Patel from IIC UDSC New Delhi joined as well. Samarth online portal has 45 modules.

It may be mentioned that 45 modules of Samarth ERP University Management System are being successfully implemented which include modules for examination, admission, finance, reserves, human resources etc. Experts related to the Samarth project IIC UDSC Delhi are telling the solutions of the problems faced in the implementation of various modules through online medium.

Under Samarth online portal, related training was given to 45 module users, module coordinators and 03 assistant coordinators and problems were solved online during this training program. The vote of thanks for the program was given by Dr. Amit Khaskalam.

Inauguration of e-Office system at IIT Bhilai

Central Chronicle News

Raipur, Apr 04: The e-Office system was inaugurated on April 4, 2022, at IIT Bhilai. Its main objective is to promote digitization and reduce the use of paper. The chief guest of the program was Professor Rajat Moona, Director, IIT Bhilai.



E-Office is an ambitious scheme of the government. It is easy to operate, and it creates greater efficiency when compared to non-digitized methods.

The officers and employees of the institute have undertaken a rigorous training to gear themselves with this future-proof tool in storing relevant data and maintaining records. E-Office is a crucial step towards paperless work, and once it is imple-

mented, all officers and employees will have the necessary platform to exchange files through the e-Office system.

The program started with welcoming the guests and everyone present. Thereafter Ms. Kaveri, Junior Superintendent gave a brief description on e-Office. Then the Deputy Director General, National Informatics Centre (NIC), Dr. Ashok Kumar Hota shared the

Gauthans are playing an important role in strengthening rural economy: CM

CM announced an early commencement of Jarve minor line, besides the establishment of a link court at Palari and a library in district headquarters in the memory of Swami Atmanand

Raipur, Apr 04: Gauthans are playing an important role in giving impetus to the rural economy and in realizing the dreams of Mahatma Gandhi. Gauthans in Chhattisgarh are being developed as livelihood centers to involve youth and women self help groups in the employment-oriented works, said Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel while addressing the 76th Annual Convention of Palari Raj Kurmi Kshatriya Samaj organized at village Jarve under Palari develop-



ment block of Balodabazar-Bhatapara district today. Chief Minister Baghel inaugurated the conference by paying tribute to the ancestors of the community and by remembering the freedom fighters Jhalu Ram Chandravanshi, Salik Ram Chandravanshi, and social worker Chaubees Ram Chandravanshi. Baghel approved sanction of Rs 30 lakh for construction of social harmony building (Samajik Samrasta Bhavan) in the memory of the freedom fighters of the village Jarve. In this building, the statues of the freedom fighters namely Jhalu Ram Chandravanshi, Salik Ram

Chandravanshi, social worker Chaubees Ram Chandravanshi will also be erected. Chief Minister announced a one-day link court in Tehsil Palari under Balodabazar sub-division, a new library in the name of Swami Atmanand at the district headquarters and the commencement of Jarve Minor canal line. Moreover, construction of a building for new higher secondary school, boundary walls of primary health center, commercial complex along with mini stadium was also announced. Recalling the public welfare works of Gandhian leader and Social Worker Chaubees Ram Chandravanshi,

said that Gauthan is no more just a place of day-care for cattle, it is now being developed as an important center of rural livelihood. Rajiv Gandhi Kisan Nyay Yojana has been started to strengthen the economic condition of the farmers of the state. Swami Atmanand Excellent English Medium Schools have been opened in the state to provide education in English medium to the children. New sources of employment have been created under Godhan Nyay Yojana for villagers, farmers and livestock farmers. Chief Minister further said that Chhattisgarh Government is reviving the rural traditions in the state through Godhan Nyay Yojana, with the cooperation and participation of common people. This scheme of Chhattisgarh is being appreciated across the country. He also exhorted the farmers to use vermi compost and to donate hay for the cattle.

St. Xavier Bharni organizes Rendezvous- a talk show

With Air Marshal and CBI DIG

Central Chronicle News

Bilaspur, Apr 04: St. Xavier's High School, Bharni organized Rendezvous- a talk show in the school premises on 4th April, 2022. The objective of the event was to kindle a spark among students to stretch their limitations and open new horizons of opportunities for the students.

Air Marshal M. Baladitya was the Chief Guest whereas Mathew Varugeesh was present as the Guest of Honour. The dignitaries were rendered a guard of honour by the NCC girl cadets of the school. The programme commenced with lighting of lamp by the Chief Guest and the Guest of Honour in the august presence of



SP Chaturvedi- Vice Chairman CMD College, Bilaspur, Former Wing Commander AK Dubey, Dr. GS Patnaik- MD, St. Xavier's Chain of Schools, Prabhakar Patnaik- Former DFO, Nitya Bajpayee CEO Mukesh Saraaf and the school principal JS Hundal.

The school chorus group presented a wel-

come song which mesmerized the spectators. The school principal Jitinder Singh Hundal welcomed the dignitaries and highlighted the accomplishments of the school students.

M. Baladitya exhorted the students to take part in different co-curricular activities along with the academics as these activities



build the confidence and the students as successful professionals. Mathew Vargeesh highlighted the importance of sports in students' life and inspired the students to do hard and smart work.

Pragya Sonwani and Abhinav - the students of class XII were the host of the programme. Class IX to XII students took part in

the event and asked different questions to crack competitive exams were asked from the guests.

The event culminated with vote of thanks presented by HM Reema Arora Sharma followed by national anthem. Nancy Parekh-HM, Subash Roy, Abhilash Patnaik and MS Pabro were also present on the occasion.

'Bell Metal' artifacts available at Bilaspur station

As part of 'One Station One Product' project

Central Chronicle News

Bilaspur, Apr 04: As part of a decision taken in the Union Budget 2022-23 to in-cash the widespread reach of railways, in order to popularize the local products railway stations will act as a venue to sell these products.

Accordingly Bilaspur station has been chosen under 'One Station One Product' project scheme and Bell Metal based different products are sold



from the stalls at Bilaspur station from March 25.

The passengers alighting here get information about Bell Metal products from the dedicated stall installed at the station and also buy the products as per their choice. The stall set up at platform no 01 is selling bell metal artifact made out of Dhokra art.

This pilot project has been started on experimental basis for 15 days and local artisans are getting an opportunity to sell their products and also find global reach.



NTPC Talaipalli provides funds to Collector

For construction of Muktidham and waiting room



Central Chronicle News

Raigarh, Apr 04: NTPC Coal Mining Project is a responsible corporate citizen who has been continuously striving to conduct business responsibly and contribute to the development of the community.

NTPC is continuously striving for development of education, health, sports, sanitation, drinking water, facilities, women empowerment and infrastructure in its surrounding area especially in the affected area by Talaipalli Coal Mining



Project, cleanliness and sanitation awareness amongst the general public. Efforts are also being made through many programs to spread public awareness about health & nutrition.

Under this effort, an amount of 1 crore was pro-

vided by NTPC Talaipalli Coal Mining Project to District Collector Raigarh for construction of Muktidham and waiting rooms in 15 places of Raigarh district by Suryakant Rai, Business Unit Head NTPC Talaipalli.

Bhupesh's sticks and bullets on tribal society: Kedar

Central Chronicle News

Konta, Apr 04: Targeting the boycott of CM Bhupesh Baghel in the program of Backward Classes Welfare Association held at Lalbagh Maidan in Jagdalpur; former minister and BJP state spokesperson Kedar Kashyap accused Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel of misleading the people of the state with the help of lies.

Kedar Kashyap said that the general public of the state has now understood that they have been deceived, only lies and lies were told in the public manifesto issued by the

Congress before the elections. Now Congress has no answer to fulfill it. People have understood the politics of CM's deceit. Earlier, he brought an ordinance for 27% reservation, in which legal loopholes were deliberately left.

Later on, a petition was filed and a stay was put in it. Later, the government of Bhupesh Baghel decorated the petitioner with an office of profit by making the petitioner the chairman of Kabir Shodh Peeth. Kashyap further said that the public is now coming out in the open, the result of which was clearly visible on the Chief Minister's stay in Bastar.



Kedar Kashyap

Kashyap said that in Sukma, Bijapur, Katte Kalyan (Dantewada) and Narayanpur the tribal society reached the district office in thousands with their legitimate demands in a peaceful manner. It is unfortunate that

this is a question mark on the functioning of the government, Bhupesh Baghel should apologize to the tribal society.

In the recent days, in Narayanpur's Bharnada, the alleged police tried to declare a young promising tribal as a Naxalite by firing on them, but after the protest, the police accepted that Manuram Nooreti was a tribal, not a Naxalite, about 3 months after the murder.

Even after this, neither the victim's family got compensation nor government job, because of this the Congress government's sympathy towards the tribals seems to be zero.

Students of Class 8th bid farewell



Central Chronicle News

Dongargarh, Apr 04: The students of Class 8th of Saraswati Shishu Mandir Vidyalaya (SSMV) Gram Charabhanta were given farewell in a simple pro-

gramme organised here on Saturday. The Chief Guest of the programme was President Sarwati Gram Shiksha Samiti Girwar Sahu and special guest was Hemprakash Sahu, and Head Mistress Nutan Yadav. Along with

them all the 'Acharyas' and 'didis' (teachers) along with students were also present. The guest Sahu and all 'Acharyas' and 'Didis' bid farewell to all 'Bhaiyas' and 'behanas' (students) of SSMV Charbhanta.

820 'Jyots' lighted in Mahamaya Mandir

- 97 in Sheetala Mata's Mandir
- On occasion of 'Chaitra Navratra'

Central Chronicle News

Rajim, Apr 04: With relief from Corona pandemic, this year it was for the first time that people are celebrating 'Chaitra Navratra' with great religious fervour. The devotees are having lot of enthusiasm and they are lighting 'Manokamna Jyoti Kalash' in large number.

At city's Maa Mahamaya's temple, this year 820 devotees have lighted 'jyoti kalash' and in Mata Sheetala temple, a total of 97 'jyoti kalash' have been lighted. On

Saturday it was at 11:30 am, it was amidst citing of 'mantras' by Pt. Vijay Sharma that traditional 'diyas' / 'jyoti' was lighted in the 'garb grih' of Mata Devi's temple by Pujari Balda Singh Thakur and Neeraj Thakur. After this the Mandir's Sewa samiti office bearers and members lighted the 'Manokamna Jyoti Kalash' of the 'devotees' in the temple.

At the time of 'Deep Pravajalan', President of Mahamaya management Samiti Shatrughan Dhewar, Nagar Panchayat President Rekha Raju Sonkar, Jitendra Sonkar, Pawan Sonkar, Lileshwar Yadu, Pawan Sahu, Fagu Nishad, Arvind Yadu,



Balmiki Dheewar, Fagwa Nishad, Ramesh Sahu, Lakhna Mahobia and other devotees were present in large number.



On this occasion where large number of devotees will be keeping fast for all 9 days and there are many who are keeping fast on the

day of foundation, fifth day and the 8th day (Mahashanti). During the fasting the devotees take only fruits or consume milk as per rituals.

With devotees in large number going on fasting, the prices of milk and fruit too increase manifold and at one place where Apple earlier were costing Rs 100 per kg are now available at Rs 180 per kg.; on the other, Grapes are at record Rs 100 per kg and Banana at Rs 50-60 per kg. In the same way Pomegranate, Orange are also have got hike of Rs 20-30 per kg. Milk is now available at Rs 50 or Rs 60 per litre and which earlier was just at Rs 40 per litre.

Neelesh Misra launches national initiative to promote rural artisans

Central Chronicle News

Jagdalpur, Apr 04: With an emotional tribal art maestro standing next to him, Neelesh Misra, India's leading storyteller and a social entrepreneur, launched a national initiative for rural creators starting from Bastar, one of the rich hubs of tribal heritage in India.

In the presence of Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel, Misra exchanged an MoU with Bastar District Collector Rajat Bansal on Saturday to make the district the first partner of the Ten Thousand Creators Project.

This is a very difficult art. All I want is that after me, my children and their children's children should practice this craft," Phagnu Ram Sagar or Phagnu Dada, a Dhokra art guru, said in a film broadcast watched keenly by the chief minister at the event. Dhokra is non ferrous metal casting using the lost wax casting technique and is considered one of India's most ancient artforms.

Phagnu Dada, from Chhattisgarh's Chilkuti Village,

was sitting in the audience when he was asked by Misra to walk onto the stage with him. He did, slightly bewildered, moving forward with his walking stick, and was honoured by Baghel.

We are delighted and humbled. Phagnu Dada, being honoured today, is the first of the 10,000 creators we shall reach out to, Misra said.

The project shall next be expanded to districts in Gujarat, Bihar and Jharkhand, with discussions underway with stakeholders in several other states, Misra said.

Misra is one of India's leading communicators whose work centres around small towns and rural India. He is most well known in India as an audio storyteller with outreach to more than 100 cities and towns and tens of millions of people.

The Ten Thousand Creators Project is a joint initiative of two of Misra's ventures Gaon Connection, a rural platform with its presence in 425 districts spread across all states - and The Slow

Movement, which has content, products and marketplace verticals and is creating a community and social commerce marketplace in India and overseas at www.slowbazaar.com and The Slow App. In its first phase, the project aims to impact 10,000 creators through one or more of the following:

- Branding to create respect and visibility for the artisans through content creation in the form of video, audio and text campaigns;
- Increased income by showcasing them in a dedicated manner on Slow's platforms, including its e-commerce website www.slowbazaar.com and The Slow App;
- Income-generating knowledge and best practices through direct content dissemination and linkages with specialists and market experts;
- Health insurance and life insurance, to prevent income loss due to illness or death of an artisan who is the family's primary earner;

-Tools if needed for higher income generation. Misra said the project is a manifestation of India's 'Vocal for Local' vision in the truest sense. On one side are millions of people keen, especially post-Covid, to explore healthier and pure food, handcrafted products and meaningful, mindful content and on the other, hundreds of thousands of creators unable to access these audiences on digital platforms. We want to try and address these gaps, he said.

Misra's project is aligned with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's One District One Product (ODOP) programme, launched in Uttar Pradesh in January 2018 by the Yogi Adityanath government and adopted nationally after its success. The ODOP programme aims to convert every district in India into an export hub by promoting one product that the district specialises in.

Our project is a manifestation of India's 'Vocal for Local' vision in the truest sense going deep to the

panchayat level and connecting the creators with a global audience, Misra said. Misra said that Slow had been approached by ODOP for a possible collaboration and discussions were underway on working together. To give the project scale, a similar collaboration is being explored with the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII). Misra's Project though has a larger ambit, and the creators covered under it would go beyond artisans.

We have widened the definition of creators beyond what is commonly understood to include all those creating something out of rural innovation and creativity at the grassroots which can create livelihood opportunities, he said.

This includes handicraft artisans, folk and other 'non-TikTok' rural content creators on the margins of the creative economy, and women in self-help groups and farmer producer organisations creating food and non-food products, he said.

न्यायालय जिला दण्डाधिकारी, रायपुर
नोटिस

क्रमांक / 71/ब-121/2020-21/259 रायपुर, दिनांक 22 फरवरी 2022

1. विजय सिंह पिता प्रभाकर सिंह, 2. अजय सिंह पिता प्रभाकर सिंह
निवासी : म.न. 697 के चंभोरामाडा, थाना दीनदयाल उपाध्याय नगर, जिला रायपुर

आवेदक शाखा प्रबंधक शुभम हाउसिंग डेवलपमेंट फायनेंस कंपनी लि. आमापारा चौक जी.ई. रोड रायपुर की ओर से शिल्पा पाठक अधिवक्ता ने आवेदन पत्र / शपथ पत्र मय दस्तावेज प्रस्तुत कर, आवेदन पत्र से आपको कंपनी से 6,74,901.00 रुपये का गृह ऋण दिया गया था, और विजय सिंह के स्वामित्व की अचल संपत्ति कंपनी के पक्ष में बंधक रखी गयी थी। आपके द्वारा ऋण की अदायगी नहीं की जा रही है। जिसके कारण कंपनी द्वारा आपके अधिनियम की धारा 13 (2) के तहत नोटिस जारी किया गया कि आप ऋण की अदायगी मय ब्याज एवं अन्य शुल्क रूपया 6,98,628.00 अदा करें, अन्यथा बंधक रखी गई संपत्ति कंपनी अपने हक में प्राप्त कर लेगी कि जानकारी दी जाकर, कंपनी के पक्ष में बंधक रखी संपत्ति का कब्जा दिलाये जाने का निवेदन किया है।

2) आपने शाखा प्रबंधक शुभम हाउसिंग डेवलपमेंट फायनेंस कंपनी लि. आमापारा चौक जी.ई. रोड रायपुर से 6,74,901.00 रुपये का गृह ऋण प्राप्त कर विजय सिंह के स्वामित्व की अचल संपत्ति कंपनी के पक्ष में बंधक रखी है।

3) अतः आपके द्वारा लिये गये ऋण के पक्ष में विजय सिंह के स्वामित्व की बंधक रखी गई अचल संपत्ति को वितीय आस्तियों का प्रतिभूतिकरण और पुनर्गठन और प्रतिभूति हित प्रवर्तन अधिनियम 2002 की धारा 14 में प्रदत्त शक्तियों का प्रयोग करते हुये व्यों न आधिपत्य में लेने की कार्यवाही की जावे। आप स्वयं अथवा अपने नियुक्त अधिभाषक के माध्यम से ऋण से संबंधित एवं बंधक रखी गई संपत्ति से संबंधित दस्तावेज लेकर पक्ष प्रस्तुत करने हेतु इस न्यायालय में पेशी दिनांक 11.04.2022 को ठीक 3.00 बजे उपस्थित होना सुनिश्चित करें। नियत तिथि में उपस्थित नहीं होने की दशा में आपके विरुद्ध एक पक्षीय कार्यवाही की जाकर, प्रकरण में निर्णय ले लिया जावेगा।

आज दिनांक 22 फरवरी, 2022 को मेरे हस्ताक्षर एवं न्यायालय की मुहर से जारी किया गया।

जिला दण्डाधिकारी,
रायपुर (छ.ग.)

Notice for Name Change

I, Deepak Kumar S/O Shri Lok Chand Lalwani R/O 76, In front of Desh Bandhu Press, Nagar Nigam Colony, Raipur inform the general public that I have changed my name from Deepak Kumar, S/O Shri Lok Chand Lalwani to Deepak Lalwani, S/O Shri Lok Chand Lalwani .Hereby, from now I will be identified by my new name Deepak Lalwani S/O Shri Lok Chand Lalwani and this will be recorded in all my official and semi-official documents.

Deepak Lalwani
76, In front of
Deshbandhu Press,
Nagar Nigam Colony, Raipur

BRIEF

Torch

Ramgarh: Miscreants torched a few vehicles and an earth-moving heavy equipment in Laiyo village in Ramgarh district, police said. The vehicles set ablaze include a tractor and a motorcycle, they said. A senior police officer said the miscreants carried out the attack to possibly extort money from a brick kiln owner in the area. We are investigating the issue from all angles and will soon nab the culprits from nearby regions, he said.

Nabbed

Motihari: Three Russians, including a woman, were arrested by security personnel along the India-Nepal border in Bihar's Raxaul and six kg of narcotics seized from their possession. Their visa in India had expired and they were crossing the border without valid travel documents, an official said. They were arrested at Raxaul in East Champaran district while attempting to cross over to Nepal in a private vehicle without valid travel documents.

Bribery

Aurangabad: The secretary of an educational trust was among four held by the Maharashtra Anti Corruption Bureau for allegedly demanding and accepting a bribe of Rs 1.5 lakh, an official said. The four had demanded Rs 12 lakh to withdraw a case related to salary and post retirement benefits of the complainant, he said. They were held in a trap while taking an installment of Rs 1.5 lakh in Kej town under the Prevention of Corruption Act.

Pelted

Kolkata: A group of miscreants pelted stones at a steel manufacturing unit in Jalpaiguri district of North Bengal, damaging doors and windows of the facility, police said. The incident took place within the Magaruba industry cluster and investigation is underway to nab the culprits, they said. Rohit Bindal, the owner of the unit, said the sudden attack on the steel-making facility has created panic among other factory owners.

Held

Ghaziabad: Two persons have been arrested in connection with a loot of Rs 23 lakh from staffers of a petrol pump in B-Block in Govind Puram Colony here. Based on footage from CCTV cameras, and manual and electronic surveillance, Shoaib, a resident of Puri Delhi, was arrested and Rs 40,000 was seized, Superintendent of Police (Rural) Iraj Raja said.

Drugs

Mumbai: Mumbai police have arrested four persons, including a history-sheeter, from Dharavi slum colony here, and recovered from them MD drugs. The accused were identified as Arif Nasir Sheikh, Abdul Rehman Sheikh, Iqbal Ali Sheikh and Feeroz Sheikh, the police official said.

'New legal structure needed to counter cyber criminals'

New Delhi, Apr 04 (PTI):

Union Minister of Information and Technology Ashwini Vaishnav on Monday called for a new "dynamic" legal structure which balances the right to privacy and freedom of expression and demands for regulations and control to meet challenges from unscrupulous elements in the cyber space.

Addressing the second national conference on cyber crime investigations and digital forensics organised by the CBI, the minister said over the years technology has



Union IT Minister launches revamped website of CBI in New Delhi on Monday.

given a lot of productivity, efficiency and convenience but simultaneously it has brought intrusions in the lives of people which can be benign but most of the time it is malignant and aimed to com-

mit a fraudulent act. He said this problem can be tackled by legal strategy, technology, organisations, capacity building and mutual cooperation. Speaking on legal strategy to counter cyber

crimes, Vaishnav said the country needs to overhaul the legal structure in a big way.

"I don't think any incremental changes will help. The change has to be substantial, significant, fundamental and structural," he said.

He said that is where the whole conflict is between the two constraints — the first constraint of right to privacy and freedom of expression and second conflicting demand of having more regulation and control — to "prevent fraudulent activities in the garb of right to privacy and freedom of expression."

Congress MLAs seek change of guard in Odisha unit

Bhubaneswar, Apr 04 (PTI):

Rattled by the party's poor performance in the recently held panchayat and urban polls, a section of Odisha Congress MLAs are seeking a change of guard in the state unit.

Of the nine Congress MLAs in the state, four of them — Taraprasad Bahinipati, SS Saluja, Adhiraj Panigrahi and Mohammed Moqium — have expressed concern over the party's present situation and future prospects, further demanding a reshuffle in the party.

"The party must survive. An alternative leadership should be installed to strengthen the party's Odisha unit," Panigrahi, a lawmaker from Khariar, said.

Bahinipati, a Jeypore legislator, and Jatni MLA Suresh Routray, known for their loyalty to



Odisha Congress Bhawan in Bhubaneswar.

Odisha Pradesh Congress Committee (OPCC) chief Niranjan Patnaik, also insisted on a change in leadership. "Niranjan Babu falls ill whenever there is an election. Therefore a new and strong leadership should be installed in Odisha," Bahinipati maintained.

Routray, while supporting the idea, said that the party leadership should back candidates with resources during elections in order to counter its rivals. "The OPCC presi-

dent should provide necessary logistics to the candidates fighting against the mighty BJD and BJP," Routray said. Kantabanji MLA Santosh Singh Saluja claimed that party candidates who won the rural and urban polls did so through their "personal efforts". The Congress which ruled Odisha for decades before Naveen Patnaik's BJD took over the reins of the state in 2000 was pushed to third spot in state politics after the 2019 elections.

CAG slams Bihar over 'Namami Gange' programme

Patna, Apr 04 (PTI):

Slamming the Bihar government for leaving unutilised a major portion of the funds sanctioned for strengthening the sewerage system in Patna, under the Centre's 'Namami Gange' programme, the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) said the project was running behind schedule.

As much as Rs 683 crore, meant to be used under the scheme in a span of four years, was left untouched by the Bihar State Ganga River Conservation and Programme Management Society (BGCMS), according to a CAG report that was recently tabled in the Bihar Assembly. "Audit observed that only 16 to 50 per cent funds were being utilised

(annually) during the period 2016-17 to 2019-20. The National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) without ensuring the utilisation of previous installments released funds for next installments and as a result a huge fund of Rs 683.10 remained parked in the savings bank account of BGCMS," the report said. It also pointed out that the drainage system of Patna, the second largest urban centre in eastern India after Kolkata, was laid about 200 years ago and was in bad shape at present. "Due to lack of sewerage infrastructure in Bihar (including Patna), the maximum Total Coliform (TC) and Faecal Coliform (FC) which was measured up to the level of 9000 mpn/100 ml and 3100 mpn/100 ml in 2016-17 re-

spectively has increased up to 160,000 MPN/100 ML (for both TC and FC) in 2019-20. This shows that water quality deteriorated during the period," the audit report noted. The project executing agency, Bihar Urban Infrastructure Development Corporation Ltd (BUIDCO), has also failed to adhere to the stipulated time line for completion of work, it added. Reacting to the CAG report, the convener (south Bihar) of Ganga Samagra — an organisation that creates awareness among masses about the importance of cleaning Ganga — said, "The river along with her many tributaries has been the source of physical and spiritual sustenance of the Indian civilization.

Prohibition issue boils as Uma questions Shivraj

Bhopal, Apr 04 (PTI):

Senior BJP leader Uma Bharti, who has been opposing the liquor policy of the Madhya Pradesh government, on Monday wondered why Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has "stopped talking" now while she had always raised the issue of prohibition with him.

In a series of tweets in Hindi, Bharti demanded that the practice of serving liquor in 'ahatas' (enclosed areas close to liquor vends) be immediately stopped and booze shops near schools, hospitals, temples and other prohibited places shut down. She also demanded that home delivery of liquor be not allowed.

Calling Chouhan her elder brother, Bharti said that the former was now speaking through the



Uma Bharti

media on the liquor issue. I enjoy cordial and respectful relations with the MP chief minister and my elder brother Shivraj Singh Chouhan since 1984. He used to meet me while going to the office or whenever I went for my Himalaya sojourn, Bharti tweeted.

The former Union minister said she always raised the demand for banning liquor in MP during

her every meeting with Chouhan.

"Now as the things are starting to come out why Shivraj has stopped talking. 'Unbola kyun kar diya'? (Why is he not talking) and why has he started speaking through the media on this issue? she asked in another tweet.

Referring to Chouhan's recent statement that if people stop consuming liquor, he will immediately close these shops, Bharti said When people won't drink liquor then how these shops will run? (Obviously), they will automatically get closed.

She said the police and administration are duty-bound to stop the sale of illegal liquor. "It is a matter of law and order". Bharti suggested a string of measures to discourage people from drinking. Bharti demanded serv-

ing of liquor in 'ahatas' should be stopped immediately while liquor shops situated near schools, hospitals, temples and other prohibited places should be closed and the system of home delivery of liquor suspended.

After taking these measures, an awareness campaign should be launched wherein all religious leaders, social organisations, leaders like me and Shivraj, and leaders from other parties should be included, she said in another tweet. Bharti said that hoardings should be put up before the legally established shops later highlighting the disadvantages of consuming liquor. Wherever women and citizens oppose these shops they should not be opened. They (women and citizens) only form our government, she said.

FIRST TIME MP



Nagaland BJP leader S Phangnon Konyak after taking oath as Rajya Sabha MP for first time at Parliament House in New Delhi, Monday.

Delimitation Commission begins two-day interaction

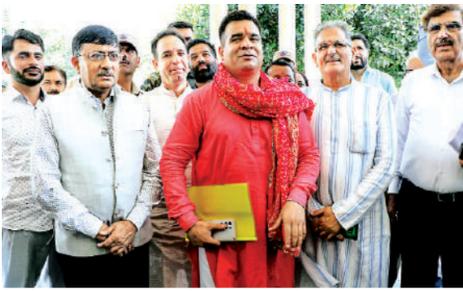
With public, J-K political leaders

Jammu, Apr 04 (PTI):

The Delimitation Commission, which has been tasked to redraw the boundaries of assembly and parliamentary constituencies in Jammu and Kashmir, on Monday began its two-day long meetings with public and civil society for receiving suggestions and objections on its draft delimitation proposal for the union territory.

The Commission on March 14 has put its report in the public domain and invited objections and suggestions from people. The commission has published its report in the gazettes of India as well as Jammu and Kashmir.

The commission has begun meetings at the Convention Centre here with members of the public, civil society and political parties from all districts of the Jammu region, while a similar pub-



BJP leaders arrive to meet members of Delimitation Commission in Jammu on Monday.

lic sitting will be held at SKICC in Srinagar on Tuesday, officials said.

It has met 20 such delegations and members of the public from Ramban, Rajouri, Poonch, Kishtwar, Kathua and Doda districts and heard them and received their representations, the officials said.

The members of the public and elected representatives raised various demands in terms of carving out new segments of assemblies and also raised objections about the draft in which various areas

have been merged with other areas of assembly and parliamentary constituencies.

The people from Kathua, Udhampur, Doda, Ramban, Kishtwar, Rajouri and Poonch districts are currently participating in the public sittings from 10.00 am while the people from Reasi, Samba and Jammu will participate in the second half-sittings at the Convention Centre from 2.00 pm, they said.

The official said that the people from Srinagar, Budgam, Anantnag,

Kulgam, Pulwama and Shopian will be part of the public sittings at SKICC in the first half on April 5 while the people from Ganderbal, Bandipora, Kupwara and Baramulla will participate in the sittings in the second half on the same day at the same venue in Srinagar.

Delimitation Commission, comprising Justice (retired) Ranjana Prakash Desai as chairperson, the Chief Election Commissioner Sushil Chandra and State Election Commissioner (SEC) K K Sharma as its members, was set up on March 6, 2020, with one year term. However, in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, its term was extended on March 6, 2021, by one year.

It also has five associate members: three National Conference Lok Sabha members (Farooq Abdullah, Hasnain Masoodi and Mohammad Akbar Lone), BJP MP Jugal Kishore and Union Minister Jitendra Singh.

Ex-Karnataka ADGP B Bhaskar Rao joins AAP

New Delhi, Apr 04 (PTI):

B Bhaskar Rao, a 1990-batch Karnataka cadre IPS officer and a native of Bengaluru, joined the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) here on Monday after serving the police force for 32 years in various capacities.

He was welcomed to the party fold by senior AAP leader and Delhi Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia.

AAP's Karnataka unit convener Prithvi Reddy, election in-charge for the state and Timarpur MLA Dilip Pandey, organisation secretary Damodaran and other leaders were present on the occasion at the party headquarters here.

Rao, who was serving as the Additional Director General of Police (Railways), had resigned



Former additional DGP of Karnataka Bhaskar Rao felicitates Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal as the former joins AAP in New Delhi, Monday.

from the service in September last year, citing personal reasons.

He demitted his office on Friday to join the AAP after the Karnataka government accepted his resignation and relieved him of his duties.

Rao's joining is seen as a shot in the arm of the

AAP with the Arvind Kejriwal-led party preparing for the Karnataka Assembly elections next year, starting with the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (Greater Bengaluru Municipal Corporation) polls this year. The party leaders believe that the

popularity and clout of the former IPS officer would help the AAP better execute its expansion plan in the run up to the assembly elections in the state, currently ruled by the BJP.

The AAP had contested the Karnataka assembly polls for the first time in 2018, fielding candidates in 28 out of total 124 assembly seats, but could not open its account.

Riding high on its stupendous victory in Punjab, the party is hoping to gain its foothold in the southern state this time. During his service, Rao held various positions and served as Bengaluru Police Commissioner, State Transport Commissioner and Additional Director General of Police (ADGP)-Internal Security.

Maha Govt didn't call for Oct 11 'bandh' over Lakhimpur Kheri incident

HC told

Mumbai, Apr 04 (PTI):

The Maharashtra government on Monday told the Bombay High Court that it had not taken any cabinet decision calling for a statewide bandh on October 11 last year.

