



### BRIEF



People belonging to Lambani community take part in rally on the occasion of 131st birth anniversary of Babasaheb B.R. Ambedkar, in Bengaluru, Thursday.

### Bail

■ **Allahabad:** The Allahabad High Court has granted bail to former MP Umakant Yadav in a case registered against him under Gangsters Act. The former Azamgarh MP was in the jail since February 21 and had submitted in his bail plea that he has been implicated in a false case.

### Explosion

■ **New Delhi:** Thirteen people were injured following a cylinder blast inside an eatery near Jamia Millia Islamia in southeast Delhi on Thursday, Delhi Fire officials said. A call about the fire was received at 3.49 pm and three fire tender were rushed to the spot, said Atul Garg, Director, Delhi Fire Service.

### Shot dead

■ **Nagpur:** Two villagers were allegedly shot dead by naxals on suspicion of being police informant in separate attacks in Maharashtra's Gadchiroli district, police said on Thursday. The victims, who were in their 20s, were picked up from Gorkutta and Jharaiwada area, located close to each other, late on Wednesday night, a senior police official said.

**Weather**

High 39 Low 27

# Modi inaugurates PMs' museum, buys first ticket

New Delhi, Apr 14 (PTI):

Every government formed after Independence has contributed in taking India to the heights it has achieved today, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Thursday and asserted that barring one or two exceptions, the country has a proud tradition of strengthening democracy in a democratic manner.

In a speech after inaugurating 'Pradhanmantri Sangrahalaya' (prime ministers' museum), which is dedicated to all previous 14 prime ministers, Modi said every prime minister



Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the inauguration of Pradhan Mantri Sangrahalaya, in New Delhi.

has contributed immensely in the fulfilment of the goals of constitutional democracy. Modi also bought the first ticket of

the museum before its inauguration, officials said. He said it is our responsibility to strengthen democracy, noting that

### Families of former PMs happy; Gandhis skip event

A spinning wheel which former prime minister Lal Bahadur Shastri got as "dowry", Chaudhary Charan Singh's diaries and P V Narasimha Rao's spectacles are among the articles that their families have offered for display at the Pradhan Mantri Sangrahalaya, which was inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday. Members of the Nehru-Gandhi family, which gave the country three prime ministers, chose to skip the event, while kin of former premiers Chaudhary Charan Singh, P V Narasimha Rao, H D Deve Gowda, Atal Bihari Vajpayee, Morarji Desai and Lal Bahadur Shastri attended it with enthusiasm.

India has a proud tradition of doing so in a democratic manner with one or two exceptions.

Though he did not elaborate, the BJP has been critical of some past Congress

governments, especially the one headed by Indira Gandhi, of weakening democracy. Gandhi had suspended civil rights and imposed Emergency in 1975.

### EXPERTS OPINE

## Complacency responsible for low uptake of precaution dose

### ■ Of Covid vaccines

New Delhi, Apr 14 (PTI):

Public complacency owing to the waning of the pandemic coupled with the nine month gap between the second and the precaution dose are major reasons for the low uptake of booster shots of COVID-19 vaccines in the 18-59 age group, experts said on Thursday. AIIMS Chief Dr

Randeep Guleria said unlike in the past, people have less fear of the disease now and due to declining COVID-19 cases they have become complacent. He, however, cautioned available scientific data suggest that immunity wanes with time and especially those with comorbidities in any age group are vulnerable to more severe disease. "But Covid has not gone anywhere and new variants

may emerge anytime. Also, we know that with time our immunity wanes and those with comorbidities in any age group especially are vulnerable to develop a more severe disease.

"Therefore, people who are eligible for the precaution dose should take it as it will maintain a good level of protection against any new variant that may emerge," Guleria told PTI.

### FOURTH WAVE SCARE

## Delhi govt to issue fresh guidelines to schools

New Delhi, Apr 14 (PTI):

The Delhi government will issue fresh guidelines for schools amid reports of a few students testing positive for COVID-19 across the national capital and NCR.

Noting a "slight" rise in COVID cases, Delhi Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia said he has directed the education department to issue guidelines on Friday in this regard.

However, both Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and Sisodia maintained the government is closely monitoring the situation, and asked people not to panic as there is no rise in hospitalisation. "COVID cases have slightly increased but there is no rise in hospitalisation, so we need not worry. There is no need to panic but (we have to) stay alert. We have to learn to live with COVID. We are constantly monitoring the situation," Sisodia

told reporters. "I have got reports from a few schools in the past few days where parents have informed about their child testing positive. The education department will tomorrow issue guidelines to schools in this regard," he added.

Delhi on Wednesday reported 299 new COVID-19 cases, a jump of 118 per cent in two days. The positivity rate stood at 2.49 per cent, according to data shared by the city health department. Reports of infections from schools have sparked concerns weeks after they opened for completely offline classes after a two-year gap due to the pandemic. Kalkaji MLA and senior AAP leader Atishi said, "There are reports of a child and a teacher testing positive for Covid. Other students of the class have been sent home. We are closely tracking the situation."

## Ranbir, Alia get married

Mumbai, Apr 14 (PTI):

Bollywood A-listers Alia Bhatt and Ranbir Kapoor got married on Thursday, not in a big fat Indian wedding spangled with tinsel as many would have imagined but at their Bandra apartment with just family and close friends in attendance. Though there was no word from the family till the evening, some of those who had set up the mandap' came out at about 6 pm to tell the waiting media that the wedding ceremony was over. Later, those close to the family confirmed that the rituals were indeed over. Soon after, Ranbir's brother-in-law Bharat Sahani left the apartment complex Vaastu'. And bouncers sprung to action to clear the road for the celeb guests who would be leaving in their cars. Media and those waiting outside were treated to 'laddoos'. 'Dholaks' were heard too, perhaps the only concession to the otherwise understated affair.

## Govt removes import duty on cotton

New Delhi, Apr 14 (PTI):

The government's decision to remove import duty on cotton is likely to help bring down prices of the commodity, Textiles Secretary U P Singh said on Thursday. The finance ministry on April 13 waived customs duty on cotton imports till September 30, a move that will benefit the textile industry and keep prices low for consumers. Currently, cotton imports attract 5 per cent Basic Customs Duty (BCD) and 5 per cent Agriculture Infrastructure Development Cess (AIDC). The industry has been demanding a waiver of duty to lower domestic prices. "It would enable people who want to import. We are expecting that within a day or two, you would certainly see the impact on prices going down but at the same time we would not expect the prices to be very low because there is a shortage all over (the world)," Singh told reporters here. In India, cotton crops get affected because of unseasonal rains, and in the US, there were drought-like conditions.

## Four terrorists killed in encounter

### ■ Two army men dead in accident on way to site

Srinagar, Apr 14 (PTI):

Four terrorists were killed in an encounter with security forces in Shopian district of Jammu and Kashmir on Thursday, while two army personnel lost their lives as their vehicle met with an accident on way to the site of the gunfight, officials said. On receiving information about the presence of terrorists at Badigam in the Zainapora area of Shopian, security forces launched a cordon and search operation, a police official said.

During the search operation, the terrorists fired upon the forces which led to an encounter, he said.

In the exchange of fire, four militants were killed, the official said, adding their identity and group affiliation were being ascertained.

Also, two army personnel were killed and as many others injured when their vehicle met with an accident while on way to the encounter site, the official said. "An army party of 44 Rashtriya Rifles was in a Sumo going towards the encounter site at Badigam Zainapora, when the vehicle turned turtle near Chowgam Shopian due to which two army personnel died and two got injured," he said.

### CONTRACTOR'S DEATH

## K'taka Minister Eshwarappa to resign

Shivamogga (KTK), Apr 14 (PTI):

Karnataka Minister K S Eshwarappa, who is facing charges of abetment to suicide in connection with the death of a civil contractor in Udupi, on Thursday announced stepping down from his position.

Addressing a press meet here, Eshwarappa said, "I have served as the Rural Development and Panchayat Raj Minister in the Karnataka government. I have taken a decision today to resign from my ministerial position."

He further said he would tender his resignation letter to Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai on Friday.

The Minister was booked on Wednesday in connection with the suspected suicide of civil contractor Santosh K Patil, who was found dead in a hotel in Udupi.

The contractor had accused the minister and his close aides of demanding 40 per cent commission for executing a civic work in Hindalga village in Belagavi in 2021 ahead of a village festival.

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# Pro-agriculture policies result in reverse-migration of 7 lakh farmers: Baghel

**Total area of cultivation increased by 8 lakh hectare**

## Central Chronicle News

**Bhilai, Apr 14:** Pro-Agriculture schemes of the government have brought a big change at the ground level. The number of farmers registering themselves for paddy procurement had increased from 15 lakh to 22 lakh. The area of cultivation has also increased from 22 lakh hectare to 30 lakh hectare.

The pro-agriculture policies of the state government have resulted in reverse migration of people towards farming, said Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel while addressing the 76th annual convention of Chhattisgarh Manwa Kurmi Kshatriya Samaj on Thursday at village Devada of Patan block.

In his address, the Chief Minister said that they have made a comprehensive plan for the progress of the farmers. The government removed



the huge debt burden on farmers through loan waiver. Along with this, the Rajiv Gandhi Kisan Nyay Yojana was introduced to provide a fair price for the hard work of farmers.

Further, works were also done for livestock promotion and crop protection through Gauthans. Narrating the incident when the idea of Gauthan came in his mind, Chief Minister said that once he visited the

village Darbar Mokhal. During interaction with local farmers, he came to know about the problem of stray cattle.

During talks with the farmers, the idea of Gauthan came to his mind. He realized that there must be a place for the keeping the cattle where breed improvement could also be done. Chief Minister said that the development of Gauthan will be equally beneficial for agriculture.

Baghel said that they have also paid attention towards water conservation. Significant work is being done for the recharge of ground water through Narva Yojana. Through the Narva scheme, the state government has taken such an initiative that the water crisis can be solved permanently.

The Chief Minister said that in Patan region, our ancestors laid maximum emphasis on educa-

tion. Through Swami Atmanand Government English Schools (SAGES), the state government provided a facility where the children will be able to get education in English medium.

SAGES has been a successful scheme and a large number of parents want to send their children to these schools. In view of the enthusiastic success of this scheme, the state government has decided to increase the

number of seats in each classroom by 25%.

Another scheme has also been introduced for landless farmers in which Rs 7000 is being provided to them. Chief Minister further said that they have given respect and honour to the great men of all Samajs and tried to preserve their memories.

Schemes have also been named after the personalities of Manwa Kurmi Samaj. A health scheme has been introduced after

the name of Dr Khubchand Baghel, the visionary of separate Chhattisgarh state.

English Medium Schools have been started in the name of Swami Atmanand and the song written by Late Narendra Dev Varma is now the Raj Geet of Chhattisgarh.

Addressing the people of Manwa Kurmi Samaj, Baghel said that it is a matter of great pleasure that daughters are also studying well and are

making their place in public life. It is an indicator of a progressive society. On the occasion, the Central President of the Samaj, Chova Ram Verma and Raj Pradhan Mehattarlal Verma also addressed the gathering.

25 members of the Samaj were awarded with Kurmi Gaurav Samman. Those who were honoured on the occasion were Ashish Verma (OSD of Chief Minister), Jawahar Verma (President, District Co-operative Central Bank Durg), Kamal Verma (State Coordinator, Staff Officer Federation) and journalist & ornithologist Raju Verma.

Raju Verma was honoured for his appreciable work in the conservation of birds in the state. Verma has played an important role in the identification of migratory birds coming to the state and creating public awareness for them.



## Women of Brahmin Samaj extend helping hand to victim families of fire mishap

### Central Chronicle News

**Bhilai, Apr 14:** The havoc from the fire mishap that occurred a couple of days ago in Surya Nagar area of Bhilai Municipal limits has shocked everyone. The fire destroyed the settlement almost completely. Many social organisations have come forward to help provide relief to the fire mishap victims.

The women of Saryuparin Brahmin Samaj from Durg too extended aid such as clothes, cash and household items to the families of victims. Under the leadership of social worker Sharma Navita Sharma, the items were handed over to nodal officer in Durg Municipal Corporation Javed Ali.

On this occasion, social worker Navita Sharma,



Bharti Dubey, Anita Pandey, Sangeeta Sharma, Sarita Mishra, Sangeeta Mishra, Annapurna

Tiwari, Milli Sharma, Manisha Tiwari, Shavati Shukla, Anita Dewan, Bharti Dewan, Jagriti

Sharma, Jyoti Upadhyay, Yogita Sharma, Sushila Tiwari, Preeti Tiwari were present.

## Water supply begins from new tank of 11 MLD filter plant

### Central Chronicle News

**Bhilai, Apr 14:** Work is in full swing in Durg Municipal Corporation area to complete the targeted water supply under the ambitious Amrut Mission. Continuous efforts are being made to get rid of the drinking water crisis for the entire population of the city. Durg (urban) MLA Arun Vora and Durg Mayor Dheeraj Bakliwal are constantly taking updates about the progress of the scheme.

On the instructions of Corporation Commissioner Haresh Mandavi, the officers of the Corporation along with technical experts are continuously monitoring the works of water supply under the scheme. After the completion of the



scheme, 100% of the population of the city will get sufficient amount of water even during the summer season. Also, due to the implementation of this scheme, the city of Durg has become tanker free.

A total of 6 tanks are proposed to be constructed

in the city under Amrut Mission scheme, out of which the construction work of all water tanks has been completed. At present, water is being supplied continuously by the corporation administration from the water tanks of Girdhari Nagar,

Transport Nagar, Hanuman Nagar, due to which half of the population of the city's area is getting benefit. Water testing work is going on from the Jalgrah Parishad and Pulgaon water tank. Soon water supply will be started from these tanks also.

Special care is being taken for water purification as well as water supply under the AMRUT Mission scheme, the work of water testing has been completed in the new water tank constructed in 11 MLD Filter Plant and water supply has been initiated. Under which about 20 thousand people of Ward 24 Deepak Nagar Amdi Mandir Ward, Ward 25 Gayatri Mandir, Ward 26 Santra Bari, Ward 27 Polsai Para will be benefitted.

## BMC counters to remain open for taxpayers



### Central Chronicle News

**Bhilai, Apr 14:** Taxpayers under Bhilai Municipal Corporation limits who need to deposit property tax can also deposit tax on holidays till the last date which happens to be April 15. Counters of all zone offices including the main office will remain open till April 15. For the taxpayers of the financial year 2021-22, the date of submission of tax has been extended to 15 April.

There will be no need to pay additional surcharge for depositing property tax during this period. This decision will bring great relief to the taxpayers. The last date for depositing property tax was earlier fixed as March 31, which has been extended by the local government till April 15. Taxpayers can avail this exemption by depositing their tax in this period.

On the instructions of Corporation Commissioner Prakash

Survey, the work of expediting the collection of property tax is being done by the concerned officers. Tax collection counters remained open for depositing property tax throughout the month. An appeal was made to the people to deposit the tax through loudspeakers and other means.

Also attachment team was formed and the process of recovery of attachment was taken. As a result, there has been a significant increase in the collection of tax. For the next two days, the tax collection counters will remain open even on holidays. Corporation Commissioner Prakash Survey has given instructions for 100% tax recovery against the target.

The Corporation Commissioner has been continuously directing the officers to complete the tax collection. It is noteworthy that due to the decision of Mayor Neeraj Pal, the tax has not been increased in this financial year, due to

which taxpayers who have deposited property tax will get a lot of relief for the financial year 2022-23.

Taxpayers depositing tax after April 15 will have to pay 18% surcharge for the financial year 2021-22, those who deposit tax till the last date of April 15 will not have to pay surcharge. But after this, taxpayers who deposit tax will have to pay 18% surcharge and penalty fee.

Taxpayers can avoid surcharge if they pay the tax on time. Tax can be deposited online. Taxpayers can submit online payment through debit credit and net banking after selecting Bhilai Municipal Corporation by clicking on online payment in www.cg-suda.com ward and entering their ID number. Year wise tax information can also be seen on this website. In case of any problem in online, detailed information can be obtained by contacting the helpline number 180021216505.

## Fire-mishap victims of Surya Nagar rehabilitated within 3 days

### Central Chronicle News

**Bhilai, Apr 14:** The Khatik settlement of Surya Nagar that had been destroyed in the fire mishap has been established again in just three days. The houses that had been affected have been made ready and handed over to the victims. All the materials of daily needs were distributed to the affected families from the hands of Bhilai Nagar MLA Devendra Yadav and Bhilai Mayor Neeraj Pal. It was on the initiative of Neeraj Pal, Mayor of Bhilai Nagar Municipal Corporation, that the Khatik settlement of Surya Nagar came back to its original form and that too in just three days.

After erecting the complete structure of the houses of the affected families, on Wednesday MLA Devendra Yadav, Mayor Neeraj Pal, OSD to Chief Minister Manish

Banchhor, Congress District President Mukesh Chandrakar, BMC Speaker Girwar Bunt Sahu distributed relief materials to the affected families. Here it needs a mention that the Bhilai Mayor and the Commissioner stayed put at the place day and night, showed unprecedented cooperation in re-establishing the settlement. The hard work of the corporation administration paid off and the house of the affected families could be readied. Since the incident occurred on April 9, Mayor Neeraj Pal and Corporation Commissioner Prakash Surve have been working to help the affected families and after tireless efforts day and night, finally the settlement of Surya Nagar has become ready again. The corporation made quick arrangements for bamboo, ball, tin shed, food, drinking water, bucket and neces-

sary materials for daily activities to provide all possible help to the affected families and immediately set up a relief camp. A camp was organised for recreation of documents like Aadhar card and Ration card. The mayor and commissioner met each family in the basti and helped them according to their needs. Collector Dr Sarveshwar Narendra Bhure constantly monitored the activities and the survey work has been completed for compensation to the affected families. Apart from this, mainly Zone President Santosh Nath Singh alias Jalandhar, MIC member and in-charge of Public Works Department, Ekansh Banchhor, in-charge of Revenue Department, Siju Anthony, in-charge of General Administration Department, Sandeep Nirankari, Councillor Engineer Salman, Additional Commissioner Ashok Dwivedi,

Deputy Commissioner Sunil Aghari, Zone Commissioner Yesha Laharen extended special support to help the affected families.

After re-settlement of Surya Nagar Basti, MLA Devendra Yadav, Mayor Neeraj Pal and District President Mukesh Chandrakar gave all the necessary materials to all the affected families for the operation of their house. The Kit distributed mainly includes mattress, pillow, bedsheet, pillow cover, fan, gas stove, utensils, bucket and mug, shirt, lower, tooth brush, toothpaste, both bath and laundry soap, oil, saree, Innerwear kitchen items Spoon, Tawa, Ganji, Belna, Chowki, Tongs, Cooker, big bowl, Complete kit of all types of different clothes and ration material for women and men including rice, pulses, flour, different types of spices, salt, turmeric, coriander, chilli, etc.



## Mahavir Jayanti celebrated with fervour



**Bhilai, Apr 14:** Mahavir Jayanti was celebrated with religious fervour across the city on Thursday. On the occasion of the 2621st Janmakalyanak Mahotsava, the Jain organisations organised various programmes and took out processions in the city. Various political leaders attended the programme and paid obeisance to Bhagwan Mahavir. Akhil Bharatiya Khatargachha Yuva Mahila Parishad Durg and Jinkushal Manch Pariwar distributed cold drinks among the people. They also distributed small pots among the people and urged them to keep the water filled pots on the roof of their houses for birds. Rajya Sabha member Saroj Pandey also attended the event and exchanged Mahavir Jayanti greetings with the people. She spent a lot of time in the procession also. BJP State Secretary Usha Tawri, Kantilal Bothra, Deepak Chopda, Dinesh Dewangan, Manoj Mishra, Madan Jain, Mahendra Duggad, Gyanchand Kothari and others were present.

## CM Baghel writes letter to the PM seeking extension of GST compensation

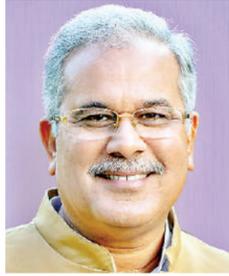
**Pitches for continuation of GST compensation for the next 10 years**

**Appeals Center to make alternate permanent arrangements for compensation of revenue to the manufacturing states**

**Manufacturing states will suffer huge loss due to discontinuation of GST compensation grant**

Central Chronicle News

Raipur, Apr 14: Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel has written a letter to



Prime Minister Narendra Modi seeking extension of GST compensation grant. He has urged the Prime Minister to continue the present system of GST compensation for the next 10 years. The Chief Minister has also mentioned in his letter that the Central Government should make an alternative permanent arrangement for compensation of revenue to the producing states at the earliest.

Stating that discontinuation of GST compensation grant is a huge economic loss for producing states like Chhattisgarh, Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel said "being a manufacturing state, our contribution in the development of the country's economy is much more than those states which have benefited in the GST tax system due to higher consumption of goods and services. If the GST compensation is not continued beyond June 2022, then Chhattisgarh is likely to face a revenue loss of nearly Rs 5 thousand crore in the upcoming year. Similarly, many other states will also face revenue shortfall in the coming year. Due to this, it would be difficult to arrange for the ongoing public welfare and develop-

ment works in the state."

In his letter, Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel also gave reference of the pre-budget consultation meetings for Budget 2022-23 chaired by the Union Finance Minister with the Chief Ministers and Finance Ministers, which was held in New Delhi on December 2021. He said adding that many states including Chhattisgarh requested to extend GST compensation grant for the states in the said meeting. The states expect a positive decision from the central government in this regard.

Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel has said that after the implementation of the GST tax system, the autonomy of states in shaping tax policies have become very limited and there is not much revenue-related potential in the tax rev-

enue other than commercial tax. Although, every effort is being made by us towards revenue generation, however, the present compensation grant system should be continued for the next 10 years to recover from the adverse impact of Covid-19 on economy of states and till the time actual benefits of the GST tax system are realized. The Chief Minister has also appealed the Central Government to device an alternate permanent mechanism to compensate for shortfall in revenue for manufacturing states. The Chief Minister has expressed hope that the Prime Minister will agree with the concerns of states and will act in the spirit of co-operative federalism to resolve the important issue involving the interests of all states.

## MASSIVE RALLY



Ambedkarites took out a massive rally with statue of Baba Saheb Ambedkar and Lord Buddha in the form of tableau in a vehicle on occasion of his birth anniversary here on Thursday.

## Number of seats be increased for admission in Atmanand Schools

**CM's instructions in view of growing demand for admission**

**Admission of 50 students in each class now**

Raipur, Apr 14: In view of the huge demand for admission in Swami Atmanand Schools Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel has given instructions to increase the seats for admission. Following instructions of Chief Minister, an order has been issued for the admission of 50 students in the classes of Swami Atmanand School. So far 40 children were admitted in each class in Atmanand schools.

Considering quality of education in 171 Swami Atmanand excellent English medium schools run in the state, a large

number of people are enthusiastically seeking admission of their wards for class 01 to 12th.

Keeping in view the demand and huge enthusiasm of the people, it has been decided to increase ten seats in each class. In the academic session 2022-23, the Directorate of Public Instruction has issued instructions for the admission of 50 students instead of 40 in each class.

Chhattisgarh government has started innovative efforts in the form of Swami Atmanand English Medium Schools to provide quality education to every child of the state. Its objective is to prepare the poorest child of the state for future competitions by providing good facilities in Swami Atmanand English Medium Schools at par with private schools, so that inequality of opportunities in the field of education can be removed and educational quality can be promoted.

## BJP office-bearers asked to visit booth

**● BJP State in-charge D Purandeswari directs party workers at meeting**



Bharatiya Janata Party in-charge of party affairs in Chhattisgarh D Purandeswari paid rich tributes to Dr Bhimrao Ambedkar on his birth anniversary at a function held at Collectorate Chowk here on Thursday.

Raipur, Apr 14: Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) office-bearers have been asked to make a visit to polling booth centres across Chhattisgarh from May 3 to 20 to strengthen the Organisation.

Above decision was taken at the meeting of BJP Core Group held in presence of Bharatiya Janata Party in-charge of party affairs in Chhattisgarh D

Purandeswari and National General Secretary Shivprakash here on Thursday. Purandeswari said that the office-bearers would be

interacting with the party workers at booth level visits to give them strategy here and also provide guidelines on which they would be working. She said that

the saffron brigade had strongly contested the Khairagarh by-elections and added that the party would continue to give spirited fight to the ruling Congress in the forthcoming elections. She further added that the party would be focusing in the region in which they had lost political ground in the last elections and added that she would further hold meeting in Bastar whereas the in-charge Secretary Nitin Nabin would be holding meetings in Sarguja region. She claimed that work distributions have been given with better co-ordination.

## Goel shifted to Panchayat as Director in admn reshuffle

**● Abhijit Singh posted as MD of Medical Corporation**

Central Chronicle News

Raipur, Apr 14: Six Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officers were given fresh posting orders in the administrative reshuffle here on Thursday.

According to the order issued from General Administration Department (GAD), the 2005 batch IAS Officer S Prakash working as Secretary Transport, has been given additional responsibility of Secretary Gramudhyog Department and Secretary Parliamentary Affairs department.

Similarly, the 2010 batch IAS Officer Kartikeye Goel working as Managing Director at Chhattisgarh Medical Service Corporation has been given fresh respon-

sibility of Director Panchayat whereas the 2012 batch IAS Officer Abhijit Singh posted as Managing Director of Smart City and Chief Executive Officer of Raipur Development Authority (RDA) has been given fresh responsibility of Managing Director at Chhattisgarh Medical Service Corporation and has been given additional responsibility of Joint Secretary at Home Department.

2017 batch IAS Officer Chandrakant Verma has been posted as Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Raipur Development Authority (RDA). CEO of Raipur District Panchayat Mayank Chaturvedi has been given additional charge of Managing Director of Raipur Smart City.

Sub-divisional Officer (Revenue) Bijapur Dvesh Kumar Dhruv has been posted as CEO of Narayanpur District Panchayat.

## MLA's iPhone worth 1 lakh stolen

Raipur, Apr 14: Congress MLA Manendragarh Vinay Jaiswal lost a costly iPhone 13 worth 1 lakh in a pickpocketing at the Raipur Railway station here last night. MLA was on way to Ambikapur and it was in the rush at the railway station that somebody cleared off his iPhone-13. It is learnt that the i-Phone of the MLA

was with his body guard and it was lost while boarding or at the railway station itself.

The Police has filed a case in this regard and started investigation into the same. When the Railway officers came to know that iPhone of an MLA has been stolen then the RPF and GRP team were active whole night to

find out any clue about the theft. RPF and GRP searched through many CCTV footages, but could not find any clue about the theft.

GRP Thana Raipur TI LS Rajput informed that iPhones cannot be traced, as the information about its tracking reaches directly to its owner. Though we are

trying to search for the mobile at their level. Majority of the iPhones are linked with iCloud digital system and it is here that the owner of iPhone uploads information about his iPhone under 'find my iPhone' option and then the phone can be traced. Still in many cases, this technique has not led to success, he added.

## Babasaheb dedicated his life for the upliftment of Dalits: CM

**CM announces Rs 50 lakh each for Mangal Bhawan and Auditorium construction**

**New 20-foot tall statue of Babasaheb will be installed in Ambedkar Chowk**

Central Chronicle News

Raipur, Apr 14: Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel attended Ambedkar Jayanti celebrations organized here today at Ambedkar Chowk. On the occasion he announced Rs 50 lakh for Mangal Bhawan and Rs 50 lakh for the construction of auditorium at Buddha Vihar in Devendra Nagar. Besides, he also announced the installation of a new 20-foot tall statue of Babasaheb at



Ambedkar Chowk by the Municipal Corporation.

Addressing the gathering on the occasion, the Chief Minister said that Babasaheb Ambedkar dedicated his entire life voicing concerns for the downtrodden and deprived sections besides working for the upliftment of Dalits. Despite facing social stigma, he pursued his higher education and worked for the upliftment of all.

Babasaheb Ambedkar

coined the slogan "Educate, Agitate and Organize". Education makes us aware of our rights and duties and inspires us raise voice against the wrong. He gave India its strongest pillar of strength—our sacred Constitution, promoting social economic and political equality. We got reservation because of this constitution. If it hadn't been for Babasaheb, the society would not have been able to rise above the class divi-

sion in the society. He gave us the best constitution in the world, which has given individuals, right to education, equality and work.

Following the path of Babasaheb, our government has simplified the process of issuance of caste certificates. Chhattisgarh is the first state in the country where the child is given a caste certificate soon after birth, given if parents have a caste certificate. Babasaheb gave utmost

importance to education. While imbibing his policy, we have given instructions in today's decision to increase the number of seats in a class from 40 children to 50 children in Swami Atmanand English Medium School—where children are provided excellent education in English medium.

Industries and Excise Minister Kawasi Lakhma, Urban Administration Minister Dr. Shiv Kumar Dahariya, Chhattisgarh State Mineral Development Corporation Chairman Girish Devangan, District Co-operative Central Bank President Pankaj Sharma, Raipur Mayor Aijaz Dhebar, Chairman of Guru Ghasidas Sahitya and Sanskriti Akademi K.P. Khande along with members of Ambedkar Ceremony Organizing Committee were present on the occasion.

## Fake paramedical college in Raipur



Raipur, Apr 14: Sainath Paramedical College was being run without recognition in Devpuri area of the capital for the last 3 years. After the matter

**Students raise protest when truth came out**

came to light on Thursday, hundreds of students gheraoed the college and created a ruckus. Hundreds of students who reached the spot along

with NSUI and Youth Congress workers surrounded the college management and raised questions.

But the college management did not give satisfactory answer to any of the questions. Meanwhile, the students protested strongly and raised slogans besides lodging complaint with the police, in which FIR is being registered. About 300 students from various districts are studying in the college.

## PCC state in-Charge holds talks with heads of PCC cells

**● On organisational working and future plans**

Central Chronicle News

Raipur, Apr 14: AICC Secretary and State in-Charge Saptagiri Shankar Ulka held meeting with state presidents of media deptt, Morcha Sanghatan, Prakosth-Vibhag Sewa Dal, Mahila Congress, Adivasi Cong, SC cell, Data Analytics, social media and research department of Congress at party's Rajiv Bhavan here on Thursday. They held talks on organisational activities and provided neces-



sary guidance. Ulka also held discussions about the work plan for the coming months and the organisational works done earlier by all cells and departments of State Congress.

Meeting was attended by PCC state general secy. Chandrashekhar Shukla, PCC V-P Sumitra Dhritlahare, PCC gen. Secy.

Amarjeet Chawla, PCC media dept President Sushil Anand Shukla, State President Sewa Dal Arun Tamrakar, Adivasi Pradesh Congress President Janak Ram Dhruv, President OBC Congress Dr Chouleswar Chandrakar, PCC IT Cell V-P Prakash Mani Vaishnav and Shashi Bhagat.

## Assembly Speaker Mahant remembers Ambedkar on his birth anniversary

**● Pays floral tributes at oil painting of Dr Ambedkar in Central Hall of Legislative Assembly**

Raipur, Apr 14: Chhattisgarh Legislative Assembly Speaker Dr Charan Das Mahant remembered Dr Bhimrao Ambedkar on the occasion of Ambedkar Jayanti by paying floral tributes at his



oil painting installed in the Central Hall located in the Legislative Assembly premises today. Leader of Opposition Dharamlal Koushik, MLAs

Satyanarayan Sharma, Vikas Upadhyay, Gulab Kamro, Secretary of Legislative Assembly Dinesh Sharma and senior officers of Legislative

Assembly Secretariat were also present on the occasion. In his message Dr Mahant said that Dr. Ambedkar was the main architect and founder of the constitution of independent India. He was the first law minister of independent India. Dr Ambedkar was a scholar, thinker, brilliant writer of high order, influential orator, able administrator, legal scholar and messiah of the backward and downtrodden.

Dr Ambedkar always tried to free the society from narrow-mindedness, traditionalism and bigotry and struggled throughout his life to eradicate social discrimination and casteism in India, said the Speaker, adding that the nation will always remember his contribution. According to Dr Mahant that harmonious society and an advanced nation can be built only by following the path shown by Baba Saheb.

## CM pays tributes to Bharat Ratna Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar

Central Chronicle News

**Raipur, Apr 14:** Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel paid floral tributes to the portrait of Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar—the chief architect of Indian Constitution, first Law and Justice Minister of independent India and social reformer—on his birth anniversary.

Urban Administration Minister Dr. Shiv Kumar Dahriya and Industries Minister Kawasi Lakhma were also present on this occasion.

Recalling the invaluable contribution of Babasaheb Ambedkar, Chief Minister Mr. Baghel



said that Dr. Ambedkar was multi-faceted personality and the chairman of the drafting committee of the Indian Constitution,

who gave India its strongest pillar of strength—our sacred Constitution. Chief Minister Mr.

Baghel said that Babasaheb fought for the eradication of caste discrimination.

He also advocated for the rights of laborers and women. Following the path shown by Babasaheb, the state government is running several schemes for the upliftment of the weaker sections of the society. He said that millions of followers of Babasaheb all over the country including Chhattisgarh celebrate his birth anniversary with enthusiasm and reverence.

His contribution towards the country is unforgettable.

## Folk team 'Surta' gives lively presentation



● In Mahamaya temple

**Raipur, Apr 14:** In the ancient Mahamaya Temple, folk team Surta gave a lively presentation.

Through folk dances based on songs which connect religion, culture along with nature, artists gave a presentation which mesmerized the audience.

Director of Surta Manch and veteran folk artist Vijay Mishra gave information about Chhattisgarhi Hana, Janula and Parab. He said, folk presentation is a strong medium which connects mass to religion, culture along with nature. In the programme Mahamaya Trust in-charge Vyas Narayan Tiwari presented senior Hindi folk artist Vijay Mishra with memento in recognition of his contribution towards folk culture.

## Scholarship worth Rs 42.33 lakh Disbursed to 1682 Children of Labour families

Central Chronicle News

**Raipur, Apr 14:** One thousand six hundred eighty two children of registered labor families have been benefitted by Chhattisgarh Labor Welfare Board's Scholarship Scheme of the financial year 2021-22. Under this scheme, Rs 42 lakh 33 thousand 500 have been approved to provide scholarships to the children of underprivileged labour families.

One thousand 500 rupees for class I to VIII,

Three thousand rupees for class IX to XII, rupees five thousand for graduation like BA/B work, B.Sc, ITI, Nursing, eight thousand for graduate level vocational courses like engineering, medical. The scholarship is awarded annually at Rs. and Rs.10,000 at postgraduate level.

In the year 2021-22, a scholarship of Rs 42 lakh, 33 thousand 500 has been sanctioned to one thousand 682 boys and girls in different districts of the state on the application for scholarship.

## Scribe held for extortion; six cases filed against him

**Ambikapur, Apr 14:** The Chhattisgarh police have registered six cases against a journalist working for a web portal for allegedly demanding extortion in Surguja and Balrampur districts of the state, officials said on Wednesday.

The accused, Jitendra Jaiswal, who runs a news portal named 'Bharat Samman', allegedly used to run an extortion racket under the garb of journalism and circulate defamatory content and spread rumours against the victims to extort money from them.

"Six cases have been registered against Jaiswal (during the past two weeks) in Surguja and neighbouring Balrampur district," said Ajay Yadav, Inspector General of Police (Surguja range).

He was arrested last week and lodged in a jail in adjoining Surajpur district, the IG said, adding that investigation into all the cases

is underway.

Based on a written complaint application submitted on April 1 by Jitendra Soni of Ambikapur, Jaiswal, a native of Balrampur, was booked under sections 384 (extortion), 392 (robbery), 452 (house-trespass after preparation for hurt, assault or wrongful restraint) and 506 (criminal intimidation) of the IPC at Gandhinagar police station, a Surguja police statement said.

Subsequently, another case was registered in Gandhinagar police station based on a complaint by Praveen Agarwal, a resident of Balrampur district. Agrawal accused Jaiswal of demanding extortion from him and threatening to get him killed by Naxals if he did not fulfill his demand, it said.

Another complaint was lodged at Ajak police station (special police stations meant to address griev-

ances of SC/ST people) of Surguja under section 509 (word, gesture or act intended to insult the modesty of a woman) and other sections of the IPC and provisions of the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, the release said.

Balrampur district police have also registered FIRs in Basantpur, Wadrafnagar and Dindo police stations on charges of extortion and dacoity against Jaiswal, it added.

"Several victims have fallen prey to Jaiswal's trap till date, but many didn't complain due to fear of further spread of false, libelous information through the web portal by the accused. He had become so audacious that he even allegedly tried to frighten one complainant inside the police station premises, who somehow mustered courage to come against him," the release said.

