



BRIEF



An ISKCON member drinks coconut water along with her son, in Nadia, Saturday.

Encounter

Srinagar: An encounter broke out between security forces and militants in Kulgam district of Jammu and Kashmir on Saturday, police said. The security forces had launched a cordon-and-search operation in the Mirhama area of Kulgam, in south Kashmir, following inputs about the presence of militants there, a police official said. He said the search operation turned into an encounter after the hiding militants fired upon the security force personnel, who retaliated.

Watery grave

Kaushambi: Two persons were feared drowned in Yamuna river here, after they went bathing into it with a group of friends on Saturday, police said. Search is on for Sandeep Dubey, 28, a resident of Ayodhya district, and Priyanshu Mishra, 16, a resident of Kaushambi, said Chail Circle officer Shyamkant. The two had gone bathing into the river at Angwa Ghat with a few others around 10.00 am, and possibly drowned after straying into the deep waters.

Cancel

Pratapgarh: A court here cancelled the bail of Uttar Pradesh legislative council member Akshay Pratap Singh and ordered his arrest in a case of getting an arms licence on a fake address, a government counsel said on Saturday. Ordering his arrest, the Pratapgarh district and sessions court issued a non-bailable warrant against the MLC who has been convicted in the arms licence case and sentenced to a seven-year jail term by a special court meant to try lawmakers, District Government Counsel Yogesh Sharma said.

Arrested

Sheopor: Two sons of a BJP MLA and two others were booked for allegedly assaulting forest department staffers who had reportedly stopped them from illegally quarrying stones in Madhya Pradesh's Sheopor district, police said on Saturday. A video of the incident, which showed some persons thrashing a group, went viral on social media soon after.

Mishap

Beed: Seven persons including five women were killed and ten injured after a truck rammed into their SUV in central Maharashtra's Beed district on Saturday morning, police said. The incident took place at Nandgaon Phata near Ambajogai town on the Latur-Ambajogai highway around 10 am, said a police official. The condition of three of the injured was critical, he added.

Weather
High 39 Low 24

'Won't hesitate to cross border for terrorists'

Guwahati, Apr 23 (PTI):

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Saturday asserted that India would not hesitate to act against terrorists who target the country from across the border. Speaking at a programme, where Assam-based veterans of 1971 India-Pakistan War were felicitated, Singh said the government was working to wipe out terrorism from the country. "India has been successful in giving out the message that terrorism will be strongly dealt with. We will not hesitate to cross borders if the country is targeted from outside," he maintained. Singh also said that the eastern boundary of



Defence Minister Rajnath Singh speaks during a function honouring the war heroes of 1971 Bangladesh Liberation War, in Guwahati, Saturday.

the country is currently experiencing more peace and stability compared to the western frontier, with Bangladesh being a friendly neighbour. "The tension that India experiences on western

frontier does not exist along eastern boundary as Bangladesh is a friendly country," he noted. "The problem of infiltration has almost ended. There is peace and stability at the border (in the eastern frontier) now," the minister said. On the recent withdrawal of Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA) from different parts of northeast, the defence minister stated that the government did so whenever the situation in a place improved. Maintaining that there was a "public misconception" that the Army always wanted AFSPA to remain in force, Singh added, "It is the situation that is responsible for imposition of AFSPA, not the Army."

Delhi's R-value up to 2.1

'Every Covid patient infecting 2 others'

New Delhi, Apr 23:

Delhi's R-value, which indicates the spread of COVID-19, was recorded at 2.1 this week, implying that every infected person is infecting two others in the national capital, according to an analysis by IIT-Madras. The 'R' or reproductive value indicates the number of people an infected person can spread the disease to, and a pandemic is considered to end if this value goes below one. The preliminary analysis by computational modelling was done by IIT-Madras' department of mathematics and centre of excellence for computational mathematics and data science headed by Prof Neelesh S Upadhye and Prof S Sundar. This was shared with PTI and according to it, Delhi's R-value this week was recorded at 2.1. India's R-value, at pres-

ent, stands at 1.3, the analysis found. Asked if it can be deduced that this is the beginning of the fourth wave of COVID-19 in Delhi, Dr Jayant Jha, assistant professor, department of mathematics, IIT-Madras, said it would be too early to declare an onset of another wave. "We can only say right now that every person is affecting two others...but we need to wait a bit to declare onset...we don't know about the immunity status and whether the people who got affected during the third wave in January are getting affected or not again," he told PTI. For other metro cities - Mumbai, Chennai and Kolkata, Jha said the number of cases are too low to ascertain a trend. Delhi is witnessing an uptick in the number of COVID-19 cases. The city logged 1,042 fresh Covid cases with a positivity rate of 4.64 per cent on Friday.

The Omicron sub-lineage BA.2.12 has been detected in a majority of the samples sequenced from Delhi in the first fortnight of April and it could be behind the recent surge in COVID-19 cases in the city, sources said on Thursday. However, an Indian SARS-CoV-2 Genomics Consortium source has claimed that Omicron variant derivative BA.2.12.1 has also been found in a few samples in Delhi which is said to be contributing to the recent rise in cases in the US. But officials have not confirmed that it indeed was found in some samples in Delhi. An official source said, "New sub-variants BA.2.12 (52 per cent samples) and BA.2.10 (11 per cent samples) are showing high transmission and have been found in over 60 per cent of the total samples from Delhi sequenced recently."

Yes Bank-DHFL case

'Rs 5,000-crore fraud by Rana Kapoor, Wadhawans'

Mumbai, Apr 23 (PTI):

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has alleged that Yes Bank co-founder Rana Kapoor and Dewan Housing Finance Limited (DHFL) promoters Kapil and Dheeraj Wadhawan siphoned off funds worth Rs 5,050 crore through suspicious transactions. The ED said this in its second supplementary (third overall) charge sheet filed in special court here recently against Rana Kapoor, his family, Wadhawans and others in a money laundering case. During the investigation, it came to light that a big part of the proceeds of crime (POC) generated in

this case has been siphoned off overseas by Rana Kapoor and hence they are not available for attachment directly under the provisions of Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), it said. "Rana Kapoor, DHFL promoters Kapil Wadhawan, Dheeraj Wadhawan and others were involved in criminal conspiracy with each other in illegal diversion and siphoning off of funds through suspicious transaction of Rs 5,050 crore," the central probe agency claimed in its fresh prosecution complaint (charge sheet) filed recently. The ED said investigation has revealed that Yes Bank had bought debentures worth Rs 3,700 crore

between April 2018 and June 2018 from DHFL. Therefore, the amount was transferred to DHFL. Subsequently, DHFL gave a loan of Rs 600 crore to DOIT Urban Ventures Pvt Ltd (an entity, beneficially owned by Rana Kapoor and his family). The probe also revealed that Yes Bank had used public money for the purchase of the above-said short-term debentures of DHFL, which has not yet been redeemed by DHFL. On the other hand, DHFL obliged Rana Kapoor by giving the so called loan of Rs 600 crore to his beneficially-owned company, namely DUVPL, without adequate collateral, the agency said.

Rs 24,713-cr deal with Future is over: Reliance

New Delhi, Apr 23 (PTI):

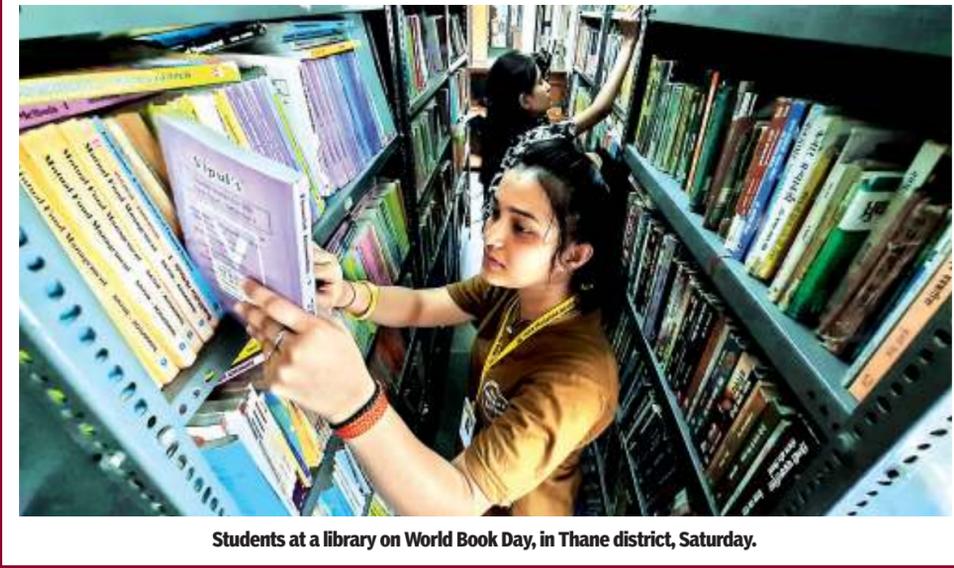
Almost 21 months after signing an agreement for a Rs 24,713-crore deal with Kishore Biyani-led Future Group to acquire its retail, wholesale, logistics and warehousing assets, Reliance Industries Ltd on Saturday said the transaction cannot go ahead as secured creditors of the latter have voted against it. In a regulatory filing, Reliance said Future Group companies comprising Future Retail Limited (FRL) and other listed companies involved in the scheme have intimated the results of the voting on the scheme of arrangement by their shareholders and creditors at their respective meetings. "...The secured creditors of FRL have voted against

the scheme. In view thereof, the subject scheme of arrangement cannot be implemented," said RIL, while updating on the scheme of arrangement for the transfer of retail and wholesale business and the logistics and warehousing business of Future Group to its subsidiary Reliance Retail Ventures Ltd (RRVL) and Reliance Retail and Fashion Lifestyle Ltd (RRFL). The Future Group companies had called meetings of their shareholders, secured and unsecured creditors this week to get the approval of the scheme of amalgamation and sale of assets as per the deal announced with Reliance Retail. However, secured creditors, which mainly include banks and financial insti-

tutions, of listed entities - Future Retail, Future Enterprises, Future Lifestyle Fashion Ltd, Future Market Networks and Future Consumer -- could not get the mandatory 75 per cent approval. Though, the shareholders of the listed entities had supported the deal with Reliance. The meetings were opposed by e-commerce giant Amazon, which in 2019, had picked up a 49 per cent stake in Future Coupons Pvt Ltd (FCPL), a promoter firm of FRL. In August 2020, Future Group announced the Rs 24,713-crore deal to sell 19 companies operating in retail, wholesale, logistics and warehousing segments to Reliance Retail Ventures Ltd (RRVL). RRVL is the holding

company of all the retail companies under the RIL Group. The deal was vehemently opposed by global e-commerce major Amazon, on grounds that the deal violated its 2019 agreement through which it acquired a 49 per cent stake in FCPL, the promoter entity of FRL, for about Rs 1,500 crore. There were no immediate comments, over the development, from Future Group, Reliance Retail and e-commerce major Amazon, which is opposing the deal. In February, Reliance Retail had taken over the operations of at least 350 stores of FRL and offered jobs to its employees after the Kishore Biyani-led group failed to make lease payments to landlords.

WORLD BOOK DAY



Students at a library on World Book Day, in Thane district, Saturday.

MP, MLA arrested over 'Hanuman Chalisa' face-off with Uddhav

Mumbai, Apr 23 (PTI):

Mumbai Police on Saturday evening arrested MLA Ravi Rana and his wife, MP Navneet Rana for allegedly "creating enmity between different groups" after escorting them out of their house in suburban Khar here amid high drama. The development came hours after the couple cancelled their plan to recite the Hanuman Chalisa outside Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray's private residence 'Matoshree' here. The Ranas were booked under IPC section 153 (A) (Promoting enmity be-



tween different groups on grounds of religion, race, place of birth, residence, language, etc., and doing acts prejudicial to maintenance of harmony), and section 135 of the Mumbai Police Act (violation of prohibitory orders of police), said an official of the Khar police station in western Mumbai. BJP leader Devendra Fadnis, speak-

ing in Nagpur, said the Shiv Sena-led Maharashtra government's way of handling the entire episode was "very childish". The state government tries to hide its failures by terming the situations it can't handle as BJP-sponsored, the former chief minister said. "If allowed, the Rana couple would have gone there (Matoshree), recited Hanuman Chalisa and returned without creating any news. I don't understand why so many people had gathered at several places as if they (Rana couple) were planning some attack. What kind of politics is this?" the BJP leader said.

INTERESTING DEVELOPMENT

Patidar leader Naresh Patel meets Prashant Kishor

Says yet to finalise political party

Rajkot, Apr 23 (PTI):

Influential Patidar leader Naresh Patel, who heads Shree Khodaldham Temple Trust, on Saturday said he had met poll strategist Prashant Kishor in New Delhi but has not finalised the party he may join ahead of the Gujarat Assembly elections. Amid speculation that he may join Congress at the behest of Kishor, Patel said

that he will take a final call on which political party to join based on a public opinion survey being conducted by a committee of the Shree Khodaldham Trust (SKT). Patel has said that leaders from all the three parties (Congress, AAP and BJP) had met him. Kishor is learnt to have suggested top Congress leadership to induct Patel into Congress ahead of elections, due in December this year, sources said. Notably, quota spearhead and Gujarat Congress

working president Hardik Patel had recently questioned the "delay" by Congress leadership over the induction of Naresh Patel into the party fold. The SKT headed by Patel manages the affairs of the Shree Khodaldham temple dedicated to the goddess Khodiyar in the Rajkot district, the patron deity of the Leuva Patel community. The Patidars form about 11-12% of the population in Gujarat and are the influential caste group whose votes can sway results in many constituencies.

'Don't blindly follow rules, conflicts have human face'

Chennai, Apr 23 (PTI):

Judges cannot blindly apply rules as conflicts have a human face and before rendering any decision, they have to weigh socio-economic factors and the impact of their decision on the society, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, Justice N V Ramana said here on Saturday. In this era of 'instant noodles', people expect instant justice. But they do not realise that real justice will be a casualty if we strive for instant justice, he said addressing an event at the Madras High Court. People looked up to the judiciary in times of distress. And they firmly believe that their rights would be protected by the



courts. "It is necessary to contemplate how to improve the functioning of the judiciary, how to reach out to the people and fulfil their justice needs." On the language used in courts, Justice Ramana said a common citizen cannot relate to the practices, procedures and language of courts. Hence, efforts should be on making the general population an active part of the justice delivery process.

Dhamdha known for its horticultural crops across the country: CM

Chief Minister inaugurates new fruit and vegetable market

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Apr 23: On Saturday, Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel inaugurated and performed bhoomipujan of various development projects worth Rs 55 crore in Dhamdha block of Durg District. He inaugurated a vegetable and fruit market (mandi) constructed at a cost of Rs 11 crore.

Along with this, a Community Health Center and Senior Agricultural Extension Office building constructed at a cost of Rs 1.75 crore was also inaugurated. Rs 18 crore schemes of Water Resources Department were inaugurated and Bhoomipujan of Rs 15 crore schemes of PHE Department were also conducted.

In his address, Chief Minister said that Dhamdha has been identified as "6 Agar, 6 Kori Talab". The city always had a historical identity. Now it is also recognized for the production of tomatoes and horticulture crops. The farmers of Dhamdha have not only supplied the horticultural crops within the country but have also exported it to Bangladesh and Pakistan.

This achievement of the farmers is amazing. The hard work of Agriculture Minister Ravindra Choubey is behind this success. CM said that he approved the plan prepared by Choubey for the market. Soon after the approval, the project was completed very quickly.

With the establishment of this market, farmers will be able to get a better price for the crop. On this occasion, the Chief Minister announced to upgrade the health center of Dhamdha to 50 beds.

Along with this, he also announced to start coaching for PSC, Army recruitment and other competitive examinations in Dhamdha. He also announced construction of a stadium at a cost of Rs One crore. The Chief Minister also announced the construction of an auditorium in Dhamdha Mahavidyalaya.



Dhamdha to 50 beds.

He further announced the beautification of ponds in Dhamdha; Rs One Crore for the beautification of the Bandhua pond; and Rs 1 crore for community building in Dhamdha.

In his remarks, the Chief Minister said that the government has taken all possible steps for the development of Dhamdha. He said that now Dhamdha is known for its horticulture crops. A market has been set up for promoting horticulture crops. Along with that, plans have been made to help the farmers in every possible way.

Agriculture Minister Ravindra Choubey said that the inauguration of the market is a very auspicious sign for the farmers of Dhamdha. Earlier also the farmers have been transporting their products to Hyderabad and Allahabad, now they will be able to get a fair price through the mandi.



It is a very nice gift of Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel's government to the Dhamdha block. He said that the irrigation system would be improved from Moti Nala and Raunda reservoir. In the last 3 years, major works have been done to increase the

area of irrigation in Dhamdha.

On the occasion, the Chief Minister also distributed various materials to the beneficiaries. He distributed tractors to 50 farmers. Boats, nets, fish feed etc were also distributed to the farmers involved in fisheries. Along with this, he also provided bikes to the beneficiaries of Social Welfare Department.

District Mandi Board President Ashwini Sahu also addressed the gathering and expressed his gratitude to the Chief Minister for the unique gift of Mandi. Nagar Panchayat President Sunita Gupta also expressed her gratitude towards the Chief Minister. Former MLA Pradeep Choubey, former MLA Pratima Chandrakar, Janpad President Saraswati Ratte, Avinash

Choubey and other public representatives were present.

Collector Dr Sarveshwar Narendra Bhure presented a report and detailed about the achievements of the last 3 years in Dhamdha. Divisional Commissioner Mahadev Kavre, IG OP Pal, SSP Badrinarayan Meena, SDM Brajesh Kshatriya and other officers were present.

The Chief Minister also had lunch with the farmers. He inquired about the status of horticulture crops from the farmers. He conducted discussion with the farmers to make better schemes for this area. He asked the farmers that they have given a new identity to Dhamdha in the field of horticulture crops. "With the innovative working of farmers, our dream will soon become a reality", CM said.

Induction programme held at RLAMCH



Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Apr 23: The Rajiv Lochan Ayurved Medical College and Hospital organised Induction Programme for new students of first year BAMS 19th Batch (2021-22). All the faculty members, students and their parents were present. At the outset, the programme began with offering prayers to Lord Dhanvantari. In her address, Principal Dr Vandana Fating spoke about the history and achievements of the college. She informed that Rajiv Lochan Ayurved Medical College and Hospital was established in the year

2002. This institution enjoys the status of being the first private Ayurveda College of the state. She also gave information about the hospital and available facilities. The college progressed continuously in the last 20 years. Dr Manjusha Sonpikare gave instructions about the new pattern of examinations and first year syllabus. Students were informed about the course and subjects by the specialist teachers. The newcomers were administered oath by Dr Shivhar Ophale to become good doctors and serve the humanity. The programme was conducted by Dr Yogeshwar Pandey.

CM inaugurates Tehsil Office in Bhilai-3



Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Apr 23: On Saturday, Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel inaugurated the new Tehsil and Sub-Tehsil office in Bhilai-3. Public Health Engineering Minister Guru Rudra Kumar, Mayor Nirmal Kosre, Bhilai Charoda Speaker Krishna Chandrakar and other elected representatives were present. It needs to be mentioned

here that Bhilai-3 has become the sixth tehsil of Durg District. After inaugurating the new Tehsil Office building, Chief Minister took a round of the building and oversaw the arrangements.

Addressing a public rally, Chief Minister said that the inauguration of the new Tehsil office has made him very happy because he is also a resident and farmer of this area. He further said that they had announced the formation of 85 new Tehsils out of which 52 have come into existence. Possibly no other state government has formed such a large number of tehsils within three years. The Chhattisgarh government has further formed six new districts within three years.



PHE Minister Guru Rudra Kumar also addressed the gathering and raised a few demands before the Chief Minister. Considering his demands, CM announced to introduce a tap water scheme after conducting a survey. He further announced administrative Sub Division in Bhilai-3; opening of Sub Registrar Office; Swami Atmanand Government English School after survey; and construction of boundary walls in the Tehsil and Sub-Tehsil offices. CM exchanged Akshaya Tritiya greetings with the people.