The bandh was held to express solidarity with the farmers' protest and the Lakhimpur Kheri incident.

The Mumbai Police also informed the HC that as soon as the bandh was declared, the state government diligently ensured that the law and order situation was maintained and hence the state cannot be held liable. The tripartite Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA)

government and the Mumbai Police filed their affidavits in reply to a public interest litigation (PIL) filed by four senior citizens including Julio Ribeiro, former police commissioner of Mumbai, challenging the one-day shutdown. As per the plea, the bandh called to express solidarity with the farmers' protest and the Lakhimpur Kheri incident had caused a loss of Rs 3,000 crore to the public exchequer. "As per the said Minutes of the State Cabinet meeting held on October 6, 2021, the State Cabinet had only expressed grief and offered its condolences and tributes to the farmers who died in the unfortunate incident that took place at Lakhimpur Kheri in Uttar Pradesh," the state's affi-

davit said. Police stated that as soon as the state government came to know about the bandh, the police machinery was set in motion immediately and necessary steps were taken to ensure that the law and order situation is maintained. "The state government was prompt, diligent and alert in ensuring that the law and order situation is maintained and no harm or injury is caused to any person," the affidavit said. It added that around 60 cases were registered during the October 11 shutdown. "The State government cannot be held liable for the alleged incidences and hence the petition is dismissed," the affidavit filed by Sanjay Latkar, Deputy Commissioner of Police (Operations), said.

BRIEF

Flights

New York: Airlines have canceled more than 3,300 US flights this weekend and delayed thousands more, citing weather in Florida and other issues.

Unify

Juba: South Sudan's president and his deputy signed an agreement to unify the command of the security forces, a deal that eases political tensions in the East African country.

Gas

Vilnius: In a move to break its energy dependence upon Moscow, Lithuania has cut itself off entirely of gas imports from Russia, allegedly becoming the first of the European Union's 27 nations that use Russian gas to do so.

Electrocuted

Colombo: A 53-year old man, who was protesting outside the private residence of Sri Lankan President Gotabaya Rajapaksa over the long power cuts in the country due to the ongoing economic crisis, got electrocuted after he climbed a electricity pole.

Russia faces growing outrage amid evidence of atrocities

Bucha, Apr 04 (AP):

Russia faced a fresh wave of condemnation on Monday after evidence emerged of what appeared to be deliberate killings of civilians in Ukraine.



A woman cries while waiting along with others for distribution of food products in the village of Motyzhyn, Ukraine.

Germany's defense minister suggested the European Union discuss a ban on Russian gas imports, but more senior officials indicated an immediate boycott was not possible.

Ukrainian officials said bodies of 410 civilians

were found in towns around the capital, Kyiv, that were recaptured from Russian forces in recent days. In Bucha, northwest of the capital, Associated Press journalists saw 21 bodies.

The images of battered bodies lying in the streets or hastily dug graves un-

leashed a wave of outrage that could signal a turning point in the nearly 6-week-old war. But sanctions have thus far failed to halt the offensive, and rising energy prices along with the tight controls on Russian currency market have blunted their impact.

Western and Ukrainian leaders have accused Russia of war crimes before, and the International Criminal Court's prosecutor has opened a probe to investigate the conflict.

With students in turmoil, US teachers train in mental health



Mojave Unified School District Superintendent Katherine Aguirre, far right, and Benito Luna, a 7th-grade social studies teacher.

Course teaches how to handle crisis

San Francisco, Apr 04 (AP):

Since the pandemic started, experts have warned of a mental health crisis fac-

ing American children that is now visibly playing out at schools across the country.

Benito Luna-Herrera, a 7th grade social studies teacher in Southern

California, tells of middle school students whose post-pandemic depression led them to thoughts of suicide. Other educators say they have never seen so much school violence, anxiety, depression, substance abuse and suicide ideation.

The silver lining in Luna-Herrera's case is that special training helped him know what to look for and how to respond to signs of a mental emergency. He is among a small but growing number of California teachers and school staff to take a course called Youth Mental Health First Aid.

Department of Education funds the program for any school district requesting it, and the pandemic has accelerated moves to make such courses a state requirement. The training program is operated by the National Council for Mental Wellbeing and available in every state.

I don't want to read about another teenager where there were warning signs and we looked the other way, said Sen. Anthony Portantino, author of a bill that would require all California middle and high schools to train at least 75% of employees in behavioral health. Teachers and school staff are on the front lines of a crisis, and need to be trained to spot students who are suffering.

Hungary's Orban popular at home, isolated abroad after win



Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban celebrates on stage with members of the Fidesz party.

Budapest, Apr 04 (AP):

As Hungary's national-ist Prime Minister Viktor Orban prepares to continue his autocratic governance of Hungary for another four years, he faces

a shattered opposition at home but an increasingly isolated position abroad, where his flouting of democratic standards and approach to the war in Ukraine has riled the European Union and

other nations. As officials from his right-wing Fidesz party gathered at an election night event on the Danube river in Budapest, Orban told supporters that their landslide victory in the country's national election was a message to Europe that his model of 'illiberal democracy' was a prophecy for the continent's future.

'The whole world has seen tonight in Budapest that Christian democratic politics, conservative civic politics and patriotic politics have won. We are telling Europe that this is not the past, this is the future, our common European future,' Orban said.

Ukrainian refugees find jobs, kindness, as they settle in

Warsaw, Apr 04 (AP)

Nataliya Hibska quickly brushes her teeth and makes the bed. She is rushing to her new job.

From a small hostel

room in eastern Warsaw, Hibska, a Ukrainian refugee, is slowly rebuilding her life, which was abruptly upended

by Russia's invasion of her homeland. European Union member nations like Poland and Romania, the two

neighboring countries to have received the most refugees from Ukraine have launched programs to help them integrate.

GRAMMY'S AWARDEE



Olivia Rodrigo, winner of the awards for best pop vocal album for Sour, best new artist and best pop solo performance at the 64th Annual Grammy Awards in Las Vegas.

Hong Kong leader Lam won't seek new term

Hong Kong, Apr 04 (AP):

Hong Kong leader Carrie Lam said Monday she wouldn't seek a second term after a rocky five years marked by huge protests calling for her resignation, a security crackdown that has quashed dissent and

most recently a COVID-19 wave that overwhelmed the health system. Her successor will be picked in May and the city's security chief during the 2019 protests is among the possible choices. I will complete my five-year term as chief executive on the 30th of June this year,

and I will also call an end to my 42 years of public service, Lam said at a news conference. She thanks her team of local officials and the central authorities in Beijing, and said she plans to spend more time with family, which is her sole consideration.

China sends military to help in Shanghai COVID outbreak

Beijing, Apr 04 (AP):

China has sent more than 10,000 health workers from across the country to Shanghai, including 2,000 military medical staff, as it struggles to stamp out a rapidly spreading COVID-19 outbreak in China's largest city.

The city was conducting a mass testing of its 25 million residents Monday as what was supposed to be a two-phase lockdown entered its second week. While many factories and financial firms have been able to keep operating by isolating their employees, concern was growing about the potential economic impact of an extended lockdown in China's financial capital and a major shipping and



The entrance to a noodle store is locked and sealed in the Jingan district of western Shanghai, Monday.

manufacturing center. The highly contagious omicron BA.2 form of the virus is testing China's ability to maintain its zero-COVID approach, which aims to stop outbreaks from spreading by isolating everyone who tests positive, whether

they have symptoms or not. Shanghai has converted an exhibition hall and other facilities into massive isolation centers where people with mild or no symptoms are housed in a sea of beds separated by temporary partitions.

Street in New York named Ganesh Temple Street

New York, Apr 04 (PTI):

In a significant moment for the Hindu community in the US, a street outside a renowned and prominent temple here has been named the Ganesh Temple Street'. Established in 1977, The Hindu Temple Society of North America Sri Maha Vallabha Ganapati Devasthanam, popularly known as the Ganesh Temple, is regarded as the first and oldest Hindu Temple in North America.

named the Ganesh Temple Street' in honour of the iconic Ganesh temple.

The special ceremony, during which the street sign was unveiled, was attended by Consul General of India in New York Randhir Jaiswal, Queens Borough President Donovan Richards, Deputy Commissioner for Trade, Investment and Innovation in the office of New York City Mayor Eric Adams, Dilip Chauhan and members of the Indian-American community.

Jaiswal, during a special function on Saturday held at the Indian Consulate to commemorate Baisakhi, told the gathering that at a beautiful function in Queens, the Bowne Street just outside the Ganesh Temple was co-named the

Ganesh Temple Street. He said the co-naming event was not just a celebration but it showed the kind of hard work that has gone into reaching this milestone, years after years, decades after decades.

कार्यालय नगर पालिक निगम बिलासपुर (छ.ग.) ई-प्रोक्वोरमेंट निविदा सूचना. 01/म.पा.नि./जोन क्र.03/2022-23. दिनांक 04/04/2022. एकीकृत पंजीयन प्रणाली अंतर्गत सक्षम श्रेणी में पंजीकृत ठेकेदारों से निम्नलिखित निर्माण कार्य हेतु दिनांक 25/04/2022 को सायं 5:00 बजे तक ऑनलाइन (Online) निविदा आमंत्रित की जाती है:-

CHHATTISGARH STATE POWER TRANS. CO. LTD. O/o Executive Director (S&P), 3rd Floor, SLDC Building, Raipur (C.G.) Phone-0771-2574236/4247/4106 Fax-0771-2574246. No.02-16/ED/TR-21/S&P/53/011 Raipur, Dtd.- 04.04.2022. E-PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTICE. Sealed tenders are invited from experienced manufacturers/eligible bidders for supply of following equipments/materials.

CHHATTISGARH STATE POWER GENERATION CO. LTD. (A Govt. of Chhattisgarh Undertaking) CIN: U40108CT2003SGC015821. No. 03-03/ SE:W-I/TN-452/03 Raipur, Dtd 01/04/2022. E-TENDER NOTICE NO. TN- 452 /22. Online bids are invited by the undersigned through CSPCL e-bidding system (SAP SRM) from experienced & reputed contractors for Supply/ Work as mentioned below:-



CENTRAL Chronicle

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Chinese debt trap

With emergency in Sri Lanka due to economic reasons and political crisis in Pakistan due to economic reasons, the world witnesses' pitfalls of Chinese debt trap. Both, Pakistan and Sri Lanka became delusional by glitter of Chinese economic development. With China's Belt and Road Initiative, Pakistan and Sri Lanka shunned western financial practices and got ample Chinese debts with implicit policy of encircling India, as Chinese geopolitical objectives. With spread of COVID-19 pandemic, again from alleged lab leak of Chinese virus, economies of Pakistan and Sri Lanka got stalled. Suddenly, Pakistan and Sri Lanka find the situation of being debt slaves to China. The political crisis in Pakistan resulted in outflows of foreign investments in the domestic bonds which weakened the local currency. The Pakistani rupee plunged to a historic low of 133.70 against the US dollar in the interbank market after the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) reported a massive outflow of USD 2.9 billion. The SBP announced that its foreign exchange reserves dropped to USD 12.047 billion during the week ended on March 25 due to a major repayment of Chinese loans while the rest was regular debt servicing. Pakistan has said that China agreed to rollover USD 4.2 billion debt that was maturing this week, providing a major financial relief to the cash-strapped country. The USD 2 billion loan by China's State Administration of Foreign Exchange (SAFE) has been rolled over. Beijing had given a commitment to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in 2019 to rollover its debt until the Fund programme expires. The Currency Swap Agreement is a Chinese trade finance facility that Pakistan has been using since 2011 to repay foreign debt and keep its gross foreign currency reserves at comfortable levels instead for trade-related purposes. Pakistan had paid Rs 26.1 billion interest on the outstanding balance at agreed rates.

Last month, the IMF said that Pakistan owes USD 18.4 billion or one-fifth of its external public debt to China, which is not only USD 4 billion higher than the officially reported figures but is also the highest lending by any single country or financial institution. China refused to assist Sri Lanka which appealed to reschedule its huge Chinese debt burden in the face of the COVID-19 outbreak. Sri Lanka appealed if a restructuring of the debt could be arranged to mitigate the economic crisis that had arisen in the face of the COVID-19 outbreak. China has shed some crocodile tears over the economy of Sri Lanka getting caught in a quagmire after hobnobbing with the BRI projects of China, record inflation, soaring food prices and the sufferings of the people. A major part of this debt was owed to China, which accounts for nearly USD 8 billion. This debt burden was a result of China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) projects like Hambantota Port and Colombo Port City for which Chinese agencies lent large amounts to Sri Lanka under stiff terms of repayment. Notably, in 2021-22, Colombo's debt repayment to Beijing amounted to nearly USD 2 billion. Further, Hambantota port has already been leased out to China for 99 years against USD 1.2 billion. The very reason for the establishment of the IMF was to assist countries to tackle crises. Yet, the Sri Lankan government continued its stubborn refusal to seek assistance from the IMF or restructure debt. Pro-China Rajapaksa government had booted out the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) of the USA with its offer to extend developmental assistance grant. Countries the world should learn lessons from crisis in Pakistan and Sri Lanka so as to avoid being debt slaves of China. Chinese goal to encircle India is also stalled.

Hydrogen as fuel

Union minister Nitin Gadkari, who has been pushing for use of alternative fuel-powered vehicles recently rode to Parliament in his new hydrogen-based electric car. Demonstrating the vehicle powered by 'green hydrogen' outside his residence here, Gadkari talked about need to spread awareness about green Hydrogen, FCEV technology and its benefits to support hydrogen-based society for India. Price of petrol, diesel, CNG, LPG and aviation turbine fuel keeps increasing and researchers are working hard to develop alternative propulsion systems. At present, hydrogen is more expensive than petroleum as economies of scale is not yet realised in production of hydrogen. Once, economies of scale are realised from production of green hydrogen and subsequent hydrogen distribution network, it will be attractive alternative compared to imported fossil fuels. But instead of personal vehicles, hydrogen will be viable for commercial vehicles such as ships, long range trucks, mining and construction earth movers besides logistic vehicles such as forklifts. A recent report shows around 100 forklifts or 80 percent of the vehicle fleet in a retailer's logistics centre in France, already operate on green hydrogen, and the rest is to follow by the end of the year.

Hydrogen powered vehicles are available 97 percent of the time compared to approximately 50 percent with lead-acid technology, this required much fewer charging or refuelling spaces, and allowed a reduction of fleet inventories. Hydrogen fuel cell vehicles can offer significant advantages in niche applications where charging times are key, such as logistics centres that operate around the clock even if modern battery-electric vehicles use lithium-ion batteries, which can be charged much more rapidly than lead-acid models. Apart from fuel cells, which are expensive, the direct combustion of hydrogen is better for aviation applications. Hydrogen has the potential to power larger aircraft as a direct gas turbine engine fuel, and is being investigated with significant technical and operational challenges needing to be overcome. Hydrogen fuel cells will probably be limited to medium to low power applications where the power requirements are lower. Given volume limitations attached to the storage of hydrogen and the limited power density of fuel cells, for long range, fuelling gas turbines will remain the most likely solution moving forward. Hydrogen will offer options in shorter range segments and has the potential to progress onto larger segments, as the technology is proven and hydrogen fuel becomes more readily available.

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.

LESS RESTRICTIONS

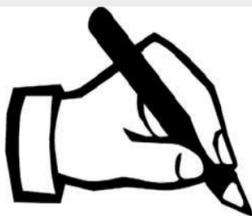


People walk across Cavenagh bridge with less restrictions to move amid COVID-19 pandemic in Singapore.

Protecting midday meal scheme in India



REETIKA KHERA



India's school meals scheme programme is ubiquitous, helping deliver food to millions. It faces threats from multiple angles. It would be hard to find a larger or more universal school meals program than that in India. Until COVID-19 hit more than 87 percent of children in rural government schools were being served the 'Mid-Day Meal'. At last count the scheme covered 118 million children. The benefits of school meals are well established, but government budget pressures threaten the sustainability of India's program. It will also need to fend off corruption and corporate lobbyists if it is to continue to thrive. With its roots in pioneer state Tamil Nadu in the 1960s, the midday meals program went national in 1995. But it wasn't until 2001 that it moved beyond dry rations such as wheat and rice. When the scheme was first started in 1995, the midday meal was meant to ensure that children in government schools, especially those unable to get food at home, had at least one meal a day. It also became an initiative to improve enrolment in schools. The scheme is now being revamped to expand its ambit.

In 2001, many parts of India grappled with drought and in some places (Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Odisha) people were reported to have died from starvation. The People's Union for Civil Liberties, petitioned the Supreme Court, pointing out that although the government had enough food stocks, people were dying, and it must be

directed to act. On 28 November 2001, the Supreme Court directed the government to implement the meal scheme by providing every child in every government and government-assisted primary school with a cooked midday meal, with a minimum nutritional content of 300 calories and eight to 12 grams of protein each day of school for a minimum of 200 days in a year. In the first decade, states gradually succeeded in putting the required infrastructure in place as building kitchens, ensuring water supply in the schools, and appointing cooks and helpers. Today, typically, all schools have one cook and one helper. In some states (e.g., Tamil Nadu, Karnataka), there is a three-member team, including an organiser who is in-charge of accounts, stocks and purchases.

Hygiene conditions in the school kitchens were a major concern in the initial years because there was no access to clean drinking water and there were no proper kitchens. The critical importance of this became very evident in 2013, when in Bihar school children died as a result of food poisoning: the school did not have its own premises, and the kitchen was in a veranda. The cook fetched oil in a container from the sarpanch's or the teacher's house, which had previously been used to store pesticide. Since then, the mid-day meal program has been shown to benefit enrolment, attendance, learning outcomes and even nutritional intake and nutritional out-

comes. Enrolment effects were especially strong for girls and children from disadvantaged communities like Adivasis (tribals or literally, 'original inhabitants'). A study by Barooah and her co-authors in Delhi evaluated the impact on learning effort in school, and found that children who had been fed a proper meal did not give up as easily. There is socialisation (habit formation such as queuing up for meals, sharing a meal) and educational benefits (personal hygiene such as washing your hands before eating) as well. The program also created employment opportunities for women. In many parts of rural India, there are few opportunities for a woman to get paid work outside her home. Being a cook in a school is one form of low paid, but dignified, employment.

Having their children fed at home also makes for one less chore for women, who typically undertake the majority of childcare in India. This is significant for working women. Though it is rare to hear complaints that children don't get enough food, questions about the quality of the mid-day meal persist. From 2010 onwards, ensuring nutritional content of mid-day meals has become a big battle. Initially, the same food was given every day. Now there are weekly menus. Afridi found that in Chhindwara district (Madhya Pradesh) the improved menus met up to 22 percent of the required daily nutritional allowance for these children as opposed to just 11 percent where the old menu was served. Some states also provide eggs. Eggs are nutrient dense 'superfoods', yet many states have been resisting their introduction on ostensibly religious grounds. Socialisation benefits, including the breaking down of caste barriers, have also been documented. Recently, a Dalit cook was removed because of her caste. In other instances, when such resistance arose, district administrators stepped in. Even as caste issues per-

sist, the mid-day meal has become an important way to break the caste barriers. There are instances of children where they were given food by their parents and told not to eat at school because the cook was from another community. These children, when they go to school and they see all their schoolmates eating together, eat with the others but don't tell anyone at home.

Despite its success as a social policy, government commitment and adequate budgets remain important. The central government provides the grain component free of cost to the states. In addition, cooking costs are also provided for the other ingredients. Though this has increased over the years, starting from just Rs 1 per child per day in 2004, to between Rs 4-6 per day (for primary and upper primary school children, respectively), the revision in the cooking costs per child per day is inadequate. The central government earlier allocated money to the states, which then included their share of the money before sending it to a nodal midday meal scheme authority at district and tehsil levels. This year's budget (2022-23) is slightly lower than last year's: in nominal terms, it has been slashed by about Rs 1000 crores. Last year's cost was Rs 11,000 crores. Many other concerns remain as the link between India's health program (deworming, health check-ups, micronutrient especially iron supplementation) and the mid-day meal program in most parts of the country remains weak. Corruption is also a concern and requires constant vigilance. An emerging challenge is the corporate lobby, which views the mid-day meal budget as a large potential 'market'. In 2008 a biscuit manufacturers' association attempted to lobby the central government to replace hot cooked meals with fortified biscuits. Such lobbyists have not given up.

(Reetika Khera is a development economist and teaches at IIT, Delhi.)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Nothing wrong

There is nothing wrong when in the middle of a row in Karnataka over a call by right-wing groups to ban Muslim traders from temple festivals, Biocon chief Kiran Mazumdar Shaw has urged Chief Minister (CM) Basavaraj Bommai to "resolve the growing religious divide" in the state, warning that if the tech sector becomes communal it will "destroy" India's global leadership in it. Glad to see a woman do this while other male corporate honchos try to figure out what is politically expedient and keep their mouths shut. She is right and one hopes that more corporate leaders need to speak up against Bharatiya Janata Party's (BJP) divide and rule policy in Karnataka, to help them for the up-coming election. Strange! BJP called itself as a party of difference, but when anyone criticizes anything they do, they get upset. Just see how a rattled BJP, led by its IT cell head Amit Malviya has accused Kiran Shaw of expressing "It is unfortunate to see people like Kiran Shaw impose their personal, politically coloured opinion, and conflate it with India's leadership in the IT sector". In the greed of power BJP has forgotten that equality for all is our constitution's strength. No appeasement but also no communalisation. Instead focus on economy, employment, inflation, health, education, women safety and corruption that matter. Also Ms Mazumdar Shaw is not only a business woman but a corporate contributing to growth of the state and country. What is the credential of Amit Malviya, that he personally attacked Ms. Shaw? Shame on him and BJP for polarising the society. Actually, a few years back Karnataka was famous for being the hub of learning sadly, now first Hizab, then non-Hindus from doing business on temple premises and now BJP national general secretary CT Ravi, endorsed a call from fringe Hindutva organisations asking Hindus to boycott halal meat sold by Muslims. When our political leaders, male corporate or intellectual wear bangle, then good to see some famed corporate showing mirror to the Karnataka Chief Minister Bommai, on their dirty politics. Though no reply comes from the CM, but I'm sure no body expect a bold decision from Bommai, but majority of Hindus not want to live under BJP umbrella as they don't want to live in a bigoted hindu nation, one prefer pluralism and that is when religion and culture also thrives.

Bidyut K Chatterjee, Faridabad

NRI voting

Facilitating Non Resident Indians (NRI) to vote online would be one of India's most needed and welcome electoral reforms, because NRIs, who form a significant segment of the population, also deserve a say in the country's government formation. Arranging polling stations at suitable locations abroad on polling day should not be a problem for the Election Commission of India (ECI) in collaboration with the Indian embassies. Since online voting would involve different constituencies on the same platform, computerisation of electoral rolls becomes a pre-requisite. In addition to biometric identification, the ECI could also issue a secret password to the NRI who votes to make identification foolproof. It is only a question of all political parties trusting the system. The technical feasibility to introduce this long-coveted reform exists. If this becomes a success, we can also think of extending it to an 'anywhere voting' system in the country.

Mangal, via email



WHAT THEY TWEET!



Joey@DrJoyeeta

A recombinant of Omicron BA.1 and BA.2 variants has been confirmed in the UK, known as the XE UK Variant. At present there is not enough evidence to indicate that it is more transmissible or more infectious than any previous variants. So do not panic, but keep your Masks on.

Sandeep@sandythapar

I partially understand the propensity of societies along main rds making speed breakers on rd just outside their main gates. To slow down rowdy traffic. But why 2? One before & one after crossing society gate? And most times they are not speed breakers but axle crushers.



Anil Swarup @swarup58

What Chanakya didn't say: All successful persons have had failures in their lives. So, dont feel depressed when you fail. No point in brooding over the past failures. Learn from failures & move on. Make failures stepping stones to success. #ChanakyaDidntsay

Chandrashekhar@cdbhage

Konkan Railway accomplishes 100% Electrification for 741 km Long railway.



Salman@SalmanSoz

Before we get to opposition unity, we need unity in Congress. It is an open secret that we keep losing elections in large part because there is infighting in our teams. Congress defeats itself. BJP & others enjoy the fruit. Unless we fix this, we are finished & India will suffer.



Navin Kabra@NGKabra

You don't need a detox break from social media. You need a detox break from news and current events. You can unfollow everybody who obsesses, outrages over current events without leaving social media. 99% of that stuff is irrelevant. The 1% that matters will still reach you.

MoneyTalk@LarissaFernand

Met an acquaintance after years. Dropped out of college after Std XII. Worked as a waiter, then in travel business, then an entrepreneur. His villa in Goa: Master bedroom on the 1st floor includes a mini lounge area, pool, mini kitchen so he 'need not go downstairs if he's lazy'

BRIEF

Production



New Delhi: HYM Drive Systems said it expects to start production of electric drive units at its facility in Ludhiana from November this year. MD Pankaj Munjal said this manufacturing facility is a part of our joint strategy with Yamaha to localise electric drive units.

Raises

New Delhi: Corporate cards startup EnKash on Monday said it has raised USD 20 million (around Rs 150 crore) in a funding round led by Ascent Capital. Baring India and Singapore-based White Ventures also participated in the series B funding round along with existing investors, Mayfield India and Axilor Ventures.

Solar



New Delhi: Tata Power Renewables has commissioned a 300 MW solar plant in Dholera, Gujarat with the country's largest single-axis solar tracker system. CEO MD Dr Praveer Sinha said our technical expertise and project execution skills will solidify our position.

Fund

New Delhi: Agritech venture capital firm Omnivore on Monday said it will raise USD 130 million (around Rs 1,000 crore) to set up its third fund. The company has launched its third fund with a target corpus of USD 130 million (Rs 1,000 crore). The new fund will continue to invest in early-stage startups developing breakthrough technologies for agriculture, food, climate, and rural economy.

Zooms



New Delhi: Electric two-wheeler maker Ward Wizard Innovations and Mobility Ltd on Monday reported over eight-fold jump in sales at 30,761 units last fiscal. COO Sheetal Bhalerao said with the rise in fuel prices, there is a fast shift towards electric two-wheelers.

Stake

New Delhi: British telecom major Vodafone has raised its stake in debt-ridden Vodafone Idea Limited to 47.61 per cent through its subsidiary Prime Metals, a regulatory filing said on Monday.

Manufacturing activities moderate in March

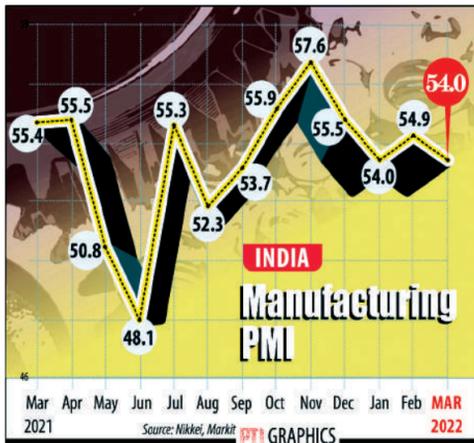
Production, sales expand at slowest pace in six months

New Delhi, Apr 04 (PTI):

India's manufacturing sector activities moderated in March with companies reporting softer expansions in new orders and production as inflation concerns dampened business confidence, a monthly survey said on Monday.

The seasonally-adjusted S&P Global India Manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) was at 54.0 in March, down from 54.9 in February, highlighting weakest rate of growth in terms of production and sales since September 2021.

The March PMI data pointed to an improvement in overall operating conditions for the ninth straight month. In PMI parlance, a print above 50 means expansion while a score below 50 denotes contraction. "Manufacturing sector growth in India weakened at the end of fiscal year 2021/22, with com-



panies reporting softer expansions in new orders and production," Pollyanna De Lima, Economics Associate Director at S&P Global, said. On the price front, manufacturers reported another increase in input prices at the end of fiscal year 2021/22. Chemical, energy, fabric, foodstuff and metal costs were all re-

portedly greater than in February. "Goods producers signalled higher prices paid for chemicals, energy, fabric, foodstuff and metals, despite supplier performance worsening to the least extent in almost a year," Lima said. Output prices rose in March as goods producers sought to share part of the additional cost burden with their

clients. "For now, demand has been sufficiently strong to withstand price hikes, but should inflation continue to gather pace we may see a more significant slowdown, if not an outright contraction in sales," Lima said. According to Lima, companies appeared very concerned about price pressures, which was a key factor dragging down business confidence to a two-year low. The March data pointed to subdued optimism towards growth prospects among Indian manufacturers, with the overall level of sentiment slipping to a two-year low. "Anecdotal evidence indicated that inflation concerns and economic uncertainty dampened overall confidence," the survey said. Meanwhile, there was a renewed decline in new export orders received by Indian goods producers, ending an eight-month sequence of growth.

Rupee surges 19 paise at 75.55 against USD, gold declines Rs 50

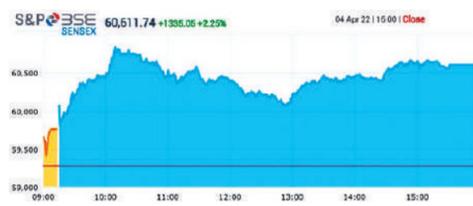
Mumbai, Apr 04 (PTI): The rupee started the financial year 2022-23 on a bullish note and settled 19 paise higher at 75.55 (provisional) against the US dollar on Monday, supported by a firm trend in domestic equities.

At the interbank forex market, the local unit opened at 75.77 against the greenback and witnessed an intra-day high of 75.42 and a low of 75.79.

It finally ended at 75.55, registering a rise of 19 paise over its previous close. On Thursday, the last trading session of FY22, the rupee had advanced by 16 paise to close at 75.74. The local unit, however, closed the 2021-22 fiscal with overall losses of 3.61 per cent or 264 paise against the American currency due to a stronger dollar and surging crude oil prices.

The forex market was closed on Friday for the annual account closing of banks. Meanwhile, the dollar index, which measures the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, rose 0.12 per cent to 98.75.

Sensex rallies over 1,300 pts, Nifty recaptures 18k mark



Mumbai, Apr 04 (PTI):

Equity benchmark Sensex surged over 1,300 points on Monday to reclaim the 60,000-level, boosted by intense buying in banking and financial stocks after the announcement of merger between HDFC and HDFC Bank.

Strong global cues and receding crude oil prices also propped up the domestic equity markets, according to traders.

Shares of HDFC and HDFC Bank rallied nearly 10 per cent as investors lapped up the merger deal. In the biggest merger in corporate history, India's largest housing finance company HDFC Ltd will merge with the country's largest private lender HDFC Bank to create a banking behemoth.

The 30-share BSE index closed 1,335.05 points or

2.25 per cent higher at 60,611.74. Likewise, the NSE Nifty jumped 382.95 points or 2.17 per cent to end at 18,053.40.

The scrip of HDFC Bank surged 9.97 per cent to Rs 1,656.45, while HDFC Ltd jumped 9.30 per cent to Rs 2,678.90.

The other gainers in the Sensex pack included Kotak Bank, HUL, L&T, IndusInd Bank and Sun Pharma.

On the other hand, Titan and Infosys were the laggards.

Elsewhere in Asia, bourses in Tokyo, Seoul, Hong Kong and Shanghai closed with healthy gains.

Stock exchanges in Europe were also trading significantly higher in mid-session deals. Germany's DAX lost 0.7% to 14,344.48 and the CAC 40 in Paris declined 0.6% to 6,646.42.