## Columbia Global School organizes career counselling prog



**Raipur, Apr 14:** Columbia Global School organized a Career Counselling programme for the students of Grades 9 to 12. The renowned Career Coach, Dr. Ajit Varwandkar from My Aglakadam Academy of Guidance and Counseling was the guest speaker who guided students on choosing the right career options scientifically based on their interests and ability. He stated that the key to success is when

the child recognises his passion and profession together. He further stated that every child is unique in his own ways and career selection should be based on it. Students were motivated and encouraged to take their career decisions smartly. Thereafter, Dr. Varwandkar explained the scientific method of choosing a career by taking a Psychometric Test which students have to do in the next one week. Based on their responses, on 23rd April the students will be having a face to face interaction along with their parents with a counsellor.

The workshop concluded with the vote of thanks to Dr. Varwandkar by the School Principal Mr. Ivan Smith. Also present at the workshop were Directors, Mr. Ravinder Singh Hura & Mrs. Shikha Hura along with Mr. Harjeet Singh Hura - Secretary, Janpragati Education Society and the teachers.

## Rural roads are being paved for better transport connectivity under CMGGY

**Out of the 10 villages 'Gram Gaurav Path Yojna' the construction of roads is accomplished in 7 villages**

**With the construction of paved roads, ambulances can directly reach the homes of villagers**

**Raipur, Apr 14:** To provide better road connectivity for the rural populace living in the remote villages of Chhattisgarh, the state government, under the Mukhyamantri Gram Gauravpath Yojna (CMGGY) has accomplished the construction of cement and concrete paved roads in numerous villages to improve inter-road connectivity and

rural living standards. The objective behind developing connectivity facilities in villages is to avoid the use of mud roads so that there is less dust in the atmosphere. Moreover, with cc roads daily commute will become very easy and ambulances will be able to reach the patients resident directly.

Under this scheme, in the village Rakharsota of Manora development block, a CC road-cum-drain from Rakharsota to Panchayat Bhawan has been constructed. Simultaneously, CC road-cum-drain construction work has been completed from Maytoli to Basti in village Jumekele of Kansabel block. It is noteworthy that from the year 2019-20 to 2021-22, a total of 10 Gram Gauravpath roads have been approved under the scheme. Out of which 7 roads have been

completed and a total of 7 colonies with a population of 5167 have been benefitted by the construction of complete roads. In these areas, cement concrete roads and drains have been constructed to reach the village through street corridors and main roads.

Due to the presence of cement concrete roads in the streets and corridors of the villages, the problem of getting mud during the rainy season has now been solved. From the main road till reaching the village residents, the ambulance coming for medical treatment is now able to reach the house directly due to the presence of CC roads. Due to the construction of drains along the roads, there is no accumulation of dirty water in front of the houses. With proper drainage facilities, diseases caused due to stagnation of dirty water will also be avoided.

## 'We are one, we are India, we are the heritage of this earth': V-C

Program organized on 131st birth anniversary of Dr B.R. Ambedkar



**Bilaspur, Apr 14:** A function was organized on the 131st birth anniversary of Baba Saheb Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar at Guru Ghasidas Vishwavidyalaya (Central University) here on Thursday. The Chief Guest of the program was Ranveer Singh Marhas, Senior Advocate of Chhattisgarh High Court. The main speaker was Shri Manoj Paranjpe, Advocate, Chhattisgarh High Court. The program was presided over by the Honorable Vice-Chancellor of the University, Professor Alok Kumar Chakrawal.

In the beginning of the program, a rally was taken out under the leadership of NSS Coordinator, Dilip Jha, upto the statue of Dr B.R. Ambedkar and a street play was presented on the topic of equality, untouch-

ability and cleanliness. Flowers were offered by the guests after worshipping the grand statue of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar. After this, in the program organized in the meeting room of the administrative building, flowers were offered to the idol of Mother Saraswati and the oil painting of Babasaheb Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar with the lighting of the lamp by the guests. The Tarang Band presented Saraswati Vandana. After that, the guests on stage were welcomed with small plants. Dean Student Welfare, Dr. M.N. Tripathi gave the welcome address.

In his presidential address, Honorable Vice-Chancellor of the

University, Professor Alok Kumar Chakrawal, while paying respects at the 131st birth anniversary of Bharat Ratna Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar, called upon everyone to follow the path shown by Baba Saheb. Baba Saheb, besides being the guide of all, has been the leader in binding the society in a garland through the Constitution. We all need to look within so that we can recognize the principles of Baba Saheb in ourselves. On this occasion he said that we are one, we are India, we are the heritage of this earth.

It is our endeavor that the University establishes affiliations according to local and social needs. We

are moving towards realizing Baba Saheb's vision of a country free from social discrimination. We should continuously study the literature written and related to Baba Saheb. He congratulated everyone on the successful organizing of the program.

Chief Guest of the program, senior advocate of Chhattisgarh High Court, Mr. Ranveer Singh Marhas said that the life of Babasaheb Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkarji has been full of struggles. He advocated equal justice and equal opportunity for all throughout his life. He was a vocal advocate of issues ranging from protecting and ensuring fundamental rights to civil liberties. Film is also a medium through which students can be told about various dimensions related to the life of Baba Saheb. On this occasion, he also shared information about the books and literature written by Baba. As the keynote speaker, Manoj Paranjpe, Advocate, Chhattisgarh

High Court, while referring to the proceedings of the Constituent Assembly, explained the important contribution of Baba Saheb. Babasaheb played an important role in the creation of the Indian Constitution based on equality, fraternity and humanity. The words and ideals of Baba Saheb are clearly mentioned in legal decisions today. The vocal pioneer of social justice will always be remembered as a social reformer.

The guests were honored by presenting shawls, shreephala, and mementos. At the end of the program, the Registrar, Prof. Shailendra Kumar proposed vote of thanks and the event was conducted by Dr. Garima Tiwari, Assistant Professor, Forestry Department, Buddhist followers, Shri Mahesh Chandrikapur, Shri Jitendra Bhang, Shri Sudama Meshram, Smt. Vandana Bhang, Dean of all the Schools of the University, Heads of Departments, teachers, officers and employees were present in the program.

## Ambedkar's 131st birth anniversary celebrated



Central Chronicle News

**Kondagaon, Apr 14:** The 131st birth anniversary of Baba Saheb Bhimrao Ambedkar was celebrated with great pomp in the district headquarters under the aegis of the Scheduled Castes / Tribes / Backward Classes / Minorities United Front.

On this occasion, Trisharan Panchsheel offered prayers before the life-size statue of Dr Ambedkar located in Court Chowk. After this the chief guest, Kondagaon Assembly Constituency MLA and

State Congress President Mohan Markam and Sarva Samaj President Dhansraj Tandon, Sarva Tribal Samaj Patron CR Korram Prem Singh Nag President Gada Samaj The program was presided over by Ritesh Patel and Shyamsundar Meshram, Buddhist Samaj President, MD Baghel Patron Sarva Samaj jointly hoisting the flag, resonating with the slogans of 'Long live Ambedkarji' and 'Jai Bhim'.

Along with this a massive rally was taken out with a chariot and DJ

adorned with the photo of Baba Saheb and it passed through the main roads of the city. The program was organized after the rally by sharing the biography of Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar, with emphasis on passing on the benefits to the dalits, poor and needy and remembering the work done by him for the interest of the country and human society. It was informed to adopt the principles given by him on life. On this occasion, various people's organizations associated with the organization were present in large numbers.

## 97.66 lakh MT of paddy has been lifted

**Raipur, Apr 13:** Paddy lifting for custom milling is being done at a rapid pace across the state as per the directions of Chief Minister Mr. Bhupesh Baghel. According to the information received till April 11, over 97.66 lakh metric tonnes of paddy has been lifted in the state so far. Meanwhile, the state government is also working expeditiously to deposit rice in the central pool. Over 35.85 lakh metric tonnes of quality rice has been deposited in the central pool so far. This includes 18.97 lakh metric tonnes of rice deposited in the Food Corporation of India and 16.88 lakh metric tonnes in the Civil Supplies Corporation.

Food Secretary Topeshwar Verma informed that on the initiative of the Chief Minister, the work of paddy lifting for custom milling is being done at a rapid pace this year, just like the work of paddy procurement. A record 97.66 lakh metric tonnes of paddy has been lifted through DO and TO so far. Mr. Verma informed that DO of 75 lakh 07 thousand metric tonnes of paddy has been issued. The millers have lifted 74 lakh 76 thousand metric tonnes of paddy from the procurement centers. Similarly, TO has been issued for the transportation of 23 lakh 09 thousand metric tonnes of paddy. Against which 22 lakh 91 thousand metric

tonnes of paddy has been lifted from the committees. This year a target has been set to deposit 61.65 lakh metric tonnes of Arva rice in pool. It is worth mentioning that in the Kharif marketing year 2021-22, about 98 lakh metric tonnes of paddy has been purchased on support price from 21 lakh 77 thousand registered farmers. Nearly Rs 20 thousand crore has been paid to the farmers under the bank linking system in lieu of paddy purchase. In comparison to last year, this year 1 lakh 24 thousand i.e. 6 per cent more farmers of the state sold their paddy on support price. This is the result of farmer-friendly policies and decisions of the state government.

## 98 % works under Water Supply Scheme completed in Korba while 90 % in Bhilai

Under Amrut Mission

An action plan of Rs 2236 cr has been approved for 9 cities in the state under Amrut Mission

Raipur, Bilaspur, Durg, Bhilai, Rajnandgaon, Ambikapur, Jagdalpur, Raigarh and Korba have been included in the mission

Central Chronicle News

**Raipur, Apr 13:** Work of water supply project, septage management and garden development is being done at a rapid pace under Amrut Mission in 9 urban bodies of the state including Raipur, Bilaspur, Durg, Bhilai, Rajnandgaon, Ambikapur, Jagdalpur, Raigarh and Korba having a population of more than one lakh. Under the mission, about 98 per cent work of the water supply scheme has been completed in Korba while 90 per cent in Bhilai. Similarly,

the progress of water supply projects Rajnandgaon, Ambikapur, Raipur and Bilaspur is about 70 per cent. The progress of water supply project Durg and Raigarh is about 50 per cent.

It is worth mentioning that under the Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT) by the Urban Administration Department, an action plan of Rs 2236 crore has been approved for these 9 cities from the year 2015-20. Under the mission, water supply projects are

being carried out in selected cities at a cost of Rs 1804 crore. Similarly, septage-sewage management works are being done at a cost of Rs 399 crore and garden development at a cost of Rs 33 crore.

Under the sewerage/septage component, Rs 235 crore has been approved for setting up a total of STPs (total capacity 200 MLD) for the treatment of sewage flowing in Raipur city, the progress of the same is about 45 per cent so far. Similarly, Rs 112 crore has been sanctioned for setting up a total of two

STPs (total capacity 32 MLD) in Raigarh and one STP of 25 MLD capacity in Jagdalpur, whose physical progress is about 17 per cent as of now. On achieving the target of reform set by the Government of India, the department has received a total incentive of Rs 70 crores, Rs 13 crores in the year 2015-16, Rs 25 crores for the year 2016-17, Rs 14 crores for the year 2017-18 and Rs 18 crores was received for the year 2018-19. All the projects under the mission are being executed expeditiously in the state.

## SKS condoles demise of Jainendra

**Khairagarh, Apr 14:**

In a fire incident in Narayanpur district, a businessman from Khairagarh Jainendra Bhansali has died. It is notable here that fire broke out in Mansarovar Shopping Mall in Narayanpur on Tuesday afternoon at around 1:30 pm and in this Jainendra got stuck on the fourth floor. But since the flames of fire were intense, he just could not be saved on time. It is learnt that large number of customers and shopkeepers were present in the Shopping Mall at the time of fire and on getting information about fire breaking out, there was stampede like situation



and in this many persons lost their lives.

It is learnt that Jainendra Bhansali S/o Phulchand Bansali, used to reside in Bakshi road in city and was running a garment business in Mansarovar Shopping Mall along with his

brother-in-law in Narayanpur. It was after tiring efforts by fire-brigade team that the fire can be dowsed and brought under control.

On getting information about death of young businessman Janendra Bhansali, there was air of sadness among members of Jain Samaj Khairagarh. The members of Sakal Jain Srisangh (SKS) supposed to organised Shri Mahavir Jankalnayak Mahotsav on April 12 was postponed. President Sakal Jain Srisangh Narendra Jain has expressed condolence on sad demise of Jainendra Bhansali and expressed condolences on behalf of all from Jain community.

## Open black marketing of PDS rice in Konta

**Konta, Apr 14:**

In Konta block of Sukma district, black marketing of PDS rice continues unabated, PDS is running black marketing of rice by overturning rice from ration shops to another sack.

In Sukma district, the spirits of the mafia who do black marketing of PDS rice are so high that they do not even have any fear of the administration. The work of theft of rice mafia is being done very easily. Somewhere in this, the people running the ration shop also have a big hand.

In Konta block there are many gal rioters who are using PDS rice in weekly markets. And some people are taking PDS rice by means of small autos,



pickup vehicles at night time. They take the PDS rice overturned in another sack towards Andhra-Telangana. Officers like SDM, tehsildar, food inspector are present in Konta Nagar, but the administration is silent regarding this black marketing of rice and there is no one to inquire.

## Five-day week increases number of holidays

**For government officers and employees; likely to affect work****Mungeli, Apr 14:**

With five-day week for the government employees and officers, it has turned out to be big gift for all by the state government, as getting holiday on April 13, all the government employees have got straight four-days off and due to which majority of the officers and employees in different government departments were found absent.

With declaration of holiday on Saturday, now every government officer or employee is getting additional 52 days holidays and this no doubt is going to affect the working outcome. Right after start of this new announcement from Feb 1, 2022, there are two such occasion when the government officers and employees have got 2-3 days leave at a stretch. So now there are going to many such occasion

when the government officers and employees are going to be benefitted with declaration of weekly off on Saturday by the state government. There are reports that employees are going to get three to four days holiday in a week in coming months and no doubt this is going to affect the day-to-day working in the government departments.

When it comes to number of holiday in a year for government employees, taking 365 days into account, there will be 52 Saturday's and Sunday's, making it 104 holidays. In addition to this the government employees are entitled for three-days optional holidays and this takes the figure to 110. Now when it comes to festivals in the country, there are total of 21 festivals and including this the figures goes to 131 days. Now these are the hol-

idays which the government employees get without asking for it and set aside this there are many other alternatives for holidays for the government employees in their annual holiday list and according to which they can take holidays.

They get 13 days CLs in a year and the non-vocational employees can take 20 days EL. In addition to this there are provisions to go on long leave on medical grounds and it is decided based upon the type of services.

Many a government employees are now found taking advantage of holidays as if there is holiday on Friday, then they take leave on Thursday and in this way they get directly 4 days holiday and in the same way many an employee from outside the hq's take leave on Monday and take full five days holidays.

## Payment of death claim of RPLI done



**Pithora, Apr 14:** Payment of Rural Postal Life Insurance (RPLI) death claim was done on April 11 at Main Post Office Dhamtari in the presence of Sub Divisional Post Inspector Shashi Kumar Sahu and Post Master Vijay Puri Goswami India Post Payment Bank Manager Vaishakh Das and Postal Superintendent Neelam Ban Goswami in the presence of Mrs. Maheshwari Bai Sahu of village Parastarai Post Potiadih District Dhamtari. A cheque of Rs. 1 lakh 5

thousand eighty five was paid to the wife of late Thanu Ram, who died due to corona infection. As per information, Mannu Ram Sahu, father of late Thanu Ram, said that this sum insured became a small recourse, if this policy had been extended, it would have been a great recourse for my daughter-in-law. He has appealed; the villagers to open insurance policies with Rural Postal Life Insurance and said that he did not have any problem in claiming the insurance after the death of his son.

## Students informed about importance of good health

**On occasion of World Health Day at RRDSGC Khairagarh****Khairagarh, Apr 14:**

It was under chairmanship of Principal Rani Rashmi Devi Singh Government College (RRDSGC) Khairagarh Dr DK Balendra and in the presence of Red Cross in-Charge JK Vaishnav, Science in-charge GS Bhatia, that World Health Day was observed here on Wednesday.

Speaking on the occasion Principal Dr DK Balendra said that on this occasion every person should pay due attention towards his health. Red Cross Society in-charge JK Vaishnav gave information about formation of World Health Organisation (WHO) and its objectives and gave information about WHO.

The students were also



informed about taking balanced and healthy diet on daily basis, use pure drinking water, eat properly on time and avoid eating fast-food, doing physical exercises regularly, Yoga and others and importance of health facilities and problems related to diseases were underlined.

Prof. GS Bhatia - Science in-Charge said that during studies in the classes, the students are explained in detail about body's Anatomy and how to take care of it. Recalling the World Health Day, he urged all to take care of one's health and safeguard from falling ill to vari-

ous diseases. On this occasion Asst. Prof. Suresh Adwani, Yashpal Janghel, Mukesh Vaghvani, Satish Kumar, teacher PR Sahu, Dr Umendra Chandel, Anjali Patel, Preeti Janghel, Nathu Ram Nishad and students in large number were present.

## Santu Dharamgarh suspended from party's membership

**On charges of being involved in anti-party activities****Khairagarh, Apr 14:**

On charges of being involved in anti-party activities during Khairagarh VS By-poll, former President Santu Dharamgarh has been suspended from the party. It is notable here that Santu Dharamgarh was till lately member of BJP Kissan Morcha and he has been suspended from the party for six years.

Sant Dharagarh is facing charges that in the Khairagarh by-poll held on April 12, he was involved in anti-party activities and on confirmation of the same District BJP office issued orders for his suspension.

District BJP Gen. Secy. Dinesh Gandhi on issuing a suspension letter in-



formed that Santu Dharamgarh was found to be involved in anti-party activities during campaigning for Khairagarh VS by-poll. Terming the same as coming under disciplinary activities, BJP district office has suspended him with immediate effect for six years.

It is worthwhile to mention here that earlier also Santu Dharamgarh has faced similar charges of being involved in anti-party activities during earlier VS polls and is also facing charges of being a saboteur.

## Joint review meeting of District Level Task Force Committee held

**Koriya, Apr 14:**

A joint review meeting of District Level Task Force Committee was held here under the chairmanship of District Collector. District Child Protection Committee, District Level Committee of Sakhi One-Stop-Center and Ujjwala Sanchalan Surveillance Committee under the Department of Women and Child Development also took part in the meeting.

Abhilasha Behar, District Program Officer,

Department of Women and Child Development, while discussing the campaign being run for the rescue and rehabilitation of child laborers, waste collectors and children involved in begging in the district, said that if a child is found in the condition, the team of Women and Child Development Department can be contacted directly. The child helpline number for this is 1098.

In the meeting of District Level Taskforce Committee, the

Department of Education has set up Legal Literacy Classes and Legal Aid Clinics in schools and colleges. Publicity of Justice Board, Victims Compensation Schemes was discussed. Discussions were also held on setting up of missing person's cell in each police station of the district to track down missing children at police station level.

Discussions were also held on development of information system by developing community

concept like Mahila Mitra, Publicity of Juvenile Justice Board, and Victims Compensation Scheme. In the meeting, the updated status of the cases of Sakhi One Stop Center, publicity activity, land demarcation for building construction, shelter of minor girls from CW and appointment of women reservists in the center etc. were discussed in detail.

It was informed in the meeting that out of 1 thousand 277 cases related to women in the center since April 2017, 1 thousand 236 have been disposed off. In the review meeting of Ujjwala Home Monitoring Committee, discussions regarding the Aadhaar card of the beneficiaries residing in Ujjwala Home, referral of deranged women to Sendri Bilaspur psychiatric hospital etc. were also discussed.

## Havan Pujan completed on Ashtami at Devi temples

**Birkoni, Apr 14:**

Havan Puja was completed in Devi temples located in village Birkoni, wherein devotees kept fast and worshiped and took part in Havan Pujan. The Havan commenced from 2 pm in the Khallari

temple, after which Bhandara was organized at 1 in the afternoon. Havan was also done in Khallari temple including Mauli temple and Mahamaya temple. Jyot Janwara immersion and other religious ritual program were done with devotion in the houses of the region and devotees came out in large number to feast the occasion.

In the programme of Bhandara in Sheetla temple and Mauli temple, devotees including devotees kept reaching till late night to get the prasad. In the same area, there was movement from morning till night on Navratri. Devotees hailed the mother in the temple and asked for their wishes by decorating aarti with religious songs.

## Shobha Yatra marks beginning of Bhagwat Katha



**Anwari, Apr 14:** The Shrimad Bhagwat Katha by Gangber family in Gram Bhaibod began with massive 'Kalash Shobha Yatra'. This 'Shobha Yatra' started from Sheetla Mata Mandir to main roads of the village and passing through main roads of village concluded at the 'Katha' venue itself.

This Shrimad Bhagwat Katha is being organised by Gangber family in the memory of Late Ishwar Sahu of Gram Bhaibod. On the first day of this Katha, 'Kalash Yatra' was taken out and in this the women carrying 'Kalash' atop

their head were part of the 'Shobha Yatra' amidst playing of religious tunes and 'Sewak Bhaiyao' and reciting 'Mata's 'jasgan'. This 'Kalash Yatra' was welcomed mid-way in front of houses of many persons.

On the first day, started 'Bhagwat Katha', Bhagwatacharya from Gram Saja-Bija- Pt. Sheetlesh Maharaj recited about the importance of this Bhagwat Katha and the benefits thereafter. He said that with desire to hear about this Bhagwat Katha makes the Supreme reside inside one's heart.

## Educational tour conducted for students of GNC

**Dongargarh, Apr 14:**

Under the guidance of Pradeep Kumar Jambulkar, Principal of Government Nehru College (GNC), the students of Computer

Science Department and Commerce Department were given an educational tour of MSME Technology Center Durg and Akshaya Patra Bhillai.

A total of 90 students of PGDCA, B.Com, B.Sc.

Computer Science, and DCA of the college visited MSME Technology Center Durg and were also given participation certificates by MSME. The students were also taken to Akshaya Patra Bhillai,

where the students got information about the techniques of making food with machines. College Principal Dr. Jambulkar congratulated the organizing department for a successful educational tour.

## Penalty imposed on use of banned plastic bags

**Korba Apr 14:** On the instructions of Commissioner Shri Prabhakar Pandey, continuous action is being taken by the employees of Korba Municipal Corporation on the sale and use of banned plastic and taking action in this direction, confiscated materials from various shops of the city while imposing a penalty of Rs.15000.

It is worth mentioning here that the manufacture of other plastic items including carry bags, disposables made of plastic material not conforming to the prescribed standard, has been banned by KMC owing to its serious adverse effect on the environment and sanitation. The raids were conducted in Darri Road



Ramsagarpara, Power House Road Main Road and the concerned were given strict instructions to not store, sell and use banned plastic carry bag disposals and other banned materials. The Commissioner has

appealed to the general public and said that health, cleanliness and sanitation is affected due to plastic bags, therefore people should not sell, use and store the disposal and other materials, instead adopt alternative means.

## NAME CHANGE

I Gitanjali Shawke, W/o Shri Sangam Shawke, R/o Budhapara, District Raipur, (C.G.), 492001, do hereby make the following statements:

1. That after the marriage I am known and identified by the above name and reside in the above address.
2. But prior to the marriage my name in all the educational records of Class 10<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> has been registered as GEETANJALI WAKDE.
3. But after the marriage the name in all the educational documents and documents of Govt viz. (Aadhar Card, Driving Licence, PAN Card, and others) my name has been registered as Gitanjali Shawke.
4. That my name in all educational documents before the marriage GEETANJALI WAKDE and name in all after the marriage I.e. GITANJALI SHAWKE, is the name of the same person.
5. And I am submitting this affidavit in support of the same before the concerned officer.

**CERTIFY**  
I do hereby certify that the statements made from Sl. No. 1-5 are true to the best of my knowledge and I do stand by it and signing in full senses.

**DEPONENT**  
GITANJALI SHAWKE

**BRIEF**

**Relaunch**

■ Pune: The Pune police relaunched their 'Buddy Cop' initiative aimed at ensuring the safety of working women, especially those in the Information Technology (IT) and other private sectors where they have to work in late night shifts, an official said. The city police had first launched this initiative in 2017 when Rashmi Shukla was the police commissioner. It was rolled out in wake of murder of a 25-year-old woman employee of Infosys in January 2017 which shocked India.

**Seized**

■ Bhubaneswar: Cocaine, an expensive drug, has been seized for the first time in Odisha, a police statement said. Acting on a tip-off, the Crime Branch's Special Task Force arrested two people, hailing from Rajasthan, in Bhubaneswar and seized 202 gm of cocaine worth Rs 12.12 lakh from their possession. The duo, hailing from Churu and Jhunjhunu districts of Rajasthan, was attempting to spread cocaine business in posh areas of Bhubaneswar, procured from Delhi.

**Injured**

■ Jammu: At least four people, including a tehsildar, were injured in a clash in Rajouri district of Jammu and Kashmir, prompting the authorities to order an inquiry, officials said. Tehsildar Ravi Shanker and agricultural employee Chandar Mohan had a heated argument over some issue at Shanker's residence in Sunderbani before they attacked each other, they said. Shanker, Mohan and two more people were injured in the clash and hospitalised. Police have registered two FIRs.

**Gunfight**

■ Mangaldoi: A suspected dacoit has been killed in a gunfight with police in Assam's Darrang district, police said. The gun-battle happened when the accused, who was arrested from Guwahati, was taken to his residence in Sipajhar area in Darrang district to recover stolen goods. Suddenly, accused picked up pistol and opened fire on policemen, leading to retaliatory firing in which he was critically injured. He was taken to a local hospital, where he could not survive.

**Disqualified**

■ Jammu: A woman sarpanch was disqualified after her Scheduled Caste (SC) certificate was cancelled by the concerned authorities in Rajouri district of Jammu and Kashmir, officials said. The caste certificate of Santosh Kumari, a resident of Bhajnowa, was issued in her favour by the then Tehsildar, Nowshera on September 28, 1979. But, after verification it came to fore that her father belonged to Vashist Rajput caste, they said, quoting order issued by ADC, Rajouri.

## Terrorists using mobile data of unsuspecting civilians



A mobile phone tower in Kashmir valley.

Srinagar, Apr 14 (PTI):

The phone could be in your hand but another person, possibly a militant or a sympathiser, could be using its hotspot facility, say police officials, red-flagging the latest modus operandi of terrorists in Kashmir and warning unsuspecting civilians about the trouble they could land in. Taking serious note of the new MO adopted by terrorists and their overground workers to escape

security radars, the officials said wrong use of a SIM card or providing communication facility to a terrorist through hotspot will make the subscriber of the card liable for investigation and arrest. SIM card subscribers cannot hide behind the fact that they themselves are not into terrorism and that their SIM card has not been used directly by the terrorists. Allowing one's SIM card to be used

**To escape security radar**

through 'hotspot' is direct liability according to police, an official told PTI on condition of anonymity. The relatively new way of operating came to light during in-depth investigation of a terror network case. In October last year, based on intelligence inputs, police nabbed Mukhtar Ahmad Kumar from south Kashmir's Pulwama district under the stringent Public Safety Act (PSA) and shifted him to a prison in Agra. His troubles, it appeared, started when he got a SIM card in his name and gave it to his fiancée in Srinagar along with a mobile phone. Investigations revealed that the SIM card and the device were used by the Lashkar-e-Taiba for planning a terrorist attack, officials said.

## BJP MP Suresh Gopi lands in 'vishu kaineettam' row

Thrissur, Apr 14 (PTI):

The ancient practice of giving 'vishu kaineettam' has landed actor-turned-politician and BJP MP, Suresh Gopi in a controversy in Kerala as netizens criticised him after a video in which he was seen sitting in a car distributing money and people touching his feet accepting their 'kaineettam', went viral on social media platforms.



Suresh Gopi had organised 'vishu kaineettam' distribution in Thrissur.

According to Hindu custom, a small amount of money would be given to children, elderly and women as "kaineettam" with a blessing that wealth will multiply as part of the harvest festival Vishu, which falls on April 15 this year. The national award-winning actor, whose tenure as Rajya Sabha MP would end later this

month, had organised a mass 'vishu kaineettam' distribution campaign earlier this week in Thrissur, where he unsuccessfully contested in the last Assembly polls. Besides BJP activists, he also distributed one rupee currency note as 'kaineettam' to people from various walks of life

including children and elderly across the district. In the controversial video, Gopi could be seen sitting in a car distributing money while people including women queued in front of him to accept their 'kaineettam'. Many of them could be seen touching his feet seeking his blessings after

## OPCC president also says that change of guard is needed

Bhubaneswar, Apr 14 (PTI):

Odisha Pradesh Congress Committee president Niranjan Patnaik on Thursday said a change is needed in the OPCC. Patnaik said this in the backdrop of wide speculation on change of guard in the OPCC after the party's dismal performance in the recently concluded panchayat and urban polls. He said the OPCC president's post is not permanent, it is changed every two-three years. Patnaik, who assumed the OPCC chief post in 2018 ahead of the general elections for the Lok Sabha and the State Assembly, said: "Some



Niranjan Patnaik

## NMDC celebrates the 131st birth anniv of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar

Hyderabad, Apr 14: NMDC paid its tribute to the Father of Indian Constitution and celebrated the 131st birth anniversary of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar today at NMDC Head Office in Hyderabad. Chief Guests Shri Somnath Nandi, Director (Technical); Shri Dilip Kumar Mohanty, Director (Production) and Guest of Honour Shri K. Praveen Kumar, Executive Director (Personnel and Law) led the employees in offering their respect to one of the Founding Fathers of the Republic of India. The event was organized by the mining major in association with NMDC HO SC/ST Federation. Shri B. Hanumanth Rao (President) and Shri B. Pavan Kumar (General Secretary) from the NMDC SC/ST Employees



Welfare Association along with Executive Members and employees and their family members were present on the occasion. The function commenced with dignitaries putting a garland on the portrait of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, followed by a prayer sung in his memory. Shri Somnath Nandi on this occasion said that Baba Saheb is a symbol of equality and justice, his inspiring life and thoughts reinforce our conviction that the nation is to be governed with absolute com-

dismal performance. "What can I do, the All India Congress Committee (AICC) has not yet accepted my resignation." Patnaik also said that he has no idea when the high command will take a final call in regard to his resignation. He said that there are several able leaders in the party and he will support the new OPCC president to be chosen by the AICC. Immediately after the recently concluded panchayat and urban polls, there is a fresh move for a change of the OPCC president. Some of the senior leaders have already met the party high command and sought a change of guard in the OPCC.

through education only. As the country celebrates AzadikaAmritMahotsav, we must also celebrate the reforms that have come by and the ones that we are striving for. With good governance practices and a sense of duty, we, at NMDC, take inspiration from and emulate the discipline Dr. Ambedkar built in our democracy. On this occasion, NMDC distributed school bags and water bottles to children. NMDC SC/ST Association distributed fruits, food packets to orphanage children at RadhaKishan Balika Bhavan, Nanal Nagar, Hyderabad. Suing to the occasion-cultural and musical programmes were organized by Citizen Orchestra, Hyderabad.

## 'MAHAVIR JAYANTI'



People belonging to Jain community participate in a procession on the occasion of Mahavir Jayanti in Bhopal, Thursday.

## Sule seeks Mandaviya's help for Indian students studying in China

Mumbai, Apr 14 (PTI):

NCP MP Supriya Sule has sought Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya's help for Indian students studying medicine in China, who have demanded that their return to the neighbouring country be facilitated to resume offline courses and arrangements for practical classes be made in India till then. In a letter to Mandaviya, Sule said the students are attending their lectures online in India and are anxious due to uncertainties surrounding reopening of the Chinese border and lifting of the travel restrictions. A large number of Indian students had come back to India when China shut all uni-



Supriya Sule

versities following the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. China had restricted travel by suspending visa and residence permits from March 27, 2020 in view of the pandemic. I met the delegation of Indian Students in China and the Foreign Medical Graduates Parents

Association (FMGPA). They have put forth a few demands...requesting you to kindly look into the matter and help our students, Sule said in the April 13 letter, a copy of which she shared on Twitter. In their letter to the Baramati MP, the students and the FMGPA said they are facing financial and mental stress due to uncertainties surrounding the reopening of the Chinese border and lifting of the travel restrictions. The students have demanded that arrangements be made for their return to China or practical classes be provided to them, in line with their curriculum, in India until they go back to China.

## 'Dalit MPs, MLAs of 'casteist parties' won't do anything for community'

Lucknow, Apr 14 (PTI):

Bahujan Samaj Party president Mayawati on Thursday said that Dalits who become MPs and MLAs through "casteist parties" like the BJP and the Congress will only serve their interests rather than those of the community. If these leaders try to do something for their community, they are removed from the party and the government, Mayawati said at a programme at the party office here on the occasion of the birth anniversary of Dalit icon B R Ambedkar. Born in Maharashtra in a Dalit family in 1891,



BSP supreme Mayawati pays tribute to Baba Bhimrao Ambedkar on his 131st birth anniversary, at party office in Lucknow, Thursday.

Ambedkar was a key architect of India's Constitution. He was a jurist and an economist who played an important role

in India's freedom movement. Ambedkar championed the cause of the Dalit community which faced

deep-rooted discrimination. He was also India's first law minister. "It has always been clear in the country's politics that even if casteist parties, especially the Congress and the BJP, make a Dalit MP, MLA, minister, deputy chief minister or even the president, that Dalit person can only ensure his progress and that of his family but cannot do anything for the progress of the neglected community," a BSP statement quoted Mayawati as saying. If these people make efforts to do something for the Dalit community, then they are thrown out of the party and the government, she said.

## Survey in Banka, Patna to unearth ancient structures

Patna, Apr 14 (PTI):

The Bihar government is conducting a survey in Banka and Patna districts, hoping to unearth ancient structures that are buried in the soil, an official said on Thursday. Banka and Patna are historically and mythologically significant places, so the exercise of ground-penetrating radar (GPR) survey has been undertaken, he said. "The GPR survey is almost on the verge of completion in Bhadaria village in Amarpur block of Banka. It will now start in Patna district," Additional Secretary and Director (Archaeology) of Art, Culture and Youth Department Deepak Anand told PTI. "All formalities have been completed to conduct the GPR



An archeological site in Patna district.

survey in Patna," he said, refusing to share the specific location in the district where the exercise would be conducted. A report will be published based on the findings, he said. At present, the findings at the Bhadaria village are being analysed by experts, he added. "Ancient Patna,

then Pataliputra, was the capital of the Magadh Empire. Pataliputra was a seat of learning and it was home to many scholars, including Aryabhata, Vatsyayana and Chanakya. The Mandar hill in Banka has many references in Hindu mythology.

## BRIEF

### Overcount

**Phoenix:** Jennifer Chau was astonished last month when the US Census Bureau's report card on how accurately it counted the US population in 2020 showed that Asian people were overcounted by the highest rate of any race or ethnic group. The director of an Asian American advocacy group thought thousands of people would be missed outreach activities had been scratched by the coronavirus pandemic, and she and her staff feared widespread language barriers.

### Extends

**Pretoria:** The deployment of South Africa's military in northern Mozambique has been extended while its role has shifted from aggressively fighting Islamic extremist rebels to a peacekeeping effort. About 600 members of the South African National Defence Force have been in Mozambique's Cabo Delgado province since October last year and have captured and destroyed several of extremists' bases, the chief of South African mission to Mozambique, Rudzani said.

### Shortages

**Addis Ababa:** Patients at the flagship hospital in Ethiopia's embattled Tigray region are dying amid shortages of life-saving drugs and oxygen, according to health officials. At least 60 patients with kidney disease have died since July, the result of a lack of supplies needed for regular dialysis, a doctor at Ayder Hospital in Mekele, Tigray's capital. Another 81 patients have died directly because of a lack of oxygen since conflict between the federal government and TPLF.

### Override

**Kentucky:** New abortion restrictions passed by Republican lawmakers over the Democratic governor's veto will force the only two abortion clinics in Kentucky, US to stop providing the procedures for women, at least temporarily, while the new law is challenged in court, abortion-rights activists said. The law will draw immediate federal lawsuits, and attorneys for the clinics will seek a ruling to block the measure to allow the clinics to resume abortions while case is litigated.

