

### BRIEF



LGBTQ community members during the annual 'Pride March 2023', in Nagpur, Saturday.

### Rly litigations

**New Delhi:** Union Law Minister Kiren Rijiju and his junior minister S P Singh Baghel have reviewed the performance of matters related to railway litigations. The Ministry of Railways is considered the biggest litigant among government departments. It is a party to over 66,000 cases pending in courts across the country, according to a June, 2017 document of the ministry. The meeting with officials of the Department of Legal Affairs took place on Friday, officials said.

### Bribery case

**New Delhi:** The CBI has arrested an Income Tax officer and a chartered accountant in Chennai for their alleged involvement in a Rs 2.25 lakh bribery case, officials said Saturday. The bureau's action came after an FIR was registered against CPWD's superintendent engineer Sanjay Chinchghare, assistant valuation officer D.Manjunathan and chartered accountant Satgurudas and Suresh, the assessee and property owner, they said. A case was registered by the CBI against the accused on allegations that Suresh had declared a high-value property transaction in his Income Tax return which was referred to the Income Tax Valuation Cell by National Faceless Assessment Centre, New Delhi, the officials said.

### Tourists killed

**Siliguri (WB):** Two persons were killed and five others critically injured after their car rammmed into a truck parked on the roadside in northern West Bengal's Siliguri on Saturday morning, police said. Seven tourists from Nadia district were on the way to Darjeeling when the accident happened near Saidabad tea garden in Phansidewa block in Siliguri subdivision, they said. It is suspected that dense fog in the area led to the accident, they added.

### Life term

**Kota:** A court here on Saturday convicted a 75-year-old man and his son in a four-year-old murder case and awarded them life sentence. Additional Sessions and District Court Judge (V) in Kota city also slapped a penalty of Rs 25,000 each on Jagannath Bairwa and his son Heeralal, residents of Malmoja Karadia, for the murder of Satyanarayan Bairwa (30) in September, 2018 over a land dispute, Public Prosecutor Akhtar Khan Akela said. The two convicts, along with four women of the family, attacked Satyanarayan Bairwa with sticks and sharp weapons, the public prosecutor said, adding the injured was rushed to a hospital where doctors declared him brought dead.

**Weather**  
High 24 Low 12

## 'Govt aiming to make country free of Naxalism before 2024 elections'

**Korba (C'garh), Jan 07 (PTD):**

Naxalite violence has declined over the last decade and efforts are on to rid the country of the Naxal menace before the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, Union Home Minister Amit Shah said on Saturday.

Shah was speaking at a rally at Indira Stadium in Korba city of Chhattisgarh, a state affected by Maoist violence.

Sounding the poll bugle, the BJP leader also urged people to vote out the Bhupesh Baghel-led Congress government in the state in the Assembly elections this year.

People should vote for the Bharatiya Janata Party if



they wanted to see Narendra Modi as Prime Minister once again in 2024, he said, while blaming the Baghel government for a 'rise' in crime and corruption.

"Naxalite incidents declined to 509 in 2021, from 2,258 in 2009 when the Congress was in power at

the Centre," Shah said.

The Narendra Modi government not only ensured that the youth (in Naxalite-affected areas) who used to pick up weapons got access to education and employment, but also worked to eliminate those who wielded weapons, he said.

"Our government's effort is to make the country free of Naxalism before the 2024 parliamentary polls," he added.

Taking a swipe at the Congress government, he said, "I want to ask Bhupesh Baghel what he will tell people if they ask him what he has done in his five years' rule. not that he has done nothing. He has worked to increase corrup-

tion, incidents of rape and crimes, and the cutting of forests of tribals."

Shah also alleged corruption in the management of the District Mineral Foundation (DMF) funds under the Baghel government.

"The Modi government started DMF for the development and welfare of people (in mineral-rich areas) Chhattisgarh received Rs 9,243 crore by way of DMF, but what has this government done with that money? I can tell you where it has gone. See the houses of Congressmen in your area. Those who used to move around on scooter now have an Audi car. Their houses have turned into

three-storey buildings ...Congress committed corruption in DMF funds," the union minister alleged.

Shah urged people to teach a lesson to the Congress by voting it out of power and said a BJP government will seek account of every single rupee from Bhupesh Baghel.

"If you want to add momentum to the vehicle of development then you have to put a double engine in it. There is already one engine (referring to the Modi government) and you need to put another by electing the BJP in this year's Assembly elections. Whatever that has not been done, will be completed in five years," he said.

### CADET PERFORMS



An NCC cadet performs during Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar's visit to the NCC Republic Day 2023 camp at Delhi Cantt., in New Delhi, Saturday.

## RSS does not seek to create pressure group through its volunteers: Bhagwat

**Panaji, Jan 07 (PTD):**

Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh chief Mohan Bhagwat on Saturday said his organization produces volunteers who can contribute to the country in many fields but does not seek to create any "pressure group" through them. He was speaking at a public meeting organised by the RSS here. RSS Swayamsevaks (volunteers) are involved in various social causes at their individual level but that does not mean that the Sangh is a "service organization," he said. "Whatever Swayamsevaks do, it is in their individual capacity. The Sangh

has given them the thought, due to which they work wherever work is needed. They have mastered the art of taking along everyone, that is why they lead society," Bhagwat said.

"This is how volunteers are moulded, they are not moulded to create any influential pressure group in the country. The RSS chief also said that it is in the world's interest that India becomes a strong country. There were various (political and social) experiments in the last 2,000 years but now the world wants India to show the way, he said.



### Kanjhawala accident case

## Court grants bail to man accused of shielding accused

**New Delhi, Dec 07 (PTD):**

A court here on Saturday granted bail to Ankush Khanna who allegedly shielded the accused involved in the Kanjhawala accident case.

Metropolitan Magistrate Sanya Dalal granted the relief to Khanna, who had surrendered on Friday, after observing that the charges against him were bailable.

The judge noted that according to the Investigating Officer (IO), Khanna had in his statement to the police said that accused Deepak was driving the vehicle. However, according to the investigation conducted so far, it has been found that ac-

cused Amit was driving.

The court also noted the investigation officer's submission that Ankush Khanna along with another accused Ashutosh had assisted the co-accused in hiding them at Deepak's residence. "...Offences alleged are bailable in nature. Hence accused is granted bail on furnishing personal bond of Rs 20,000 along with one surety of like amount," the judge said.

The court asked the accused to join the investigation as and when required by the IO, attend the trial and not tamper with evidence. During the proceedings, the prosecution sought 14 days of judicial custody of the accused.

## Peeing episode: Accused arrested

**Air India CEO apologises for incident; crew, pilot de-rostered**

**Bengaluru, Jan 07 (PTD):**

The man who allegedly urinated on a woman co-passenger on an Air India flight was arrested Saturday while the carrier's CEO issued an apology over handling of the incident and said four cabin crew and a pilot have been de-rostered and the policy of serving alcohol on flights is being reviewed.

Delhi Police arrested Shankar Mishra, 34, from Bengaluru after he was traced to that city through technical surveillance, officials said.

A Delhi court later sent Mishra to judicial remand for 14 days while rejecting



Delhi police takes away accused Shankar Mishra after producing him before the Patiala House Court in an Air India flight urinating case, in New Delhi, Saturday.

a plea by police for his custody.