Kirloskar launches 'High-Efficiency Low Voltage Electric Motors'

Pune, Apr 04: Kirloskar Oil Engines Limited (KOEL), an industry leader and pioneer in engines, power generating sets, and agricultural equipment has been instrumental in transforming the lives of people across the globe for several decades now. With its vision to make a positive impact in the customers' lives by launching new products and services, Kirloskar Oil Engines Limited proudly launches High-Efficiency Low Voltage Electric Motors that will power machines in all applications across industries. To ensure top-class performance and ef-

iciency, these motors are manufactured with high-grade copper wires and tested by a BIS-approved, NABL-accredited test lab. With a range of quality products, backed by an excellent sales and service network, Kirloskar Oil Engines makes a grand entry into the Electric Motors market with the mission to "perform beyond expectations".

Speaking on the occasion Atul Kirloskar, Executive Chairman stated, "We have always come up with products and solutions to satisfy our customers and help them to save costs.

Artists celebrate uniqueness of Indian cities with KFC's Bucket Canvas

Mumbai, Apr 04:

Celebrating the brand's signature taste offered across the country and reinforcing its runway for growth, KFC India marked the milestone of growing 600 restaurants strong with the #KFC Bucket Canvas campaign.

The campaign brought together young artists from across the country who together, transformed the iconic KFC Bucket into the #KFC Bucket Canvas, with a unique design for each city that the brand has a presence in. Drawing inspiration from the art, architecture, and cultural elements of different cities, these 150 limited edition designs are on display across restaurants. Fans can

now cheer for the KFC in their city and appreciate the nuanced designs when they next step into a KFC restaurant closest to them; as well as learn about the artists and their inspiration here.

Speaking about this interesting display of art on the KFC Bucket, Moksh Chopra, Chief Marketing Officer, KFC India said, "It's been an amazing journey for KFC in India, with the brand now present across 150+ cities and crossing 600 restaurants. So, what better way for us to mark this moment, by partnering with young, upcoming artists across the length and breadth of our country. The iconic KFC Bucket served as a Canvas for them to showcase their talent and bring alive the uniqueness

of the different regions of India with 150 unique designs. We're blown away with the talent that's emerged, and we're privileged to be able to provide a visibility opportunity to such fabulous new talent. I would encourage you to look up these wonderful creations (at our respective restaurants or online)".

The journey began with the artists exploring different cities, scanning through popular landmarks, walking through narrow lanes, interacting with its offerings of food, people, language and culture - essentially catching the pulse of the city. All this and more, was then brought alive on the KFC Bucket, painted with much (KFC) love of course.

PSU insurers receive Covid insurance claims worth Rs 17,537 cr

New Delhi, Apr 04 (PTI):

Public sector insurers received COVID-19 related health insurance claims worth Rs 17,537 crore till December 2021 and more than 93 per cent of the cases were settled, Parliament was informed on Monday.

"Till December 31, 2021, 14.92 lakh COVID-19 health claims, of a total amount of Rs 17,537 crore, were lodged with public sector insurance companies, of which 93.3 per cent claims had been disposed of," Minister of State for Finance Bhagwat Karad said in a

written reply to the Lok Sabha. In another reply, the minister said public sector insurance companies sustained a total loss of Rs 3,450.68 crore during the one and a half financial year period from April 2020 to September 2021, as against a total loss of Rs 7,552.02 crore during the preceding one and a half financial year period (from October 2018 to March 2020).



RBI notification had triggered possible HDFC-HDFC Bank merger talks

Nearly 8 years ago

Mumbai, Apr 04 (PTI):

Talks of a merger between HDFC Bank and parent HDFC Ltd had gained steam nearly eight years ago, when the Reserve Bank of India allowed banks to issue long-term bonds to fund infrastructure and affordable housing. At that time, key executives at both entities denied any such proposal. And now, the merger has been officially announced by the two players.

Back in July 2014, RBI had issued a notification saying banks do not have to maintain Cash Reserve Ratio (CRR) and Statutory Liquidity Ratio (SLR) for



funds raised through the route, and also exempted them from meeting priority-sector lending targets on such funds.

Analysts and banking industry watchers had then opined that the regulatory move makes sense for the merger of the largest pure-play home financier with what was then

the second largest private sector lender, to create what was reckoned as the second biggest financial sector entity in the country after SBI.

At that time, key executives at both the entities had acknowledged that a merger made sense but denied any such proposal. Without going into exact

details, they had also sought clarity to make such a merger more beneficial. "There are some regulatory issues which need to be resolved to make the merger more beneficial. Partly, it has been resolved with the issuance of the circular on infra bonds, but there are a few more issues in which we are in discussion with the regulators," Aditya Puri, the then chief executive and managing director of HDFC Bank, had said in December 2014.

Keji Mistry, the vice chairman and chief executive of HDFC, had said a merger was possible "theoretically" and could be done at an appropriate time.

India continues to remain highest receiver of FDI

New Delhi, Apr 04 (PTI):

India continues to remain the highest receiver of the FDI, and the Indian retail investors have created the capacity to absorb the shock due to outflow of foreign funds from the country's stock markets, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman told Lok Sabha.

Replying to a question asked by Congress member Shashi Tharoor in Lok Sabha, she said foreign investments have to be gauged, not just by looking at FIIs and FPIs which by very nature depend on the interest rates and they keep on "moving up and down." "The FIIs and FPIs would come and go. But, today the Indian retail investors have proven that even if they come and go any shock that may come



Nirmala Sitharaman

in is now taken care of because of the shock absorbing capacity that the Indian retailers have brought into the Indian market," she said during Question Hour.

"We in the House should stand up and appreciate the Indian retailer who has invested a lot of confidence in the

markets today in India," she added.

Pointing out that overseas investors has pulled out over Rs 1.14 lakh crore from the Indian market so far, Tharoor had urged the finance minister to explain the worrying trend of "steadily" declining investment by the foreign investors.

IOC, L&T, ReNew join hands for green hydrogen business



New Delhi, Apr 04 (PTI): India's top oil firm IOC, engineering and construction giant Larsen & Toubro and renewable energy company ReNew Power on Monday came together to form a joint venture to develop green hydrogen business. Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) and L&T have additionally signed a pact to form a joint venture

with equity participation to manufacture and sell electrolyzers used in the production of green hydrogen. "The tripartite venture is a synergistic alliance that brings together the strong credentials of L&T in designing, executing, and delivering EPC projects, IOC's established expertise in petroleum refining along with its presence across the

energy spectrum, and the expertise of ReNew in offering and developing utility-scale renewable energy solutions," the firms said in a statement.

The joint ventures will look to manufacture zero-carbon emitting hydrogen, which is used from refineries to steel plants to even running automobiles, via electrolysis powered by renewable energy. The government in February, notified a green hydrogen policy aimed at boosting the production of green hydrogen and green ammonia to help the nation become a global hub for the environmentally friendly version of the element.

5G auction to be held on schedule, within stipulated timeline

New Delhi, Apr 04 (PTI):

The auction of 5G spectrum will be held on schedule and within the stipulated timeline, Minister for Communications Ashwini Vaishnav said on Monday. His affirmation comes at a time when telecom regulator Trai's 5G recommendations on spectrum pricing and other nuances, which were widely expected to come by March-end, have spilled over by a few days to early April. Asked if 5G auction will be held as per schedule, Vaishnav said, "absolutely". He was speaking to reporters on the sidelines of an event — 2nd national conference on cyber crime investigation and digital forensics.



The spectrum auctions are slated to be conducted in 2022, to facilitate the rollout of 5G mobile services within 2022-23, by private telecom providers.

Trai's views on 5G auction and related nuances are crucial since they will serve as building blocks, and set the pace for the auctions and subsequent

rollout of the fifth-generation services that will usher in ultra-high-speed and spawn new-age services and business models.

On March 29, a senior Trai official had told PTI that the recommendations (on 5G spectrum pricing and other modalities) will come out within the next 7-10 days. The telecom reg-

ulator, in November last year, had released a detailed consultation paper to discuss threadbare the modalities for auction of spectrum across multiple bands, including pricing, quantum and other conditions — preparing the groundwork for upcoming 5G auctions.

Trai's comprehensive consultation paper ran into 207 pages and posed 74 questions for industry-wide discussion, touching on crucial aspects like valuation and reserve price of 5G spectrum, quantum of the spectrum, block size, eligibility conditions for participation in the auction, rollout obligations, spectrum cap, and surrender of the spectrum.

New Zealand give emotional Taylor a winning farewell



Hamilton, Apr 04 (AP): Ross Taylor made 14 for New Zealand against the Netherlands in the third one-day cricket international on Monday, coming to the crease and leaving it to a standing ovation. The match was Taylor's 450th and last for New Zealand before he retires at the end of a 16-year international career. The 38-year-old batsman played his last test against South Africa this year but decided to make this match on his home ground at Seddon Park his final bow. His children, MacKenzie, Jonty and Adelaide, stood beside him during the national anthems and he went through an honor guard formed by Netherlands players. Taylor played his first one-day international for New Zealand in 2006 and his first test the following year. He went on to play 112 tests, scoring 7,683 runs, including 19 centuries, and 236 one-day internationals in which he made 8,593 runs. He also scored 1,909 runs in 102 Twenty20 internationals.

Sindhu, Sen to lead Indian challenge in Korea Open

Suncheon (Korea), Apr 04 (PTI): India's latest badminton sensation Lakshya Sen and double Olympic medallist P V Sindhu will lead the Indian campaign at the Korea Open Super 500 tournament starting here on Tuesday. With back-to-back finals at German Open and All England Championships, Sen is in the form of his life and will look to be third time lucky as he opens his campaign against world number 25 Lu Guang Zu of China. It will not, however, be an easy outing for Sen as the men's singles draw boasts of some tough competitors such as the Indonesian duo of Anthony Ginting (top seed) and Jonatan Christie (third seed), world champion and fourth seed Loh Kean Yew, second seeded Malaysian Lee Zii Jia and the formidable Thai Kunlavut Vitidsarn, seeded eighth. Sen, the world championships bronze medallist, had scooped his maiden Super 500 crown at the India Open in January before making two final appearances and he will be keen to lift the second title of the season here.

Four Australians in ICC's Most Valuable Team of Women's WC



Dubai, Apr 04 (PTI): Four players from champion side Australia featured in the 'Most Valuable Team' of the just-concluded ICC Women's World Cup while none from the Mithali Raj-led Indian side made the cut after their shock group exit. In the MVT released by ICC on Monday, four Australians made the team, including Player of the Tournament Alyssa Healy, the wicketkeeper-cum-opening batter who slammed a record 170 from just 138 balls in the final against England on Sunday. Australia skipper Meg Lanning was named captain, while her deputy Rachael Haynes and Beth Mooney were also picked in the team. Haynes ended the World Cup as the second-highest run-scorer on 497 after Healy (509), with 130 of those coming in their opening game against England.

Orleans Masters: Mithun Manjunath loses in final

Orleans (France), Apr 04 (PTI): Indian shuttler Mithun Manjunath's splendid run at the Orleans Masters ended with a straight game loss to local favourite Toma Junior Popov in the summit clash of the Super 100 tournament here. The 23-year-old Manjunath went down 21-11 21-19 to world number 32 and fourth seed Frenchman in 50 minutes late on Sunday night. It was Manjunath's maiden Super 100 final. He is a product of the Prakash Padukone Badminton Academy. The unseeded Indian had been impressive throughout the tournament, stunning world No. 22 Hans-Kristian Solberg Vittinghus of Denmark in the quarterfinals. The world number 79 has won four All-India ranking titles, including the All India Senior Ranking Badminton tournament in December last year. The shuttler from Bengaluru was rated highly during his junior days and he also had one or two odd performances in the circuit like reaching the quarters at 2018 Czech Open and back-to-back semi-finals finishes at Vietnam Open and Russian Open in 2018.

Netherlands coach Van Gaal says he has prostate cancer

The Hague, Apr 4 (AP): Netherlands national soccer team coach Louis van Gaal has revealed that he is being treated for an aggressive form of prostate cancer but still plans to lead the team at the World Cup in Qatar in November. Van Gaal told Sunday night Dutch talk show Humberto that players in the team did not know about his diagnosis even though he was receiving night-time treatment during four training camps. You don't tell something like this to people you work with because it could influence their choices, their energy or whatever, and I thought, they shouldn't know," he said. He said he has undergone 25 radiation therapy treatments. I have been to the hospital in the evening or night in every period, without the players knowing, the 70-year-old coach said. Van Gaal lost his first wife to cancer. It's part of life. I have experienced so much with disease and death, in my own family, my wife, he said.

Boxing: Monika stuns two-time World Championship medallist

New Delhi, Apr 04 (PTI):

Boxer Monika (48kg) upstaged two-time World Championship medallist Josie Gabuco of the Philippines to enter the semifinals along with two other Indians at the Thailand Open here on Monday. Ashish Kumar (81kg) and Manisha (57kg) are the two other Indian pugilists who also made their way into the last four with contrasting wins against their respective Thai opponents.

The 26-year-old Monika, who hails from Rohtak, prevailed 4-1 over experienced campaigner Gabuco, who won gold and bronze medals at the World Championships in 2012 and 2008 respectively. She will now face Vietnam's Trinh Thi Diem Kieu, who received bye in the last round.

Competing in his first international tournament since the Tokyo Olympics, last edition's gold medallist Ashish notched a 5-0 win against local boxer Aphisit Khankhokhruea in the 81kg quarterfinals. The Indian will now clash with Indonesia's Maikhel Roberrd Muskita in the semifinals. It was a good day in the ring for Manisha, who recently



India's Monika pulled off an impressive 4-1 victory against two-time world championships medallist Josie Gabuco of Philippines to enter the women's 48kg semi-finals at the 2022 Thailand Open International.

qualified for the upcoming World Championships as well as Asian Games, as she defeated two-time Youth Asian champion Thailand's Porntip Buapa 3-2 in the 57kg quarterfinals. However, Renu (54kg) and Monika (63kg) lost their opening round clashes. While Renu gave a tough fight to Italy's European U-22 champion Sirine Charaabi, it wasn't enough as the Indian lost 2-3 in the quarterfinal clash. Monika, on the other hand, went down in the quarterfinals, losing to

Youth Olympic champion local boxer Panpatchara Somnuek by RSC verdict (Referee Stops Contest) in the third round.

On the third day of the competition on Tuesday, Sumit and Gaurav Chauhan will play their quarter-finals against respective opponents from Kazakhstan. Sumit (75kg), who received bye in the last opening round, will take on Timur Nurseitov while Gaurav (91kg) will fight against 2018 Youth Olympics champion Aibek Oralbay.

We have habit of not finishing games when we are in control: Reid

Bhubaneswar, Apr 04 (PTI): The Indian men's hockey team might have won its FIH Pro League double-header against England but head coach Graham Reid is not completely pleased with its performance, especially the tendency of allowing opponents to come back into the game. India pulled off wins in both the games against England, winning the first one in the shootout after being locked 3-3 in the regulation time before registering a 4-3 victory in the second on Sunday. With the twin wins, India climbed to the top of the Pro League

table, with 21 points in 10 games so far. "We seem to have a habit of not finishing those games when we have control of them. We let the other team get back into it. But I suppose that's hockey nowadays. In the third quarter, we lost control a bit and we need to look into that," Reid said. "The corners went in tonight and we had opportunities to try some variations. It was a really good fight with them and our boys showed a good heart and good spirits. Games like these help in building characters. And it's always good to come out on top," the coach added. India

next play against Germany at the same Kalinga Stadium in another two-legged tie on April 14 and 15. "It's good to win and reach top of the table, but now we have to prepare for Germany, who are also a very tough team. They will always bring a competitive team. They are a great hockey nation. So, we can look forward to some good games coming up in two weeks," Reid said. Harmanpreet, who scored a hat-trick in the second match, said he was happy to have helped in the team's winning cause. "My aim has always been to score goals for the bene-

fit of the team. Even if I score one or two goals, or don't score any, I always look to help the team in any which way I can. All my goals are memorable for me and are my favourite ones - because I scored them for India," Harmanpreet said. "England are a very good team, they did not give up till the last minute. But we also performed well to keep our calm. "It is also a learning lesson for us that we need to maintain our lead and the pressure in the match so that we can play freely in the final two quarters," he added.

Govt sanctions Rs 3.65 crore for international exposure trips of athletics, yachting teams

New Delhi, Apr 04 (PTI):

The government has sanctioned assistance of the tune of Rs 3.65 crore for international exposure trips of Indian athletics and yachting teams this month.

Indian track and field athletes are set for international exposure tours ahead of a packed schedule this year that constitutes the World Athletics Championship, the Commonwealth Games and the Asian Games 2022.

The Indian athletics' middle and long-distance teams comprising 12 ath-

letes, two coaches and one support staff will undergo training-cum-competition in Colorado Spring, USA from April 15 to June 6.

The team includes Avinash Sable, who competed at the Tokyo Olympics in 3000m steeplechase. A total of Rs 1.19 crore has been sanctioned by the government for the exposure trip.

Similarly, the 400m and 4x100m teams comprising 31 athletes, four coaches and five support staff will undergo training-cum-competition in Antalya, Turkey, from April 10 to June 6.

With momentum on their side, Rajasthan face RCB in battle of Royals



Mumbai, Apr 04 (PTI):

Rajasthan Royals would aim to build on their promising start to the season when they take on Royal Challengers Bangalore, a side that is yet to unlock its potential, in the Indian Premier League here on Tuesday. Rajasthan come

into the game following their 23-run win over Mumbai Indians. Bangalore, led by Faf Du Plessis, head into the match after a narrow three-wicket win over Kolkata Knight Riders and would be looking to be more convincing. The Wankhede track has been aiding the pacers ini-

ITF has preponed Davis Cup tie in September to avoid clash with Asian Games

New Delhi, Apr 04 (PTI):

India will be able to field its 'A' team at both Davis Cup and the Asian Games with the ITF preponing the team tournament and ATF pushing back the tennis events at the regional multi-sport showpiece by eight days to avoid a clash in dates. The Indian Davis Cup team was recently drawn to meet Norway in an away contest, which was to be held either on September 16-17 or 17-18. The tennis events at the Asian Games were scheduled to be held from September 10-14, which meant that India could



play only one event with its 'A' team since reaching Hangzhou in China from Davis Cup venue Norway was not practically possible. However, the All India Tennis Association (AITA) and the Asian Tennis

Federation (ATF) managed to convince the International Tennis Federation (ITF) to revise the dates. The Davis Cup tie between India and Norway and that of nine other Asian nations will

'Indian team needs to emerge from legacy of poor decision making going forward'

New Delhi, Apr 04 (PTI):

Former captain Anjum Chopra believes India were never among the title contenders at the just concluded Women's World Cup and going forward, she wants the team to "emerge from a legacy of poor decision-making" to turn the corner.

India's underwhelming show at the ICC showpiece in New Zealand ended with a heartbreaking loss to South Africa in the group stage.

"It is time women's cricket emerges from legacy of poor decision making and be honest about what they want to do and



how they want to do going forward. Otherwise we will remain a near about team, we will never get

South Africa wins 1st test as Bangladesh all out for 53

Durban, Apr 04 (AP):

South Africa raced to a 220-run victory in the first test after Bangladesh's collapse to 53 all out on the morning of the final day on Monday. Bangladesh lasted only 19 overs in its second innings and South Africa needed only two bowlers to roll the tourists out.

They were both spinners, with left-arter Keshav Maharaj collecting 7-32 and offspinner Simon Harmer 3-21. They both cashed in on spin-friendly conditions on a wearing pitch to take South Africa home.

It was a surprisingly sudden end to the match after Bangladesh had hopes of possibly pulling off its first test victory over South Africa by needing 274 runs in the final innings. But the tourists slumped to 11-3 at the close of play on Day 4 in Durban and the wickets continued to tumble dramatically on the morning of Day 5.

No. 3 Najmul Hossain Shanto (26) and tailender Taskin Ahmed (14) were the only Bangladesh batters to reach double figures and South Africa needed less than an hour of play on Monday to take those remaining seven wickets and take a 1-0 lead in the two-



Keshav Maharaj took 7-32 and fellow spinner Simon Harmer 3-21 to complete a dominant performance for the home side.

test series. Bangladesh's total was its second-lowest in test cricket after the 43 it was bowled out for against West Indies in 2018. Its 53 was also the lowest test total ever at the Kingsmead ground in Durban.

The huge winning margin belied a test which was competitive for much of the time. It might even have tipped slightly in Bangladesh's favor at one point on the fourth day when South Africa went from 116-1 to 204 all out in its second innings to give the touring team a sight at that

historic test win over the Proteas. Bangladesh had already won its first one-day series in South Africa earlier in the tour.

But its hopes in the first test were ripped away by Maharaj and Harmer, with Maharaj's seven at his home ground taking him to 141 career test wickets, now the most by a South African spinner since the country returned to international cricket after apartheid.

The second test is in Port Elizabeth and starts on Thursday.

I see Prasad Krishna playing all three formats for India: Buttler



Mumbai, Apr 04 (PTI):

Seasoned Rajasthan Royals opening batter Jos Buttler feels team-mate Prasad Krishna has the attributes of becoming a successful fast bowler and foresees the youngster playing for India in all

three formats. Krishna, who made his ODI debut last March, has given a good account of himself in the past year. He troubled the West Indies with his disconcerting pace and bounce while also doing well for his previous IPL franchise Kolkata Knight Riders.

"He has some pace in the nets and skills, he's got all the attributes to be a very successful fast bowler for India in all formats of the game. I see him playing red ball cricket for India as well," Buttler said at the pre-match conference ahead of Rajasthan's clash with Royal Challengers Bangalore on Monday.

now be held on September 14-15 while the ATF itself rescheduled the tennis event at the Asian Games to September 18-24.

"The ATF has communicated to AITA that ITF has revised the dates of Davis Cup ties, involving 10 Asian Nations in World Group I and II, so that it does not clash with the tennis events at the Asian Games," AITA Secretary General Anil Dhupar told PTI. "India's Davis Cup tie will now be played on September 14-15. "ATF has also pushed back dates of tennis event at Asian Games to avoid clash," Dhupar added.

there," Chopra told PTI in an exclusive interview.

Expectations were high after the runners-up finish in the previous World Cup five years ago but Chopra, who watched the action from the sidelines as a commentator, feels that the Mithali Raj-led squad never looked winning the trophy in the lead up to the mega event.

India were the only team to get a bilateral series against hosts New Zealand ahead of the World Cup but they could still not get fully used to the conditions and zero in on a settled combination. "I won't say India played poorly.

FUEL PRICE HIKE

Buses, taxis may go off roads if fares not revised

Kolkata, April 04 (PTI):

With fuel prices touching a new high every day, private bus and cab operators said they might have to take their vehicles off the roads if the state and central governments did not provide some succour in the form of an allowance or make way for fare hikes to support the ailing transport sector.

Petrol and diesel prices were hiked by 40 paise a litre each, taking the total increase in rates in the last two weeks to Rs 8.40 per litre. This is the 12th hike in oil prices since March 22. On Monday, petrol price in Kolkata stood at Rs 113.45 per litre, and diesel

price at Rs 98.22 per litre. Tapan Banerjee, the general secretary of Joint Council of Bus Syndicate, said only 30 per cent of the 42,000 private buses are plying the city roads at present, and the number would dwindle further if oil prices continue to surge.

"Private operators are already bleeding under the dual effect of increasing operation costs and penalties charged by the traffic police. Hike in fuel prices have added to their woes. The operators unable to pay insurance fees," Banerjee told PTI.

The state government, in January, effected a 10-fold increase in traffic violation fines. As buses and

minibuses stayed off the roads for the major part of 2020 and 2021 due to pandemic-related restrictions, maintenance cost of vehicles went up during the period. Ninety per cent of the vehicle owners have failed to repay bank loans under such circumstances.

"We sent several letters to the prime minister and chief minister, but neither the Centre nor the state government responded. From high insurance premium to EMIs, the bus owners have to shell out every penny from their pockets while not making any profit from their daily trips," he said. Every bus incurs an expense of Rs

4500-5000 per day, while fuel cost goes up to Rs 11,000 for long-distance trips to places like Digha and Siliguri.

"As the last revision was effected in 2018, employees of many buses have upped fares at different stages unofficially, but the extra earnings are usually pocketed by them. We demand that a regulatory committee be formed to examine all aspects and fix fares accordingly.

If the minimum fare of Rs 7 is not revised immediately, all buses will stop hitting the roads," Banerjee stated. As fuel does not come under GST, central excise and VAT get levied on petrol and diesel.

SARHUL FESTIVITY



Members of local tribal communities celebrate the Sarhul festival, in Ranchi, Monday.

No increase in medicine prices: Mandaviya

New Delhi, Apr 04 (PTI):

Allaying concerns about any increase in prices of medicines, Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya on Monday said the government has not effected any hike and only a few essential drugs that are linked to the wholesale price index and are as such priced very low may see some automatic rise or fall as per inflation trends.

"There are some essential medicines linked to WPI that can see rise or fall automatically as per the WPI movement. These are drugs that are priced a few rupees and there-



Mansukh Mandaviya

fore, a 10 per cent WPI increase may lead to the price rising by a few paise," Mandaviya said.

The government has no role in the price of these medicines and it has not effected any increase in prices and it

has no plans to do so, he said.

The prices of these medicines also automatically decline when WPI falls, Mandaviya told reporters here.

The concerns have been raised in some quarters after the drug pricing authority NPPA recently allowed a price hike for scheduled drugs, which are under price control under the National List of Essential Medicines (NLEM), with effect from April.

These drugs include paracetamol, antibiotics used to treat bacterial infections, anti-anemia, vitamins and minerals.

IITG researchers develop technology to rate EVs for Indian conditions

Guwahati, Apr 04 (PTI):

Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati has developed a technology to rate motors and batteries of electric vehicles and suggest to original equipment manufacturers (OEM) the best drivetrain components for the Indian scenario. Drivetrain is a group of components that deliver power to the drive wheels.

Currently, no OEM uses this technology and there is a demand for constituents that take into account different climatic conditions in the country, an official release by IITG said. The technology has been developed by the researchers of IITG's

Electric Mobility Laboratory, led by Prof Praveen Kumar, and focuses on Indian climatic conditions for both rural and urban areas.

The development in the field of next-generation energy-efficient EV technology is one of the most important breakthroughs required for the sustainable development of the country and to reduce carbon footprint," IITG Director T G Sitharam said. Explaining the long-term impact of this development, Kumar said that their goal is to prepare a document that can enable the new entrants into the EV market and help in levelling the playing field.

'Extremist mindset' not growing Muslim population threat to country

Giriraj on Gorakhnath temple attack

New Delhi, Apr 04 (PTI):

Union minister Giriraj Singh said on Monday the country does not face a threat because of the rising Muslim population but the "extremist mindset" that was behind the attack on security personnel at Gorakhnath temple, and hit out at the opposition over its "silence" on the incident.

A man named Murtaza attacked two PAC constables with a sharp-edged weapon at the south gate of Gorakhnath temple, of which Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath is the head priest. The attacker also allegedly tried



to force his way into the temple after shouting "Allahu Akbar". Speaking to reporters at Parliament House Complex, Singh alleged, "The growing population

of Muslims in the country is not a threat. The threat is the extremist mindset which takes various forms. Sometimes it seeks Sharia law implementation, sometimes it undertakes hijab protests, at times it protests against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act and at another an educated man acts like a terrorist."

The accused, police have said, is an IIT pass out. He has been arrested.

Hitting out at the opposition, Singh, considered a hardline Hindutva face of the BJP, said the "silence" of those who preach secularism all the time over the incident is a bigger threat.

RAMADAN RITUALS



Muslim devotees break their day-long fast during holy month of Ramadan, in Surat, Monday.

'Muslims going through more difficult situation than in 1857, 1947'

Lucknow, Apr 04 (PTI):

Indian Muslims are going through a more difficult situation than in 1857 and 1947 over their religious traditions, said an office-bearer of the All India Muslim Personal Law Board.

AIMPLB general secretary Maulana Khalid Saifullah Rahmani urged Muslims, especially women, not to fall prey to "propaganda" being spread against the Muslim Personal Law Board.

He said, "extremist forces" were trying to "mislead and instigate us" and bring the Muslim youth to the streets, and cited the issue of 'hijab' in Karnataka which he said was posing a "big test" for the Muslims in that state.

"All India Muslim

Personal Law Board is looking into this issue from day one and taking legal remedies for the same," he said.

He said, an appeal has been filed in the Supreme Court against the decision of the Karnataka High Court (on the hijab issue) and the board is not ignoring any such issue which affects 'Shariat'.

"But sadly, some people want to create a misunderstanding about the board," he added.

He said, "I request the Muslims, especially the Muslim sisters, that does not get influenced by such propaganda and do not let the efforts being made to



Maulana Khalid Saifullah

create resentment among them."

Rahmani in a video message said, "Muslims are going through a more difficult situation than in 1857 and 1947 in terms of the crisis in their religious traditions. Shariat-Islami is being attacked from many sides and Muslims are being targeted."

India witnessed the first war of Independence in 1857 while 1947 marked the country's independence and Partition.

In Karnataka, girls have been banned from wearing 'hijab' in educational institutions. Recently, the Karnataka High Court has

also refused to stay the ban, holding that the wearing of 'hijab' by Muslim women is not a compulsory religious practice of Islam.

The AIMPLB has filed a special leave petition against the decision last month.

The board has moved to the Supreme Court through its secretary, Mohammad Fazlurrahim, along with two other petitioners, Munisa Bushra and Jalisa Sultana Yasin.

The AIMPLB is a non-government organisation constituted in 1973 to adopt suitable strategies for the protection and continued applicability of Muslim Personal Law in India, most importantly, the Muslim Personal Law (Shariat) Application Act of 1937.

Medical services at govt hospitals in Gujarat hit

As 10,000 doctors on indefinite strike

Ahmedabad, Apr 04 (PTI):

At least 10,000 government doctors in Gujarat began an indefinite strike on Monday for their pending demands including regularisation of ad-hoc services, affecting medical services in state-run hospitals and PHCs.

On the first day, services in government hospitals, primary and community health centres and hospitals run by GMERS (Gujarat Medical Education and Research Society) of the state health department were crippled as doctors re-

fused to attend to patients.

"Nearly 10,000 government doctors across the state have gone on an indefinite strike from Monday after waiting for the resolution of our demands that never happened. Government employees at CHCs, PHCs, district hospitals, six medical colleges, and nine GMERS colleges, etc. are all on strike from today," said Gujarat Medical Teachers' Association (GMTA) president Dr Rajnish Patel.

GMTA is one of the constituents of the Gujarat Government Doctors' Forum-an umbrella body of the associations of GMERS' faculty mem-

bers, in-service doctors, ESIC and Class-2 medical officers, among others.

The striking doctors have been demanding the continuation and regularisation of ad-hoc services, departmental promotions, and non-practising allowance (NPA) as per the Seventh Pay Commission, Patel said, adding that another key demand is stopping contractual appointments.

Another member of the GMTA said doctors have been trying to ensure since last November that they do not have to go on strike and that their issues get resolved through discussions with the government.

New Delhi, Apr 04 (PTI):

Attorney General K K Venugopal on Monday told the Supreme Court that he has an objection to the petition, seeking direction for enacting well-defined laws/rules to ensure adherence to the fundamental duties as enshrined in the Constitution, as the website of the Department of Justice shows the tremendous amount of work which has been done for sensitizing citizens about Article 51-A.