### Proceed

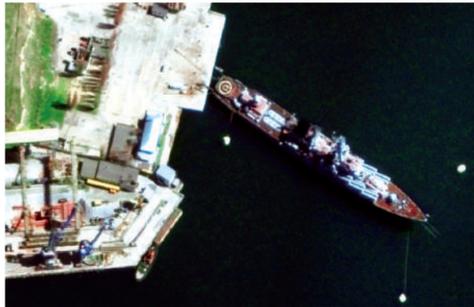
**Washington:** The criminal prosecution of a Hillary Clinton campaign lawyer charged with lying to the FBI during the Trump-Russia investigation can move forward, a judge ruled in denying a defense bid to dismiss the case. The ruling means Michael Sussmann, charged last year by special counsel John Durham, remains set for trial on May 16 in Washington's federal court. Sussmann is charged with lying to the FBI during a 2016 meeting in which he relayed concerns

# Ukraine says missiles hit Russian flagship, crew evacuates

Kyiv, Apr 14 (AP):

Ukrainian forces said they hit and badly damaged the flagship of Russia's Black Sea fleet, and Russia said its crew was forced to evacuate as a result of a fire without acknowledging an attack, as the battle shifts east and around the battered city of Mariupol where the defenders were still holding out. The governor of the Odesa region, Maksym Marchenko, said the Ukrainians struck the guided-missile cruiser Moskva with two missiles and caused serious damage. Russia's Defence Ministry confirmed the ship was damaged but not that it was hit by Ukraine it said ammunition on board detonated as a result of a fire of as-yet undetermined causes. The entire crew was evacuated, it added; the cruiser typically has about 500 on board. If confirmed, the sinking of the cruiser would be a major blow to Russia, after the tank carrier Orsk was hit and set on fire in an attack in Berdyansk in the Sea of Azov late last month.

The reported ship attack



File picture of cruiser Moskva in Black sea, seen from a satellite.

by Neptune cruise missiles came a day after President Joe Biden called Russia's actions in Ukraine a genocide and approved 800 million in new military assistance to Kyiv, saying weapons from the West have sustained Ukraine's fight so far and we cannot rest now. The munitions include artillery systems, armoured personnel carriers and helicopters.

Russia invaded on Feb 24 with the goal, according to Western officials, of taking Kyiv, toppling the government and installing a Moscow-friendly replacement. But the ground advance slowly stalled and Russia lost potentially

thousands of fighters. The conflict has killed untold numbers of Ukrainian civilians and forced millions more to flee. It also has rattled the world economy, threatened global food supplies and shattered Europe's post-Cold War balance.

The presidents of Poland, Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia showed their support to Ukraine on a visit to war ravaged areas and demanded accountability for what they called war crimes. They meet with their counterpart, Volodymyr Zelenskyy, and visited Borodyanka, one of the towns near Kyiv where evidence of atrocities was found after Russian troops

withdrew to focus on the country's east.

"There are no doubts that they committed war crimes. And for that, they should be accountable, Latvian President Egils Levits said.

The Lithuanian president, Gitanas Nauseda, added: The fight for Europe's future is happening here." He called for tougher sanctions, including against Russian oil and gas shipments and all the country's banks.

In one of the most crucial battles of the war in the southern port city of Mariupol, Russian Defence Ministry spokesman Maj-Gen Igor Konashenkov said 1,026 troops from the Ukrainian 36th Marine Brigade surrendered at a metals factory. But Vadym Denysenko, adviser to Ukraine's interior minister, rejected the claim, telling Current Time TV that the battle over the seaport is still ongoing now.

Russian troops are gearing up for a major offensive in the eastern Donbas region, where Moscow-allied separatists and Ukrainian forces have been fighting since 2014.

## COUP ANNIVERSARY



Bolivarian militia march to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the coup, in Caracas, Venezuela.

# CDC extends travel mask requirement as COVID-19 rises

Washington, Apr 14 (AP):

The Biden administration has announced that it is extending the nationwide mask requirement for airplanes and public transit for 15 days as it monitors for an uptick in COVID-19 cases.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said it was extending the order, which was set to expire on April 18, until May 3 to allow more time to study the BA.2 omicron

subvariant that is now responsible for the vast majority of cases in the US.

In order to assess the potential impact the rise of cases has on severe disease, including hospitalizations and deaths, and health care system capacity, the CDC order will remain in place at this time, the agency said. When the Transportation Security Administration, which enforces the rule for planes, buses, trains and transit hubs, extended the require-

ment last month, it said the CDC had been hoping to roll out a more flexible masking strategy that would have replaced the nationwide requirement. The mask mandate is the most visible vestige of government restrictions to control the pandemic, and possibly the most controversial. A surge of abusive and sometimes violent incidents on airplanes has been attributed mostly to disputes over mask-wearing.

# Sri Lankan protesters mark new year near president's office

Colombo, Apr 14 (AP):

Sri Lankans shared milk rice and oil cakes to celebrate their traditional new year on Thursday opposite the president's office, where they camped out for a sixth day demanding his resignation over the worst economic crisis in memory.

Soldiers who were disabled in the island nation's civil war lit a hearth, Buddhist monks chanted religious verses and others set off firecrackers amid chants of: Victory to the people's struggle!

Protesters are occupying the entrance and surroundings of President Gotabaya Rajapaksa's office, holding him responsi-



Demonstrators at the entrance of the President Gotabaya Rajapaksa office grab food distributed during Sinhala and Tamil New Year, in Colombo on Thursday.

ble for the economic situation. They also are calling for his powerful family to leave power, accusing them of corruption and misrule.

Other days our children go to their grandparents to

celebrate the new year; but we brought them here to show them the real situation in the country," said Dilani Niranjala, who attended the protest with her husband and two sons aged 10 and 8.

# Rajnath visits US INDOPACOM HQ

● Reaffirms commitment to open, inclusive Indo-Pacific

Honolulu, Apr 14 (PTI):

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh has visited the headquarters of the United States Indo-Pacific Command and held wide-ranging interactions with its leadership to advance India-US defence collaboration across all domains and reaffirmed the commitment to work together for a free, open and inclusive Indo-Pacific, amidst China's aggressive actions in the region.

USINDOPACOM is a unified combatant command of the United States Armed Forces responsible



Defence Minister Rajnath Singh laying wreath at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific in Hawaii.

for the key Indo-Pacific region. The USINDOPACOM and Indian military have wide-ranging engagements, including a number of military exercises, training events and exchanges. Adm John Aquilino, Commander

USINDOPACOM, received Singh with Honour Ceremony on his visit to the Command's headquarters in Hawaii, the Defence Ministry tweeted on Thursday. Singh expressed satisfaction at the significant progress in the India-

US defence partnership, it said.

"Wide-ranging interactions with INDOPACOM leadership were held to advance India-US defense collaboration across all domains," the ministry said, adding, "The commitment to working together for a free, open and inclusive Indo-Pacific and beyond was reaffirmed."

Earlier, Singh visited various training sites of the US Army, Pacific (the Army Service Component Command to INDOPACOM) located around the island of Oahu. "The Military to Military relationship between India and the United States has been strengthened in recent years," Singh tweeted, sharing photographs of his visit.

# Brazil indigenous influencers take their fight online

Brasilia, Apr 14 (AFP):

Clutching an iPhone in each hand, and sporting a feather headdress and traditional indigenous garb, Brazilian influencer Samela Awia, a member of the Amazon rainforest's Satere-Mawe people, checks out her latest video, then posts it online.

"Good stuff," says the 25-year-old after uploading the video, a recap of news from a tent city near the seat of government in Brasilia, where she and thousands of other indigenous Brazilians have been camped out since last week protesting far-right President Jair Bolsonaro's policies.

"Hi, this is Samela, com-



Digital indigenous activists Tukuma Pataxo and Samela Awia (L) posts on their mobile phones at the Terra Livre Indigenous Camp in Brasilia.

ing to you from the indigenous camp," she tells her 54,000 followers in the mini-report, decked out in

a coconut shell-and-crochet bustier, colorful beads and blue flower armbands.

"Come with me, I'll show you what's going on," says the self-described artisan and digital activist from Manaus, the city known as the "capital of the Amazon."

The indigenous camp, an annual event, has focused this year on mobilizing public opinion against a series of Bolsonaro initiatives that critics say would be disastrous for native peoples and the environment, including bills that would sharply limit the creation of new indigenous reservations and open existing ones to mining. But in addition to the camp, young and tech-savvy indigenous influencers are increasingly taking their cause online.

# UK plan to send asylum seekers to Rwanda draws criticism

London, Apr 14 (AP):

The British government has struck a deal with Rwanda to send some asylum-seekers to the African country, a move that opposition politicians and refugee groups condemned as unworkable and inhumane.

Home Secretary Priti Patel is due to announce details in Rwanda on Thursday of what the UK government is calling an economic development partnership.

Media reports say the government plan would see some single men who arrive in Britain from

across the English Channel in small boats flown 4,000 miles (6,400 kilometres) to Rwanda while their asylum claims are processed.

Simon Hart, the government minister for Wales, said the arrangement would cost Britain about 120 million pounds (158 million). He said the goal was to break up the business model of criminal people-smuggling gangs.

(f) we have an arrangement with the Rwandan government for the proper and humane treatment of these people, then the criminal gangs will realise that their potential

source of income will dry up, Hart said.

Steve Valdez-Symonds, refugee director at Amnesty International UK, said the government's shockingly ill-conceived idea will go far further in inflicting suffering while wasting huge amounts of public money. He said Rwanda's dismal human rights record made the idea even worse.

The chief executive of the UK-based organisation Refugee Council, Enver Solomon, called it a cruel and nasty decision and predicted it would not stop people-smuggling gangs.

# East, Horn of Africa prep for worst drought in decades

Mombasa, Apr 14 (AP):

Agricultural workers in the east and Horn of Africa are preparing for their most severe drought in forty years, as authorities warn that higher temperatures and less than normal rainfall was recorded by weather agencies in March and April this year.

The Intergovernmental Authority on Development said rains will likely fail for a fourth consecutive year, triggering fears of increased cases of malnutrition, threats to livelihoods and severe risks for 29 mil-

lion people in the region. Meteorologists are linking the unfolding drought to human-caused climate change which is leading to increased warming in the Indian Ocean, causing more frequent cyclones.

Like most of Africa, the east and the Horn's economic mainstay is agriculture, which is rain-fed, making it vulnerable to extreme weather events. Mama Charity Kimaru, who practices mixed farming by rearing livestock and planting cereals and vegetables in her 30-acre farm in Nyandarua, some



The tents of people displaced by drought are seen at the Higo camp in the Shabelle Zone, Somali region of Ethiopia.

80 miles (126 kilometers) north of Nairobi, is among

the farmers who are preparing for the worst

outcomes. Kimaru says that increased tempera-

tures recorded over the past few months have denied her livestock pasture and the crops she had planted in anticipation of the long rains season have failed.

The weather agency previously said in February that the region should prepare for a 'wetter than average' long rains season, which normally pours from March to May, but the agency revised its previous forecasts this week.

The March, April, May rains are crucial for the region and, sadly, we are looking at not just three,

but potentially four consecutive failed seasons,' Workneh Gebeyehu, the executive secretary of the intergovernmental agency, said. "This, coupled with other stress factors such as conflicts in both our region and Europe, the impact of COVID-19, and macro-economic challenges, has led to acute levels of food insecurity across the greater Horn of Africa. Below average rainfall for 2022 are likely to prolong the already extremely dry conditions which have not been experienced to this degree since 1981.



## CENTRAL Chronicle

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### Judicial diversity

Chief Justice of India (CJI) NV Ramana noted that India has a population of nearly 140 crores, with around 120 languages, thousands of dialects, more than 4000 communities and more than 700 tribes. Politics is not relevant after becoming a judge and it is the Constitution that guides the judges. CJI NV Ramana said. The CJI also said that India's vast social and geographical diversity must find its reflection at all levels of the judiciary, contending that it will improve efficiency. Justice Ramana was speaking at the 'second Comparative Constitutional Law Conversation' along with United States Supreme Court Justice Stephen Breyer. The online event was organised by Society for Democratic Rights, New Delhi and the Georgetown University Law Centre, Washington DC on the topic 'Comparative Approaches of Supreme Courts of World's Largest Democracies'. The diversity issue in judiciary was also debated in the Parliament during last winter session. Last month, the CJI said it was unfortunate that only 17 of 37 women recommended by the Supreme Court collegium were appointed as High Court judges, while the other names are pending with the government. Ramana said that the appointment of women judges has more than a symbolic importance. The top court judge also called for appointment of more women judges from rural backgrounds, saying that the atrocities suffered by many there is either 'underreported or unnoticed by many. Last year, the Supreme Court's collegium was talking about the judiciary's own diversity profile and finds it wanting, is welcome. This self-reflection comes not a moment too soon. In fact, it would be fair to say it is already several decades late. But better late than never. That the direction came out of CJI's conviction rather than being spurred by the need to fill officially mandated quotas makes it even more gratifying. That it comes so early in his tenure allows for watching how well aspiration translates into action.

While examining diversity across police, judiciary, prisons and legal aid, the India Justice Report 2020 points out that data for diversity among judges remains unavailable, particularly in the subordinate courts. From what is publicly available, one can barely cull out gender diversity. The profile is predictable. In 2019, across states, figures for women subordinate court judges come in at double digits, nationally, it's 30 percent. But it never quite reaches 50 percent anywhere except in Meghalaya. Goa, an exception, comes in highest at 72 percent. But move to high courts and the figures take a sharp dive, to just 11 per cent at the national level. The 2020 report indicates that Goa dips to just above 13 percent and the majority of states couldn't even reach 20 percent. Bihar, Tripura, Uttarakhand, Meghalaya, and Manipur high courts had no women judges. Only Sikkim with 33.3 percent women judges in the high court and 28.6 percent in the subordinate courts escapes the steep drop. The absence of inclusion gets spotlighted at national level. The Supreme Court has seen Dalit and minority chief justices, but overall, as with the high courts, it remains a bastion of male privilege. Muslim chief justices belong in the past and a Christian perhaps to the future, but women are nowhere on the horizon. In the 74 years since Independence, there have been only seven women Supreme Court judges. Today, there is just one out of 26. The glass ceiling is indeed well anchored in place. American political scientist GH Gadbois, in his book 'Judges of the Supreme Court of India: 1950-1989', revealed that close to 50 percent were from other forward castes. The total number of SC, ST and OBC judges in the Supreme Court never crossed 10 percent in this period, Gadbois had found. The judiciary has a long way to go before vision of CJI's NV Ramana is realised.

### Electric vehicle fires

The government has taken very seriously the four incidents of fire in two-wheeler electric vehicles (EVs) in the recent past and will take appropriate action against the manufacturers after a forensic investigation, Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari had told. The minister said India's standards for approval of EV and batteries are apt with the global standards and the government will take appropriate action after the exact technical reason behind the accidents is known. The recent fire incidents in electric vehicles are unlikely to have any long-term impact on the sales of EVs in the country, but there could be an immediate perception that whether these vehicles are safe or not. Experts said this could have been due to inexperience in the manufacturing of lithium-ion batteries and installation of recharge stations with little to no expertise at play. Even big companies pan-India are engaging their R&D section to work on better batteries. Such incidents, due to the casual approach of the fire and transport departments, is a matter of concern to the general public and desisting them from a switch-over from fuel to electric vehicles.

These recent accidents have all been reported from Indian cities where temperatures have been rising. Yet, blaming the weather is wrong, according to experts who, instead, prefer looking more closely at how a lithium-ion (Li-ion) battery is packed and designed. Thermal management and battery construction play a huge role in battery stability. Others echo the view, warning against inefficiently designed products. Thermal runaway is the process of the battery heating up, accelerated by that same increase in heat, ultimately resulting in an uncontrollable temperature spike. This can destroy the battery and, in severe cases, also end in a fire. This condition is made worse by the operating conditions of electric vehicles in the Indian summer, 40-50 degree ambient temperatures do not allow for sufficient cooling, particularly the air cooling systems on electric scooters in India, and make a bad situation worse. A cell has to be well-made, unfortunately there are some suppliers out there who may not be making the lithium cells to standard. Many of lithium ion cells are imported from China and until India has domestic cell manufacturing, problems will continue.

### VIEW FROM ABOVE

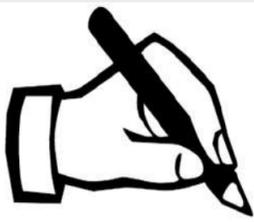


An aerial view from above shows a local tourist visiting the Laomei Green Reef in New Taipei City's Shimen District of Taiwan.

## Universal basic income pilots have not led to policy change



CHRIS TAYLOR



Universal basic income, a tax-free, unconditional sum of money regularly given to everyone in a society, has repeatedly been shown to help the most vulnerable groups in society. Numerous successful trials have found that basic income, whether given to everyone or specific groups or communities, improves health, life satisfaction, trust in others and employment opportunities among participants. Many of the largest and most successful basic income schemes were from the 1960s and 1970s. Mincome, a basic income experiment in Manitoba that ran from 1974-1979, found an improvement in wages, psychological wellbeing and school and college attendance. More recently, a nationwide experiment in Finland gave Euro 560 per month to 2,000 randomly selected, unemployed people, again producing favourable outcomes. The Welsh government is the latest to announce such a trial, giving Euro 1,600 a month to every 18-year-old leaving the care system (about 500 young people) over a two-year period.

The argument has been reheated at regular intervals since, employing a similar logic. If new technology and robots are taking all the jobs, as one modern version of the argument goes, then the gains from these technological developments should be shared out to everyone in the form of a basic income. UBI proper is, then, the idea that every citizen should be paid a sum of money sufficient to live on with no preconditions - that is, regardless of willingness to work or any other

qualification. And that has never been tried.

But none of the experiments have (so far) ended with the implementation of basic income as a policy, by keeping the pilot going or rolling it out to wider populations. The International Public Policy Observatory, in collaboration with the Institute of Policy Research at the University of Bath, recently examined 38 experiments across Europe, North America and Asia (in countries that already had established welfare systems) and found three main reasons why the effort ended with the pilot. The first reason is gaps in evidence. Supporters of universal basic income usually point to a wide range of benefits to those who receive the payment, their family and their wider community. But collecting evidence on all possible outcomes has been difficult to achieve. The complex designs of basic income pilots have made it difficult to show whether improvements in people's lives are due to the introduction of a basic income or other factors. No two basic income pilots look the same, so the outcomes of one pilot are rarely the same in another. Keeping pilots as simple as possible and identifying the criteria for success prior to their introduction would strengthen the case for keeping the schemes going.

The second reason is short term thinking. We found that most basic income experiments were intended to be just that - experiments. Few, if any, schemes were launched with a clear understanding of how they would be

fully implemented if deemed successful. Many schemes broke down because the necessary fiscal and legal requirements for further roll-out did not exist. If those designing the experiments do not see the problem as long term and systemic, then they will inevitably take a short-term view about any experiment and what they hope to learn from it. Future experiments should be designed so that if they are found to be successful, they can continue to run. This might mean designing a scheme that will only benefit a small, well-defined group for a short and specific period of time. The scheme for care leavers in Wales is a good example of this. It is designed to target a particular group of vulnerable young people at a key point in their life. The resulting benefit is only for a short period (when they are 18-20 years old) but at a time in their lives when we might expect to see the most advantage for minimal cost. The scheme can continue to run for new cohorts of care leavers after the pilot without the overall costs increasing.

The third reason is politics and public understanding. Despite the large number of pilots over the last 50 years, universal basic income is still highly controversial. Giving 'free' money to people without conditions is very sensitive, particularly to people who work to earn money and pay their taxes. Improving the public understanding and support of basic income remains a challenge. Pilots need to demonstrate how basic income benefits the whole of society, as well as those who receive the payment. Improving someone's immediate wellbeing, for example, leads to less dependency on welfare benefits, lower levels of crime and reduced illness. The public also needs to understand why people deserve to receive a basic income. Most basic income pilots are for the unemployed, and there is a fear that providing a guaranteed income will only continue their economic inactivity. Evidence from previous pilots on this specific issue is mixed. Some people who receive basic income continue to remain unem-

ployed, but for others it provides the necessary foundations for getting employment. Many pilots have shown a marginal benefit of increased employment. But the continued presence of unemployed people in receipt of basic income, however small in number, undermines the public's confidence in such a policy. One solution is to target basic income at other groups of vulnerable people, where perhaps the public's understanding of the challenges they face are greater to begin with.

Again, the Wales example is a good one. While young care leavers are likely to be unemployed, their participation in the scheme is not defined by this. The public is also likely to have greater empathy for young adults who experienced difficult childhoods. The pandemic has led to growing calls and public support for universal basic income. In the UK, a petition with 114,574 signatures triggered a parliamentary debate on the introduction of universal basic income to help families during the pandemic. One suggestion would implement UBI as a 'negative income tax', paid through the monthly payroll, or in some other way for those with different tax or work circumstances. The negative income tax would then work as a flat refundable tax deduction - everyone in effect gets a tax cut, and those without much or any taxable income would get the basic income paid out in cash, or the difference between the basic income and the amount they owe in tax. Experiments have shown the wide range of benefits such a policy could have, but few have been designed to provide long-term benefits or to fill the evidence gaps that remain. If policymakers continue to design basic income pilots without addressing these issues, then they are likely to repeat the same mistakes. In doing so, they may even bolster their opponents' arguments that basic income cannot work.

(Chris Taylor is Academic Director, Cardiff University Social Sciences Research Park, in UK.)

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

#### Price level

People have been facing severe heat on the price front. The rise in the price level of essential food items has been going on for a long time, causing extreme hardship to the common people. Edible oils, pulses, sugar are selling at Rs 120-160, Rs 120-170 and Rs 50 per litre/kg respectively. Even the cost of non-edible oil for burning puja-lamps is selling at Rs 150 per litre, which is an evidence of unduly high rates. Besides, prices of other goods and services such as clothes, stationeries, footwear, toiletries, transportation, fuel et al are getting increasingly higher due to overall inflation. The excessive rise in price level has severely affected the daily wage-earners to make both ends meet and also eroded purchasing capacity of the middle class consumers. The political parties are currently busy in canvassing for their respective candidates for upcoming elections. The ruling political parties are very animatedly campaigning and is boasting for scoring a thumping victory, forgetting the peoples' woes in the context of unprecedented price hike. The voters should make the rising inflation a poll issue and persuade governments to lower the cost of essential goods and services for support to the party.

Pannalal, via email

#### Stay in India

Both Russia and Ukraine are at war and the eyes of the whole world are on them. Indians dreaming of going abroad should build their future by staying in India. Although it seems that after some time when the war stops, everything will be as before, but which country will fall on whom? It's hard to tell. The Government of India rescued students from Ukraine to India. When there was no war situation and when they had to come to India, they would have come at their own expense. Indian students who have returned from Ukraine are required to pay for the tickets themselves sensibly. It can be as much as a regular ticket. There should be no problem in depositing the ticket money in the Government's Social Welfare, Sainik Welfare Fund. For that necessary inquiries can be made in that department attached to the Central Government. There has been an immediate helping hand from the motherland itself during the difficult time ahead us. Keeping this in mind, it becomes a duty to donate your ticket money to such fund. The cost of bringing about 20,000 Indians to India by air was huge. The President of France has said that, "The world should be prepared for a long war." This thing indicates the negative events that will happen in the world in the coming times. Even if the war situation calms down over the next few days, it's uncertain when the war will resume. Therefore, Indians who want to go abroad for education and job should stop and stabilize their steps in India. With this, the physical and mental pain that can be caused by being in a difficult situation abroad can be avoided. Work hard to contribute to the progress of the country. This should be considered honestly. Now is the time to think carefully and move on.

Jayesh, via email

### WHAT THEY TWEET!

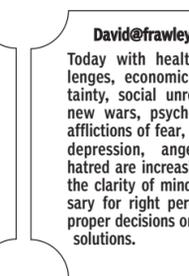


**KCSingh@ambkcsingh**  
Apropos #IndiaUSTies I've been saying on TV & in my pieces US wasn't seeking immediate ban of Russian oil imports by India. They wanted reassurance that big discount lure wouldn't cause ramped up oil imports. I suspect India has accepted that compromise.

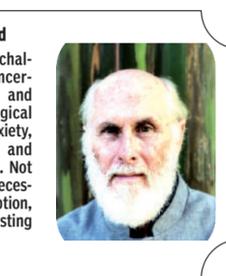
**Arvind@datta\_arvind**  
Inflation figures came in at 6.95% way above RBI's comfort levels. Now what options does RBI have. Change the composition of CPI basket to reflect the real consumption products, then it's definitely above 12%. RBI's inflation forecast for FY2023 is 5.7%.



**Akshath@nyayacarya**  
Anecdote: I went to renew my passport recently and was encountered by an individual at the embassy who was pleasantly surprised at me for having come to renew my passport rather than the renunciation of my citizenship.



**David@frawleyved**  
Today with health challenges, economic uncertainty, social unrest and new wars, psychological afflictions of fear, anxiety, depression, anger and hatred are increasing. Not the clarity of mind necessary for right perception, proper decisions or lasting solutions.



**Mona@MonaPatelT**  
Great place to see the Malabar giant squirrel ??#Kabini.



**Zucker@DoctorLFC**  
Quite ironic how some of the most talented and wealthiest cricketers in India are talking about their stories of actual struggle in advertisements of a fantasy sports platform that encourages people to sit at home and gamble. Paisa phek tamasha dekh. #Nightmare11

**Aankhi@AankhiGM**  
My entire timeline is discussing some dumb wannabe woman's attention seeking wedding. That is the level of peace this govt has afforded to us in India when the rest of the world is literally falling apart ?? If one really wants to understand politics.

**BRIEF**

**Production**



**New Delhi:** Triviron Healthcare on Thursday said it has set up its second ultrasound manufacturing facility in Mumbai. Triviron Healthcare Group CEO Chandra Ganjoo said with indigenous manufacturing, we will help to cutting down imports of ultrasound products.

**IPO**

**New Delhi:** Specialty chemical company Prasol Chemicals has filed preliminary papers with capital markets regulator Sebi to raise as much as Rs 800 crore through an initial share-sale. The IPO comprises fresh issue of equity shares aggregating up to Rs 250 crore and an offer-for-sale (OFS) of up to 90 lakh equity shares by existing shareholders, according to draft red herring prospectus (DRHP).

**Initiative**



**New Jersey:** TCS in partnership with CCEP and PYXERA Global, has announced a new slate of programmes and events for the 'Digital Empowers' initiative. TCS's Balaji Ganapathy said it is to explore how digital innovations can lead to solutions.

**Proposal**

**Patna:** Bihar has received an investment proposal of Rs 817 crore for setting up data centres across the state. Data management firm VueNow, which is planning the investment, will develop a four-tier data centre of 100 racks with Patna as the master hub. Four other centers will come up in Dharbhanga, Bhagalpur, Purnea and Buxar in the first phase.

**Chairman**



**Mumbai:** India Pulses and Grains Association (IPGA) on Thursday announced the appointment of Bimal Kothari as the new chairman with immediate effect. Kothari takes over from Jitu Bheda, who was the IPGA chairman since 2018, the industry body said.

**Double**

**Chennai:** Air conditioning and commercial refrigeration major Blue Star Ltd has set up a new manufacturing facility at Wada in Maharashtra at a cost of Rs 130 crore doubling the production capacity of deep freezers, a top company official said.

## Increased tax revenue mop-up keeps India on track

To becoming USD 5 trillion economy

**New Delhi, Apr 14 (PTI):**

The focus on capex in the recently announced Budget for the current fiscal year will boost manufacturing and tax revenue collections, thereby keeping India on track to becoming a USD 5 trillion economy, the finance ministry said on Thursday.

Tax revenues in last fiscal year grew by a record 34 per cent to Rs 27.07 lakh crore, which the ministry said is "a remarkable testimony to the rapid recovery" of the economy following successive waves of COVID-19. "The central government's focus on making India a global economic powerhouse and the host of measures adopted towards this commitment



has directly reflected in India's GDP growth in recent years. "This has translated into increased revenue collection for the exchequer while keeping India well on the track towards achieving a USD 5 trillion economy..." the ministry said in a statement.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi in 2019 envisioned making India a USD 5 trillion economy and a global economic powerhouse. The Indian GDP is estimated to be around USD 3 trillion in

2021-22. The ministry said apart from a brief setback owing to COVID-19, the government has maintained the nominal GDP growth above 10 per cent in recent years. GST, a simplified way of collecting indirect taxes, has been a revolutionary step propelling India's GDP.

"With a big push to capex in the Union Budget of 2022-23, the coming years are going to see a surge in domestic manufacturing as well as growth in employment. These in turn will directly boost tax contribution to the exchequer," the ministry said.

The gross corporate taxes during 2021-22 was Rs 8.6 lakh crore against Rs 6.5 lakh crore in the previous year.

## Body Shop announces price reductions of Best-Sellers

**Mumbai, Apr 14:**

The Body Shop-the Original, Ethical and Activist British beauty brand, announces their strategic affordability platform - "Falling for You" - through which The Body Shop's top selling essentials will now be available at a flat price of Rs.595 in India. Spanning its top 12 SKUs in the brand's best-selling products in skincare and haircare categories, this strategic price reduction has been undertaken keeping in mind the post-pandemic spending habits of consumers and to strengthen its positioning as an affordable yet high quality, natural, sustainable beauty brand. The new pricing strategy in India entails reduction by 20-50% on iconic favorites including its top

selling Tea Tree and Vitamin E ranges amongst others. The Body Shop India's "Falling for You" range includes entry level, full size products such as facial washes, 100% Vegan haircare and high performing skincare. This includes Vitamin C Facial Wash, Tea Tree Skin Clearing Facial Wash, Moringa Shine & Protection Shampoo and Conditioner, Tea Tree Purifying & Balancing Shampoo and Conditioner, The Body Shop Ginger Anti Dandruff Shampoo and Conditioner, Banana Truly Nourishing Shampoo and Conditioner, Shea Intense Repair Shampoo and Conditioner. These will now be available at reduced prices in India across all its brand stores as well as online on www.thebodyshop.

## Road ministry completes 1,41,190 km of NH as of Mar 31

**New Delhi, Apr 14 (PTI):**

The road transport ministry has completed 1,41,190 kilometre of national highways as on March 31 this year out of the set target of 2 lakh km for 2024-25, the commerce and industry ministry said on Thursday.

Similarly, the petroleum ministry has completed laying of a gas pipeline of 20,000 km out of 34,500 km targeted for the same period and the power ministry has also surpassed its target for laying the transmission network of 4,54,200 km till the end of March 2022.

Ministry-wise progress of such projects was discussed during a review meeting on PM GatiShakti on April 13. It was chaired by

## Petronet may look at building 4th LNG import terminal

**New Delhi, Apr 14 (PTI):**

Petronet LNG Ltd, the operator of the world's largest liquefied natural gas (LNG) import terminal, may look at setting up a fourth facility in the country to meet the rising energy demand in Asia's third-largest economy, its CEO AK Singh said.

Petronet operates a 17.5 million tonnes a year LNG import facility at Dahej in Gujarat and another 5 million tonnes facility at Kochi in Kerala. It is looking to set up a floating LNG import terminal at Gopalpur in Odisha in the next 3 years at a cost of Rs 1,600 crore. "We believe gas demand will continue to grow and we will need avenues to meet such requirement," he told PTI in an interview. With limited domestic production, gas demand will have to be met through imports. "We could possibly look at setting up a fourth LNG im-



port and regasification terminal," he said without giving details. "These are preliminary thoughts and we will come back to you once plans are firm up."

Natural gas consumption will have to rise to over 500 million standard cubic meters per day from the current 165 mmscmd to achieve the government's goal of raising the share of natural gas in the country's primary energy basket to 15 per cent by 2030 from the current 6.7 per cent. With domestic production of gas barely

meeting half of the current consumption, import of gas in the form of LNG will have to grow.

According to Shell, India would need 35 to 40 million tonnes of additional LNG imports between 2020 to 2040. (1 million tonnes of LNG is equal to 3.60 mmscmd). Besides Petronet's terminals, India currently has an operational import facility at Hazira and Mundra in Gujarat, Dabhol in Maharashtra and Ennore in Tamil Nadu (all 5 million tonnes per annum ca-

capacity each).

Singh said Petronet plans to make a foray into the petrochemical business by investing Rs 12,500 crore in a Propane Dehydrogenation Plant at Dahej to convert imported feedstock into propylene.

"We plan to build a jetty at Dahej for import of ethane and propane.

While propane will be used as feedstock for our petrochemical plant, ethane will be for sale to petrochemical plants of other companies such as that of OPAL," he said.

## Amazon.in launches one stop store to help avid cricket fans

**New Delhi, Apr 14:**

With the ongoing cricket season, Amazon.in has launched a one stop store to help avid cricket fans to shop from the comfort of their homes and enjoy the gamewith exciting offers on cricket accessories, sportswear, TV, appliances, Amazon devices, Prime video and much more. The offers and deals will be available till May 29, 2022.

The store will dial up the cricket fever with exciting deals on sports essentials with up to 70% off on protective gear, clothes, shoes, cricket bats, balls, kits, and complete sets across brands like Puma, Adidas New Balance, Cosco, among others. Choose your most liked jersey and sportswear from our cricket collection

across brands such as Nike, Fila, New Balance, Jockey, Monte Carlo and many more. Cricket enthusiasts can also enjoy this IPL season at home while shopping for TVs, refrigerators, air conditioners, microwaves, barbecue grills and popcorn makers, among others. The store also has a wide range of munchies to enjoy during match time, furniture to relax and watch the match, books that tell the story of cricketers, fitness equipment to keep up the adrenaline rush, grooming kits to get that look of your favourite cricketer, video games and cricket posters. Fans can also cheer the loudest for their favourite team with Alexa on any Echo, Fire TV, Alexa-enabled smart devices, and stay updated this cricket season.

## Honda unveils City e:HEV sedan, launch next month



**New Delhi, Apr 14 (PTI):**

Japanese auto major Honda Cars on Thursday unveiled its new offering for the Indian market - City e:HEV sedan, marking its foray into the mainstream strong hybrid electric vehicle segment in the country.

The company, which is present in India through a wholly-owned subsidiary,

has commenced the bookings of the model and plans to introduce it in the market next month.

As per the company, the model, an extension of its City model range, would feature self-charging two-motor strong hybrid system connected to a 1.5 litre petrol engine, entailing a peak power of 126 PS and fuel efficiency of 26.5 km per litre.

The model would also come with various safety features including a high-performance front camera with a wide-angle, far-reaching detection system to scan the road ahead and alert the driver to minimise risk of accidents and in some cases intervene to avoid a collision or lessen its severity. In an interaction with PTI, the

President & CEO of Honda Cars India Takuya Tsumura noted that introduction of the model marks the start of the company's journey towards introduction of new-age electrified models in the country.

"We are committing to electric vehicles and towards carbon neutrality by 2050 globally. That is the company's direction. In India we are starting with City e:HEV and of course based on Honda's direction we will see what is the best solution we can bring to the market here," he said.

Honda globally plans to launch 30 EV models by 2030, with an annual production volume of more than two million units. The auto major aims to invest around USD 40 billion over the next 10 years in the EV space.

## BMW launches new F 900 XR bike at Rs 12.3 lakh

**New Delhi, Apr 14 (PTI):** German luxury carmaker BMW on Thursday said it has launched the updated version of F 900 XR bike in India priced at Rs 12.3 lakh (ex-showroom).

The adventure sports tourer will be available as a completely built-up unit (CBU) and can be booked at BMW Motorrad dealerships, the company said in a statement.

Deliveries of the bike will commence from June 2022, it added. "BMW Motorrad has brought the world's finest premium motorcycles to India and created a distinct place for itself among motorcycling enthusiasts. XR represents an uncompromising combination of athleticism and long-distance riding



performance," BMW Group India President Vikram Pawah noted.

The new profile of adventure sports tourer F 900 XR's unique performance

is combined with powerful features that further enhance riding in a distinctive and future-oriented style of a genuine XR, he added.

## Govt wants to ease compliance burden on pharma industry



**Mumbai, Apr 14 (PTI):**

Union Chemicals and Fertilizers Minister Mansukh Mandaviya on Thursday said the government wants to reduce the compliance burden on the pharma industry for the ease of doing business.

Addressing an event of the Indian Drug Manufacturers' Association (IDMA) here,

Mandaviya, who is also the Minister for Health and Family Welfare, said that the Narendra Modi-led government at the Centre is not only pro-poor and pro-farmer but "industry-friendly" as well.

The IDMA is commemorating 60 years of its establishment this year.

"We want the ease of doing business for the industry and lessen the

compliance burden on it. This is why we always carry out consultations with all stakeholders prior to the formulation of any policy or regulation (governing the pharma industry)," Mandaviya said.

Our Government is pro-poor, pro-farmer and industry-friendly government. It is dedicated to the poor and farmers but at the same time it is an industry-friendly government as well," he emphasized.

Stating that the industry plays an important role in nation-building and also in achieving self-reliance, the minister said that the Indian pharma industry is known in the world which is due to the efforts of both the government and the industry.