Police had sought his three-day remand, saying he was required to be identified by three cabin crew members and two captains and other co-passengers were also to be examined.

Passing the order, Metropolitan Magistrate Anamika Mag that Mishra's custody was not required by police for recording statements of other witnesses, including cabin crew and co-passengers.

"Just because there's public pressure, don't do this. Go by the law," the judge said.

Delhi Police had registered an FIR against him on January 4 on a complaint given by the woman to Air India.

Mishra, who was working with US multinational firm Wells Fargo in India, was sacked on Friday. He allegedly urinated on the woman, a senior citizen, in an inebriated condition in the business class of the Air India flight from New York to Delhi on November 26 last year.

## Mumbai logs two new COVID-19 cases

**Mumbai, Jan 07 (PTD):**

Mumbai on Saturday recorded two new cases of coronavirus that took the tally of infections to 11,55,153, an official from the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) said. The toll remained unchanged at 19,746 and the count of recoveries stood at 11,35,378, an official said. Mumbai had on Friday logged nine new cases. As per a bulletin issued by the civic body, the city is left with 29 active COVID-19 cases. The average doubling rate of cases is at 2,27,441 days, while the recovery rate is 98.3 per cent, it said. As many as 2,289 swab samples were tested in the last 24 hours, taking the total number of tests conducted in the city to 1,86,51,367.

## Three held for chasing, harassing lions in Gir Wildlife Sanctuary

**Junagadh, Jan 07 (PTD):**

Three persons have been arrested for allegedly harassing lions by chasing them on their vehicles and shooting videos using mobile phones in Gir Wildlife Sanctuary in Junagadh district of Gujarat, a forest official said on Saturday.

Out of six persons involved in the incident, the authorities on Friday arrested three accused, who hail from Rajasthan, after videos of the chase surfaced on social media, an official said.

According to forest officials, the videos were most likely recorded two weeks ago in Gir Wildlife

Sanctuary near Sasan Gir in Junagadh district.

In a video, some persons can be seen following a pride of lions on two vehicles, with one of them sitting on the bonnet of a four-wheeler. Some of the accused shot videos on their mobile phones while driving dangerously close to the lions on what appeared to be a village road.

Offences under relevant provisions of the Wildlife Protection Act have been registered against six persons for trespassing and chasing lions, said Aradhana Sahu, the chief conservator of forests of Junagadh wildlife circle.

"Three of the accused

were arrested and produced in court, as harassing lions is a non-bailable offence. The arrested accused have been sent to judicial custody," the official said. The arrests were made based on videos that went viral and came to the notice of the forest department, she said.

"We had called three of them for inquiry and detained them. They were booked under two offences, one for trespassing and another for chasing lions," Sahu said. Chasing or participating in illegal lion shows invites action under the Wildlife Protection Act and the offence is non-bailable, she said.

### LOHRI FESTIVAL



A worker prepares 'dor' or 'manjha', a kite-flying string, ahead of Lohri festival, in Amritsar, Saturday.

## Six more held for church vandalism, attack on cops

**Narayanpur, Jan 7 (PTD)**

Six more persons have been arrested in connection with the alleged vandalism at a church and attack on policemen in Chhattisgarh's Narayanpur district early this week, taking the number of those taken into custody to 11, police said on Saturday.

The church, located on the premises of a private school, in Narayanpur city was targeted on Monday during a protest against alleged religious conversion in the tribal-dominated area.

The protesters also attacked Narayanpur Superintendent of Police Sadanand Kumar and five police personnel when they were trying to disperse the crowd. "Six more persons



Catholic and non-Catholic Churches members holding placards participate in a protest against the alleged vandalisation of Baster Church, near Tipu Sultan mosque, in Kolkata, Saturday.

were arrested on Friday in connection with the incident of riots in Narayanpur during a protest by people of a community," said Kumar, who sustained head injuries in

the attack. The person who attacked the IPS officer is among the six held, said officials. Earlier, the president of the Bharatiya Janata Party's Narayanpur district unit and four oth-

ers were arrested for their alleged role in the violence, the SP said. The police have registered four FIRs under Indian Penal Code sections pertaining to rioting, promoting enmity between different groups on the grounds of religion and race, criminal conspiracy and defiling places of worship.

Adequate security personnel have been deployed to maintain law and order in the Narayanpur district, the police officer said, adding the situation was peaceful and normal.

On Monday, tribals gathered in Narayanpur; nearly 240 km from the state capital Raipur, to protest against a clash between two communities on Sunday over alleged religious conversion in Edka village in the district.

After the meeting, the crowd barged into a church and vandalised it, officials had said. The rioters also attacked a police team led by SP Kumar that arrived to control the situation.

The discord between the Christian and non-Christian communities in the district had been brewing for some time.

Last month, a large number of people belonging to the Christian community staged a protest in front of the Collector's office in Narayanpur alleging "atrocities" against them.

Protesters from at least 14 villages of the tribal-dominated district had claimed they were allegedly assaulted and evicted from their homes for following the Christian faith and sought action by the administration.

## Four PFI members chargesheeted by NIA

**Patna, Jan 07 (PTD):**

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Saturday filed a chargesheet against four members of the Popular Front of India (PFI) in a case related to "unlawful and anti-national" activities by the banned group in Bihar, an official said.

The charge sheet was filed in a special NIA court here against arrested accused - Athar Parvej, Mohd Jalaluddin Khan, Nooruddin Zangi alias "Advocate Nooruddin" and Arman Malik alias "Imteyaz Anwer", a spokesperson of the federal anti-terror agency said.

They were charged under various sections of the Indian Penal Code and the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act. The

spokesperson said the case was initially registered on July 12 last year at the Phulwarisharif police station and re-registered by the NIA 10 days later.

"The case pertains to the involvement of accused/suspected persons, associated with the PFI, in unlawful and anti-national activities, who had assembled in Phulwarisharif area of Patna," the official said.

During investigations, the NIA said Parvej, Khan, Zangi and Malik were arrested for their involvement in the instant case.

"Investigations revealed that the criminal conspiracy was hatched with an intention to carry out acts of terror and violence, leading to an atmosphere of terror and endangering the unity and integrity of the nation," the spokesperson said.

# Absconding thief arrested; one still at large

# Police targets prime factors of road accidents

**Central Chronicle News**

**Bhilai, Jan 07:** With the arrest of three notorious thieves, police claimed to have solved 02 cases of thefts at locked houses in Supela and Smriti Nagar area. The thefts were committed by a gang of four thieves. Police identified the accused with the help of CCTV footage. The accused used to distribute the stolen gold and silver ornaments among themselves. Stolen booty worth Rs 08.75 lakh has been recovered. It was a joint action of Anti Crime and Cyber Unit and Chowki Smriti Nagar.

Under the directions of Superintendent of Police, Dr Abhishek Pallava and supervision of Additional Superintendent of Police (City) Sanjay Dhruv, City Superintendent of Police (Bhilai Nagar) Nikhil Rakhecha and Deputy Superintendent of Police (Crime) Nasar Siddiqui, a

joint team of ACCU, Supela Police Station and Smriti Nagar Chowki led by Inspector Santosh Mishra (I/c ACCU), Inspector Durgesh Sharma (SHO, Supela) and Sub-Inspector Pramod Srivastava (I/c, Smriti Nagar) was keeping an eye on the suspects.