Annual fest SYMPHONIA 2022 organised at CCET



Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Apr 23: Symphonia 2022, the annual fest was organised by Christian College of Engineering and Technology, Kailash Nagar, Bhilai (formerly MPCCET). The Corporator of Ward 21, Neha Sahu graced the occasion as chief guest in presence of Fr Kurian John, Fr Philip Kuruvilla, and the Principal, Dr Dipali Soren, among others. Students with Academic and extracurricular excellence were felicitated, sporting talent was showcased on the ground, and trophies, medals and certificates awarded. The Fest

ended on an electrifying note with students rocking on desi and western themes and flaunting regional traditional attire. Over the last few days, the sprawling and picturesque College campus was abuzz with engaging sports and technical games for budding engineers. With Symphonia 2022, the CCET, the 3rd oldest Engineering College of the region, has thrown off the lethargy of the last 2 Corona-touched years, moved through online classes and examinations, and come back onto the Engineering Educational Map of Chhattisgarh with a bang.

Saplings planted inside Plant on World Earth Day

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Apr 23: SAIL-Bhilai Steel Plant observed World Earth Day on April 22, 2022 with plantation of saplings in the Plant's Ore Handling Plant - B area. Led by Executive Director (Works) Anjani Kumar, senior officers including AK Bhatta, ED (Projects), KK Singh, ED (P&A), SN Abidi, CGM I/c Services, BL Chandwani, CGM (OHP), Asit Saha, CGM I/c M & U, Rajiv Pandey, CGM (PBS), AK Dutta, CGM (SP 2), GA Rao, CGM (Coke Ovens), DL Moitra, CGM I/c Environment planted saplings of bakul trees. The theme for this year's World Earth Day is Invest



in our Planet. Anjani Kumar, ED (Works) emphasised on giving priority to any activity that would be beneficial in maintaining ecological balance of our planet. DL Moitra, CGM I/c Environment outlined several activities being carried out by Environment Mgt Dept to protect and conserve our environment. The plantation programme was carried out with the help of OHP B team led by Chandwani, CGM (OHP).

St Thomas College conducts Workshop on Research Methodology

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Apr 23: St Thomas College conducted three day workshop on Research Methodology in Collaboration with MoU partners Govt KDR Girls College, Rajnandgaon and Holy Cross Women's College, Ambikapur. The PG Department of Psychology of St Thomas College conducted the workshop online on Basics of Research Methodology.

Resource persons of the workshop were Dr Avantika Kaushil, Assistant Professor, Govt EVPG College, Korba and Dr Jay Singh, Associate Professor, University of Allahabad, Uttar Pradesh. Dr Kaushil gave inputs on the topic 'Data collection and Sampling Techniques' and spoke that a researcher has to be very honest in collecting appropriate sample and discussed various methods of data collection and sampling techniques. Dr Jay Singh, gave his expert lecture on 'Introduction to Basics of Statistics'. It was a very interactive session in which students were introduced to inferential and descriptive statistics, importance of normal probability curve and when to use statistics such as ANOVA, ANCOVA and Factor Analysis. Administrator of the college, Rev Father Dr Joshy Varghese appreciated the topic of the workshop and stressed that in today's academic world every student should develop his research skills to be a better student and researcher. Principal Dr MG Roymon said the IQAC has to

conduct such academic development programs for quality enhancement. Dr SR Shanta Joseph, Principal, Holy Cross women's college, Ambikapur addressed the gathering in the opening session and encouraged the organisers for their efforts. Dr Alok Mishra, Principal, Government Kamla Devi Rathi Girls PG college, Rajnandgaon gave full support for the conduct of the workshop. Dr Debjani Mukherjee Head, Dept of Psychology welcomed the gathering and said every student must know the basics of research methods and statistics as it is very useful in higher education. MoU partner colleges give a platform to students to interact and learn together. Dr Mamta Awasthi, Head, Dept of Psychology Holy Cross Women's College, Ambikapur and Dr Basant Sonber, Government Kamla Devi Rathi Girls PG College, Rajnandgaon addressed the students and enlightened them on the various aspects of Research Methodology. Dr Ankita Deshmukh, Dr Mona Makhija and Divya Singh Assistant Professors of the three colleges conducted the sessions and Dr Sumita Singh Assistant Professor St Thomas College, proposed the vote of thanks. J Maju, Assistant Professor assisted in smooth conduct of the workshop.



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International Conference ICAECT 2022 conducted at SSTC

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Apr 23: The two day Second International Conference on Advances in Electrical, Computing, Communications and Sustainable Technologies (ICAECT 2022) was organised at Shri Shankaracharya Technical Campus (SSTC).

Dr MK Verma, Vice Chancellor, CSVTU, Bhilai was the Chief Guest for the occasion and Dr Rajashree Jain, Secretary IEEE India Council and Vice Chair TEMS, IEEE Pune Section was Guest of Honour. Dr Jaya Mishra was special guest and she congratulated the organizing team.

The vision of ICAECT 2022 was to promote foster communication among researchers and practitioners working in a wide variety of the above areas in Engineering and



Technology. It is a platform for researchers, scientists, academicians, scholars and practitioners around the world to present papers on recent developments in the broad fields of Electrical, Electronics & Computer Engineering.

The conference received potential number of submissions from across the world and the papers have been accepted by the editorial board of ICAECT after the stringent screening and

review process. This conference received more than 600 submissions and 238 papers were accepted after the review and evaluation process. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic all around the world, the conference was organized in Hybrid Mode where participants were given option to present either online or physical mode based on their preference and convenience. Online sessions of the conference were conducted

using Google meet online platform. The conference had six keynote sessions during the two days. The speakers were Dr Moi Hoon Yap, Professor, Image and Vision Computing from Manchester Metropolitan University Loughborough, England United Kingdom, Dr Ruslinda Arahim, Director, National Nanotechnology Center, Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation (MOSTI), Malaysia, Dr

Rajashree Jain, Secretary, IEEE India Council 2021, Professor, Symbiosis Institute of Computer Studies and Research (SICSR), Pune, India, Dr Sanjeev Singh, Professor, Maulana Azad National Institute of Technology (MANIT), Bhopal, Dr Pooja Jain, Department of Computer Science and Engineering, Indian Institute of Information Technology, Nagpur, and Dr Tapan Jain, Department of Electronics and Communication Engineering, Indian Institute of Information Technology, Nagpur.

Being the Second edition, ICAECT 2022 had received submissions from different regions of the world like Bangladesh, Iraq, Libya, Peru, Turkey and scholars from these countries registered and participated.

DAV Hudco celebrates World Earth Day

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Apr 23: The students of DAV Public School Hudco enthusiastically participated in various activities to commemorate benevolent Mother Earth. On the occasion of the Earth Day, an array of creative activities was organised with a view to sensitize the children about the conservation of natural resources and to motivate them to do their bit towards making their planet even more beautiful.

"Invest on Mother Earth: a poster making and slogan writing activity was organised which invigorated the young minds towards the conservation of out natural resources they also learnt the art of reduction, reusing and recycling. On the occasion



the principal Prashant Kumat praised the efforts of all the students and asked them to thank Mother Earth for all its bountiful gifts in the form of all flora and beautiful landscapes. The students got a platform to showcase their artistic and creative skills.

The corridors of the school were decorated with the thoughtful slogans written by the students. The event of the day rekindled emotive concerns and instigated the youngsters to save, love and respect Mother Nature with all their heart and soul.

CSI-SIG's e-Governance Award to School Education Department

Tele-practices for practical and assessment of school children get award in recognition category

Central Chronicle News

Raipur, Apr 23: The School Education Department of Chhattisgarh has been awarded CSI-SIG (Computer Society of India Special Interest Group) e-Governance Award 2021. This award has been given to Chhattisgarh in the recognition category for tele-practices implemented to ease the assessment and practice work of school children. The 19th CSI-SIG e-Governance Award was presented at Motilal Nehru National Institute of Technology, Prayagraj. Dr M Sudhish of Education



Department on behalf of Chhattisgarh senior scientist Lalita Verma and senior technical director Som Shekhar on behalf of NIC received the award.

Tele-practices program is being conducted under the guidance of Principal Secretary School Education Alok Shukla and Secretary Dr Kamalpreet Singh to sim-

plify assessment and practice in the Education Department.

A program called Tele-practices is being implemented by the Department of School Education in collaboration with the National Informatics Center (NIC) to simplify the assessment and practice work of children and to remove the commonly

occurring discrepancies in the assessment procedures. Teachers and students have to work in a group in Telegram. Questions come and go in front of children, which children have to answer without wasting time. Each child e-answer automatically creates a separate video. After watching these videos teachers can

assess the children. Similarly children can improve their performance by watching the video containing their answers, correcting their errors next time and choosing the correct answer.

Tele-practices program is being fully utilized by the School Education Department in Chhattisgarh in collaboration with NIC Chhattisgarh. The questions used in this are also prepared by the teachers. Various organizations have observed tele-practices prevalent in the state and found them useful for easing the work of children's practice and teachers' assessment.

It has been prepared under the leadership of Som Shekhar, Senior Technical Operations from NIC. Its piloting in the state has been done under the direction of Dr M Sudhish from Samagra Shiksha.

Cabinet to discuss proposal on lifting ban on transfer

Meeting to be held on May 1

Raipur, Apr 23: Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel would be presiding over the meeting of Chhattisgarh Cabinet on May 1 at his official residence here. Several issues would be taken up for discussion including the proposal to lift ban on the transfer of the government employees after a

gap of nearly two years. It is notable that presently, the transfer of government employees takes place through Co-ordination Committee headed by CM himself. Due to ban, the bulk ban on government employees could not take place but with pressure from Organization, the Chhattisgarh Cabinet can give consent to the above proposal to lift ban on transfer. If the Cabinet gives consent on the pro-

posal, the Departmental Minister can give his recommendation for transfer of grade III and grade IV employees. Government spokesperson and Cabinet Minister Ravindra Choubey had given indications that the above proposal would be taken up for discussion in the cabinet meet to be held on May 1. Apart from it, several other important issues would be presented before the Cabinet.

21 Ethanol Manufacturers to be able to sale their products from October

Raipur, Apr 23: Nearly 20 more Ethanol manufacturing units from Chhattisgarh would be able to sale their products from October this year. Centre has issued notification in this regard. It is notable that Union Ministry of Food & Civil Supplies had issued guidelines for the 21 Ethanol manufacturing units from

Chhattisgarh to come up with special arrangements within six months to get their products sold. Presently only 6 Manufacturing Units have been selling their ethanol which is mixed with the petroleum products. It is understood that the existing six Ethanol units are not able to ensure supply of required 23.43 crore

litres of Ethanol in Chhattisgarh. Amidst growing demand, the Chhattisgarh government had requested the Centre to allow the other 21 Manufacturing units to sale their Ethanol. With the fresh notification from Centre, the other 21 Units would be able to sale their Ethanol for petroleum products.

BJP terms lathicharge on employees a cowardice act



Contractual employees who have been arrested following lathicharge on them.

CSEB serves notices to employees

Meanwhile, the Chhattisgarh State Power Distribution Company on Saturday issued notices to the Contractual employees on grounds of absent from their respective duty for long time. A press release issued here stated that administration has made optional arrangements to ensure smooth electricity supply. Company Management had also held discussion with the agitating Contractual employees on Friday to sort out the situation.

RERA brought transparency in working of real estate: Dhand

Promoters-builders' workshop Real estate business gets support from state government

Raipur, Apr 23: Chhattisgarh Real Estate Regulatory Authority (RERA) Chairman Vivek Dhand said that RERA was formed with the objective of organising the real estate sector. He said that formation of RERA is not intended to create trouble in the work of the promoters-builders. Existence of RERA brought transparency in the real estate business besides benefiting promoters-builders and the consumers, Dhand said while addressing RERA workshop here today.



Hundreds of promoters, architects and engineers from the districts of Bilaspur and Surguja divisions participated in the workshop. Various problems related to real estate were discussed with senior officials and solutions were found. The Director of Town and Country Planning, Jayaprakash Maurya and Collector, Saransh Mitter were present in the meeting. Dhand said that the real estate sector had a significant contribution in the progress of the country. This sector accounts for 6 percent of the GDP. It has become a source of employment for more than 4 crore people in the country. According to him the materials produced by 250 types of industries are used in this sector. Before the formation of RERA, there was a lot of arbitrariness in this sector, consumers were exploited and there was no hearing mechanism. To overcome these problems, RERA is working in the

state since 2018, he said. Promoters-builders will have to provide the facility to the consumer as per their declaration. Plot and building will have to be allotted on-time otherwise action will be taken to recover fine. He asked all builders to update their accounts every three months to maintain RERA monitoring and protect customers from exploitation. RERA is also ready to provide training to the account holders of builders. Dhand said that good work is being done by the state government to promote the real estate sector. For the last three-four

years, the amount of collector guideline has not been increased. Not only this, registration has been allowed at 30 percent concession. Promoters-builders on the basis of their experience enumerated many problems, which were resolved by the officials. CREDAI Chhattisgarh President Mrinal Golchha, CREDAI Bilaspur President Ajay Srivastava also gave their important suggestions and views. RERA Adjudicating Officer Deepa Katara, Registrar Dr Anupriya Mishra and other departmental senior officers were also present.

BJYM extend support to them

Raipur, Apr 23: Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has termed the alleged lathicharge on the agitating Contractual employees of Chhattisgarh State Electricity Board (CSEB) to be an act of cowardice. In a statement issued here, the BJP President

Vishnu Deo Sai has termed it to be very unfortunate. He further added that the ruling Congress government has failed to deliver the promise it had made to the Contractual employees. He termed the violent method to suppress democratic demonstration to be very shameful act. Sai claimed that the real face of Congress has been exposed with the above act.

Meanwhile, the Bharatiya Janata Yuva Morcha (BJYM) members held peaceful demonstration to register protest against the action on Contractual employees. They took out a silent march to extend support to the Contractual employees.

A group of senior BJP workers also reached the Central Jail premises to extend support to the

Chhattisgarh sees 2 COVID-19 cases, no death; active tally now 13

Raipur, Apr 23: Chhattisgarh on Friday reported two COVID-19 cases, taking the state's tally to 11,52,230, while the death toll remained unchanged at 14,034, an official said. The positivity

rate, or cases detected per 100 tests, was 0.05 per cent, he added. The recovery count was 11,38,183 and the active tally stood at 13, the official informed. The two cases were reported in Raigarh and

Balod, while, as on Friday, 18 districts do not have any active case, he said. With 4,183 samples examined during the day, the tally of tests carried out so far in Chhattisgarh went up to 1,76,09,989, he added.

Chhattisgarh's coronavirus figures are as follows: Positive cases 11,52,230, new cases 2, death toll 14,034, recovered 11,38,183, active cases 13, today tests 4,183, total tests 1,76,09,989.

Chit fund company Sai Prakash Property Development Limited's property to be attached

District Magistrate issues interim order

Central Chronicle News

Raipur, Apr 23: Chit fund company Sai Prakash Property Development Limited's property will be attached soon. District Magistrate and Collector Sourabh Kumar has issued an interim order in this regard. Chit fund company's shop located on the second floor of two storey building constructed on the land near GE Road Chhattisgarh Auto Care, Raipur; plots in some other locations in Raipur district will be attached. Company Director Pushpendra Singh Baghel (son of late Krishna Pratap Singh Baghel), Pushpanjali Baghel (wife of Pushpendra Baghel), Rajvijay Singh Baghel (son of late Krishna Pratap Singh Baghel), Dharendra Singh Baghel (son of late Krishna Pratap Singh Baghel), Shahendra Singh Baghel (son of late Krishna Pratap Singh Baghel),

Mrigendra Singh (son of Krishna Pratap Singh Baghel), all residents of Semarpakha falling under jurisdiction of Beahhari police station in Shahdol district of Madhya Pradesh formed a company in the name of Sai Prakash Property Development Limited Company. After forming the company they prepared forged documents, with the help of their workers and deceived general public on the pretext of giving more interest and doubling the money in less time. The company made fraudulent deposits by offering investors various lucrative schemes to investors.

The amount deposited by the investors was returned to them even after maturity and even interest on deposited amount was not paid. On the basis of the complaint lodged by the investors in the case, an offense has been registered against the directors of the company under various sections in the police station Azad Chowk, Raipur.

Promote folk arts and rich culture of tribals: Uikey



Governor inaugurated the three-day Raman Lok Kala Mahotsav

Raipur, Apr 23: Governor Ms. Anusuiya Uikey inaugurated the three-day Raman Folk Kala Mahotsav organised by Dr. C.V. Raman University in Kota, Bilaspur. While addressing the program with the gusto of the chief guest, Ms. Uikey said that

Chhattisgarh has a unique identity with tribal art and culture. The various folk arts and cultures of Chhattisgarh get a platform by organizing the Lok Kala Mahotsav. Speaking on the occasion, the Governor said that Dr. CV Raman University is giving a big platform to tribal art, culture, literature, traditions through such events they will be able to make their place on the world stage. She said that it is a matter of pride that today tribal cul-

ture is accepted in the country and abroad. Tribal culture has become a distinct identity on a global scale. She said that the smell of Chhattisgarh culture has spread all over the world due to events like World Class Tribal Festival and the smell of Chhattisgarh culture attracts everyone. The music of Chhattisgarh is melodious and heart touching, which mesmerizes everyone. The tribals here are very naive, always stay

away from deceit. For the upliftment of such society, to provide them a platform, to establish them at the global level, the folk art festival organized by the Dr. C.V. Raman University is a commendable initiative. Ms. Uikey also enjoyed the dance of folk artists from different districts of Chhattisgarh. Janakram and his companions who came from Tamnar gave a splendid performance of Karma dance. In the program, the artists of Kondagaon gave an enchanting performance of Kakasad dance. She said that traditional sports should also be promoted along with various sports through sports academy in Chhattisgarh. On the occasion of this function, Bilaspur MP Mr. Arun Sao, Lormi MLA Mr. Dharamjit Singh, Santosh Choubey, Chancellor of Raman University, Registrar, Gaurav Shukla, university teachers and other officials and students were present.

Advertisement for 'Voids' (वॉइस) medicine, featuring text in Hindi and English, a QR code, and contact information for Ratan Ayurvedic Samadhan.

Affordable healthcare facilities will be provided for patients: CM

At Hi-Tech District Hospital equipped with Hamar Lab and Surgical wing

CM inaugurates Surgical Wing and Hamar Lab in Durg

Surgical wing has been prepared in the district hospital at a cost of Rs 7 cr

CM also launched ASHA campaign for the nurturing of children with cerebral palsy

Patients can avail Test facilities at affordable price in Hamar Lab: Hamar Lab has been set up at a cost of Rs 50 lakhs



ies, 'hamar lab' and surgical wing has been set up in Durg district hospital. Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel inaugurated the Surgical Wing and Hamar Lab at District Hospital Durg today.

Addressing this occasion, Chief Minister Baghel said that with the launch of Hamar Lab, the

medical facilities in the district hospital would become even better. Various types of medical tests done here will now be able to be done at a very low cost. It is worth mentioning that, all the above-mentioned tests are done in private institutions at a very high cost that cannot be afforded

by all sections of the society. With the introduction of Hamar Lab, all the tests will be easily available at low cost and every patient can avail quality healthcare facilities. Hamar Lab has been set up at a cost of Rs 50 lakh.

After the launch, Baghel congratulated the Health Minister TS Singhdeo and the team of doctors of the district hospital. Health Minister Singhdeo thanked CM Baghel for the launch of the surgical wing and Hamar lab. During the inauguration, Singhdeo participated virtually in the presence of Urban Administration Minister Dr. Shiv Dahariya, Home Minister Tamradhwaj Sahu, Water Resources Minister Ravindra Choubey, MLA Arun Vora.

The surgical unit has been prepared at a cost of Rs 7 cr. It has 10 beds in ICU. The medical facilities in the district hospital have increased with the help of hi-tech surgi-

cal unit as well as the facility of critical care unit. While the expansion of medical facilities in the district hospital, this will benefit the patients who cannot afford private healthcare facilities, the patients will not have to go elsewhere for quality treatment.

The Chief Minister also launched the ASHA campaign on the occasion. Under this campaign, a special program will be run to nurture children with cerebral palsy. The Chief Minister met such children today. He praised the campaign. Along with this, he also started the campaign of hemoglobin test of teenage girl students.