## Reliance Jewels launches 'Rannkaar' collection this Akshaya Tritiya

**Mumbai, Apr 14:**

Reliance Jewels, one of India's leading jewellery brands is known for its many collections inspired by the art and culture, traditions and beliefs that personify India's rich and diverse heritage. From Utkala inspired by Odisha to Kaasyam inspired by Banaras, Reliance Jewels continues to bring forth the rich and diverse heritage of India through its jewellery designs. Reliance Jewels has launched an exquisite collection of fine jewellery, "Rannkaar" to mark the auspicious festival of Akshaya Tritiya.

The collection is inspired by the Rann of Kutch and its diverse

heritage. Kutch to the enchanting Rann and a ka of vibrant Customers get from a variety of designs. Reliance Jewels pieces inspired by the vibrant and beautiful art forms of Kutch like Ajrakh - an age old block printing technique, Rogan - a beautiful painting form using rich natural colours, Lippan - Stunning craftsmanship where mirrors are carved on walls, the vibrant Kutch Embroidery, Bhandhani - A popular tie-and-dye technique that are loved by many and lastly the beautiful Wood-work from Kutch. To celebrate and honour the rich cultural legacy of India and

the festivity of Akshaya Tritiya event for their Reliance Jewels collection. The collection offers an extensive choice to patrons choose from the magnificent and luxurious opulent choker sets to long, intricate, and elegant necklace sets along with beautiful designs of bangles and rings in 22kt Gold that brings out the beauty of Kutch alive. Commenting on the newest collection, Sunil Nayak, CEO of Reliance Jewels said, "India has a

very vast and precious heritage which is an integral part of our country's roots. We hold pride in exploring this inheritance and bringing the finest jewellery designs from deep roots of our culture & art forms.

For the auspicious occasion of Akshaya Tritiya which is considered to bring luck and success in each one's lives, we are pleased to offer "Rannkaar", our exquisitely created ornate collection inspired by the Rann of Kutch continuing our design legacy. Each gold and diamond necklace, earrings, rings, and bangles in this collection are unique and represent the different art, tradition, and heritage of Kutch."

## Pooja Hegde's inconsequential role in 'Beast' disappoints her fans

'Beast,' starring Vijay and Pooja Hegde was released on Wednesday. Pooja Hegde, who has become one of the most popular heroines in recent times, has appeared in a role that is essentially an extended cameo. Apart from one song in the first half, she doesn't have much of an impact, which has upset her slowly increasing fandom. Starring Vijay as the lead, Pooja's role in Nelson Dilipkumar's directorial seems to be disappointing to the viewers. "Nobody would have recognised her if it hadn't been for the two songs released prior to the film's release. This is disappointing at many levels", one of her fans said at one of the theatres in Hyderabad, on Wednesday.

Star actresses are downgraded to only making cameo appearances in songs in superstar films, which seems to have changed in recent movies. However, in 'Beast,' Pooja Hegde played a silly role with no significance to the story, which changes the perspective that heroines are given equal importance in big-budget films starring popular heroes. Pooja Hegde, who had appeared in super hit movies like 'Maharshi', 'DJ-Duvvada Jagannadham', 'Aravinda Sametha Veera Raghava', 'Ala Vaikunthapuramloo', has been in limelight for a long time now.

## Priya Lal to play leading lady in 'Gentleman 2'

Actress Priya Lal is to play the second female lead in Tamil film producer K T Kunjumon's much-awaited upcoming film 'Gentleman 2'.

Taking to Twitter, the producer posted a picture of him welcoming the actress with a flower and said, "The enthusiastic Priya Lal will be another lead actress in our Mega movie 'Gentleman2'." Nayanthara Chakravarthy, who has acted in over 30 films in Malayalam, Tamil and Telugu as a child artiste, will be making her debut as the lead actress in the film.

As a child artiste, Nayanthara Chakravarthy has acted with several top stars including Rajinikanth, Mohanlal and Mammooty. Kunjumon, who is known for having produced a number of blockbusters in Tamil, including the Prabhu Devastarrer 'Kadhalan' and the Vineeth and Abbas-starrer 'Kadhal Desam', is credited with having introduced Shankar as a director with 'Gentleman'. After a long break, he has now returned to producing films and is looking to make a comeback with 'Gentleman 2'. Music director MM Keeravani, who is known for having scored music for pan-Indian blockbusters like 'Baahubali', has been roped in to score music for the film.



## Raima Sen opens up on the challenges of doing action sequences in 'Mai'

Actress Raima Sen is all set to be seen as antagonist Neelam in the upcoming series 'Mai'. The actress for the first time is doing a character with grey shades and also performing a lot of action-packed sequences.

Sharing more about her experience, Raima shares: "Initially, I found it difficult because the gun was heavy and I couldn't even press my finger against the trigger. However, after working with an action master, I realised that the most important thing is to just stay in the zone."

"The idea was to make the action sequences come out as realistic and still have a cinematic edge to it. Eventually, it turned out really well. Needless to say, it was quite a thrilling experience," she adds.

'Mai' revolves around a middle-class mother (Sakshi Tanwar) whose daughter (Wamiqa Gabbi) is run over by a truck right in front of her eyes. Now Sakshi wants to take revenge from those responsible for her daughter's death.

'Mai' will be streaming from April 15 on Netflix.



## Baal Shiv completes 100-episodes



It is celebration time for &TV's Baal Shiv as the show completes 100-episodes! Baal Shiv, Mahadev Ki Undekhi Gatha, showcases the beautiful, endearing relationship between a mother and son - Mahasati Anusuya and Baal Shiv. In a short time, the show has become the audience's favourite. The show's lead cast, Baal Shiv - Aan Tiwari, Mahasati Anusuya - Mouli Ganguly, Mahadev - Siddharth Arora, Devi Parvati - Shivya Pathania, and Tarkasur - Kapil Nirmal, talk about their journey in the show and excitement on achieving the 100-episode milestone.

Baal Shiv, aka Aan Tiwari, said, "Har-Har Mahadev! I am grateful to the viewers for their overwhelming support for Baal Shiv and my character. I am an ardent Mahadev devotee and

playing his Baal Roop has been a dream role for me. The character has struck a chord with the audience so much that many people have started calling me Baal Shiv instead of Aan, and I love that". Mahasati Anusuya, aka Mouli Ganguly, said, "It is 100-episodes already! The time truly flies. It has been fun shooting with Aan, Siddharth, and Shivya along with the other casts, especially the children. We all share a very close bond and have become one big happy family. It is truly a big moment for us, and we all are very excited. Anusuya is a very strong character, and it is quite different from what I have done before. Thanks to the audience for showing such overwhelming support for my character and our show. And now, it has reached the milestone of 100 episodes.

## 'Ek Mahanayak-Dr B.R. Ambedkar' gets underway in &TV

The birth of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, reverently called Babasaheb, is celebrated with great enthusiasm and honour across the country every year on April 14. To mark the 131st birth anniversary celebration of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, something exciting is in store for viewers of &TV's show Ek Mahanayak-Dr B.R. Ambedkar from 14th April-19th April.

In the track, Ramji Sakpal (Jagannath Nivangune) along with Ramabai (Narayani Varne) and people from the chawl where they reside will have a surprise birthday celebration planned for Bhimrao (Atharva). On the morning of his birthday, everyone gives their blessings and presents Bhimrao with a bouquet.

While it seems like it is just another day, Bhimrao finds Ramabai writing a letter and gets curious. Ramabai then tells him that he can see the letter only if he takes her out to the beach. Upon returning to the chawl, Bhimrao is surprised, looking at the beautifully decorated chawl. He is more startled by his elder brother, Bala's presence after years - playing the dhol and this takes him down memory lane and recalling their childhood memories. Much to his delight, Bala is joined by



Sethji, Panditji, Mangesh, Dhruv and Bhim's teacher, Ambedkar Guruji from Satara along with his sisters Ganga, Manjula and his Rakhi sister, Madhvi. Bhim gets extremely emotional reminiscing his childhood in Satara and he fondly remembers his Aai, Bhimabai (Neha Joshi) and the indescribable bond that he shared with her. Viewers will also be in for a surprise with a song sequence dedicated to Bhimrao.

Talking about the special episode, Bhimrao (Atharva) says, "It is indeed a very special mo-

ment. We get to celebrate Ambedkar Jayanti on the show and have the entire cast - past and present seen in the show. The special episode is heartwarming and has beautiful moments, especially between Bhimrao and Bhimabai. It is a reunion of sorts for the entire cast. Babasaheb is one of the most prominent voices in Indian history. Be it his fight for equality, women empowerment, or his involvement in the reformation of education - he has impacted the lives of every Indian. This episode is our special tribute to Babasaheb on his birthday."

## HOROSCOPE FRIDAY APRIL 15

### Aquarius: Jan 21 - Feb 18

There is a possibility that you'll fall into a bit of a regression today as old feelings of anxiety or inadequacy surface. Although you've reached a good place in terms of self-confidence, some old childhood fears could resurface.

### Pisces: Feb 19 - Mar 20

OK, up and at 'em, Pisces! You might feel like you're walking through sand today, but you really need to shake your booty and get the blood flowing. If you don't get up and do something, you'll be a slug all day. You need to clear your head and cast off that bloated feeling. Most importantly, you want to get a good start to the day so you can accomplish everything that awaits you.

### Gemini: May 22 - June 21

Things could be up and down for you today, Gemini. You might experience some confusion as a result of communication snafus or computer glitches that affect financial issues you're trying to solve. Persevere and you'll succeed. Don't be surprised if you're recruited to join a project that is totally new to you.

### Cancer: June 22 - July 22

You might be feeling a little tense because you and your partner are grappling with some thorny financial issues right now, Cancer. You could be frustrated because you need to postpone some purchases or investments until the cash starts flowing more freely again.

### Libra: Sept 23 - Oct 23

Tugs on the home front could be pulling you away from attending an event with friends that you've been looking forward to for some time. Try to be reasonable and sort out the needs of those at home with kindness in your heart. You might be able to address those issues and still have time to be with your friends later.

### Scorpio: Oct 24 - Nov 22

Cool heads will be needed today, Scorpio, as tempers may flare at work because of frustration with ongoing problems. You might need to take the lead in keeping everyone calm by facilitating clear and open communication. It will be important to keep emotions in check or words will fly that people may regret.

### Aries: Mar 21 - Apr 20

You could be startled to find that your artistic talents, although dormant for a while, are called into service today. A particular undertaking of those around you could benefit from your gift in this area. Don't panic, Aries, you won't be expected to do this alone. Others will pitch in and help.

### Leo: July 23 - Aug 23

This will be an exciting day for you intellectually, Leo. A number of intriguing concepts will catch your fancy, and you'll be hungry to learn more about them right away. Your research could take you to a library or onto the Internet. The topics might relate to social or political issues.

### Sagittarius: Nov 23 - Dec 21

If you find yourself second-guessing plans you made earlier, Sagittarius, perhaps for a plane trip, try to look objectively at your concerns. You don't have to cancel everything if you have money worries. Your fears will probably turn out to be unfounded.

### Taurus: Apr 21 - May 21

This could be a tough day for you emotionally. It might surprise you to find that some very old, deep-seated feelings get churned up in the course of investigating a subject of keen interest to you. It might be difficult to process these feelings. Don't try to intellectualize them too much, Taurus.

### Virgo: Aug 24 - Sept 22

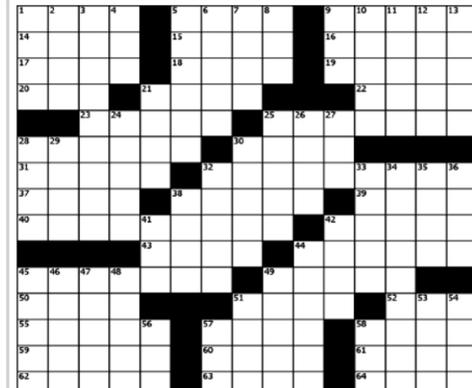
You'll want to respond to your creative juices, which will be flowing freely today, Virgo. Don't suppress the urge to sing, compose, paint, or write. You'll be in the full flower of creativity, so make the most of it. You'll be able to take care of your daily obligations and still make room for your creative expression.

### Capricorn: Dec 22 - Jan 20

You might find yourself wrestling some ongoing, unresolved issues that could interfere with your ability to do your job. Be mindful that you're a bit brittle today, particularly if you're working on financial matters, Capricorn. The last thing you want is a major battle with those around you, so do your best to keep a cool head.

## CROSSWORD

270



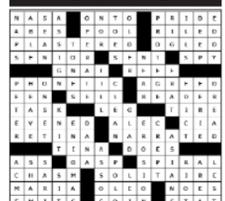
### ACROSS

- Singer \_\_\_\_\_ Seeger
- Mama's man
- Spaghetti, e.g.
- God of love
- Oodles (2 wds.)
- Map book
- Ready to pick
- Ascend
- Hen's perch
- Media mogul \_\_\_\_\_ Turner

### DOWN

- Cheeky
- Cleveland's waterfront
- Highest price (2 wds.)
- Opposite of WNW
- Talking pet
- Foreigner
- Sit for an artist
- Consumed
- Average
- Make up for
- Sailboat
- A sense
- Fall flower
- Heltsinki native
- Lowest tides
- Dish out
- Gentle

### SOLUTION 269



## Resurgent and rejigged SRH ready for KKR challenge

Mumbai, Apr 14 (PTI):

Back to winning ways, a resurgent Sunrisers Hyderabad will be forced to tinker their successful combination following Washington Sundar's injury as they face Kolkata Knight Riders in the IPL here on Friday.

After a subdued start to the tournament, SRH turned things around with back-to-back wins over Chennai Super Kings and Gujarat Titans, and Kane Williamson's team is now eyeing a hat-trick of victories.

However Washington, a vital cog in the SRH wheels, will be missing in action after he sustained a split webbing on his bowling hand while fielding against GT.

Washington plays the dual role of restricting the batters with his spin bowling and chipping in with some runs as a floater. He has taken four wickets and scored a half-century so far in the season.

But coach Tom Moody has made it clear that he won't be available for at least two matches and it will be interesting to see who replaces the all-rounder in the XI.

Hyderabad have the op-



tion of Shreyas Gopal and Jagadeesha Suchith in the spin department or they might give another chance to Abdul Samad, who looked ordinary in the first two matches.

For Sunrisers, it was the batting failure which was hurting them as they faltered in their first two chases, but the team addressed the problem with openers Abhishek Sharma and Williamson producing

the goods in the last two outings.

If Sharma shone with match-winning knocks of 75 and 42, Williamson scored 32 and 57 to set up the chase in the last two games.

Rahul Tripathi was looking good against GT before he retired hurt following what seemed like a cramp, and his availability will be crucial for SRH.

In Tripathi's absence,

Nicholas Pooran and Aiden Markram completed the job against GT and the team will expect them to show consistency and take the responsibility in the middle-order.

In bowling, Marco Jansen have taken a wicket each in the last two games, while his pace colleagues T Natarajan and Bhuvneshwar Kumar have contributed with crucial wickets. KKR are

heading into the match after a loss against Delhi Capitals but it remains a formidable side and would look to bounce back from the reversal.

The Knight Riders are placed in the second spot with six points from five outings.

Shreyas Iyer and Co. were blown away by the batting might of Delhi, their formidable bowling attack looking toothless against the brilliance of David Warner and Prithvi Shaw.

Umesh Yadav had his first bad day of the season as he conceded 48 runs for one wicket. Ditto for Pat Cummins as the Australian skipper bled 51 in his four overs. Varun Chakravarthy and Andre Russell went for 44 and 16 in their respective spells.

While Iyer did the bulk of the scoring with a 54 in the last match, the poor form of opener Ajinkya Rahane is a cause of concern for KKR. Venkatesh Iyer, too, couldn't set the stage ablaze and has just one fifty to show for from his five innings.

Former champions KKR will also hope for more consistency from the likes of Nitish Rana, Andre Russell and Sam Billings.

## I am not concerned about Rohit's form: Jayawardene



Pune, Apr 14 (PTI):

Mumbai Indians coach Mahela Jayawardene says it's just a "matter of time" before skipper Rohit Sharma plays a big knock, something which his team desperately needs to arrest its slide in IPL-15.

The MI captain has failed to capitalise on the starts, managing just 108 runs at an average of 21.60 this season.

"If you look at the way he starts, the way he hits the ball, it's brilliant. He's timing it, he's getting some really, really good starts. Yes he's disappointed as

well, that he's not being able to convert them," Jayawardene said.

"We've seen Rohit batting deep, batting for 14-15 overs and getting those big scores. It's just a matter of time. He's a quality player and I am not concerned about the form as such."

MI on Wednesday suffered a 12-run loss at the hands of Punjab Kings -- their fifth successive defeat -- to inch closer to elimination.

Chasing 199, Rohit (28) and Ishan Kishan (3) got out cheaply as MI were found struggling at 32 for 2 in 4.1 overs.

Young Dewald Brevis (49 off 25) and Tilak Varma (36 off 20) added 84 runs for the third wicket after MI decided to hold back Suryakumar Yadav, who came out to bat at number five, instead of his usual position at four.

Suryakumar made 43 off 30 balls before being dismissed in the 19th over.

"Today was to try and take the game deep, because we were playing with six batters. And there's no better person than Surya to finish a game off," Jayawardene said.

"In the powerplay, they would swing the ball a bit and all that. So I didn't want Surya to go into that situation and not be able to play his natural game also. It was just a tactical thing."

The 44-year-old said the idea was to give the youngsters more freedom in the middle as Suryakumar and Kieron Pollard play the role of finishers.

"The two young guys, we know what they are capable of. So given them a bit of freedom to go and control that situation, so that Polly and Surya are able to chase that. That was the initial thinking."

"It's a call that we will take depending on how we've set up tactically against certain opposition."

## Olympic champion Chopra to compete against Peters, Vetter



### In Word Athletics Continental Gold Meet in Finland

Turku (Finland), Apr 14 (PTI):

Olympic champion Neeraj Chopra is pitted against current world champion Anderson Peters and 2017 world champion Johannes Vetter in the men's javelin throw event at the at the World Athletics Continental Tour Gold meet here on Thursday.

Julian Weber, the fourth-place finisher at the Tokyo Olympic Games, adds further depth and quality to the event. It will be the first time all four men will meet in a final.

Chopra, who is currently training at Belek, Turkey, made history when he won in Tokyo last year, earning India's first Olympic gold medal in athletics and instantly becoming a sport-

ing superstar in his home country. Earlier in the season, he had broken his own national record with 88.07m.

Before the Olympics, Vetter had dominated the event for the best part of two years. The German moved to second on the world all-time list when he threw 97.76m in Silesia in 2020. He returned to the Polish region last year and came close to matching that throw with 96.29m, the third-best throw in history. Although Peters went undefeated for the whole of 2019, the Grenadian was still something of a surprise winner of the world title in Doha that year. Earlier in the season he had won the NCAA title, then broke his own national record to win at the Pan-American Games with 87.31m. Weber may not have a global title to his name, but he is a consistent performer on the circuit and at major championships.

## Liverpool in Champions League semis

Liverpool, Apr 14 (AP):

A place in the Champions League semifinals secured. The dream of an unprecedented quadruple of trophies still intact. Key players rested amid a hectic schedule.

Liverpool is in a good place entering the home straight of what could turn out to be the club's greatest ever season.

Even conceding two late goals to draw 3-3 at home to Benfica couldn't take the smile of Jurgen Klopp's face.

"The day we qualify for the semifinals of the Champions League and I'm not happy, please come here and knock me out," the Liverpool manager said Wednesday after seeing his team advance from the quarterfinals 6-4 on aggregate.

With Liverpool inflicting significant damage by winning the first leg 3-1 in Lisbon last week, Klopp was confident enough to rest stars like Mohamed Salah, Sadio Mane, Virgil van Dijk and Trent Alexander-Arnold for a return match against Benfica that turned into a wild, end-to-end contest at Anfield. Roberto



Liverpool's Brazilian midfielder Roberto Firmino celebrates after scoring his team third goal during the UEFA Champions League quarter final second leg football match between Liverpool and Benfica at the Anfield stadium, in Liverpool.

Firmino's second-half double put Liverpool 3-1 ahead on the night and 6-2 ahead on aggregate, only for Klopp's team to ease off the pace. Benfica took advantage by getting behind Liverpool's makeshift defense to score through substitute Roman Yaremchuk and rising star Darwin Nunez, but the gap was too much to make up.

"It was pretty comfortable," Liverpool captain Jordan Henderson said,

"but we're disappointed with the goals we conceded." Ultimately, Liverpool has coasted into the last four of Europe's top club competition and is there for the 12th time tying the record for an English team with Manchester United and the first since the last of its six title triumphs in 2019. Villarreal awaits Liverpool in the last four. Despite the Spanish team eliminating both Juventus and Bayern Munich and

its coach, Unai Emery, being a master strategist of European competitions, it's pretty much a dream scenario for Klopp and his team.

The quadruple of major trophies might really be on for Liverpool, already the winner of the English League Cup, currently in second place in Premier League just a point behind Manchester City and into the semifinals of the FA Cup.

## England pacer Anya Shrubsole announces retirement

London, Apr 14 (PTI):

England pacer Anya Shrubsole, a two-time Women's World Cup winner, on Thursday announced her retirement from international cricket after a 14-year-old career.

The 30-year-old, known for her sharp inswingers, played eight Tests, 86 ODIs and 79 T20s taking 19, 106 and 102 wickets respectively.

Shrubsole had famously taken six for 46, which remains her career best figures, against India in the World Cup final against India five years ago. She was also part of 2009 victorious squad and more recently the team that lost to Australia in the final earlier this month. "I feel immensely privileged to have been able to represent my country for the past 14 years. To have been involved in women's cricket at a time of such growth has been an honour but it has become clear to me that it is moving forward faster than I can keep up with,

so it is time for me to step away," she said in a statement. "Never in my wildest dreams did I think I would be lucky enough to play for England for so long, I'd have been happy with one game."



## Pujara, Rizwan make Sussex debut in County cricket

Derby (England), Apr 14 (PTI):

India's Cheteshwar Pujara and Pakistan's Mohammad Rizwan on Thursday made their Sussex debut for the game against hosts Derbyshire in the County Championships Division 2 here. While Pujara has played first-class cricket in England in the past, it is the first outing for Pakistan wicketkeeper batter. Both were named in the Sussex playing eleven which is captained by Tom Daines. With Derbyshire opting to bat, Pujara and Rizwan are expected to bat on day two.

Both the players stand at the opposite end of their international careers. While Pujara will be aiming to score a bagful of runs to make a Test comeback after being dropped following the tour of South Africa, Rizwan has been one of the best wicket-keeper batters in international cricket over the last couple of years. With Sussex having lost their opening game, head coach Ian Salisbury included both overseas stars for the contest against Derbyshire.

## Aishwarya Tomar wins at selection trials, Rajput second



New Delhi, Apr 14 (PTI):

Madhya Pradesh's Aishwarya Pratap Singh Tomar won the men's 50m rifle 3 positions T4 (fourth trial) competition, getting the better of seasoned Haryana shooter Sanjeev Rajput at the national selection trials here on Thursday.

In the gold medal contest, Tomar shot 404.9 to finish ahead of Rajput (400.7) at the Dr Karni Singh Shooting Range.

Both Tomar and Rajput are Olympians and if the result at the trials is any indication, the two remain

India's best bet in 3P event, notwithstanding the change in format. Unfortunately, it is also a reflection of the lack of depth and the absence of young talents in the men's 3P event. Navy's G Purusothaman finished third with 395.8, while Rajan Tomar of the Army settled for the fourth position with a score of 391.0 in the final stage elimination.

Army's Nishan Budha, who finished last among the eight finalists, topped the qualification with a total score of 586, while eventual winner Tomar was placed second with 584.

Kolkata, Apr 14 (PTI):

In 2008, when Tim Southee was making waves in competitive cricket as a 19-year-old, Umesh Yadav had only started considering a career in the sport.

Nearly a decade and a half later, Southee, a year younger and 366 international wickets ahead of Umesh, is so impressed with his Kolkata Knight Riders teammate's bowling in IPL-15, that the New Zealander is backing him to wear the India jersey again in the shortest format, having last played a T20I more than three years ago.

"I'm a fan of Umesh, he is a tremendous bowler. I was fortunate enough to share the new ball with him a few times when we both played at RCB," Southee said in an interview to PTL.

"The way he's been managed suits Umesh's style of bowling. If he keeps performing the way he's been doing I can't see why he would not do well for India in T20 cricket." Maintaining a great line and



length, the 34-year-old Umesh has been very effective for KKR this season, giving crucial breakthroughs in the powerplays. He has taken 10 wickets from five matches so far, at an economy of 6.60 while bowling the highest number of dot balls (62).

His scalps include those of Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma inside the powerplay, while against Punjab Kings, he delivered a magical double-wicket maiden in the middle overs to

## I can't see why Umesh would not do well for India in T20 cricket: Southee

(McCullum) and (captain) Shreyas (Iyer) have used him obviously as an attacking weapon with the new ball, maximising his strengths with the new ball and coming back in the middle overs to try and pick up wickets make the phase a bit easier.

"He's had a strong start to the tournament. To open the bowling with some of the great bowlers, and someone who you don't usually get to deal with, that's the beauty of this tournament, you are able to open the bowling with the very fine Indian fast bowler."

With premier Australian fast bowler Pat Cummins leading the pace attack, and Sunil Narine and Varun Chakravarthy handling the spin department, KKR have their bases covered in the bowling department, Southee said.

"It's really exciting. You look at the experience and the pace that the three have and then we throw in the exciting talents of the young Indian bowlers who we have in our side."

"On top of that you have got two of the great mystery spin-

ners of the game so I think as a bowling attack that covers all the bases. "It's great to be a part of such a great lineup. You got the experience of Sunil Narine, Pat and Umesh and then throw in some exciting young Indian talents, it's great to be around."

**Impressed with young pace duo**

Southee also praised the young pace duo of Raskh Salam and Ashok Sharma. The 22-year-old Kashmir pacer, Raskh made his debut for the franchise against his former team Mumbai Indians and was tidy against the explosive duo of Rohit Sharma and Ishan Kishan, returning with figures of 0/18 from his three overs.

"Raskh Salam who played his first game the other day is just a very skilful bowler and can swing the ball both ways. Then there's Ashok (Sharma). "It's always an eye-opener when you come to India and see these young Indian talented guys. They are asking some tough questions which are great to see," Southee concluded.

## TRADITIONAL DANCE



Youngsters belonging to Assamese community perform a traditional dance on the occasion of Rongali Bihu festival, at Tezpur in Sonitpur district, Thursday.

### Vanmali awards for writers announced

**Bhopal, Apr 14 (PTI):** The prestigious Rashtriya Vanmali Katha Samman awards will be given in eight categories this year including NRI literature and science writing, its organizers announced here on Thursday.

The literature awards have been instituted by Vanmali Srijan Peeth and Rabindra Nath Tagore University (RNTU) in memory of the late Jagannath Prasad Choubhe Vanmali, an acclaimed Hindi writer. The first Vanmali Kathasheersh Samman will be given to professor Dhananjay Verma, while the Vanmali Rashtriya Katha Samman will be given to Delhi-based writer Geetanjali Shri.

## 'Reskilling of coal mine workers must for transition towards renewable energy'

**REPORT CLAIMS**

**New Delhi, Apr 14 (PTI):**

The country needs a strong action plan to reskill coal mine workers in order to protect their interests while making a transition from conventional fuel to renewable energy usage, a report said on Thursday.

India's power sector is one of the most diversified ones in the world. The country's thermal power generation by coal accounts for 62 per cent of its total generation capacity, a joint report of EY, SED Fund and FICCI said.

It also noted that India has been consistently working at a global level to reduce emission intensity to attain its net-zero target for 2070.

"For the transition from conventional to clean fuel-based energy generation, it will be imperative to protect the interests of coal mine workers through a holistic approach, and a strong skill action plan is needed to transition from coal to renewable energy," said the report titled as 'Skill action plan to fuel transition from coal to renewable energy in India'.

Somesh Kumar, Partner

and Leader, Power & Utilities, EY India, said while the 'just transition' theme in the Indian context is an evolving one, it is of utmost importance to plan this evolution in a strategic manner to have a smooth transition, especially for the workforce involved across the value chains of these fossil fuels.

According to the report, coal mines create over 7.25 lakh direct jobs and many more indirect jobs. With the phasing out of old coal plants and shutting down of mines, thousands of coal mine workers are at risk of disruption in liveli-

hood in states like West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand and Maharashtra.

"Most of them are blue-collared workers who need to be upskilled with the newer skills of the hour. Apart from the direct workers, the entire economy of mining districts revolves around coal-related activities, and communities have relied on it for generations," it said.

Amit Vatsyayan, Partner and Leader (Social & Skills sector), Government and Public Sector, EY India, said that skills and entrepreneur-

ship development will play a key role in the just transition of coal mine workers.

"The report focuses on the development of a replicable 'just transition' framework which can be used by districts or states to ensure that livelihood disruption of the impacted coal mine workers is minimised, and ample opportunities are provided to them. Only when the interests of the poorest and most economically vulnerable are protected, the transition may be termed as just transition," Vatsyayan said.

Menace of stray cattle, abandoned by their owners, had become a major talking point in the Uttar Pradesh elections. The NITI Aayog member highlighted the advantage of producing bio-CNG from cow dung.

"So rather than it (gas) damaging the environment, we will use it as energy which will give returns also," he argued. The eminent agriculture economist observed that leaving unwanted cattle in the open is also harmful for crops. "That's why we are working on the gaushala economy," he asserted.

## 'Niti working on gaushala economy to address stray cattle issue'

**New Delhi, Apr 14 (PTI):**

Keen on improving the gaushala (cow shelter) economy, government think-tank Niti Aayog is working on a roadmap to enable commercial use of cow dung for multiple purposes, and resolve various issues connected with stray cows which often become liability for farmers, its member Ramesh Chand has said.

The Aayog has also asked economic think tank NCAER to prepare a report on the economics of gaushalas to ensure its commercial viability. "We



Ramesh Chand

are just looking at what are the possibilities to improve the gaushala economy..We are looking at the possibility that can we have some value created or value addition for the by-products,

which is cow dung," he told PTI. A team of government officials under Chand has visited big gaushalas in Vrindavan (Uttar Pradesh), Rajasthan and other parts of India to assess their conditions.

He pointed out that maybe 10 per cent or 15 per cent of cows give a small quantity of milk but that is not enough to cover labour, fodder and treatment costs. "Cow dung can be used to make Bio-CNG...So we are looking at the possibilities," Chand, who oversees farm policies at the government think tank said.

## 'Gujarat Congress leaders harassing me'

**Want me to leave party**

**Ahmedabad, Apr 14 (PTI):**

Gujarat Congress working president Hardik Patel on Thursday alleged that the leaders of his party's state unit were harassing him and want him to leave the party. Patel also said that although he had taken up the issue of his harassment with Congress leader Rahul Gandhi many times, no action has been taken to address his grievances. Patel had attained prominence when he spearheaded the Patidar community's campaign in Gujarat in 2015 seeking reservations under the OBC category. However, his popularity shrank after he joined the Congress in 2019 as he had earlier promised that he would never enter politics.

Although the Congress benefited due to quota agitation in the 2017 state assembly elections, the Patidar community did not support the party in the 2019 Lok Sabha polls or subsequent municipal or panchayat elections after Patel joined it. "I am being harassed so much that I feel bad about it. Gujarat



Hardik Patel

Congress leaders want that I should leave the party," Patel told PTI Bhasha in a telephonic interview. "I am more pained because I have represented the situation to Rahul Gandhi many times, but no action has been taken by him against Gujarat Congress leaders," he said.

The Congress's plan to rope in chairman of the Khodaldham Temple Trust Naresh Patel, a prominent Patidar face, ahead of 2022 state polls has apparently angered Hardik, who believes that his clout as Patidar leader will be finished if Naresh Patel joins the Congress party. "You used Hardik in 2017, you want to use Naresh bhai in 2022 and in 2027 you would use another

Patidar leader. Why don't you support and strengthen Hardik?" he said. "They should take Naresh bhai, but will they treat him like the way they did to me?" he asked. Hardik said despite being a working president of the party's state unit, no work has been given to him. "I am not called to attend important meetings or not made part of any decision making process," he claimed. He said that it was due to his Patidar quota agitation that the Congress benefited in the 2017 elections.

He also alleged that the Congress in Gujarat is a divided house and the party has not been able to gain power in the last 30 years due to infighting. Hardik said he has no plans to leave the Congress. On Wednesday, Hardik had expressed displeasure over the state Congress's 'style of functioning', claiming that he was sidelined in the state unit and the leadership is not willing to utilise his skills. He had expressed his grouse a day after he hinted at contesting elections after the Supreme Court stayed his conviction in a 2015 rioting and arson case.

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### BRIEF



People belonging to Lambani community take part in rally on the occasion of 131st birth anniversary of Babasaheb B.R. Ambedkar, in Bengaluru, Thursday.

### Bail

■ **Allahabad:** The Allahabad High Court has granted bail to former MP Umakant Yadav in a case registered against him under Gangsters Act. The former Azamgarh MP was in the jail since February 21 and had submitted in his bail plea that he has been implicated in a false case.

### Explosion

■ **New Delhi:** Thirteen people were injured following a cylinder blast inside an eatery near Jamia Millia Islamia in southeast Delhi on Thursday, Delhi Fire officials said. A call about the fire was received at 3.49 pm and three fire tender were rushed to the spot, said Atul Garg, Director, Delhi Fire Service.

### Shot dead

■ **Nagpur:** Two villagers were allegedly shot dead by naxals on suspicion of being police informant in separate attacks in Maharashtra's Gadchiroli district, police said on Thursday. The victims, who were in their 20s, were picked up from Gorkutta and Jharaiwada area, located close to each other, late on Wednesday night, a senior police official said.

**Weather**

High 39 Low 27

# Modi inaugurates PMs' museum, buys first ticket

New Delhi, Apr 14 (PTI):

Every government formed after Independence has contributed in taking India to the heights it has achieved today, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Thursday and asserted that barring one or two exceptions, the country has a proud tradition of strengthening democracy in a democratic manner.

In a speech after inaugurating 'Pradhanmantri Sangrahalaya' (prime ministers' museum), which is dedicated to all previous 14 prime ministers, Modi said every prime minister



Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the inauguration of Pradhan Mantri Sangrahalaya, in New Delhi.

has contributed immensely in the fulfilment of the goals of constitutional democracy. Modi also bought the first ticket of

the museum before its inauguration, officials said. He said it is our responsibility to strengthen democracy, noting that

### Families of former PMs happy; Gandhis skip event

A spinning wheel which former prime minister Lal Bahadur Shastri got as "dowry", Chaudhary Charan Singh's diaries and P V Narasimha Rao's spectacles are among the articles that their families have offered for display at the Pradhan Mantri Sangrahalaya, which was inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday. Members of the Nehru-Gandhi family, which gave the country three prime ministers, chose to skip the event, while kin of former premiers Chaudhary Charan Singh, P V Narasimha Rao, H D Deve Gowda, Atal Bihari Vajpayee, Morarji Desai and Lal Bahadur Shastri attended it with enthusiasm.

India has a proud tradition of doing so in a democratic manner with one or two exceptions.

Though he did not elaborate, the BJP has been critical of some past Congress

governments, especially the one headed by Indira Gandhi, of weakening democracy. Gandhi had suspended civil rights and imposed Emergency in 1975.

# Four terrorists killed in encounter

■ **Two army men dead in accident on way to site**

Srinagar, Apr 14 (PTI):

Four terrorists were killed in an encounter with security forces in Shopian district of Jammu and Kashmir on Thursday, while two army personnel lost their lives as their vehicle met with an accident on way to the site of the gunfight, officials said.

On receiving information about the presence of terrorists at Badigam in the Zainapora area of Shopian, security forces launched a cordon and search operation, a police official said.

During the search operation, the terrorists fired upon the forces which led to an encounter, he said.

In the exchange of fire, four militants were killed, the official said, adding their identity and group affiliation were being ascertained.

Also, two army personnel were killed and as many others injured when their vehicle met with an accident while on way to the encounter site, the official said. "An army party of 44 Rashtriya Rifles was in a Sumo going towards the encounter site at Badigam Zainapora, when the vehicle turned turtle near Chowgam Shopian due to which two army personnel died and two got injured," he said.

### CONTRACTOR'S DEATH

# K'taka Minister Eshwarappa to resign

Shivamogga (KTK), Apr 14 (PTI):

Karnataka Minister K S Eshwarappa, who is facing charges of abetment to suicide in connection with the death of a civil contractor in Udupi, on Thursday announced stepping down from his position.

Addressing a press meet here, Eshwarappa said, "I have served as the Rural Development and Panchayat Raj Minister in the Karnataka government. I have taken a decision today to resign from my ministerial position."

He further said he would tender his resignation letter to Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai on Friday.