The team interrogated the habitual criminals and criminals released from jail. The network of informers was activated to gather information about the people involved in thefts. After receiving complaints of thefts, the team examined the footage of CCTV cameras installed in the surrounding areas of the crime scene. Some suspects were seen in the footage after which their pics were shared on social media and finally police managed to identify the suspects.

The suspects were identified as Ajay Babu alias Bajji of Camp 01, Rajesh



Nani and Nausad alias Billu of Camp 01. Police arrested the suspect Ajay Babu alias Bajji from Chhawani. Initially he tried to mislead the cops but during sustained interrogation, he confessed to have committed thefts.

Ajay Babu disclosed that he committed theft at a locked house in Shanti Nagar in December. They had distributed the stolen booty among themselves and had kept some items with Vicky alias Sardar. The accused Rajesh alias

Nani and Nausad alias Billu had absconded but police managed to arrest Vicky Verma alias Sardar after which gold and silver coins were recovered from his possession. The two were sent to jail on judicial remand.

Since then, police was continuously tracing the absconding accused Rajesh alias Nani and Nausad alias Billu. Recently, police came to know that Rajesh alias Nani had fled to Bihar and was returning back to Bhilai by Danapur

Express. Police rounded up the accused Rajesh at Railway Station Power House.

During interrogation, he disclosed that apart from the theft of Shantinagar, they had committed a theft at Chandra Nagar Kohka in the month of October. Police recovered some gold and silver jewellery from his possession. He too has been sent to jail on judicial remand. Absconding accused Nausad alias Billu is being traced.

ASI Purna Bahadur, Chandrashekhar Soni, Head Constable Chandrashekhar Banjeer, Constable Santosh Gupta, Anup Sharma, Panne Lal, Jagnu Singh, Upendra Yadav, Vikrant Kumar from ACCU, Sub Inspector Likhani Verma from Chowki Smriti Nagar, ASI BL Sahu, Constable Ashish Prasad and Jaynarayan Yadav played a vital role in arresting the accused.



● **115 fined for over speeding, without helmet and two pillion riders**

**Central Chronicle News**

**Bhilai, Jan 07:** Traffic Police is continuously taking action against the traffic rules violators to make the roads safer for commuters. Now, the cops are focussing on the prime factors which cause road accidents. Under the direc-

tions of Dr Abhishek Pallava, Superintendent of Police, Durg and under the leadership of DSP Satish Thakur and DSP Sadanand Vindhayraj, a special campaign was conducted for traffic awareness. People were asked to follow the traffic rules. Action was taken against a total of 115 drivers who were found violating the traffic rules at the major traffic junctions of the city. People were fined for driving at high speed, driving with two pillion riders

and riding without helmets. Car drivers, who were found moving without seat belts, were also fined. The violators were explained about the significance of traffic rules and were asked to follow them strictly.

Traffic Police Durg has appealed to all the citizens to always follow the traffic rules while driving to stay safe and ensure safety of others on the road. By following the traffic rules, serious road accidents can be avoided.

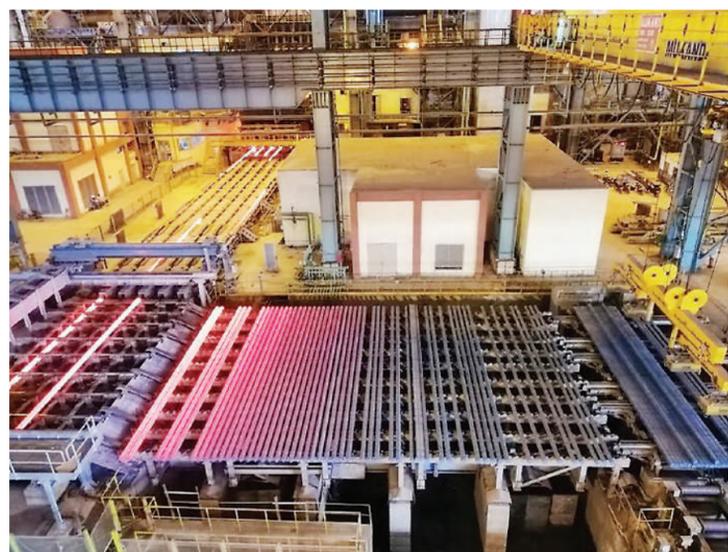
# BSP records all time high production of Finished Steel & Saleable Steel in 2022

**Central Chronicle News**

**Bhilai, Jan 07:** SAIL-Bhilai Steel Plant has recorded all time high production of finished steel and saleable steel in Calendar Year 2022. Modex units, Steel Melting Shop-3, Universal Rail Mill and Bar & Rod Mill too have recorded best ever calendar year performances in 2022.

In the area of sinter production, Sinter Plant-3 recorded production of 5,365,500 T in Year 2022, surpassing previous best of 5,192,267 T achieved in 2021. Total Sinter production at 8,001,700 T was also best ever for any calendar year, surpassing previous best of 7,848,545 T achieved in 2021.

Modex unit, Steel Melting Shop-3 that supplies cast blooms for production of rails and cast billets for production of TMT Bars etc recorded



best ever production of 2,927,600 T of cast steel in 2022, surpassing the previous best of 2,675,258 T achieved in the year 2021.

This included best ever production of Cast Bloom at 1,130,100 T, surpassing the previous best of 1,034,317 T achieved in the

year 2021 and best ever production of Cast Billets at 1,797,500 T, surpassing previous best of 1,640,941 T achieved in 2021.

Universal Rail Mill recorded highest ever Prime Rail production of 743,500 T in 2022, surpassing previous best of 628,922 T achieved in the year 2021. URM also recorded best ever Long Rail Production at 700,700 T, surpassing previous best of 691,986 T achieved in the year 2020.

Total long production from both URM and Rail & Structural Mill in 2022 was also best ever at 843,700 T, surpassing previous best of 691,986 T achieved in the year 2020. The Plant recorded highest ever loading of Long Rails at 866,500 T in 2022, surpassing previous best of 715,644 T achieved in the year 2020.

Modex unit, Bar & Rod Mill recorded best ever finished production at 814,300 T, surpassing previous best of 656,606 T achieved in the year 2021. RMP 3, another Modex unit

recorded highest ever total production of 469,600 T, surpassing previous best of 385,430 T achieved in the year 2021.

The Plant recorded highest ever total Finished Steel production at 4,277,100 T in 2022, surpassing previous best of 3,632,768 T achieved in the year 2021, and highest ever Saleable Steel production at 4,667,800 T, surpassing previous best of 4,660,348 T achieved in the year 2021. Highest ever Total Loading for Direct despatches of 2,676,200 T was recorded, surpassing the previous best of 2,474,061 T achieved in the year 2021.

In the area of techno-economics, highest ever CDI (coal dust injection) rate of 110 Kg per tonne of hot metal has been achieved in Blast Furnaces, surpassing previous best of 77.4 Kg/THM achieved in the year 2021.

# Tension prevails in Khursipar over alleged religious conversion event

**Central Chronicle News**

**Bhilai, Jan 07:** An alleged case of religion conversion has come into light from the New Khursipar area of Steel City. A Punjabi family, which converted recently, had organised a house warming function at their newly constructed house. During this function, a prayer meeting was also organised during which the invitees were allegedly lured for religious conversion.