Venugopal, who was earlier asked by the top court to assist in the matter, told a bench of Justices S K

Kaul and M M Sundresh that the curriculum of schools contains Article 51-A with duties to be taught to the students and debates have been held throughout the country. Article 51-A of the Constitution deals with fundamental duties. While the Attorney General said the President and Prime Minister have addressed this aspect and a one-year awareness drive was also launched, the Centre told the bench that it would file an affidavit in the matter and was granted four weeks for the purpose. The bench told Venugopal that it was circumspect while issuing notice on the plea and the court only wanted to know about the limited

issue. It said the court, in its earlier order, had said that government may inform it as to whether any steps have been taken in pursuance to one of its earlier judgement or do it propose to take any steps in furtherance thereof. In its February 21 order, the apex court had noted that the counsel appearing for the petitioner had said that he was emphasizing two of the prayers made in the plea taking into consideration the observations made by the top court in the 2003 judgement. In that verdict, the apex court had directed the Centre to consider and take appropriate steps expeditiously for implementation of recommendations

of the report of the National Commission to Review the Working of the Constitution, wherein a report made by a committee on the operationalization of the fundamental duties of citizens was accepted and the strong suggestion was made for its early implementation. During the hearing on Monday, Venugopal said it has been elaborately set out on the website of the Ministry of Justice and there is a duty on the part of a PIL petitioner to first investigate and then come forward. Why don't you place an affidavit on record, the bench said. Venugopal said the court may ask the Union of India to file an affidavit as

he is appearing as the Attorney General in the matter. An advocate appearing in the matter told the bench that he is being led by Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, who is representing the Centre in the matter.

We will take instructions and file a response, the lawyer said. Venugopal referred to two of the prayers, including the one which seeks direction to the Centre and states to make comprehensive well-defined laws/rules ensuring the adherence to the provisions of Part IV-A of the Constitution effectively and requiring the citizens to perform their fundamental duties properly, and said such prayers will not lie.



BRIEF



Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren plays the musical instrument Mandar, on the occasion of the Sarhul festival, in Ranchi, Monday.

Arrested

Rewa: The Madhya Pradesh police arrested qawwali singer Sharif Parvaz, booked for making "provocative" remarks, from Kanpur and brought him to Rewa district on Monday, a police officer said. A case was registered against the qawwali singer after he allegedly made provocative remarks against the country, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Home Minister Amit Shah and Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath during a musical event at Mangawa town in Rewa district of Madhya Pradesh on March 28.

Fire

Amritsar: A fire broke out in a multi-storey commercial building in Ranjit Avenue here on Monday, police said. Around one dozen fire fighting vehicles were pressed into service to douse the fire, said the police. However, there was no report of any casualty in the incident, they said. The electric wiring system of the building caught fire because of a short circuit and it took four hours for the fire fighting vehicles to douse the flames, they added.

Extended

Mumbai: A special court here on Monday extended the judicial custody of Maharashtra minister Nawab Malik till April 18 in connection with a money laundering case. Malik (62) was arrested on February 23 by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) in a money-laundering probe linked to the activities of fugitive gangster Dawood Ibrahim and his aides.

Watery grave

Kozhikode: A newly-wed man drowned and his wife injured after the two slipped and fell into a river in Kuttidiy, near here, on Monday, police said. The police identified the man as Rejjilal (27), a native of Paleri near here, and the wife as Kanika, who has been hospitalised, the police said. According to the police, the couple and their relatives reached the area this morning, where the mishap took place.

Weather
High 40 Low 26

MARKET
NIFTY 18053.40
SENSEX 60,611.74

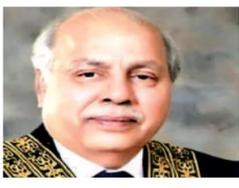
BULLION
GOLD 51,303
SILVER 66,489

Imran nominates former CJ of Pak as caretaker PM

Islamabad, Apr 04 (PTI):

Pakistan's former chief justice Gulzar Ahmed was on Monday nominated for the office of the caretaker prime minister by incumbent Imran Khan, amid ongoing political crisis in the country.

Former information minister and senior leader of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf party Fawad Chaudhry said that the premier made the decision after approval from the party's core committee. The announcement comes after President Arif Alvi



sent letters to Prime Minister Khan and Leader of the Opposition Shehbaz Sharif on Monday seeking suggestions for the appointment of a caretaker prime minister. "In response to the President's letter, after consultation and approval by the PTI Core Committee, Prime



Minister Imran Khan has nominated Pakistan's former chief justice Gulzar Ahmed for the post of caretaker Prime Minister," Chaudhry said. In his letter, President Alvi told them in case they do not agree on the appointment within three days of the dissolution of

the Parliament, they shall forward two nominees each to a committee to be constituted by the Speaker, comprising eight members of the outgoing assembly, or the Senate, or both, having equal representation from the treasury and the opposition.

The Constitution has empowered the president to appoint a caretaker prime minister in consultation with the prime minister and the leader of the Opposition in the outgoing National Assembly, the President's Secretariat said in a statement.

BJP's Raigarh unit chief booked for molestation

On colleague's complaint

Case registered

A case was registered against Umesh Agrawal on Monday with City Kotwali police station here based on the 21-year-old woman's complaint. As per the complaint, the alleged molestation incident took place in Agrawal's chamber in the BJP's Raigarh district unit office here on June 2 last year, The woman lodged a complaint in this connection on April 1 this year, following which an investigation was launched.

Agrawal's chamber in the BJP's Raigarh district unit office here on June 2 last year, The woman lodged a complaint in this connection on April 1 this year, following which an investigation was launched,

the police official said. Based on the preliminary probe, Agrawal was booked under Indian Penal Code section 354 (criminal assault with intent to outrage modesty), he added.

Doctor booked for extortion

Bilaspur, Apr 04:

A doctor hailing from neighbouring Madhya Pradesh has been booked for allegedly demanding money from a woman physician by threatening to circulate morphed photographs of her, police said on Monday. An extortion case under IPC and IT Act provisions has been registered against Dr Ashok Dante based on the complaint of the victim's husband who is also a doctor and runs a private hospital here, said JP Gupta, Station House Officer (SHO) of Civil Lines police. "As per the complaint lodged on Saturday, the

About the incident

As per the complaint lodged on Saturday, the woman doctor was in Chitrakoot in Satna district of neighbouring Madhya Pradesh between 2017 and 2020 for her medical studies during which she got acquainted with the accused Dr Ashok Dante. When the woman returned here after her studies, Dante allegedly demanded Rs 50 lakhs from her after threatening to circulate morphed images of her.

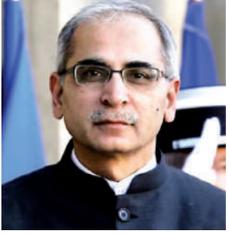
woman doctor was in Chitrakoot in Satna district of neighbouring Madhya Pradesh between 2017 and 2020 for her medical studies during which she got acquainted with Dante.

Vinay Mohan Kwatra appointed next FS

New Delhi, Apr 04 (PTI):

India's envoy to Nepal Vinay Mohan Kwatra was on Monday appointed as the new Foreign Secretary (FS), succeeding Harsh Vardhan Shringla who will retire at the end of this month, a personnel ministry order said. Announcing the appointment of Kwatra, a 1988-batch Indian Foreign Service (IFS) officer, the ministry said he will take charge as the foreign secretary on April 30. Kwatra's appointment was approved by the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet.

Before his diplomatic posting to Nepal in 2020, he served as the Ambassador of India to France from August 2017 to February 2020. A career diplomat with over 32 years of experience, Kwatra has also held



the position of a Joint Secretary in the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) for two years between October 2015 to August 2017. Kwatra headed the policy planning & research division of the Ministry of External Affairs between July 2013 and October 2015 and later served as the head of the Americas Division in the Foreign Ministry where he dealt with India's relations

with the United States and Canada. He served as Minister (Commerce) in the Embassy of India, Washington from May 2010 till July 2013.

Between 2003 and 2006, he served as a Counsellor and later as the Deputy Chief of Mission in the Embassy of India, Beijing, China.

After joining the service, he served as Third Secretary and then Second Secretary in the Permanent Mission of India in Geneva until 1993, where apart from learning the French language, he handled work relating to the UN specialized agencies, as also the Human Rights Commission. During this period, he also obtained a diploma in International Relations from the Graduate School of International Studies in Geneva.

Amitabh Bachchan to revive meet-and-greet with fans

Two years after suspending due to COVID

Mumbai, Apr 04 (PTI): Megastar Amitabh Bachchan on Monday teased that he is planning to restart his routine Sunday meet-and-greet with his fans as COVID-19 restrictions have been lifted in Maharashtra.

Bachchan, who used to meet-and-greet his fans every Sunday at his house Jalsa in Juhu, had called off the weekly activity in March 2020 due to the pandemic, putting an end to a 38-year-old tradition.

Now that the Maharashtra government has lifted all pandemic-related restrictions, includ-

ing the mandatory wearing of masks, the 79-year-old actor said the fan activity might resume.

"Alright .. the news about the city of Mumbai is that no more masks and protocol of COVID .. which comes as a blessing .. and the restrictions of flights in the International to be given operations as normal ..

"So hopefully travel from far off lands shall be in permission .. and perhaps the Sunday meets at the Jalsa gate on the Sunday to be revived, albeit with given precautions.

Buzz over Shivpal-BJP 'bonhomie' in UP

Shivpal may get Deputy Speaker's post

Lucknow, Apr 04 (PTI):

Amid reports of growing bonhomie between Pragatisheel Samajwadi Party-Lohia president Shivpal Yadav and the BJP, there is speculation that he may become Deputy Speaker in the Uttar Pradesh Assembly with the backing of the ruling party. "Such speculation is doing the rounds. The sky has no limits, nor does politics. The door of possibilities is never closed in politics, PSPML spokesperson Deepak Mishra told PTI.

Shivpal Yadav had floated his own party in 2019 after a rift with his nephew, Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav. But ahead of the recent assembly polls, the two were back together and Shivpal Yadav won from Jaswantnagar on an SP ticket. Strains appeared to have developed again between the two again after

the election results, with the BJP returning to power for a second consecutive term. The PSPML spokesperson recalled Shivpal Yadav's experience as a legislator. If the MLAs give him this responsibility, it will increase the dignity of the assembly," Mishra said.

Asked why Yadav is eyeing the Deputy Speaker's post, he said, "Which post is left now for him? He cannot become the Speaker. Neither can he become the Leader of the House or the Leader of Opposition."

Mishra said there has been no official proposal on PSPML leader's election to the Deputy Speaker's post. "But if such a proposal comes, Shivpal Yadav will be the first choice of the ruling party and the opposition," he added. When asked about the possibility, UP's Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs

Jaswant Singh Saini said, "I have no information in this regard." Earlier, there was speculation that Yadav would be sent to the Rajya Sabha by the BJP and his son Aditya Yadav would contest from the Jaswantnagar assembly seat vacated by him.

In October 2021, BJP-backed SP rebel Nitin Agarwal was elected as Deputy Speaker of the UP Legislative Assembly.

In recent days, there have been signs of strain within the opposition alliance headed by Akhilesh Yadav, and his uncle Shivpal Yadav has thrown hints that he is moving towards the BJP.

He has met Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath and begun following Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath and former deputy chief minister Dinesh Sharma on Twitter.

HC allows journalist Ayyub to travel abroad

Questions ED on LOC against her

New Delhi, Apr 04 (PTI):

The Delhi High Court Monday allowed journalist Rana Ayyub to travel abroad while questioning the Enforcement Directorate (ED) over a Look Out Circular (LOC) issued against her barring her from travelling abroad.

Justice Chandra Dhari Singh said the permission is subject to appropriate conditions and a detailed order will follow.

Deposit some money. Also, inform agencies as to where you are staying. Share your phone number, the court said.

The court was hearing Ayyub's plea seeking to quash a LOC issued against her barring her from travelling abroad.

The plea, however, was opposed by the ED which



alleged that she was involved in a serious offence regarding funds involving over Rs one crore and that there was an apprehension that she might not return to India.

During the hearing, the judge asked the ED as to how do you defend your LOC? It is an admitted fact that whenever a summons was issued, she replied and she appeared before officers. How do you say that she is avoiding investigation? Because for LOC, evidence should be satisfactory.

'Low number of COVID-19 cases'

Pune, Apr 04 (PTI):

Serum Institute of India CEO Adar Poonawalla on Monday said the low number of COVID-19 cases at the moment was because the country chose the right vaccine. Speaking to reporters on the sidelines of the 'Alternate Fuel Conclave', he said the fourth wave, if at all it occurs, will hopefully be mild. Speaking on the booster dose, he said, "About the booster dose, we have appealed to the government, because everyone who needs to travel, needs the booster dose. They (government) are having internal discussions and a policy on booster dose may be announced soon." All other countries are doing it and it was now time for India to have a look at it (booster dose), Poonawalla said, adding that the Centre had done a fantastic job by covering most of eligible adult population with two vaccine doses.

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Nutrient	Diseases due to Deficiency
Vitamin A	Weak eyesight, fatigue, dry skin and frequently falling sick can occur due to Vitamin A deficiency.
Vitamin C	Deficiency of Vitamin C can cause muscle weakness, pain in joints and muscles, gum bleeding etc.
Vitamin D	Helpful for regulating calcium and phosphate in the body. Its deficiency can cause fatigue and bone weakness.
Vitamin E	Useful antioxidant and helpful in stability of cell membrane. Its deficiency can cause skin problems and hairfall.
Vitamin K	Vitamin K is beneficial for blood circulation. Its deficiency causes low bone density.
Vitamin B1	Vitamin B1 converts food to energy. Its deficiency can cause dementia, alzheimer's, cancer and metabolism related problems.
Vitamin B2	Vitamin B2 is important to increase immunity. Its deficiency can cause nerve diseases, anemia and problems related to the heart.
Vitamin B12	Deficiency of Vitamin B12 can effect the brain, nervous system and blood pressure. It helps in building red blood cells in the body.

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Eight arrested for operating online cricket betting racket

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Apr 04: In a bid to tighten noose around the people involved in the innovative online betting, Durg Police took its third consecutive major action on Monday. They have arrested eight persons who were operating online cricket betting racket through Mahadev Online Book.

Police are investigating the inter-state and international connections of this gang. Police seized Rs 54,730 cash, 8 nos mobile phones worth Rs 1,70,700, one ATM card, 05 nos betting records and ball point pen total worth Rs 2,25,430. Police are collecting information about various bank accounts of the accused.

ASP (city) Sanjay Dhruv informed that under the guidance of SSP (Durg) BN Meena, teams of various police stations are conducting special operation against the illegal activities of



betting and gambling. The team of Chhawani Police Station led by Inspector Vishal Sone achieved a major breakthrough in this direction. Immediately after the launch of IPL season, Chhawani Police has been conducting a continuous campaign to curb the illegal betting. The network of informers has been activated for the purpose. In this sequel, Chhawani Police received a tip off regard-

ing some people who were operating an illegal online betting racket.

Acting on this tip off, Police team conducted raid at Satnam Bhavan in Camp-2 and rounded up eight persons. They were caught red-handed while operating the online cricket betting racket through their social media accounts like Instagram, WhatsApp and Telegram. They were providing the ID / password to the interest-

ed people and were receiving online payments against the bets.

Police recovered Rs 54,730 cash, eight nos Mobile phones worth Rs 1,70,700, one ATM card; 05 nos betting records and ball point pen total worth Rs 2,25,430. They have been booked under the provisions mentioned in section 4 (a) of Gambling Act.

The accused are identified as Rahul Mudgare alias Aman Khan (26) son

of Wahad Khan a resident of Shardapara, Chhawani; Jaishankar Prasad (42) son of Kanta Prasad a resident of Santoshipara, Milan Chowk Camp 2; Sagar Singh (27) son of Sarvjit Singh a resident of EWS 671, Vaishali Nagar; Vikas Singh alias Babu (30) son of Sajawal Singh a resident of Ghasidas Nagar, Jamul; Sunny Choudhary (26) son of Ramesh Choudhary a resident of Rajiv nagar, ACC Chowk, Jamul; N Sunil (32) son of N Srinivas Rao a resident of Kailash Nagar, Jamul; Saurabh Shukla (27) son of Omprakash Shukla a resident of Babadeep Singh Nagar, Vaishali Nagar; and Anil Singh alias Jhumru (29) son of Late Harjit Singh a resident of Ruabandha, Bhilai.

Inspector Vishal Sone, SI Naresh Sarva, Head Constable Jaspal Singh, Constable Jeet Narayan Yadav, Amit Singh, Trilok Bhati and Dharmendra Singh played vital role in arresting the accused.

Two held with psychotropic drugs



Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Apr 04: Police have arrested two persons on charges of illegal trade of psychotropic drugs. About 2012 tablets of the scheduled drugs were seized from their possession. The accused were illegally selling these tablets to the addicts. Jamul Police arrested the accused and booked them under the provisions of Narcotics Act.

ASP (City) Sanjay Dhruv informed that the accused

are identified as Rahul Srivastava (32) son of Shankar Kumar Srivastava a resident of Camp 2 Power House and Shailabh Sharma (45) son of Laxmi Kumar Sharma a resident of Mukut Nagar, Durg. ASP Dhruv informed that under the guidance of Senior Superintendent of Police (Durg) Badri Narayan Meena (IPS), effective action is being taken against illegal drug dealers and peddlers in the district.

In this sequence, the

Jamul police had received information about the trade of illegal narcotic pills. After verifying the information, Jamul Police team led by Inspector Gaurav Pandey conducted a raid and rounded up two persons.

On searching, police recovered 2012 nos tablets of scheduled psychotropic drugs from their possession. An offense was registered against the accused under section 08/22B of Narcotics Act.

Life skills and mental skills training imparted to Govt Primary School students

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Apr 04: The students of Government Primary School, Ruabandha, Bhilai were given training on life skills and mental health by the members of Psychology department of St Thomas College. Training on increase of memory skills, positive physical and mental health and personal hygiene were given.

This work was done under the successful guidance of the Head Master of the school and his teachers. Head of the department Dr Debjani Mukherjee, Assistant Professor Dr Sumita Singh and Dr Ankita Deshmukh helped their students to carry out the programme. Training was given to the students of class III to V of Government Primary



School. Along with the training, stationery, food items and sanitizers were also distributed to them. The primary school students very enthusiastically participated in all events. These extension programs were also conducted under the

aegis of 'Aahan', initiative of the 50th year celebrations of St Thomas Mission, Bhilai.

The administrator of the college, Father Dr Joshi Varghese appreciated the efforts taken and the Principal Dr MG Royman encouraged the

department to organize such awareness programmes. Faculty of the department Dr Sumita Singh, Assistant Professor and Dr Ankita Deshmukh, Assistant Professor, accompanied the students and took the guidance sessions.

Durg Police seeks Look Out Circular against absconding

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Apr 04: Senior Superintendent of Police (Durg) has written a letter to Intelligence Bureau seeking Look Out Circular against the people involved in illegal online betting.

During Police is carrying out a special campaign "Hunter" to crack down on people involved in online cricket betting through Mahadev Online Book IDs. There are some high profile offenders who have escaped and are likely to leave the country.

Durg Police is sending its report against such accused to the Intelligence Bureau for getting Look Out Circulars issued against them. In this sequel, Police have sought Look Out Circulars



Abhishek Gaur



Pushpendra Kumar Parakh

against Abhishek Gaur; an accused of section 306 IPC of Smriti Nagar and Pushpendra alias Ricky Parakh, an accused of extortion.

ASP (city) Sanjay Dhruv informed that under the guidance of Senior Superintendent of Police (Durg) BN Meena, Durg Police is conducting "Operation Hunter" against the illegal activi-

ties of Gambling, Online Betting on IPL Cricket matches, etc. After the commencement of the IPL tournament, Police is continuously taking action against the bookies, operators, etc.

Police are conducting search operations against the two well off people who have links with the online betting racket. It is suspected that the accused

are planning to flee to some foreign country. Considering the situation, Police have sought look out circulars from IB against the accused.

The first accused is Abhishek Gaur on of Bharat Gaur, who is wanted in connection with a abetment to suicide case registered at Smriti Nagar Police Station.

The second accused is Pushpendra Kumar Parakh alias Ricky Parakh son of Ropchand Parakh who is wanted in extortion case registered at Bhilai Nagar Police Station under sections 342, 384, 386, 34 of IPC. Durg Police has requested the Intelligence Bureau (IB) to issue Look Out Circulars against the accused to prevent them from escaping abroad.

Government invites bids to disinvest FSNL; employees launch protest

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Apr 04: One can justify the disinvestment of a loss making Public Sector Undertaking but the strategic sale and privatisation of a profit making Mini Ratna is definitely shocking news for the employees / executives of the public sector.

The Government of India has initiated proceedings to disinvest the Ferro Scrap Nigam Limited (FSNL), a 100% subsidiary of MSTC Limited through strategic sale alongwith transfer of management control. The finance ministry has invited Expression of Interest for the purpose.

Employees of the public sector giant - SAIL Bhilai Steel Plant are shocked with the government's move to disinvest FSNL, which is providing its services to Bhilai Steel Plant also. The Corporate office of FSNL is located near the Main Gate of BSP and hence, the BSP employees are highly worried as the privatisation move has gradually come to their doorsteps.

The employees of FSNL have launched protests against the gov-



ernment's decision. They staged demonstrations in the morning and evening as well and wore black ribbons at the workplace. They are expecting solidarity from the employees and Trade Unions of Bhilai Steel Plant.

It needs to be mentioned here that the Union Government had made a failed attempt to disinvest FSNL in the year 2017. As the total assets of the company are the equipment and earth movers, the private and corporate players did not show interest.

Apart from the Bhilai Headquarters, FSNL has its offices in Hyderabad, Rourkela, Burnpur, Bokaro, Visakhapatnam, Durgapur, Duburi,

Haridwar, Bhadravati, Salem, Mumbai and Hazira. FSNL offers services in the recovery and processing of scrap from slag and refuse generated during iron and steel making across different steel plants.

They offer services for dig and haul of blast furnaces and steel melting shop slag at slag yards, processing of iron and steel skulls, mill rejects and maintenance scrap as per the specific requirements of its customers. The Company also undertakes scarfing of metal slabs, crushing and screening of LD slag to be used in sinter plant, blast furnace, steel melting shop and rail ballast. It removes sludge and

ash deposit from sludge compartments and ash ponds. It handles and neutralizes acid sludge in open hearth muck dump. The company is the largest recycler in India in terms of the volume of scrap and slag handled across various steel plants. The company was incorporated on March 28, 1979 to provide steel mill services.

At present 23 officers, 145 employees and 170 contract workers are working in Bhilai Headquarters. While a total of 1451 officers and contract workers, including 130 officers, 490 employees, are employed in FSNL all over the country.

Equipment, earth

movers, cranes, etc constitute the total assets of FSNL. Most of the equipment used by FSNL in scrap processing and transportation are very old. The company is conducting most of the work by outsourcing. Hence, the company's asset valuation will not be very high.

But the government is trying to attract the bidders by displaying the existing orders and contracts of FSNL. Even in the absence of assets, the Mini Ratna PSU has continuously generated profit over years. In the year 2020-21, where the company earned a profit before tax (PBT) of Rs 32 crore, its net profit was Rs 23 crore.

Sahu Samaj playing vital role in state's development: Guru Rudra Kumar

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Apr 04: PHE Minister Guru Rudra Kumar on Monday said that the Sahu Samaj, through its positive activities, is not only ensuring progress of its people, but is also making significant contributions in development and progress of the state. Minister of PHE and Village Industries, Guru Rudra Kumar was addressing the Karma Jayanti celebrations at village Devaloda.

Extending greetings on Karma Jayanti, the Minister said that Bhakt Mata Karma is revered by the Sahu Samaj. Prominent speakers gave detailed information about her biography. Members of Sahu Samaj are preserving the social traditions. Guru Rudra Kumar said that the Chhattisgarh government has declared a holiday on the occasion of Karma Jayanti. This shows that the Government of Chhattisgarh is deeply interested in keeping the cul-



tural concerns intact. The Minister further said that he is constantly working with the people and is resolving their problems in every possible way. Based on the feedback received from the people, various works have been approved. The most important work is being done for ensuring supply of drinking water. Through Jaljeevan Mission, the state government ensured supply of clean drinking water to every household. For the first time, on such a large scale, a campaign is being conducted to provide pure water in every village through the Jaljeevan Mission. He added that their aim is to help improve

the skills of the people further and enhance them through modern technology. Arrangements for such training are being made through the Department of Village Industries. People are getting skilled and are starting their own business. The traditional art of Chhattisgarh is very beautiful. The state government is working to provide markets for the traditional art forms and make its identity reach far and wide.

Speaking on the occasion, the Minister said that Gauthans are being developed as Rural Livelihood Centers in the villages. Such local products which can be produced at the village level only, are being produced in Gauthans. Special arrangements are being made in C-mart for the sale of such products. Senior public representatives of Bhilai 3 and office bearers of Sahu Samaj also addressed the function and expressed their gratitude to the Minister for the rapid development of the area.



Collectors directed to stop arbitrary collection of fees

In pvt schools

Fees can be increased up to a maximum of 8% once by school fee committee

District Collectors have right to hear appeals against decision of School Fee Committee

Central Chronicle News

Raipur, Apr 04: Chhattisgarh government has asked all the collectors of the state to constitute district level fee regulation committees and ensure strict compliance of the provisions of Chhattisgarh Non-Government School Fee Regulation Act-2020 in order to strictly stop arbitrary

collection of fees in private schools being run in the state.

Principal Secretary School Education Dr Alok Shukla has asked the collectors to take necessary action under the provisions of the Act after obtaining information regarding the fees of all private schools in their districts, so that the fees are not increased by private schools in an uncontrolled manner and parents should not face any difficulty. In letters to all the Collectors the Principal Secretary Dr Shukla referred to information received from various sources about difficulties being faced by parents due to hike in fees in non-government schools against provisions of the Act.

Drawing the attention of the District Collectors to the sub-section 8 of Section 10 of the Act, he

said that there is a provision in this that the school fees can be increased by the committee at a time by a maximum of 8%. To increase the fee beyond this, the school fee committee will have to present its proposal before the district fee committee.

A reasonable decision will be taken on this proposal by the Fee Regulation Committee at the district level. Under Section-13 of the Act, the District Committee has the right to hear appeals against the School Fee Committee. According to Section 4 of the Act, the District Fee Committee is headed by the District Collector and the District Education Officer is the Secretary. The District Collectors have been empowered enough in the Act to regulate the uncontrolled fee hike by private schools.

PRECAUTIONS



Girls are taking all necessary precautions from heat-wave that has started just in the first week of April.

Three fencing players from the state selected for the Junior World Championship

Raipur, Apr 04: Three players from Chhattisgarh have been selected for the Fencing Junior and Cadet World Championships. The office bearers of Chhattisgarh Fencing Association including Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel have extended their congratulations and best wishes to these players. The players who have been selected for the Junior World Championship are Sukham Ningthuba, K. Denny Singh and S.N. Shiva Magesh is involved. Member of Chhattisgarh Fencing Association Mr. Sameer Khan has been appointed as Team Manager by Fencing Association of India.

It is worth mentioning that the Junior and Cadet World Fencing Championships (Boys and Girls) organised by the United Arab Emirates, Fencing, Federation at Dubai Hamdan Sports Complex, Dubai, UAE. It is being organised under the aegis of International Fencing Federation from April 02 to April 10, 2022 in which a 47-member fencing team of Indian Junior and Cadet Boys and Girls Fencing Team is being sent by the Fencing Association of India. As Team Manager of Indian



Junior and Cadet Fencing Team, former General Secretary of Chhattisgarh Pradesh Fencing Association and presently member Mr. Sameer Khan has been appointed as Team Manager by Fencing Association of India. Three players from Chhattisgarh have been selected in the said World Championship. The players have been selected for winning medals in individual event held at 29th Junior National Fencing Championship (Boys and Girls), Sonapat, Haryana from December 25 to 28, 2022, in which Mr. Sukham Ningthoba (Silver Medal- Foil Event), Mr. K. Denny Singh (Bronze Medal - File Event) and Shri S.N. Shiva Magesh (Gold Medal - File Event). Chhattisgarh Fencing Association, President, Dr.

Bharti Dasan, Executive, President, Sunil Kumar Agarwal, Senior Vice President, Ajit Singh Patel, Treasurer, Ram Pratap Gupta, Prince Bhatia, General Secretary and Treasurer of the Fencing Federation of India, Bashir Ahmed Khan, all the office bearers of the Association and office bearers of various sports associations. Expressed happiness over being selected from Chhattisgarh for Fencing Junior World Championship and said that this would create a better environment for fencing in the state. A positive environment will be created for the sports talents of the state to move forward. Congratulating the players and team manager of the state, Mr. Sameer Khan, he has given best wishes for getting the medal by performing excellently in the World Championship.

New Legislative Assembly Secretary Sharma takes over charge

Speaker congratulates Sharma for new responsibility



Raipur, Apr 04: Newly appointed Chhattisgarh Legislative Assembly Secretary Dinesh Sharma took over the charge today morning in front of the Speaker Dr Charandas Mahant. Dr Mahant extended greetings and best wishes to Dinesh Sharma for new responsibility. Senior officers of Assembly Secretariat too extended greetings and

best wishes to Dinesh Sharma for new responsibility. Sharma assured Dr Mahant that he would always work for maintaining the dignity and prestige of the Legislative Assembly Secretariat.

People, who had to migrate to Telangana-AP are welcome if they want to return: CM



After being displaced from Sukma, Bijapur, Dantewada during Salwa Judum

Raipur, Apr 04: Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel has said that those people of Chhattisgarh who migrated to Telangana and Andhra Pradesh after being displaced from Bastar, Sukma, Bijapur, Dantewada during Salwa Judum, will be wholeheartedly welcomed by Chhattisgarh Government, if they decide to come back. State Government will chalk out an action plan to create a conducive environment for their rehabilitation. Chief Minister Baghel expressed aforementioned views, during his discussion with the delegation of people from Telangana at his residence office today. Members of this delegation were the people who had migrated from

Sukma, Bijapur and Dantewada districts of Chhattisgarh to Telangana during the Salwa Judum. Industries Minister Mr. Kawasi Lakhma, Chhattisgarh State Scheduled Tribes Commission Chairman Bhanupratap Singh were also present on the occasion.

During the meeting with Chief Minister Baghel, the delegation requested for suitable location for rehabilitation of the people returning from the aforementioned states and to provide them land for agriculture. In response to their request, Chief Minister said that people who desire to come back to Chhattisgarh will be provided all kinds of basic facilities including ration shop, school, employment, along with the land. Additional Chief Secretary, Home Department Subrat Sahoo and Director General of Police Ashok Juneja were also present on the occasion.

Dacoits run away with cash, jewellery worth lakhs

Dacoity in a house of pharma trader in Sai Vatika, Devpuri



Raipur, Apr 04: There are reports that a pharma trader from Sai Vatika Colony in Tikrapara area of capital city was held hostage late at night on Monday and dacoity was conducted. Dacoits ran away with cash and jewellery worth above Rs 10 lakhs. When the Police came to know about it in the morning they reached the site and taken the matter under investigation.

As per information in this regard in the house of a Pharma trader Dinesh Kumar Sahu, who lives along with his wife and

son in Sai Vatika in Devpuri under Tikrapara thana, 6-7 dacoits entered his house on intervening night of Monday-Tuesday and held his wife as hostage and ran away with cash and jewellery worth lakhs.

On hearing about this dacoity, SSP Prashant Agrawal, Addl. SP Crime Abhishek Maheshwari, Addl. SP (West) Aakash Rao Girepunje, along with

all TIs and other officers reached the site. The Police started its investigation in to the matter and brought sniffer dog to the site and took finger prints as well. It is learnt that in this theft, there are few old and new gold jewellery. The Police is interrogating with the family members and victim DK Sahu, who is supplier of medical items and medicines.