The Minister was booked on Wednesday in connection with the suspected suicide of civil contractor Santosh K Patil, who was found dead in a hotel in Udupi.

The contractor had accused the minister and his close aides of demanding 40 per cent commission for executing a civic work in Hindalga village in Belagavi in 2021 ahead of a village festival.

### FOURTH WAVE SCARE

# Delhi govt to issue fresh guidelines to schools

New Delhi, Apr 14 (PTI):

The Delhi government will issue fresh guidelines for schools amid reports of a few students testing positive for COVID-19 across the national capital and NCR.

Noting a "slight" rise in COVID cases, Delhi Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia said he has directed the education department to issue guidelines on Friday in this regard.

However, both Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and Sisodia maintained the government is closely monitoring the situation, and asked people not to panic as there is no rise in hospitalisation. "COVID cases have slightly increased but there is no rise in hospitalisation, so we need not worry. There is no need to panic but (we have to) stay alert. We have to learn to live with COVID. We are constantly monitoring the situation," Sisodia

told reporters. "I have got reports from a few schools in the past few days where parents have informed about their child testing positive. The education department will tomorrow issue guidelines to schools in this regard," he added.

Delhi on Wednesday reported 299 new COVID-19 cases, a jump of 118 per cent in two days. The positivity rate stood at 2.49 per cent, according to data shared by the city health department. Reports of infections from schools have sparked concerns weeks after they opened for completely offline classes after a two-year gap due to the pandemic. Kalkaji MLA and senior AAP leader Atishi said, "There are reports of a child and a teacher testing positive for Covid. Other students of the class have been sent home. We are closely tracking the situation."

# Complacency responsible for low uptake of precaution dose

■ **Of Covid vaccines**

New Delhi, Apr 14 (PTI):

Public complacency owing to the waning of the pandemic coupled with the nine month gap between the second and the precaution dose are major reasons for the low uptake of booster shots of COVID-19 vaccines in the 18-59 age group, experts said on Thursday. AIIMS Chief Dr

### EXPERTS OPINE

Randeep Guleria said unlike in the past, people have less fear of the disease now and due to declining COVID-19 cases they have become complacent. He, however, cautioned available scientific data suggest that immunity wanes with time and especially those with comorbidities in any age group are vulnerable to more severe disease. "But Covid has not gone anywhere and new variants

may emerge anytime. Also, we know that with time our immunity wanes and those with comorbidities in any age group especially are vulnerable to develop a more severe disease.

"Therefore, people who are eligible for the precaution dose should take it as it will maintain a good level of protection against any new variant that may emerge," Guleria told PTI.

# Ranbir, Alia get married

Mumbai, Apr 14 (PTI):

Bollywood A-listers Alia Bhatt and Ranbir Kapoor got married on Thursday, not in a big fat Indian wedding spangled with tinsel as many would have imagined but at their Bandra apartment with just family and close friends in attendance. Though there was no word from the family till the evening, some of those who had set up the mandap' came out at about 6 pm to tell the waiting media that the wedding ceremony was over. Later, those close to the family confirmed that the rituals were indeed over. Soon after, Ranbir's brother-in-law Bharat Sahani left the apartment complex Vaastu'. And bouncers sprung to action to clear the road for the celeb guests who would be leaving in their cars. Media and those waiting outside were treated to 'laddoos'. 'Dholaks' were heard too, perhaps the only concession to the otherwise understated affair.

# Govt removes import duty on cotton

New Delhi, Apr 14 (PTI):

The government's decision to remove import duty on cotton is likely to help bring down prices of the commodity, Textiles Secretary U P Singh said on Thursday. The finance ministry on April 13 waived customs duty on cotton imports till September 30, a move that will benefit the textile industry and keep prices low for consumers. Currently, cotton imports attract 5 per cent Basic Customs Duty (BCD) and 5 per cent Agriculture Infrastructure Development Cess (AIDC). The industry has been demanding a waiver of duty to lower domestic prices. "It would enable people who want to import. We are expecting that within a day or two, you would certainly see the impact on prices going down but at the same time we would not expect the prices to be very low because there is a shortage all over (the world)," Singh told reporters here. In India, cotton crops get affected because of unseasonal rains, and in the US, there were drought-like conditions.

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# Pro-agriculture policies result in reverse-migration of 7 lakh farmers: Baghel

**Total area of cultivation increased by 8 lakh hectare**

## Central Chronicle News

**Bhilai, Apr 14:** Pro-Agriculture schemes of the government have brought a big change at the ground level. The number of farmers registering themselves for paddy procurement had increased from 15 lakh to 22 lakh. The area of cultivation has also increased from 22 lakh hectare to 30 lakh hectare.

The pro-agriculture policies of the state government have resulted in reverse migration of people towards farming, said Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel while addressing the 76th annual convention of Chhattisgarh Manwa Kurmi Kshatriya Samaj on Thursday at village Devada of Patan block.

In his address, the Chief Minister said that they have made a comprehensive plan for the progress of the farmers. The government removed



the huge debt burden on farmers through loan waiver. Along with this, the Rajiv Gandhi Kisan Nyay Yojana was introduced to provide a fair price for the hard work of farmers.

Further, works were also done for livestock promotion and crop protection through Gauthans. Narrating the incident when the idea of Gauthan came in his mind, Chief Minister said that once he visited the

village Darbar Mokhal. During interaction with local farmers, he came to know about the problem of stray cattle.

During talks with the farmers, the idea of Gauthan came to his mind. He realized that there must be a place for the keeping the cattle where breed improvement could also be done. Chief Minister said that the development of Gauthan will be equally beneficial for agriculture.

Baghel said that they have also paid attention towards water conservation. Significant work is being done for the recharge of ground water through Narva Yojana. Through the Narva scheme, the state government has taken such an initiative that the water crisis can be solved permanently.

The Chief Minister said that in Patan region, our ancestors laid maximum emphasis on educa-

tion. Through Swami Atmanand Government English Schools (SAGES), the state government provided a facility where the children will be able to get education in English medium.

SAGES has been a successful scheme and a large number of parents want to send their children to these schools. In view of the enthusiastic success of this scheme, the state government has decided to increase the

number of seats in each classroom by 25%.

Another scheme has also been introduced for landless farmers in which Rs 7000 is being provided to them. Chief Minister further said that they have given respect and honour to the great men of all Samajs and tried to preserve their memories.

Schemes have also been named after the personalities of Manwa Kurmi Samaj. A health scheme has been introduced after

the name of Dr Khubchand Baghel, the visionary of separate Chhattisgarh state.

English Medium Schools have been started in the name of Swami Atmanand and the song written by Late Narendra Dev Varma is now the Raj Geet of Chhattisgarh.

Addressing the people of Manwa Kurmi Samaj, Baghel said that it is a matter of great pleasure that daughters are also studying well and are

making their place in public life. It is an indicator of a progressive society. On the occasion, the Central President of the Samaj, Chova Ram Verma and Raj Pradhan Mehattarlal Verma also addressed the gathering.

25 members of the Samaj were awarded with Kurmi Gaurav Samman. Those who were honoured on the occasion were Ashish Verma (OSD of Chief Minister), Jawahar Verma (President, District Co-operative Central Bank Durg), Kamal Verma (State Coordinator, Staff Officer Federation) and journalist & ornithologist Raju Verma.

Raju Verma was honoured for his appreciable work in the conservation of birds in the state. Verma has played an important role in the identification of migratory birds coming to the state and creating public awareness for them.



## Women of Brahmin Samaj extend helping hand to victim families of fire mishap

### Central Chronicle News

**Bhilai, Apr 14:** The havoc from the fire mishap that occurred a couple of days ago in Surya Nagar area of Bhilai Municipal limits has shocked everyone. The fire destroyed the settlement almost completely. Many social organisations have come forward to help provide relief to the fire mishap victims.

The women of Saryuparin Brahmin Samaj from Durg too extended aid such as clothes, cash and household items to the families of victims. Under the leadership of social worker Sharma Navita Sharma, the items were handed over to nodal officer in Durg Municipal Corporation Javed Ali.

On this occasion, social worker Navita Sharma,



Bharti Dubey, Anita Pandey, Sangeeta Sharma, Sarita Mishra, Sangeeta Mishra, Annapurna

Tiwari, Milli Sharma, Manisha Tiwari, Shavati Shukla, Anita Dewan, Bharti Dewan, Jagriti

Sharma, Jyoti Upadhyay, Yogita Sharma, Sushila Tiwari, Preeti Tiwari were present.

## Water supply begins from new tank of 11 MLD filter plant

### Central Chronicle News

**Bhilai, Apr 14:** Work is in full swing in Durg Municipal Corporation area to complete the targeted water supply under the ambitious Amrut Mission. Continuous efforts are being made to get rid of the drinking water crisis for the entire population of the city. Durg (urban) MLA Arun Vora and Durg Mayor Dheeraj Bakliwal are constantly taking updates about the progress of the scheme.

On the instructions of Corporation Commissioner Haresh Mandavi, the officers of the Corporation along with technical experts are continuously monitoring the works of water supply under the scheme. After the completion of the



scheme, 100% of the population of the city will get sufficient amount of water even during the summer season. Also, due to the implementation of this scheme, the city of Durg has become tanker free.

A total of 6 tanks are proposed to be constructed

in the city under Amrut Mission scheme, out of which the construction work of all water tanks has been completed. At present, water is being supplied continuously by the corporation administration from the water tanks of Girdhari Nagar,

Transport Nagar, Hanuman Nagar, due to which half of the population of the city's area is getting benefit. Water testing work is going on from the Jalgrah Parishar and Pulgaon water tank. Soon water supply will be started from these tanks also.

Special care is being taken for water purification as well as water supply under the AMRUT Mission scheme, the work of water testing has been completed in the new water tank constructed in 11 MLD Filter Plant and water supply has been initiated. Under which about 20 thousand people of Ward 24 Deepak Nagar Amdi Mandir Ward, Ward 25 Gayatri Mandir, Ward 26 Santra Bari, Ward 27 Polsai Para will be benefitted.

## BMC counters to remain open for taxpayers



### Central Chronicle News

**Bhilai, Apr 14:** Taxpayers under Bhilai Municipal Corporation limits who need to deposit property tax can also deposit tax on holidays till the last date which happens to be April 15. Counters of all zone offices including the main office will remain open till April 15. For the taxpayers of the financial year 2021-22, the date of submission of tax has been extended to 15 April.

There will be no need to pay additional surcharge for depositing property tax during this period. This decision will bring great relief to the taxpayers. The last date for depositing property tax was earlier fixed as March 31, which has been extended by the local government till April 15. Taxpayers can avail this exemption by depositing their tax in this period.

On the instructions of Corporation Commissioner Prakash

Survey, the work of expediting the collection of property tax is being done by the concerned officers. Tax collection counters remained open for depositing property tax throughout the month. An appeal was made to the people to deposit the tax through loudspeakers and other means.

Also attachment team was formed and the process of recovery of attachment was taken. As a result, there has been a significant increase in the collection of tax. For the next two days, the tax collection counters will remain open even on holidays. Corporation Commissioner Prakash Survey has given instructions for 100% tax recovery against the target.

The Corporation Commissioner has been continuously directing the officers to complete the tax collection. It is noteworthy that due to the decision of Mayor Neeraj Pal, the tax has not been increased in this financial year, due to

which taxpayers who have deposited property tax will get a lot of relief for the financial year 2022-23.

Taxpayers depositing tax after April 15 will have to pay 18% surcharge for the financial year 2021-22, those who deposit tax till the last date of April 15 will not have to pay surcharge. But after this, taxpayers who deposit tax will have to pay 18% surcharge and penalty fee.

Taxpayers can avoid surcharge if they pay the tax on time. Tax can be deposited online. Taxpayers can submit online payment through debit credit and net banking after selecting Bhilai Municipal Corporation by clicking on online payment in www.cg-suda.com ward and entering their ID number. Year wise tax information can also be seen on this website. In case of any problem in online, detailed information can be obtained by contacting the helpline number 18001216505.

## Fire-mishap victims of Surya Nagar rehabilitated within 3 days

### Central Chronicle News

**Bhilai, Apr 14:** The Khatik settlement of Surya Nagar that had been destroyed in the fire mishap has been established again in just three days. The houses that had been affected have been made ready and handed over to the victims. All the materials of daily needs were distributed to the affected families from the hands of Bhilai Nagar MLA Devendra Yadav and Bhilai Mayor Neeraj Pal. It was on the initiative of Neeraj Pal, Mayor of Bhilai Nagar Municipal Corporation, that the Khatik settlement of Surya Nagar came back to its original form and that too in just three days.

After erecting the complete structure of the houses of the affected families, on Wednesday MLA Devendra Yadav, Mayor Neeraj Pal, OSD to Chief Minister Manish

Banchhor, Congress District President Mukesh Chandrakar, BMC Speaker Girwar Bunty Sahu distributed relief materials to the affected families. Here it needs a mention that the Bhilai Mayor and the Commissioner stayed put at the place day and night, showed unprecedented cooperation in re-establishing the settlement. The hard work of the corporation administration paid off and the house of the affected families could be readied. Since the incident occurred on April 9, Mayor Neeraj Pal and Corporation Commissioner Prakash Surve have been working to help the affected families and after tireless efforts day and night, finally the settlement of Surya Nagar has become ready again. The corporation made quick arrangements for bamboo, ball, tin shed, food, drinking water, bucket and neces-

sary materials for daily activities to provide all possible help to the affected families and immediately set up a relief camp. A camp was organised for recreation of documents like Aadhar card and Ration card. The mayor and commissioner met each family in the basti and helped them according to their needs. Collector Dr Sarveshwar Narendra Bhure constantly monitored the activities and the survey work has been completed for compensation to the affected families. Apart from this, mainly Zone President Santosh Nath Singh alias Jalandhar, MIC member and in-charge of Public Works Department, Ekansh Banchhor, in-charge of Revenue Department, Siju Anthony, in-charge of General Administration Department, Sandeep Nirankari, Councillor Engineer Salman, Additional Commissioner Ashok Dwivedi,

Deputy Commissioner Sunil Aghari, Zone Commissioner Yesha Laharen extended special support to help the affected families.

After re-settlement of Surya Nagar Basti, MLA Devendra Yadav, Mayor Neeraj Pal and District President Mukesh Chandrakar gave all the necessary materials to all the affected families for the operation of their house. The Kit distributed mainly includes mattress, pillow, bedsheet, pillow cover, fan, gas stove, utensils, bucket and mug, shirt, lower, tooth brush, toothpaste, both bath and laundry soap, oil, saree, Innerwear kitchen items Spoon, Tawa, Ganji, Belna, Chowki, Tongs, Cooker, big bowl, Complete kit of all types of different clothes and ration material for women and men including rice, pulses, flour, different types of spices, salt, turmeric, coriander, chilli, etc.



## Mahavir Jayanti celebrated with fervour



**Bhilai, Apr 14:** Mahavir Jayanti was celebrated with religious fervour across the city on Thursday. On the occasion of the 2621st Janmakalyanak Mahotsava, the Jain organisations organised various programmes and took out processions in the city. Various political leaders attended the programme and paid obeisance to Bhagwan Mahavir. Akhil Bharatiya Khatargachha Yuva Mahila Parishad Durg and Jinkushal Manch Pariwar distributed cold drinks among the people. They also distributed small pots among the people and urged them to keep the water filled pots on the roof of their houses for birds. Rajya Sabha member Saroj Pandey also attended the event and exchanged Mahavir Jayanti greetings with the people. She spent a lot of time in the procession also. BJP State Secretary Usha Tawri, Kantilal Bothra, Deepak Chopda, Dinesh Dewangan, Manoj Mishra, Madan Jain, Mahendra Duggad, Gyanchand Kothari and others were present.

## CM Baghel writes letter to the PM seeking extension of GST compensation

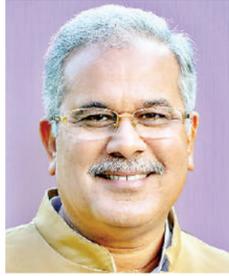
**Pitches for continuation of GST compensation for the next 10 years**

**Appeals Center to make alternate permanent arrangements for compensation of revenue to the manufacturing states**

**Manufacturing states will suffer huge loss due to discontinuation of GST compensation grant**

Central Chronicle News

Raipur, Apr 14: Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel has written a letter to



Prime Minister Narendra Modi seeking extension of GST compensation grant. He has urged the Prime Minister to continue the present system of GST compensation for the next 10 years. The Chief Minister has also mentioned in his letter that the Central Government should make an alternative permanent arrangement for compensation of revenue to the producing states at the earliest.

Stating that discontinuation of GST compensation grant is a huge economic loss for producing states like Chhattisgarh, Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel said "being a manufacturing state, our contribution in the development of the country's economy is much more than those states which have benefited in the GST tax system due to higher consumption of goods and services. If the GST compensation is not continued beyond June 2022, then Chhattisgarh is likely to face a revenue loss of nearly Rs 5 thousand crore in the upcoming year. Similarly, many other states will also face revenue shortfall in the coming year. Due to this, it would be difficult to arrange for the ongoing public welfare and develop-

ment works in the state." In his letter, Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel also gave reference of the pre-budget consultation meetings for Budget 2022-23 chaired by the Union Finance Minister with the Chief Ministers and Finance Ministers, which was held in New Delhi on December 2021. He said adding that many states including Chhattisgarh requested to extend GST compensation grant for the states in the said meeting. The states expect a positive decision from the central government in this regard. Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel has said that after the implementation of the GST tax system, the autonomy of states in shaping tax policies have become very limited and there is not much revenue-related potential in the tax rev-

enue other than commercial tax. Although, every effort is being made by us towards revenue generation, however, the present compensation grant system should be continued for the next 10 years to recover from the adverse impact of Covid-19 on economy of states and till the time actual benefits of the GST tax system are realized. The Chief Minister has also appealed the Central Government to device an alternate permanent mechanism to compensate for shortfall in revenue for manufacturing states. The Chief Minister has expressed hope that the Prime Minister will agree with the concerns of states and will act in the spirit of co-operative federalism to resolve the important issue involving the interests of all states.

## MASSIVE RALLY



Ambedkarites took out a massive rally with statue of Baba Saheb Ambedkar and Lord Buddha in the form of tableau in a vehicle on occasion of his birth anniversary here on Thursday.

## Number of seats be increased for admission in Atmanand Schools

**CM's instructions in view of growing demand for admission**

**Admission of 50 students in each class now**

Central Chronicle News

Raipur, Apr 14: In view of the huge demand for admission in Swami Atmanand Schools Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel has given instructions to increase the seats for admission. Following instructions of Chief Minister, an order has been issued for the admission of 50 students in the classes of Swami Atmanand School. So far 40 children were admitted in each class in Atmanand schools.

Considering quality of education in 171 Swami Atmanand excellent English medium schools run in the state, a large

number of people are enthusiastically seeking admission of their wards for class 01 to 12th.

Keeping in view the demand and huge enthusiasm of the people, it has been decided to increase ten seats in each class. In the academic session 2022-23, the Directorate of Public Instruction has issued instructions for the admission of 50 students instead of 40 in each class.

Chhattisgarh government has started innovative efforts in the form of Swami Atmanand English Medium Schools to provide quality education to every child of the state. Its objective is to prepare the poorest child of the state for future competitions by providing good facilities in Swami Atmanand English Medium Schools at par with private schools, so that inequality of opportunities in the field of education can be removed and educational quality can be promoted.

## BJP office-bearers asked to visit booth

**● BJP State in-charge D Purandeswari directs party workers at meeting**

Raipur, Apr 14: Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) office-bearers have been asked to make a visit to polling booth centres across Chhattisgarh from May 3 to 20 to strengthen the Organisation.

Above decision was taken at the meeting of BJP Core Group held in presence of Bharatiya Janata Party in-charge of party affairs in Chhattisgarh D



Bharatiya Janata Party in-charge of party affairs in Chhattisgarh D Purandeswari paid rich tributes to Dr Bhimrao Ambedkar on his birth anniversary at a function held at Collectorate Chowk here on Thursday.

Purandeswari and National General Secretary Shivprakash here on Thursday. Purandeswari said that the office-bearers would be

interacting with the party workers at booth level visits to give them strategy here and also provide guidelines on which they would be working. She said that

the saffron brigade had strongly contested the Khairagarh by-elections and added that the party would continue to give spirited fight to the ruling Congress in the forthcoming elections. She further added that the party would be focusing in the region in which they had lost political ground in the last elections and added that she would further hold meeting in Bastar whereas the in-charge Secretary Nitin Nabin would be holding meetings in Sarguja region. She claimed that work distributions have been given with better co-ordination.

## Goel shifted to Panchayat as Director in admn reshuffle

**● Abhijit Singh posted as MD of Medical Corporation**

Central Chronicle News

Raipur, Apr 14: Six Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officers were given fresh posting orders in the administrative reshuffle here on Thursday.

According to the order issued from General Administration Department (GAD), the 2005 batch IAS Officer S Prakash working as Secretary Transport, has been given additional responsibility of Secretary Gramudhyog Department and Secretary Parliamentary Affairs department.

Similarly, the 2010 batch IAS Officer Kartikeye Goel working as Managing Director at Chhattisgarh Medical Service Corporation has been given fresh respon-

sibility of Director Panchayat whereas the 2012 batch IAS Officer Abhijit Singh posted as Managing Director of Smart City and Chief Executive Officer of Raipur Development Authority (RDA) has been given fresh responsibility of Managing Director at Chhattisgarh Medical Service Corporation and has been given additional responsibility of Joint Secretary at Home Department.

2017 batch IAS Officer Chandrakant Verma has been posted as Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Raipur Development Authority (RDA). CEO of Raipur District Panchayat Mayank Chaturvedi has been given additional charge of Managing Director of Raipur Smart City.

Sub-divisional Officer (Revenue) Bijapur Dvsh Kumar Dhruv has been posted as CEO of Narayanpur District Panchayat.

## MLA's iPhone worth 1 lakh stolen

Raipur, Apr 14: Congress MLA Manendragarh Vinay Jaiswal lost a costly iPhone 13 worth 1 lakh in a pickpocketing at the Raipur Railway station here last night. MLA was on way to Ambikapur and it was in the rush at the railway station that somebody cleared off his iPhone-13. It is learnt that the i-Phone of the MLA

was with his body guard and it was lost while boarding or at the railway station itself.

The Police has filed a case in this regard and started investigation into the same. When the Railway officers came to know that iPhone of an MLA has been stolen then the RPF and GRP team were active whole night to

find out any clue about the theft. RPF and GRP searched through many CCTV footages, but could not find any clue about the theft.

GRP Thana Raipur TI LS Rajput informed that iPhones cannot be traced, as the information about its tracking reaches directly to its owner. Though we are

trying to search for the mobile at their level. Majority of the iPhones are linked with iCloud digital system and it is here that the owner of iPhone uploads information about his iPhone under 'find my iPhone' option and then the phone can be traced. Still in many cases, this technique has not led to success, he added.

## Babasaheb dedicated his life for the upliftment of Dalits: CM

**CM announces Rs 50 lakh each for Mangal Bhawan and Auditorium construction**

**New 20-foot tall statue of Babasaheb will be installed in Ambedkar Chowk**

Central Chronicle News

Raipur, Apr 14: Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel attended Ambedkar Jayanti celebrations organized here today at Ambedkar Chowk. On the occasion he announced Rs 50 lakh for Mangal Bhawan and Rs 50 lakh for the construction of auditorium at Buddha Vihar in Devendra Nagar. Besides, he also announced the installation of a new 20-foot tall statue of Babasaheb at



Ambedkar Chowk by the Municipal Corporation.

Addressing the gathering on the occasion, the Chief Minister said that Babasaheb Ambedkar dedicated his entire life voicing concerns for the downtrodden and deprived sections besides working for the upliftment of Dalits. Despite facing social stigma, he pursued his higher education and worked for the upliftment of all.

Babasaheb Ambedkar

coined the slogan "Educate, Agitate and Organize". Education makes us aware of our rights and duties and inspires us raise voice against the wrong. He gave India its strongest pillar of strength—our sacred Constitution, promoting social economic and political equality. We got reservation because of this constitution. If it hadn't been for Babasaheb, the society would not have been able to rise above the class divi-

sion in the society. He gave us the best constitution in the world, which has given individuals, right to education, equality and work.

Following the path of Babasaheb, our government has simplified the process of issuance of caste certificates. Chhattisgarh is the first state in the country where the child is given a caste certificate soon after birth, given if parents have a caste certificate. Babasaheb gave utmost

importance to education. While imbibing his policy, we have given instructions in today's decision to increase the number of seats in a class from 40 children to 50 children in Swami Atmanand English Medium School—where children are provided excellent education in English medium.

Industries and Excise Minister Kawasi Lakhma, Urban Administration Minister Dr. Shiv Kumar Dahariya, Chhattisgarh State Mineral Development Corporation Chairman Girish Devangan, District Co-operative Central Bank President Pankaj Sharma, Raipur Mayor Aijaz Dhebar, Chairman of Guru Ghasidas Sahitya and Sanskriti Akademi K.P. Khande along with members of Ambedkar Ceremony Organizing Committee were present on the occasion.

## Fake paramedical college in Raipur



Raipur, Apr 14: Sainath Paramedical College was being run without recognition in Devpuri area of the capital for the last 3 years. After the matter

**Students raise protest when truth came out**

came to light on Thursday, hundreds of students gheraoed the college and created a ruckus. Hundreds of students who reached the spot along

with NSUI and Youth Congress workers surrounded the college management and raised questions.

But the college management did not give satisfactory answer to any of the questions. Meanwhile, the students protested strongly and raised slogans besides lodging complaint with the police, in which FIR is being registered. About 300 students from various districts are studying in the college.

## PCC state in-Charge holds talks with heads of PCC cells

**● On organisational working and future plans**

Central Chronicle News

Raipur, Apr 14: AICC Secretary and State in-Charge Saptagiri Shankar Ulka held meeting with state presidents of media deptt, Morcha Sanghatan, Prakosth-Vibhag Sewa Dal, Mahila Congress, Adivasi Cong, SC cell, Data Analytics, social media and research department of Congress at party's Rajiv Bhavan here on Thursday. They held talks on organisational activities and provided neces-



sary guidance. Ulka also held discussions about the work plan for the coming months and the organisational works done earlier by all cells and departments of State Congress.

Meeting was attended by PCC state general secy. Chandrashekar Shukla, PCC V-P Sumitra Dhritlahare, PCC gen. Secy.

Amarjeet Chawla, PCC media dept President Sushil Anand Shukla, State President Sewa Dal Arun Tamrakar, Adivasi Pradesh Congress President Janak Ram Dhruv, President OBC Congress Dr Chouleswar Chandrakar, PCC IT Cell V-P Prakash Mani Vaishnav and Shashi Bhagat.

## Assembly Speaker Mahant remembers Ambedkar on his birth anniversary

**● Pays floral tributes at oil painting of Dr Ambedkar in Central Hall of Legislative Assembly**

Raipur, Apr 14: Chhattisgarh Legislative Assembly Speaker Dr Charan Das Mahant remembered Dr Bhimrao Ambedkar on the occasion of Ambedkar Jayanti by paying floral tributes at his



oil painting installed in the Central Hall located in the Legislative Assembly premises today. Leader of Opposition Dharamlal Koushik, MLAs

Satyanarayan Sharma, Vikas Upadhyay, Gulab Kamro, Secretary of Legislative Assembly Dinesh Sharma and senior officers of Legislative

Assembly Secretariat were also present on the occasion. In his message Dr Mahant said that Dr. Ambedkar was the main architect and founder of the constitution of independent India. He was the first law minister of independent India. Dr Ambedkar was a scholar, thinker, brilliant writer of high order, influential orator, able administrator, legal scholar and messiah of the backward and downtrodden.

Dr Ambedkar always tried to free the society from narrow-mindedness, traditionalism and bigotry and struggled throughout his life to eradicate social discrimination and casteism in India, said the Speaker, adding that the nation will always remember his contribution. According to Dr Mahant that harmonious society and an advanced nation can be built only by following the path shown by Baba Saheb.

## CM pays tributes to Bharat Ratna Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar

Central Chronicle News

**Raipur, Apr 14:** Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel paid floral tributes to the portrait of Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar—the chief architect of Indian Constitution, first Law and Justice Minister of independent India and social reformer—on his birth anniversary. Urban Administration Minister Dr. Shiv Kumar Dahriya and Industries Minister Kawasi Lakhma were also present on this occasion.

Recalling the invaluable contribution of Babasaheb Ambedkar, Chief Minister Mr. Baghel



said that Dr. Ambedkar was multi-faceted personality and the chairman of the drafting committee of the Indian Constitution,

who gave India its strongest pillar of strength—our sacred Constitution. Chief Minister Mr.

Baghel said that Babasaheb fought for the eradication of caste discrimination.

He also advocated for the rights of laborers and women. Following the path shown by Babasaheb, the state government is running several schemes for the upliftment of the weaker sections of the society. He said that millions of followers of Babasaheb all over the country including Chhattisgarh celebrate his birth anniversary with enthusiasm and reverence.

His contribution towards the country is unforgettable.

## Folk team 'Surta' gives lively presentation



● In Mahamaya temple

**Raipur, Apr 14:** In the ancient Mahamaya Temple, folk team Surta gave a lively presentation.

Through folk dances based on songs which connect religion, culture along with nature, artists gave a presentation which mesmerized the audience.

Director of Surta Manch and veteran folk artist Vijay Mishra gave information about Chhattisgarhi Hana, Janula and Parab. He said, folk presentation is a strong medium which connects mass to religion, culture along with nature. In the programme Mahamaya Trust in-charge Vyas Narayan Tiwari presented senior Hindi folk artist Vijay Mishra with memento in recognition of his contribution towards folk culture.

## Scholarship worth Rs 42.33 lakh Disbursed to 1682 Children of Labour families

Central Chronicle News

**Raipur, Apr 14:** One thousand six hundred eighty two children of registered labor families have been benefitted by Chhattisgarh Labor Welfare Board's Scholarship Scheme of the financial year 2021-22. Under this scheme, Rs 42 lakh 33 thousand 500 have been approved to provide scholarships to the children of underprivileged labour families.

One thousand 500 rupees for class I to VIII,

Three thousand rupees for class IX to XII, rupees five thousand for graduation like BA/B work, B.Sc, ITI, Nursing, eight thousand for graduate level vocational courses like engineering, medical. The scholarship is awarded annually at Rs. and Rs.10,000 at postgraduate level.

In the year 2021-22, a scholarship of Rs 42 lakh, 33 thousand 500 has been sanctioned to one thousand 682 boys and girls in different districts of the state on the application for scholarship.

## Scribe held for extortion; six cases filed against him

**Ambikapur, Apr 14:** The Chhattisgarh police have registered six cases against a journalist working for a web portal for allegedly demanding extortion in Surguja and Balrampur districts of the state, officials said on Wednesday.

The accused, Jitendra Jaiswal, who runs a news portal named 'Bharat Samman', allegedly used to run an extortion racket under the garb of journalism and circulate defamatory content and spread rumours against the victims to extort money from them.

"Six cases have been registered against Jaiswal (during the past two weeks) in Surguja and neighbouring Balrampur district," said Ajay Yadav, Inspector General of Police (Surguja range).

He was arrested last week and lodged in a jail in adjoining Surajpur district, the IG said, adding that investigation into all the cases

is underway.

Based on a written complaint application submitted on April 1 by Jitendra Soni of Ambikapur, Jaiswal, a native of Balrampur, was booked under sections 384 (extortion), 392 (robbery), 452 (house-trespass after preparation for hurt, assault or wrongful restraint) and 506 (criminal intimidation) of the IPC at Gandhinagar police station, a Surguja police statement said.

Subsequently, another case was registered in Gandhinagar police station based on a complaint by Praveen Agarwal, a resident of Balrampur district. Agrawal accused Jaiswal of demanding extortion from him and threatening to get him killed by Naxals if he did not fulfill his demand, it said.

Another complaint was lodged at Ajak police station (special police stations meant to address griev-

ances of SC/ST people) of Surguja under section 509 (word, gesture or act intended to insult the modesty of a woman) and other sections of the IPC and provisions of the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, the release said.

Balrampur district police have also registered FIRs in Basantpur, Wadrafnagar and Dindo police stations on charges of extortion and dacoity against Jaiswal, it added.

"Several victims have fallen prey to Jaiswal's trap till date, but many didn't complain due to fear of further spread of false, libelous information through the web portal by the accused. He had become so audacious that he even allegedly tried to frighten one complainant inside the police station premises, who somehow mustered courage to come against him," the release said.

## Columbia Global School organizes career counselling prog



**Raipur, Apr 14:** Columbia Global School organized a Career Counselling programme for the students of Grades 9 to 12. The renowned Career Coach, Dr. Ajit Varwandkar from My Aglakadam Academy of Guidance and Counseling was the guest speaker who guided students on choosing the right career options scientifically based on their interests and ability. He stated that the key to success is when

the child recognises his passion and profession together. He further stated that every child is unique in his own ways and career selection should be based on it. Students were motivated and encouraged to take their career decisions smartly. Thereafter, Dr. Varwandkar explained the scientific method of choosing a career by taking a Psychometric Test which students have to do in the next one week. Based on their responses, on 23rd April the students will be having a face to face interaction along with their parents with a counsellor.

The workshop concluded with the vote of thanks to Dr. Varwandkar by the School Principal Mr. Ivan Smith. Also present at the workshop were Directors, Mr. Ravinder Singh Hura & Mrs. Shikha Hura along with Mr. Harjeet Singh Hura - Secretary, Janpragati Education Society and the teachers.

## Rural roads are being paved for better transport connectivity under CMGGY

**Out of the 10 villages 'Gram Gaurav Path Yojna' the construction of roads is accomplished in 7 villages**

**With the construction of paved roads, ambulances can directly reach the homes of villagers**

**Raipur, Apr 14:** To provide better road connectivity for the rural populace living in the remote villages of Chhattisgarh, the state government, under the Mukhyamantri Gram Gauravpath Yojna (CMGGY) has accomplished the construction of cement and concrete paved roads in numerous villages to improve inter-road connectivity and

rural living standards. The objective behind developing connectivity facilities in villages is to avoid the use of mud roads so that there is less dust in the atmosphere. Moreover, with cc roads daily commute will become very easy and ambulances will be able to reach the patients resident directly.

Under this scheme, in the village Rakharsota of Manora development block, a CC road-cum-drain from Rakharsota to Panchayat Bhawan has been constructed. Simultaneously, CC road-cum-drain construction work has been completed from Maytoli to Basti in village Jumekele of Kansabel block. It is noteworthy that from the year 2019-20 to 2021-22, a total of 10 Gram Gauravpath roads have been approved under the scheme. Out of which 7 roads have been

completed and a total of 7 colonies with a population of 5167 have been benefitted by the construction of complete roads. In these areas, cement concrete roads and drains have been constructed to reach the village through street corridors and main roads.

Due to the presence of cement concrete roads in the streets and corridors of the villages, the problem of getting mud during the rainy season has now been solved. From the main road till reaching the village residents, the ambulance coming for medical treatment is now able to reach the house directly due to the presence of CC roads. Due to the construction of drains along the roads, there is no accumulation of dirty water in front of the houses. With proper drainage facilities, diseases caused due to stagnation of dirty water will also be avoided.

## 'We are one, we are India, we are the heritage of this earth': V-C

Program organized on 131st birth anniversary of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar



**Bilaspur, Apr 14:** A function was organized on the 131st birth anniversary of Baba Saheb Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar at Guru Ghasidas Vishwavidyalaya (Central University) here on Thursday. The Chief Guest of the program was Ranveer Singh Marhas, Senior Advocate of Chhattisgarh High Court. The main speaker was Shri Manoj Paranjpe, Advocate, Chhattisgarh High Court. The program was presided over by the Honorable Vice-Chancellor of the University, Professor Alok Kumar Chakrawal.

In the beginning of the program, a rally was taken out under the leadership of NSS Coordinator, Dilip Jha, upto the statue of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar and a street play was presented on the topic of equality, untouch-

ability and cleanliness. Flowers were offered by the guests after worshipping the grand statue of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar. After this, in the program organized in the meeting room of the administrative building, flowers were offered to the idol of Mother Saraswati and the oil painting of Babasaheb Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar with the lighting of the lamp by the guests. The Tarang Band presented Saraswati Vandana. After that, the guests on stage were welcomed with small plants. Dean Student Welfare, Dr. M.N. Tripathi gave the welcome address.

In his presidential address, Honorable Vice-Chancellor of the

University, Professor Alok Kumar Chakrawal, while paying respects at the 131st birth anniversary of Bharat Ratna Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar, called upon everyone to follow the path shown by Baba Saheb. Baba Saheb, besides being the guide of all, has been the leader in binding the society in a garland through the Constitution. We all need to look within so that we can recognize the principles of Baba Saheb in ourselves. On this occasion he said that we are one, we are India, we are the heritage of this earth.