Local Corporator Daya Singh came to know about the happening after which Bajrang Dal activists reached the spot and created a scene. Under their pressure, the programme was cancelled and the tents were removed.

Brawl like situation was created at the venue due to the verbal clash between the followers of two different religions. Both the groups raised slogans against each other. Locals alleged that the housewarming func-

tion was being deliberately converted into a prayer meeting. Angered locals made the organisers discontinue the event and remove the pandals.

On information, ASP Sanjay Dhruv reached the spot with the teams of three police stations. The cops managed to diffuse the tension and have recorded the statements of both the parties. Police team has been deployed at the locality to avert any possible untoward incident.

Bajrang Dal leader Ravi Nigam stated that the person who was hosting the function was a poor truck driver. Few years back, he accepted another religion and within a few years he became rich. Bajrang Dal demanded an investigation into his sources of income. They further alleged that the converted person was pressuring other locals for religious conversion due to which the locals came forward in his protest.



# 2023 will be the golden year for MSMEs: KK Jha

**Central Chronicle News**

**Bhilai, Jan 07:** MSME District Industry Association Durg President KK Jha has said that the era of MSME industries has arrived. The New Year 2023 will be the golden year of revolution for the MSME industries. Hence this year must be celebrated as "MSME Kranti Udyog". At present, MSME industries have become the backbone of the country and the state as well. The markets across the country are open for MSME industries. Now there is a need to take advantage of the facilities and exemptions

given by the government for MSME industries. MSME industries no longer need to depend only on BSP as there is work for them in the entire country.

Jha further said that it is a big achievement for MSMEs to take advantage of the exemptions and facilities given by the government. For example, there is a technical center in Borai where young entrepreneurs can learn almost everything. Skill development committee in the district provides a lot of guidance. Today, there is scope for MSMEs in many sectors and hence there is no need to depend on BSP.



Today the whole country is open for MSME industries. For which "GEM" (Government E Marketing) has been created. Through "GEM", the MSMEs can work all over the country without any

restriction. Jha added that MSMEs have an open market today. Special facility has been given by the government in Chhattisgarh. If industries are facing any problem, the state's sensi-

and take facilities from them. At present, many facilities are being provided to the MSME industries by the government, such as loans without guarantee, special package of loans for women, 30 to 40% subsidy to newly installed units, subsidy on electricity bills and bank loans and other facilities are being provided.

Jha said that the era of MSME industries has come. Its glimpse was visible in 2022 itself. Just like the Green Revolution, the MSME revolution is going to happen. The year 2023 will be the golden year for MSME industries.

Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel is taking it very seriously. He personally attended the meeting of Chambers / Industries and discusses the issues with everyone. Not only this, whatever matter reaches to him through letters and media, he takes them seriously and tries to solve the problems.

KK Jha said that at present the Prime Minister, Chief Minister, public representatives and bureaucrats all understand the importance of MSMEs. Today MSME has become the backbone of the country and the state. There is a need to provide facilities to them

# Sub Junior boys & girls team to participate in National Fencing Championship

**Central Chronicle News**

**Bhilai, Jan 07:** Chhattisgarh State Sub-Junior Boys and Girls Fencing Teams left for Cochin, Kerala to participate in the 24th Sub-Junior National Fencing Championship. The 24th Sub-Junior Boys and Girls National Fencing Championship is being organized by the Kerala Fencing Association under the aegis of Fencing Federation of India from January 10 to 13, 2023 at Rajiv Gandhi Indoor Stadium, Cochin, Ernakulam, Kerala.

A 28-member team of sub-junior boys and girls from the state of Chhattisgarh is participat-

ing in the said National Championship.

Special training camp for sub-junior boys and girls fencing team of Chhattisgarh state was organised at Multipurpose Hall, Ispat Club, Sector-1, from December 18, 2022 to January 07, 2023 for best performance of the players before participating in the above championship.

The names of the players and officials participating in the above competition are as follows: boys- Yuvraj Sahu, Chandra Sai Tekram, AnshSahu, Shorya Sharaf, Prince Raj, Advaya Nair, Atharva Pratap Singh, Chaitanya Sharma, Melvin John, Naveen Sahu, Manav Mehta, Ashmit Singh,



Coach Mohnish Verma, Manager Ram Pratap Singh; girls- Sneha Yadav,

Navya Verma, Avni Chudasma, Garima Baghel, Anshika Yadav,

Shreya Tiwari, Chaya Yadav, Reeba Beni, Kulraj Kaur, DivyankaSahu,

Vanshika Thakur, Inayat Kaur, Coach Bhupendra Rajput, Manager Anamika

Armo.

The closing ceremony of the above training camp was done today. January 07, 2023, at 01:00 pm in Multipurpose Hall, Ispat Club, Sector-1, Bhilai (Chhattisgarh) by General Secretary of Chhattisgarh Pradesh Fencing Association Mr. Bashir Ahmed Khan.

On this occasion, Shri Ram Pratap Gupta, Treasurer of Chhattisgarh Pradesh Fencing Association, NIS of Chhattisgarh. Instructor Shri V. Johnson Solomon and N.I.S. Instructor Mr. Praveen Kumar Gaonre was present.

Chhattisgarh State Fencing Association's President DrS Bharti

Dasan, IAS, Working President Sunil Kumar Agarwal, Senior Vice President Ajit Singh Patel, Vice President Prince Bhatia, Vice President Kamal Chauhan, Vice President D Kondayya, Joint Secretary Nikhil Kumar Jambhulkar, Joint Secretary Akhilesh Dubey, Joint Secretary Varun Pandey, Joint Secretary Santosh Kumar Sahu, along with office bearers of Chhattisgarh Pradesh Fencing Association and office bearers of various sports associations extended their warm wishes while giving blessings to the sub-junior boys and girls fencing players and coaches of Chhattisgarh state.

## Ch'garh's Bilaspur District Administration website gets National Award

**Bilaspur collector receives National Platinum Award at the hands of the President**



**Raipur, Jan 07:** The website of Bilaspur District Administration of Chhattisgarh has been honored today with the National Platinum Award by President Draupadi Murmu for innovation here. The award was received by District Collector of Bilaspur Saurabh Kumar in a program organized at Vigyan Bhawan in New Delhi on Saturday.

The innovation done by Bilaspur district administration has been appreciated at the national level. The website of the district administration has been awarded the National Platinum Award by the Department of Electronics and Information Technology, Government of India. The website of Bilaspur District Administration

has been given this award under the category of Best Web and Mobile Initiative Compliant with GIGW and accessibility Guidelines.

The website of Bilaspur district has made innovation in the implementation of Central Government's flagship scheme Digital India. In addition to uploading information about Central and State Government schemes in the website prepared by NIC (National

Informatics Center), special facilities have also been provided for the differently-abled. Visually impaired can also listen to the information given in this website through software.

Wherever the mouse cursor will go, the written information will be converted into voice. However, this facility is currently available in English only. In the coming days, this facility will

also be given in Hindi. For this the technical experts of NIC have started working. The special thing is that a special type of software has also been uploaded in the website for the visually impaired. It can be used for free. No extra amount will be charged for this.

NIC Bilaspur's DIO Arvind Yadav and Assistant DIO Manoj Kumar Singh were also present on this occasion.