Reverting to the old pension scheme has put an end to retirement worries: CM

Officers and employees are strength of the government: Mr. Baghel

Ch'garh Employees-Officers Federation honour CM Bhupesh Baghel



Raipur, Apr 04: Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel on Monday attended the "Mukhyamantri Pension Drishta Samman Samaroh" organized by Chhattisgarh Employees-Officers Federation at Indr'vati Bhawan, Nava Raipur. The federation expressed gratitude to Chief Minister for restoration of the old pension scheme. Industries Minister Kawasi Lakhma, Commissioner C.R. Prasanna, Chief

Executive Officer of NRDA and Commissioner Housing Board Dr. Ayyaz Tamboli, Heads of Departments, Chhattisgarh Staff Officers Federation's Provincial Convener Kamal Verma, office-bearers of federation along with a large number of officers and employees were also present on the occasion.

Extending Navratri wishes to everyone on the occasion, the Chief Minister said that I am glad to know there is a wave of joy among you all due to the restoration old pension scheme. Now no more worries retirement worries. He assured that the problems of employee organizations will be resolved. "I was aware of the difficulty that you people were facing due to the

Contributory Pension Scheme. Everyone wants to lead a dignified life post-retirement. Officers-employees are the strength of government and the work is adversely affected by constant worries. Therefore, the old pension scheme has been restored to boost the morale of officers-employees", said the Chief Minister.

Heaping praise on the officers-employees for working with utmost dedication during the Covid-19 pandemic times, Chief Minister said that you all have worked hard during the pandemic period, many lost their lives, yet you all stood firm and worked in solidarity. As a result, the management of Chhattisgarh during the pandemic was appreciated all across the country. Meanwhile, we also took care of the families of those who lost their lives

due to Covid-19. Showing sensitivity towards such families, the government abolished the exemption of compassionate appointment deadline.

He added that many states witnessed salary deduction during the pandemic period; however, our government did not undertake any such step. I had bluntly told my officers that there would be no salary deduction at all.

It is worth mentioning that Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel has undertaken a historic decision to restore the old pension scheme in place of new pension scheme in the state. About 3 lakh government servants of the state will get benefited from this decision. Chief Minister Mr. Baghel was honored with 'Pension Drishta Samman' by the Federation.

Alertness of traffic police and patrolling party avoids situation of traffic jam

In and around Bhatagaon Inter-State Bus Stand

Central Chronicle News

Raipur, Apr 04: With continuous patrolling of the traffic police and patrolling party in the area around the inter-state bus stand of the capital Raipur, people are not facing any kind of inconvenience in commuting to and from the inter-state bus stand. Traffic police personnel are working continuously to manage the traffic pressure in and around the inter-state bus stand in Bhatagaon area.

According to Raipur Senior Superintendent of Police Prashant Agrawal,

action has been taken against 397 vehicles parked in no parking zone in that area in three months from November 2021 to February 2022 after the bus stand was started. Action has been taken on buses, 91 cars, 28 auto rickshaws, 11 small goods vehicles, 246 two wheelers and 01 truck. He said that the traffic and police personnel are systematically organizing traffic in the inter-state bus stand and the surrounding area besides giving necessary advice to the drivers to follow the traffic rules.

Buses are operating from the Inter-State Bus Terminal at Bhatagaon. There are separate routes for the buses to enter and exit the bus stand. Buses ply on the

designated routes and passengers are allowed to board the buses from the bus stand itself. After coming out on exit route the buses pass through service road under Bhatagaon bridge towards destinations. Buses at Bhatagaon Chowk do not stop for boarding.

Frequent movement of buses at the bus stand leads to jam on the service road. Traffic personnel and patrolling team have been deployed at Bhatagaon Chowk for patrolling. Due to entry and exit movement of buses near the under-bridge, the speed of traffic remains slow but the situation of jam is not created because of patrolling by the traffic and police teams.

CM unveils statue of former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi

Central Chronicle News

Raipur, Apr 04: Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel unveiled the statue of the country's first woman Prime Minister, Late Indira Gandhi in village Jarve in Balodabazar district. Unveiling the statue of Mrs. Indira Gandhi. It is worth noting that in the early years of the 80s, when she was the Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi had come

on a tour to village Jarve. He laid the foundation stone of Old Jerve Minor to give relief to the people suffering from the problem of famine. During the unveiling of the statue, Chief Minister Baghel felicitated the Iron Lady Late Mrs Indira Gandhi. Remembering the personality and work of Indira Gandhi, Chief Minister Baghel congratulated the entire team of Gram Panchayat includ-

ing local public representatives, villagers. On this occasion Parliamentary Secretary and MLA Shakuntala Sahu, District Panchayat President Rakesh Verma, District President Hitendra Thakur, District Panchayat President Khilendra Verma, Sarpanch of the village Mrs. Munni Verma, all Panchs and senior officials of Kurmi Samaj were present.

Raipur, Apr 04: On the instructions of Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel, the Commissioner Bastar Division, Jagdalpur has been appointed as the nodal officer for coordination with different states for the purpose of rehabilitation of the migrant people of Bastar region. In the instructions issued by the State Government, it has been mentioned that the Nodal Officer shall ensure that Forest Rights are being provided to the

Big initiative has been taken for the rehabilitation of migrant population of Bastar region: CM

Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers under (Recognition of Forest Rights Act 2006) in the border state of Bastar division to Telangana and other provinces. According to the provisions of the Recognition of Rights Amendment Rules 2012, the Nodal officer will coordinate for the rehabilitation of the Scheduled Tribes community. For the rehabilitation action, the Commissioner, Bastar

division has been directed to coordinate with the local public representatives and has been asked to issue separate telephone numbers or mobile numbers for easy contact with the migrants. The mobile number for contact will also be uploaded in the government website.

It is noteworthy that a delegation of people of Chhattisgarh who came from Telangana had a discussion with Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel

at his residence office here on Monday. During the meeting, the delegation urged the Chief Minister to settle them in a suitable place and provide land for agriculture. On their demand, the Chief Minister said that along with giving land to the people who want to come back to Chhattisgarh, they would be provided with basic facilities including access to ration shops, school and employment.

Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel has said that the people of Chhattisgarh who went to Telangana and Andhra Pradesh after being displaced from Bastar region Sukma, Bijapur, Dantewada during Salwa Judum, the state government is ready to welcome them wholeheartedly if they want to come back. A conducive environment will be created for their rehabilitation by making an action plan.

3006 Gauthans of the state have become self-sufficient

Self-supporting Gauthan has started purchasing cow dung using their own funds

Cow dung worth Rs 13.18 cr purchased so far

Central Chronicle News

Raipur, Apr 04: The Gauthans built under the 'Suraji Gaon Yojana'—one of the flagship schemes of the Government of Chhattisgarh, are rapidly heading towards becoming self-sufficient. As many as 3006 Gauthans have become self-supporting in the state so far. These self-supporting Gauthans have now started procuring cow dung using their own funds under the Godhan Nyay Yojana. Cow dung worth Rs 13 crore 18 lakh has



been purchased so far. The number of self-supporting Gauthans is more than one third of the number of Gauthans built and operated in the state. As many as 8366 Gauthans have built and operated in the state. Raigarh district has the highest number of self-sufficient gauthans i.e. 279, while Rajnandgaon ranks second with the 221

self-supporting Gauthans and Janjgir-Champa district has the third highest number of self-sufficient gauthans i.e. 190.

According to the information received from the Agriculture Department, 26 Gauthans in Gariyaband district, 130 in Dhamtari, 101 in Balodabazar, 170 in Mahasamund, 85 in

Raipur district, 141 in Kabirdham, 185 in Durg, 67 in Balod, 78 in Bemetara, 175 in Korba, 28 in Gaurela-Pendra-Marwahi, 101 in Bilaspur, 82 in Mungeli, 121 in Korea, 75 in Jashpur, 80 in Balrampur, 105 in Surguja, 94 in Surajpur, 144 in Kanker, 80 in Kondagaon, 64 in Dantewada, 7 in

Narayanpur, 102 in Bastar, 23 in Bijapur and 52 in Sukma district have become self-supporting.

It is worth mentioning that in order to promote the conservation and promotion of livestock in the state, the state government has so far approved the construction of Gauthan in around 10,591 villages. Out of which the construction of 8,366 Gauthans has been completed. Purchase of cow dung, manufacturing of vermi compost and other income-generating activities are being conducted in these Gauthans. At present, construction work of 1750 Gauthans are being done at a rapid pace and the work of construction of remaining 475 Gauthans is yet to be started. Arrangements of quality fodder, care, treatment, and water for livestock have been ensured in the Gauthans.

RELIEF FROM SCORCHING HEAT



Citizens are taking a break near sugarcane juice shop to take relief from scorching heat here on Tuesday.

Dr Shailesh Sharma takes charge as Principal, GEMS



Central Chronicle News

Raipur, Apr 04: In a glittering ceremony Dr Shailesh Sharma took over the charge of new principal of Shri Gujarati English Medium School (SGEMS) from the new academic session. He succeeded Vishnu Kumar Mishra who achieved age

of superannuation and by virtue of his experience has been relocated as Administrator of Shri Gujarati Shikshan Sangh (GSS).

Dr Sharma was given charge by the outgoing principal in presence of Ramji Bhai, president of patron committee, Jayanti Bhai Patel and Kirti Bhai

Vyas, both vice presidents of executive committee, Tushi Bhai Patel and Ashok Bhai Patel, both secretaries of executive committee, Jayant Bhai Taunk, treasurer and other committee members. The programme started with lighting of ceremonial lamp and formal welcome of the guests. Thereafter outgoing principal handed over charge to Dr Sharma on the stage and registrar Ashok Jachak made formal announcement to this regard. New Principal addressed the gathering and outgoing principal too delivered his address. The programme ended with vote of thanks by the Vice Principal S V Chandrasekhar.

BJYM accorded warm welcome to Abhishek Singh



Dhamdha, Apr 04: BJPians accorded warm welcome to former LSMP of Rajnandgaon Abhishek Singh and BJYM State President Amit Sahu at city's Gandai Chowk here

on Monday. In this hundreds of BJYM workers under leadership of BJYM former President and corporator Aaruni Dani welcomed the leader duo with slogans of 'Jai Shri Ram'. In

this welcome rally, former Mandal President BJP Naresh Sahu, General Secretary Harsh Sahu, Pradeep Tamrakar, Pawan Dewangan, Montu Gupta, Prabhakar Sharma, BJYM Gen. Secy. Dishan Sinha, V-P Tamradhwaj Verma, Tulesh Sonwami, Shubhank Sharma, Sonu Chandel, Sanju Dheemar, Tulesh Verma, Pankaj Patel Bori, Chotu Bori, Rajaram Verma, Manoj Sahu, Mohan Yadav, Vicky Dheemar, Ballu Sinha, Jitendra Sahu, Dinesh Yadav, Sanjay Thakur, Birebhet and other party workers were present.

CM pays tribute to Makhanlal Chaturvedi

● On his birth anniversary

Raipur, Apr 04: Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel has paid homage to the famous poet, writer, journalist and Padma Bhushan Awardee Makhanlal Chaturvedi on his birth anniversary on April 4. Baghel said that he awakens the spirit of patriotism with his impressive writing and inspired people to active-

ly participate in the freedom struggle. In his works, a unique confluence of love for nature, sacrifice and patriotism is seen. His popular work 'Pushpa Ki Abhilasha' written by him in Central Jail Bilaspur during the freedom struggle is filled with patriotism. Baghel said that the work of Makhanlal Chaturvediji and his invaluable contribution will always inspire people.

Ch'garh's unemployment rate drops to 0.6% in March, lowest so far

'Ch'garh Model' of development giving major boost to state's economic growth

Ch'garh tops the list of states with lowest unemployment rate in the country

Raipur, Apr 04: According to the latest data released by the Center for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE), the unemployment rate in Chhattisgarh has fallen to 0.6 per cent in March, which is the lowest so far. Chhattisgarh ranks first in the country with the lowest unemployment rate. Meanwhile, in March, India's unemployment rate stood at 7.5 per cent.

Chhattisgarh's economy is scaling new heights of growth and progress with the effective implementation of Chhattisgarh Model of development Under the leadership of Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel. According to the data, Chhattisgarh tops the states with the lowest unemployment rate in the country with 0.6 per cent. The State Government has undertaken several steps and formulated new policies for generating employment opportunities especially for the youth, resulting in constant decline in the unemployment rate. According to the data released by CMIE as on 2 April 2022, Haryana has the highest unemployment rate at 26.7 per cent, followed by Rajasthan and Jammu and Kashmir at 25 per cent each, Jharkhand at 14.5 per cent, Bihar at

14.4 per cent, Tripura at 14.1 per cent, and Himachal Pradesh at 12.1 per cent.

The Chhattisgarh government adopted a new model of development three years ago in line with Mahatma Gandhi's vision of 'Gram Swaraj', with a goal of inclusive development of the state. Under this model, schemes and programmes like Suraji Gaon Yojana, Narva-Garva-Ghurva-Bari programme, Godhan Nyay Yojana, Rajiv Gandhi Kisan Nyay Yojana, Rajiv Gandhi Grameen Bhumiheem Krishi Mazdoor Nyay Yojana, establishment of Rural Industrial Parks, procurement of collection and value addition of Minor Forest Produce are being implemented for boosting rural economy. New employment opportunities

are being created in rural areas with the effective implementation of these schemes which are giving impetus to the holistic development of the state. Even during the first and second wave of Covid-19 pandemic, the economy of Chhattisgarh remained untouched by the nationwide economic slowdown. Even then the unemployment rate in Chhattisgarh remained completely under control. The State Government has formed "Chhattisgarh Employment Mission" with an aim to create around 15 lakh new employment opportunities in the coming five years. According to the latest report, India's unemployment rate stood at 7.5%. The urban unemployment rate at 8.5% and the rural unemployment rate at 7.1%.

ERP Samarth Portal training in CU

Bilaspur, Apr 04: The training for Samarth Online Portal of the Ministry of Education, Government of India took place in Guru Ghasidas Vishwavidyalaya (Central University), on April 4, 2022. Under the able leadership and efficient guidance of Vice-Chancellor, Professor Alok Kumar Chakrawal, emphasis is being laid on the implementation of Samarth Online Portal at a rapid pace in the university.

On April 4, 2022, the implementation of the modules was discussed in detail in the training program organized from 11.00 am in the meeting room of the administrative building of the university in which the problems being faced in implementation of main User Management System, Student Feedback Management, and Knowledge Management System were resolved through online medium by subject experts associated



with the Samarth Project. On behalf of the University, suggestions were given to the members of IIC, UDSC New Delhi for partial modifications according to the working and procedures of the University. The meeting was mainly attended by, Director of IQAC, Prof. AS Ranadive, The Registrar,

Prof. Shailendra Kumar and the Deans of various Schools of Study, Heads of Departments and other teachers and officers.

This training meeting was organized by the Coordinator of the University's Samarth Online Portal, Senior Professor, Prof. Amit

Saxena and Assistant Coordinator Dr. Rohit Raja, Dr. Amit Khaskalam and Dr. Vinay Singh. Mr. Alok Patel from IIC UDSC New Delhi joined as well. Samarth online portal has 45 modules.

It may be mentioned that 45 modules of Samarth ERP University Management System are being successfully implemented which include modules for examination, admission, finance, reserves, human resources etc. Experts related to the Samarth project IIC UDSC Delhi are telling the solutions of the problems faced in the implementation of various modules through online medium.

Under Samarth online portal, related training was given to 45 module users, module coordinators and 03 assistant coordinators and problems were solved online during this training program. The vote of thanks for the program was given by Dr. Amit Khaskalam.

Inauguration of e-Office system at IIT Bhilai

Central Chronicle News

Raipur, Apr 04: The e-Office system was inaugurated on April 4, 2022, at IIT Bhilai. Its main objective is to promote digitization and reduce the use of paper. The chief guest of the program was Professor Rajat Moona, Director, IIT Bhilai.



E-Office is an ambitious scheme of the government. It is easy to operate, and it creates greater efficiency when compared to non-digitized methods.

The officers and employees of the institute have undertaken a rigorous training to gear themselves with this future-proof tool in storing relevant data and maintaining records. E-Office is a crucial step towards paperless work, and once it is imple-

mented, all officers and employees will have the necessary platform to exchange files through the e-Office system.

The program started with welcoming the guests and everyone present. Thereafter Ms. Kaveri, Junior Superintendent gave a brief description on e-Office. Then the Deputy Director General, National Informatics Centre (NIC), Dr. Ashok Kumar Hota shared the

Gauthans are playing an important role in strengthening rural economy: CM

CM announced an early commencement of Jarve minor line, besides the establishment of a link court at Palari and a library in district headquarters in the memory of Swami Atmanand

Raipur, Apr 04: Gauthans are playing an important role in giving impetus to the rural economy and in realizing the dreams of Mahatma Gandhi. Gauthans in Chhattisgarh are being developed as livelihood centers to involve youth and women self help groups in the employment-oriented works, said Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel while addressing the 76th Annual Convention of Palari Raj Kurmi Kshatriya Samaj organized at village Jarve under Palari develop-



ment block of Balodabazar-Bhatapara district today. Chief Minister Baghel inaugurated the conference by paying tribute to the ancestors of the community and by remembering the freedom fighters Jhalu Ram Chandravanshi, Salik Ram Chandravanshi, and social worker Chaubees Ram Chandravanshi. Baghel approved sanction of Rs 30 lakh for construction of social harmony building (Samajik Samrasta Bhavan) in the memory of the freedom fighters of the village Jarve. In this building, the statues of the freedom fighters namely Jhalu Ram Chandravanshi, Salik Ram

Chandravanshi, social worker Chaubees Ram Chandravanshi will also be erected. Chief Minister announced a one-day link court in Tehsil Palari under Balodabazar sub-division, a new library in the name of Swami Atmanand at the district headquarters and the commencement of Jarve Minor canal line. Moreover, construction of a building for new higher secondary school, boundary walls of primary health center, commercial complex along with mini stadium was also announced. Recalling the public welfare works of Gandhian leader and Social Worker Chaubees Ram Chandravanshi,

Chief Minister Mr. Baghel said that it was on his request that the then Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi had visited village Jarve in the 80's, and had gifted Jarve Miner Canal Line to the region. We are taking forward his ideas and legacies, said Chief Minister. Mr. Baghel said that Kurmi Samaj is a progressive community that has taken several constructive steps towards eradication of social evils and ambiguities. On the occasion, Mr. Baghel honoured various meritorious students on behalf of the community. Chief Minister Baghel further said that we are working continuously to glorify our identity as Chhattisgarhia and to save Chhattisgarhi culture. Various folk festivals including Teej festival are also being promoted. After the formation of the new government in Chhattisgarh, the quantity of paddy procured and the number of farmers in the state is increasing continuously. He

said that Gauthan is no more just a place of day-care for cattle, it is now being developed as an important center of rural livelihood. Rajiv Gandhi Kisan Nyay Yojana has been started to strengthen the economic condition of the farmers of the state. Swami Atmanand Excellent English Medium Schools have been opened in the state to provide education in English medium to the children. New sources of employment have been created under Godhan Nyay Yojana for villagers, farmers and livestock farmers. Chief Minister further said that Chhattisgarh Government is reviving the rural traditions in the state through Godhan Nyay Yojana, with the cooperation and participation of common people. This scheme of Chhattisgarh is being appreciated across the country. He also exhorted the farmers to use vermi compost and to donate hay for the cattle.

St. Xavier Bharni organizes Rendezvous- a talk show

With Air Marshal and CBI DIG

Central Chronicle News

Bilaspur, Apr 04: St. Xavier's High School, Bharni organized Rendezvous- a talk show in the school premises on 4th April, 2022. The objective of the event was to kindle a spark among students to stretch their limitations and open new horizons of opportunities for the students.

Air Marshal M. Baladitya was the Chief Guest whereas Mathew Varugeesh was present as the Guest of Honour. The dignitaries were rendered a guard of honour by the NCC girl cadets of the school. The programme commenced with lighting of lamp by the Chief Guest and the Guest of Honour in the august presence of



SP Chaturvedi- Vice Chairman CMD College, Bilaspur, Former Wing Commander AK Dubey, Dr. GS Patnaik- MD, St. Xavier's Chain of Schools, Prabhakar Patnaik- Former DFO, Nitya Bajpayee CEO Mukesh Saraaf and the school principal JS Hundal.

The school chorus group presented a wel-

come song which mesmerized the spectators. The school principal Jitinder Singh Hundal welcomed the dignitaries and highlighted the accomplishments of the school students.

M. Baladitya exhorted the students to take part in different co-curricular activities along with the academics as these activities



build the confidence and the students as successful professionals. Mathew Vargeesh highlighted the importance of sports in students' life and inspired the students to do hard and smart work.

Pragya Sonwani and Abhinav - the students of class XII were the host of the programme. Class IX to XII students took part in

the event and asked different questions to crack competitive exams were asked from the guests.

The event culminated with vote of thanks presented by HM Reema Arora Sharma followed by national anthem. Nancy Parekh-HM, Subash Roy, Abhilash Patnaik and MS Pabro were also present on the occasion.

'Bell Metal' artifacts available at Bilaspur station

As part of 'One Station One Product' project

Central Chronicle News

Bilaspur, Apr 04: As part of a decision taken in the Union Budget 2022-23 to en-cash the widespread reach of railways, in order to popularize the local products railway stations will act as a venue to sell these products.

Accordingly Bilaspur station has been chosen under 'One Station One Product' project scheme and Bell Metal based different products are sold



from the stalls at Bilaspur station from March 25.

The passengers alighting here get information about Bell Metal products from the dedicated stall installed at the station and also buy the products as per their choice. The stall set up at platform no 01 is selling bell metal artifact made out of Dhokra art.

This pilot project has been started on experimental basis for 15 days and local artisans are getting an opportunity to sell their products and also find global reach.



NTPC Talaipalli provides funds to Collector

For construction of Muktidham and waiting room



Central Chronicle News

Raigarh, Apr 04: NTPC Coal Mining Project is a responsible corporate citizen who has been continuously striving to conduct business responsibly and contribute to the development of the community.

NTPC is continuously striving for development of education, health, sports, sanitation, drinking water, facilities, women empowerment and infrastructure in its surrounding area especially in the affected area by Talaipalli Coal Mining



Project, cleanliness and sanitation awareness amongst the general public. Efforts are also being made through many programs to spread public awareness about health & nutrition.

Under this effort, an amount of 1 crore was pro-

vided by NTPC Talaipalli Coal Mining Project to District Collector Raigarh for construction of Muktidham and waiting rooms in 15 places of Raigarh district by Suryakant Rai, Business Unit Head NTPC Talaipalli.

Bhupesh's sticks and bullets on tribal society: Kedar

Central Chronicle News

Konta, Apr 04: Targeting the boycott of CM Bhupesh Baghel in the program of Backward Classes Welfare Association held at Lalbagh Maidan in Jagdalpur; former minister and BJP state spokesperson Kedar Kashyap accused Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel of misleading the people of the state with the help of lies.

Kedar Kashyap said that the general public of the state has now understood that they have been deceived, only lies and lies were told in the public manifesto issued by the

Congress before the elections. Now Congress has no answer to fulfill it. People have understood the politics of CM's deceit. Earlier, he brought an ordinance for 27% reservation, in which legal loopholes were deliberately left.

Later on, a petition was filed and a stay was put in it. Later, the government of Bhupesh Baghel decorated the petitioner with an office of profit by making the petitioner the chairman of Kabir Shodh Peeth. Kashyap further said that the public is now coming out in the open, the result of which was clearly visible on the Chief Minister's stay in Bastar.



Kedar Kashyap

Kashyap said that in Sukma, Bijapur, Katte Kalyan (Dantewada) and Narayanpur, the tribal society reached the district office in thousands with their legitimate demands in a peaceful manner. It is unfortunate that

this is a question mark on the functioning of the government, Bhupesh Baghel should apologize to the tribal society.

In the recent days, in Narayanpur's Bharnada, the alleged police tried to declare a young promising tribal as a Naxalite by firing on them, but after the protest, the police accepted that Manuram Nooreti was a tribal, not a Naxalite, about 3 months after the murder.

Even after this, neither the victim's family got compensation nor government job, because of this the Congress government's sympathy towards the tribals seems to be zero.

Students of Class 8th bid farewell



Central Chronicle News

Dongargarh, Apr 04: The students of Class 8th of Saraswati Shishu Mandir Vidyalaya (SSMV) Gram Charabhanta were given farewell in a simple pro-

gramme organised here on Saturday. The Chief Guest of the programme was President Sarwati Gram Shiksha Samiti Girwar Sahu and special guest was Hemprakash Sahu, and Head Mistress Nutan Yadav. Along with

them all the 'Acharyas' and 'didis' (teachers) along with students were also present. The guest Sahu and all 'Acharyas' and 'Didis' bid farewell to all 'Bhaiyas' and 'behanas' (students) of SSMV Charbhanta.

820 'Jyots' lighted in Mahamaya Mandir

97 in Sheetala Mata's Mandir
On occasion of 'Chaitra Navratra'

Central Chronicle News

Rajim, Apr 04: With relief from Corona pandemic, this year it was for the first time that people are celebrating 'Chaitra Navratra' with great religious fervour. The devotees are having lot of enthusiasm and they are lighting 'Manokamna Jyoti Kalash' in large number.

At city's Maa Mahamaya's temple, this year 820 devotees have lighted 'jyoti kalash' and in Mata Sheetala temple, a total of 97 'jyoti kalash' have been lighted.



Saturday it was at 11:30 am, it was amidst citing of 'mantras' by Pt. Vijay Sharma that traditional 'diyas' / 'jyot' was lighted in the 'garb grih' of Mata Devi's temple by Pujari Baldev Singh Thakur and Neeraj Thakur. After this the Mandir's Sewa samiti office bearers and mem-



bers lighted the 'Manokamna Jyoti Kalash' of the 'devotees' in the temple.

At the time of 'Deep Pravajalan', President of Mahamaya management Samiti Shatrughan Dheewar, Nagar Panchayat President Rekha Raju Sonkar,

Jitendra Sonkar, Pawan Sonkar, Lileshwar Yadu, Pawan Sahu, Fagu Nishad, Arvind Yadu, Balmiki Dheewar, Fagwa Nishad, Ramesh Sahu, Lakhman Mahobia and other devotees were present in large number.

On this occasion where large number of devotees will be keeping fast for all 9 days and there are many who are keeping fast on the day of foundation, fifth day and the 8th day (Mahashatmi). During the fasting the devotees take only fruits or consume

milk as per rituals.

With devotees in large number going on fasting, the prices of milk and fruit too increase manifold and at one place where Apple earlier were costing is Rs 100 per kg are now available at Rs 180 per kg.; on the other, Grapes are at record Rs 100 per kg and Banana at Rs 50-60 per kg. In the same way Pomegranate, Orange are also have got hike of Rs 20-30 per kg. Milk is now available at Rs 50 or Rs 60 per litre and which earlier was just at Rs 40 per litre.

Neelesh Misra launches national initiative to promote rural artisans

Central Chronicle News

Jagdalpur, Apr 04: With an emotional tribal art maestro standing next to him, Neelesh Misra, India's leading storyteller and a social entrepreneur, launched a national initiative for rural creators starting from Bastar, one of the rich hubs of tribal heritage in India.

In the presence of Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel, Misra exchanged an MoU with Bastar District Collector Rajat Bansal on Saturday to make the district the first partner of the Ten Thousand Creators Project.

This is a very difficult art. All I want is that after me, my children and their children's children should practice this craft," Phagnu Ram Sagar or Phagnu Dada, a Dhokra art guru, said in a film broadcast watched keenly by the chief minister at the

event. Dhokra is non ferrous metal casting using the lost wax casting technique and is considered one of India's most ancient artforms.

Phagnu Dada, from Chhattisgarh's Chikuli Village, was sitting in the audience when he was asked by Misra to walk onto the stage with him. He did, slightly bewildered, moving forward with his walking stick, and was honoured by Baghel.

We are delighted and humbled. Phagnu Dada, being honoured today, is the first of the 10,000 creators we shall reach out to, Misra said.

The project shall next be expanded to districts in Gujarat, Bihar and Jharkhand, with discussions underway with stakeholders in several other states, Misra said.

Misra is one of India's leading communicators whose work

centres around small towns and rural India. He is most well known in India as an audio storyteller with outreach to more than 100 cities and towns and tens of millions of people.

The Ten Thousand Creators Project is a joint initiative of two of Misra's ventures Gaon Connection, a rural platform with its presence in 425 districts spread across all states - and The Slow Movement, which has content, products and marketplace verticals and is creating a community and social commerce marketplace in India and overseas at www.slowbazaar.com and The Slow App. In its first phase, the project aims to impact 10,000 creators through one or more of the following:

- Branding to create respect and visibility for the artisans through content creation in the form of video, audio and text

campaigns;

- Increased income by showcasing them in a dedicated manner on Slow's platforms, including its e-commerce website www.slowbazaar.com and The Slow App;

- Income-generating knowledge and best practices through direct content dissemination and linkages with specialists and market experts;

- Health insurance and life insurance, to prevent income loss due to illness or death of an artisan who is the family's primary earner;

- Tools if needed for higher income generation. Misra said the project is a manifestation of India's 'Vocal for Local' vision in the truest sense.

On one side are millions of people keen, especially post-Covid, to explore healthier and pure food, handcrafted products and meaningful, mindful

content and on the other, hundreds of thousands of creators unable to access these audiences on digital platforms.

We want to try and address these gaps, he said.

Misra's project is aligned with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's One District One Product (ODOP) programme, launched in Uttar Pradesh in January 2018 by the Yogi Adityanath government and adopted nationally after its success. The ODOP programme aims to convert every district in India into an export hub by promoting one product that the district specialises in.

Our project is a manifestation of India's 'Vocal for Local' vision in the truest sense going deep to the panchayat level and connecting the creators with a global audience, Misra said.

Misra said that Slow had been approached by ODOP for a

possible collaboration and discussions were underway on working together. To give the project scale, a similar collaboration is being explored with the Confederation Of Indian Industry (CII). Misra's project though has a larger ambit, and the creators covered under it would go beyond artisans.

We have widened the definition of creators beyond what is commonly understood to include all those creating something out of rural innovation and creativity at the grassroots which can create livelihood opportunities, he said.

This includes handicraft artisans, folk and other 'non-TikTok' rural content creators on the margins of the creative economy, and women in self-help groups and farmer producer organisations creating food and non-food products, he said.

न्यायालय- श्रीमान द्वितीय अतिरिक्त जिला न्यायाधीश, मनेन्द्रगढ़, जिला-कोरिया (उ.ग.)