It is our endeavor that the University establishes affiliations according to local and social needs. We

are moving towards realizing Baba Saheb's vision of a country free from social discrimination. We should continuously study the literature written and related to Baba Saheb. He congratulated everyone on the successful organizing of the program.

Chief Guest of the program, senior advocate of Chhattisgarh High Court, Mr. Ranveer Singh Marhas said that the life of Babasaheb Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkarji has been full of struggles. He advocated equal justice and equal opportunity for all throughout his life. He was a vocal advocate of issues ranging from protecting and ensuring fundamental rights to civil liberties. Film is also a medium through which students can be told about various dimensions related to the life of Baba Saheb. On this occasion, he also shared information about the books and literature written by Baba. As the keynote speaker, Manoj Paranjpe, Advocate, Chhattisgarh

High Court, while referring to the proceedings of the Constituent Assembly, explained the important contribution of Baba Saheb. Babasaheb played an important role in the creation of the Indian Constitution based on equality, fraternity and humanity. The words and ideals of Baba Saheb are clearly mentioned in legal decisions today. The vocal pioneer of social justice will always be remembered as a social reformer.

The guests were honored by presenting shawls, shreephala, and mementos. At the end of the program, the Registrar, Prof. Shailendra Kumar proposed vote of thanks and the event was conducted by Dr. Garima Tiwari, Assistant Professor, Forestry Department. Buddhist followers, Shri Mahesh Chandrikapur, Shri Jitendra Bhang, Shri Sudama Meshram, Smt. Vandana Bhang, Dean of all the Schools of the University, Heads of Departments, teachers, officers and employees were present in the program.

## Ambedkar's 131st birth anniversary celebrated



Central Chronicle News

**Kondagaon, Apr 14:** The 131st birth anniversary of Baba Saheb Bhimrao Ambedkar was celebrated with great pomp in the district headquarters under the aegis of the Scheduled Castes / Tribes / Backward Classes / Minorities United Front.

On this occasion, Trisharan Panchsheel offered prayers before the life-size statue of Dr Ambedkar located in Court Chowk. After this the chief guest, Kondagaon Assembly Constituency MLA and

State Congress President Mohan Markam and Sarva Samaj President Dhansraj Tandon, Sarva Tribal Samaj Patron CR Korram Prem Singh Nag President Gada Samaj The program was presided over by Ritesh Patel and Shyamsundar Meshram. Buddhist Samaj President, MD Baghel Patron Sarva Samaj jointly hoisting the flag, resonating with the slogans of 'Long live Ambedkarji' and 'Jai Bhim'.

Along with this a massive rally was taken out with a chariot and DJ

adorned with the photo of Baba Saheb and it passed through the main roads of the city. The program was organized after the rally by sharing the biography of Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar, with emphasis on passing on the benefits to the dalits, poor and needy and remembering the work done by him for the interest of the country and human society. It was informed to adopt the principles given by him on life. On this occasion, various people's organizations associated with the organization were present in large numbers.

## 97.66 lakh MT of paddy has been lifted

**Raipur, Apr 13:** Paddy lifting for custom milling is being done at a rapid pace across the state as per the directions of Chief Minister Mr. Bhupesh Baghel. According to the information received till April 11, over 97.66 lakh metric tonnes of paddy has been lifted in the state so far. Meanwhile, the state government is also working expeditiously to deposit rice in the central pool. Over 35.85 lakh metric tonnes of quality rice has been deposited in the central pool so far. This includes 18.97 lakh metric tonnes of rice deposited in the Food Corporation of India and 16.88 lakh metric tonnes in the Civil Supplies Corporation.

Food Secretary Topeshwar Verma informed that on the initiative of the Chief Minister, the work of paddy lifting for custom milling is being done at a rapid pace this year, just like the work of paddy procurement. A record 97.66 lakh metric tonnes of paddy has been lifted through DO and TO so far. Mr. Verma informed that DO of 75 lakh 07 thousand metric tonnes of paddy has been issued. The millers have lifted 74 lakh 76 thousand metric tonnes of paddy from the procurement centers. Similarly, TO has been issued for the transportation of 23 lakh 09 thousand metric tonnes of paddy. Against which 22 lakh 91 thousand metric

tonnes of paddy has been lifted from the committees. This year a target has been set to deposit 61.65 lakh metric tonnes of Arva rice in pool. It is worth mentioning that in the Kharif marketing year 2021-22, about 98 lakh metric tonnes of paddy has been purchased on support price from 21 lakh 77 thousand registered farmers. Nearly Rs 20 thousand crore has been paid to the farmers under the bank linking system in lieu of paddy purchase. In comparison to last year, this year 1 lakh 24 thousand i.e. 6 per cent more farmers of the state sold their paddy on support price. This is the result of farmer-friendly policies and decisions of the state government.

## 98 % works under Water Supply Scheme completed in Korba while 90 % in Bhilai

Under Amrut Mission

An action plan of Rs 2236 cr has been approved for 9 cities in the state under Amrut Mission

Raipur, Bilaspur, Durg, Bhilai, Rajnandgaon, Ambikapur, Jagdalpur, Raigarh and Korba have been included in the mission

Central Chronicle News

**Raipur, Apr 13:** Work of water supply project, septage management and garden development is being done at a rapid pace under Amrut Mission in 9 urban bodies of the state including Raipur, Bilaspur, Durg, Bhilai, Rajnandgaon, Ambikapur, Jagdalpur, Raigarh and Korba having a population of more than one lakh. Under the mission, about 98 per cent work of the water supply scheme has been completed in Korba while 90 per cent in Bhilai. Similarly,

the progress of water supply projects Rajnandgaon, Ambikapur, Raipur and Bilaspur is about 70 per cent. The progress of water supply project Durg and Raigarh is about 50 per cent.

It is worth mentioning that under the Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT) by the Urban Administration Department, an action plan of Rs 2236 crore has been approved for these 9 cities from the year 2015-20. Under the mission, water supply projects are

being carried out in selected cities at a cost of Rs 1804 crore. Similarly, septage-sewage management works are being done at a cost of Rs 399 crore and garden development at a cost of Rs 33 crore.

Under the sewerage/septage component, Rs 235 crore has been approved for setting up a total of STPs (total capacity 200 MLD) for the treatment of sewage flowing in Raipur city, the progress of the same is about 45 per cent so far. Similarly, Rs 112 crore has been sanctioned for setting up a total of two

STPs (total capacity 32 MLD) in Raigarh and one STP of 25 MLD capacity in Jagdalpur, whose physical progress is about 17 per cent as of now. On achieving the target of reform set by the Government of India, the department has received a total incentive of Rs 70 crores, Rs 13 crores in the year 2015-16, Rs 25 crores for the year 2016-17, Rs 14 crores for the year 2017-18 and Rs 18 crores was received for the year 2018-19. All the projects under the mission are being executed expeditiously in the state.

## SKS condoles demise of Jainendra

Khairagarh, Apr 14:

In a fire incident in Narayanpur district, a businessman from Khairagarh Jainendra Bhansali has died. It is notable here that fire broke out in Mansarovar Shopping Mall in Narayanpur on Tuesday afternoon at around 1:30 pm and in this Jainendra got stuck on the fourth floor. But since the flames of fire were intense, he just could not be saved on time. It is learnt that large number of customers and shopkeepers were present in the Shopping Mall at the time of fire and on getting information about fire breaking out, there was stampede like situation



and in this many persons lost their lives.

It is learnt that Jainendra Bhansali S/o Phulchand Bansali, used to reside in Bakshi road in city and was running a garment business in Mansarovar Shopping Mall along with his

brother-in-law in Narayanpur. It was after tiring efforts by fire-brigade team that the fire can be dowsed and brought under control.

On getting information about death of young businessman Janendra Bhansali, there was air of sadness among members of Jain Samaj Khairagarh. The members of Sakal Jain Srisangh (SKS) surprised to organised Shri Mahavir Jankalnayak Mahotsav on April 12 was postponed. President Sakal Jain Srisangh Narendra Jain has expressed condolence on sad demise of Jainendra Bhansali and expressed condolences on behalf of all from Jain community.

## Open black marketing of PDS rice in Konta

Konta, Apr 14:

In Konta block of Sukma district, black marketing of PDS rice continues unabated, PDS is running black marketing of rice by overturning rice from ration shops to another sack.

In Sukma district, the spirits of the mafia who do black marketing of PDS rice are so high that they do not even have any fear of the administration. The work of theft of rice mafia is being done very easily. Somewhere in this, the people running the ration shop also have a big hand.

In Konta block there are many gal rioters who are using PDS rice in weekly markets. And some people are taking PDS rice by means of small autos,



pickup vehicles at night time. They take the PDS rice overturned in another sack towards Andhra-Telangana. Officers like SDM, tehsildar, food inspector are present in Konta Nagar, but the administration is silent regarding this black marketing of rice and there is no one to inquire.

## Five-day week increases number of holidays

For government officers and employees; likely to affect work

Mungeli, Apr 14:

With five-day week for the government employees and officers, it has turned out to be big gift for all by the state government, as getting holiday on April 13, all the government employees have got straight four-days off and due to which majority of the officers and employees in different government departments were found absent.

With declaration of holiday on Saturday, now every government officer or employee is getting additional 52 days holidays and this no doubt is going to affect the working outcome. Right after start of this new announcement from Feb 1, 2022, there are two such occasion when the government officers and employees have got 2-3 days leave at a stretch. So now there are going to many such occasion

when the government officers and employees are going to be benefitted with declaration of weekly off on Saturday by the state government. There are reports that employees are going to get three to four days holiday in a week in coming months and no doubt this is going to affect the day-to-day working in the government departments.

When it comes to number of holiday in a year for government employees, taking 365 days into account, there will be 52 Saturday's and Sunday's, making it 104 holidays. In addition to this the government employees are entitled for three-days optional holidays and this takes the figure to 110. Now when it comes to festivals in the country, there are total of 21 festivals and including this the figures goes to 131 days. Now these are the hol-

idays which the government employees get without asking for it and set aside this there are many other alternatives for holidays for the government employees in their annual holiday list and according to which they can take holidays.

They get 13 days CLs in a year and the non-vocational employees can take 20 days EL. In addition to this there are provisions to go on long leave on medical grounds and it is decided based upon the type of services.

Many a government employees are now found taking advantage of holidays as if there is holiday on Friday, then they take leave on Thursday and in this way they get directly 4 days holiday and in the same way many an employee from outside the hq's take leave on Monday and take full five days holidays.

## Payment of death claim of RPLI done



Pithora, Apr 14:

Payment of Rural Postal Life Insurance (RPLI) death claim was done on April 11 at Main Post Office Dhantari in the presence of Sub Divisional Post Inspector Shashi Kumar Sahu and Post Master Vijay Puri Goswami India Post Payment Bank Manager Vaishakh Das and Postal Superintendent Neelam Ban Goswami in the presence of Mrs. Maheshwari Bai Sahu of village Parastarai Post Potiadih District Dhantari. A cheque of Rs. 1 lakh 5

thousand eighty five was paid to the wife of late Thanu Ram, who died due to corona infection. As per information, Mannu Ram Sahu, father of late Thanu Ram, said that this sum insured became a small recourse, if this policy had been extended, it would have been a great recourse for my daughter-in-law. He has appealed; the villagers to open insurance policies with Rural Postal Life Insurance and said that he did not have any problem in claiming the insurance after the death of his son.

## Students informed about importance of good health

On occasion of World Health Day at RRDSGC Khairagarh

Khairagarh, Apr 14:

It was under chairmanship of Principal Rani Rashmi Devi Singh Government College (RRDSGC) Khairagarh Dr DK Balendra and in the presence of Red Cross in-Charge JK Vaishnav, Science in-charge GS Bhatia, that World Health Day was observed here on Wednesday.

Speaking on the occasion Principal Dr DK Balendra said that on this occasion every person should pay due attention towards his health. Red Cross Society in-charge JK Vaishnav gave information about formation of World Health Organisation (WHO) and its objectives and gave information about WHO.

The students were also



informed about taking balanced and healthy diet on daily basis, use pure drinking water, eat properly on time and avoid eating fast-food, doing physical exercises regularly, Yoga and others and importance of health facilities and problems related to diseases were underlined.

Prof. GS Bhatia - Science in-Charge said that during studies in the classes, the students are explained in detail about body's Anatomy and how to take care of it. Recalling the World Health Day, he urged all to take care of one's health and safeguard from falling ill to vari-

ous diseases. On this occasion Asst. Prof. Suresh Adwani, Yashpal Janghel, Mukesh Vaghvani, Satish Kumar, teacher PR Sahu, Dr Umendra Chandel, Anjali Patel, Preeti Janghel, Nathu Ram Nishad and students in large number were present.

## Santu Dharamgarh suspended from party's membership

On charges of being involved in anti-party activities

Khairagarh, Apr 14:

On charges of being involved in anti-party activities during Khairagarh VS By-poll, former President Salhevara BJP Mandal Santu Dharamgarhe has been suspended from the party. It is notable here that Santu Dharamgarhe was till lately member of BJP Kissan Morcha and he has been suspended from the party for six years.

Sant Dharagarh is facing charges that in the Khairagarh by-poll held on April 12, he was involved in anti-party activities and on confirmation of the same District BJP office issued orders for his suspension.

District BJP Gen. Secy. Dinesh Gandhi on issuing suspension letter in-



formed that Santu Dharamgarh was found to be involved in anti-party activities during campaigning for Khairagarh VS by-poll. Terming the same as coming under disciplinary activities, BJP district office has suspended him with immediate effect for six years.

It is worthwhile to mention here that earlier also Santu Dharamgarh has faced similar charges of being involved in anti-party activities during earlier VS polls and is also facing charges of being a sabotage.

## Joint review meeting of District Level Task Force Committee held



Koriya, Apr 14:

A joint review meeting of District Level Task Force Committee was held here under the chairmanship of District Collector. District Child Protection Committee, District Level Committee of Sakhi One-Stop-Center and Ujjwala Sanchalan Surveillance Committee under the Department of Women and Child Development also took part in the meeting.

Abhilasha Behar, District Program Officer,

Department of Women and Child Development, while discussing the campaign being run for the rescue and rehabilitation of child laborers, waste collectors and children involved in begging in the district, said that If a child is found in the condition, the team of Women and Child Development Department can be contacted directly. The child helpline number for this is 1098.

In the meeting of District Level Taskforce Committee, the

Department of Education has set up Legal Literacy Classes and Legal Aid Clinics in schools and colleges. Publicity of Justice Board, Victims Compensation Schemes was discussed. Discussions were also held on setting up of missing person's cell in each police station of the district to track down missing children at police station level.

Discussions were also held on development of information system by developing community

concept like Mahila Mitra, Publicity of Juvenile Justice Board, and Victims Compensation Scheme. In the meeting, the updated status of the cases of Sakhi One Stop Center, publicity activity, land demarcation for building construction, shelter of minor girls from CW and appointment of women reservists in the center etc. were discussed in detail.

It was informed in the meeting that out of 1 thousand 277 cases related to women in the center since April 2017, 1 thousand 236 have been disposed off. In the review meeting of Ujjwala Home Monitoring Committee, discussions regarding the Aadhaar card of the beneficiaries residing in Ujjwala Home, referral of deranged women to Sendri Bilaspur psychiatric hospital etc. were also discussed.

## Shobha Yatra marks beginning of Bhagwat Katha

Anwari, Apr 14:

The Shrimad Bagwat Katha by Gangber family in Gram Bhaibod began with massive 'Kalash Shobha Yatra'. This 'Shobha Yatra' started from Sheetala Mata Mandir to main roads of the village and passing through main roads of village concluded at the 'Katha' venue itself.

This Shrimad Bhagwat Katha is being organised by Gangber family in the memory of Late Ishwar Sahu of Gram Bhaibod. On the first day of this Katha, 'Kalash Yatra' was taken out and in this the women carrying 'Kalash'



atop their head were part of the 'Shobha Yatra' amidst playing of religious tunes and 'Sewak Bhaiyao' and reciting 'Mata's 'jasgan'. This 'Kalash Yatra' was wel-

comed mid-way in front of houses of many persons.

On the first day, started 'Bhagwat Katha', Bhagwatacharya from Gram Saja-Bija- Pt. Sheetlesh Maharaj recited

about the importance of this Bhagwat Katha and the benefits thereafter. He said that with desire to hear about this Bhagwat Katha makes the Supreme reside inside one's heart.

## Educational tour conducted for students of GNC



Dongargarh, Apr 14:

Under the guidance of Pradeep Kumar Jambulkar, Principal of Government Nehru College (GNC), the students of Computer

Science Department and Commerce Department were given an educational tour of MSME Technology Center Durg and Akshaya Patra Bhillai.

A total of 90 students of PGDCA, B.Com, B.Sc.

Computer Science, and DCA of the college visited MSME Technology Center Durg and were also given participation certificates by MSME. The students were also taken to Akshaya Patra Bhillai,

where the students got information about the techniques of making food with machines. College Principal Dr. Jambulkar congratulated the organizing department for a successful educational tour.

यूनियन बैंक		Regional Office Bilaspur, 1st Floor, Opposite Gumber Petrol Pump, Vyapar Vihar Road, Bilaspur. (C.G) 495004	
Union Bank of India		Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Properties	
E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8 (6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rule, 2002			
Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) and Guarantor (s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged /charged to the Secured Creditor, the constructive/ physical possession of which has been taken by the Authorized Officer of Union Bank of India (secured creditor), will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is" and "Whatever there is" on 29.04.2022 between 11.00 am to 5.00 pm for recovery of dues as mentioned hereunder to Union Bank of India from the below mentioned Borrower (s) & Guarantor (s). The Reserve Price and the Earnest Money Deposit are also mentioned hereunder:			
S. No.	Name of the Borrower / Guarantor	Total dues (in Rs.)	Short description of the properties
1.	1. M/s HE Construction Prop. Mr. Atul Parihar S/o Mr. Heera Singh Parihar, R/o. at H.No. 130/6 Jorapara, Balti Factory Ke Pass, Sarkanda, Bilaspur C.G. (Borrower) 2. Mrs. Reetu Parihar W/o Mr. Atul Parihar, R/o. at H.No. 130/6 Jorapara, Balti Factory Ke Pass, Sarkanda, Bilaspur C.G. (Co-Borrower) 3. Santoshi Parihar, Address: H.No. 130/6 Jorapara, Balti Factory Ke Pass, Sarkanda, Bilaspur C.G. (Co-Borrower) 4. Chandra Bhan Singh Dhruw S/o Bhagwat Singh Dhruw, H.No. 72, Near Mata Chowra, Old Sarkanda, Bilaspur 495001 (Guarantor).	₹ 22,25,324.21 (as on 31/03/2021 with further interest, cost & expenses)	All that piece and parcel of Open Land, Over star no 15/17 part of land 178, Kh. No. 427/18, PH No. 20/32, mouja-sarkanda, Bilaspur C.G. 495001. Original Sale deed number 5825 dated 31.12.2015, property in the name of Smt. Reetu Parihar W/o Atul Parihar. Total Area of the property : 2668 Square Feet. On the North: Land of Bhoi, On the South: Land of Chaturvedi, On the East: 11ft Road, On the West : Shivam Homes Colony.
2.	1. Mr. Sahbaz Khan Tipu S/O: Nazar Mohammad Khan, R/o. at H.No 19, Opp. Agrasen Bhawan, Juni Line, Bilaspur. C.G-495001 (Borrower) 2. Mr. Vikas Jaiswal S/o Kamta Prasad Jaiswal, R/o. Ward 43, Kisan Para, Chantidih, Bilaspur C.G.-495001 (Guarantor).	₹ 12,43,049.89 (as on 31/03/2021 with further interest, cost & expenses)	All that piece and parcel of Open Land belonging to Sahbaz Khan Tipu, situated at KH.No. 179/3, P.H.No. 20/32 Ward No.54, Bandhwapara, Arvind Nagar, Mouza- Sarkanda Nigam, Bilaspur C.G. Total Area of the property : 1466 Square Feet. On the North: Remaining Land of Seller, On the South: Remaining Land of Seller, On the East: Road, On the West: House of Pandey.
03.	1. M/s. Troyashi Industrials, Prop. Mrs. Ritu Bansal W/o Mr. Sunil Bansal, Address- Near Mahindra Showroom, Jindal Road, Raigarh 496001 (Borrower) 2. Mr. Sunil Bansal S/o Shri Om Prakash Bansal, Address- H.No. 25, Krishna Vihar Colony Raigarh-496001, (C.G)	₹ 16,56,030.47 (as on 01.01.2021 with further interest, cost & expenses)	All that piece and parcel of Flat No.5 Area 1181sqft second floor at Sarla Villa over PH No.13, Plot no.70 Kh No. 251/6 Built up area 1181 sqft & super built up area 1590 at North Chakradhar Nagar, Chakradhar Nagar Chowk, Raigarh, Total Area of the property: 1590 Square Feet. Owner of the property: Mrs. Ritu Bansal W/o Mr. Sunil Bansal. On the North: Land of Sarla Villa, On the South: Flate No. 06, On the East: Land of Sarla Villa, On the West: Flate No. 04.
For Registration and Login and Bidding Rules visit <a href="https://www.msmeccommerce.com/auction/home/ibapi/index.jsp">https://www.msmeccommerce.com/auction/home/ibapi/index.jsp</a> , <a href="http://www.unionbankofindia.co.in">www.unionbankofindia.co.in</a> for further detailed any enquiry please contact: Shri Kishore Sahu, Mob.: 97529-84538			
Date: 14.04.2022, Place: Bilaspur (CG)		Authorised Officer, Union Bank of India	

**BRIEF**

**Relaunch**

■ Pune: The Pune police relaunched their 'Buddy Cop' initiative aimed at ensuring the safety of working women, especially those in the Information Technology (IT) and other private sectors where they have to work in late night shifts, an official said. The city police had first launched this initiative in 2017 when Rashmi Shukla was the police commissioner. It was rolled out in wake of murder of a 25-year-old woman employee of Infosys in January 2017 which shocked India.

**Seized**

■ Bhubaneswar: Cocaine, an expensive drug, has been seized for the first time in Odisha, a police statement said. Acting on a tip-off, the Crime Branch's Special Task Force arrested two people, hailing from Rajasthan, in Bhubaneswar and seized 202 gm of cocaine worth Rs 12.12 lakh from their possession. The duo, hailing from Churu and Jhunjhunu districts of Rajasthan, was attempting to spread cocaine business in posh areas of Bhubaneswar, procured from Delhi.

**Injured**

■ Jammu: At least four people, including a tehsildar, were injured in a clash in Rajouri district of Jammu and Kashmir, prompting the authorities to order an inquiry, officials said. Tehsildar Ravi Shanker and agricultural employee Chandar Mohan had a heated argument over some issue at Shanker's residence in Sunderbani before they attacked each other, they said. Shanker, Mohan and two more people were injured in the clash and hospitalised. Police have registered two FIRs.

**Gunfight**

■ Mangaldoi: A suspected dacoit has been killed in a gunfight with police in Assam's Darrang district, police said. The gun-battle happened when the accused, who was arrested from Guwahati, was taken to his residence in Sipajhar area in Darrang district to recover stolen goods. Suddenly, accused picked up pistol and opened fire on policemen, leading to retaliatory firing in which he was critically injured. He was taken to a local hospital, where he could not survive.

**Disqualified**

■ Jammu: A woman sarpanch was disqualified after her Scheduled Caste (SC) certificate was cancelled by the concerned authorities in Rajouri district of Jammu and Kashmir, officials said. The caste certificate of Santosh Kumari, a resident of Bhajnowa, was issued in her favour by the then Tehsildar, Nowshera on September 28, 1979. But, after verification it came to fore that her father belonged to Vashist Rajput caste, they said, quoting order issued by ADC, Rajouri.

## Terrorists using mobile data of unsuspecting civilians



A mobile phone tower in Kashmir valley.

Srinagar, Apr 14 (PTI):

The phone could be in your hand but another person, possibly a militant or a sympathiser, could be using its hotspot facility, say police officials, red-flagging the latest modus operandi of terrorists in Kashmir and warning unsuspecting civilians about the trouble they could land in. Taking serious note of the new MO adopted by terrorists and their overground workers to escape

security radars, the officials said wrong use of a SIM card or providing communication facility to a terrorist through hotspot will make the subscriber of the card liable for investigation and arrest. SIM card subscribers cannot hide behind the fact that they themselves are not into terrorism and that their SIM card has not been used directly by the terrorists. Allowing one's SIM card to be used

**To escape security radar**

through 'hotspot' is direct liability according to police, an official told PTI on condition of anonymity.

The relatively new way of operating came to light during in-depth investigation of a terror network case.

In October last year, based on intelligence inputs, police nabbed Mukhtar Ahmad Kumar from south Kashmir's Pulwama district under the stringent Public Safety Act (PSA) and shifted him to a prison in Agra.

His troubles, it appeared, started when he got a SIM card in his name and gave it to his fiancée in Srinagar along with a mobile phone. Investigations revealed that the SIM card and the device were used by the Lashkar-e-Taiba for planning a terrorist attack, officials said.

## BJP MP Suresh Gopi lands in 'vishu kaineettam' row

Thrissur, Apr 14 (PTI):

The ancient practice of giving 'vishu kaineettam' has landed actor-turned-politician and BJP MP, Suresh Gopi in a controversy in Kerala as netizens criticised him after a video in which he was seen sitting in a car distributing money and people touching his feet accepting their 'kaineettam', went viral on social media platforms.

According to Hindu custom, a small amount of money would be given to children, elderly and women as "kaineettam" with a blessing that wealth will multiply as part of the harvest festival Vishu, which falls on April 15 this year.

The national award-winning actor, whose tenure as Rajya Sabha MP would end later this



Suresh Gopi had organised 'vishu kaineettam' distribution in Thrissur.

month, had organised a mass 'vishu kaineettam' distribution campaign earlier this week in Thrissur, where he unsuccessfully contested in the last Assembly polls.

Besides BJP activists, he also distributed one rupee currency note as 'kaineettam' to people from various walks of life

including children and elderly across the district.

In the controversial video, Gopi could be seen sitting in a car distributing money while people including women queued in front of him to accept their 'kaineettam'.

Many of them could be seen touching his feet seeking his blessings after

## OPCC president also says that change of guard is needed

Bhubaneswar, Apr 14 (PTI):

Odisha Pradesh Congress Committee president Niranjan Patnaik on Thursday said a change is needed in the OPCC.

Patnaik said this in the backdrop of wide speculation on change of guard in the OPCC after the party's dismal performance in the recently concluded panchayat and urban polls. He said the OPCC president's post is not permanent, it is changed every two-three years.

Patnaik, who assumed the OPCC chief post in 2018 ahead of the general elections for the Lok Sabha and the State Assembly, said: "Some



Niranjan Patnaik

people spread only bad messages. Change of leadership is not a new thing. Change is needed, the sooner the better."

The OPCC president also said that he had resigned from the post immediately after the 2019 elections on moral responsibility for party's

dismal performance. "What can I do, the All India Congress Committee (AICC) has not yet accepted my resignation." Patnaik also said that he has no idea when the high command will take a final call in regard to his resignation. He said that there are several able leaders in the party and he will support the new OPCC president to be chosen by the AICC.

Immediately after the recently concluded panchayat and urban polls, there is a fresh move for a change of the OPCC president. Some of the senior leaders have already met the party high command and sought a change of guard in the OPCC.

## NMDC celebrates the 131st birth anniv of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar

Hyderabad, Apr 14: NMDC paid its tribute to the Father of Indian Constitution and celebrated the 131st birth anniversary of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar today at NMDC Head Office in Hyderabad. Chief Guests Shri Somnath Nandi, Director (Technical); Shri Dilip Kumar Mohanty, Director (Production) and Guest of Honour Shri K. Praveen Kumar, Executive Director (Personnel and Law) led the employees in offering their respect to one of the Founding Fathers of the Republic of India.

The event was organized by the mining major in association with NMDC HO SC/ST Federation. Shri B. Hanumanth Rao (President) and Shri B. Pavan Kumar (General Secretary) from the NMDC SC/ST Employees



Welfare Association along with Executive Members and employees and their family members were present on the occasion. The function commenced with dignitaries putting a garland on the portrait of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, followed by a prayer sung in his memory.

Shri Somnath Nandi on this occasion said that Baba Saheb is a symbol of equality and justice, his inspiring life and thoughts reinforce our conviction that the nation is to be governed with absolute com-

mitment, positive thinking, judicious planning, optimum effort, harmonizing initiatives and relentless determination. He concluded with Dr. Ambedkar's quote "Life should be great rather than long".

Speaking on the occasion, Shri Dilip Kumar Mohanty said life of Baba Saheb Ambedkar reminds us to inculcate societal values, inculcate his vision and ideals to uplift the lives, eradicate inequality, provide equal opportunities to all which is possible

## 'MAHAVIR JAYANTI'



People belonging to Jain community participate in a procession on the occasion of Mahavir Jayanti in Bhopal, Thursday.

## Sule seeks Mandaviya's help for Indian students studying in China

Mumbai, Apr 14 (PTI):

NCP MP Supriya Sule has sought Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya's help for Indian students studying medicine in China, who have demanded that their return to the neighbouring country be facilitated to resume offline courses and arrangements for practical classes be made in India till then. In a letter to Mandaviya, Sule said the students are attending their lectures online in India and are anxious due to uncertainties surrounding reopening of the Chinese border and lifting of the travel restrictions. A large number of Indian students had come back to India when China shut all uni-



Supriya Sule

versities following the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic.

China had restricted travel by suspending visa and residence permits from March 27, 2020 in view of the pandemic.

I met the delegation of Indian Students in China and the Foreign Medical Graduates Parents

Association (FMGPA). They have put forth a few demands...requesting you to kindly look into the matter and help our students, Sule said in the April 13 letter, a copy of which she shared on Twitter.

In their letter to the Baramati MP, the students and the FMGPA said they are facing financial and mental stress due to uncertainties surrounding the reopening of the Chinese border and lifting of the travel restrictions.

The students have demanded that arrangements be made for their return to China or practical classes be provided to them, in line with their curriculum, in India until they go back to China.

## 'Dalit MPs, MLAs of 'casteist parties' won't do anything for community'

Lucknow, Apr 14 (PTI):

Bahujan Samaj Party president Mayawati on Thursday said that Dalits who become MPs and MLAs through "casteist parties" like the BJP and the Congress will only serve their interests rather than those of the community.

If these leaders try to do something for their community, they are removed from the party and the government, Mayawati said at a programme at the party office here on the occasion of the birth anniversary of Dalit icon B R Ambedkar.

Born in Maharashtra in a Dalit family in 1891,



BSP supreme Mayawati pays tribute to Baba Bhimrao Ambedkar on his 131st birth anniversary, at party office in Lucknow, Thursday.

Ambedkar was a key architect of India's Constitution. He was a jurist and an economist who played an important role

in India's freedom movement. Ambedkar championed the cause of the Dalit community which faced

deep-rooted discrimination. He was also India's first law minister.

"It has always been clear in the country's politics that even if casteist parties, especially the Congress and the BJP, make a Dalit MP, MLA, minister, deputy chief minister or even the president, that Dalit person can only ensure his progress and that of his family but cannot do anything for the progress of the neglected community," a BSP statement quoted Mayawati as saying.

If these people make efforts to do something for the Dalit community, then they are thrown out of the party and the government, she said.

## Survey in Banka, Patna to unearth ancient structures

Patna, Apr 14 (PTI): The Bihar government is conducting a survey in Banka and Patna districts, hoping to unearth ancient structures that are buried in the soil, an official said on Thursday.

Banka and Patna are historically and mythologically significant places, so the exercise of ground-penetrating radar (GPR) survey has been undertaken, he said. "The GPR survey is almost on the verge of completion in Bhadaria village in Amarpur block of Banka. It will now start in Patna district," Additional Secretary and Director (Archaeology) of Art, Culture and Youth Department Deepak Anand told PTI. "All formalities have been completed to conduct the GPR



An archeological site in Patna district.

survey in Patna," he said, refusing to share the specific location in the district where the exercise would be conducted. A report will be published based on the findings, he said. At present, the findings at the Bhadaria village are being analysed by experts, he added. "Ancient Patna,

then Pataliputra, was the capital of the Magadh Empire. Pataliputra was a seat of learning and it was home to many scholars, including Aryabhata, Vatsyayana and Chanakya. The Mandar hill in Banka has many references in Hindu mythology.

**BRIEF**

**Overcount**

**Phoenix:** Jennifer Chau was astonished last month when the US Census Bureau's report card on how accurately it counted the US population in 2020 showed that Asian people were overcounted by the highest rate of any race or ethnic group. The director of an Asian American advocacy group thought thousands of people would be missed outreach activities had been scratched by the coronavirus pandemic, and she and her staff feared widespread language barriers.

**Extends**

**Pretoria:** The deployment of South Africa's military in northern Mozambique has been extended while its role has shifted from aggressively fighting Islamic extremist rebels to a peacekeeping effort. About 600 members of the South African National Defence Force have been in Mozambique's Cabo Delgado province since October last year and have captured and destroyed several of extremists' bases, the chief of South African mission to Mozambique, Rudzani said.

**Shortages**

**Addis Ababa:** Patients at the flagship hospital in Ethiopia's embattled Tigray region are dying amid shortages of life-saving drugs and oxygen, according to health officials. At least 60 patients with kidney disease have died since July, the result of a lack of supplies needed for regular dialysis, a doctor at Ayder Hospital in Mekele, Tigray's capital. Another 81 patients have died directly because of a lack of oxygen since conflict between the federal government and TPLF.

**Override**

**Kentucky:** New abortion restrictions passed by Republican lawmakers over the Democratic governor's veto will force the only two abortion clinics in Kentucky, US to stop providing the procedures for women, at least temporarily, while the new law is challenged in court, abortion-rights activists said. The law will draw immediate federal lawsuits, and attorneys for the clinics will seek a ruling to block the measure to allow the clinics to resume abortions while case is litigated.

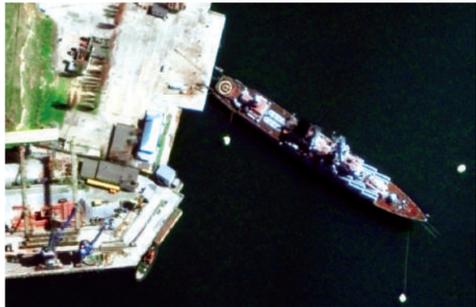
**Proceed**

**Washington:** The criminal prosecution of a Hillary Clinton campaign lawyer charged with lying to the FBI during the Trump-Russia investigation can move forward, a judge ruled in denying a defense bid to dismiss the case. The ruling means Michael Sussmann, charged last year by special counsel John Durham, remains set for trial on May 16 in Washington's federal court. Sussmann is charged with lying to the FBI during a 2016 meeting in which he relayed concerns.

## Ukraine says missiles hit Russian flagship, crew evacuates

Kyiv, Apr 14 (AP):

Ukrainian forces said they hit and badly damaged the flagship of Russia's Black Sea fleet, and Russia said its crew was forced to evacuate as a result of a fire without acknowledging an attack, as the battle shifts east and around the battered city of Mariupol where the defenders were still holding out. The governor of the Odesa region, Maksym Marchenko, said the Ukrainians struck the guided-missile cruiser Moskva with two missiles and caused serious damage. Russia's Defence Ministry confirmed the ship was damaged but not that it was hit by Ukraine it said ammunition on board detonated as a result of a fire of as-yet undetermined causes. The entire crew was evacuated, it added; the cruiser typically has about 500 on board. If confirmed, the sinking of the cruiser would be a major blow to Russia, after the tank carrier Orsk was hit and set on fire in an attack in Berdyansk in the Sea of Azov late last month. The reported ship attack



File picture of cruiser Moskva in Black sea, seen from a satellite.

by Neptune cruise missiles came a day after President Joe Biden called Russia's actions in Ukraine a genocide and approved 800 million in new military assistance to Kyiv, saying weapons from the West have sustained Ukraine's fight so far and we cannot rest now. The munitions include artillery systems, armoured personnel carriers and helicopters. Russia invaded on Feb 24 with the goal, according to Western officials, of taking Kyiv, toppling the government and installing a Moscow-friendly replacement. But the ground advance slowly stalled and Russia lost potentially

thousands of fighters. The conflict has killed untold numbers of Ukrainian civilians and forced millions more to flee. It also has rattled the world economy, threatened global food supplies and shattered Europe's post-Cold War balance. The presidents of Poland, Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia showed their support to Ukraine on a visit to war ravaged areas and demanded accountability for what they called war crimes. They meet with their counterpart, Volodymyr Zelenskyy, and visited Borodyanka, one of the towns near Kyiv where evidence of atrocities was found after Russian troops

withdrew to focus on the country's east. "There are no doubts that they committed war crimes. And for that, they should be accountable, Latvian President Egils Levits said. The Lithuanian president, Gitanas Nauseda, added: The fight for Europe's future is happening here." He called for tougher sanctions, including against Russian oil and gas shipments and all the country's banks. In one of the most crucial battles of the war in the southern port city of Mariupol, Russian Defence Ministry spokesman Maj-Gen Igor Konashenkov said 1,026 troops from the Ukrainian 36th Marine Brigade surrendered at a metals factory. But Vadym Denysenko, adviser to Ukraine's interior minister, rejected the claim, telling Current Time TV that the battle over the seaport is still ongoing now. Russian troops are gearing up for a major offensive in the eastern Donbas region, where Moscow-allied separatists and Ukrainian forces have been fighting since 2014.