## Protest against 'Youth Hub' an attempt to divert attention from Skywalk scam

**Raipur, Jan 07:** Describing ongoing protest of BJP and former Minister Rajesh Munat against development of 'Youth Hub' as sheer opportunism, Raipur Mayor Aijaz Dhebar, Municipal Corporation Speaker Pramod Dubey and Congress Communication Wing Head Anand Shukla said that Youth Hub Project was sanctioned in previous BJP rule when Rajesh Munat was Minister. Action plan for Youth Hub included development of bicycle track, vending zone and landscaping and work order for preparing estimate and drawing design for this was issued on June 4, 2018, they said at a press conference here today.

They said that the then Minister Munat himself had conducted site inspection along with the then Smart City Limited officers, Collector and SP. The Congress leaders said that the plan prepared during previous BJP regime was being



moved forward with development of Youth Hub.

Raipur Municipal Corporation's Mayor Dhebar and Speaker Pramod Dubey released the document saying, Rajesh Munat was doing political stunt through this to save his ticket from Raipur West assembly constituency.

In the project of 80 thousand square feet, 74 thousand feet has been left for landscaping, parking etc. There is no ongoing permanent construction at the site and no obstruction is being created in the road width, they said.

Shukla said that Youth

Hub was being developed for the last four months. He asked why there is so much of protest when more than 90 per cent of work has been completed. In fact Rajesh Munat started playing drama by sitting on dharna over Youth Hub especially to divert attention of public from Skywalk scam which is being investigated by EOW, Shukla alleged.

### Anti-Choupati posters, banners seized

As the protest against development of 'Choupati' in Education has intensified, Municipal Corporation removed BJP's posters and banners against 'Choupati' under property defacement act. Reacting to Municipal Corporation's action Munat said that attempt was being made to muzzle voice being raised peacefully through dharna. He said that Congress should not vi-

olate democratic rights.

Meanwhile indefinite dharna of BJP under the leadership of former Minister Rajesh Munat in protest against 'Choupati' in Education Hub continued for 4th day on Saturday. BJP leaders and workers also performed 'Sadbuddhi Yagya' in evening with participation of students and youth to pray for wisdom to Congress government in the state.

## Second day of Income Tax raid, action continues on builders-financers-transporters

**Income Tax Raid in Chhattisgarh**



**Raipur, Jan 23:** The Income Tax Department raided 21 locations of builders-transporters-financers of Raipur, Durg, Bhilai on Friday. On the second on Saturday the search and raid action by the Income Tax Department continued. Income tax sources said that there is a possibility of large amount of tax evasion from these businessmen. Necessary documents have also been seized during the investigation at their locations. The action is likely to be completed in the coming one to two days. It is being told that the builders were being monitored by the Income Tax Department for a long time. Significantly, the Income Tax Department has received three crore cash as well as a huge amount of jewelry from these business groups. Inquiries are being made in this regard by the Income Tax officials. According to the in-

formation, this search is likely to be completed by Sunday. Income Tax Department officials raided the premises of Subodh Singhania, director of Singhania Buildcon, Narendra Agarwal, director of Swastik Group, Sunil Sahu, director of Shree Swastik Group, Mahavir Agarwal, director of Rosby Resort, financier and land trader Kamlesh Baid and are checking documents at their homes and office locations.

A group of officers has also reached Hotel Landmark for investigation. The Income Tax Department team has seized documents related to business as well as several documents of proper-

ty purchased in the name of family members. A team of about 150 Income Tax officers from Indore-Bhopal and Raipur are involved in this action. 100 CRPF personnel are deployed in their security. Different teams of the Income Tax Department started action on several locations simultaneously on Friday morning. The acquaintances and business partners of the business groups are also being questioned.

The raid of Income Tax Department is likely to be completed by late Saturday night or Sunday afternoon. Sources are telling that a large amount of tax evasion is likely to be unearthed in this action.

## CM meets Union Home Minister



**Raipur, Jan 07:** Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel paid a courtesy call on the Union Home Minister Amit Shah at Swami Vivekananda Airport in the capital Raipur today. The Union Home Minister Shah had returned to Raipur from Korba during his stay in Chhattisgarh. Chief Minister Baghel met him directly at the airport after returning from his stay in

Gariaband. Baghel discussed various developmental works that have been done in Chhattisgarh with Union Home Minister Shah. Baghel presented millet-based products manufactured by the self-help groups of Chhattisgarh to the Union Home Minister. He also presented Shah with a memento based on the cultural artwork of Chhattisgarh.

## Sindhi Council makes Website for students to give guidance

**Students of class 10th-12th to get information about courses and admission in better institutions**



**Raipur, Jan 23:** Students of the state will now get necessary information related to education sitting at home. For this, the Chhattisgarh unit of the Sindhi Council of India has prepared a website. It contains information about the social activities of the Sindhi community of the state. More than 100 courses for the students, all the information related to admission has been given. The head of the institution, Lalit Jaisingh said that website contains information about which course to take after 10th. There is always full of confusion for the students on this issues. Sometimes even parents cannot decide what to do, he said. In such a situation, it is not possible for everyone to

get information from a counselor by paying expensive fees. Therefore, this information has been made available free of cost on the website of Sindhi Council of India. Council's Youth Wing President Ravi Gwalani, General Secretary Sunil Wadhwa, Gautam Railwani said that there are many types of entrance exams after 12th. Many students are not aware about the right institutions. We have given information about the best institutes in different courses on the website, it has also been informed how admission can be taken there by giving

exam. Major institutions of India have been included in this. In addition to this information related to Tourism, Physical Study, Library Science, Food Science, Foreign Language, Information Communication and Entertainment, Liberal Studies, Logistics and Supply Chain Management, Event Management, Hospital Management, Hotel Management, Photography, Graphics Designing, Cinematography, Animation, Film Production. Dozens of courses are also available on the website.

## Tickets to be available online from 12th for 1st international cricket match in Raipur



**CCA representatives and Collector-SSP meeting**

**Arrangements for parking, medical and fire brigade discussed**

**Raipur, Jan 07:** The sale of tickets for the first international cricket match to be held at the Shaheed Veer Narayan Singh Stadium in Nava Raipur will start online from January 12. Preparations are in full swing for this cricket match to be held between India and New Zealand. Office bearers of Chhattisgarh Cricket Association (CCA) held a meeting with Collector Dr Sarveshwar Bhure and SSP Prashant Agrawal at the stadium.

Special emphasis was laid by the officers on completing all the preparations on time, taking special care of the facilities of the visitors along with the security. The Collector suggested the representatives of the Cricket Association to make adequate number of ticket counters in the city for the matches. Chhattisgarh Cricket Association President Baldev Singh Bhatia, District Panchayat CEO Akash Chikara and many officials were also present in the meeting.

All necessary arrangements for the first international cricket match were discussed in the meeting. The officials of the Cricket Association spoke on the resources available at the stadium and the cooperation expected from the district administration. From clean-

liness of the stadium, repair of chairs to volunteers and security etc. were discussed. During the match, there will be an ambulance with fire fighting and medical staff at all the entry gates.

Halogen bulbs in stadium's floodlights have also been replaced with LEDs. Necessary preparations for parking arrangements around the stadium premises during the match were also discussed in the meeting. Security arrangements with adequate lights etc. at the parking lots, arrangement of adequate number of sanitation workers and other necessary machines and equipment for cleaning in the stadium premises, leveling of parking lots were discussed. Installation of clear signage was also discussed.