On this occasion, Mayor Dheeraj Bakliwal, Collector Dr. Sarveshwar Narendra Bhure, SP Badrinarayan Meena, Municipal Corporation Durg Commissioner Hareesh Mandavi along with local public representatives and departmental officers-employees were present.

Central Chronicle News

Bilaspur, Apr 23: Dr. Ambedkar Center of Excellence will be established in Guru Ghasidas (Central University) University. In this regard, a program organized at the Centenary Auditorium of Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi from 2:30 PM on 22nd April, 2022, the MoU for the establishment of Dr. Ambedkar Centers of Excellence in 31 Central Universities of the country simultaneously was signed. On this occasion, the Registrar of the University, Prof. Shailendra Kumar and Dr. Bharti Ahirwar, Head of Department, Pharmacy Department signed the MoU with Vikas Trivedi, Director of Dr. Ambedkar Foundation. Among the guests on stage were Dr. Virendra Kumar, Minister of Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India,

Governor of Uttar Pradesh, Anandiben Patel, Vice-Chancellor of Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi, Prof. Sudhir Kumar Jain, Union Minister of State for Social Justice and Empowerment, Pratima Bhowmik and A. Narayanaswamy, R. S u b r a m a n i a m , Secretary, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India and Director of Dr. Ambedkar Pratishthan, Vikas Trivedi were specially present. As a result of the continuous active and fruitful efforts of Honorable Vice-Chancellor of Central University, Prof. Alok Kumar Chakrawal, new initiatives are being taken in the field of academics, research, innovation and entrepreneurship in the university. The university has entered into mutual agreements with various national and international institutions to upgrade the quality of

academics and research. With the establishment of Dr. Ambedkar Center of Excellence in the University, SC students will get the guidance of experts at one place for preparation of Administrative Services.

Free coaching will be provided in universities through Dr. Ambedkar Centers of Excellence. The biggest benefit from its opening will be for the scheduled caste students preparing for the administrative service.

Dr. Ambedkar Center of Excellence will also have facilities like library, high speed WiFi etc. Each center will have 100 seats. Admission to the free coaching will be on the basis of an entrance test conducted by the university. Anand Kumar, the founder of Super 30 was specially present in the program along with representatives of 31 central universities.

CU students are becoming self-reliant

Due to study-cum-income scheme

Central Chronicle News

Bilaspur, Apr 23: The 'Earn While Learn Scheme' under the Department of Rural Technology and Social Development, Guru Ghasidas Vishwavidyalaya, was started in the year 2018. Now these units, which were closed due to Corona pandemic, are again being operated under the direction of Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Alok Kumar Chakrawal.

Head of the department, Dr. Pushpraj Singh informed that various pro-

duction units like earthworm manure production, vermifish, azolla, mushroom production, hand-made soap production, natural gull production, lac production and fish farming were started by the department in which the above tasks were conducted smoothly by forming a group of students.

From the income received in the year 2020, an amount of 42000.00 (Rupees forty two thousand) was deposited as the fees of 12 students. The Assistant Professor of the department, Dr. Dilip Kumar said that due to the corona epidemic, the production units had to face a lot of difficulty in operating in the last two years,

but under the guidance of Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Alok Kumar Chakrawal, many production units have been started again to make the students self-reliant and develop skills in them due to which an income of Rs.61100/- has been earned from the sale of past products and current production.

From this, Rs 21300/- the fees of 06 students of M.Sc final year and Rs 40300/-, the fees of 13 students of B.Sc. final year is being deposited. All the above activities are being conducted by Dr. Dilip Kumar, Assistant Professor working in the department and by the Head of the Department, Dr. Pushpraj Singh.

Social Justice Fortnight organized by BJP



Kondagaon, Apr 23: Congratulations to ASHA and Anganwadi workers under the nutrition campaign programme in Gandhiward School with the aim of emphasizing the concept of social justice by making the public aware of the schemes of the central government

through various outreach activities under the Social Justice Fortnight by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).

Nutritious food packets were distributed to the children. During this, National Working Committee member and former minister Lata Usendi, BJP District President Deepesh Arora, Mahila Morcha District President Anita Netam, Municipality President Hem Kunwar Patel, Eena Srivastava, Laxmi Dhruva, Sonamani Poyam, Kulwant Chahal, were present.

MLA Markam lays stone for beautification work

In Ram temple pond

Konta, Apr 23: Stone was laid for beautification of pond in Ram temple located in the heart of Kondagaon city here on Wednesday. The beautification work will done at the cost of Rs 2 cr. The village priest, village Patel Mati Sheela Mata temple committee members visited village Devi Maa Sheela Mata temple in the morning and offered prayers. After reciting rituals with the citizens, MLA Mohan Markam reached the Ram temple pond and laid the foundation stone for beautification work. On this occasion, MLA's



representative Budhram Netam, DCC Urban President Tarun Golchha, Tabasum Bano District General Secretary Gitesh Gandhi Kapil Chopra, Sakur Khan, Councilors ML Sori, Shanti Pandey, Aldermen Pappu Gupta, Hema Devangan, Preeti Bhadauria, Youth Leader Aman Sagar, Municipal CMO Vijay Pandey, Deputy Engineer Sanjay

Markande, Sheela Mata Mandir Committee Secretary Deenbandhu Devangan, Village Patel Kanhaiya Patel, Kotwal Sukalu Korram, Village Dehari Sadharam, Mati Pujari Sawant Ram, Village priest Duy Mosu Ram, Pila Ram, Mata Sirha Bablu Employees of Sahit Municipality Kondagaon and Congress workers from Kondagaon were present.

Chief Secretary reviews progress in aspirational districts

Raipur, Apr 23: Chief Secretary Amitabh Jain reviewed the progress of Central and State Government schemes falling under the prescribed standard points from the collectors of ten aspirational districts of the state through video conference from Mantralaya Mahanadi Bhawan here.

In the aspirational districts, health, education, drinking water, agriculture and financial resources were discussed in detail. The Chief Secretary has directed the officers-in-charge monitoring the aspirational districts to reach their aspirational districts and review the progress of the schemes. The Principal Secretary, Department of Commercial Taxes and Statistical Planning, Gaurav



Dwivedi was present in the meeting. The Chief Secretary asked the collectors of Aspirational Districts, Bastar, Bijapur, Dantewada, Kanker, Sukma, Kondagaon, Narayanpur, Mahasamund, Rajnandgaon and Korba from the aspirational districts to provide health facilities, removal of malnutrition, necessary arrangements in schools and better education to children. He directed the farmers to take the benefits of other schemes including availability

of improved seeds and fertilizers, irrigation system, road, electricity, and communication connectivity to the people of the aspirational district and to make their income under the special work plan. In the meeting, Secretary, Department of Energy, Mr. Ankit Anand, Secretary of Forest and Commerce Mrs. R. Sageeta, Director Agriculture Department Yashwant Kumar, Director of SC/ST Department Mrs. Shammi Abidi, Chief Executive Officer of NRDA Mr. Ayaz Tamboli, Director Health Mr. Neeraj Bansod, Director State Mineral Development Corporation Mr. Jaiprakash Moyal, Director of National Health Mission Ms. Priyanka Shukla and other officials were present.

Central govt approves demand of 13.70 lakh metric tonnes of fertilizers by Chhattisgarh



Agriculture Production Commissioner held a meeting of officials of fertilizer companies regarding the availability of fertilizers in the state

Raipur, Apr 23: The demand of 13.70 lakh metric tonnes of chemical fertilizers has been approved by the Chhattisgarh government for the Kharif crop

2022. This information was given under the chairmanship of Agriculture Production Commissioner Dr. Kamalpreet Singh in a joint meeting of the office bearers of supplier fertilizer companies including agriculture cooperative and registrar departments at Mahanadi Mantralaya Bhawan here. The meeting discussed in detail about ensuring the availability of all types of chemical fertilizers on the basis of the demand of the farmers of the state in Kharif 2022.

Agriculture Production Commissioner directed the departmental officers and officials of fertilizer companies to ensure the supply of fertilizers in the state as per the schedule plan by coordinating. It was informed in the meeting that demand of 13.70 lakh metric tonnes of chemical fertilizers had been sent to the Government of India for the Kharif year 2022, which included Urea 6.50 lakh metric tonnes, DAP 3 lakh metric tonnes, Potash

80 thousand metric tonnes, NPK complex 1.10 lakh metric tonnes, and super phosphate (ash) 2.30 metric tonnes. According to demand of Chhattisgarh state, the Government of India has approved the supply of 13.70 lakh metric tonnes of fertilizers. Agriculture Production Commissioner directed the fertilizer suppliers that the rates presented by them at present such as Rs.1350 per bag for DAP, Rs.1470 per bag for NPK 12:32:16 and Rs.1700 per bag for Potash, till the issue of new NBS policy in the state. Supply will be ensured and 60 percent allocation of fertilizers being brought in the state will be ensured in the cooperative sector. In the

meeting, information was given by the fertilizer suppliers that fertilizers are being supplied to other states at the rates presented by them in the tender. According to the quantity of different types of fertilizers approved by the Government of India for the Kharif 2022 season to the state of Chhattisgarh, it was told to supply the maximum quantity of fertilizers to the state of Chhattisgarh. Director Agriculture, Yashwant Kumar, Managing Director Markfed, Mrs. Kiran Kausal, Additional Registrar Cooperative Societies, IFFCO, Kribhco, IPL, Chambal, PPL company's representative and officials were present in the meeting.

Through Pt. Nehru's story, CM explains democracy to the children

Of Prayas Residential School

At the inauguration ceremony of Prayas Residential School, CM take over the role of a teacher

Central Chronicle News

Durg, Apr 23: On the occasion of the inauguration ceremony of Prayas Residential School built at a cost of Rs. One crore, the Chief Minister Baghel took on a teacher's role and explained the concept of democracy to the children. The Chief Minister narrated the story of Pt. Nehru in his class of democracy and told the children how there was a



difference in governance between a democratic India and an India under slavery. Continuing the story, he said After the Indian Independence, an old woman once held Nehruji's collar and asked "Tell me Jawahar, What have I got from this free-

dom? To which Pt. Nehru replied, 'you have received the right to question, and you can even question the Prime Minister of India.' Baghel further informed the children that the policies in India under slavery were not made according to the people's favor but ac-

ording to the self-interests of the British colonial system. He told that the finest quality muslin was prepared in India. This muslin was so fine that it would even fit in the ring. Through their policies, the Britishers had forced

India to be completely dependent on Manchester Mills for muslin production.

On this occasion, the Chief Minister also informed the children about their rights and duties. The Chief Minister said that democracy gives you freedom of expression, but at the same time, it also tells the necessary duties to follow as a responsible citizen. He explained this with the example of traffic sense. If you don't follow the rules then you have to pay a fine.

The Chief Minister also asked questions from the children on this occasion. He asked 'who were the members of the Hindi Committee in the Constituent Assembly in Chhattisgarh'. He told that

the late Shri Ghanshyam Guptaji, who is related to Durg, played a significant role in this. Along with this, he also informed the children about Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar's significant contribution in drafting our Constitution.

Palak asks "How does a Vidhan Sabha function?": Student Palak Sahu asked the Chief Minister that she wanted to know the process of how Vidhan Sabha functions. How do the members sit here? On this, the Chief Minister told her in detail about the works of the Vidhan Sabha. On this, the Chief Minister gave information about the Question-Hour session, Zero-Hour, and other activities related to the Vidhan Sabha. "How many hours do

you work in a day?": Megha Chauhan asked the Chief Minister as to how many hours does he work in a day? On this, the Chief Minister said that "I start my day with yoga, meditation, and pooja, after that I work on the agenda of the day and I keep working until my work is not finished." On this, another child asked the question that from "where do you get the energy to do so much work?" In response to this, the Chief Minister said that for this we should pay special attention to physical and mental balance. A good diet that contains nutrients, is necessary for physical balance. Meditation is essential for mental balance. He said that children should do yoga or do a lot of sports

for physical balance so that they always remain energetic.

"How are Laws made?": A child asked the Chief Minister how laws are made. On this, the Chief Minister said that according to the need of the citizens of the state, their requirements, their problems, and their solutions, whatever things are considered necessary according to their interests. All these criterias are analyzed before drafting a law, and that is how laws are framed.

Had lunch with children too
The Chief Minister also had lunch with children on this occasion. He also talked to the children about their studies during the meal.

BRIEF

Duping

Kolkata: The West Bengal directorate of economic offence has arrested one person for allegedly duping several hundreds of senior citizens of around Rs 9,000 crore with promises of large returns, a police official said. Sleuths of the DEO conducted a raid at a house in Ballygunge area of the city and arrested the director of a ponzi scheme company, which has so far allegedly duped mainly retired persons, a senior officer said. The company has been operating since 2007.

Probe

Bulandshahar: Hours after a video of students allegedly cleaning a toilet in a government primary school here went viral, the district administration has ordered a probe into the matter. Two girl students in school uniform are seen inside a toilet of the school. One of them appears to be cleaning the toilet in the video. The primary school seen in the video is in Upar Kot locality in the city area, officials said. Acting on direction of the district magistrate, action will be taken.

Busted

Aligarh: Police busted a gang of kidnapers arresting four women and two men and recovering seven children from their possession, a senior police officer said. Superintendent of Police Kalanidhi Naithani told reporters that a 17-day-old girl had been kidnapped from a private hospital in Gandhi Park Police Station area. The parents fell for the bait and handed over the girl to the nurse. When they realised their daughter was kidnapped, they approached the police.

Demands

Aizawl: Mizoram's opposition party Zoram People's Movement asked the state government to immediately release compensation to swineherds, who lost their pigs due to the outbreak of African Swine Fever (ASF) in the state. The Centre had, in March, released over Rs 5.84 crore to the Mizoram government to compensate pig farmers for their losses. The state government failed to release compensation till now even as one month has passed, despite assurance.

Arrest

New Delhi: A 39-year-old home guard was arrested for allegedly killing his live-in partner due to frequent quarrels between them in east Delhi's Shahdara, police said. On April 15, police received information from the accused neighbour about the suspicious death of Preeti (35) who was living with the accused for the last one year in the Farsh bazar area, a senior police officer said. Police found that the accused, along with his relatives, had taken the deceased for cremation.

After criticising Congress, Hardik praises BJP, but not joining it



Hardik Patel with his supporters.

● Calls himself 'proud Hindu'

Ahmedabad, Apr 23 (PTI):

Days after criticising his own party, Gujarat Congress leader Hardik Patel has praised the ruling BJP for its "decision-making capacity", which he said is lacking in the leadership

of the opposition party's state unit. Stating that he was "proud to be a Hindu", Patel, who is working president of the Congress's state unit, denied speculation that he was joining the BJP, and said that if at all he needs to take such a decision, he would take the matter before people "with an open heart".

Assembly elections in Gujarat are due in December this year.

The Congress's plan to rope in Patidar leader Naresh Patel ahead of the state polls has apparently angered Hardik, who believes that his clout as the community leader will be over if the former joins the Congress. Talking to the media persons, nearly a week after criticising the state Congress' "style of functioning", Patel said he has conveyed his opinion to the party high command, and that he hopes it will take a decision keeping the interest of the people of the state in mind.

"We will have to acknowledge that recent political decisions taken by the BJP show that it has a better political decision-making capacity. I believe that without praising it, we can at least acknowledge the truth.

'Congress trying to create anarchy ahead of Assembly polls'

Bengaluru, Apr 23 (PTI):

Karnataka BJP President Nalin Kumar Kateel on Saturday accused the opposition Congress party of encouraging riots and creating anarchy-like situation, ahead of the Assembly elections in the state and even called it a "Gangotri of Corruption".

He advocated strong laws and steps to stop communal flare-ups and riots in the state, including confiscating the property of those behind it.

The chief of the ruling party in the state, was speaking to reporters here after a meeting with party office-bearers as part of a state-wide tour by leaders in three teams, aimed at preparing the BJP from the grass-root level for the 2023 Assembly polls.



Karnataka BJP press conference in Bengaluru on Saturday.

"Congress is misleading the people of the state and trying to bring a bad name to the government. As the opposition it has the right to oppose the anti-people policies of the government if any and caution it, but it is indulging in communal flare-up," Kateel told reporters here.

Hitting out at the Congress for its alleged role in the violence in Bengaluru's DJ Halli, in

Shivamogga and Hubballi, and its stand in the hijab row, he alleged when not in power the grand old party attempts to regain power by using wrong means.

"There are two contributions from Congress to this country, one is it has encouraged terrorism-who created Bhindranwale; who allowed Dawood Ibrahim to flee to Dubai? with the

BJP grappling with shrinking vote base amid internal bickerings



BJP leader Vanathi Srinivasan visiting West Bengal, at airport in Kolkata.

Kolkata, Apr 23 (PTI):

A year after its drubbing in assembly polls, the West Bengal unit of the BJP is struggling to hold its flock together amid the slide in its vote share, as reflected in the series of electoral losses since then.

The state unit of the saffron camp, which has been experiencing churnings since the change of guard late last year, is still licking its wounds from the assembly poll defeat, with several leaders voicing concerns or raising complaints over the state leadership's style of functioning.

As efforts made by the

top brass to unite the state BJP unit seemed to have hit the wall, all eyes are now on the likely visit of Union Home Minister Amit Shah, who during his tenure as the party's national president was instrumental in creating its inroads into Bengal.

"Whatever has been happening is unfortunate. It has led to an uncomfortable situation for all of us. The party leadership is looking into it, trying to resolve all problems," BJP state spokesperson Samik Bhattacharya told PTI.

The party, which had been grappling with reverse exodus since the assembly poll debacle with top leaders and legislators, including Babul Supriyo and Mukul Roy, switching over to the TMC, is now plagued by internal rebellion even as state unit chief Sukanta Majumdar urged members to approach him with grievances instead of speaking to mediapersons.

SHO among three cops suspended for dereliction of duty in rape case

Jammu, Apr 23 (PTI):

Three policemen have been suspended and a deputy superintendent of police has been removed for alleged delay in registration of a rape case in Jammu and Kashmir's Samba district, officials said. On the orders of Director General of Police (DGP) Dilbag Singh, they will also face a departmental inquiry for dereliction of duty in the matter related to the rape of a minor girl. Station House Officer (SHO) Ali Imran, Assistant Sub-Inspector

Rattan Lal, Head Constable Satwinder Singh were placed under suspension and Sub Divisional Police Officer (SDPO) Vijaypur, Vishal Manhas, was removed from his post and attached with Zonal police head-quarter for "poor supervision and control", the officials said. As per the complaint, a heinous crime was committed with an 11-year-old girl by accused Shammil after entering her house in Bazigar Basti in Vijaypur tehsil on intervening night of April 16 and 17, they said.

AGAINST PAKISTAN



Bajrang Dal members burn Pakistani national flag during a protest, in Jammu, Saturday.

Man accused of firing at SP during Khargone violence held

Khargone, Apr 23 (PTI):

Police have arrested a man, who is accused of firing at Superintendent of Police (SP) Siddharth Chaudhary during the recent violence in Khargone city of Madhya Pradesh, an official said.

Meanwhile, the local administration on Saturday relaxed the curfew in Khargone for nine hours at a stretch - from 8 am to 5 pm. "The accused, identified as Mohsin aka Waseem, has been arrested in the case of firing at SP Siddharth Chaudhary in Sanjay Nagar area of Khargone during the April 10 violence," Inspector General (IG) of Police Nimar Zone, Tilak Singh, said. A police team arrest-

ed Mohsin from Kasrawad police station area, he said.

Four criminal cases were already registered against Mohsin, including those related to the sale of illegal arms and assault, Singh said.

"Police will interrogate the accused to collect information about his accomplices," he said.

Khargone SP Siddharth Choudhary is currently on leave as he is undergoing treatment after sustaining a bullet injury in his leg.

Communal clashes had erupted in Khargone city on Ram Navami on April 10, during which shops and houses were damaged, vehicles torched and stones hurled. The curfew in Khargone city was re-

laxed for nine hours in one go on Saturday from 8 am to 5 pm, officials said.

The curfew was clamped after the violence. But since April 14, the local administration has been relaxing the curfew for intervals of two hours. On Wednesday it was relaxed for six hours.