## Sri Lankan protesters mark new year near president's office

Colombo, Apr 14 (AP):

Sri Lankans shared milk rice and oil cakes to celebrate their traditional new year on Thursday opposite the president's office, where they camped out for a sixth day demanding his resignation over the worst economic crisis in memory. Soldiers who were disabled in the island nation's civil war lit a hearth, Buddhist monks chanted religious verses and others set off firecrackers amid chants of: Victory to the people's struggle! Protesters are occupying the entrance and surroundings of President Gotabaya Rajapaksa's office, holding him responsible for the economic situation. They also are calling for his powerful family to leave power, accusing them of corruption and misrule. Other days our children go to their grandparents to



Demonstrators at the entrance of the President Gotabaya Rajapaksa office grab food distributed during Sinhala and Tamil New Year, in Colombo on Thursday.

celebrate the new year; but we brought them here to show them the real situation in the country," said Dilani Niranjala, who attended the protest with her husband and two sons aged 10 and 8.

## Brazil indigenous influencers take their fight online

Brasilia, Apr 14 (AFP):

Clutching an iPhone in each hand, and sporting a feather headdress and traditional indigenous garb, Brazilian influencer Samela Awia, a member of the Amazon rainforest's Satere-Mawe people, checks out her latest video, then posts it online. "Good stuff," says the 25-year-old after uploading the video, a recap of news from a tent city near the seat of government in Brasilia, where she and thousands of other indigenous Brazilians have been camped out since last week protesting far-right President Jair Bolsonaro's policies. "Hi, this is Samela, com-



Digital indigenous activists Tukuma Pataxo and Samela Awia (L) posts on their mobile phones at the Terra Livre Indigenous Camp in Brasilia.

ing to you from the indigenous camp," she tells her 54,000 followers in the mini-report, decked out in a coconut shell-and-crochet bustier, colorful beads and blue flower armbands.

"Come with me, I'll show you what's going on," says the self-described artisan and digital activist from Manaus, the city known as the "capital of the Amazon." The indigenous camp, an annual event, has focused this year on mobilizing public opinion against a series of Bolsonaro initiatives that critics say would be disastrous for native peoples and the environment, including bills that would sharply limit the creation of new indigenous reservations and open existing ones to mining. But in addition to the camp, young and tech-savvy indigenous influencers are increasingly taking their cause online.

## East, Horn of Africa prep for worst drought in decades

Mombasa, Apr 14 (AP):

Agricultural workers in the east and Horn of Africa are preparing for their most severe drought in forty years, as authorities warn that higher temperatures and less than normal rainfall was recorded by weather agencies in March and April this year. The Intergovernmental Authority on Development said rains will likely fail for a fourth consecutive year, triggering fears of increased cases of malnutrition, threats to livelihoods and severe risks for 29 mil-

lion people in the region. Meteorologists are linking the unfolding drought to human-caused climate change which is leading to increased warming in the Indian Ocean, causing more frequent cyclones. Like most of Africa, the east and the Horn's economic mainstay is agriculture, which is rain-fed, making it vulnerable to extreme weather events. Mama Charity Kimaru, who practices mixed farming by rearing livestock and planting cereals and vegetables in her 30-acre farm in Nyandarua, some



The tents of people displaced by drought are seen at the Higlo camp in the Shabelle Zone, Somali region of Ethiopia.

80 miles (126 kilometers) north of Nairobi, is among

the farmers who are preparing for the worst

outcomes. Kimaru says that increased tempera-

tures recorded over the past few months have denied her livestock pasture and the crops she had planted in anticipation of the long rains season have failed. The weather agency previously said in February that the region should prepare for a 'wetter than average' long rains season, which normally pours from March to May, but the agency revised its previous forecasts this week. The March, April, May rains are crucial for the region and, sadly, we are looking at not just three,

but potentially four consecutive failed seasons,' Workneh Gebeyehu, the executive secretary of the intergovernmental agency, said. "This, coupled with other stress factors such as conflicts in both our region and Europe, the impact of COVID-19, and macro-economic challenges, has led to acute levels of food insecurity across the greater Horn of Africa. Below average rainfall for 2022 are likely to prolong the already extremely dry conditions which have not been experienced to this degree since 1981.

**COUP ANNIVERSARY**



Bolivarian militia march to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the coup, in Caracas, Venezuela.

## CDC extends travel mask requirement as COVID-19 rises

Washington, Apr 14 (AP):

The Biden administration has announced that it is extending the nationwide mask requirement for airplanes and public transit for 15 days as it monitors an uptick in COVID-19 cases. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said it was extending the order, which was set to expire on April 18, until May 3 to allow more time to study the BA.2 omicron

subvariant that is now responsible for the vast majority of cases in the US. In order to assess the potential impact the rise of cases has on severe disease, including hospitalizations and deaths, and health care system capacity, the CDC order will remain in place at this time, the agency said. When the Transportation Security Administration, which enforces the rule for planes, buses, trains and transit hubs, extended the require-

ment last month, it said the CDC had been hoping to roll out a more flexible masking strategy that would have replaced the nationwide requirement. The mask mandate is the most visible vestige of government restrictions to control the pandemic, and possibly the most controversial. A surge of abusive and sometimes violent incidents on airplanes has been attributed mostly to disputes over mask-wear-

## Rajnath visits US INDOPACOM HQ

● Reaffirms commitment to open, inclusive Indo-Pacific

Honolulu, Apr 14 (PTI):

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh has visited the headquarters of the United States Indo-Pacific Command and held wide-ranging interactions with its leadership to advance India-US defence collaboration across all domains and reaffirmed the commitment to work together for a free, open and inclusive Indo-Pacific, amidst China's aggressive actions in the region. USINDOPACOM is a unified combatant command of the United States Armed Forces responsible



Defence Minister Rajnath Singh laying wreath at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific in Hawaii.

for the key Indo-Pacific region. The USINDOPACOM and Indian military have wide-ranging engagements, including a number of military exercises, training events and exchanges. Adm John Aquilino, Commander

USINDOPACOM, received Singh with Honour Ceremony on his visit to the Command's headquarters in Hawaii, the Defence Ministry tweeted on Thursday. Singh expressed satisfaction at the significant progress in the India-

US defence partnership, it said. "Wide-ranging interactions with INDOPACOM leadership were held to advance India-US defense collaboration across all domains," the ministry said, adding, "The commitment to working together for a free, open and inclusive Indo-Pacific and beyond was reaffirmed." Earlier, Singh visited various training sites of the US Army, Pacific (the Army Service Component Command to INDOPACOM) located around the island of Oahu. "The Military to Military relationship between India and the United States has been strengthened in recent years," Singh tweeted, sharing photographs of his visit.

## UK plan to send asylum seekers to Rwanda draws criticism

London, Apr 14 (AP):

The British government has struck a deal with Rwanda to send some asylum-seekers to the African country, a move that opposition politicians and refugee groups condemned as unworkable and inhumane. Home Secretary Priti Patel is due to announce details in Rwanda on Thursday of what the UK government is calling an economic development partnership. Media reports say the government plan would see some single men who arrive in Britain from

across the English Channel in small boats flown 4,000 miles (6,400 kilometres) to Rwanda while their asylum claims are processed. Simon Hart, the government minister for Wales, said the arrangement would cost Britain about 120 million pounds (158 million). He said the goal was to break up the business model of criminal people-smuggling gangs. (f) we have an arrangement with the Rwandan government for the proper and humane treatment of these people, then the criminal gangs will realise that their potential

source of income will dry up, Hart said. Steve Valdez-Symonds, refugee director at Amnesty International UK, said the government's shockingly ill-conceived idea will go far further in inflicting suffering while wasting huge amounts of public money. He said Rwanda's dismal human rights record made the idea even worse. The chief executive of the UK-based organisation Refugee Council, Enver Solomon, called it a cruel and nasty decision and predicted it would not stop people-smuggling gangs.



# CENTRAL Chronicle

Since 1974 Volume 10 No. 15

## Judicial diversity

Chief Justice of India (CJI) NV Ramana noted that India has a population of nearly 140 crores, with around 120 languages, thousands of dialects, more than 4000 communities and more than 700 tribes. Politics is not relevant after becoming a judge and it is the Constitution that guides the judges. CJI NV Ramana said. The CJI also said that India's vast social and geographical diversity must find its reflection at all levels of the judiciary, contending that it will improve efficiency. Justice Ramana was speaking at the 'second Comparative Constitutional Law Conversation' along with United States Supreme Court Judge Justice Stephen Breyer. The online event was organised by Society for Democratic Rights, New Delhi and the Georgetown University Law Centre, Washington DC on the topic 'Comparative Approaches of Supreme Courts of World's Largest Democracies'. The diversity issue in judiciary was also debated in the Parliament during last winter session. Last month, the CJI said it was unfortunate that only 17 of 37 women recommended by the Supreme Court collegium were appointed as High Court judges, while the other names are pending with the government. Ramana said that the appointment of women judges has more than a symbolic importance. The top court judge also called for appointment of more women judges from rural backgrounds, saying that the atrocities suffered by many there is either 'underreported or unnoticed by many. Last year, the Supreme Court's collegium was talking about the judiciary's own diversity profile and finds it wanting, is welcome. This self-reflection comes not a moment too soon. In fact, it would be fair to say it is already several decades late. But better late than never. That the direction came out of CJI's conviction rather than being spurred by the need to fill officially mandated quotas makes it even more gratifying. That it comes so early in his tenure allows for watching how well aspiration translates into action.

While examining diversity across police, judiciary, prisons and legal aid, the India Justice Report 2020 points out that data for diversity among judges remains unavailable, particularly in the subordinate courts. From what is publicly available, one can barely cull out gender diversity. The profile is predictable. In 2019, across states, figures for women subordinate court judges come in at double digits, nationally, it's 30 percent. But it never quite reaches 50 percent anywhere except in Meghalaya. Goa, an exception, comes in highest at 72 percent. But move to high courts and the figures take a sharp dive, to just 11 per cent at the national level. The 2020 report indicates that Goa dips to just above 13 percent and the majority of states couldn't even reach 20 percent. Bihar, Tripura, Uttarakhand, Meghalaya, and Manipur high courts had no women judges. Only Sikkim with 33.3 percent women judges in the high court and 28.6 percent in the subordinate courts escapes the steep drop. The absence of inclusion gets spotlighted at national level. The Supreme Court has seen Dalit and minority chief justices, but overall, as with the high courts, it remains a bastion of male privilege. Muslim chief justices belong in the past and a Christian perhaps to the future, but women are nowhere on the horizon. In the 74 years since Independence, there have been only seven women Supreme Court judges. Today, there is just one out of 26. The glass ceiling is indeed well anchored in place. American political scientist GH Gadbois, in his book 'Judges of the Supreme Court of India: 1950-1989', revealed that close to 50 percent were from other forward castes. The total number of SC, ST and OBC judges in the Supreme Court never crossed 10 percent in this period, Gadbois had found. The judiciary has a long way to go before vision of CJI's NV Ramana is realised.

## Electric vehicle fires

The government has taken very seriously the four incidents of fire in two-wheeler electric vehicles (EVs) in the recent past and will take appropriate action against the manufacturers after a forensic investigation, Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari had told. The minister said India's standards for approval of EV and batteries are apt with the global standards and the government will take appropriate action after the exact technical reason behind the accidents is known. The recent fire incidents in electric vehicles are unlikely to have any long-term impact on the sales of EVs in the country, but there could be an immediate perception that whether these vehicles are safe or not. Experts said this could have been due to inexperience in the manufacturing of lithium-ion batteries and installation of recharge stations with little to no expertise at play. Even big companies pan-India are engaging their R&D section to work on better batteries. Such incidents, due to the casual approach of the fire and transport departments, is a matter of concern to the general public and desisting them from a switch-over from fuel to electric vehicles.

These recent accidents have all been reported from Indian cities where temperatures have been rising. Yet, blaming the weather is wrong, according to experts who, instead, prefer looking more closely at how a lithium-ion (Li-ion) battery is packed and designed. Thermal management and battery construction play a huge role in battery stability. Others echo the view, warning against inefficiently designed products. Thermal runaway is the process of the battery heating up, accelerated by that same increase in heat, ultimately resulting in an uncontrollable temperature spike. This can destroy the battery and, in severe cases, also end in a fire. This condition is made worse by the operating conditions of electric vehicles in the Indian summer, 40-50 degree ambient temperatures do not allow for sufficient cooling, particularly the air cooling systems on electric scooters in India, and make a bad situation worse. A cell has to be well-made, unfortunately there are some suppliers out there who may not be making the lithium cells to standard. Many of lithium ion cells are imported from China and until India has domestic cell manufacturing, problems will continue.

## VIEW FROM ABOVE

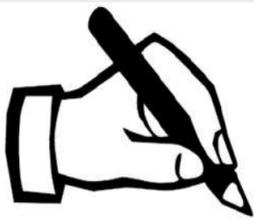


An aerial view from above shows a local tourist visiting the Laomei Green Reef in New Taipei City's Shimen District of Taiwan.

## Universal basic income pilots have not led to policy change



CHRIS TAYLOR



Universal basic income, a tax-free, unconditional sum of money regularly given to everyone in a society, has repeatedly been shown to help the most vulnerable groups in society. Numerous successful trials have found that basic income, whether given to everyone or specific groups or communities, improves health, life satisfaction, trust in others and employment opportunities among participants. Many of the largest and most successful basic income schemes were from the 1960s and 1970s. Mincome, a basic income experiment in Manitoba that ran from 1974-1979, found an improvement in wages, psychological wellbeing and school and college attendance. More recently, a nationwide experiment in Finland gave Euro 560 per month to 2,000 randomly selected, unemployed people, again producing favourable outcomes. The Welsh government is the latest to announce such a trial, giving Euro 1,600 a month to every 18-year-old leaving the care system (about 500 young people) over a two-year period. The argument has been reheated at regular intervals since, employing a similar logic. If new technology and robots are taking all the jobs, as one modern version of the argument goes, then the gains from these technological developments should be shared out to everyone in the form of a basic income. UBI proper is, then, the idea that every citizen should be paid a sum of money sufficient to live on with no preconditions - that is, regardless of willingness to work or any other qualification. And that has never been tried.

But none of the experiments have (so far) ended with the implementation of basic income as a policy, by keeping the pilot going or rolling it out to wider populations. The International Public Policy Observatory, in collaboration with the Institute of Policy Research at the University of Bath, recently examined 38 experiments across Europe, North America and Asia (in countries that already had established welfare systems) and found three main reasons why the effort ended with the pilot. The first reason is gaps in evidence. Supporters of universal basic income usually point to a wide range of benefits to those who receive the payment, their family and their wider community. But collecting evidence on all possible outcomes has been difficult to achieve. The complex designs of basic income pilots have made it difficult to show whether improvements in people's lives are due to the introduction of a basic income or other factors. No two basic income pilots look the same, so the outcomes of one pilot are rarely the same in another. Keeping pilots as simple as possible and identifying the criteria for success prior to their introduction would strengthen the case for keeping the schemes going.

The second reason is short term thinking. We found that most basic income experiments were intended to be just that - experiments. Few, if any, schemes were launched with a clear understanding of how they would be

fully implemented if deemed successful. Many schemes broke down because the necessary fiscal and legal requirements for further roll-out did not exist. If those designing the experiments do not see the problem as long term and systemic, then they will inevitably take a short-term view about any experiment and what they hope to learn from it. Future experiments should be designed so that if they are found to be successful, they can continue to run. This might mean designing a scheme that will only benefit a small, well-defined group for a short and specific period of time. The scheme for care leavers in Wales is a good example of this. It is designed to target a particular group of vulnerable young people at a key point in their life. The resulting benefit is only for a short period (when they are 18-20 years old) but at a time in their lives when we might expect to see the most advantage for minimal cost. The scheme can continue to run for new cohorts of care leavers after the pilot without the overall costs increasing.

The third reason is politics and public understanding. Despite the large number of pilots over the last 50 years, universal basic income is still highly controversial. Giving 'free' money to people without conditions is very sensitive, particularly to people who work to earn money and pay their taxes. Improving the public understanding and support of basic income remains a challenge. Pilots need to demonstrate how basic income benefits the whole of society, as well as those who receive the payment. Improving someone's immediate wellbeing, for example, leads to less dependency on welfare benefits, lower levels of crime and reduced illness. The public also needs to understand why people deserve to receive a basic income. Most basic income pilots are for the unemployed, and there is a fear that providing a guaranteed income will only continue their economic inactivity. Evidence from previous pilots on this specific issue is mixed. Some people who receive basic income continue to remain unem-

ployed, but for others it provides the necessary foundations for getting employment. Many pilots have shown a marginal benefit of increased employment. But the continued presence of unemployed people in receipt of basic income, however small in number, undermines the public's confidence in such a policy. One solution is to target basic income at other groups of vulnerable people, where perhaps the public's understanding of the challenges they face are greater to begin with.

Again, the Wales example is a good one. While young care leavers are likely to be unemployed, their participation in the scheme is not defined by this. The public is also likely to have greater empathy for young adults who experienced difficult childhoods. The pandemic has led to growing calls and public support for universal basic income. In the UK, a petition with 114,574 signatures triggered a parliamentary debate on the introduction of universal basic income to help families during the pandemic. One suggestion would implement UBI as a 'negative income tax', paid through the monthly payroll, or in some other way for those with different tax or work circumstances. The negative income tax would then work as a flat refundable tax deduction - everyone in effect gets a tax cut, and those without much or any taxable income would get the basic income paid out in cash, or the difference between the basic income and the amount they owe in tax. Experiments have shown the wide range of benefits such a policy could have, but few have been designed to provide long-term benefits or to fill the evidence gaps that remain. If policymakers continue to design basic income pilots without addressing these issues, then they are likely to repeat the same mistakes. In doing so, they may even bolster their opponents' arguments that basic income cannot work.

(Chris Taylor is Academic Director, Cardiff University Social Sciences Research Park, in UK.)

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Price level

People have been facing severe heat on the price front. The rise in the price level of essential food items has been going on for a long time, causing extreme hardship to the common people. Edible oils, pulses, sugar are selling at Rs 120-160, Rs 120-170 and Rs 50 per litre/kg respectively. Even the cost of non-edible oil for burning puja-lamps is selling at Rs 150 per litre, which is an evidence of unduly high rates. Besides, prices of other goods and services such as clothes, stationeries, footwear, toiletries, transportation, fuel et al are getting increasingly higher due to overall inflation. The excessive rise in price level has severely affected the daily wage-earners to make both ends meet and also eroded purchasing capacity of the middle class consumers. The political parties are currently busy in canvassing for their respective candidates for upcoming elections. The ruling political parties are very animatedly campaigning and is boasting for scoring a thumping victory, forgetting the peoples' woes in the context of unprecedented price hike. The voters should make the rising inflation a poll issue and persuade governments to lower the cost of essential goods and services for support to the party.

Pannalal, via email

### Stay in India

Both Russia and Ukraine are at war and the eyes of the whole world are on them. Indians dreaming of going abroad should build their future by staying in India. Although it seems that after some time when the war stops, everything will be as before, but which country will fall on whom? It's hard to tell. The Government of India rescued students from Ukraine to India. When there was no war situation and when they had to come to India, they would have come at their own expense. Indian students who have returned from Ukraine are required to pay for the tickets themselves sensibly. It can be as much as a regular ticket. There should be no problem in depositing the ticket money in the Government's Social Welfare, Sainik Welfare Fund. For that necessary inquiries can be made in that department attached to the Central Government. There has been an immediate helping hand from the motherland itself during the difficult time ahead us. Keeping this in mind, it becomes a duty to donate your ticket money to such fund. The cost of bringing about 20,000 Indians to India by air was huge. The President of France has said that, "The world should be prepared for a long war." This thing indicates the negative events that will happen in the world in the coming times. Even if the war situation calms down over the next few days, it's uncertain when the war will resume. Therefore, Indians who want to go abroad for education and job should stop and stabilize their steps in India. With this, the physical and mental pain that can be caused by being in a difficult situation abroad can be avoided. Work hard to contribute to the progress of the country. This should be considered honestly. Now is the time to think carefully and move on.

Jayesh, via email

## WHAT THEY TWEET!

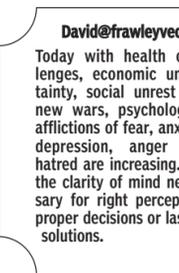


**KCSingh@ambkcsingh**  
Apropos #IndiaUSTies I've been saying on TV & in my pieces US wasn't seeking immediate ban of Russian oil imports by India. They wanted reassurance that big discount lure wouldn't cause ramped up oil imports. I suspect India has accepted that compromise.

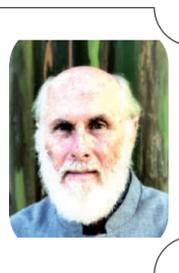
**Arvind@datta\_arvind**  
Inflation figures came in at 6.95% way above RBI's comfort levels. Now what options does RBI have. Change the composition of CPI basket to reflect the real consumption products, then it's definitely above 12%. RBI's inflation forecast for FY2023 is 5.7%.



**Alkshath@nyayacarya**  
Anecdote: I went to renew my passport recently and was encountered by an individual at the embassy who was pleasantly surprised at me for having come to renew my passport rather than the renunciation of my citizenship.



**David@frawleyved**  
Today with health challenges, economic uncertainty, social unrest and new wars, psychological afflictions of fear, anxiety, depression, anger and hatred are increasing. Not the clarity of mind necessary for right perception, proper decisions or lasting solutions.



**Mona@MonaPatelT**  
Great place to see the Malabar giant squirrel ??#Kabini.



**Zucker@DoctorLFC**  
Quite ironic how some of the most talented and wealthiest cricketers in India are talking about their stories of actual struggle in advertisements of a fantasy sports platform that encourages people to sit at home and gamble. Paisa phek tamasha dekh. #Nightmare11

**Aankhi@AankhiGM**  
My entire timeline is discussing some dumb wannabe woman's attention seeking wedding. That is the level of peace this govt has afforded to us in India when the rest of the world is literally falling apart ?? If one really wants to understand politics.

**BRIEF**

**Production**



**New Delhi:** Triviron Healthcare on Thursday said it has set up its second ultrasound manufacturing facility in Mumbai. Triviron Healthcare Group CEO Chandra Ganjoo said with indigenous manufacturing, we will help to cutting down imports of ultrasound products.

**IPO**

**New Delhi:** Specialty chemical company Prasol Chemicals has filed preliminary papers with capital markets regulator Sebi to raise as much as Rs 800 crore through an initial share-sale. The IPO comprises fresh issue of equity shares aggregating up to Rs 250 crore and an offer-for-sale (OFS) of up to 90 lakh equity shares by existing shareholders, according to draft red herring prospectus (DRHP).

**Initiative**



**New Jersey:** TCS in partnership with CCEP and PYXERA Global, has announced a new slate of programmes and events for the 'Digital Empowers' initiative. TCS's Balaji Ganapathy said it is to explore how digital innovations can lead to solutions.

**Proposal**

**Patna:** Bihar has received an investment proposal of Rs 817 crore for setting up data centres across the state. Data management firm VueNow, which is planning the investment, will develop a four-tier data centre of 100 racks with Patna as the master hub. Four other centers will come up in Dharbhanga, Bhagalpur, Purnea and Buxar in the first phase.

**Chairman**



**Mumbai:** India Pulses and Grains Association (IPGA) on Thursday announced the appointment of Bimal Kothari as the new chairman with immediate effect. Kothari takes over from Jitu Bheda, who was the IPGA chairman since 2018, the industry body said.

**Double**

**Chennai:** Air conditioning and commercial refrigeration major Blue Star Ltd has set up a new manufacturing facility at Wada in Maharashtra at a cost of Rs 130 crore doubling the production capacity of deep freezers, a top company official said.

## Increased tax revenue mop-up keeps India on track

To becoming USD 5 trillion economy

**New Delhi, Apr 14 (PTI):**

The focus on capex in the recently announced Budget for the current fiscal year will boost manufacturing and tax revenue collections, thereby keeping India on track to becoming a USD 5 trillion economy, the finance ministry said on Thursday.

Tax revenues in last fiscal year grew by a record 34 per cent to Rs 27.07 lakh crore, which the ministry said is "a remarkable testimony to the rapid recovery" of the economy following successive waves of COVID-19. "The central government's focus on making India a global economic powerhouse and the host of measures adopted towards this commitment



has directly reflected in India's GDP growth in recent years.

"This has translated into increased revenue collection for the exchequer while keeping India well on the track towards achieving a USD 5 trillion economy..." the ministry said in a statement.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi in 2019 envisioned making India a USD 5 trillion economy and a global economic powerhouse. The Indian GDP is estimated to be around USD 3 trillion in

2021-22. The ministry said apart from a brief setback owing to COVID-19, the government has maintained the nominal GDP growth above 10 per cent in recent years. GST, a simplified way of collecting indirect taxes, has been a revolutionary step propelling India's GDP.

"With a big push to capex in the Union Budget of 2022-23, the coming years are going to see a surge in domestic manufacturing as well as growth in employment. These in turn will directly boost tax contribution to the exchequer," the ministry said.

The gross corporate taxes during 2021-22 was Rs 8.6 lakh crore against Rs 6.5 lakh crore in the previous year.

## Body Shop announces price reductions of Best-Sellers

**Mumbai, Apr 14:**

The Body Shop-the Original, Ethical and Activist British beauty brand, announces their strategic affordability platform - "Falling for You" - through which The Body Shop's top selling essentials will now be available at a flat price of Rs.595 in India. Spanning its top 12 SKUs in the brand's best-selling products in skincare and haircare categories, this strategic price reduction has been undertaken keeping in mind the post-pandemic spending habits of consumers and to strengthen its positioning as an affordable yet high quality, natural, sustainable beauty brand. The new pricing strategy in India entails reduction by 20-50% on iconic favorites including its top

selling Tea Tree and Vitamin E ranges amongst others. The Body Shop India's "Falling for You" range includes entry level, full size products such as facial washes, 100% Vegan haircare and high performing skincare. This includes Vitamin C Facial Wash, Tea Tree Skin Clearing Facial Wash, Moringa Shine & Protection Shampoo and Conditioner, Tea Tree Purifying & Balancing Shampoo and Conditioner, The Body Shop Ginger Anti Dandruff Shampoo and Conditioner, Banana Truly Nourishing Shampoo and Conditioner, Shea Intense Repair Shampoo and Conditioner. These will now be available at reduced prices in India across all its brand stores as well as online on www.thebodyshop.

## Road ministry completes 1,41,190 km of NH as of Mar 31

**New Delhi, Apr 14 (PTI):**

The road transport ministry has completed 1,41,190 kilometre of national highways as on March 31 this year out of the set target of 2 lakh km for 2024-25, the commerce and industry ministry said on Thursday.

Similarly, the petroleum ministry has completed laying of a gas pipeline of 20,000 km out of 34,500 km targeted for the same period and the power ministry has also surpassed its target for laying the transmission network of 4,54,200 km till the end of March 2022.

Ministry-wise progress of such projects was discussed during a review meeting on PM GatiShakti on April 13. It was chaired by

## Petronet may look at building 4th LNG import terminal

**New Delhi, Apr 14 (PTI):**

Petronet LNG Ltd, the operator of the world's largest liquefied natural gas (LNG) import terminal, may look at setting up a fourth facility in the country to meet the rising energy demand in Asia's third-largest economy, its CEO AK Singh said.

Petronet operates a 17.5 million tonnes a year LNG import facility at Dahej in Gujarat and another 5 million tonnes facility at Kochi in Kerala. It is looking to set up a floating LNG import terminal at Gopalpur in Odisha in the next 3 years at a cost of Rs 1,600 crore. "We believe gas demand will continue to grow and we will need avenues to meet such requirement," he told PTI in an interview. With limited domestic production, gas demand will have to be met through imports. "We could possibly look at setting up a fourth LNG im-



port and regasification terminal," he said without giving details. "These are preliminary thoughts and we will come back to you once plans are firmed up."

Natural gas consumption will have to rise to over 500 million standard cubic meters per day from the current 165 mmscmd to achieve the government's goal of raising the share of natural gas in the country's primary energy basket to 15 per cent by 2030 from the current 6.7 per cent. With domestic production of gas barely

meeting half of the current consumption, import of gas in the form of LNG will have to grow.

According to Shell, India would need 35 to 40 million tonnes of additional LNG imports between 2020 to 2040. (1 million tonnes of LNG is equal to 3.60 mmscmd). Besides Petronet's terminals, India currently has an operational import facility at Hazira and Mundra in Gujarat, Dabhol in Maharashtra and Ennore in Tamil Nadu (all 5 million tonnes per annum ca-

capacity each).

Singh said Petronet plans to make a foray into the petrochemical business by investing Rs 12,500 crore in a Propane Dehydrogenation Plant at Dahej to convert imported feedstock into propylene.

"We plan to build a jetty at Dahej for import of ethane and propane.

While propane will be used as feedstock for our petrochemical plant, ethane will be for sale to petrochemical plants of other companies such as that of OPAL," he said.

## Amazon.in launches one stop store to help avid cricket fans

**New Delhi, Apr 14:**

With the ongoing cricket season, Amazon.in has launched a one stop store to help avid cricket fans to shop from the comfort of their homes and enjoy the gamewith exciting offers on cricket accessories, sportswear, TV, appliances, Amazon devices, Prime video and much more. The offers and deals will be available till May 29, 2022.

The store will dial up the cricket fever with exciting deals on sports essentials with up to 70% off on protective gear, clothes, shoes, cricket bats, balls, kits, and complete sets across brands like Puma, Adidas New Balance, Cosco, among others. Choose your most liked jersey and sportswear from our cricket collection

across brands such as Nike, Fila, New Balance, Jockey, Monte Carlo and many more. Cricket enthusiasts can also enjoy this IPL season at home while shopping for TVs, refrigerators, air conditioners, microwaves, barbecue grills and popcorn makers, among others. The store also has a wide range of munchies to enjoy during match time, furniture to relax and watch the match, books that tell the story of cricketers, fitness equipment to keep up the adrenaline rush, grooming kits to get that look of your favourite cricketer, video games and cricket posters. Fans can also cheer the loudest for their favourite team with Alexa on any Echo, Fire TV, Alexa-enabled smart devices, and stay updated this cricket season.

## Honda unveils City e:HEV sedan, launch next month



**New Delhi, Apr 14 (PTI):**

Japanese auto major Honda Cars on Thursday unveiled its new offering for the Indian market — City e:HEV sedan, marking its foray into the mainstream strong hybrid electric vehicle segment in the country.

The company, which is present in India through a wholly-owned subsidiary,

has commenced the bookings of the model and plans to introduce it in the market next month.

As per the company, the model, an extension of its City model range, would feature self-charging two-motor strong hybrid system connected to a 1.5 litre petrol engine, entailing a peak power of 126 PS and fuel efficiency of 26.5 km per litre.

The model would also come with various safety features including a high-performance front camera with a wide-angle, far-reaching detection system to scan the road ahead and alert the driver to minimise risk of accidents and in some cases intervene to avoid a collision or lessen its severity. In an interaction with PTI, the

President & CEO of Honda Cars India Takuya Tsumura noted that introduction of the model marks the start of the company's journey towards introduction of new-age electrified models in the country.

"We are committing to electric vehicles and towards carbon neutrality by 2050 globally. That is the company's direction. In India we are starting with City e:HEV and of course based on Honda's direction we will see what is the best solution we can bring to the market here," he said.

Honda globally plans to launch 30 EV models by 2030, with an annual production volume of more than two million units. The auto major aims to invest around USD 40 billion over the next 10 years in the EV space.

## BMW launches new F 900 XR bike at Rs 12.3 lakh

**New Delhi, Apr 14 (PTI):** German luxury carmaker BMW on Thursday said it has launched the updated version of F 900 XR bike in India priced at Rs 12.3 lakh (ex-showroom).

The adventure sports tourer will be available as a completely built-up unit (CBU) and can be booked at BMW Motorrad dealerships, the company said in a statement.

Deliveries of the bike will commence from June 2022, it added. "BMW Motorrad has brought the world's finest premium motorcycles to India and created a distinct place for itself among motorcycling enthusiasts. XR represents an uncompromising combination of athleticism and long-distance riding



performance," BMW Group India President Vikram Pawah noted.

The new profile of adventure sports tourer F 900 XR's unique performance

is combined with powerful features that further enhance riding in a distinctive and future-oriented style of a genuine XR, he added.

## Govt wants to ease compliance burden on pharma industry



**Mumbai, Apr 14 (PTI):**

Union Chemicals and Fertilizers Minister Mansukh Mandaviya on Thursday said the government wants to reduce the compliance burden on the pharma industry for the ease of doing business.

Addressing an event of the Indian Drug Manufacturers' Association (IDMA) here,

Mandaviya, who is also the Minister for Health and Family Welfare, said that the Narendra Modi-led government at the Centre is not only pro-poor and pro-farmer but "industry-friendly" as well.

The IDMA is commemorating 60 years of its establishment this year.

"We want the ease of doing business for the industry and lessen the

compliance burden on it. This is why we always carry out consultations with all stakeholders prior to the formulation of any policy or regulation (governing the pharma industry)," Mandaviya said.

Our Government is pro-poor, pro-farmer and industry-friendly government. It is dedicated to the poor and farmers but at the same time it is an industry-friendly government as well," he emphasized.

Stating that the industry plays an important role in nation-building and also in achieving self-reliance, the minister said that the Indian pharma industry is known in the world which is due to the efforts of both the government and the industry.

**Mumbai, Apr 14:**

Reliance Jewels, one of India's leading jewellery brands is known for its many collections inspired by the art and culture, traditions and beliefs that personify India's rich and diverse heritage. From Utkala inspired by Odisha to Kaasyam inspired by Banaras, Reliance Jewels continues to bring forth the rich and diverse heritage of India through its jewellery designs. Reliance Jewels has launched an exquisite collection of fine jewellery, "Rannkaar" to mark the auspicious festival of Akshaya Tritiya.

The collection is inspired by the Rann of Kutch and its diverse

heritage. Kutch to the enchanting Rann and a ka of vibrant Customers get from a variety of designs. Reliance Jewels pieces inspired by the vibrant and beautiful art forms of Kutch like Ajrakh - an age old block printing technique, Rogan - a beautiful painting form using rich natural colours, Lippan - Stunning craftsmanship where mirrors are carved on walls, the vibrant Kutch Embroidery, Bhandhani - A popular tie-and-dye technique that are loved by many and lastly the beautiful Wood-work from Kutch. To celebrate and honour the rich cultural legacy of India and

the festival of 'Tritiya' evenial for their Reliance launched this r collection es the crafts-tistically design-ellery pieces inspired by the vibrant and beautiful art forms of Kutch like Ajrakh - an age old block printing technique, Rogan - a beautiful painting form using rich natural colours, Lippan - Stunning craftsmanship where mirrors are carved on walls, the vibrant Kutch Embroidery, Bhandhani - A popular tie-and-dye technique that are loved by many and lastly the beautiful Wood-work from Kutch. To celebrate and honour the rich cultural legacy of India and

very vast and precious heritage which is an integral part of our country's roots. We hold pride in exploring this inheritance and bringing the finest jewellery designs from deep roots of our culture & art forms.

For the auspicious occasion of Akshaya Tritiya which is considered to bring luck and success in each one's lives, we are pleased to offer "Rannkaar", our exquisitely created ornate collection inspired by the Rann of Kutch continuing our design legacy. Each gold and diamond necklace, earrings, rings, and bangles in this collection are unique and represent the different art, tradition, and heritage of Kutch."