## Practical examinations of CBSE continue

**Practical exams of Chhattisgarh Board to start from January 10**



**Raipur, Jan 07:** The practical examinations of the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) have started from January 2. Instructions have been given by the Chhattisgarh Board of Secondary Education to start practical examinations from January 10. According to the schedule issued by CBSE, it has been asked to complete the practical examinations of class 10th and 12th. There will be project work and internal assessment of the students in practical examination. Instruction has been issued to follow the rules regarding the examinations. Under this, the rules related to corona virus will have to be followed inside the school premises. Practical examination will be conducted by the schools in batches of 15 students each. Practical examinations should be conducted in different batches in several sessions. Only a maxi-

mum of three batches of examinations can be taken in a day. Students have been asked to upload their grades and marks before February 14. CBSE has sent the list of externals to the schools for the examination. School managements are setting their dates by talking to externals as per their convenience. According to the instructions issued by the Board of Secondary Education, the practical examinations of the students of the board are starting from January 10, which have been instructed to be completed by January 30. Invigilators are appointed by the board for practical examinations, under whose supervision students give practical examinations. The school managements de-

cide the date of the subject by talking to their invigilator. If there are marks of practical examination, then it is necessary to upload them on the same day or by the next day. Pre-board exams are conducted by schools as per their convenience. Instructions have been issued by the board that pre-board examinations have to be completed in February. Schools declare the date for pre-board as per their convenience. The school management sets the question paper for Pre-Board. The final examinations for CBSE board are starting from February 15, which will continue till April 5. On the other hand, the CG Board examinations are starting from March 1, which will continue till March 31.

## IIA national convention concludes



**Raipur, Jan 07:** The national convention of architects, organised by the Chhattisgarh Chapter of Indian Institute of Architects (IIA) concluded at Chhattisgarh Chapter at Pt Deendayal Upadhyaya Auditorium here on Saturday. As many as 1100 people from all over the state participated in the technical session held on the concluding day. IIA National President CR Raju and National members of IIA launched Professor Jeet Kumar Gupta's book Decoding

Affordable Housing. Best Chapter Award for the year 2022 was given to IIA Calicut. As many as 220 awards in various categories were received by various IIA Centers and Chapters across the country. IIA Chhattisgarh Chapter President Architect Raj Kumar Prajapati ji honored all the committee members who played an important role in this program and all the architects who came for the technical session were honored with memento.

## Baghel unveils grand idol of lord Shri Ram in Rajim



**Raipur, Jan 07:** Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel today unveiled a 25 feet tall grand statue of Lord Shri Ram at the Rajim Mahotsav site today. It is noteworthy that this idol has been prepared by 20 craftsmen from Odisha in

a short span of 5 months and the idol has been hand carved from the Bilha stone of Chhattisgarh. This magnificent idol has been enshrined in a newly constructed platform of 8 feet height. Chief Minister

Mr. Bhupesh Baghel reached the Shri Rajiv Lochan Temple today and offered prayers and wished for the prosperity and happiness of the people of the state.

On this occasion, Chief Minister Mr. Baghel also

performed Bhumi Pujan for the developmental works of widening and strengthening of Rajim-Chaubandha-Navaagam road and the 3.7 kilometer long Laxman Jhula access road. It is notable that Triveni Sangam Rajim is also included under the Ram Vanagaman tourism circuit and the state government has given approval of Rs 13 crore 12 lakh for the development of Ram Vanagaman tourism circuit in Rajim. On this occasion, Home Minister Mr. Tamradhwaj Sahu, Chairman of Chhattisgarh Tourism Board Mr. Atal Srivastava, Vice President Mrs. Chitrarekha Sahu, and Chairman of Gau Seva Aayog Mahant Ram Sunder Das were present.

## Effort to save young generation from tobacco addiction discussed

**NHM Director calls for cooperation of all departments, NGOs and civil societies necessary to control tobacco**

**Raipur, Jan 07:** In order to take effective steps towards tobacco control and save the new generation from its harmful effects, the director of the National Health Mission, Bhoskar Vilas Sandipan held a meeting of the officials of the Health and Family Welfare Department, NGO representatives and members of an organization 'The Union' at Indravati Bhawan. He instructed to make efforts at the social level to save the young generation from tobacco addiction and to work prominently to change the behavior of the people in this regard. All NGOs at the state



level were brought together on a single platform to discuss the seriousness of the ill-effects of tobacco and measures to stop its use. A suggestion was also made in the meeting to prepare a comprehensive action plan to stop the use of tobacco and its products in the state. State Nodal Officer of Tobacco Control Program Dr Kamlesh Jain informed about the works being done under Tobacco Control Program in the state. He said that according to the Global Adult Survey, 39.1 percent of the total population of the state use tobacco products in some form or the other and 21.9 percent of the

population uses tobacco at work place, which is a matter of serious concern. Manufacturers of tobacco products are not fully complying with the provisions of the COTPA Act, 2003. There are many tobacco products in the state which do not comply with section 7 of the COTPA Act, 2003. Section 5 of the COTPA Act is also being violated by direct and indirect advertisement of tobacco and tobacco products through various mediums. Everyone needs to take proper action on this.

Ashish Pandey, Deputy Regional Director of 'The Union' informed about the effective laws and policies

in the country and informed about the instructions received by the Health and Family Welfare Department of the Government of India for tobacco control. Dr Amit Yadav, Senior Technical Advisor, 'The Union' gave information about various provisions of COTPA Act, 2003 and online MIS. He told about the role of all departments for tobacco control, vendor licensing for proper monitoring and control. Dr Yadav also explained how the provisions of Section 5 and 7 of the COTPA Act, 2003 are being violated by the manufacturers of tobacco products.

## LHB coaches to offer more berths to railway passengers



**16 trains in SECR with these coaches**

**Bilaspur, Jan 07:** The convenience, safety and safe rail operation of railway passengers is the top most priority of South East Central Railway. In order to provide better travel experience to rail passengers, convenient, comfortable and safe, all trains running on South East Central Railway will be gradually replaced with

new technology LHB (Linke Hofmann Busch) coaches by replacing old ICF (Integral Coach Factory) coaches. South East Central Railways presently running 16 trains with new technology LHB coaches.

The LHB coach is named after the German company Linke Hoffman Busch that first manufactured it. LHB coaches were first introduced in the Indian Railways in the year 1999. Presently it is

being manufactured at Kapurthala Railway Coach Factory. LHB coach is very comfortable for the passengers. LHB coaches are very safe from the point of view of rail operations. If we talk about the speed on the demand of today's time, then the maximum speed of these coaches is 110-130 kmph of normal coaches. It is designed for speeds in excess of 160, and above the maximum speed.

These coaches have more space as compared to normal coaches due to which providing more berths in sleeper and AC coaches also helps in providing maximum number of confirmed berths to railway passengers. Hydraulic suspension is used in LHB coaches. Suspension has also been used for the same right-left movement, which makes the journey comfortable.

## Two accused arrested with 2200 no's illegal drugs



**Jagdalpur, Jan 07:** Under Kotwali police station area of the district, 2 accused were caught on Friday with 2200 pieces of illegal banned psychotropic drugs and tablets. Batu Chauhan and Nitesh alias Monu Wasnikar are residents of Jagdalpur among the arrested accused. The accused have been arrested by the police and sent on judicial remand after the proceedings. The estimated market value of the seized medicines has been estimated at Rs 5,217.