As per the order, the curfew relaxation will not be applicable to the local agricultural market, petrol pumps and for the sale of kerosene from Public Distribution System (PDS) shops. During the curfew relaxation period, shops selling milk, vegetables, medicines, and barber's shops among others, are allowed to remain open, but religious places have been asked to be kept shut.

Drug peddler injured in police firing in Assam

Guwahati, Apr 23 (PTI):

An alleged drug peddler was injured when police fired upon him as he purportedly attacked them and tried to escape from custody in Assam's Nagaon district, an officer said on Saturday.

The injured accused has been admitted to Gauhati Medical College and Hospital with bullet injuries on both legs, the po-

lice officer said.

"We had arrested the person and at night, we had taken him to his residence in Juria in Nagaon district in search of hidden drugs or any incriminating documents, he said.

Suddenly, he attacked our team with a dagger and tried to flee. Our officer had to fire to ensure that he doesn't escape, he added. One police person-

nel was injured in the dagger attack, while the accused sustained bullet injuries on both legs, the officer said.

Both were taken to Nagaon Civil Hospital and the accused has been sent to Gauhati Medical College and Hospital for further treatment, he added.

The accused was arrested from the Koliabor area of the district and 762 gms

of suspected heroin, Rs 59,700 in cash and one vehicle were seized from him.

Altogether 46 people have been killed and at least 111 injured in police action while allegedly trying to flee from custody or attacking the personnel since the BJP government, led by Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, assumed office in May 2021.

Chronicle MATRIMONIAL

<h3>अग्रवाल</h3> <p>वधु चाहिये</p> <p>वधु चाहिये- मारवाड़ी युवक 18-11-89 बोकायन देहादर, ज्वेलरी सोलर, इनकम 60 लाख सालाना खुद का बंगला परेनु सरकारी वधु चाहिये. फोटो बायोडेटा केवल वाट्सअप-98261-61471. (248817)</p>	<h3>पंजाबी</h3> <p>वधु चाहिये</p> <p>वधु चाहिए- 75 साल बुजुर्ग पुरु सिख सेवा के लिए पंजाबी सेवहार औरत, जिसका कोई नहीं हो। 84508-54057, 99953- 47054, 83056-12214. (248940)</p>	<h3>सामान्य</h3> <p>वधु चाहिये</p> <p>वधु चाहिए- कुनो क्षत्रिय, 27 वर्षीय, 5'10", को.ई. (एलेक्ट्रिकल), शास्त्रीय/ पारंपरिक सांस्कृतिक अभिरुचि हेतु धनकरी शिक्षित वधु चाहिए. (बामोडाटा भेजे 70895-67446) (N856468)</p>
<h3>गुजराती</h3> <p>वधु चाहिये</p> <p>वधु चाहिये- गुजराती 41 वर्ष, अय- 40000, हाइट 6 फिट लड़के हेतु सर्व दुबाराती या उच्च जाति वधु कन्या चाहिए. शोध विवाह. संपर्क करे- मो.-98271- 14645, 91311-39179. (248749)</p>	<h3>क्षत्रीय/राजपूत</h3> <p>वधु चाहिये</p> <p>बपेल राजपूत 5'6" होमगार्ड अभिकापुर में सेकारत 40 वर्षीय युवक हेतु सज्जतीय वधु चाहिए प्रथम विवाह संपर्क:- 98269-36206, 62653-49820. (N856468)</p>	<h3>वर चाहिये</h3> <p>उम्र 36 वर्ष 5'6" व्याख्याता सामकोय पद पर कार्यरत अथ 80,000 महीना सुवैतल कन्या हेतु वधु चाहिए, धरमार्थ, अन्नक, अनप्रीति, मत्तकन्युत, विधुर, प्रस्तावसोप 09179749242, 07898410145 (83423)</p>
<h3>बंगाली</h3> <p>वर चाहिये</p> <p>Suitable match for Bengali Kayaatha Girl 32 yrs. 5' 3" working as govt. teacher in Raipur. Caste no bar in Bengali. Contact No- 7389428067, 9171876490. (248820)</p>	<h3>किश्चन</h3> <p>वर चाहिये</p> <p>वर चाहिए- किश्चियन कन्या 24वर्ष /5'4"/ कोटेक (आई.टी.) / सफ्टवेयर इंजिनियर इन एम.एन.सी. कम्पनी /9 लाख. एवं 27वर्ष/5'4" /एम.बी.बी.एस. /मनमेंट मेडिकल अभिरुचि/ इलाहा. संपर्क - 07415595726. (248816)</p>	<p>41/5'7"/ फोट हेतु/एम.बी.आई. केक कार्यरत अथ 80,000 महीना सुवैतल कन्या हेतु वधु चाहिए, धरमार्थ, अन्नक, अनप्रीति, मत्तकन्युत, विधुर, प्रस्तावसोप 09179749242, 07898410145 (83423)</p>

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BRIEF

Charged

Stockholm: A man was charged with spying on 13 military installations in Sweden gaining information that make it possible to map military infrastructure of great importance for national defence, a prosecutor said. The 51-year-old, whose name and citizenship were not revealed, had spread the information on a secret internet forum, authorities said. These are defence facilities that are important for Sweden's ability to defend the country in the event of war, Prosecutor said.

Postpone

London: The Earl and Countess of Wessex have postponed the Grenada leg of a Caribbean tour amid controversy surrounding the crown's continuing role in Britain's former colonies in the region. Edward, the youngest son of Queen Elizabeth II, and his wife Sophie announced the change of plans on the eve of a seven-day trip to the region to celebrate the queen's Platinum Jubilee, marking monarch's 70 years on the throne. They plan to visit Grenada at a later date.

Eases

Ottawa: Unvaccinated children aged five to 11 travelling with a fully vaccinated adult will no longer need a COVID-19 test to enter Canada beginning Monday, the federal government said. Pre-entry tests will still be needed for partially vaccinated or unvaccinated travellers over the age of 12 who are eligible to travel to Canada. Children under five years of age don't currently require a COVID-19 test to enter Canada. Government officials announced several changes.

Announced

Washington: Decades of conservation efforts have stabilised the population of endangered mountain gorillas in eastern Africa. But the number of Grauer's gorillas a less furry, lower elevation-dwelling animal has declined. Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund announced that more land in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo where Grauer's gorillas live will fall under community protection initiative. The species has lost estimated 60 percent of its population in the past two decades.

Threatened

Cocoa: A woman has been arrested months after threatening to blow up her son's high school unless cafeteria workers started giving him more food in US, officials said. The threat was left February 3 in a voice-mail to Cocoa High School on Florida's Atlantic Coast, according to police and court records. The 41-year-old woman was arrested and charged with making a false bomb threat and disruption of a school. She did not leave her name on the voice-mail.

Biden says Xi Jinping told him Quad was against China

China warned against providing support to Russia

Brussels: US Deputy Secretary of State Wendy Sherman has warned China against providing "material support" to Russian President Vladimir Putin's "unprovoked" war in Ukraine, saying sanctions against Moscow would give Beijing some idea of the menu from which America could choose.

Washington, Apr 23 (PTI):

US President Joe Biden said his Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping once told him that he was strengthening Quad against China.

"I indicated to Xi Jinping that I was going to pull together the Quad: Australia, India, Japan, and the United States. He said, 'You're just doing that to affect us.' I said, 'No, it's because we're trying to put together those folks who have an opportunity to work together in the Indo-Pacific,'" Biden said during a party fundraiser event at a private residence in Seattle.



US President Joe Biden speaks to reporters while in flight on board Air Force One.

"The point being that one of the things that the autocrats fear the most — and India has its own problems; all those countries have their own problems — is the notion that somehow we can work together in concert and contrary to what are essentially dictatorships, which a lot of countries have become, particularly not only China but Russia and many other countries...the Philippines, he said.

Biden said when he got elected, Russian president Vladimir Putin thought that he would easily be able to break up NATO. "That's what part of his objective was from the very beginning. And I know I've been saying that for eight years, but it was part of his objective, he said. "But the irony of all ironies to this...he got exactly what he didn't want. He was looking for the further Finlandization of Europe. Instead, he got Finland and the President of Finland calling, wanting to see me, wanting to join NATO, and Sweden wanting to join NATO. His action is generating exactly the opposite of what he intended, Biden said.

"I'm not suggesting that that makes things all that easier. But the point is that we have a circumstance where the Ukrainian people are incredibly brave; they're incredibly resolved, not just the military that was trained but the people in the streets," he said. "They are making a lie of Putin's theory that somehow because they're Slavic in background and many spoke Russian that somehow there would be a welcoming party. The exact opposite has happened, he added.

Biden said he was staking his hopes on an up-and-coming generation. "Every time I get a little down ... I just turn on the television or take a look at all the young people," he said. "This younger generation is not going to put up with all this stuff. No, they're not." Biden spoke to some of that generation at his second stop of the day, Green River College, just south of Seattle.

The auditorium included scores of students, plus faculty and local elected officials, and Biden used the moment to promote an agenda that goes far beyond the environment.

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EU reaches landmark deal on hate speech, disinformation

Brussels, Apr 23 (AP):

The European Union reached a landmark deal early Saturday to take aim at hate speech, disinformation and other harmful content online that would force big tech companies to police themselves harder, make it easier for users to flag problems and empower regulators to punish noncompliance with billions in fines.

EU officials finally clinched the agreement in principle in the early hours of Saturday over the final details of the Digital Services Act, which will overhaul the digital rulebook for 27 countries and cement Europe's reputation as the global leader in reigning in the power of so-



cial media companies and other digital platforms, such as Facebook, Google and Amazon.

With the DSA, the time of 'big online platforms behaving like they are too big to care' is coming to an end," said EU Internal Market Commissioner Thierry Breton.

EU Commission Vice President Margrethe Vestager added that "with this agreement we ensure that platforms are held accountable for the risks

their services can pose to society and citizens.

The act is the EU's third significant law targeting the tech industry, a notable contrast with the US, where lobbyists representing Silicon Valley's interests have largely succeeded in keeping federal lawmakers at bay.

While the Justice Department and Federal Trade Commission have filed major antitrust actions against Google and Facebook, Congress remains politically divided on efforts to address competition, online privacy, disinformation and more.

The EU's new rules, which are designed to protect internet users and their fundamental rights online, should make tech

Push to remake Japan's cherry blossom season

Yuki, Apr 23 (AFPI):

Japan's famed cherry blossom season blankets the country in the delicate white flowers of the prized and popular "somei-yoshino" tree, delighting residents and visitors alike. But some want change.

The season produces a nationwide frenzy, as forecasters compete to declare when full bloom will arrive, and Japanese unfurl picnic blankets for sometimes raucous flower-viewing parties — at least in pre-pandemic times. The blooms of the ubiqui-



Hideaki Tanaka, manager of the Flower Association of Japan, grafting cherry trees at a farm in Yuki.

tous somei-yoshino strain, which accounts for more than 90 percent of the cherry trees planted in Japan, last

In Donbas, denial and fatalism face Russian onslaught

Companies will have to be more transparent

Severodonetsk, Apr 23 (AFP):

After two months of sustained Russian artillery fire, the hamlet of Lysychansk, located just 14 kilometres (nine miles) from Russian ground forces, has turned into a ghost town.

Most residents have left: shops are closed, windows sealed with wooden planks and doors barricaded.

Only a small sheltered market in the centre of town is still operating, providing food and other supplies. The town's other market was bombed.

"Those who stayed come out of their cellars in the morning and rush here to

RECEIVING LADYBUGS



Children receive ladybugs in a plastic container at Doral Glades Park in Doral, Florida, US.

Mexican police find body of missing young woman in cistern

Mexico City, Apr 23 (AP):

The haunting story of a young woman left on the side of a highway late at night in northern Mexico ended in sorrow, with her decomposing body found in a subterranean water tank at a motel.

Assistant Public Safety Secretary Ricardo Mejia said that the woman's body apparently unrecognizable after what may have been nearly two weeks in the

water had a crucifix necklace and clothing that Debanhi Escobar was wearing the night she disappeared.

Despite what authorities in the border state of Nuevo Leon described as a massive search for her, the story ended the way it often does in Mexico: when her body was found by local people. The alert was sounded by hotel workers, because of the fetid odors coming from the area, Mejia said.

State prosecutors later said they had confirmed the body was Escobar's. Escobar's case made headlines because of a haunting photo taken by a driver who was supposed to take her home that night.

It was not clear why she got out of the car, but her father, Mario Escobar, said prosecutors told him that surveillance camera footage suggested the driver inappropriately touched his daughter.



A man looks at smoke with binoculars on a rooftop in Lysychansk, eastern Ukraine.

see if there is anything left, quickly do some shopping and return to their shelters," explains Tatyana Ivanenko, standing behind a bread counter. The 45-year-old merchant says she leaves the market "as soon as I have sold the last one", adding that she is determined to feed her town

until the end. The rain appeared to have delayed the now traditional morning exchange of artillery fire between Russian and Ukrainian troops, as about a hundred people gathered under the market's glass ceiling. The size of the crowd makes everyone nervous. "Everyone, this is

going to end badly," says an elderly woman in line for vegetables, fearing a targeted strike by Russian forces similar to a deadly train station rocket attack in the nearby town of Kramatorsk on April 8 that killed at least 52 people.

In Severodonetsk, 10 kilometres (six miles) from Russian positions, the city's volunteers and medical personnel are holding the fort in a local hospital that is littered with broken windows and where some floors are plunged into darkness.

Shelling resumed recently, and the city is likely to soon be surrounded by advancing Russian troops.

"We will stay here until the last patient," says Roman Vodanik, the hospital's chief, whose office is decorated with Orthodox Christian icons.

Pre-departure COVID-19 tests not required for vaccinated travellers

Singapore, Apr 23 (PTI):

All vaccinated travellers arriving in Singapore via air or sea checkpoints will no longer need to take a pre-departure COVID-19 test as restrictions for controlling the spread of the coronavirus are eased.

The Ministry of Health (MOH) also announced that from July 1, all long-term pass holders aged 13 and above travelling to Singapore will have to be fully vaccinated before entering the country, unless they are medically ineligible for vaccines.

This is a change from

the present rule, which states that long-term pass holders aged between 13 and 17 can travel into Singapore even if they are not fully vaccinated.

The ministry said that it is now requiring vaccinations for this group "given the increased availability of vaccines globally for those aged between 13 and 17". With the latest easing of restrictions on people's movement in COVID-19 environment, fully vaccinated and well travellers will no longer need to be

tested for COVID-19 to enter Singapore, it said.

All vaccinated travellers and non-fully vaccinated children aged 12 and below arriving in Singapore via air or sea checkpoints will no longer need to take a pre-departure COVID-19 test, effective midnight Tuesday.

The entry requirements for travellers who are aged 13 and above and not fully vaccinated remain unchanged, reported TODAY newspaper quoting the MOH statement.

Female artists dominate Venice Biennale for first time

Venice, Apr 23 (AP):

For the first time in the 127-year history of the Venice Biennale, the world's oldest and most important contemporary art fair features a majority of female and gender non-conforming artists, under the curatorial direction of Cecilia Alemani.

The result is a Biennale that puts the spotlight on artists who have been long overlooked despite prolific careers, while also investigating themes including gender norms, colonialism and climate change.

Alemani's main show, titled The Milk of Dreams, alongside 80 national pavilions opened Saturday after a



Italian curator of the 59th Venice Art Biennale, Cecilia Alemani poses by artworks in Venice.

one-year pandemic delay. The art fair runs through Nov 27. It is only the fourth of the Biennale's 59 editions

chosen for the main show was not a choice, but a process," Alemani, a New York-based Italian curator, said this week.

I think some of the best artists today are women artists," she told The Associated Press.

But also, let's not forget, that in the long history of the Venice Biennale, the preponderance of male artists in previous editions has been astonishing.

Unfortunately, we still have not solved many issues that pertain to gender, Alemani said. Conceived during the coronavirus pandemic and opening as war rages in Europe, Alemani acknowledged that art in such

times may seem superficial. But she also asserted the Biennale's role over the decades as a sort of seismograph of history ... to absorb and record also the traumas and the crises that go well beyond the contemporary art world. In a potent reminder, the Russian pavilion remains locked this year, after the artists withdrew following Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

Nearby, sandbags have been erected in the center of the Giardini by the curators of the Ukrainian Pavilion, and surrounded by stylised posters of fresh artwork by Ukrainian artists representing the horrors of the two-month-old war.

कार्यालय प्रधान मुख्य वन संरक्षक एवं वन बल प्रमुख, छ.ग.

अरुण मवन, सेक्टर-19, नॉर्थ ब्लॉक, नवा रायपुर, बटल नगर-492002
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विषय :- वनरक्षक भर्ती हेतु निविदा प्रकाशन के संबंध में शुद्धि पत्र।

शुद्धि पत्र (CORRIGENDUM)

छ.ग. राज्य वन विभाग में 291 पदों पर वनरक्षकों की भर्ती हेतु सार्वजनिक मांगपत्र एवं वनरक्षक परीक्षा लेने के शिष्टे इच्छुक निविदाकारों से आवेदन पत्र आमंत्रित किये जाने हेतु दिनांक 25 एवं 27 मार्च 2022 को प्रदेश एवं राष्ट्रीय स्तर से समाचार पत्र में निविदा का प्रकाशन हुआ था।

उक्त निविदा में आंशिक रूप से संशोधन उपरंत शुद्धि पत्र का विस्तृत विवरण निविदा सूचना (Corrigendum with Tender Notice Updated) की प्रती विभागीय वेबसाइट <https://www.cgforest.com> से प्राप्त की जा सकती है। निविदा की शेष शर्तें चर्चिता रहेंगी।

प्रधान मुख्य वन संरक्षक एवं वन बल प्रमुख
छत्तीसगढ़, नवा रायपुर

G-90506/1



CENTRAL Chronicle

Established 1974 Volume 47 No. 199

Oil free cooking

Indonesia will ban exports of cooking oil and its raw materials to reduce domestic shortages and hold down skyrocketing prices, President Joko Widodo announced, a day after hundreds of people protested in the capital against rising food costs. The ban begins next week and will continue for an undetermined length of time. The government issued a policy earlier this year obligating all palm oil exporters to ensure that adequate supplies are available in the domestic market and that costs do not follow sharply rising international prices. Indonesia and Malaysia are the world's largest exporters of palm oil, which plays an important role in their economies. They account for 85 percent of global palm oil production. India imports around 13-13.5 million tonnes of edible oils every year, of which around 8-8.5 million tonnes (around 63 percent) is palm oil. Of this, 8-8.5 million tonnes of palm oil, almost 45 per cent comes from Indonesia and the remaining from neighbouring Malaysia. If suddenly, monthly supplies of around 300,000-325,000 tonnes of palm oil stop from May onwards it will cause a sharp escalation in edible oil prices which have been already on the boil due to the ongoing Russia-Ukraine crisis. India's sunflower oil supplies have gone down from 200,00-250,000 per month to less than 100,000 tonnes per month causing a sharp spike in prices. People are advised to change their eating habits. With edible oil crisis, home cooks may cope with higher prices by changing their cooking method or trading down to cheaper supermarket own-label oils. However, for restaurants and food companies that use huge quantities of cooking oil, shortages and price increases are adding to the pressure caused by other rising costs. It might seem baffling to think of cooking with minimal or no oil, but this has its benefits. Begin by opting for other cooking mediums such as water or broth or alternative techniques including grilling, steaming or baking.

The market today is flooded with kitchen appliances that can help with new method of cooking while simultaneously preserving the nutritional value of food. It can take a lot of years to uncover the tricks for making food cooked without oil to be just as delicious. Oil free curry base using some vegetables, spices and water is possible. Of the other main vegetable oils produced globally, rapeseed oil is lower in saturated fats than sunflower oil, soybean oil is slightly higher and palm oil is significantly higher. However, vegetable oils are complex mixes of chemicals and it is hard to measure their health effects directly. The diet in India seems to be an oily affair because cooking without oil is inevitable. The traditional Indian concept of using oil and ghee usage has been passed on for generations as a necessity in cooking. In the past, the global market would see big supply shocks every five to seven years, but in the past 10 years these have become much more frequent, with climatic conditions like drought and frost and sometimes disease affecting crops more often. Farmers in Canada, the biggest producer and exporter of rapeseed, had a disastrous growing season after temperatures soared. The soya bean oil price is marching up at the moment due to the smaller harvests expected from growers in Brazil, Argentina, and Paraguay, which account for more than 50 percent of world supply after severe drought. Believe it or not, it's not hard to cook without oil. About 29 percent Indian households have downgraded the edible oil they use, while 17 percent have cut down on discretionary spending, with escalation in raw material prices. Instead of using low quality oil, people should shift to cooking with oil free recipes.