## Pooja Hegde's inconsequential role in 'Beast' disappoints her fans

'Beast,' starring Vijay and Pooja Hegde was released on Wednesday. Pooja Hegde, who has become one of the most popular heroines in recent times, has appeared in a role that is essentially an extended cameo. Apart from one song in the first half, she doesn't have much of an impact, which has upset her slowly increasing fandom. Starring Vijay as the lead, Pooja's role in Nelson Dilipkumar's directorial seems to be disappointing to the viewers. "Nobody would have recognised her if it hadn't been for the two songs released prior to the film's release. This is disappointing at many levels", one of her fans said at one of the theatres in Hyderabad, on Wednesday.

Star actresses are downgraded to only making cameo appearances in songs in superstar films, which seems to have changed in recent movies. However, in 'Beast,' Pooja Hegde played a silly role with no significance to the story, which changes the perspective that heroines are given equal importance in big-budget films starring popular heroes. Pooja Hegde, who had appeared in super hit movies like 'Maharshi', 'DJ-Duvvada Jagannadham', 'Aravinda Sametha Veera Raghava', 'Ala Vaikunthapuramloo', has been in limelight for a long time now.

## Priya Lal to play leading lady in 'Gentleman 2'

Actress Priya Lal is to play the second female lead in Tamil film producer K T Kunjumon's much-awaited upcoming film 'Gentleman 2'.

Taking to Twitter, the producer posted a picture of him welcoming the actress with a flower and said, "The enthusiastic Priya Lal will be another lead actress in our Mega movie 'Gentleman2'." Nayanthara Chakravarthy, who has acted in over 30 films in Malayalam, Tamil and Telugu as a child artiste, will be making her debut as the lead actress in the film.

As a child artiste, Nayanthara Chakravarthy has acted with several top stars including Rajinikanth, Mohanlal and Mammootty. Kunjumon, who is known for having produced a number of blockbusters in Tamil, including the Prabhu Devastarrer 'Kadhalan' and the Vineeth and Abbas-starrer 'Kadhal Desam', is credited with having introduced Shankar as a director with 'Gentleman'. After a long break, he has now returned to producing films and is looking to make a comeback with 'Gentleman 2'. Music director MM Keeravani, who is known for having scored music for pan-Indian blockbusters like 'Baahubali', has been roped in to score music for the film.



## Raima Sen opens up on the challenges of doing action sequences in 'Mai'

Actress Raima Sen is all set to be seen as antagonist Neelam in the upcoming series 'Mai'. The actress for the first time is doing a character with grey shades and also performing a lot of action-packed sequences.

Sharing more about her experience, Raima shares: "Initially, I found it difficult because the gun was heavy and I couldn't even press my finger against the trigger. However, after working with an action master, I realised that the most important thing is to just stay in the zone."

"The idea was to make the action sequences come out as realistic and still have a cinematic edge to it. Eventually, it turned out really well. Needless to say, it was quite a thrilling experience," she adds.

'Mai' revolves around a middle-class mother (Sakshi Tanwar) whose daughter (Wamiqa Gabbi) is run over by a truck right in front of her eyes. Now Sakshi wants to take revenge from those responsible for her daughter's death.

'Mai' will be streaming from April 15 on Netflix.



## Baal Shiv completes 100-episodes



It is celebration time for &TV's Baal Shiv as the show completes 100-episodes! Baal Shiv, Mahadev Ki Undekhi Gatha, showcases the beautiful, endearing relationship between a mother and son - Mahasati Anusuya and Baal Shiv. In a short time, the show has become the audience's favourite. The show's lead cast, Baal Shiv - Aan Tiwari, Mahasati Anusuya - Mouli Ganguly, Mahadev - Siddharth Arora, Devi Parvati - Shivya Pathania, and Tarkasur - Kapil Nirmal, talk about their journey in the show and excitement on achieving the 100-episode milestone.

Baal Shiv, aka Aan Tiwari, said, "Har-Har Mahadev! I am grateful to the viewers for their overwhelming support for Baal Shiv and my character. I am an ardent Mahadev devotee and

playing his Baal Roop has been a dream role for me. The character has struck a chord with the audience so much that many people have started calling me Baal Shiv instead of Aan, and I love that". Mahasati Anusuya, aka Mouli Ganguly, said, "It is 100-episodes already! The time truly flies. It has been fun shooting with Aan, Siddharth, and Shivya along with the other casts, especially the children. We all share a very close bond and have become one big happy family. It is truly a big moment for us, and we all are very excited. Anusuya is a very strong character, and it is quite different from what I have done before. Thanks to the audience for showing such overwhelming support for my character and our show. And now, it has reached the milestone of 100 episodes.

## 'Ek Mahanayak-Dr B.R. Ambedkar' gets underway in &TV

The birth of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, reverently called Babasaheb, is celebrated with great enthusiasm and honour across the country every year on April 14. To mark the 131st birth anniversary celebration of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, something exciting is in store for viewers of &TV's show Ek Mahanayak-Dr B.R. Ambedkar from 14th April-19th April.

In the track, Ramji Sakpal (Jagannath Nivangune) along with Ramabai (Narayani Varne) and people from the chawl where they reside will have a surprise birthday celebration planned for Bhimrao (Atharva). On the morning of his birthday, everyone gives their blessings and presents Bhimrao with a bouquet.

While it seems like it is just another day, Bhimrao finds Ramabai writing a letter and gets curious. Ramabai then tells him that he can see the letter only if he takes her out to the beach. Upon returning to the chawl, Bhimrao is surprised, looking at the beautifully decorated chawl. He is more startled by his elder brother, Bala's presence after years - playing the dhol and this takes him down memory lane and recalling their childhood memories. Much to his delight, Bala is joined by



Sethji, Panditji, Mangesh, Dhruv and Bhim's teacher, Ambedkar Guruji from Satara along with his sisters Ganga, Manjula and his Rakhi sister, Madhvi. Bhim gets extremely emotional reminiscing his childhood in Satara and he fondly remembers his Aai, Bhimabai (Neha Joshi) and the indescribable bond that he shared with her. Viewers will also be in for a surprise with a song sequence dedicated to Bhimrao.

Talking about the special episode, Bhimrao (Atharva) says, "It is indeed a very special mo-

ment. We get to celebrate Ambedkar Jayanti on the show and have the entire cast - past and present seen in the show. The special episode is heartwarming and has beautiful moments, especially between Bhimrao and Bhimabai. It is a reunion of sorts for the entire cast. Babasaheb is one of the most prominent voices in Indian history. Be it his fight for equality, women empowerment, or his involvement in the reformation of education - he has impacted the lives of every Indian. This episode is our special tribute to Babasaheb on his birthday."

## HOROSCOPE FRIDAY APRIL 15

### Aquarius: Jan 21 - Feb 18

There is a possibility that you'll fall into a bit of a regression today as old feelings of anxiety or inadequacy surface. Although you've reached a good place in terms of self-confidence, some old childhood fears could resurface.

### Pisces: Feb 19 - Mar 20

OK, up and at 'em, Pisces! You might feel like you're walking through sand today, but you really need to shake your booty and get the blood flowing. If you don't get up and do something, you'll be a slug all day. You need to clear your head and cast off that bloated feeling. Most importantly, you want to get a good start to the day so you can accomplish everything that awaits you.

### Gemini: May 22 - June 21

Things could be up and down for you today, Gemini. You might experience some confusion as a result of communication snafus or computer glitches that affect financial issues you're trying to solve. Persevere and you'll succeed. Don't be surprised if you're recruited to join a project that is totally new to you.

### Cancer: June 22 - July 22

You might be feeling a little tense because you and your partner are grappling with some thorny financial issues right now, Cancer. You could be frustrated because you need to postpone some purchases or investments until the cash starts flowing more freely again.

### Libra: Sept 23 - Oct 23

Tugs on the home front could be pulling you away from attending an event with friends that you've been looking forward to for some time. Try to be reasonable and sort out the needs of those at home with kindness in your heart. You might be able to address those issues and still have time to be with your friends later.

### Scorpio: Oct 24 - Nov 22

Cool heads will be needed today, Scorpio, as tempers may flare at work because of frustration with ongoing problems. You might need to take the lead in keeping everyone calm by facilitating clear and open communication. It will be important to keep emotions in check or words will fly that people may regret.

### Aries: Mar 21 - Apr 20

You could be startled to find that your artistic talents, although dormant for a while, are called into service today. A particular undertaking of those around you could benefit from your gift in this area. Don't panic, Aries, you won't be expected to do this alone. Others will pitch in and help.

### Leo: July 23 - Aug 23

This will be an exciting day for you intellectually, Leo. A number of intriguing concepts will catch your fancy, and you'll be hungry to learn more about them right away. Your research could take you to a library or onto the Internet. The topics might relate to social or political issues.

### Sagittarius: Nov 23 - Dec 21

If you find yourself second-guessing plans you made earlier, Sagittarius, perhaps for a plane trip, try to look objectively at your concerns. You don't have to cancel everything if you have money worries. Your fears will probably turn out to be unfounded.

### Taurus: Apr 21 - May 21

This could be a tough day for you emotionally. It might surprise you to find that some very old, deep-seated feelings get churned up in the course of investigating a subject of keen interest to you. It might be difficult to process these feelings. Don't try to intellectualize them too much, Taurus.

### Virgo: Aug 24 - Sept 22

You'll want to respond to your creative juices, which will be flowing freely today, Virgo. Don't suppress the urge to sing, compose, paint, or write. You'll be in the full flower of creativity, so make the most of it. You'll be able to take care of your daily obligations and still make room for your creative expression.

### Capricorn: Dec 22 - Jan 20

You might find yourself wrestling some ongoing, unresolved issues that could interfere with your ability to do your job. Be mindful that you're a bit brittle today, particularly if you're working on financial matters, Capricorn. The last thing you want is a major battle with those around you, so do your best to keep a cool head.

## CROSSWORD

270



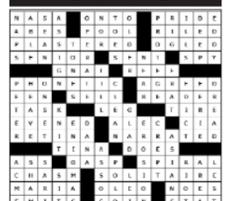
### ACROSS

- Singer \_\_\_\_\_ Seeger
- Mama's man
- Spaghetti, e.g.
- God of love
- Oodles (2 wds.)
- Map book
- Ready to pick
- Ascend
- Hen's perch
- Media mogul \_\_\_\_\_ Turner

### DOWN

- Cheeky
- Cleveland's waterfront
- Highest price (2 wds.)
- Opposite of WNW
- Talking pet
- Foreigner
- Sit for an artist
- Consumed
- Average
- Make up for
- Sailboat
- A sense
- Fall flower
- Heltsinki native
- Lowest tides
- Dish out
- Gentle

### SOLUTION 269



## Resurgent and rejigged SRH ready for KKR challenge

Mumbai, Apr 14 (PTI):

Back to winning ways, a resurgent Sunrisers Hyderabad will be forced to tinker their successful combination following Washington Sundar's injury as they face Kolkata Knight Riders in the IPL here on Friday.

After a subdued start to the tournament, SRH turned things around with back-to-back wins over Chennai Super Kings and Gujarat Titans, and Kane Williamson's team is now eyeing a hat-trick of victories.

However Washington, a vital cog in the SRH wheels, will be missing in action after he sustained a split webbing on his bowling hand while fielding against GT.

Washington plays the dual role of restricting the batters with his spin bowling and chipping in with some runs as a floater. He has taken four wickets and scored a half-century so far in the season.

But coach Tom Moody has made it clear that he won't be available for at least two matches and it will be interesting to see who replaces the all-rounder in the XI.

Hyderabad have the op-



tion of Shreyas Gopal and Jagadeesha Suchith in the spin department or they might give another chance to Abdul Samad, who looked ordinary in the first two matches.

For Sunrisers, it was the batting failure which was hurting them as they faltered in their first two chases, but the team addressed the problem with openers Abhishek Sharma and Williamson producing

the goods in the last two outings.

If Sharma shone with match-winning knocks of 75 and 42, Williamson scored 32 and 57 to set up the chase in the last two games.

Rahul Tripathi was looking good against GT before he retired hurt following what seemed like a cramp, and his availability will be crucial for SRH.

In Tripathi's absence,

Nicholas Pooran and Aiden Markram completed the job against GT and the team will expect them to show consistency and take the responsibility in the middle-order.

In bowling, Marco Jansen have taken a wicket each in the last two games, while his pace colleagues T Natarajan and Bhuvneshwar Kumar have contributed with crucial wickets. KKR are

heading into the match after a loss against Delhi Capitals but it remains a formidable side and would look to bounce back from the reversal.

The Knight Riders are placed in the second spot with six points from five outings.

Shreyas Iyer and Co. were blown away by the batting might of Delhi, their formidable bowling attack looking toothless against the brilliance of David Warner and Prithvi Shaw.

Umesh Yadav had his first bad day of the season as he conceded 48 runs for one wicket. Ditto for Pat Cummins as the Australian skipper bled 51 in his four overs. Varun Chakravarthy and Andre Russell went for 44 and 16 in their respective spells.

While Iyer did the bulk of the scoring with a 54 in the last match, the poor form of opener Ajinkya Rahane is a cause of concern for KKR. Venkatesh Iyer, too, couldn't set the stage ablaze and has just one fifty to show for from his five innings.

Former champions KKR will also hope for more consistency from the likes of Nitish Rana, Andre Russell and Sam Billings.

## I am not concerned about Rohit's form: Jayawardene



Pune, Apr 14 (PTI):

Mumbai Indians coach Mahela Jayawardene says it's just a "matter of time" before skipper Rohit Sharma plays a big knock, something which his team desperately needs to arrest its slide in IPL-15.

The MI captain has failed to capitalise on the starts, managing just 108 runs at an average of 21.60 this season.

"If you look at the way he starts, the way he hits the ball, it's brilliant. He's timing it, he's getting some really, really good starts. Yes he's disappointed as

well, that he's not being able to convert them," Jayawardene said.

"We've seen Rohit batting deep, batting for 14-15 overs and getting those big scores. It's just a matter of time. He's a quality player and I am not concerned about the form as such."

MI on Wednesday suffered a 12-run loss at the hands of Punjab Kings -- their fifth successive defeat -- to inch closer to elimination.

Chasing 199, Rohit (28) and Ishan Kishan (3) got out cheaply as MI were found struggling at 32 for 2 in 4.1 overs.

Young Dewald Brevis (49 off 25) and Tilak Varma (36 off 20) added 84 runs for the third wicket after MI decided to hold back Suryakumar Yadav, who came out to bat at number five, instead of his usual position at four.

Suryakumar made 43 off 30 balls before being dismissed in the 19th over.

"Today was to try and take the game deep, because we were playing with six batters. And there's no better person than Surya to finish a game off," Jayawardene said.

"In the powerplay, they would swing the ball a bit and all that. So I didn't want Surya to go into that situation and not be able to play his natural game also. It was just a tactical thing."

The 44-year-old said the idea was to give the youngsters more freedom in the middle as Suryakumar and Kieron Pollard play the role of finishers.

"The two young guys, we know what they are capable of. So given them a bit of freedom to go and control that situation, so that Polly and Surya are able to chase that. That was the initial thinking."

"It's a call that we will take depending on how we've set up tactically against certain opposition."

## Olympic champion Chopra to compete against Peters, Vetter



### In Word Athletics Continental Gold Meet in Finland

Turku (Finland), Apr 14 (PTI):

Olympic champion Neeraj Chopra is pitted against current world champion Anderson Peters and 2017 world champion Johannes Vetter in the men's javelin throw event at the World Athletics Continental Tour Gold meet here on Thursday.

Julian Weber, the fourth-place finisher at the Tokyo Olympic Games, adds further depth and quality to the event. It will be the first time all four men will meet in a final.

Chopra, who is currently training at Belek, Turkey, made history when he won in Tokyo last year, earning India's first Olympic gold medal in athletics and instantly becoming a sport-

ing superstar in his home country. Earlier in the season, he had broken his own national record with 88.07m.

Before the Olympics, Vetter had dominated the event for the best part of two years. The German moved to second on the world all-time list when he threw 97.76m in Silesia in 2020. He returned to the Polish region last year and came close to matching that throw with 96.29m, the third-best throw in history. Although Peters went undefeated for the whole of 2019, the Grenadian was still something of a surprise winner of the world title in Doha that year. Earlier in the season he had won the NCAA title, then broke his own national record to win at the Pan-American Games with 87.31m. Weber may not have a global title to his name, but he is a consistent performer on the circuit and at major championships.

## Liverpool in Champions League semis

Liverpool, Apr 14 (AP):

A place in the Champions League semifinals secured. The dream of an unprecedented quadruple of trophies still intact. Key players rested amid a hectic schedule.

Liverpool is in a good place entering the home straight of what could turn out to be the club's greatest ever season.

Even conceding two late goals to draw 3-3 at home to Benfica couldn't take the smile of Jurgen Klopp's face.

"The day we qualify for the semifinals of the Champions League and I'm not happy, please come here and knock me out," the Liverpool manager said Wednesday after seeing his team advance from the quarterfinals 6-4 on aggregate.

With Liverpool inflicting significant damage by winning the first leg 3-1 in Lisbon last week, Klopp was confident enough to rest stars like Mohamed Salah, Sadio Mane, Virgil van Dijk and Trent Alexander-Arnold for a return match against Benfica that turned into a wild, end-to-end contest at Anfield. Roberto



Liverpool's Brazilian midfielder Roberto Firmino celebrates after scoring his team third goal during the UEFA Champions League quarter final second leg football match between Liverpool and Benfica at the Anfield stadium, in Liverpool.

Firmino's second-half double put Liverpool 3-1 ahead on the night and 6-2 ahead on aggregate, only for Klopp's team to ease off the pace. Benfica took advantage by getting behind Liverpool's makeshift defense to score through substitute Roman Yaremchuk and rising star Darwin Nunez, but the gap was too much to make up.

"It was pretty comfortable," Liverpool captain Jordan Henderson said,

"but we're disappointed with the goals we conceded." Ultimately, Liverpool has coasted into the last four of Europe's top club competition and is there for the 12th time tying the record for an English team with Manchester United and the first since the last of its six title triumphs in 2019. Villarreal awaits Liverpool in the last four. Despite the Spanish team eliminating both Juventus and Bayern Munich and

its coach, Unai Emery, being a master strategist of European competitions, it's pretty much a dream scenario for Klopp and his team.

The quadruple of major trophies might really be on for Liverpool, already the winner of the English League Cup, currently in second place in Premier League just a point behind Manchester City and into the semifinals of the FA Cup.

## England pacer Anya Shrubsole announces retirement

London, Apr 14 (PTI):

England pacer Anya Shrubsole, a two-time Women's World Cup winner, on Thursday announced her retirement from international cricket after a 14-year-old career.

The 30-year-old, known for her sharp inswingers, played eight Tests, 86 ODIs and 79 T20s taking 19, 106 and 102 wickets respectively.

Shrubsole had famously taken six for 46, which remains her career best figures, against India in the World Cup final against India five years ago. She was also part of 2009 victorious squad and more recently the team that lost to Australia in the final earlier this month. "I feel immensely privileged to have been able to represent my country for the past 14 years. To have been involved in women's cricket at a time of such growth has been an honour but it has become clear to me that it is moving forward faster than I can keep up with,

so it is time for me to step away," she said in a statement. "Never in my wildest dreams did I think I would be lucky enough to play for England for so long, I'd have been happy with one game."



## Pujara, Rizwan make Sussex debut in County cricket

Derby (England), Apr 14 (PTI):

India's Cheteshwar Pujara and Pakistan's Mohammad Rizwan on Thursday made their Sussex debut for the game against hosts Derbyshire in the County Championships Division 2 here. While Pujara has played first-class cricket in England in the past, it is the first outing for Pakistan wicketkeeper batter. Both were named in the Sussex playing eleven which is captained by Tom Daines. With Derbyshire opting to bat, Pujara and Rizwan are expected to bat on day two.

Both the players stand at the opposite end of their international careers. While Pujara will be aiming to score a bagful of runs to make a Test comeback after being dropped following the tour of South Africa, Rizwan has been one of the best wicket-keeper batters in international cricket over the last couple of years. With Sussex having lost their opening game, head coach Ian Salisbury included both overseas stars for the contest against Derbyshire.

## Aishwarya Tomar wins at selection trials, Rajput second



New Delhi, Apr 14 (PTI):

Madhya Pradesh's Aishwarya Pratap Singh Tomar won the men's 50m rifle 3 positions T4 (fourth trial) competition, getting the better of seasoned Haryana shooter Sanjeev Rajput at the national selection trials here on Thursday.

In the gold medal contest, Tomar shot 404.9 to finish ahead of Rajput (400.7) at the Dr Karni Singh Shooting Range.

Both Tomar and Rajput are Olympians and if the result at the trials is any indication, the two remain

India's best bet in 3P event, notwithstanding the change in format. Unfortunately, it is also a reflection of the lack of depth and the absence of young talents in the men's 3P event. Navy's G Purusothaman finished third with 395.8, while Rajan Tomar of the Army settled for the fourth position with a score of 391.0 in the final stage elimination.

Army's Nishan Budha, who finished last among the eight finalists, topped the qualification with a total score of 586, while eventual winner Tomar was placed second with 584.

## I can't see why Umesh would not do well for India in T20 cricket: Southee

Kolkata, Apr 14 (PTI):

In 2008, when Tim Southee was making waves in competitive cricket as a 19-year-old, Umesh Yadav had only started considering a career in the sport.

Nearly a decade and a half later, Southee, a year younger and 366 international wickets ahead of Umesh, is so impressed with his Kolkata Knight Riders teammate's bowling in IPL-15, that the New Zealander is backing him to wear the India jersey again in the shortest format, having last played a T20I more than three years ago.

"I'm a fan of Umesh, he is a tremendous bowler. I was fortunate enough to share the new ball with him a few times when we both played at RCB," Southee said in an interview to PTL.

"The way he's been managed suits Umesh's style of bowling. If he keeps performing the way he's been doing I can't see why he would not do well for India in T20 cricket." Maintaining a great line and



length, the 34-year-old Umesh has been very effective for KKR this season, giving crucial breakthroughs in the powerplays. He has taken 10 wickets from five matches so far, at an economy of 6.60 while bowling the highest number of dot balls (62).

His scalps include those of Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma inside the powerplay, while against Punjab Kings, he delivered a magical double-wicket maiden in the middle overs to

skittle them out for 137. In the auction, Umesh was bought by KKR at his base price or Rs 2 crore.

### Credit goes to KKR think tank

Giving credit to the team's think tank for bringing the best out of Umesh, the 33-year-old Kiwi said the side has benefited from it.

"The way the KKR has used him has been outstanding. (Head coach) Brendon

(McCullum) and (captain) Shreyas (Iyer) have used him obviously as an attacking weapon with the new ball, maximising his strengths with the new ball and coming back in the middle overs to try and pick up wickets make the phase a bit easier.

"He's had a strong start to the tournament. To open the bowling with some of the great bowlers, and someone who you don't usually get to deal with, that's the beauty of this tournament, you are able to open the bowling with the very fine Indian fast bowler."

With premier Australian fast bowler Pat Cummins leading the pace attack, and Sunil Narine and Varun Chakravarthy handling the spin department, KKR have their bases covered in the bowling department, Southee said.

"It's really exciting. You look at the experience and the pace that the three have and then we throw in the exciting talents of the young Indian bowlers who we have in our side. "On top of that you have got two of the great mystery spin-

ners of the game so I think as a bowling attack that covers all the bases. "It's great to be a part of such a great lineup. You got the experience of Sunil Narine, Pat and Umesh and then throw in some exciting young Indian talents, it's great to be around."

### Impressed with young pace duo

Southee also praised the young pace duo of Raskh Salam and Ashok Sharma. The 22-year-old Kashmir pacer, Raskh made his debut for the franchise against his former team Mumbai Indians and was tidy against the explosive duo of Rohit Sharma and Ishan Kishan, returning with figures of 0/18 from his three overs.

"Raskh Salam who played his first game the other day is just a very skilful bowler and can swing the ball both ways. Then there's Ashok (Sharma). "It's always an eye-opener when you come to India and see these young Indian talented guys. They are asking some tough questions which are great to see," Southee concluded.

## TRADITIONAL DANCE



Youngsters belonging to Assamese community perform a traditional dance on the occasion of Rongali Bihu festival, at Tezpur in Sonitpur district, Thursday.

## 'At least 1,000 BJP leaders in HP set to join AAP'

New Delhi, Apr 14 (PTI):

At least 1,000 local BJP leaders in Himachal Pradesh will join the AAP soon and several big guns in the poll-bound state are also in touch with the Arvind Kejriwal-led party, Delhi Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia said on Thursday. Claiming that defections will leave the ruling party "scattered" in Himachal Pradesh, Sisodia asserted that the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) will form its government winning assembly elections to be held later this year in the hill state.

Sisodia's claims come a day after three BJP leaders, including national executive member of the saffron party's Scheduled

Caste Morcha Harman Dhiman, joined the AAP along with their supporters. "Dhiman ji has joined the party along with 20 other district level leaders. Now, 1,000 district and block leaders of the BJP are going to join the AAP as their hopes were shattered. They feel that the BJP is not going to do anything for the people of the state," Sisodia said while addressing a press conference here.

They will join the AAP "in a few days," the senior AAP leader said. "Several big leaders of the BJP are also in touch with us. The BJP is completely scattered in the state now," Sisodia said. The AAP on Monday dissolved its Himachal Pradesh working committee, announce-



Delhi Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia addresses a press conference, in New Delhi.

ing that it will reorganise it soon following defection of the top functionaries of the party's state unit and some other leaders to the BJP.

Last week, AAP's Himachal Pradesh unit president Anup Kesari, general secretary (organi-

sation) Satish Thakur and Una district chief Iqbal Singh had joined the BJP in the presence of its president J P Nadda and Union minister Anurag Thakur in the national capital. The Union minister had taken a jibe at the AAP on Monday after few more

AAP leaders, including women wing chief Mamata Thakur, joined the BJP, saying Kejriwal will find it difficult to save his party's organisation in Himachal Pradesh.

Sisodia also said that the process is underway to reorganise the party's working committee by bringing in dedicated leaders in the poll-bound state.

He asserted that the AAP has gained significant support base in Himachal Pradesh with leaders from the BJP and other parties joining it.

The BJP is so rattled with the "growing popularity" of the AAP that the saffron party has resorted to inducting those AAP leaders who were to be ousted from the party, Sisodia said.

## Vanmali awards for writers announced

Bhopal, Apr 14 (PTI): The prestigious Rashtriya Vanmali Katha Samman awards will be given in eight categories this year including NRI literature and science writing, its organizers announced here on Thursday.

The literature awards have been instituted by Vanmali Srijan Peeth and Rabindra Nath Tagore University (RNTU) in memory of the late Jagannath Prasad Choubhe Vanmali, an acclaimed Hindi writer. The first Vanmali Kathasheersh Samman will be given to professor Dhananjay Verma, while the Vanmali Rashtriya Katha Samman will be given to Delhi-based writer Geetanjali Shri.

## 'Reskilling of coal mine workers must for transition towards renewable energy'

REPORT CLAIMS

New Delhi, Apr 14 (PTI):

The country needs a strong action plan to reskill coal mine workers in order to protect their interests while making a transition from conventional fuel to renewable energy usage, a report said on Thursday.

India's power sector is one of the most diversified ones in the world. The country's thermal power generation by coal accounts for 62 per cent of its total generation capacity, a joint report of EY, SED Fund and FICCI said.

It also noted that India has been consistently working at a global level to reduce emission intensity to attain its net-zero target for 2070.

"For the transition from conventional to clean fuel-based energy generation, it will be imperative to protect the interests of coal mine workers through a holistic approach, and a strong skill action plan is needed to transition from coal to renewable energy," said the report titled as 'Skill action plan to fuel transition from coal to renewable energy in India'. Somesh Kumar, Partner

and Leader, Power & Utilities, EY India, said while the 'just transition' theme in the Indian context is an evolving one, it is of utmost importance to plan this evolution in a strategic manner to have a smooth transition, especially for the workforce involved across the value chains of these fossil fuels.

According to the report, coal mines create over 7.25 lakh direct jobs and many more indirect jobs. With the phasing out of old coal plants and shutting down of mines, thousands of coal mine workers are at risk of disruption in liveli-

hood in states like West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand and Maharashtra.

"Most of them are blue-collared workers who need to be upskilled with the newer skills of the hour. Apart from the direct workers, the entire economy of mining districts revolves around coal-related activities, and communities have relied on it for generations," it said.

Amit Vatsyayan, Partner and Leader (Social & Skills sector), Government and Public Sector, EY India, said that skills and entrepreneur-

ship development will play a key role in the just transition of coal mine workers.

"The report focuses on the development of a replicable 'just transition' framework which can be used by districts or states to ensure that livelihood disruption of the impacted coal mine workers is minimised, and ample opportunities are provided to them. Only when the interests of the poorest and most economically vulnerable are protected, the transition may be termed as just transition," Vatsyayan said.

## Self-immolation by worker UP power corpn JE, lineman held

Lakhimpur Kheri, Apr 14 (PTI):

Police here arrested a junior engineer and a lineman in connection with the death of a UP power corporation worker, who had set himself on fire alleging that he was told by his boss to "send his wife for a night".

Junior Engineer Nagendra Sharma and lineman Jagapal were arrested from the Tehra trisection on the Nighasan road in the Pallia area on Thursday, police said.

The JE had allegedly asked lineman Gokul (42) to

"send his wife for a night" and asked him to pay Rs 1 lakh for a transfer he was seeking. Before taking the step on April 9 night outside the JE's house at Hyde Colony in Pallia, Gokul made a video levelling the allegations.

According to the FIR lodged by his wife Rajkumari, the JE demanded Rs 1 lakh and asked her husband to "send her to him for a night" for a transfer to Pallia. Gokul was earlier posted at Manhgapur under the Pallia substation and transferred to Aliganj a few weeks ago.

## 'Niti working on gaushala economy to address stray cattle issue'

New Delhi, Apr 14 (PTI):

Keen on improving the gaushala (cow shelter) economy, government think-tank Niti Aayog is working on a roadmap to enable commercial use of cow dung for multiple purposes, and resolve various issues connected with stray cows which often become liability for farmers, its member Ramesh Chand has said.

The Aayog has also asked economic think tank NCAER to prepare a report on the economics of gaushalas to ensure its commercial viability. "We



Ramesh Chand

are just looking at what are the possibilities to improve the gaushala economy.. We are looking at the possibilities that can we have some value created or value addition for the by-products,

which is cow dung," he told PTI. A team of government officials under Chand has visited big gaushalas in Vrindavan (Uttar Pradesh), Rajasthan and other parts of India to assess their conditions.

He pointed out that maybe 10 per cent or 15 per cent of cows give a small quantity of milk but that is not enough to cover labour, fodder and treatment costs. "Cow dung can be used to make Bio-CNG...So we are looking at those kinds of possibilities," Chand, who oversees farm policies at the government think tank said.

Menace of stray cattle, abandoned by their owners, had become a major talking point in the Uttar Pradesh elections. The NITI Aayog member highlighted the advantage of producing bio-CNG from cow dung.

"So rather than it (gas) damaging the environment, we will use it as energy which will give returns also," he argued. The eminent agriculture economist observed that leaving unwanted cattle in the open is also harmful for crops. "That's why we are working on the gaushala economy," he asserted.

## ACROBATIC PERFORMANCE



Devotees swing using ropes during an acrobatic performance on the occasion of the Charak Puja festival, at Kedarchandpur in Murshidabad district, Thursday.

## Public, politicians through Mhow to pay tributes to Ambedkar

CM says town to be included in Teerth Darshan scheme

Mhow, Apr 14 (PTI): A large number of people and senior Madhya Pradesh leaders on Thursday paid tributes to Dr B R Ambedkar on his 131st birth anniversary at his birthplace in Mhow, where Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan announced to include the town as a destination in the list of the 'Teerth Darshan Yojna'.

The Madhya Pradesh government has been running the Teerth Darshan scheme since some years to enable people and senior citizens to go on a pilgrimage free of cost at least once in their lifetime.

## 'Gujarat Congress leaders harassing me'

Want me to leave party

Ahmedabad, Apr 14 (PTI):

Gujarat Congress working president Hardik Patel on Thursday alleged that the leaders of his party's state unit were harassing him and want him to leave the party. Patel also said that although he had taken up the issue of his harassment with Congress leader Rahul Gandhi many times, no action has been taken to address his grievances. Patel had attained prominence when he spearheaded the Patidar community's campaign in Gujarat in 2015 seeking reservations under the OBC category. However, his popularity shrank after he joined the Congress in 2019 as he had earlier promised that he would never enter politics.

Although the Congress benefited due to quota agitation in the 2017 state assembly elections, the Patidar community did not support the party in the 2019 Lok Sabha polls or subsequent municipal or panchayat elections after Patel joined it. "I am being harassed so much that I feel bad about it. Gujarat



Hardik Patel

Congress leaders want that I should leave the party," Patel told PTI Bhasha in a telephonic interview. "I am more pained because I have represented the situation to Rahul Gandhi many times, but no action has been taken by him against Gujarat Congress leaders," he said.

The Congress's plan to rope in chairman of the Khodaldham Temple Trust Naresh Patel, a prominent Patidar face, ahead of 2022 state polls has apparently angered Hardik, who believes that his clout as Patidar leader will be finished if Naresh Patel joins the Congress party. "You used Hardik in 2017, you want to use Naresh bhai in 2022 and in 2027 you would use another

Patidar leader. Why don't you support and strengthen Hardik?" he said. "They should take Naresh bhai, but will they treat him like the way they did to me?" he asked. Hardik said despite being a working president of the party's state unit, no work has been given to him. "I am not called to attend important meetings or not made part of any decision making process," he claimed. He said that it was due to his Patidar quota agitation that the Congress benefited in the 2017 elections.

He also alleged that the Congress in Gujarat is a divided house and the party has not been able to gain power in the last 30 years due to infighting. Hardik said he has no plans to leave the Congress. On Wednesday, Hardik had expressed displeasure over the state Congress's 'style of functioning', claiming that he was sidelined in the state unit and the leadership is not willing to utilise his skills. He had expressed his grouse a day after he hinted at contesting elections after the Supreme Court stayed his conviction in a 2015 rioting and arson case.

## Rajput community in shock & despair after driver's killing

To leave leaving Kashmir Valley

Kulgam (Kashmir), Apr 14 (PTI):

The killing of a Rajput driver by a terrorist has generated a sense of fear and uncertainty among members of the tiny community in Kakran village in Kulgam district who have stayed on in Kashmir Valley despite decades of militancy but are now considering leaving for a safer place. Satish Kumar Singh, 50, was shot dead at his home on Wednesday evening, amid a string of targeted attacks on members of minority communities in Kashmir Valley.

At the Singh residence a day later, one could hear wails and shrieks as his family members and neighbours were yet to come to terms with their loss. Singh's Muslim neighbours were shell-shocked after the cold-blooded killing.

To carry out the attack, the lone terrorist chose the time of 'Iftaar', when the Muslim neighbourhood

was busy offering prayers in mosques to break their fast during the holy month of Ramzan.

"We have not had our dinner or anything. The entire village is mourning, Singh was a gentleman," says Abdul Rehman, a neighbour. Firewood for the pyre was collected by villagers, many of whom spoke about the brotherhood they share with the few Rajput families who never moved out. "He (Singh) was working as a private load carrier driver...and had never harmed anyone," Bitu Singh, his younger brother, told PTI as the family was preparing to perform the last rites.

Satish Kumar Singh left behind an aged mother, wife and three daughters in the age group of six to 15 years. Some neighbours were seen consoling the family members. Bitu Singh said the incident occurred around 7.05 pm when a gunman came

looking for his brother who was having tea in a room.

"I was also sitting with him and had left the room to go upstairs with my daughter who insisted on being given a mobile phone to play game. In the meantime, I heard a few shots and rushed downstairs to find my brother in a pool of blood. He was fired twice in the upper body, causing his death," he said.

He said they have been living in the village for three generations and stayed back when militancy broke out in early 1990s - the year when Kashmiri Pandits left the valley en masse to take shelter in Jammu and elsewhere in the country.

"We never felt threatened in the past...We are eight Rajput families living in the village and a police guard is deployed at the local temple," Bitu Singh, a farmer who spends most of his time at-

tending to his fields, said.

They have lost their father sometime back due to an illness and their mother Pushpa Devi is in shock over the killing of her son. She was inconsolable and was seen being comforted by mourners, including Muslim neighbours, who visited the house to express their sympathies with the family.

"Muslim neighbours are also coming to offer their condolences. What else can they do? They too are helpless," Bitu Singh said. However, he said, the community is considering moving out of the valley, and referred to a poster asking the Hindus to leave Kashmir.

A "threat" letter was circulated at Veeraan village in north Kashmir's Baramulla district on Wednesday. A hitherto unknown group, named 'Lashkar-e-Islami', had threatened the residents of the village where a group of Kashmiri Pandits live.