CSP Vikas Kumar said that the Kotwali police received information that two persons were looking

for a customer along with a bag near Kuharpara Madia Chowk to sell illegal drugs. On information, a team was sent to the incident under the leadership of police station inspector Eman Sahu. The team managed to nabbed Jagdalpur resident Batu Chauhan and Nitesh alias Monu Wasnikar by laying siege to the site. On search, illegal drug Alprazolam tablets were found in possession of the accused. Crime has been registered against the accused under Section 21 of NDPS Act and taken up for investigation.

## CAIT ask Vaishnav for a strong data protection bill

**Raipur, Jan 07:** CAIT National Senior Vice President Amar Parwani, chairman Mangal Maloo, Amar Gidwani, State President Jitendra Doshi, States Working President Vikram Singh Deo, Parmanand Jain, Vashu Makhija, State General Secretary, Suriender Singh, State Working General Secretary Bharat Jain, State Treasurer Ajay Agrawal and state media incharge Sanjay Choube informed that the Confederation of All India Traders (CAIT) in a communication sent to Union IT Minister Mr. Ashwini Vaishnav, while commenting upon Digital Data Protection Bill, 2022, has strongly advocated the need of Data protection rules to ensure that the retail and ecommerce sectors are not negatively impacted by the data collection and processing activities of big tech companies. The CAIT charged that these large companies misuse the personal data

of Indian consumers to gain a competitive edge over local traders and retailers and therefore protection of data is all the more necessary.

CAIT National Senior Vice President Mr. Amar Parwani & State President Mr. Jitendra Doshi said that restrictions are must on cross border data flow to ensure that user data is not misused, especially from the endless and unchecked processing of personal data by technology owners. The global tech giants collect and process global user data, and apply predatory algorithms to benefit their bottom line, at the expense of local sectors and economies. They also misuse personal data by targeting customers using a complex web of preferred sellers and service providers who benefit from preferential treatment such as low or no commission fees, as well as other benefits that give them an undue competitive edge over local entre-

preneurs. Mr. Parwani & Mr. Doshi said that the proposed legislation should also clarify that in the event of conflicts with sectoral rules & regulations, such as in the case of the RBI data localization mandate, the proposed personal data protection legislation is to be read in addition to the sectoral rules, and is not to be construed in derogation of existing rules and frameworks established by sectoral regulators.

The trade leaders further said that revised bill has also removed the previous classification of personal data into critical and sensitive personal data, in favor of an umbrella definition that covers all types of personal data. This change ignores the disproportionate potential of harm that accompanies misuse and breach of sensitive information. Sensitive user data should be provided additional safeguards to prevent misuse by data fiduciaries and processors.

## Health check-up camp organized for sanitation workers

**Jagdalpur, Jan 07:** Under the Municipal Corporation, a health check-up camp was organized for the sanitation workers of the Municipal Corporation at Shyama Prasad Mukherjee Town Hall today. The health camp organized by Red Cross Society and Urban Health Mission and Nagar Pali Corporation was inaugurated by Mayor Safira Sahu. In the health camp, BP, sugar, blood test, eye test and other health tests were done for the employees. Collector and District President of Red Cross Society Chandan Kumar praised for this initiative of providing various facilities including health check-up to the sanitation



workers under one roof. He said that this event would help in achieving the objective of taking the schemes of the govern-

ment to the last person. In the health camp organized today, health check-up of the regular employees of the corpora-

tion's sanitation department, placement sweepers, ward supervisors, sanitation didi, vehicle drivers will be done. Apart from the health camp, the work of making Ayushman card, driving license and Aadhaar card, labor card has also been done. Mayor Safira Sahu said that health related check-ups are being conducted by organizing health check-up camps for the employees of the sanitation department, our employees continuously work to make the city clean and beautiful, for which health check-ups of the employees are done from time to time. It is necessary to have health check-up camp being organized today in this con-

text. Along with this, Sanitation Chairman Vikram Singh Dangi and Commissioner Dinesh Kumar Nag gave information about the health camp. During this, MIC members Vikram Singh Dangi, Yashvardhan Rao, Rajesh Rai, Mrs. Sushila Baghel, Councillor Kamlesh Pathak, Surya Pani, Lata Nishad, Neha Dhruv, Dr. Virendra Thakur, Dr. MR Goude, Sanitation Department's Hemant Shriwas, Ajay Banik, Sandeep Vivekar, Vinay Sharma, Alexander Cherian, Damodar, Sushil Karma, Shekhar and other employees from Red Cross Society were present.

## Complete CM's announcements within time limit: Collector

**Bemetara, Jan 07:** Collector Jitendra Kumar Shukla took the weekly time-limit meeting in the meeting room of the district office on Tuesday. First of all, he congratulated and best wishes for the New Year to all the departmental officers and asked them to work with a new resolution in the new calendar year. In the meeting, the Collector said that the Chief Minister's Bhent-Mulauquat programme was successfully completed. To make this programme a success, all the departments should discharge their duties 100% and he wished best wishes to all for this. The Collector said

that it is our first priority to complete the announcements and instructions given by Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel during his Bhent-Mulauquat programme. Work on all the proposals on priority and also complete the old announcements within the time limit. In those places where the Chief Minister has ordered for investigation, take action by forming a team on time, he added.

Collector Shukla said that the allotment of land for social buildings during the program should also be completed within the time limit. We came to know about the public problems of the local peo-

ple from the block and district level public redressal camps we organized and this camp was beneficial for the people.

In the meeting District Panchayat CEO Leena Mandavi, Additional Collector Dr. Anil Bajpai, SDM Revenue Bemetara Suruchi Singh, Berla Yugal Kishore Urvsha, Nawagarh Praveen Tiwari, Joint Collector Umashankar Bande, Dy. Collector Vishwas Rao Maske, Pinky Manhar, Heera Governa, CMHO District level officers of various departments including the CMO of the urban body and the CEO of the Janpad Panchayat were present.

## Jagdalpur 'bandh' near total

**As per call by Sarv Adivasi Samaj**

**Jagdalpur, Jan 07:** Chhattisgarh Sarv Adivasi Samaj called for Bastar bandh on Thursday in protest against conversion. This bandh also got the support of Bastar Chamber of Commerce.

Keeping in view the bandh, strict security arrangements were made by deploying police force on major roads and around the church. During this, Jagdalpur city remained completely closed.

In front of the Danteshwari temple of



Bastar divisional headquarters, a protest was held in support of the bandh. A large number of

BJP leaders including BJP's tribal leader Kedar Kashyap addressed in this protest.

## Atma Nirbhar is the ultimate goal, says IGNTU V-C

**Ambikapur, Jan 07:** A nine-day USHA silai training for women was concluded, the event was organized by the Department of Social work Indira Gandhi National Tribal University (IGNTU), in collaboration with the National Institute of women and child development (NIWCYD) Bhopal, sponsored by the USHA Silai school, Bhopal branch. 15 women from 15 villages were selected for this training program. Smt. Chaya Sharma was the master trainer at this event.