Afghan minerals

China has cautiously reacted to the Pakistani military's air attack in Afghanistan, killing at least 47 civilians and leaving two dozen wounded in the border region of Khost and Kunar. Chinese Foreign Ministry said that China believes that two countries can properly settle each other's concerns through dialogues and consultations and jointly maintain regional peace and tranquillity in the region. Afghanistan, which is one of the world's poorest countries at present, contains huge riches in the shape of mineral deposits of gold, precious stones, coal, oil and gas, lithium, and rare-earth minerals. In 2008, the administration of Hamid Karzai signed a 30-year contract with a Chinese joint venture called MCC to extract high-grade copper from Mes Aynak. Studies show the site holds up to 12 million tons of the mineral. But the project got tied up in logistical and contract problems, and it never got past some initial test shafts before it ground to a halt when Chinese staff. With global inflation, Afghanistan may become a mining hub. Mere months after the Taliban seized Kabul in August, consolidating power over the country, the group's newly installed Acting Minister for Mining and Petroleum Shahbuddin Dilawar urged his staff to re-engage Chinese state-run companies.

China already controls most of the world's rare-earth minerals, which are used to manufacture a variety of technologies, including components in electric vehicles and smartphone touch screens. Acquiring rare minerals is key for Beijing to maintain its standing as a global manufacturing powerhouse. Now China has plunged into the troubled waters of Afghanistan, after the US withdrawal. In the recent past, China has courted the Taliban administration with much fanfare. Its embassy in Kabul kept functioning when Western missions fled after the Taliban takeover. Reportedly, even Iran, which has facilitated several rounds of talks for restoring the new government in Afghanistan has jumped into the fray and has tried to foster good ties with the top Taliban honchos. Of the current Taliban administration, its Mining Ministry is apparently engaged in a lot of activities. However, Dilawar is reported to be exercising a cautious and pragmatic approach to decide which country to allow mining these resources for Afghanistan. American and other Western companies to also come to Afghanistan now that the American military presence is gone. And would prefer American mining companies due to their expertise.

FLOWER FARMER



A farmer harvest arum lily flowers from her farm in the Zhuzihu area, in the Yangmingshan National Park, in Taipei, Taiwan.

Sri Lanka's economic crisis is chance to reinvent international bailouts

SAYANTAN GHOSAL & DANIA THOMAS

Sri Lanka recorded the first casualties from its spiralling economic crisis several days ago, with one protester dead and 24 more injured. This was from police firing gunshots into a crowd who were demanding the removal of a government they hold responsible for the country's predicament. At present: Citizens cannot access essentials such as fuel, medicines and food, with some even dying while queuing for fuel. Protesters of all classes are taking to the streets - members of the middle class face a potentially irreversible decline in living standards, while the masses are being pushed into absolute poverty. Sri Lanka has formally (apparently temporarily) defaulted on its debts. India and China, jostling for influence and power, are providing emergency funding and the IMF is considering a bailout under its Rapid Financing Initiative. An apologist could put much of Sri Lanka's problems down to bad luck: the pandemic and the conflict between Russia and Ukraine are partly to blame, and neither could have been anticipated. On the other hand, poor policy choices by a corrupt, authoritarian governing elite have made Sri Lanka uniquely vulnerable. This has been a disaster in slow motion, entirely predictable, a textbook case of how a government can

cause a debt crisis.

Before 2019, Sri Lanka was self-sufficient in food. The government elected that year banned pesticides so that only organic farming was allowed, resulting in the shutting of tea plantations (a source of export revenue) and shrinking the country's ability to feed itself (Sri Lanka now imports grains). Together with the damage to tourism from the COVID pandemic and rising global commodity prices, this has reduced tax revenues and put more pressure on the Sri Lankan rupee. The public finances have been further damaged by unsustainable subsidies and unaffordable tax cuts. Equally, there have been futile attempts to maintain an unviable currency peg to the US dollar and bad decisions around debt management. Public debt has near-tripled as a percentage of GDP to 104% in three years, while the rupee has jumped from about 200 to the US dollar in early March to almost 330 today. Sri Lanka's governing elites are not alone in making these kinds of poor policy choices. For example, in the run up to the crisis that engulfed Lebanon in late 2019, the central bank swapped debt held in Lebanese pounds into debt in euros and US dollars while maintaining an unviable currency peg.

The fees from these activities generated huge profits for major banks but made the country vulnerable to negative external shocks, such as nervous foreign investors dumping government bonds. This helped to drive down the value of the currency and made debts priced in foreign currency harder to pay back. Just like Sri Lanka, there were protesters on the streets, governing elites waxing eloquently about the need to maintain national unity, and a middle class facing the prospect being wiped out while millions were

pushed into poverty. The financial crisis in the eurozone in the 2010s was the result of a similar mix of bad policy choices and bad luck, as was the 1990s Asian financial crisis before it, and the Latin American crisis in the 1980s - not to mention Argentina's protracted debt crisis and restructuring in the recent past. What can be done to prevent these situations? One common thread is international bailouts from the IMF and other bodies, in which the money is conditional on reining in the state through severe cuts to public spending, privatisations and so on. After a gap of a few years, provided the state meets these conditions, borrowing in international capital markets is permitted to resume and the whole cycle can repeat. These interventions teach elites elsewhere that reckless policies will be bailed out, making it inevitable that similar debt crises will occur in apparently different circumstances in other countries.

Perhaps it is time to consider a different approach, which puts the needs of citizens first and ensures that political elites aren't rewarded for poor policy choices. Various academics make a distinction between two types of creditors in these situations: 'formal creditors', such as a western European pension fund buying sovereign bonds, and 'informal creditors' within the state itself, such as pensioners who have contributed to the state social security fund, or workers who have paid into the public insurance system. There's a social contract that these informal creditors will benefit from the money they pay in, yet in a bailout situation, they bear the brunt of austerity, including cuts to social security programmes. Meanwhile, foreign creditors get their money back - albeit with a 'haircut' where they lose a proportion (though this risk is usually

already reflected in the interest rate at which their money is lent in the first place). We argue in an upcoming paper that when informal creditors have an explicit say in how a debt crisis is resolved, as in Iceland in the early 2010s, both austerity and the power of governing elites will be limited. Instead, policy choices are tailored to ensuring that the economy recovers faster and a future debt crisis becomes less likely.

The UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) published a debt workout guide in 2015 that offers a road map for such a process. It proposes referendums at key points in the lead-up to a bailout to ensure that the public see the options and get a chance to vote on them. Sri Lanka presents an ideal opportunity to put this into practice. The suffering of ordinary citizens, pensioners, students and the impact on future generations is neither inevitable nor bad luck. Citizens' views must be taken into account in determining how the crisis is resolved. This would be a blueprint for future economic crises - and these could well be looming in view of slow post-COVID recovery, the strong US dollar and high commodity prices. In south Asia alone, Pakistan is similarly vulnerable to not having adequate foreign exchange reserves to service its sovereign debts, and despite strenuous official denials, so is Nepal. The political elites in these countries may already have made the poor financial decisions that have created these vulnerabilities. But there is a good opportunity to send a message that the consequences will be different when politicians and bankers take similar decisions in future.

(Sayantan Ghosal is Professor of Economics and Dania Thomas is Lecturer in Business Law, University of Glasgow in UK.)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Income tax

The Himachal Pradesh cabinet had decided that all legislators including the Chief Minister would henceforth pay the income tax on their salaries from their own pocket rather than the government footing the bill in that regard. The cabinet had decided to promulgate an ordinance to omit section 12 of the salaries and allowances of Ministers act 2000 and section 11A of the Act 1971 relating to MLA's income tax. Last month a petition was filed in the High court questioning the payment of MLAs' income tax from the exchequer and the decision by the cabinet is aimed at quelling public resentment on the issue. It is worth notable that the same payment is being made by other five govts and the petitioners had averred in the plea that the state legislature has no powers to legislate in any manner whatsoever with respect to the payment of income tax or charging of income tax or assessment of income. Against this backdrop, the plea contends that by virtue of these legislations, a special class has been created for the Members of Legislative Assembly and Ministers thereof, whose income tax liability is being borne by the State. "At the same time, there is another class of general income tax payers, who bear and pay the income tax in accordance with the provisions of the Income Tax Act. There is no intelligible differentia for carving out these two classes with respect to the payment of income tax and such a differentia has no nexus with the object sought to be achieved by the said classification," the plea further submitted. On the basis of what is stated above it is very much clear that payment of tax of Legislatures is totally illegal and such type tax is being paid by six states and these are Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana, MP, Chattisgarh. It is expected that other states will also follow HP state and will refrain from paying income tax of Legislatures

Yash Pal Ralhan, Chandigarh

Kudos

I went to see a movie named 'The Kashmir Files' which is based on the genocide of Kashmiri Pandits in early 1990s by religious fanatics. The movie gave me goosebumps, seeing the plight of the indigenous sons and daughters of the soil at the hands of bloodthirsty religious fanatics. The movie also reflects the sheer failure of the State administration and the Union Government in protecting the lives of its legitimate citizens. Through your esteemed daily, I offer my kudos to director Vivek Agnihotri and the entire cast and crew of the movie for bringing the truth to light.

Julie, via email

Fertiliser

The IMD has predicted 'normal' monsoons, but this generosity from the heavens could well be offset by ongoing human contradictions. We could well be staring into empty bins of fertilisers, particularly DAP. We had been struggling, in 2021-22 with shortages. The Ukraine conflict has hugely disrupted the supply chain as the troubled region counts for sizeable production. While the landed cost today of imported DAP is Rs 1.1 lakh a ton, the farmer pays Rs 27,000 a ton. Without clear policy enunciation on assistance, importers are yet to place orders.

Narayana, via email



WHAT THEY TWEET!



Sonia@Sikka4

When people say, 'This isn't my India,' I doubt they're remembering some golden age. No one remembers an India without grotesque levels of inequality, poverty, violence, corruption. But they remember a time when they truly believed it could change for the better. They miss hope.

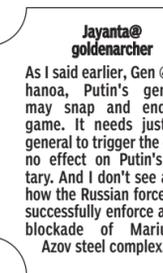
Akshay@alladi

Underlines again why India, like other countries, needs to regulate Big Tech companies. These are extensions of US establishment policy and weapons of info wars. To be blunt - really naive to frame issues about regulating them as an attack on 'free speech' and 'free markets'.



Vir Das@theviridas

I have NO idea. My two cents as a customer. Twitter needs an edit button, and an anonymous interactions on/off filter option. You get to choose to interact with people who have confirmed their identity, or not, or all. I think 90% of racism & hatred here is powered anonymity.



Jayanta@goldenarcher

As I said earlier, Gen @bsd-hanoa, Putin's generals may snap and end the game. It needs just one general to trigger the domino effect on Putin's military. And I don't see a way how the Russian forces can successfully enforce a total blockade of Mariupol's Azov steel complex.



ivinay@vinaysreeni

Saw this fruit in St Mary's Island, Malpe.



Rajendra@Enraged

Singapore PM Lee Kuan Yew said, 'There were 2 options for me. Either I get corrupted, put myself in the Forbes list of the richest people and leave my people with nothing; OR I serve people & let my country be in the list of the best economies of the world. I chose the 2nd.'

sandip@sabharwal

#GreenHydrogen facts Each kg of Hydrogen production requires 9 kgs of water It requires around 60 KWH electricity Energy from one kg of Hydrogen is around 35 KWH Essentially with current technologies it takes up huge water & Electricity & gives out lesser Its all GAS.

BRIEF

Investments

Mumbai: Beauty and fashion brand Nykaa announced strategic investments in home-grown D2C brand incubator Onesto Labs, science-focused beauty brand Earth Rhythm and activewear brand Kica. Nykaa has acquired 18.51 per cent stake of Earth Rhythm at a consideration of Rs 41.65 crores, Anchit Nayar, CEO, E-commerce Beauty, Nykaa told reporters. The company has also partnered with Onesto Labs to enter the nutraceutical space by acquiring 60 per cent stake in the company with an investment of Rs 3.6 crore, he added. The company has fully acquired the activewear brand Kica for Rs 4.51 crore, Nayar said.

Plans

New Delhi: Brinton Pharmaceuticals said it plans to invest 30 million pounds (around Rs 295 crore) over the next five years to strengthen its product pipelines, create 300 highly skilled jobs and develop innovative products for its global consumers. The company, which has a strong presence in India and globally in 24 countries, said it has decided to invest in a global research and development centre in the United Kingdom. The proposed life sciences research and development centre in the North of England will support the acceleration of the company's research in the areas of biotechnology, health and life sciences, the company said.

Tourism

Mumbai: The tourism industry is recovering and there is a sense of optimism in the sector; founder and CEO of OYO Rooms Ritesh Agarwal said. "India had over a billion domestic visits right before the pandemic, and increasing as we speak, and I hope that we will get back there or even further in a period of time. So I think tourism in my view is going to come back with vengeance and in the last two weeks, I think the next few months are going to be very busy for us," Agarwal said at an event. Talking about new trends of vacations in remote work mode amid COVID-19, he said, workations, homestays and rural tourism are here to stay for a long time.

Commissions

Guwahati: Claimed to be the first of its kind in the country, a pilot plant capable of manufacturing 99.999 per cent pure green hydrogen was commissioned by Oil India Limited (OIL) in Assam. An official statement said that the pilot plant, with an installed capacity of producing 10 kg of gas per day, was commissioned by the nation's second-largest state-owned oil explorer in a record time of three months at its Jorhat pump station. Green hydrogen will be produced from the electricity generated by the existing 500kW Solar plant using a 100 kW Anion Exchange Membrane (AEM) Electrolyser array. AEM technology is being used for the first time in the country.

India facing difficulties with WTO on exporting cereals

Washington, Apr 23 (PTI):

Amidst a global shortage of food grains in the aftermath of the Ukrainian war, countries like India which have the potential to address this by exporting agricultural products, in particular cereals, are facing difficulties from the World Trade Organization, Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said Friday.

Responding to India's concerns, WTO Director General Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala during the just-concluded annual Spring meeting of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank said that the organisation is looking at it very positively and hopefully it would be sorted, the minister told a group of Indian reporters here.

The United States has requested India to help out with the food grain situation right now, India's



Nirmala Sitharaman

Ambassador to the US Taranjit Singh Sandhu noted during a news conference with the minister.

"I was very positively inspired by the fact that in the plenary...response from the WTO was very positive. I hope we'll break that decade-long restriction which has held us back from using our agricultural products after taking care of the buffer we need for food security purposes. So

that the farmers also can get a better return," Sitharaman said in response to a question.

She said India has identified opportunities of export of food grains and also manufacturing in the aftermath of the Ukrainian crisis.

"The opportunities that we have identified and have progressed in it...our export of food grains, particularly wheat. We are probably

Rescue countries facing debt stress

Washington: Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has underlined the need to rescue countries facing debt stress due to the uncertainty caused by the pandemic and the recent geo-political developments. During a meeting with World Bank Group President David Malpass, Sitharaman said India remains concerned about the risks to global recovery due to rising uncertainty amidst enhanced geopolitical tensions.

now tapping also for our manufacturing goods to move to destinations which are now suddenly found as their suppliers are in a situation they can't continue with uninterrupted supply, she said.

Russian IT cos eyeing Indian JVs post sanctions



Valentin Makarov

Kolkata, Apr 23 (PTI):

A number of Russian software companies are scouting for joint ventures in India and other BRICS nations, as a barrage of sanctions by the West following the invasion of Ukraine dampened trade with the US and Europe, the head of an association of over 250 IT firms from Russia said.

Valentin Makarov, the president of St Petersburg-based Russoft,

said a delegation of around five to six companies from Russia had recently participated in the Bengal Global Business Summit (BGBS) here, and held meetings with several Indian firms.

"We believe the sanctions on Russia pose both challenges and opportunities. The US and western Europe make for more than half of Russia's IT exports, and the restrictions impacted this trade. There is also a lot of focus now on import substitution.

"So, Russian software companies are keen to expand footprint and forge JVs in the BRICS nations, and India appears to be the best potential partners for Russia to create and achieve technological goals," Makarov told PTI in an interview on the sidelines of the summit.

All members expressed concerns over inflation at MPC meet

Mumbai, Apr 23 (PTI):

All the six members of the RBI's rate setting panel expressed concern over inflation and Governor Shaktikanta Das stressed that the central bank will have to constantly re-assess the "dynamic and fast changing situation" and tailor its actions accordingly, as per the minutes of the recent MPC meeting.

Das-headed Monetary Policy Committee (MPC), which held its meeting from April 6-8, unanimously decided to keep the borrowing costs unchanged at a record low for the 11th time in a row in a bid to continue supporting economic growth despite inflation edging higher, especially in the wake of the Russia-Ukraine conflict.

The central bank's MPC has six members, including



the governor.

Das opined that the current geopolitical situation has led to an upward revision of RBI's inflation projections for 2022-23, and the estimates now point to inflation remaining above the upper tolerance band in the near-term even as growth projections have undergone downward revisions.

"The circumstances warrant prioritising inflation and anchoring of inflation expectations in the sequence of objectives to

Draft battery swapping policy step in right direction

Mumbai, Apr 23 (PTI):

The draft battery swapping policy, under which all metropolitan cities with a population of above 4 million will be prioritised for battery swapping network under the first phase, is a step in the right direction for addressing range anxiety issues, Iera Research said. The draft policy, released by government think-tank Niti Aayog, aims to ensure faster penetration of battery swapping as a service in the Indian market, it said. The policy provides guidance on multiple areas, including interoperability, traceability and data sharing, business models, fiscal support, grievance redressal, battery reuse and recycling and implementation of battery swapping stations. In the Budget for FY23, the government HAD announced plans to introduce a battery swapping policy and interoperability standards, with the intent of building and improving the efficiency of the battery swapping ecosystem, thereby driving electric vehicle (EV) adoption.

Captive wireless network good for all

Speculated loss of telco revenues misplaced view

New Delhi, Apr 23 (PTI):

Think-tank BIF has contested the views of telecom industry body COAI against sector regulator Trai's recommendation to allow business organisations to set up their own wireless networks for captive usage, saying the provision will be beneficial for everyone.

In a letter to Telecom Secretary K Rajaraman, Broadband India Forum (BIF) President TV Ramachandran said the recommendations pertaining to private 5G networks address the interests of all the stakeholders - telecom operators, enterprises, as well as the public, since more private networks would lead to more employment opportunities and business, translating into greater economic gains.

The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (Trai)



had on April 11 recommended allowing establishment of isolated captive wireless private networks using mobile services spectrum. It said the entity should be provided a licence for the same without charging any entry fee.

The regulator also said such entities should not provide any commercial telecom services.

The Cellular Operators Association of India (COAI), whose members include Reliance Jio, Bharti Airtel and Vodafone Idea, has expressed disappointment on recommendations of the Trai for the proposed spectrum auctions on various counts, including higher pricing of the radio waves and allowing private captive networks for enterprises.

Business confidence improved in Q4 of FY-22

New Delhi, Apr 23 (PTI):

Business confidence index improved in the January-March period of this year and would remain buoyant in the coming months, a survey by economic think-tank NCAER said.

The Business Confidence Index (BCI) increased for the third consecutive quarter by 14.9 per cent on a quarter-on-quarter basis from 124.4 points in October-December period of 2021 to 142.9 points in the fourth quarter. BCI also improved by 67.6 per cent in the fourth quarter of 2021 as compared to the corresponding period of 2020 21, said the National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER).

The upward movement in the BCI was driven by



an improvement in sentiments for all the four components of the BCI - 'overall economic conditions will improve in the next six months', 'financial position of firms will improve in the next six months', 'present investment climate is positive as compared with six months ago', and 'present capacity utilisation is close to or above the optimal level'.

NCAER carried out the 120th round of its Business Expectations Survey (BES) in March 2022, covering 500 firms in four regions across the country.