इशतहार

व्यावाहक क्र- 01 बी/2021 पेशी दिनांक- 10.05.2022

बैंक ऑफ बड़ौदा, शाखा- मनेन्द्रगढ़, तहसील व थाना- मनेन्द्रगढ़ जिला- कोरिया (उ.ग.) द्वारा वरिष्ठ शाखा प्रबंध बैंक ऑफ बड़ौदा वादी प्रति

- मेसर्स श्रीराम फ्लाई ऐश ब्रिक्स इन्डस्ट्रीज प्रो० सीमा सिंह पति स्व० राजेश कुमार सिंह ग्राम- केल्हारी, तह० मनेन्द्रगढ़, जिला-कोरिया उ०ग०
- सीमा सिंह पति स्व० राजेश कुमार सिंह निवासी ग्राम- केल्हारी, तह० मनेन्द्रगढ़, जिला-कोरिया उ०ग० हाल मुकाम वाई नं० 6, जमुना कालरी, जिला- अनूपपुर म०प्र० प्रतिवादीगण प्रति,

मेसर्स श्रीराम फ्लाई ऐश ब्रिक्स इन्डस्ट्रीज, प्रो० सीमा सिंह, निवासी ग्राम- केल्हारी, जिला-कोरिया उ०ग० एवं सीता सिंह पति स्व० राजेश कुमार सिंह निवासी- हाल मुकाम वाई नं० 6, जमुना कालरी, तह० कोतमा, जिला- अनूपपुर म०प्र० वादी बैंक ऑफ बड़ौदा शाखा मनेन्द्रगढ़ के द्वारा आप प्रतिवादीगण मेसर्स श्रीराम फ्लाई ऐश ब्रिक्स इन्डस्ट्रीज, प्रो० सीमा सिंह पति स्व० राजेश कुमार सिंह ग्राम केल्हारी तह० मनेन्द्रगढ़ वर्तमान केल्हारी जिला कोरिया उ०ग०, हाल मुकाम वाई नं० 6 जमुना कालरी, तह० कोतमा जिला अनूपपुर म०प्र० के विरुद्ध प्रस्तुत व्यवहार वाद क्र० 01 बी/2021 इस न्यायालय में विचारधीन है। उक्त व्यवहार वाद की सुनवाई तिथि इस न्यायालय में आगामी पेशी दिनांक 10.05.2022 को नियत है। यदि आप दिनांक 10.05.2022 को प्रातः 11 बजे इस वाद में आपकी और से आप स्वयं या वकील या आप के लिए कार्य करने के लिए विधिक प्राधिकृत कोई व्यक्ति उपसजात नहीं होगा तो यह आपकी अनुपस्थिति में सुनी व विनिश्चित की जाएगी। उक्त दिनांक 10.05.2022 को किसी कारण से अवकाश होने पर प्रकरण में सुनवाई आगामी कार्य दिवस की होगी।

आज दिनांक 29.03.2022 को मेरे हस्ताक्षर व न्यायालय की मुद्रा से जारी किया गया।

द्वितीय अतिरिक्त जिला न्यायाधीश मनेन्द्रगढ़ जिला-कोरिया उ०ग०

BRIEF

Torch

Ramgarh: Miscreants torched a few vehicles and an earth-moving heavy equipment in Laiyo village in Ramgarh district, police said. The vehicles set ablaze include a tractor and a motorcycle, they said. A senior police officer said the miscreants carried out the attack to possibly extort money from a brick kiln owner in the area. We are investigating the issue from all angles and will soon nab the culprits from nearby regions, he said.

Nabbed

Motihari: Three Russians, including a woman, were arrested by security personnel along the India-Nepal border in Bihar's Raxaul and six kg of narcotics seized from their possession. Their visa in India had expired and they were crossing the border without valid travel documents, an official said. They were arrested at Raxaul in East Champaran district while attempting to cross over to Nepal in a private vehicle without valid travel documents.

Bribery

Aurangabad: The secretary of an educational trust was among four held by the Maharashtra Anti Corruption Bureau for allegedly demanding and accepting a bribe of Rs 1.5 lakh, an official said. The four had demanded Rs 12 lakh to withdraw a case related to salary and post retirement benefits of the complainant, he said. They were held in a trap while taking an installment of Rs 1.5 lakh in Kej town under the Prevention of Corruption Act.

Pelted

Kolkata: A group of miscreants pelted stones at a steel manufacturing unit in Jalpaiguri district of North Bengal, damaging doors and windows of the facility, police said. The incident took place within the Magaruba industry cluster and investigation is underway to nab the culprits, they said. Rohit Bindal, the owner of the unit, said the sudden attack on the steel-making facility has created panic among other factory owners.

Held

Ghaziabad: Two persons have been arrested in connection with a loot of Rs 23 lakh from staffers of a petrol pump in B-Block in Govind Puram Colony here. Based on footage from CCTV cameras, and manual and electronic surveillance, Shoaib, a resident of Puri Delhi, was arrested and Rs 40,000 was seized, Superintendent of Police (Rural) Iraj Raja said.

Drugs

Mumbai: Mumbai police have arrested four persons, including a history-sheeter, from Dharavi slum colony here, and recovered from them MD drugs. The accused were identified as Arif Nasir Sheikh, Abdul Rehman Sheikh, Iqbal Ali Sheikh and Feeroz Sheikh, the police official said.

'New legal structure needed to counter cyber criminals'

New Delhi, Apr 04 (PTI):

Union Minister of Information and Technology Ashwini Vaishnav on Monday called for a new "dynamic" legal structure which balances the right to privacy and freedom of expression and demands for regulations and control to meet challenges from unscrupulous elements in the cyber space.

Addressing the second national conference on cyber crime investigations and digital forensics organised by the CBI, the minister said over the years technology has



Union IT Minister launches revamped website of CBI in New Delhi on Monday.

given a lot of productivity, efficiency and convenience but simultaneously it has brought intrusions in the lives of people which can be benign but most of the time it is malignant and aimed to com-

mit a fraudulent act. He said this problem can be tackled by legal strategy, technology, organisations, capacity building and mutual cooperation. Speaking on legal strategy to counter cyber

crimes, Vaishnav said the country needs to overhaul the legal structure in a big way.

"I don't think any incremental changes will help. The change has to be substantial, significant, fundamental and structural," he said.

He said that is where the whole conflict is between the two constraints — the first constraint of right to privacy and freedom of expression and second conflicting demand of having more regulation and control — to "prevent fraudulent activities in the garb of right to privacy and freedom of expression."

Congress MLAs seek change of guard in Odisha unit

Bhubaneswar, Apr 04 (PTI):

Rattled by the party's poor performance in the recently held panchayat and urban polls, a section of Odisha Congress MLAs are seeking a change of guard in the state unit.

Of the nine Congress MLAs in the state, four of them — Taraprasad Bahinipati, SS Saluja, Adhiraj Panigrahi and Mohammed Moqium — have expressed concern over the party's present situation and future prospects, further demanding a reshuffle in the party.

"The party must survive. An alternative leadership should be installed to strengthen the party's Odisha unit," Panigrahi, a lawmaker from Khariar, said.

Bahinipati, a Jeypore legislator, and Jatni MLA Suresh Routray, known for their loyalty to



Odisha Congress Bhawan in Bhubaneswar.

Odisha Pradesh Congress Committee (OPCC) chief Niranjan Patnaik, also insisted on a change in leadership. "Niranjan Babu falls ill whenever there is an election. Therefore a new and strong leadership should be installed in Odisha," Bahinipati maintained.

Routray, while supporting the idea, said that the party leadership should back candidates with resources during elections in order to counter its rivals. "The OPCC presi-

dent should provide necessary logistics to the candidates fighting against the mighty BJD and BJP," Routray said.

Kantabanji MLA Santosh Singh Saluja claimed that party candidates who won the rural and urban polls did so through their "personal efforts". The Congress which ruled Odisha for decades before Naveen Patnaik's BJD took over the reins of the state in 2000 was pushed to third spot in state politics after the 2019 elections.

CAG slams Bihar over 'Namami Gange' programme

Patna, Apr 04 (PTI):

Slamming the Bihar government for leaving unutilised a major portion of the funds sanctioned for strengthening the sewerage system in Patna, under the Centre's 'Namami Gange' programme, the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) said the project was running behind schedule.

As much as Rs 683 crore, meant to be used under the scheme in a span of four years, was left untouched by the Bihar State Ganga River Conservation and Programme Management Society (BGCMS), according to a CAG report that was recently tabled in the Bihar Assembly. "Audit observed that only 16 to 50 per cent funds were being utilised

(annually) during the period 2016-17 to 2019-20. The National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) without ensuring the utilisation of previous installments released funds for next installments and as a result a huge fund of Rs 683.10 remained parked in the savings bank account of BGCMS," the report said. It also pointed out that the drainage system of Patna, the second largest urban centre in eastern India after Kolkata, was laid about 200 years ago and was in bad shape at present. "Due to lack of sewerage infrastructure in Bihar (including Patna), the maximum Total Coliform (TC) and Faecal Coliform (FC) which was measured up to the level of 9000 mpn/100 ml and 3100 mpn/100 ml in 2016-17 re-

spectively has increased up to 160,000 MPN/100 ML (for both TC and FC) in 2019-20. This shows that water quality deteriorated during the period," the audit report noted. The project executing agency, Bihar Urban Infrastructure Development Corporation Ltd (BUIDCO), has also failed to adhere to the stipulated time line for completion of work, it added.

Reacting to the CAG report, Shambhunath Pandey, the convener (south Bihar) of Ganga Samagra — an organisation that creates awareness among masses about the importance of cleaning Ganga — said, "The river along with her many tributaries has been the source of physical and spiritual sustenance of the Indian civilization.

Prohibition issue boils as Uma questions Shivraj

Bhopal, Apr 04 (PTI):

Senior BJP leader Uma Bharti, who has been opposing the liquor policy of the Madhya Pradesh government, on Monday wondered why Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has "stopped talking" now while she had always raised the issue of prohibition with him.

In a series of tweets in Hindi, Bharti demanded that the practice of serving liquor in 'ahatas' (enclosed areas close to liquor vends) be immediately stopped and booze shops near schools, hospitals, temples and other prohibited places shut down. She also demanded that home delivery of liquor be not allowed.

Calling Chouhan her elder brother, Bharti said that the former was now speaking through the



Uma Bharti

media on the liquor issue. I enjoy cordial and respectful relations with the MP chief minister and my elder brother Shivraj Singh Chouhan since 1984. He used to meet me while going to the office or whenever I went for my Himalaya sojourn, Bharti tweeted.

The former Union minister said she always raised the demand for banning liquor in MP during

her every meeting with Chouhan.

"Now as the things are starting to come out why Shivraj has stopped talking. 'Unbola kyun kar diya'? (Why is he not talking) and why has he started speaking through the media on this issue? she asked in another tweet.

Referring to Chouhan's recent statement that if people stop consuming liquor, he will immediately close these shops, Bharti said When people won't drink liquor then how these shops will run? (Obviously), they will automatically get closed.

She said the police and administration are duty-bound to stop the sale of illegal liquor. "It is a matter of law and order". Bharti suggested a string of measures to discourage people from drinking. Bharti demanded serv-

ing of liquor in 'ahatas' should be stopped immediately while liquor shops situated near schools, hospitals, temples and other prohibited places should be closed and the system of home delivery of liquor suspended.

After taking these measures, an awareness campaign should be launched wherein all religious leaders, social organisations, leaders like me and Shivraj, and leaders from other parties should be included, she said in another tweet. Bharti said that hoardings should be put up before the legally established shops later highlighting the disadvantages of consuming liquor. Wherever women and citizens oppose these shops they should not be opened. They (women and citizens) only form our government, she said.

FIRST TIME MP



Nagaland BJP leader S Phangnon Konyak after taking oath as Rajya Sabha MP for first time at Parliament House in New Delhi, Monday.

Delimitation Commission begins two-day interaction

With public, J-K political leaders

Jammu, Apr 04 (PTI):

The Delimitation Commission, which has been tasked to redraw the boundaries of assembly and parliamentary constituencies in Jammu and Kashmir, on Monday began its two-day long meetings with public and civil society for receiving suggestions and objections on its draft delimitation proposal for the union territory.

The Commission on March 14 has put its report in the public domain and invited objections and suggestions from people. The commission has published its report in the gazettes of India as well as Jammu and Kashmir.

The commission has begun meetings at the Convention Centre here with members of the public, civil society and political parties from all districts of the Jammu region, while a similar pub-



BJP leaders arrive to meet members of Delimitation Commission in Jammu on Monday.

lic sitting will be held at SKICC in Srinagar on Tuesday, officials said.

It has met 20 such delegations and members of the public from Ramban, Rajouri, Poonch, Kishtwar, Kathua and Doda districts and heard them and received their representations, the officials said.

The members of the public and elected representatives raised various demands in terms of carving out new segments of assemblies and also raised objections about the draft in which various areas

have been merged with other areas of assembly and parliamentary constituencies.

The people from Kathua, Udhampur, Doda, Ramban, Kishtwar, Rajouri and Poonch districts are currently participating in the public sittings from 10.00 am while the people from Reasi, Samba and Jammu will participate in the second half-sittings at the Convention Centre from 2.00 pm, they said.

The official said that the people from Srinagar, Budgam, Anantnag,

Kulgam, Pulwama and Shopian will be part of the public sittings at SKICC in the first half on April 5 while the people from Ganderbal, Bandipora, Kupwara and Baramulla will participate in the sittings in the second half on the same day at the same venue in Srinagar.

Delimitation Commission, comprising Justice (retired) Ranjana Prakash Desai as chairperson, the Chief Election Commissioner Sushil Chandra and State Election Commissioner (SEC) K K Sharma as its members, was set up on March 6, 2020, with one year term. However, in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, its term was extended on March 6, 2021, by one year.

It also has five associate members: three National Conference Lok Sabha members (Farooq Abdullah, Hasnain Masoodi and Mohammad Akbar Lone), BJP MP Jugal Kishore and Union Minister Jitendra Singh.

Ex-Karnataka ADGP B Bhaskar Rao joins AAP

New Delhi, Apr 04 (PTI):

B Bhaskar Rao, a 1990-batch Karnataka cadre IPS officer and a native of Bengaluru, joined the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) here on Monday after serving the police force for 32 years in various capacities.

He was welcomed to the party fold by former AAP leader and Delhi Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia.

AAP's Karnataka unit convener Prithvi Reddy, election in-charge for the state and Timarpur MLA Dilip Pandey, organisation secretary Damodaran and other leaders were present on the occasion at the party headquarters here.

Rao, who was serving as the Additional Director General of Police (Railways), had resigned



Former additional DGP of Karnataka Bhaskar Rao felicitates Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal as the former joins AAP in New Delhi, Monday.

from the service in September last year, citing personal reasons.

He demitted his office on Friday to join the AAP after the Karnataka government accepted his resignation and relieved him of his duties.

Rao's joining is seen as a shot in the arm of the

AAP with the Arvind Kejriwal-led party preparing for the Karnataka Assembly elections next year, starting with the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (Greater Bengaluru Municipal Corporation) polls this year. The party leaders believe that the

popularity and clout of the former IPS officer would help the AAP better execute its expansion plan in the run up to the assembly elections in the state, currently ruled by the BJP.

The AAP had contested the Karnataka assembly polls for the first time in 2018, fielding candidates in 28 out of total 124 assembly seats, but could not open its account.

Riding high on its stupendous victory in Punjab, the party is hoping to gain its foothold in the southern state this time. During his service, Rao held various positions and served as Bengaluru Police Commissioner, State Transport Commissioner and Additional Director General of Police (ADGP)-Internal Security.

Maha Govt didn't call for Oct 11 'bandh' over Lakhimpur Kheri incident

HC told

Mumbai, Apr 04 (PTI):

The Maharashtra government on Monday told the Bombay High Court that it had not taken any cabinet decision calling for a statewide bandh on October 11 last year.

The bandh was held to express solidarity with the farmers' protest and the Lakhimpur Kheri incident.

The Mumbai Police also informed the HC that as soon as the bandh was declared, the state government diligently ensured that the law and order situation was maintained and hence the state cannot be held liable. The tripartite Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA)

government and the Mumbai Police filed their affidavits in reply to a public interest litigation (PIL) filed by four senior citizens including Julio Ribeiro, former police commissioner of Mumbai, challenging the one-day shutdown. As per the plea, the bandh called to express solidarity with the farmers' protest and the Lakhimpur Kheri incident had caused a loss of Rs 3,000 crore to the public exchequer. "As per the said Minutes of the State Cabinet meeting held on October 6, 2021, the State Cabinet had only expressed grief and offered its condolences and tributes to the farmers who died in the unfortunate incident that took place at Lakhimpur Kheri in Uttar Pradesh," the state's affi-

davit said. Police stated that as soon as the state government came to know about the bandh, the police machinery was set in motion immediately and necessary steps were taken to ensure that the law and order situation is maintained. "The state government was prompt, diligent and alert in ensuring that the law and order situation is maintained and no harm or injury is caused to any person," the affidavit said. It added that around 60 cases were registered during the October 11 shutdown. "The State government cannot be held liable for the alleged incidences and hence the petition is dismissed," the affidavit filed by Sanjay Latkar, Deputy Commissioner of Police (Operations), said.

BRIEF

Flights

New York: Airlines have canceled more than 3,300 US flights this weekend and delayed thousands more, citing weather in Florida and other issues.

Unify

Juba: South Sudan's president and his deputy signed an agreement to unify the command of the security forces, a deal that eases political tensions in the East African country.

Gas

Vilnius: In a move to break its energy dependence upon Moscow, Lithuania has cut itself off entirely of gas imports from Russia, allegedly becoming the first of the European Union's 27 nations that use Russian gas to do so.

Electrocuted

Colombo: A 53-year old man, who was protesting outside the private residence of Sri Lankan President Gotabaya Rajapaksa over the long power cuts in the country due to the ongoing economic crisis, got electrocuted after he climbed a electricity pole.

Russia faces growing outrage amid evidence of atrocities

Bucha, Apr 04 (AP):

Russia faced a fresh wave of condemnation on Monday after evidence emerged of what appeared to be deliberate killings of civilians in Ukraine.



A woman cries while waiting along with others for distribution of food products in the village of Motyzhyn, Ukraine.

Germany's defense minister suggested the European Union discuss a ban on Russian gas imports, but more senior officials indicated an immediate boycott was not possible.

Ukrainian officials said bodies of 410 civilians

were found in towns around the capital, Kyiv, that were recaptured from Russian forces in recent days. In Bucha, northwest of the capital, Associated Press journalists saw 21 bodies.

The images of battered bodies lying in the streets or hastily dug graves un-

leashed a wave of outrage that could signal a turning point in the nearly 6-week-old war. But sanctions have thus far failed to halt the offensive, and rising energy prices along with the tight controls on Russian currency market have blunted their impact.

Western and Ukrainian leaders have accused Russia of war crimes before, and the International Criminal Court's prosecutor has opened a probe to investigate the conflict.

With students in turmoil, US teachers train in mental health



Mojave Unified School District Superintendent Katherine Aguirre, far right, and Benito Luna, a 7th-grade social studies teacher.

Course teaches how to handle crisis

San Francisco, Apr 04 (AP):

Since the pandemic started, experts have warned of a mental health crisis fac-

ing American children that is now visibly playing out at schools across the country.

Benito Luna-Herrera, a 7th grade social studies teacher in Southern

California, tells of middle school students whose post-pandemic depression led them to thoughts of suicide. Other educators say they have never seen so much school violence, anxiety, depression, substance abuse and suicide ideation.

The silver lining in Luna-Herrera's case is that special training helped him know what to look for and how to respond to signs of a mental emergency. He is among a small but growing number of California teachers and school staff to take a course called Youth Mental Health First Aid.

Department of Education funds the program for any school district requesting it, and the pandemic has accelerated moves to make such courses a state requirement. The training program is operated by the National Council for Mental Wellbeing and available in every state.

I don't want to read about another teenager where there were warning signs and we looked the other way, said Sen. Anthony Portantino, author of a bill that would require all California middle and high schools to train at least 75% of employees in behavioral health. Teachers and school staff are on the front lines of a crisis, and need to be trained to spot students who are suffering.

Hungary's Orban popular at home, isolated abroad after win



Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban celebrates on stage with members of the Fidesz party.

Budapest, Apr 04 (AP):

As Hungary's national prime minister Viktor Orban prepares to continue his autocratic governance of Hungary for another four years, he faces

a shattered opposition at home but an increasingly isolated position abroad, where his flouting of democratic standards and approach to the war in Ukraine has riled the European Union and

other nations.

As officials from his right-wing Fidesz party gathered at an election night event on the Danube river in Budapest, Orban told supporters that their landslide victory in the country's national election was a message to Europe that his model of 'illiberal democracy' was a prophecy for the continent's future.

'The whole world has seen tonight in Budapest that Christian democratic politics, conservative civic politics and patriotic politics have won. We are telling Europe that this is not the past, this is the future, our common European future,' Orban said.

Ukrainian refugees find jobs, kindness, as they settle in

Warsaw, Apr 04 (AP)

Nataliya Hibska quickly brushes her teeth and makes the bed. She is rushing to her new job.

From a small hostel

room in eastern Warsaw, Hibska, a Ukrainian refugee, is slowly rebuilding her life, which was abruptly upended

by Russia's invasion of her homeland. European Union member nations like Poland and Romania, the two

neighboring countries to have received the most refugees from Ukraine have launched programs to help them integrate.

GRAMMY'S AWARDEE



Olivia Rodrigo, winner of the awards for best pop vocal album for Sour, best new artist and best pop solo performance at the 64th Annual Grammy Awards in Las Vegas.

Hong Kong leader Lam won't seek new term

Hong Kong, Apr 04 (AP):

Hong Kong leader Carrie Lam said Monday she wouldn't seek a second term after a rocky five years marked by huge protests calling for her resignation, a security crackdown that has quashed dissent and

most recently a COVID-19 wave that overwhelmed the health system. Her successor will be picked in May and the city's security chief during the 2019 protests is among the possible choices. I will complete my five-year term as chief executive on the 30th of June this year,

and I will also call an end to my 42 years of public service, Lam said at a news conference. She thanks her team of local officials and the central authorities in Beijing, and said she plans to spend more time with family, which is her sole consideration.

China sends military to help in Shanghai COVID outbreak

Beijing, Apr 04 (AP):

China has sent more than 10,000 health workers from across the country to Shanghai, including 2,000 military medical staff, as it struggles to stamp out a rapidly spreading COVID-19 outbreak in China's largest city.

The city was conducting a mass testing of its 25 million residents Monday as what was supposed to be a two-phase lockdown entered its second week. While many factories and financial firms have been able to keep operating by isolating their employees, concern was growing about the potential economic impact of an extended lockdown in China's financial capital and a major shipping and



The entrance to a noodle store is locked and sealed in the Jingan district of western Shanghai, Monday.

manufacturing center.

The highly contagious omicron BA.2 form of the virus is testing China's ability to maintain its zero-COVID approach, which aims to stop outbreaks from spreading by isolating everyone who tests positive, whether

they have symptoms or not. Shanghai has converted an exhibition hall and other facilities into massive isolation centers where people with mild or no symptoms are housed in a sea of beds separated by temporary partitions.

Street in New York named Ganesh Temple Street

New York, Apr 04 (PTI):

In a significant moment for the Hindu community in the US, a street outside a renowned and prominent temple here has been named the Ganesh Temple Street'. Established in 1977, The Hindu Temple Society of North America Sri Maha Vallabha Ganapati Devasthanam, popularly known as the Ganesh Temple, is regarded as the first and oldest Hindu Temple in North America.

named the Ganesh Temple Street' in honour of the iconic Ganesh temple.

The special ceremony, during which the street sign was unveiled, was attended by Consul General of India in New York Randhir Jaiswal, Queens Borough President Donovan Richards, Deputy Commissioner for Trade, Investment and Innovation in the office of New York City Mayor Eric Adams, Dilip Chauhan and members of the Indian-American community.

Jaiswal, during a special function on Saturday held at the Indian Consulate to commemorate Baisakhi, told the gathering that at a beautiful function in Queens, the Bowne Street just outside the Ganesh Temple was co-named the

Ganesh Temple Street.

He said the co-naming event was not just a celebration but it showed the kind of hard work that has gone into reaching this milestone, years after years, decades after decades.

कार्यालय नगर पालिक निगम बिलासपुर (छ.ग.) ई-प्रोक्वोरमेंट निविदा सूचना. 01/म.पा.नि./जोन क्र.03/2022-23. दिनांक 04/04/2022. एकीकृत पंजीयन प्रणाली अंतर्गत सखम श्रेणी में पंजीकृत ठेकेदारों से निम्नलिखित निर्माण कार्य हेतु दिनांक 25/04/2022 को सायं 5:00 बजे तक ऑनलाइन (Online) निविदा आमंत्रित की जाती है:-

CHHATTISGARH STATE POWER TRANS. CO. LTD. O/o Executive Director (S&P), 3rd Floor, SLDC Building, Raipur (C.G.) Phone-0771-2574236/4247/4106 Fax-0771-2574246. No.02-16/ED/TR-21/S&P/53/011 Raipur, Dtd.- 04.04.2022. E-PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTICE. Sealed tenders are invited from experienced manufacturers/eligible bidders for supply of following equipments/materials.

CHHATTISGARH STATE POWER GENERATION CO. LTD. (A Govt. of Chhattisgarh Undertaking) CIN: U40108CT2003SGC015821. No. 03-03/ SE:W-I/TN-452/03 Raipur, Dtd 01/04/2022. E-TENDER NOTICE NO. TN- 452 /22. Online bids are invited by the undersigned through CSPCL e-bidding system (SAP SRM) from experienced & reputed contractors for Supply/ Work as mentioned below:-



CENTRAL Chronicle

Since 1974 Volume 10 No. 5

Chinese debt trap

With emergency in Sri Lanka due to economic reasons and political crisis in Pakistan due to economic reasons, the world witnesses' pitfalls of Chinese debt trap. Both, Pakistan and Sri Lanka became delusional by glitter of Chinese economic development. With China's Belt and Road Initiative, Pakistan and Sri Lanka shunned western financial practices and got ample Chinese debts with implicit policy of encircling India, as Chinese geopolitical objectives. With spread of COVID-19 pandemic, again from alleged lab leak of Chinese virus, economies of Pakistan and Sri Lanka got stalled. Suddenly, Pakistan and Sri Lanka find the situation of being debt slaves to China. The political crisis in Pakistan resulted in outflows of foreign investments in the domestic bonds which weakened the local currency. The Pakistani rupee plunged to a historic low of 133.70 against the US dollar in the interbank market after the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) reported a massive outflow of USD 2.9 billion. The SBP announced that its foreign exchange reserves dropped to USD 12.047 billion during the week ended on March 25 due to a major repayment of Chinese loans while the rest was regular debt servicing. Pakistan has said that China agreed to rollover USD 4.2 billion debt that was maturing this week, providing a major financial relief to the cash-strapped country. The USD 2 billion loan by China's State Administration of Foreign Exchange (SAFE) has been rolled over. Beijing had given a commitment to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in 2019 to rollover its debt until the Fund programme expires. The Currency Swap Agreement is a Chinese trade finance facility that Pakistan has been using since 2011 to repay foreign debt and keep its gross foreign currency reserves at comfortable levels instead for trade-related purposes. Pakistan had paid Rs 26.1 billion interest on the outstanding balance at agreed rates.

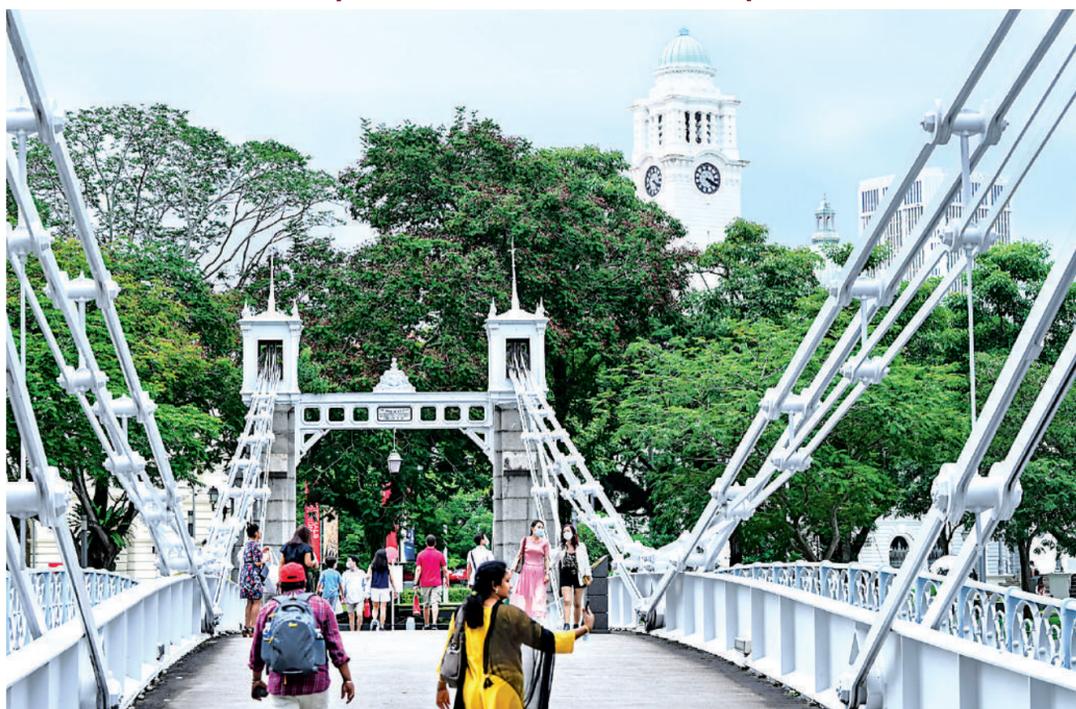
Last month, the IMF said that Pakistan owes USD 18.4 billion or one-fifth of its external public debt to China, which is not only USD 4 billion higher than the officially reported figures but is also the highest lending by any single country or financial institution. China refused to assist Sri Lanka which appealed to reschedule its huge Chinese debt burden in the face of the COVID-19 outbreak. Sri Lanka appealed if a restructuring of the debt could be arranged to mitigate the economic crisis that had arisen in the face of the COVID-19 outbreak. China has shed some crocodile tears over the economy of Sri Lanka getting caught in a quagmire after hobnobbing with the BRI projects of China, record inflation, soaring food prices and the sufferings of the people. A major part of this debt was owed to China, which accounts for nearly USD 8 billion. This debt burden was a result of China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) projects like Hambantota Port and Colombo Port City for which Chinese agencies lent large amounts to Sri Lanka under stiff terms of repayment. Notably, in 2021-22, Colombo's debt repayment to Beijing amounted to nearly USD 2 billion. Further, Hambantota port has already been leased out to China for 99 years against USD 1.2 billion. The very reason for the establishment of the IMF was to assist countries to tackle crises. Yet, the Sri Lankan government continued its stubborn refusal to seek assistance from the IMF or restructure debt. Pro-China Rajapaksa government had booted out the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) of the USA with its offer to extend developmental assistance grant. Countries the world should learn lessons from crisis in Pakistan and Sri Lanka so as to avoid being debt slaves of China. Chinese goal to encircle India is also stalled.

Hydrogen as fuel

Union minister Nitin Gadkari, who has been pushing for use of alternative fuel-powered vehicles recently rode to Parliament in his new hydrogen-based electric car. Demonstrating the vehicle powered by 'green hydrogen' outside his residence here, Gadkari talked about need to spread awareness about green Hydrogen, FCEV technology and its benefits to support hydrogen-based society for India. Price of petrol, diesel, CNG, LPG and aviation turbine fuel keeps increasing and researchers are working hard to develop alternative propulsion systems. At present, hydrogen is more expensive than petroleum as economies of scale is not yet realised in production of hydrogen. Once, economies of scale are realised from production of green hydrogen and subsequent hydrogen distribution network, it will be attractive alternative compared to imported fossil fuels. But instead of personal vehicles, hydrogen will be viable for commercial vehicles such as ships, long range trucks, mining and construction earth movers besides logistic vehicles such as forklifts. A recent report shows around 100 forklifts or 80 percent of the vehicle fleet in a retailer's logistics centre in France, already operate on green hydrogen, and the rest is to follow by the end of the year.