HILIFE EXHIBITION



Actress Bhanushree Mehra, Sravanthi Prashanth and models at the launch of Hilife Exhibition, in Hyderabad, Saturday.

Banks globally need to compete with fintech players to keep pace

New Delhi, Apr 23 (PTI):

Banks globally need to compete with new-age fintech players in providing seamless and cost-effective services and catering to the growing retail banking requirements of customers, a report said.

Retail banks are currently lagging in their ability to offer true omni-channel experiences as customers pivot to competitors that offer more personalised experiences, according to the World Retail Banking Report 2022 (WRBR) published by Capgemini and Efma. The study covering 8,051 respondents globally revealed that 75 per cent of



customers surveyed are attracted to fintech firms' cost-effective and seamless services, which has significantly raised their digital banking expectations.

Customers want rewarding and engaging experiences that are easy and approachable, it added. "However, traditional banks are struggling to deliver with 70 per cent of banking executives concerned they

lack sufficient data analysis capabilities. Therefore, with customers now able to switch providers at the tap of a screen, it is critical banks better leverage data and Artificial Intelligence (AI) to tailor the experience, create stronger connections and maximise customer value," the report said. Incumbent banks must embrace data-centric capabilities to drive personalised customer experiences, said the report, adding that 95 per cent of executives believe their current outdated legacy systems and technological capabilities are unable to fully optimise their data for customer-centric growth strategies.

'Windy India 2022' aims to catalyse up to Rs 15,000 cr investment

Into wind energy equipment

New Delhi, Apr 23 (PTI):

Wind energy trade fair and conference, Windy India 2022, scheduled later this month is aimed at catalysing investment of up to Rs 15,000 crore into component manufacturing in the country, organisers said.

The three-day wind energy event will be held at Pragati Maidan here from April 27-29, 2022, and will focus on fulfilling national commitment of quick migration to clean energy



of which wind energy is one of the pivotal pillars. "This will help to facilitate investment flow of Rs 10,000 crore to Rs 15,000 crore into wind energy component manufacturing in the country," Indian Wind Turbine Manufacturers Association (IWTMA) Chairman Tulsi Tanti

told reporters at the curtain raiser presser of the event.

The event is being organised by the Indian Wind Turbine Manufacturers Association (IWTMA) and PDA Trade fairs Pvt Ltd.

Tanti also said that the event is to attract manufacturing companies into the country and showcase the opportunities to invest in India. "There is good market also and you (investors) have the opportunity to leverage talent and other things for exports," he stated. Tanti observed that the event will connect international

and local players as well as start ups. It will be a window for equity investors who have not invested here.

This event will bring maximum wind energy equipment manufacturing capacity in the country. More companies into manufacturing of components will come. They will set up manufacturing facility for domestic markets as well as exports, he exuded confidence. He said that India has a wind turbine manufacturing capacity of 15 GW per annum and this event will help create production capacity of components.

Govt opens 6-month window for sugar mills to submit ethanol proposals

New Delhi, Apr 23 (PTI):

The Centre said it has opened a six-month window till October for sugar mills to submit fresh proposals to avail loans at a subsidised interest rate for setting up new distilleries or expanding the existing facilities for augmenting first-generation ethanol capacity in the country.

To ensure that only serious project proponents are issued in-principle approval by the Union Food Ministry, a window has been opened for fresh applications from those project proponents who have acquired land for projects and obtained environmen-



tal clearance, it said.

"The six months window has been opened from April 21 to October 22," an official spokesperson told PTI.

According to the Food Ministry, the decision will facilitate sugar mills to set up new distilleries or expand their existing distilleries and thereby help in diverting excess sugar-

cane/sugar to ethanol.

"New grain-based distilleries would come up in deficit states like northeastern states, southern states like Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and states like Bihar, Madhya Pradesh etc. This would help in the distributed production of ethanol," the ministry said in a statement.

Aparna Dixit fell in love with her onscreen avatar in 'Woh Toh Hai Albelaa'

Aparna Dixit as Anjali is the new entrant in the ongoing show 'Woh Toh Hai Albelaa'. The actor is happy to have bagged the drama and feels the title is unique and interesting.

"I got to know about the show when I got a call for this character. When I got to know about the production, the story, star cast and it was all just so amazing that I thought 'okay let me hear the character' because of course I had my inhibitions of entering an ongoing show. But one thing was there, that is I always wanted to work with Rajan sir I've seen his shows before and know how good they are."

"The good thing about the show is that it's very relatable and it also has a lot of interesting characters. Another thing that is special is that this show is based in Agra, my home town," says the actor, who was last seen in the TV show 'Pyaar Ki Luka Chupi' and web series 'Exit' and 'Sabse Bada Rupaiyaa'.

Aparna's character Anjali is very energetic, positive and brings a different kind of vibe to the show.

"She is Kanha's (Shaheer Sheikh) support system. These days the show has gotten serious and amid all that she is a breath of fresh air. She loves Kanha immensely, they both have been in a relationship. Anjali is close to Kanha's family. She is today's girl, who respects everyone," she adds. Aparna further shares her experience of working with the cast of the show.

"My experience so far has been quite good. The first day went very well although I was sleep-deprived as I had prior commitments and I had to come for the shoot directly but I think I couldn't have asked for a more fulfilling day. The entire day I shot with Saheer. He is a supportive co-actor and made it all very comfortable. The vibe of the set is nice too," she shares.

On TV, 'Woh Toh Hai Albelaa', is Aparna's first show this year. "I was doing different things like I did 2-3 music videos this year. Before that I did a series last year. So basically I was waiting for the right kind of show and character to be back on TV and finally got one. Until that happened I was trying out dif-

ferent things and even worked on the web space. Anjali's character is very different from what I have done before. I try to choose stories and characters that are interesting, allow me to do better and are different from my earlier characters," she explains.

These days, both stories and characters are very relatable. And, this does help in building a connection with the audience, feels the actor:

"These days our audience has become smart so if we show them something fake or not relatable they will just disconnect from the same. So TV has also come a long way, as per the time and preferences, we have changed the pattern, now things are more realistic, natural, but obviously there is a little liberty that is taken to add a little drama to it," she says.

This show has a regional connection especially in the kind of attire and dialect it has. The actor feels this regional connection helps people connect with the show better.

"People do not belong to a particular region enjoy learning about its language, culture, dressing pattern, food etc via shows and cinema. So that immediately makes it interesting for them. On the other hand, for people belonging to the region, it feels like watching themselves on screen," she adds.

As an actor, Aparna takes up every show as a new adventure. "Every time it's a different, new and unpredictable journey so it's quite fun and interesting. The next important step is to perform well and get a grip of your character so that it looks convincing to the audience and you are able to win their hearts. Audience enjoying the story and loving the character is the best reward for any actor. I get so many messages from people on Instagram, some even tag me on different posts saying how much they like Anjali. I feel grateful," she concludes.

&TV actors share their skincare secrets

Summer has arrived. While we splash in the sun and relax on the sand, it is also time to take care of our skin to avoid getting oily, dull, and tanned.

&TV artists Vidisha Srivastava (Anita Bhabi, Bhabiji Ghar Par Hai), Mouli Ganguly (Mahasati Anusuya, Baal Shiv), Farhana Fatema (Shanti Mishra, Aur Bhai Kya Chal Raha Hai?), and Himani Shivpuri (Katori Amma, Happu Ki Ultan Paltan) share their best-kept summer skin care home remedies.

Mouli Ganguly, aka Mahasati Anusuya, Baal Shiv shares, "I love all things natural and organic. Along with drinking proper juices for my skin, I also apply homemade face packs and natural scrubs to moisturize my skin in summer. My basic summer hack is to use a facial natural scrub once a week made from ground almonds or rice powder mixed with yoghurt and a pinch of turmeric. Apply it to the face and rub gently with small circular strokes. It gives you just the perfect glow and nourishment your skin needs on hot humid days."

Watch Baal Shiv at 8:00 pm, Aur Bhai

Kya Chal Raha Hai? at 9:30 pm, Happu Ki Ultan Paltan at 10:00 pm, and Bhabiji Ghar Par Hai at 10:30 pm airing every Monday to Friday only on &TV!



Tele-vision's most loved kids singing reality show 'Superstar Singer' is all set to return with an exciting new season. The second edition of the show will celebrate 'Singing Ka Kal' by showcasing some of the most remarkable small wonders from across the country who have a unique sense of musical expression, dedication, and enthusiasm.

Like the first season, Superstar Singer 2 will have a well-appointed panel of Captains aka Gurus i.e. Arunita Kanjilal, Pawandeep Rajan, Sayli Kamble, Mohd, Danish and Salman Ali who will nurture and groom the budding musical stars. Having proved their mettle and winning millions of hearts with their extraordinary singing talent, the Captains visited every nook and corner of the country to bring forth some of the most brilliant voices the country has ever heard. Excited about being the captain of Superstar Singer 2, the versatile and effervescent singer Pawandeep Rajan opens up about his journey from being an Indian Idol winner to becoming a captain and the kind of talent he has come across so far.

1. How does it feel to be a Captain on Superstar Singer 2? Superstar Singer is one of television's most loved kids

'It was tough to decide because the skill of kids is extraordinary'



singing reality show and being a part of the captain's panel will be the most incredible experience of my life. I consider myself really fortunate and can't thank the makers for believing me to guide and groom the young singing dynamites. I will hope to give in my best in training these kids and pass on my learning onto them. Adding on to my excitement is the fact that I am getting the chance to be sharing the platform with my fellow Indian Idol contestants turned family who are going to join me as the captains on the show.

And, competing with them along with the kids will be fun and challenging as all of them are such great singers.

Past 70, Mammooty enters a new 'age' with his aura intact



Malayalam superstar Mammooty turned 70 on Saturday and though his aura shines bright as ever, he has certainly mellowed down.

Gone are the days of the haughty personality that he used to carry with him, instead now he has become an extremely mellowed down personality and has no airs about himself at all.

Now past 70, the ageless superstar has been donning the grease paint for close to five decades in over 400 films and according to a source in the

know of things, one of the major reason why there has been a huge change in his outlook is the Covid pandemic. With Covid raging all around and life becoming virtual, two years disappeared just like that and things went for a toss, when the superstar turned Covid positive. According to the source, ever since Mammooty turned positive and after he came out of it, he has become too good a person, free from all emotional baggage. Even with all the emotional glitches, none used to have any issues with the

superstar and the beauty is, without it, he has now become the darling of many. Mammooty for long had shifted base from Chennai to his home district Ernakulam and has permanently settled at the bustling commercial capital of the state Kochi.

His actor son Dulqar Salman also is there, while his daughter is based in Bengaluru.

Today the easiest way to find out if the superstar is around, be it at a hotel or anywhere, is the presence of two of his closest aides - producer Anto Joseph and stand up comedian Ramesh Pisharody, if sighted, then rest assured, that the superstar is around.

His most recent release "Bheeshma Parvam" has been a runaway hit and on May 1 is going to be another keenly watched day, when 'CBI 5: The Brain' is going to be released and this is the fifth instalment of the CBI series, each of which became a huge blockbuster.

And not to mention his present film which he is shooting in and around Ernakulam directed by Nissam Basheer and those associated with the film reveal, that the crime thriller will bring out the best of Mammooty.

Ajay Devgn: I'm a very spontaneous actor



Bollywood star Ajay Devgn in his over a three-decade-long journey in Hindi cinema has given seen the highs of highs with the work he has done. The powerful performer says he does not get affected by portraying intense roles on screen as he is not a method actor but a spontaneous one.

The 53-year-old actor-filmmaker currently awaits the release of his upcoming film 'Runway 34', a film reportedly inspired by the true events of the Jet Airways Doha to Kochi flight that had a narrow escape on August 2015, after facing difficulties to land at Cochin International Airport due to bad weather and unclear visibility.

Talking to IANS about an intense role or a film like 'Runway 34' affects him, Ajay in a conversation with IANS said: "No, it doesn't because I am not a method actor. I am a very spontaneous actor."

The actor, who has been feted with two National Film Awards, added: "I start thinking how a character would think in that situation and perform and if I think too much about the character or about how I am going to do it, I will lose the spontaneity and stop feeling. I don't like rehearsing. I just want to think about the character feel it and go out and do it. So as soon as it is over I also switch off."

HOROSCOPE SUNDAY APRIL 24

Aquarius: Jan 21 - Feb 18
Change is in the air, Aquarius. Whether it's a dramatic change of faith or a major shift in your life's goals, prepare yourself for a profound transformation. It's likely due to the fact that you now have more freedom to do what you want, when you want. Perhaps a financial windfall has made this possible.

Pisces: Feb 19 - Mar 20
It's time to refill the well of your soul, Pisces. You spend so much of your life in service to others that it's only natural that you feel drained sometimes. Rather than try to push past this feeling and go on as though nothing is the matter, consider it a sign that something is amiss.

Aries: Mar 21 - Apr 20
You would make an excellent judge, Aries. You're able to consider all aspects of a situation. This is a bit of a blessing and a curse, because it can make it difficult to come to a decision. Today you could face the challenge of reconsidering past decisions. Once-binding contracts need to be reviewed and new ones created.

Taurus: Apr 21 - May 21
Just because one person is no longer a part of your life doesn't mean that all people are unreliable. People change, as do situations. It's possible that this person was no longer a healthy influence on you, in which case the departure is for the best. You're going to have to become more adaptable.

Gemini: May 22 - June 21
It can be hard to release old habits and beliefs even as new, better ways of thinking struggle to gain a foothold. It's time for you to do this, Gemini. You might find it difficult to confide your feelings to another, but a frank conversation with close friends will do much to ease your mind.

Cancer: June 22 - July 22
You always suspected that your job was making you crazy, but it never occurred to you that it could make you sick, too. Is it really worth it, Cancer? You may be asking yourself this question today. Fortunately, your talents apply to several professions. Why not take a closer look at other fields?

Leo: July 23 - Aug 23
Just how long has it been since you indulged in a big helping of your favorite guilty pleasure, Leo? It's time to let the youngster in you come out and play today. Eat that chocolate, read those mindless magazines, or skip down the sidewalk. You've been taking life much too seriously lately.

Virgo: Aug 24 - Sept 22
If you feel like you're trying to push a square peg into a round hole, you're probably right, Virgo. Whether you're having personal or professional difficulties, there are times when it just doesn't pay to try so hard. In fact, it's often a sign that there is something fundamentally wrong with the relationship.

Libra: Sept 23 - Oct 23
Things aren't always as they first appear. People you thought you knew well and circumstances that you thought you understood thoroughly now seem anything but straightforward. Has the world really changed that much or has your perception altered somehow? It's time to direct this "altered" vision inward.

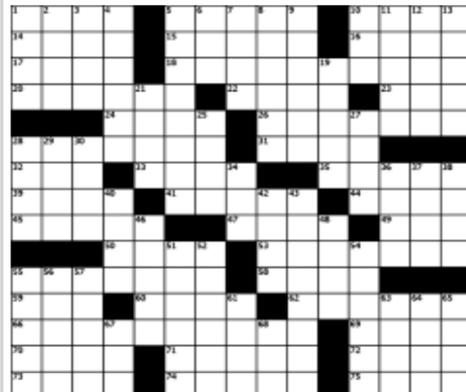
Scorpio: Oct 24 - Nov 22
Difficult as it may be for you to face all those projects you've left undone, Scorpio, know that you'll be free to move on once they're complete. People from your past figure prominently now. Perhaps they come forward to repay an old debt or possibly claim repayment from you. Don't abandon your dreams.

Sagittarius: Nov 23 - Dec 21
You could have a "eureka!" moment today, Sagittarius, as events from your past unexpectedly bubble to the surface of your mind and crystallize in a surprising new way. Suddenly, you have a clear understanding of how these past events affect your present behavior. You can use this new knowledge to bring about change.

Capricorn: Dec 22 - Jan 20
Sometimes it's easier to tend to life's mundane details rather than lift your eyes and see the big picture, Capricorn. For example, it's likely that you've grown complacent at work. Could it be that you aren't at the right job or in the right career after all? Bussing yourself with trivia isn't the way to avoid answering the question. It's imperative that you face it head on and make the necessary changes.

CROSSWORD

279



- 47. Remove wrinkles
- 49. Squeezing snake
- 50. Storage area
- 53. Adversaries
- 55. "A ___ Home Companion"
- 58. Vietnam's continent
- 59. Congressman (abbr.)
- 60. Stretched line
- 62. Church leaders
- 66. Excessive use of power
- 69. Sherlock's find
- 70. Hay bundle
- 71. Looks after
- 72. Actor ___ Baldwin
- 73. Viewed
- 74. Apart
- 75. Historian's concern
- 28. Tentacles
- 29. Converge
- 30. Wheel shaft
- 34. ___ Beta Kappa
- 36. Mongolian desert
- 37. Burn-soothing plant
- 38. Oceans
- 40. Artist Salvador ___
- 42. Region
- 43. Absurdity
- 46. Telegraph inventor
- 48. Playwright ___ Simon
- 51. Spanish party
- 52. Tantalizes
- 54. Zany
- 55. Investigate
- 56. Settle a debt
- 57. Orchard fruit
- 61. Skirt length
- 63. Singer ___ Fitzgerald
- 64. Feels remorse
- 65. Faction
- 67. Beet's color
- 68. Eccentric

- DOWN**
- 1. Dress for Caesar
 - 2. One who mimics
 - 3. Slim
 - 4. Register
 - 5. Bargain hunter's stop (2 wds.)
 - 6. Wind dir.
 - 7. P.D.'s kin
 - 8. Fill again
 - 9. Rock band ___ Dan
 - 10. Frequently, in poetry
 - 11. Bed boards
 - 12. Woodturning machine
 - 13. Follows orders
 - 19. Pigs' homes
 - 21. Ship's diaries
 - 25. Radiate
 - 27. Comedian Sandler

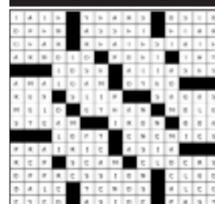
ACROSS

- 1. Narrative
- 5. 1984 and 2001
- 10. Norway's capital
- 14. Overt
- 15. Resource
- 16. Extra weight
- 17. Transmission part
- 18. ___ agent (2 wds.)
- 20. Mr. Schwarzenegger
- 22. Keats or Tennyson

DOWN

- 23. Poetic "your"
- 24. Mislaid
- 26. Pseudonyms
- 28. Dental alloy
- 31. Tinted
- 32. Tyrannosaurus ___
- 33. Slide
- 35. Legendary stories
- 39. Blend
- 41. Patriot ___ Allen
- 44. Burrowing animal
- 45. Iron setting

SOLUTION 278



Titans beat KKR in a thriller

Mumbai, Apr 23 (PTI):

Andre Russell's pyrotechnics proved to be too little too late in the end as Gujarat Titans defended a small total to clinch a dramatic eight-run win over Kolkata Knight Riders in an IPL thriller here on Saturday.

With 12 points already in its kitty, the Titans are looking good for a play-off berth in its inception year.

KKR's top and middle order batters failed miserably in the wake of a clinical bowling display from the Titans with only Rinku Singh scoring 35 and it was left to Russell (48 off 25 balls) to go for a win and the West Indian nearly did it only to fail in the last over.

Chasing 157 for a win, KKR ended their innings at 148 for 8 after Russell was out in the second ball of the final over. He hit one four and six sixes.

Needing 18 from the final over bowled by Alzarri Joseph, Russell hit the first ball for a six before Lockie Ferguson took a fine catch in the deep under pressure from the vey next delivery



to end KKR's hopes.

This was Titan's sixth win in seven matches and they strengthened their position at the top of table while KKR slumped to their fourth straight loss.

For the Titans, Mohammed Shami, Rashid Khan and yash Dayal took two wickets apiece while Alzarri Joseph and Lockie Ferguson got one each.

Veteran India pacer

Shami wreaked havoc in his first spell of two overs, taking the wickets of new opening pair of Sam Billings (4) and Sunil Narine (5) to reduce KKR to 2/10 in the third over.

KKR's decision to promote Billings to open the innings backfired while Narine failed for the second time at the top of the order.

To make matters worse for KKR, Nitish Rana (2)

edged a beautiful delivery from Lockie Ferguson to Wriddhiman Saha to continue his struggle for form this season.

Captain Shreyas Iyer, fresh from a fine 85 against Rajasthan Royals, looked in top form with an exquisite six off Ferguson as KKR reached 34 for 3 at the end of powerplay.

But, KKR suffered their biggest jolt with Iyer edging

an angled delivery from pacer Yash Dayal in the first ball after powerplay, that left them a huge mountain to climb in their run chase.

Russell got a life after he holed out to fine leg fielder but Dayal overstepped for a no-ball. Russell made the reprieve count with two successive sixes off the same bowler.

KKR knew they were still in the game as long as Russell was there and the West Indian survived two close calls to keep his side in the hunt only to get dismissed in the last over.

Earlier, captain Hardik Pandya's third fifty of the season was the lone saving grace in Gujarat Titans' underwhelming batting show as they scored a below-par 156 for 9.

KKR bowled as many as 43 dot balls and were brilliant at the death as they conceded only 29 runs and took as many as seven wickets in the final five overs.

Andre Russell (4/5 in 1 over) got four wickets in the final over as Rinku Singh was a livewire in the field with four catches.

Ravi wins hat-trick of Asian Championship gold medals



Ulaanbaatar, Apr 23 (PTI):

Indian wrestler Ravi Kumar Dahiya clinched his third straight Asian Championship gold medal with a dominating performance in the 57kg category, winning the title clash by technical superiority against Kazakhstan's Rakhmat Kalzhan, here on Saturday.

Ravi, who hails from Nahri village in Sonapat, yet again showed his immense physical prowess and tactical superiority when he outsmarted Japan's Rikuto Arai (VSU) and pulled off a comprehensive 12-5 win over Mongolia's Zanabazar Zandanbud en route the final.

smart his rivals in the men's freestyle event.

It was his second final of the season, having won a silver at the Dan Kolov event in February.

Ravi, who hails from Nahri village in Sonapat, yet again showed his immense physical prowess and tactical superiority when he outsmarted Japan's Rikuto Arai (VSU) and pulled off a comprehensive 12-5 win over Mongolia's Zanabazar Zandanbud en route the final.

In the title clash,

Kalzhan moved ahead with a take-down and for considerable time did not let the Indian make any move. However, true to his style, Ravi began to dominate the bout with his unmatched class.

He effected six consecutive two-pointers and in-between saved himself from a left-leg attack to finish the bout early in the second period to secure India's first gold medal of the tournament this year.

Ravi had won gold at the 2020 edition in Delhi and in Almaty last year.

No ball controversy: Pant, Thakur handed heavy fines, Amre suspended for one match

Mumbai, Apr 23 (PTI):

Captain Rishabh Pant was on Saturday fined 100 per cent of his match fee, while assistant coach Pravin Amre was handed a one-match ban for breaching the IPL Code of Conduct during Delhi Capitals' 15-run loss to Rajasthan Royals.

Besides the one match ban, Amre was also fined his entire match fees, while DC pacer Shardul Thakur too has been penalised 50 per cent of his match-fees, IPL said in a release.

The trio were penalised for their conduct during the controversial final over of the match in which Delhi Capitals required 36 runs to win on Friday night.

Needing 36 runs for a win off the final over, DC batter Rovman Powell hit three successive sixes from the first three deliveries, including the third ball which was a hip-high full-toss from Obed McCoy, to bring the equation down to 18 runs from the final three balls.

However, the DC camp de-



Third umpire should have interfered and said it was no ball: Pant

Mumbai: A disappointed Delhi Capitals captain Rishabh Pant said the third umpire should have "interfered" to check for a possible waist-high no-ball in the dramatic final over of their IPL match against Rajasthan Royals as it proved "precious" for his team. Pant had called back his batters -- Rovman Powell and Kuldeep Yadav -- after the umpires did not check the delivery for a possible no-ball in the last over as DC lost the match by 15 runs. Asked about the incident at the post-match presentation, Pant said, "I thought the no ball could have been precious for us. I thought we could have checked that no ball, but it's not in my control." Needing 36 runs from the final over, Powell hit three successive sixes from the first three deliveries off Obed McCoy. DC needed another 18 more from the final three deliveries.

the playing arena to speak to the umpire. Pant admitted to the "Level 2 offence" under Article 2.7 of the IPL Code of Conduct and "accepted the sanction".

Thakur also accepted the sanction for the "Level 2 offence under Article 2.8" of the IPL Code of Conduct and accepted the sanction.

Handed a one-match ban, Amre too "admitted to the Level 2 offence under Article 2.2 of the IPL Code of Conduct and accepted the sanction."

It started with Kuldeep,

who was at the non-striker's end, gesturing to the umpires to check for a possible no-ball on height after the third delivery. Powell joined in having a chat with the umpires too. But the umpires stood their ground, saying the delivery was legal.

Pant looked livid and called Kuldeep and Powell back, while assistant coach Shane Watson tried to reason him out. Amre then went into the playing arena but he was told to get back by the umpires.

IPL 2022: Struggling MI take on LSG, aiming to arrest slide

Mumbai, Apr 23 (PTI):

Virtually out of the play-off race and struggling on multiple fronts, a horribly out-of-sorts Mumbai Indians will need a special team effort to arrest their slide when they take on Lucknow Super Giants in a return-leg IPL fixture here on Sunday.

With seven defeats in as many matches, MI are winless this season and are languishing at the bottom with nothing going right for the five-time champions, who have failed to win the crunch moments and will need a miracle to make it to the playoffs.

Lucknow, on the other hand, have looked in good touch with four wins from seven matches but they are coming into the match after suffering a 18-run loss to Royal Challengers Bangalore. However, the fact that LSG beat MI by 18 runs in their first leg will



give them confidence.

MI have done well in patches but never looked as a unit, prompting former Australian batter Chris Lynn to stir speculations of a rift within the camp following their last defeat to Chennai Super

Kings on Thursday.

The defeat also handed MI the dubious record of becoming the first team in IPL history to lose its first seven matches in a season.

Skipper Rohit Sharma too seemed clueless as to what is going wrong for

the team. "It's hard to put a finger on anything, but we're not starting well in the match. If you lose quick wickets, you'll always be playing the catching game," Sharma had said after their last match.

One of the reasons for MI's downfall is the poor form of its openers Sharma and Ishant Kishan.

While both were out for a duck against CSK, Kishan has fared slightly better than his skipper, scoring 191 runs against 114 runs by Sharma.

Tilak Varma and Suryakumar Yadav have produced some good knocks, while young Dewald Brevis too shone in a few matches but a collective effort in the middle-order has been missing.

With just 96 runs, all-rounder Kieron Pollard has failed to live up to the expectations of the franchise, which decided to retain him.

Alcaraz beats top-seeded Tsitsipas to reach Barcelona semis

Barcelona, Apr 23 (API):

Spanish teenager Carlos Alcaraz thrilled the home crowd by beating top-seeded Stefanos Tsitsipas in three sets to advance to the semifinals of the Barcelona Open.

Alcaraz won the quarter-final 6-4, 5-7, 6-2 after breaking the fifth-ranked Greek five times on the outdoor clay court named for Rafael Nadal.

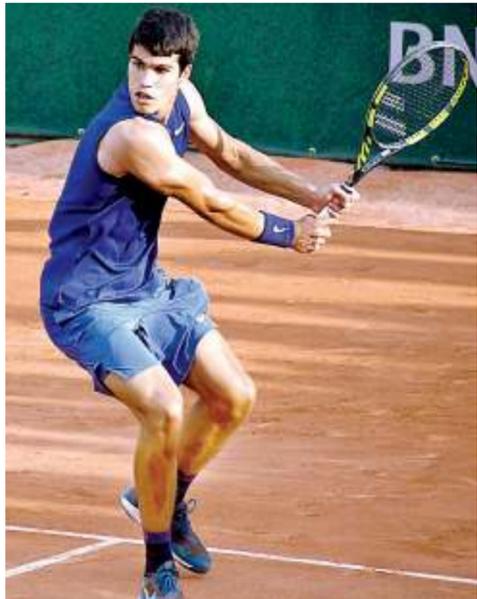
The 18-year-old Alcaraz is aiming for his third title of the season after he won at Rio de Janeiro in February and in Miami this month.

Alcaraz called it his biggest win on clay.

Unbelievable game that I played, unbelievable atmosphere that I lived today on court. It was unbelievable everything," the precocious talent who is drawing comparisons to a young Nadal said. "The atmosphere here, the crowd, the level that I played, the level of the match. It was incredible.

All of the players who reached the quarterfinals had already played third-round matches earlier on Friday that had been pushed back from Thursday due to rain delays.

Before facing Alcaraz, Tsitsipas needed just over an hour to beat Grigor Dimitrov 6-1, 6-4. Alcaraz similarly eased past fellow



countryman Jaume Munar 6-3, 6-3. Tsitsipas looked finished when he was trailing Alcaraz by a set and 4-1. He fought to pull level with the youngster, but Alcaraz dominated the third set.

The teen sensation won the nighttime crowd over with his wide range of winners, including several well-placed drop shots that Tsitsipas failed to reach.

Alcaraz, ranked 11th, is guaranteed to move into the top 10 men's rankings.

Alcaraz will face Alex de Minaur on Saturday after the Australian beat fourth-seeded Cameron Norrie 6-3, 5-7, 6-1. Tsitsipas, who won Monte Carlo last weekend, was trying to reach his second straight final in Barcelona. Instead, his record against Alcaraz is now 0-3.

On the other side of the bracket, Pablo Carreno will meet Diego Schwartzman after both produced comebacks.

World Cup: India compound men's team bag gold

Antalya, Apr 23 (PTI):

Indian men's compound archery team of Abhishek Verma, Rajat Chauhan and Aman Saini downed France by one-point in a thrilling final to win the gold medal at the World Cup Stage 1 here on Saturday.

This was the men's compound team's first World Cup gold medal since Shanghai 2017.

India, however, lost out on a second medal after the compound and mixed pair of Verma and Muskan Kirar went down 156-157 to Croatia in the bronze medal playoff.

In the compound men's team final, the Indian trio started off with a one-point deficit, losing the first end 56-57 to their French rivals of Jean Philippe Boulch, Quentin Baraer and Adrien Gontier.

India slowly improved on their first-end score by one-point but the French team had a near perfect set of 59/60 comprising three four 10s, including arrows closer to the centre (X) to extend

their lead (113-116).

Trailing by three points, Indians showed amazing resilience to drill in a perfect end of 60/60 with two Xs to win the third set 60-58, and curtail the deficit by one-point (173-174).

There was no stopping the Indian trio thereafter as they shot a 59 in the fourth end, with the under-pressure Frenchmen managing 57 to go down by one-point.

"Mentally we were really strong today, and we've been preparing for this event only and we have the Asian Games coming up this year which is something we also want to do well at," 24-year-old Saini, who bagged his first World Cup gold, said.

"After the gold medal that gives us a great confidence boost especially for the other world cup events, it will hopefully help us."

On Sunday, India's recurve mixed team pair of Tarundeep Rai and Radhika Phor will be vying for a second gold after having defeated Spain in the semi-final 5-3.

Want to win medals at CWG, crack world's top 10 & qualify for 2024 Olympics: Treasa Jolly



New Delhi, Apr 23 (PTI):

Treasa Jolly and Gayatri Gopichand's dream run continued with the young duo making it to the Indian team for the Commonwealth Games, Asian Games and Uber Cup following its stellar display at the recently-concluded selection trials.

And the young pair is now focussing on returning with a medal from the upcoming major events, cracking the world's top 10 and qualifying for the Paris Olympics in two years time.

It has just been a little over 15 months that the two paired up but the duo has been like a house on fire, becoming the first women's pair to reach the All England semifinals, winning the Odisha Open Super 100 and reaching

the finals of Syed Modi Super 300.

"Now the target is the CWG, Asian Games and Uber Cup and we also want to work hard and qualify for the 2024 Olympics," Treasa told PTI.

"Main thing is the Paris Olympics, so our aim is to be in top 10 by next year. That is the target."

All of 18, Treasa hails from Cherupuzha, Kerala where the seeds of badminton were first sowed in her by her father Jolly Mathew, who is a physical education teacher.

"My father is a physical education teacher, so he wanted his kids also to play the sport. My elder sister (Maria) was my partner in under-15, under-17 in state events but I was performing better so my father motivated

me to continue," Treasa said. "When I started playing badminton, I realised that it gives me a lot of happiness. I remember watching Saina (Nehwal) at the Olympics, since then she has been my inspiration."

Treasa, who started playing the sport as a six year old, said she joined the Gopichand academy just two months before the COVID-19 lockdowns were announced in 2020.

"I used to play singles and doubles but when I shifted to Gopichand academy in January 2020, Gayatri too had started playing doubles, so something clicked and we started playing together."

"But with lockdown, it was difficult as I had to go back home and we did the online sessions. In fact, Sudirman Cup and Uber Cup trials was the time when we played together and the first international event was at Poland."

The duo had reached the finals of Polish International, won the Infosys Foundation International Challenge, before finishing second best at Welsh International.

But it was 2022 that the duo made a massive breakthrough with a runners-up finish at Lucknow and a top finish at Odisha.

UP considering UCC implementation: Dy CM

Lucknow, Apr 23 (PTI):

The Uttar Pradesh government is thinking seriously in the direction of the implementation of the Uniform Civil Code in the state, Deputy Chief Minister Keshav Prasad Maurya said on Saturday. Maurya made the revelation while favouring the expeditious implementation of the UCC both in the country and the state.

Termining the constitutionally-envisaged measure an "important step" for the realisation of the governance 'mantra' of "Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas" (inclusive growth), he said it should be welcomed by everybody. "One law for all in one country is the need

of the hour. It is required that we should get out of the system of one law for one person and another for others. We are in favour of a common civil code," Maurya said while talking to newsmen here.

"The Uttar Pradesh government is thinking in this direction seriously, the deputy CM said. Just as the Uttarakhand government has initiated steps, in UP and other states too where there is the BJP government, the common civil code should be implemented, he said.

Even in other states where there is no BJP government, its implementation is necessary for inclusive growth, he said, adding the common civil code is

such a thing which should not only be demanded but also welcomed by all.

Soon after the formation of the Uttarakhand government after the recent assembly elections, the first Cabinet meeting presided by Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami there decided to form a committee of experts on the implementation of a Uniform Civil Code in the state.

After his first cabinet meeting, Dhami had said that Uttarakhand will be the first state to implement UCC, however, quickly adding that perhaps it is already in force in Goa. "Common civil code is definitely required at this point of time, it is very much required for the

country, for Uttar Pradesh and for the people of the country," the deputy CM said.

But when there are vote bank considerations everywhere, it definitely shows the politics of appeasement. But we are not in favour of this, Maurya said. During the election campaign in the recently held UP polls, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath had also spoken in favour of one law for the entire country and had said the matter would be taken up at the right time.

The issue of the implementation of the Uniform Civil Code, however, does not enjoy the Opposition support besides that of Muslim bodies.

'BJP scared of AAP, announcing sops in HP'

Dharamsala (HP), Apr 23 (PTI):

Taking a jibe at Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur for announcing 125 units of free electricity, Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Saturday said his Himachal Pradesh counterpart was forced to make the offer as he was scared of the AAP.

In his 20-minute speech at Chambi near Dharamsala, the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) national convener also said he had been informed that Prime Minister Narendra Modi wanted to advance the Assembly elections in Himachal Pradesh scheduled to be held in



Arvind Kejriwal

December but his party was ready and upbeat about winning it.

Thakur recently announced that his government will provide 125 units of electricity free to Himachalis. After this, he got snubbed by PM Modi, who instructed him not to repeat such offers, Kejriwal

said addressing the public at Chambi Maidan in Shahpur Assembly constituency here.

If the BJP is really serious about providing such relief to the public, then they should make such announcements in other BJP-ruled states such as Haryana, Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat, the Delhi chief minister added.

Presiding over the 75th state level Himachal Day function at Chowgan in Chamba recently, Thakur had also announced a 50 per cent relaxation in fare in HRTC buses for women and no water bill in rural areas, in addition to free power to all up to 125 units.

Kolkata, Apr 23 (PTI):

Chandra Kumar Bose, the grand nephew of Netaji, has urged the Centre to bring back to the country the purported ashes of the nationalistic leader kept at Renkoji temple in Japan this year, which is his 125th birth centenary year and order a DNA test if it is technically possible.

He urged that the ashes be brought back by August 18, the date in which Netaji reportedly died in an air crash at Taihoku in 1945. "Netaji's ambition was to return to an independent India as the head of a victorious revolutionary army.

VARSITY CONVOCATION



Karnataka Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot with Supreme Court Judge Justice S. Abdul Nazeer and Mangalore University Vice Chancellor P.S. Yadapadithaya, during the 40th convocation of Mangalore University, in Mangaluru, Saturday.

'Bring back Netaji's ashes on his 125th birth anniversary'

Circumstances did not allow that to happen.

The best way to honour his wishes in this 125th Birth Centenary year is to bring his remains by 18th August 2022 to repose in Indian soil. The Government of India

can do that. If technically possible, a DNA test may be conducted to confirm," Chandra Kumar Bose said in his letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday. He said if the ashes are brought back,

Netaji's daughter Anita Bose Pfaff will be able to perform the last rites and bring the long-awaited closure for his family and the people of India. "Because of this procrastination (in bringing back the ashes), weird stories continue to circulate which demean the might and reputation of Netaji, including in films. This should not be allowed to continue," Bose, who is a member of

the high level central committee to celebrate Netaji's 125th birth anniversary and a BJP leader, said. "The government is certain that the remains at Renkoji Temple are those of Netaji's, which is why the Government of India contributes to the costs of maintaining the urn containing the remains," the veteran social activist said in his letter. The West Bengal Government had in September 2015 declassified all files in its possession related to Netaji, while the Centre did so with the remaining Netaji files from January 23, 1916 till November 2016, the letter said.



Chandra Kumar Bose

CBSE drops chapters on Islamic empires, Cold War from syllabus

New Delhi, Apr 22 (PTI): The CBSE has dropped chapters about the Non-Aligned Movement, the Cold War era, the rise of Islamic empires in Afro-Asian territories, the chronicles of Mughal courts and the industrial revolution from the history and political science syllabi of classes 11 and 12.

Similarly, in the class 10 syllabus, the topic 'impact of globalisation on agriculture from a chapter on 'Food Security' has been dropped. The translated excerpts from two poems in Urdu by Faiz Ahmed Faiz in the 'Religion, Communalism and Politics Communalism, Secular State' section have also been excluded this year.

Jahangirpuri flare-up Business sees dip due to restricted movement

New Delhi, Apr 23 (PTI):

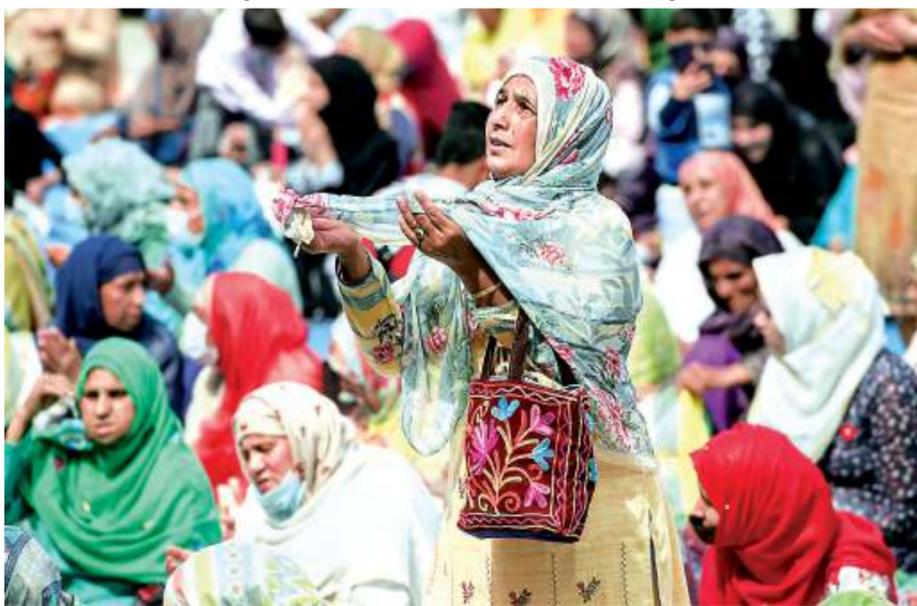
A week after the communal clashes in northwest Delhi's Jahangirpuri, most of the shops remained shut on Saturday as shopkeepers cited restricted movement and barricading to be the main hurdle in running their businesses. The grievance comes despite the Delhi Police clarifying a day earlier that it never stopped people from opening shops in the area.