Hydrogen powered vehicles are available 97 percent of the time compared to approximately 50 percent with lead-acid technology, this required much fewer charging or refuelling spaces, and allowed a reduction of fleet inventories. Hydrogen fuel cell vehicles can offer significant advantages in niche applications where charging times are key, such as logistics centres that operate around the clock even if modern battery-electric vehicles use lithium-ion batteries, which can be charged much more rapidly than lead-acid models. Apart from fuel cells, which are expensive, the direct combustion of hydrogen is better for aviation applications. Hydrogen has the potential to power larger aircraft as a direct gas turbine engine fuel, and is being investigated with significant technical and operational challenges needing to be overcome. Hydrogen fuel cells will probably be limited to medium to low power applications where the power requirements are lower. Given volume limitations attached to the storage of hydrogen and the limited power density of fuel cells, for long range, fuelling gas turbines will remain the most likely solution moving forward. Hydrogen will offer options in shorter range segments and has the potential to progress onto larger segments, as the technology is proven and hydrogen fuel becomes more readily available.

LESS RESTRICTIONS

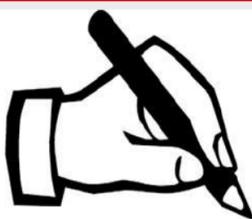


People walk across Cavenagh bridge with less restrictions to move amid COVID-19 pandemic in Singapore.

Protecting midday meal scheme in India



REETIKA KHERA



India's school meals scheme programme is ubiquitous, helping deliver food to millions. It faces threats from multiple angles. It would be hard to find a larger or more universal school meals program than that in India. Until COVID-19 hit more than 87 percent of children in rural government schools were being served the 'Mid-Day Meal'. At last count the scheme covered 118 million children. The benefits of school meals are well established, but government budget pressures threaten the sustainability of India's program. It will also need to fend off corruption and corporate lobbyists if it is to continue to thrive. With its roots in pioneer state Tamil Nadu in the 1960s, the midday meals program went national in 1995. But it wasn't until 2001 that it moved beyond dry rations such as wheat and rice. When the scheme was first started in 1995, the midday meal was meant to ensure that children in government schools, especially those unable to get food at home, had at least one meal a day. It also became an initiative to improve enrolment in schools. The scheme is now being revamped to expand its ambit.

In 2001, many parts of India grappled with drought and in some places (Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Odisha) people were reported to have died from starvation. The People's Union for Civil Liberties, petitioned the Supreme Court, pointing out that although the government had enough food stocks, people were dying, and it must be

directed to act. On 28 November 2001, the Supreme Court directed the government to implement the meal scheme by providing every child in every government and government-assisted primary school with a cooked midday meal, with a minimum nutritional content of 300 calories and eight to 12 grams of protein each day of school for a minimum of 200 days in a year. In the first decade, states gradually succeeded in putting the required infrastructure in place as building kitchens, ensuring water supply in the schools, and appointing cooks and helpers. Today, typically, all schools have one cook and one helper. In some states (e.g., Tamil Nadu, Karnataka), there is a three-member team, including an organiser who is in-charge of accounts, stocks and purchases.

Hygiene conditions in the school kitchens were a major concern in the initial years because there was no access to clean drinking water and there were no proper kitchens. The critical importance of this became very evident in 2013, when in Bihar school children died as a result of food poisoning: the school did not have its own premises, and the kitchen was in a veranda. The cook fetched oil in a container from the sarpanch's or the teacher's house, which had previously been used to store pesticide. Since then, the mid-day meal program has been shown to benefit enrolment, attendance, learning outcomes and even nutritional intake and nutritional out-

comes. Enrolment effects were especially strong for girls and children from disadvantaged communities like Adivasis (tribals or literally, 'original inhabitants'). A study by Barooah and her co-authors in Delhi evaluated the impact on learning effort in school, and found that children who had been fed a proper meal did not give up as easily. There is socialisation (habit formation such as queuing up for meals, sharing a meal) and educational benefits (personal hygiene such as washing your hands before eating) as well. The program also created employment opportunities for women. In many parts of rural India, there are few opportunities for a woman to get paid work outside her home. Being a cook in a school is one form of low paid, but dignified, employment.

Having their children fed at home also makes for one less chore for women, who typically undertake the majority of childcare in India. This is significant for working women. Though it is rare to hear complaints that children don't get enough food, questions about the quality of the mid-day meal persist. From 2010 onwards, ensuring nutritional content of mid-day meals has become a big battle. Initially, the same food was given every day. Now there are weekly menus. Afridi found that in Chhindwara district (Madhya Pradesh) the improved menus met up to 22 percent of the required daily nutritional allowance for these children as opposed to just 11 percent where the old menu was served. Some states also provide eggs. Eggs are nutrient dense 'superfoods', yet many states have been resisting their introduction on ostensibly religious grounds. Socialisation benefits, including the breaking down of caste barriers, have also been documented. Recently, a Dalit cook was removed because of her caste. In other instances, when such resistance arose, district administrators stepped in. Even as caste issues per-

sist, the mid-day meal has become an important way to break the caste barriers. There are instances of children where they were given food by their parents and told not to eat at school because the cook was from another community. These children, when they go to school and they see all their schoolmates eating together, eat with the others but don't tell anyone at home.

Despite its success as a social policy, government commitment and adequate budgets remain important. The central government provides the grain component free of cost to the states. In addition, cooking costs are also provided for the other ingredients. Though this has increased over the years, starting from just Rs 1 per child per day in 2004, to between Rs 4-6 per day (for primary and upper primary school children, respectively), the revision in the cooking costs per child per day is inadequate. The central government earlier allocated money to the states, which then included their share of the money before sending it to a nodal midday meal scheme authority at district and tehsil levels. This year's budget (2022-23) is slightly lower than last year's: in nominal terms, it has been slashed by about Rs 1000 crores. Last year's cost was Rs 11,000 crores. Many other concerns remain as the link between India's health program (deworming, health check-ups, micronutrient especially iron supplementation) and the mid-day meal program in most parts of the country remains weak. Corruption is also a concern and requires constant vigilance. An emerging challenge is the corporate lobby, which views the mid-day meal budget as a large potential 'market'. In 2008 a biscuit manufacturers' association attempted to lobby the central government to replace hot cooked meals with fortified biscuits. Such lobbyists have not given up.

(Reetika Khera is a development economist and teaches at IIT, Delhi.)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Nothing wrong

There is nothing wrong when in the middle of a row in Karnataka over a call by right-wing groups to ban Muslim traders from temple festivals, Biocon chief Kiran Mazumdar Shaw has urged Chief Minister (CM) Basavaraj Bommai to "resolve the growing religious divide" in the state, warning that if the tech sector becomes communal it will "destroy" India's global leadership in it. Glad to see a woman do this while other male corporate honchos try to figure out what is politically expedient and keep their mouths shut. She is right and one hopes that more corporate leaders need to speak up against Bharatiya Janata Party's (BJP) divide and rule policy in Karnataka, to help them for the up-coming election. Strange! BJP called itself as a party of difference, but when anyone criticizes anything they do, they get upset. Just see how a rattled BJP, led by its IT cell head Amit Malviya has accused Kiran Shaw of expressing "It is unfortunate to see people like Kiran Shaw impose their personal, politically coloured opinion, and conflate it with India's leadership in the IT sector". In the greed of power BJP has forgotten that equality for all is our constitution's strength. No appeasement but also no communalisation. Instead focus on economy, employment, inflation, health, education, women safety and corruption that matter. Also Ms Mazumdar Shaw is not only a business woman but a corporate contributing to growth of the state and country. What is the credential of Amit Malviya, that he personally attacked Ms. Shaw? Shame on him and BJP for polarising the society. Actually, a few years back Karnataka was famous for being the hub of learning sadly, now first Hizab, then non-Hindus from doing business on temple premises and now BJP national general secretary CT Ravi, endorsed a call from fringe Hindutva organisations asking Hindus to boycott halal meat sold by Muslims. When our political leaders, male corporate or intellectual wear bangle, then good to see some famed corporate showing mirror to the Karnataka Chief Minister Bommai, on their dirty politics. Though no reply comes from the CM, but I'm sure no body expect a bold decision from Bommai, but majority of Hindus not want to live under BJP umbrella as they don't want to live in a bigoted hindu nation, one prefer pluralism and that is when religion and culture also thrives.

Bidyut K Chatterjee, Faridabad

NRI voting

Facilitating Non Resident Indians (NRI) to vote online would be one of India's most needed and welcome electoral reforms, because NRIs, who form a significant segment of the population, also deserve a say in the country's government formation. Arranging polling stations at suitable locations abroad on polling day should not be a problem for the Election Commission of India (ECI) in collaboration with the Indian embassies. Since online voting would involve different constituencies on the same platform, computerisation of electoral rolls becomes a pre-requisite. In addition to biometric identification, the ECI could also issue a secret password to the NRI who votes to make identification foolproof. It is only a question of all political parties trusting the system. The technical feasibility to introduce this long-coveted reform exists. If this becomes a success, we can also think of extending it to an 'anywhere voting' system in the country.

Mangal, via email



WHAT THEY TWEET!



Anil Swarup @swarup58

What Chanakya didn't say: All successful persons have had failures in their lives. So, don't feel depressed when you fail. No point in brooding over the past failures. Learn from failures & move on. Make failures stepping stones to success. #ChanakyaDidntsay

Salman@SalmanSoz

Before we get to opposition unity, we need unity in Congress. It is an open secret that we keep losing elections in large part because there is infighting in our teams. Congress defeats itself. BJP & others enjoy the fruit. Unless we fix this, we are finished & India will suffer.



Chandrashekhar@cbdhdage

Konkan Railway accomplishes 100% Electrification for 741 km Long railway.



Sandeep@sandythapar

I partially understand the propensity of societies along main rds making speed breakers on rd just outside their main gates. To slow down rowdy traffic. But why 2? One before & one after crossing society gate? And most times they are not speed breakers but axle crushers.

Navin Kabra@NGKabra

You don't need a detox break from social media. You need a detox break from news and current events. You can unfollow everybody who obsesses, outrages over current events without leaving social media. 99% of that stuff is irrelevant. The 1% that matters will still reach you.

MoneyTalk@LarissaFernand

Met an acquaintance after years. Dropped out of college after Std XII. Worked as a waiter, then in travel business, then an entrepreneur. His villa in Goa: Master bedroom on the 1st floor includes a mini lounge area, pool, mini kitchen so he "need not go downstairs if he's lazy"

BRIEF

Production



New Delhi: HYM Drive Systems said it expects to start production of electric drive units at its facility in Ludhiana from November this year. MD Pankaj Munjal said this manufacturing facility is a part of our joint strategy with Yamaha to localise electric drive units.

Raises

New Delhi: Corporate cards startup EnKash on Monday said it has raised USD 20 million (around Rs 150 crore) in a funding round led by Ascent Capital. Baring India and Singapore-based White Ventures also participated in the series B funding round along with existing investors, Mayfield India and Axilor Ventures.

Solar



New Delhi: Tata Power Renewables has commissioned a 300 MW solar plant in Dholera, Gujarat with the country's largest single-axis solar tracker system. CEO MD Dr Praveer Sinha said our technical expertise and project execution skills will solidify our position.

Fund

New Delhi: Agritech venture capital firm Omnivore on Monday said it will raise USD 130 million (around Rs 1,000 crore) to set up its third fund. The company has launched its third fund with a target corpus of USD 130 million (Rs 1,000 crore). The new fund will continue to invest in early-stage startups developing breakthrough technologies for agriculture, food, climate, and rural economy.

Zooms



New Delhi: Electric two-wheeler maker Ward Wizard Innovations and Mobility Ltd on Monday reported over eight-fold jump in sales at 30,761 units last fiscal. COO Sheetal Bhalerao said with the rise in fuel prices, there is a fast shift towards electric two-wheelers.

Stake

New Delhi: British telecom major Vodafone has raised its stake in debt-ridden Vodafone Idea Limited to 47.61 per cent through its subsidiary Prime Metals, a regulatory filing said on Monday.

Manufacturing activities moderate in March

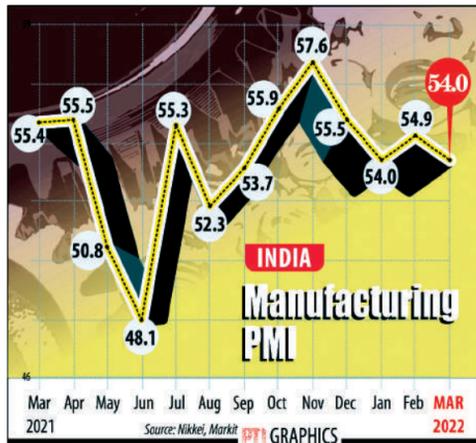
Production, sales expand at slowest pace in six months

New Delhi, Apr 04 (PTI):

India's manufacturing sector activities moderated in March with companies reporting softer expansions in new orders and production as inflation concerns dampened business confidence, a monthly survey said on Monday.

The seasonally-adjusted S&P Global India Manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) was at 54.0 in March, down from 54.9 in February, highlighting weakest rate of growth in terms of production and sales since September 2021.

The March PMI data pointed to an improvement in overall operating conditions for the ninth straight month. In PMI parlance, a print above 50 means expansion while a score below 50 denotes contraction. "Manufacturing sector growth in India weakened at the end of fiscal year 2021/22, with com-



panies reporting softer expansions in new orders and production," Pollyanna De Lima, Economics Associate Director at S&P Global, said. On the price front, manufacturers reported another increase in input prices at the end of fiscal year 2021/22. Chemical, energy, fabric, foodstuff and metal costs were all re-

portedly greater than in February. "Goods producers signalled higher prices paid for chemicals, energy, fabric, foodstuff and metals, despite supplier performance worsening to the least extent in almost a year," Lima said. Output prices rose in March as goods producers sought to share part of the additional cost burden with their

clients. "For now, demand has been sufficiently strong to withstand price hikes, but should inflation continue to gather pace we may see a more significant slowdown, if not an outright contraction in sales," Lima said. According to Lima, companies appeared very concerned about price pressures, which was a key factor dragging down business confidence to a two-year low. The March data pointed to subdued optimism towards growth prospects among Indian manufacturers, with the overall level of sentiment slipping to a two-year low. "Anecdotal evidence indicated that inflation concerns and economic uncertainty dampened overall confidence," the survey said. Meanwhile, there was a renewed decline in new export orders received by Indian goods producers, ending an eight-month sequence of growth.

Rupee surges 19 paise at 75.55 against USD, gold declines Rs 50

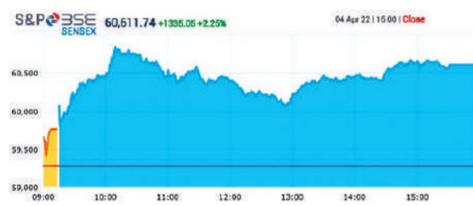
Mumbai, Apr 04 (PTI): The rupee started the financial year 2022-23 on a bullish note and settled 19 paise higher at 75.55 (provisional) against the US dollar on Monday, supported by a firm trend in domestic equities.

At the interbank forex market, the local unit opened at 75.77 against the greenback and witnessed an intra-day high of 75.42 and a low of 75.79.

It finally ended at 75.55, registering a rise of 19 paise over its previous close. On Thursday, the last trading session of FY22, the rupee had advanced by 16 paise to close at 75.74. The local unit, however, closed the 2021-22 fiscal with overall losses of 3.61 per cent or 264 paise against the American currency due to a stronger dollar and surging crude oil prices.

The forex market was closed on Friday for the annual account closing of banks. Meanwhile, the dollar index, which measures the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, rose 0.12 per cent to 98.75.

Sensex rallies over 1,300 pts, Nifty recaptures 18k mark



Mumbai, Apr 04 (PTI):

Equity benchmark Sensex surged over 1,300 points on Monday to reclaim the 60,000-level, boosted by intense buying in banking and financial stocks after the announcement of merger between HDFC and HDFC Bank.

Strong global cues and receding crude oil prices also propped up the domestic equity markets, according to traders.

Shares of HDFC and HDFC Bank rallied nearly 10 per cent as investors lapped up the merger deal. In the biggest merger in corporate history, India's largest housing finance company HDFC Ltd will merge with the country's largest private lender HDFC Bank to create a banking behemoth.

The 30-share BSE index closed 1,335.05 points or

2.25 per cent higher at 60,611.74. Likewise, the NSE Nifty jumped 382.95 points or 2.17 per cent to end at 18,053.40.

The scrip of HDFC Bank surged 9.97 per cent to Rs 1,656.45, while HDFC Ltd jumped 9.30 per cent to Rs 2,678.90.

The other gainers in the Sensex pack included Kotak Bank, HUL, L&T, IndusInd Bank and Sun Pharma.

On the other hand, Titan and Infosys were the laggards.

Elsewhere in Asia, bourses in Tokyo, Seoul, Hong Kong and Shanghai closed with healthy gains.

Stock exchanges in Europe were also trading significantly higher in mid-session deals. Germany's DAX lost 0.7% to 14,344.48 and the CAC 40 in Paris declined 0.6% to 6,646.42.

Kirloskar launches 'High-Efficiency Low Voltage Electric Motors'

Pune, Apr 04: Kirloskar Oil Engines Limited (KOEL), an industry leader and pioneer in engines, power generating sets, and agricultural equipment has been instrumental in transforming the lives of people across the globe for several decades now. With its vision to make a positive impact in the customers' lives by launching new products and services, Kirloskar Oil Engines Limited proudly launches High-Efficiency Low Voltage Electric Motors that will power machines in all applications across industries. To ensure top-class performance and ef-

iciency, these motors are manufactured with high-grade copper wires and tested by a BIS-approved, NABL-accredited test lab. With a range of quality products, backed by an excellent sales and service network, Kirloskar Oil Engines makes a grand entry into the Electric Motors market with the mission to "perform beyond expectations".

Speaking on the occasion Atul Kirloskar, Executive Chairman stated, "We have always come up with products and solutions to satisfy our customers and help them to save costs.

Artists celebrate uniqueness of Indian cities with KFC's Bucket Canvas

Mumbai, Apr 04:

Celebrating the brand's signature taste offered across the country and reinforcing its runway for growth, KFC India marked the milestone of growing 600 restaurants strong with the #KFC Bucket Canvas campaign.

The campaign brought together young artists from across the country who together, transformed the iconic KFC Bucket into the #KFC Bucket Canvas, with a unique design for each city that the brand has a presence in. Drawing inspiration from the art, architecture, and cultural elements of different cities, these 150 limited edition designs are on display across restaurants. Fans can

now cheer for the KFC in their city and appreciate the nuanced designs when they next step into a KFC restaurant closest to them; as well as learn about the artists and their inspiration here.

Speaking about this interesting display of art on the KFC Bucket, Moksh Chopra, Chief Marketing Officer, KFC India said, "It's been an amazing journey for KFC in India, with the brand now present across 150+ cities and crossing 600 restaurants. So, what better way for us to mark this moment, by partnering with young, upcoming artists across the length and breadth of our country. The iconic KFC Bucket served as a Canvas for them to showcase their talent and bring alive the uniqueness

of the different regions of India with 150 unique designs. We're blown away with the talent that's emerged, and we're privileged to be able to provide a visibility opportunity to such fabulous new talent. I would encourage you to look up these wonderful creations (at our respective restaurants or online)".

The journey began with the artists exploring different cities, scanning through popular landmarks, walking through narrow lanes, interacting with its offerings of food, people, language and culture - essentially catching the pulse of the city. All this and more, was then brought alive on the KFC Bucket, painted with much (KFC) love of course.

PSU insurers receive Covid insurance claims worth Rs 17,537 cr

New Delhi, Apr 04 (PTI):

Public sector insurers received COVID-19 related health insurance claims worth Rs 17,537 crore till December 2021 and more than 93 per cent of the cases were settled, Parliament was informed on Monday.

"Till December 31, 2021, 14.92 lakh COVID-19 health claims, of a total amount of Rs 17,537 crore, were lodged with public sector insurance companies, of which 93.3 per cent claims had been disposed of," Minister of State for Finance Bhagwat Karad said in a

written reply to the Lok Sabha. In another reply, the minister said public sector insurance companies sustained a total loss of Rs 3,450.68 crore during the one and a half financial year period from April 2020 to September 2021, as against a total loss of Rs 7,552.02 crore during the preceding one and a half financial year period (from October 2018 to March 2020).



RBI notification had triggered possible HDFC-HDFC Bank merger talks

Nearly 8 years ago

Mumbai, Apr 04 (PTI):

Talks of a merger between HDFC Bank and parent HDFC Ltd had gained steam nearly eight years ago, when the Reserve Bank of India allowed banks to issue long-term bonds to fund infrastructure and affordable housing. At that time, key executives at both entities denied any such proposal. And now, the merger has been officially announced by the two players.

Back in July 2014, RBI had issued a notification saying banks do not have to maintain Cash Reserve Ratio (CRR) and Statutory Liquidity Ratio (SLR) for



funds raised through the route, and also exempted them from meeting priority-sector lending targets on such funds.

Analysts and banking industry watchers had then opined that the regulatory move makes sense for the merger of the largest pure-play home financier with what was then

the second largest private sector lender, to create what was reckoned as the second biggest financial sector entity in the country after SBI.

At that time, key executives at both the entities had acknowledged that a merger made sense but denied any such proposal. Without going into exact

details, they had also sought clarity to make such a merger more beneficial. "There are some regulatory issues which need to be resolved to make the merger more beneficial. Partly, it has been resolved with the issuance of the circular on infra bonds, but there are a few more issues in which we are in discussion with the regulators," Aditya Puri, the then chief executive and managing director of HDFC Bank, had said in December 2014.

Keji Mistry, the vice chairman and chief executive of HDFC, had said a merger was possible "theoretically" and could be done at an appropriate time.

India continues to remain highest receiver of FDI

New Delhi, Apr 04 (PTI):

India continues to remain the highest receiver of the FDI, and the Indian retail investors have created the capacity to absorb the shock due to outflow of foreign funds from the country's stock markets, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman told Lok Sabha.

Replying to a question asked by Congress member Shashi Tharoor in Lok Sabha, she said foreign investments have to be gauged, not just by looking at FIIs and FPIs which by very nature depend on the interest rates and they keep on "moving up and down." "The FIIs and FPIs would come and go. But, today the Indian retail investors have proven that even if they come and go any shock that may come



Nirmala Sitharaman

in is now taken care of because of the shock absorbing capacity that the Indian retailers have brought into the Indian market," she said during Question Hour.

"We in the House should stand up and appreciate the Indian retailer who has invested a lot of confidence in the

markets today in India," she added.

Pointing out that overseas investors has pulled out over Rs 1.14 lakh crore from the Indian market so far, Tharoor had urged the finance minister to explain the worrying trend of "steadily" declining investment by the foreign investors.

IOC, L&T, ReNew join hands for green hydrogen business

New Delhi, Apr 04 (PTI):

India's top oil firm IOC, engineering and construction giant Larsen & Toubro and renewable energy company ReNew Power on Monday came together to form a joint venture to develop green hydrogen business. Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) and L&T have additionally signed a pact to form a joint venture



with equity participation to manufacture and sell electrolyzers used in the production of green hydrogen. "The tripartite venture is a synergistic alliance that brings together the strong credentials of L&T in designing, executing, and delivering EPC projects, IOC's established expertise in petroleum refining along with its presence across the

energy spectrum, and the expertise of ReNew in offering and developing utility-scale renewable energy solutions," the firms said in a statement.

The joint ventures will look to manufacture zero-carbon emitting hydrogen, which is used from refineries to steel plants to even running automobiles, via electrolysis powered by renewable energy. The government in February, notified a green hydrogen policy aimed at boosting the production of green hydrogen and green ammonia to help the nation become a global hub for the environmentally friendly version of the element.

5G auction to be held on schedule, within stipulated timeline

New Delhi, Apr 04 (PTI):

The auction of 5G spectrum will be held on schedule and within the stipulated timeline, Minister for Communications Ashwini Vaishnav said on Monday. His affirmation comes at a time when telecom regulator Trai's 5G recommendations on spectrum pricing and other nuances, which were widely expected to come by March-end, have spilled over by a few days to early April. Asked if 5G auction will be held as per schedule, Vaishnav said, "absolutely". He was speaking to reporters on the sidelines of an event — 2nd national conference on cyber crime investigation and digital forensics.



The spectrum auctions are slated to be conducted in 2022, to facilitate the rollout of 5G mobile services within 2022-23, by private telecom providers.

Trai's views on 5G auction and related nuances are crucial since they will serve as building blocks, and set the pace for the auctions and subsequent

rollout of the fifth-generation services that will usher in ultra-high-speed and spawn new-age services and business models.

On March 29, a senior Trai official had told PTI that the recommendations (on 5G spectrum pricing and other modalities) will come out within the next 7-10 days. The telecom reg-

ulator, in November last year, had released a detailed consultation paper to discuss threadbare the modalities for auction of spectrum across multiple bands, including pricing, quantum and other conditions — preparing the groundwork for upcoming 5G auctions.

Trai's comprehensive consultation paper ran into 207 pages and posed 74 questions for industry-wide discussion, touching on crucial aspects like valuation and reserve price of 5G spectrum, quantum of the spectrum, block size, eligibility conditions for participation in the auction, rollout obligations, spectrum cap, and surrender of the spectrum.



Nisha Rawal is evicted from 'Lock Upp'

Kangana Ranaut's fearless reality show 'Lock Upp' streaming on ALTBalaji & MX Player has been receiving a great response from the audience. The show has kept audiences on the hook and has always surprised them with unexpected twists. This time, Nisha Rawal gets eliminated from the show. 'Lock Upp' is one of the most highly viewed shows on OTT since its launch. The show has an interesting mix of contestants. Kangana was seen in a challenging situation when choosing between Payal Rohatgi and Nisha Rawal. But the decision came in favor of Payal, and Nisha got eliminated. As per Kangana, Payal does come with a questionable reputation but has a good engagement in the show, whereas Nisha lags behind. Nisha was the first contestant to enter the show and announced that she is bipolar. She had differences with a few contestants in the show, like Munawar Faruqi and Kaaranvir Bohra. So, will Nisha make a re-entry in the game or is she permanently out of the game. ALTBalaji and MX Player live-stream Lock Upp 24x7 on their respective platforms and allow audiences to interact directly with the contestants. Stay tuned to ALTBalaji & MX Player for more updates on the show.

Rupali Ganguly looks gorgeous in a traditional get up and wishes fans 'Happy festivities'



Rupali Ganguly is among the leading names in the television industry. She is presently playing the lead in the top daily soap Anupamaa. She is hailed for the excellent portrayal of the main character and for inspiring women across the nation. Rupali is active on social media and she recently shared pictures of herself in traditional attires as she wished her fans on Gudi Padwa. In the post shared by Rupali, she had sported a green Maharashtrian style saree. She has paired it with red blouse with self-work all over it. She had sported traditional golden jewellery, including a multi later necklace. Bangles, jhumka, nose pin and hair accessories. She shared in the captions, "Padwachya Shubhechhaa Unity in diversity in true sense Various cultures, various new beginnings but all are celebrating new year today. Happy festivities".

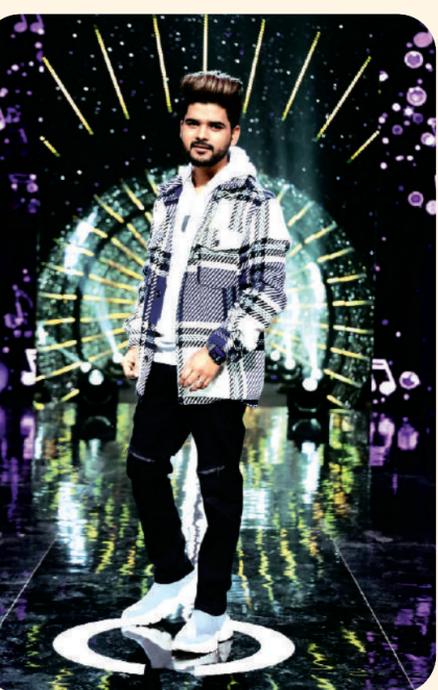
Talking about the romantic track in Anupamaa with ETimes, she said, "It feels absolutely wonderful. Change is the only constant thing in Anupamaa. Initially, the show focussed on Vanraj and Anupamaa's story and their family drama. I never really imagined that something like this, another man coming into Anupamaa's life, would happen in this show when it began. The track has been so organic. The way Rajan Shahi (producer) and his team have created this whole track of Anupamaa's transformation, is just so heart-warming. Just like I always say that there is a little girl in every woman and a boy in every man, and whenever I watch my scenes with Gaurav, who plays Anuj, I get butterflies in my stomach. Iss umar mein bhi Rajan Shahi ne meri heroine banne ki saari muradein poori kar di hain."

Southern Comfort: 'KGF' star Yash all set to conquer new frontiers

"I am who I am today because of the choices I made yesterday," these words by Eleanor Roosevelt, former US First Lady seem quite apposite for superstar Yash. The actor who started his journey from Kannada entertainment industry is now no longer confined to one region but his fan following has now crossed the borders of one state and made him popular across the country. Naveen Kumar Gowda best known as Yash was in the capital to promote 'K.G.F: Chapter 2' which is a sequel to 2018 Kannada blockbuster 'K.G.F: Chapter 1'. Quite confident and wearing a smile of

hope he says: "I hope people would love the sequel too." And he asserts that the response that was received by 'K.G.F: Chapter 1' will be the same for its sequel. Well, it seems his hope is coming true while looking at the response to the trailer. Prashanth Neel's directorial film, also stars Sanjay Dutt, Srinidhi Shetty, Raveena Tandon and Prakash Raj. There is a lot of expectation from the sequel by the entire team for which shooting started post Chapter 1. The movie became a turning point for Yash and it established him as an actor across the country. Now, he

has a huge fan following so how much 'K.G.F' is special to him or for that matter even his debut project teleserial 'Nanda Gokula' close to his heart. "For me, everything is special. Of course, I remember whatever has happened in my life, but I just keep looking forward to something. You should enjoy the moment and you should keep looking forward. I'm somebody who's not attached to anything. Be it 'Nanda Gokula' or 'K.G.F' whatever it is that I'm doing, I'll give my hundred per cent and that will be my word. Later they are in my library, you have to move on."



Salman Ali to reprise his role as the 'Captain' in 'Superstar Singer'

In the wake of the phenomenal success of Superstar Singer season 1, Sony Entertainment Television is all geared up to bring yet another exciting season of its home-grown singing reality show, Superstar Singer, the most loved platform for young talented singers. Celebrating 'Singing ka Kal', Superstar Singer Season 2 will bring forth some of the most extraordinary performers from every nook and corner of the nation with a unique sense of musical expression and dedication to their craft. Grooming and mentoring the young singing talent will be a well-appointed panel of Captains. Singing sensation and Indian Idol season 10

winner Salman Ali is all set to reprise his role as the captain in the brand-new season of Superstar Singer. Hailing from Haryana, this singing star has paved his way to audience's hearts with his mesmerizing voice and has made a name in the Indian music industry. Known for his mastery of singing in every genre, Salman Ali is looking forward to mentor and honing the singing talent of some of India's spectacular young singing talents. Elated to be reprising his role as the captain Salman Ali said, "I am extremely thrilled to be a part of Superstar Singer Season 2! It feels like I am coming back home."