Shopkeepers in and around violence-hit C-Block said there is no business due to barricades and that is the reason they are not opening shops. However, some movement was permitted in the region as locals, including school students, were seen using the barricaded roads and passing through Kushal Chowk on foot. Nevertheless, vehic-

ular movement is still restricted in the area. The situation though remained calm a day after members from both the communities declared restoration of peace in the area and agreed to live in harmony during a meeting of aman committees. Security personnel were seen manning the roads, but their numbers have significantly reduced from previous days.

During the aman committee meeting on Friday, DCP (northwest) Usha Rangani had urged the people to maintain peace and clarified that she never stopped the opening of shops. "I have never stopped the shops in H and G blocks of Jahangirpuri from opening. I do not know why these shops are closed. We will facilitate the opening of shops and businesses in these blocks," she underlined.

RAMADAN PRAYERS



A Muslim devotee during Zuhr prayers on the 21st day of holy month of Ramadan, on the occasion of the death anniversary of Hazrat Ali, descended from Prophet Muhammad, at Hazratbal Shrine in Srinagar, Saturday.

Odisha Police solemnises marriage of two surrendered Maoists

Bhawanipatna, Apr 23 (PTI):

After paying for each other's blood for long, policemen erupted in joy as two surrendered Maoists tied the knot in Odisha's Kalahandi district. The Bhawanipatna reserve police premises wore a festive look on Friday with men and women in khaki cheering former red rebels Ramdas and Kalamdeji as they tied the knot after shunning their olive green uniforms.

Ramdas Keshav Valadi (29), who hails from Chhattisgarh, married Kalamdeji Majhi (25), a native of Kalahandi, at a temple on the reserve police premises after leading the life of guerrillas, albeit in separate areas. The groom surrendered on February 18, 2020 while the bride lay down her arms four years before on January

5, 2016. But as fate had it, they accidentally met at a hospital in Bhawanipatna, where Valadi's father was undergoing cataract surgery after his son's surrender.

It was love at first sight for the duo and soon their parents met and agreed to their marriage. When the police learnt about the former red rebels' wish to get married, it decided to arrange for the wedding and bear the expenses.

Over 75,000 Indians wave national flag simultaneously in bid to break Pak record

Jagdishpur (Bihar), Apr 23 (PTI):

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Saturday was a proud witness to more than 75,000 people simultaneously waving the Indian national flag at this semi-urban town in Bihar, where the BJP sought to make history by breaking Pakistan's record set 18 years ago.

The occasion was the 164th death anniversary of Veer Kunwar Singh, the then king of Jagdishpur who is regarded as one of the heroes of the Revolt of 1857. The event was organised as part of 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav', the 75th anniversary of India's



Union Home Minister Amit Shah with others waves the national flag during Veer Kunwar Singh Vijayotsav at Jagdishpur, in Bhojpur district, Saturday.

Independence. Shah was joined by top BJP leaders from Bihar, including Union ministers R K Singh and Nityanand Rai, Deputy Chief Ministers Tarkishor

Prasad and Renu Devi and their predecessor Sushil Kumar Modi in waving the tricolour for full five minutes, to an instrumental rendition of the national

song 'Vande Mataram'.

The attendees were made to wear bands for physical identification and camera trap was installed, with Guinness Book of World Records for supervision. The crowds applauded when the gigantic screen installed at the venue put the headcount of flag wavers at 77,700. The previous world record was set by 56,000 Pakistanis who waved their national flag at a function in Lahore in 2004. Shah, whose role in bringing about "complete national integration by scrapping of Article 370" was hailed by speaker after speaker; himself spoke for less than 30 minutes.

'Cong to announce candidates 6 months ahead of K'taka assembly polls'

Davangere (KTK), Apr 23 (PTI):

Senior Congress leader Siddaramaiah on Saturday indicated that the party will try to announce its candidates six months ahead of the 2023 assembly elections in Karnataka, where it aims to win at least 150 seats to come to power. The leader of opposition in the legislative assembly however did not wish to reveal the constituency from which he will be contesting the polls and the Congress' Chief Ministerial face.

"Rahul Gandhi has said that we should win at least 150 seats (in 225 member assembly....we will try to (announce candidates six



Siddaramaiah

months before the election)," Siddaramaiah told reporters in response to a question. Setting the mood for Assembly elections in Karnataka due next year, former Congress President Rahul Gandhi earlier this month had exhorted party leaders in the State to work together, as he set an ambi-

tious target to win a minimum of 150 seats. The ruling BJP that is aiming to retain power, too has set a target of winning more than 150 seats, while JD(S)' goal is 123 seats.

In response to a query, Siddaramaiah maintained that he will reveal the constituency from which he will be contesting, as the election approaches.

There has been speculation within the party for some time now that the former chief minister, who currently represents Badami in north Karnataka, may return to his home turf of the old Mysuru region or somewhere in Bengaluru for the next assembly election.

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BRIEF



An ISKCON member drinks coconut water along with her son, in Nadia, Saturday.

Encounter

Srinagar: An encounter broke out between security forces and militants in Kulgam district of Jammu and Kashmir on Saturday, police said. The security forces had launched a cordon-and-search operation in the Mirhama area of Kulgam, in south Kashmir, following inputs about the presence of militants there, a police official said. He said the search operation turned into an encounter after the hiding militants fired upon the security force personnel, who retaliated.

Watery grave

Kaushambi: Two persons were feared drowned in Yamuna river here, after they went bathing into it with a group of friends on Saturday, police said. Search is on for Sandeep Dubey, 28, a resident of Ayodhya district, and Priyanshu Mishra, 16, a resident of Kaushambi, said Chail Circle officer Shyamkant. The two had gone bathing into the river at Angwa Ghat with a few others around 10.00 am, and possibly drowned after straying into the deep waters.

Cancel

Pratapgarh: A court here cancelled the bail of Uttar Pradesh legislative council member Akshay Pratap Singh and ordered his arrest in a case of getting an arms licence on a fake address, a government counsel said on Saturday. Ordering his arrest, the Pratapgarh district and sessions court issued a non-bailable warrant against the MLC who has been convicted in the arms licence case and sentenced to a seven-year jail term by a special court meant to try lawmakers, District Government Counsel Yogesh Sharma said.

Arrested

Sheopor: Two sons of a BJP MLA and two others were booked for allegedly assaulting forest department staffers who had reportedly stopped them from illegally quarrying stones in Madhya Pradesh's Sheopor district, police said on Saturday. A video of the incident, which showed some persons thrashing a group, went viral on social media soon after.

Mishap

Beed: Seven persons including five women were killed and ten injured after a truck rammed into their SUV in central Maharashtra's Beed district on Saturday morning, police said. The incident took place at Nandgaon Phata near Ambajogai town on the Latur-Ambajogai highway around 10 am, said a police official. The condition of three of the injured was critical, he added.

Weather
High 39 Low 24

'Won't hesitate to cross border for terrorists'

Guwahati, Apr 23 (PTI):

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Saturday asserted that India would not hesitate to act against terrorists who target the country from across the border.

Speaking at a programme, where Assam-based veterans of 1971 India-Pakistan War were felicitated, Singh said the government was working to wipe out terrorism from the country.

"India has been successful in giving out the message that terrorism will be strongly dealt with. We will not hesitate to cross borders if the country is targeted from outside," he maintained.

Singh also said that the eastern boundary of



Defence Minister Rajnath Singh speaks during a function honouring the war heroes of 1971 Bangladesh Liberation War, in Guwahati, Saturday.

the country is currently experiencing more peace and stability compared to the western frontier,

with Bangladesh being a friendly neighbour. "The tension that India experiences on western

frontier does not exist along eastern boundary as Bangladesh is a friendly country," he noted. "The problem of infiltration has almost ended. There is peace and stability at the border (in the eastern frontier) now," the minister said. On the recent withdrawal of Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA) from different parts of northeast, the defence minister stated that the government did so whenever the situation in a place improved.

Maintaining that there was a "public misconception" that the Army always wanted AFSPA to remain in force, Singh added, "It is the situation that is responsible for imposition of AFSPA, not the Army."

Yes Bank-DHFL case

'Rs 5,000-crore fraud by Rana Kapoor, Wadhawans'

Mumbai, Apr 23 (PTI):

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has alleged that Yes Bank co-founder Rana Kapoor and Dewan Housing Finance Limited (DHFL) promoters Kapil and Dheeraj Wadhawan siphoned off funds worth Rs 5,050 crore through suspicious transactions.

The ED said this in its second supplementary (third overall) charge sheet filed in special court here recently against Rana Kapoor, his family, Wadhawans and others in a money laundering case.

During the investigation, it came to light that a big part of the proceeds of crime (POC) generated in

this case has been siphoned off overseas by Rana Kapoor and hence they are not available for attachment directly under the provisions of Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), it said.

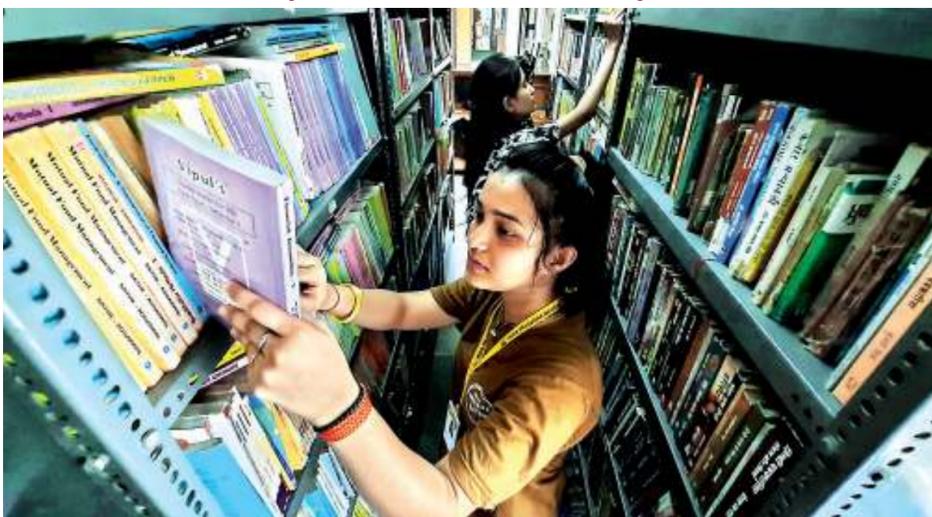
"Rana Kapoor, DHFL promoters Kapil Wadhawan, Dheeraj Wadhawan and others were involved in criminal conspiracy with each other in illegal diversion and siphoning off of funds through suspicious transaction of Rs 5,050 crore," the central probe agency claimed in its fresh prosecution complaint (charge sheet) filed recently. The ED said investigation has revealed that Yes Bank had bought debentures worth Rs 3,700 crore

between April 2018 and June 2018 from DHFL. Therefore, the amount was transferred to DHFL. Subsequently, DHFL gave a loan of Rs 600 crore to DOIT Urban Ventures Pvt Ltd (an entity, beneficially owned by Rana Kapoor and his family).

The probe also revealed that Yes Bank had used public money for the purchase of the above-said short-term debentures of DHFL, which has not yet been redeemed by DHFL.

On the other hand, DHFL obliged Rana Kapoor by giving the so called loan of Rs 600 crore to his beneficially-owned company, namely DUVPL, without adequate collateral, the agency said.

WORLD BOOK DAY



Students at a library on World Book Day, in Thane district, Saturday.

TV channels rapped over Delhi clash, Ukraine coverage

New Delhi, Apr 23 (PTI):

In a strong advisory to private television channels, the government on Saturday said certain debates on the coverage of the Ukraine-Russia conflict and the Delhi riots had provocative and socially unacceptable language, and it took exception to headlines such as 'Parmanu (nuclear) Putin' and 'Ali, Bali aur Khalbali (unrest)'. While the government found television news channels making "false claims" and "frequently misquoting" international agencies while reporting on the Ukraine conflict, it took objection to the reportage on

"incidents" in northwest Delhi, contending that channels had given communal colour to the actions of authority. It also said that certain debates on television channels on the Delhi violence had unparliamentary, provocative and socially unacceptable language.

"Having regard to the above, the government expresses serious concern about the manner in which the television channels have gone about their operations in the matter of transmitting content," read the advisory issued by the Information and Broadcasting Ministry to self-regulating bodies of television channels.

INTERESTING DEVELOPMENT

Patidar leader Naresh Patel meets Prashant Kishor

Says yet to finalise political party

Rajkot, Apr 23 (PTI):

Influential Patidar leader Naresh Patel, who heads Shree Khodaldham Temple Trust, on Saturday said he had met poll strategist Prashant Kishor in New Delhi but has not finalised the party he may join ahead of the Gujarat Assembly elections.

Amid speculation that he may join Congress at the behest of Kishor, Patel said

that he will take a final call on which political party to join based on a public opinion survey being conducted by a committee of the Shree Khodaldham Trust (SKT).

Patel has said that leaders from all the three parties (Congress, AAP and BJP) had met him.

Kishor is learnt to have suggested top Congress leadership to induct Patel into Congress ahead of elections, due in December this year, sources said.

Notably, quota spearhead and Gujarat Congress

working president Hardik Patel had recently questioned the "delay" by Congress leadership over the induction of Naresh Patel into the party fold.

The SKT headed by Patel manages the affairs of the Shree Khodaldham temple dedicated to the goddess Khodiyar in the Rajkot district, the patron deity of the Leuva Patel community.

The Patidars form about 11-12% of the population in Gujarat and are the influential caste group whose votes can sway results in many constituencies.

Delhi's R-value up to 2.1

'Every Covid patient infecting 2 others'

New Delhi, Apr 23:

Delhi's R-value, which indicates the spread of COVID-19, was recorded at 2.1 this week, implying that every infected person is infecting two others in the national capital, according to an analysis by IIT-Madras.

The 'R' or reproductive value indicates the number of people an infected person can spread the disease to, and a pandemic is considered to end if this value goes below one.

The preliminary analysis by computational modelling was done by IIT-Madras' department of mathematics and centre of excellence for computational mathematics and data science headed by Prof Neelesh S Upadhye and Prof S Sundar.

This was shared with PTI and according to it, Delhi's R-value this week was recorded at 2.1.

India's R-value, at pres-

ent, stands at 1.3, the analysis found. Asked if it can be deduced that this is the beginning of the fourth wave of COVID-19 in Delhi, Dr Jayant Jha, assistant professor, department of mathematics, IIT-Madras, said it would be too early to declare an onset of another wave.

"We can only say right now that every person is affecting two others....but we need to wait a bit to declare onset...we don't know about the immunity status and whether the people who got affected during the third wave in January are getting affected or not again," he told PTI. For other metro cities - Mumbai, Chennai and Kolkata, Jha said the number of cases are too low to ascertain a trend.

Delhi is witnessing an uptick in the number of COVID-19 cases. The city logged 1,042 fresh Covid cases with a positivity rate of 4.64 per cent on Friday.

The Omicron sub-lineage BA.2.12 has been detected in a majority of the samples sequenced from Delhi in the first fortnight of April and it could be behind the recent surge in COVID-19 cases in the city, sources said on Thursday.

However, an Indian SARS-CoV-2 Genomics Consortium source has claimed that Omicron variant derivative BA.2.12.1 has also been found in a few samples in Delhi which is said to be contributing to the recent rise in cases in the US. But officials have not confirmed that it indeed was found in some samples in Delhi.

An official source said, "New sub-variants BA.2.12 (52 per cent samples) and BA.2.10 (11 per cent samples) are showing high transmission and have been found in over 60 per cent of the total samples from Delhi sequenced recently"

MAJOR SETBACK

Rs 24,713-cr deal with Future is over: Reliance

New Delhi, Apr 23 (PTI):

Almost 21 months after signing an agreement for a Rs 24,713-crore deal with Kishore Biyani-led Future Group to acquire its retail, wholesale, logistics and warehousing assets, Reliance Industries Ltd on Saturday said the transaction cannot go ahead as secured creditors of the latter have voted against it.

In a regulatory filing, Reliance said Future Group companies comprising Future Retail Limited (FRL) and other listed companies involved in the scheme have intimated the results of the voting on the scheme of arrangement by their shareholders and creditors at their respective meetings.

"...The secured creditors of FRL have voted against

the scheme. In view thereof, the subject scheme of arrangement cannot be implemented," said RIL, while updating on the scheme of arrangement for the transfer of retail and wholesale business and the logistics and warehousing business of Future Group to its subsidiary Reliance Retail Ventures Ltd (RRVL) and Reliance Retail and Fashion Lifestyle Ltd (RRFL).

The Future Group companies had called meetings of their shareholders, secured and unsecured creditors this week to get the approval of the scheme of amalgamation and sale of assets as per the deal announced with Reliance Retail.

However, secured creditors, which mainly include banks and financial insti-

tutions, of listed entities - Future Retail, Future Enterprises, Future Lifestyle Fashion Ltd, Future Market Networks and Future Consumer -- could not get the mandatory 75 per cent approval.

Though, the shareholders of the listed entities had supported the deal with Reliance.

The meetings were opposed by e-commerce giant Amazon, which in 2019, had picked up a 49 per cent stake in Future Coupons Pvt Ltd (FCPL), a promoter firm of FRL.

In August 2020, Future Group announced the Rs 24,713-crore deal to sell 19 companies operating in retail, wholesale, logistics and warehousing segments to Reliance Retail Ventures Ltd (RRVL). RRVL is the holding

company of all the retail companies under the RIL Group.

The deal was vehemently opposed by global e-commerce major Amazon, on grounds that the deal violated its 2019 agreement through which it acquired a 49 per cent stake in FCPL, the promoter entity of FRL, for about Rs 1,500 crore.

There were no immediate comments, over the development, from Future Group, Reliance Retail and e-commerce major Amazon, which is opposing the deal.

In February, Reliance Retail had taken over the operations of at least 350 stores of FRL and offered jobs to its employees after the Kishore Biyani-led group failed to make lease payments to landlords.

MP, MLA arrested over 'Hanuman Chalisa' face-off with Uddhav

Mumbai, Apr 23 (PTI):

Mumbai Police on Saturday evening arrested MLA Ravi Rana and his wife, MP Navneet Rana for allegedly "creating enmity between different groups" after escorting them out of their house in suburban Khar here amid high drama.

The development came hours after the couple cancelled their plan to recite the Hanuman Chalisa outside Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray's private residence 'Matoshree' here.

The Ranas were booked under IPC section 153 (A) (Promoting enmity be-



tween different groups on grounds of religion, race, place of birth, residence, language, etc., and doing acts prejudicial to maintenance of harmony), and section 135 of the Mumbai Police Act (violation of prohibitory orders of police), said an official of the Khar police station in western Mumbai. BJP leader Devendra Fadnis, speak-

ing in Nagpur, said the Shiv Sena-led Maharashtra government's way of handling the entire episode was "very childish". The state government tries to hide its failures by terming the situations it can't handle as BJP-sponsored, the former chief minister said.

"If allowed, the Rana couple would have gone there (Matoshree), recited Hanuman Chalisa and returned without creating any news. I don't understand why so many people had gathered at several places as if they (Rana couple) were planning some attack. What kind of politics is this?" the BJP leader said.

'Don't blindly follow rules, conflicts have human face'

Chennai, Apr 23 (PTI):

Judges cannot blindly apply rules as conflicts have a human face and before rendering any decision, they have to weigh socio-economic factors and the impact of their decision on the society, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, Justice N V Ramana said here on Saturday. In this era of 'instant noodles', people expect instant justice. But they do not realise that real justice will be a casualty if we strive for instant justice, he said addressing an event at the Madras High Court. People looked up to the judiciary in times of distress. And they firmly believe that their rights would be protected by the



courts. "It is necessary to contemplate how to improve the functioning of the judiciary, how to reach out to the people and fulfil their justice needs." On the language used in courts, Justice Ramana said a common citizen cannot relate to the practices, procedures and language of courts. Hence, efforts should be on making the general population an active part of the justice delivery process.