Karthi: I lived all that I dreamt of during the filming of 'Ponniyin Selvan'

Actor Karthi, who loves horse riding and horses, says he lived all that he dreamt of during the filming of director Mani Ratnam's upcoming magnum opus 'Ponniyin Selvan'. 'Ponniyin Selvan', a brilliant story that revolves around the early life of prince Arulmozhi Varman, who later on went on to be known as the great Raja Raja Chozhan, is one of a kind. Karthi plays the prime character of Vandhiyathevan in this film, which is based on the classic by Kalki. Taking to Twitter, Karthi wrote, "I have forever been fascinated by horses. While I learnt horse riding for 'Kaashmora', I lived all that I dreamt of, during the filming of 'Ponniyin Selvan'. Can't describe the exhilaration when

you connect with the horse and it breathes and pulsates with you!" 'Ponniyin Selvan', called by Mani Ratnam as his dream project, features a host of top stars including actors Vikram, Aishwarya Rai, Trisha, Karthi, Jayam Ravi, Jayaram, Parthiban, Lal, Vikram Prabhu, Jayaram, Prabhu and Prakash Raj. The project will be among the most expensive projects ever undertaken in the country. The film has the best in business handling each of its departments. A.R. Rahman is scoring the music for this epic historical and cinematography is by Ravi Varman. National Award winning art director Thotta Tharani is in charge of production design while Mani Ratnam's trusted editor Sreekar Prasad is handling its editing.

HOROSCOPE TUESDAY APRIL 05

Aquarius: Jan 21 - Feb 18

You will tackle complicated issues with infinite ease! But you will also find people passing the buck onto you. It irks you no end, having to take the blame for others' mistakes. But here's a chance, says Ganesha, to turn a weakness into a strength.

Pisces: Feb 19 - Mar 20

Today you will get attention from the opposite sex and this will play an important role in your success in the near future. Due to the favourable alignment of the planets you will receive more than your expectations. Ganesha feels that even though you are a calculative and cautious person, you will tend to be aggressive, outgoing and willing to take risks today.

Aries: Mar 21 - Apr 20

If you have grievances about your love life, Aries, today is the day to speak up. Indeed, today requires only total honesty and forthrightness in all areas. You can expect to confront "the other," whether it's your mate or co-worker, on the basis of truth and righteousness. Rest assured you'll command his or her attention! Be careful that the weight of your words doesn't surpass that of your thoughts.

Taurus: Apr 21 - May 21

Are you thinking of switching careers or traveling to the other side of the world, Taurus? Or perhaps you just want to pull a *à la* Greta Garbo and stay at home alone with the shades drawn tight. A series of small incidents at work is likely to inspire you with the most outlandish of ideas. It might just be that you sense your inner need for a change of scene.

Gemini: May 22 - June 21

You're likely to find people somewhat irritating today, Gemini. It's as though nothing is good enough, and nobody seems to know exactly what he or she wants. You'll reign supreme within this maze of overt conflict and dissatisfaction. You might even be asked to step in and restore order. If the conflict is domestic, go ahead. But tread carefully if you're asked to be the sheriff at the office!

Cancer: June 22 - July 22

With Ganesha's grace, whatever you think or perseue will be successful. Students will excel and finish pending work. You can display your imagination excellently. In short, a day of happiness and variety.

Leo: July 23 - Aug 23

You will pay more attention to matters at home. You may take up home renovation projects. You may end up replacing the entire furniture at your place even. You will spend the day enjoying with your family members and friends, says Ganesha.

Virgo: Aug 24 - Sept 22

More than ever before, you'll feel as though it's time to take matters into your own hands and build your own career future. You're fed up with living on hope and putting off your happiness until tomorrow. Your determination will be so strong that you could even surprise yourself. Tomorrow you'll refine your approach and make it more concrete. Today is the first day of a new life for you, Virgo.

Libra: Sept 23 - Oct 23

Ganesha says that you will be busy in your work field today and will be able to attain your goals in your work field today. Your level of enthusiasm will be at its peak. Today you may be able to meet with a person from the opposite sex who will be your future partner. Ganesha showers you with his blessings always.

Scorpio: Oct 24 - Nov 22

Being a workaholic may divert your attention from your family and you may have to bear the consequences. It's time to sort differences with your spouse. But, all this while, you need to be calm and patient. Watch your words in case of any arguments, warns Ganesha.

Sagittarius: Nov 23 - Dec 31

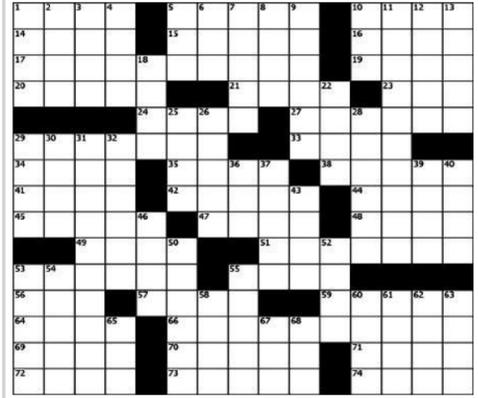
To do or not to do? That will be the question for most of today as you find yourself pulling out of one dilemma only to trip into the next one. Controversy will surround you and you may find yourself at the crossroads, where you are unsure of which direction to take. Turn to the wisdom of the experienced for proper guidance, advises Ganesha.

Capricorn: Dec 22 - Jan 20

The most intimidating of ventures can prove successful if fortune favours you; you will be fortunate today, says Ganesha. Those of you dealing in stocks and shares can expect a profitable day ahead, but don't forget to give credit to your spouse; it will be their luck working wonders for you.

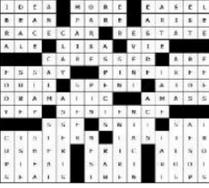
CROSSWORD

260



- 47. Hearty soup
 - 48. Minter (Ger.)
 - 49. Views
 - 51. Enthusiastically
 - 53. Sofa
 - 55. Poker bet
 - 56. Asphalt
 - 57. Tie
 - 59. Stately
 - 64. Energy source
 - 66. Eliminate completely
 - 69. TV host Jay
 - 70. Highways
 - 71. Very many (2 wds.)
 - 72. Recognized
 - 73. Fable writer
 - 74. Undermines
- DOWN**
- 1. Building wings
 - 2. Destroy
 - 3. Butter alternative
 - 4. Insult
 - 5. Summer refresher
 - 6. Newsman _____ Rather
 - 7. Stockpile
 - 8. Dancer _____ Kelly
 - 9. Respect
 - 10. French friend
 - 11. Successful book
 - 12. "Sesame Street" character
 - 13. Discourage
 - 18. Watch over
 - 22. Urge
 - 25. Paddles
 - 26. Snaky shapes
 - 28. Southwestern Indian
 - 29. Martial _____
 - 30. 500 sheets
 - 31. Italian vegetable soup
 - 32. Sock type
 - 36. Cauldron
 - 37. Primp
 - 39. British nobleman
 - 40. Nimble
 - 43. Hit
 - 46. Onionlike veggie
 - 50. Madrid matron
 - 52. Actor Richard _____
 - 53. Stem
 - 54. Consumed
 - 55. Road guide
 - 58. Wind instrument
 - 60. Important times
 - 61. Party
 - 62. On the peak
 - 63. Permis
 - 65. Cut grass
 - 67. Altar vow (2 wds.)
 - 68. 1/3 TBSP

SOLUTION 259



New Zealand give emotional Taylor a winning farewell



Hamilton, Apr 04 (AP): Ross Taylor made 14 for New Zealand against the Netherlands in the third one-day cricket international on Monday, coming to the crease and leaving it to a standing ovation. The match was Taylor's 450th and last for New Zealand before he retires at the end of a 16-year international career. The 38-year-old batsman played his last test against South Africa this year but decided to make this match on his home ground at Seddon Park his final bow. His children, MacKenzie, Jonty and Adelaide, stood beside him during the national anthems and he went through an honor guard formed by Netherlands players. Taylor played his first one-day international for New Zealand in 2006 and his first test the following year. He went on to play 112 tests, scoring 7,683 runs, including 19 centuries, and 236 one-day internationals in which he made 8,593 runs. He also scored 1,909 runs in 102 Twenty20 internationals.

Sindhu, Sen to lead Indian challenge in Korea Open

Suncheon (Korea), Apr 04 (PTI): India's latest badminton sensation Lakshya Sen and double Olympic medallist P V Sindhu will lead the Indian campaign at the Korea Open Super 500 tournament starting here on Tuesday. With back-to-back finals at German Open and All England Championships, Sen is in the form of his life and will look to be third time lucky as he opens his campaign against world number 25 Lu Guang Zu of China. It will not, however, be an easy outing for Sen as the men's singles draw boasts of some tough competitors such as the Indonesian duo of Anthony Ginting (top seed) and Jonatan Christie (third seed), world champion and fourth seed Loh Kean Yew, second seeded Malaysian Lee Zii Jia and the formidable Thai Kunlavut Vitidsarn, seeded eighth. Sen, the world championships bronze medallist, had scooped his maiden Super 500 crown at the India Open in January before making two final appearances and he will be keen to lift the second title of the season here.

Four Australians in ICC's Most Valuable Team of Women's WC



Dubai, Apr 04 (PTI): Four players from champion side Australia featured in the 'Most Valuable Team' of the just-concluded ICC Women's World Cup while none from the Mithali Raj-led Indian side made the cut after their shock group exit. In the MVT released by ICC on Monday, four Australians made the team, including Player of the Tournament Alyssa Healy, the wicketkeeper-cum-opening batter who slammed a record 170 from just 138 balls in the final against England on Sunday. Australia skipper Meg Lanning was named captain, while her deputy Rachael Haynes and Beth Mooney were also picked in the team. Haynes ended the World Cup as the second-highest run-scorer on 497 after Healy (509), with 130 of those coming in their opening game against England.

Orleans Masters: Mithun Manjunath loses in final

Orleans (France), Apr 04 (PTI): Indian shuttler Mithun Manjunath's splendid run at the Orleans Masters ended with a straight game loss to local favourite Toma Junior Popov in the summit clash of the Super 100 tournament here. The 23-year-old Manjunath went down 21-11 21-19 to world number 32 and fourth seed Frenchman in 50 minutes late on Sunday night. It was Manjunath's maiden Super 100 final. He is a product of the Prakash Padukone Badminton Academy. The unseeded Indian had been impressive throughout the tournament, stunning world No. 22 Hans-Kristian Solberg Vittinghus of Denmark in the quarterfinals. The world number 79 has won four All-India ranking titles, including the All India Senior Ranking Badminton tournament in December last year. The shuttler from Bengaluru was rated highly during his junior days and he also had one or two odd performances in the circuit like reaching the quarters at 2018 Czech Open and back-to-back semi-finals finishes at Vietnam Open and Russian Open in 2018.

Netherlands coach Van Gaal says he has prostate cancer

The Hague, Apr 4 (AP): Netherlands national soccer team coach Louis van Gaal has revealed that he is being treated for an aggressive form of prostate cancer but still plans to lead the team at the World Cup in Qatar in November. Van Gaal told Sunday night Dutch talk show Humberto that players in the team did not know about his diagnosis even though he was receiving night-time treatment during four training camps. You don't tell something like this to people you work with because it could influence their choices, their energy or whatever, and I thought, they shouldn't know," he said. He said he has undergone 25 radiation therapy treatments. I have been to the hospital in the evening or night in every period, without the players knowing, the 70-year-old coach said. Van Gaal lost his first wife to cancer. It's part of life. I have experienced so much with disease and death, in my own family, my wife, he said.

Boxing: Monika stuns two-time World Championship medallist

New Delhi, Apr 04 (PTI):

Boxer Monika (48kg) upstaged two-time World Championship medallist Josie Gabuco of the Philippines to enter the semifinals along with two other Indians at the Thailand Open here on Monday. Ashish Kumar (81kg) and Manisha (57kg) are the two other Indian pugilists who also made their way into the last four with contrasting wins against their respective Thai opponents.

The 26-year-old Monika, who hails from Rohtak, prevailed 4-1 over experienced campaigner Gabuco, who won gold and bronze medals at the World Championships in 2012 and 2008 respectively. She will now face Vietnam's Trinh Thi Diem Kieu, who received bye in the last round.

Competing in his first international tournament since the Tokyo Olympics, last edition's gold medallist Ashish notched a 5-0 win against local boxer Aphisit Khankhokhruea in the 81kg quarterfinals. The Indian will now clash with Indonesia's Maikhel Roberrd Muskita in the semifinals. It was a good day in the ring for Manisha, who recently



India's Monika pulled off an impressive 4-1 victory against two-time world championships medallist Josie Gabuco of Philippines to enter the women's 48kg semi-finals at the 2022 Thailand Open International.

qualified for the upcoming World Championships as well as Asian Games, as she defeated two-time Youth Asian champion Thailand's Porntip Buapa 3-2 in the 57kg quarterfinals. However, Renu (54kg) and Monika (63kg) lost their opening round clashes. While Renu gave a tough fight to Italy's European U-22 champion Sirine Charaabi, it wasn't enough as the Indian lost 2-3 in the quarterfinal clash. Monika, on the other hand, went down in the quarterfinals, losing to

Youth Olympic champion local boxer Panpatchara Somnuek by RSC verdict (Referee Stops Contest) in the third round.

On the third day of the competition on Tuesday, Sumit and Gaurav Chauhan will play their quarter-finals against respective opponents from Kazakhstan. Sumit (75kg), who received bye in the last opening round, will take on Timur Nurseitov while Gaurav (91kg) will fight against 2018 Youth Olympics champion Aibek Oralbay.

We have habit of not finishing games when we are in control: Reid

Bhubaneswar, Apr 04 (PTI): The Indian men's hockey team might have won its FIH Pro League double-header against England but head coach Graham Reid is not completely pleased with its performance, especially the tendency of allowing opponents to come back into the game. India pulled off wins in both the games against England, winning the first one in the shootout after being locked 3-3 in the regulation time before registering a 4-3 victory in the second on Sunday. With the twin wins, India climbed to the top of the Pro League

table, with 21 points in 10 games so far. "We seem to have a habit of not finishing those games when we have control of them. We let the other team get back into it. But I suppose that's hockey nowadays. In the third quarter, we lost control a bit and we need to look into that," Reid said. "The corners went in tonight and we had opportunities to try some variations. It was a really good fight with them and our boys showed a good heart and good spirits. Games like these help in building characters. And it's always good to come out on top," the coach added. India

next play against Germany at the same Kalinga Stadium in another two-legged tie on April 14 and 15. "It's good to win and reach top of the table, but now we have to prepare for Germany, who are also a very tough team. They will always bring a competitive team. They are a great hockey nation. So, we can look forward to some good games coming up in two weeks," Reid said. Harmanpreet, who scored a hat-trick in the second match, said he was happy to have helped in the team's winning cause. "My aim has always been to score goals for the bene-

fit of the team. Even if I score one or two goals, or don't score any, I always look to help the team in any which way I can. All my goals are memorable for me and are my favourite ones - because I scored them for India," Harmanpreet said.

"England are a very good team, they did not give up till the last minute. But we also performed well to keep our calm."

"It is also a learning lesson for us that we need to maintain our lead and the pressure in the match so that we can play freely in the final two quarters," he added.

Govt sanctions Rs 3.65 crore for international exposure trips of athletics, yachting teams

New Delhi, Apr 04 (PTI):

The government has sanctioned assistance of the tune of Rs 3.65 crore for international exposure trips of Indian athletics and yachting teams this month.

Indian track and field athletes are set for international exposure tours ahead of a packed schedule this year that constitutes the World Athletics Championship, the Commonwealth Games and the Asian Games 2022.

The Indian athletics' middle and long-distance teams comprising 12 ath-

letes, two coaches and one support staff will undergo training-cum-competition in Colorado Spring, USA from April 15 to June 6.

The team includes Avinash Sable, who competed at the Tokyo Olympics in 3000m steeplechase. A total of Rs 1.19 crore has been sanctioned by the government for the exposure trip.

Similarly, the 400m and 4x100m teams comprising 31 athletes, four coaches and five support staff will undergo training-cum-competition in Antalya, Turkey, from April 10 to June 6.

With momentum on their side, Rajasthan face RCB in battle of Royals



Mumbai, Apr 04 (PTI):

Rajasthan Royals would aim to build on their promising start to the season when they take on Royal Challengers Bangalore, a side that is yet to unlock its potential, in the Indian Premier League here on Tuesday. Rajasthan come

into the game following their 23-run win over Mumbai Indians. Bangalore, led by Faf Du Plessis, head into the match after a narrow three-wicket win over Kolkata Knight Riders and would be looking to be more convincing. The Wankhede track has been aiding the pacers ini-

ITF has preponed Davis Cup tie in September to avoid clash with Asian Games

New Delhi, Apr 04 (PTI):

India will be able to field its 'A' team at both Davis Cup and the Asian Games with the ITF preponing the team tournament and ATF pushing back the tennis events at the regional multi-sport showpiece by eight days to avoid a clash in dates. The Indian Davis Cup team was recently drawn to meet Norway in an away contest, which was to be held either on September 16-17 or 17-18. The tennis events at the Asian Games were scheduled to be held from September 10-14, which meant that India could



play only one event with its 'A' team since reaching Hangzhou in China from Davis Cup venue Norway was not practically possible. However, the All India Tennis Association (AITA) and the Asian Tennis

Federation (ATF) managed to convince the International Tennis Federation (ITF) to revise the dates. The Davis Cup tie between India and Norway and that of nine other Asian nations will

'Indian team needs to emerge from legacy of poor decision making going forward'

New Delhi, Apr 04 (PTI):

Former captain Anjum Chopra believes India were never among the title contenders at the just concluded Women's World Cup and going forward, she wants the team to "emerge from a legacy of poor decision-making" to turn the corner.

India's underwhelming show at the ICC showpiece in New Zealand ended with a heartbreaking loss to South Africa in the group stage.

"It is time women's cricket emerges from legacy of poor decision making and be honest about what they want to do and



how they want to do going forward. Otherwise we will remain a near about team, we will never get

South Africa wins 1st test as Bangladesh all out for 53

Durban, Apr 04 (AP):

South Africa raced to a 220-run victory in the first test after Bangladesh's collapse to 53 all out on the morning of the final day on Monday. Bangladesh lasted only 19 overs in its second innings and South Africa needed only two bowlers to roll the tourists out.

They were both spinners, with left-arter Keshav Maharaj collecting 7-32 and offspinner Simon Harmer 3-21. They both cashed in on spin-friendly conditions on a wearing pitch to take South Africa home.

It was a surprisingly sudden end to the match after Bangladesh had hopes of possibly pulling off its first test victory over South Africa by needing 274 runs in the final innings. But the tourists slumped to 11-3 at the close of play on Day 4 in Durban and the wickets continued to tumble dramatically on the morning of Day 5.

No. 3 Najmul Hossain Shanto (26) and tailender Taskin Ahmed (14) were the only Bangladesh batters to reach double figures and South Africa needed less than an hour of play on Monday to take those remaining seven wickets and take a 1-0 lead in the two-



Keshav Maharaj took 7-32 and fellow spinner Simon Harmer 3-21 to complete a dominant performance for the home side.

test series. Bangladesh's total was its second-lowest in test cricket after the 43 it was bowled out for against West Indies in 2018. Its 53 was also the lowest test total ever at the Kingsmead ground in Durban.

The huge winning margin belied a test which was competitive for much of the time. It might even have tipped slightly in Bangladesh's favor at one point on the fourth day when South Africa went from 116-1 to 204 all out in its second innings to give the touring team a sight at that

historic test win over the Proteas. Bangladesh had already won its first one-day series in South Africa earlier in the tour.

But its hopes in the first test were ripped away by Maharaj and Harmer, with Maharaj's seven at his home ground taking him to 141 career test wickets, now the most by a South African spinner since the country returned to international cricket after apartheid.

The second test is in Port Elizabeth and starts on Thursday.

I see Prasad Krishna playing all three formats for India: Buttler



Mumbai, Apr 04 (PTI):

Seasoned Rajasthan Royals opening batter Jos Buttler feels team-mate Prasad Krishna has the attributes of becoming a successful fast bowler and foresees the youngster playing for India in all

three formats. Krishna, who made his ODI debut last March, has given a good account of himself in the past year. He troubled the West Indies with his disconcerting pace and bounce while also doing well for his previous IPL franchise Kolkata Knight Riders.

"He has some pace in the nets and skills, he's got all the attributes to be a very successful fast bowler for India in all formats of the game. I see him playing red ball cricket for India as well," Buttler said at the pre-match conference ahead of Rajasthan's clash with Royal Challengers Bangalore on Monday.

now be held on September 14-15 while the ATF itself rescheduled the tennis event at the Asian Games to September 18-24.

"The ATF has communicated to AITA that ITF has revised the dates of Davis Cup ties, involving 10 Asian Nations in World Group I and II, so that it does not clash with the tennis events at the Asian Games," AITA Secretary General Anil Dhupar told PTI. "India's Davis Cup tie will now be played on September 14-15. "ATF has also pushed back dates of tennis event at Asian Games to avoid clash," Dhupar added.

there," Chopra told PTI in an exclusive interview.

Expectations were high after the runners-up finish in the previous World Cup five years ago but Chopra, who watched the action from the sidelines as a commentator, feels that the Mithali Raj-led squad never looked winning the trophy in the lead up to the mega event.

India were the only team to get a bilateral series against hosts New Zealand ahead of the World Cup but they could still not get fully used to the conditions and zero in on a settled combination. "I won't say India played poorly.

FUEL PRICE HIKE

Buses, taxis may go off roads if fares not revised

Kolkata, April 04 (PTI):

With fuel prices touching a new high every day, private bus and cab operators said they might have to take their vehicles off the roads if the state and central governments did not provide some succour in the form of an allowance or make way for fare hikes to support the ailing transport sector.

Petrol and diesel prices were hiked by 40 paise a litre each, taking the total increase in rates in the last two weeks to Rs 8.40 per litre. This is the 12th hike in oil prices since March 22. On Monday, petrol price in Kolkata stood at Rs 113.45 per litre, and diesel

price at Rs 98.22 per litre. Tapan Banerjee, the general secretary of Joint Council of Bus Syndicate, said only 30 per cent of the 42,000 private buses are plying the city roads at present, and the number would dwindle further if oil prices continue to surge.

"Private operators are already bleeding under the dual effect of increasing operation costs and penalties charged by the traffic police. Hike in fuel prices have added to their woes. The operators unable to pay insurance fees," Banerjee told PTI.

The state government, in January, effected a 10-fold increase in traffic violation fines. As buses and

minibuses stayed off the roads for the major part of 2020 and 2021 due to pandemic-related restrictions, maintenance cost of vehicles went up during the period. Ninety per cent of the vehicle owners have failed to repay bank loans under such circumstances.

"We sent several letters to the prime minister and chief minister, but neither the Centre nor the state government responded. From high insurance premium to EMIs, the bus owners have to shell out every penny from their pockets while not making any profit from their daily trips," he said. Every bus incurs an expense of Rs

4500-5000 per day, while fuel cost goes up to Rs 11,000 for long-distance trips to places like Digha and Siliguri.

"As the last revision was effected in 2018, employees of many buses have upped fares at different stages unofficially, but the extra earnings are usually pocketed by them. We demand that a regulatory committee be formed to examine all aspects and fix fares accordingly.

If the minimum fare of Rs 7 is not revised immediately, all buses will stop hitting the roads," Banerjee stated. As fuel does not come under GST, central excise and VAT get levied on petrol and diesel.

SARHUL FESTIVITY



Members of local tribal communities celebrate the Sarhul festival, in Ranchi, Monday.

No increase in medicine prices: Mandaviya

New Delhi, Apr 04 (PTI):

Allaying concerns about any increase in prices of medicines, Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya on Monday said the government has not effected any hike and only a few essential drugs that are linked to the wholesale price index and are as such priced very low may see some automatic rise or fall as per inflation trends.

"There are some essential medicines linked to WPI that can see rise or fall automatically as per the WPI movement. These are drugs that are priced a few rupees and there-



Mansukh Mandaviya

fore, a 10 per cent WPI increase may lead to the price rising by a few paise," Mandaviya said.

The government has no role in the price of these medicines and it has not effected any increase in prices and it

has no plans to do so, he said.

The prices of these medicines also automatically decline when WPI falls, Mandaviya told reporters here.

The concerns have been raised in some quarters after the drug pricing authority NPPA recently allowed a price hike for scheduled drugs, which are under price control under the National List of Essential Medicines (NLEM), with effect from April.

These drugs include paracetamol, antibiotics used to treat bacterial infections, anti-anemia, vitamins and minerals.

IITG researchers develop technology to rate EVs for Indian conditions

Guwahati, Apr 04 (PTI):

Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati has developed a technology to rate motors and batteries of electric vehicles and suggest to original equipment manufacturers (OEM) the best drivetrain components for the Indian scenario. Drivetrain is a group of components that deliver power to the drive wheels.

Currently, no OEM uses this technology and there is a demand for constituents that take into account different climatic conditions in the country, an official release by IITG said. The technology has been developed by the researchers of IITG's

Electric Mobility Laboratory, led by Prof Praveen Kumar, and focuses on Indian climatic conditions for both rural and urban areas.

The development in the field of next-generation energy-efficient EV technology is one of the most important breakthroughs required for the sustainable development of the country and to reduce carbon footprint," IITG Director T G Sitharam said. Explaining the long-term impact of this development, Kumar said that their goal is to prepare a document that can enable the new entrants into the EV market and help in levelling the playing field.

'Extremist mindset' not growing Muslim population threat to country

Giriraj on Gorakhnath temple attack

New Delhi, Apr 04 (PTI):

Union minister Giriraj Singh said on Monday the country does not face a threat because of the rising Muslim population but the "extremist mindset" that was behind the attack on security personnel at Gorakhnath temple, and hit out at the opposition over its "silence" on the incident.

A man named Murtaza attacked two PAC constables with a sharp-edged weapon at the south gate of Gorakhnath temple, of which Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath is the head priest. The attacker also allegedly tried



to force his way into the temple after shouting "Allahu Akbar". Speaking to reporters at Parliament House Complex, Singh alleged, "The growing population

of Muslims in the country is not a threat. The threat is the extremist mindset which takes various forms. Sometimes it seeks Sharia law implementation, sometimes it undertakes hijab protests, at times it protests against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act and at another an educated man acts like a terrorist."

The accused, police have said, is an IIT pass out. He has been arrested.

Hitting out at the opposition, Singh, considered a hardline Hindutva face of the BJP, said the "silence" of those who preach secularism all the time over the incident is a bigger threat.

RAMADAN RITUALS



Muslim devotees break their day-long fast during holy month of Ramadan, in Surat, Monday.

'Muslims going through more difficult situation than in 1857, 1947'

Lucknow, Apr 04 (PTI):

Indian Muslims are going through a more difficult situation than in 1857 and 1947 over their religious traditions, said an office-bearer of the All India Muslim Personal Law Board.

AIMPLB general secretary Maulana Khalid Saifullah Rahmani urged Muslims, especially women, not to fall prey to "propaganda" being spread against the Muslim Personal Law Board.

He said, "extremist forces" were trying to "mislead and instigate us" and bring the Muslim youth to the streets, and cited the issue of 'hijab' in Karnataka which he said was posing a "big test" for the Muslims in that state.

"All India Muslim

Personal Law Board is looking into this issue from day one and taking legal remedies for the same," he said.

He said, an appeal has been filed in the Supreme Court against the decision of the Karnataka High Court (on the hijab issue) and the board is not ignoring any such issue which affects 'Shariat'.

"But sadly, some people want to create a misunderstanding about the board," he added.

He said, "I request the Muslims, especially the Muslim sisters, that does not get influenced by such propaganda and do not let the efforts being made to



Maulana Khalid Saifullah

create resentment among them."

Rahmani in a video message said, "Muslims are going through a more difficult situation than in 1857 and 1947 in terms of the crisis in their religious traditions. Shariat-Islami is being attacked from many sides and Muslims are being targeted."

India witnessed the first war of Independence in 1857 while 1947 marked the country's independence and Partition.

In Karnataka, girls have been banned from wearing 'hijab' in educational institutions. Recently, the Karnataka High Court has

also refused to stay the ban, holding that the wearing of 'hijab' by Muslim women is not a compulsory religious practice of Islam.

The AIMPLB has filed a special leave petition against the decision last month.

The board has moved to the Supreme Court through its secretary, Mohammad Fazlurrahim, along with two other petitioners, Munisa Bushra and Jalisa Sultana Yasin.

The AIMPLB is a non-government organisation constituted in 1973 to adopt suitable strategies for the protection and continued applicability of Muslim Personal Law in India, most importantly, the Muslim Personal Law (Shariat) Application Act of 1937.

Medical services at govt hospitals in Gujarat hit

As 10,000 doctors on indefinite strike

Ahmedabad, Apr 04 (PTI):

At least 10,000 government doctors in Gujarat began an indefinite strike on Monday for their pending demands including regularisation of ad-hoc services, affecting medical services in state-run hospitals and PHCs.

On the first day, services in government hospitals, primary and community health centres and hospitals run by GMERS (Gujarat Medical Education and Research Society) of the state health department were crippled as doctors re-

fused to attend to patients.

"Nearly 10,000 government doctors across the state have gone on an indefinite strike from Monday after waiting for the resolution of our demands that never happened. Government employees at CHCs, PHCs, district hospitals, six medical colleges, and nine GMERS colleges, etc. are all on strike from today," said Gujarat Medical Teachers' Association (GMTA) president Dr Rajnish Patel.

GMTA is one of the constituents of the Gujarat Government Doctors' Forum - an umbrella body of the associations of GMERS' faculty mem-

bers, in-service doctors, ESIC and Class-2 medical officers, among others.

The striking doctors have been demanding the continuation and regularisation of ad-hoc services, departmental promotions, and non-practising allowance (NPA) as per the Seventh Pay Commission. Patel said, adding that another key demand is stopping contractual appointments.

Another member of the GMTA said doctors have been trying to ensure since last November that they do not have to go on strike and that their issues get resolved through discussions with the government.

New Delhi, Apr 04 (PTI):

Attorney General K K Venugopal on Monday told the Supreme Court that he has an objection to the petition, seeking direction for enacting well-defined laws/rules to ensure adherence to the fundamental duties as enshrined in the Constitution, as the website of the Department of Justice shows the tremendous amount of work which has been done for sensitizing citizens about Article 51-A.

Venugopal, who was earlier asked by the top court to assist in the matter, told a bench of Justices S K

Kaul and M M Sundresh that the curriculum of schools contains Article 51-A with duties to be taught to the students and debates have been held throughout the country. Article 51-A of the Constitution deals with fundamental duties. While the Attorney General said the President and Prime Minister have addressed this aspect and a one-year awareness drive was also launched, the Centre told the bench that it would file an affidavit in the matter and was granted four weeks for the purpose. The bench told Venugopal that it was circumspect while issuing notice on the plea and the court only wanted to know about the limited

issue. It said the court, in its earlier order, had said that government may inform it as to whether any steps have been taken in pursuance to one of its earlier judgements or do it propose to take any steps in furtherance thereof. In its February 21 order, the apex court had noted that the counsel appearing for the petitioner had said that he was emphasizing two of the prayers made in the plea taking into consideration the observations made by the top court in the 2003 judgement. In that verdict, the apex court had directed the Centre to consider and take appropriate steps expeditiously for implementation of recommendations

of the report of the National Commission to Review the Working of the Constitution, wherein a report made by a committee on the operationalization of the fundamental duties of citizens was accepted and the strong suggestion was made for its early implementation. During the hearing on Monday, Venugopal said it has been elaborately set out on the website of the Ministry of Justice and there is a duty on the part of a PIL petitioner to first investigate and then come forward. Why don't you place an affidavit on record, the bench said. Venugopal said the court may ask the Union of India to file an affidavit as

he is appearing as the Attorney General in the matter. An advocate appearing in the matter told the bench that he is being led by Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, who is representing the Centre in the matter.

We will take instructions and file a response, the lawyer said. Venugopal referred to two of the prayers, including the one which seeks direction to the Centre and states to make comprehensive well-defined laws/rules ensuring the adherence to the provisions of Part IV-A of the Constitution effectively and requiring the citizens to perform their fundamental duties properly, and said such prayers will not lie.