During the nine days of training, the women were trained in various aspects starting from machine fitting, repair, and training on various aspects. Besides, the women are also trained in life skills



that are useful to develop their businesses. Sheela Tripathi the president Sheel Mandal of IGNTU was the chief guest of this event. Prof. Prakash Mani Tripathi presided the event, besides Prof. Alok Pandya, HOD, Physics, Prof. Ashish Mathur Coordinator livelihood incubation center, IGNTU, Prof. Ranju Hasini Sahoo, HOD Social Work, Harish, Reginal

Manager Usha International Bhopal, Sanjay Singh, Branch Manager NIWCID Bhopal were the guests in this program.

Dr. Ramesh B, Assistant Professor, Department of Social Work, and Dr. Krishnamani Bhagabati was the coordinators of the program from IGNTU, Ramesh Maywad coordinated the event from NIWCYD, Bhopal.

Short films on departmental work, Usha silai training etc presented by the organizers. The Livelihood Incubation Centre of IGNTU (LBI) was the co-partner at the event.

While addressing the session chief guest Sheela Tripathi stressed that women are powerful but due to unorganized their energy go in vain, underlines the importance of women's education and empowerment thus their capabilities will be used for the family and society. She lauded the efforts of the department of social work department. Prof. Prakash Mani Tripathi, Vice Chancellor, IGNTU made that women have more potential, due to social restriction their abilities sup-

pressed, further he stressed that women to be motivated, educated, and empowered. Also spoke about AtmaNirbhar. He suggested that there is a need to get a brand of local products in the name of 'Amarkantakvastr' due to this program.

He also stressed the importance of Sui-Daga in day-to-day life. He expressed that due to this training program women able earn Rs. 6000/- pm at the local level. He also lauded the efforts of the USHA Silai School and the efforts of the Department of Social Work and NIWCYD Bhopal, He hoped this is a beginning and he wishes to see 1500 silai schools in the coming days.

# Guru Amardas created right for equality in the society: Tiwari

Attends three-day fair in Chatuvadhhaam

Central Chronicle News

Berla, Jan 07: In the three-day fair organised in Chetuvadhhaam of Berla Vidhan Sabha (VS), Kissan leader Yogesh Tiwari performed prayers to Baba Amardas here on Saturday and sought blessings for peace & prosperity of all in the state and region.

During this Kissan leader Yogesh Tiwari highlighting on the life of Baba Amardas informed that Guru Amardas was born in July 1794 on occasion of 'Guru Poornima' in Giroudpuri.

Guru Amardas taught the lessons of equality to the humanity by creating consciousness among the



not so conscious society and asking them to adhere to their responsibilities.

Speaking further Tiwari informed that Guru Amardas took forward the



half-works of Baba Guru Ghasidas and the most interesting thing here is that it is not the people from Satnami Samaj alone, but people from all other soci-

eties too are following upon the path of Guru Amardas and making their life successful. Guru gave the message of peace, love and harmony and

brotherhood and social equality to the society.

Guru Ghasidas removed the social evils and got the people confronted with the truth and taking the message of peace, removed the differences in the caste and religions in the society. To rekindle the power of truth, he conducted 'Yatras' and taught the lesson of de-addiction to the people and follow social harmony and his messages are still relevant today.

On this occasion Manoj Patel, Manoj Sinha, Topendra Sonwani, Balram Das, Naresh Sinha, Ajay Mishra, Sanju Barle, Bharat Koshale, Balraj Banjare and others were present.

# Students give message of no plastic thru painting

From AVMEMS Jawanga

Central Chronicle News

Geedam/Dantewada, Jan 07: An awareness campaign is being run regarding not using plastic on the orders of the Office of the District Education Officer, Dantewada, Chhattisgarh. Say no to plastic, beat plastic pollution logo (symbol) making competition was organized among the students of Classes ninth to twelfth at Astha Vidya Mandir English Medium School (AVMEMS) Jawanga, Geedam.

The best three logos created by the students were selected. Class IX student Kumma Kunjam got first position, class X students Prakash Markam got second position and Karthik Mandvi got third position.



An awareness message through painting on say no to use plastic, plastic pollution free and use eco friendly green products instead of plastic was given by the students. Lecturer Amujuri Biswanath of Astha Vidya Mandir contributed the time to train the students and organizing the painting competition. District Education Officer Pramod Thakur, District Mission Coordinator Shyam Lal Sorli, APC Rajendra Pandey,

Geedam Development Block Education Officer Sheikh Rafiq, Assistant Block Education Officer Bhavani Punem, Aastha Vidya Mandir Principal Gopal Pandey, Jawanga Cluster Coordinator Nitin Vishwakarma, Vice Principals Pramod Gupta, Ravindranath Panigrahi, Superintendents Raviprakash Thakur, Sushma Das and teachers extended their best wishes and congratulations to the students.

# 7 day camp of NSS at village Khamtarai

In Badri Prasad Lodhi PG Govt College

Central Chronicle News

Arang, Jan 07: Under the aegis of National Service Scheme (NSS) of Badri Prasad Lodhi Post Graduate Government College, Arang, a seven-day camp has been organized at village Khamtarai from 4 to 10 January.

The camp was inaugurated by Dr. K.N. Sharma presided over by the chief guest K.K. Chandrakar, sarpanch of village Khamtarai, Lal Sahu, deputy sarpanch Ram Sahu and panches of the village. All the chief guests present in the stage were welcomed by the program officer and the campers of National Service Scheme by giving them bouquets.



The chief guests gave necessary instructions to the campers of the National Service Scheme in the form of their blessings for the purpose of the National Service Scheme and to follow it. In his address chief guest K.K. Chandrakar kept the work of the camp on the National Service Scheme and its importance among

the campers. Sarpanch Poshan Lal Sahu in his address appealed to all the villagers to cooperate with the campers of the National Service Scheme. Principal of the college, Dr. K.N. Sharma also appealed to the villagers to cooperate for the success of the camp and proper development and leadership ability of the students.

- Not getting any solution from BSP mgmt or district admn
- As water from iron ore mines if flowing down into their farms and have got stuck

Central Chronicle News

Balod, Jan 07: The villagers of Gram Kumurkatta, Nalkasa and Kotagaon affected from the flow of iron ore fines flowing down from the Dalli-Rajhara Mahamaya mines into their farms have sat on strike with demand for permanent job. Earlier these villagers, under the 'Jan Mukti

Morcha' have sat on serial hunger strike from Dec 15 near the Mahamaya Mines. But not finding any solution even after 20 days, the villagers have not started staging protest sitting opposite the main gate of Dalli-Rajhara mines. There are about 42 such families, whose farms have turned red, due to flow of iron-rich fines and water from the Mahamaya mines nearby, and are badly affected from the same.

The iron ore fines problem near the villages of Mahamaya Mines is an old issue and on this issue, neither the BSP nor the government is taken any effective steps till date. This has snatched the only source of earning of livelihood that of farming from the people of the region



and now in order to find out solution as to how they can earn livelihood without any source of earning, they all have re-started indefinite movement.

Earlier the local district administration has given assurance to the villagers to provide them temporary work till June 2020, but the BSP management did not provided any perma-

nent work to affected farmers.

It is worthwhile to mention here that the villagers of the affected villages

with iron ore fines flowing down from the mines have put forth their demands before the BSP management and to the government, but they are not getting any fixed solution, as the water of iron ore mines has got stuck in their farms and there is no crop cultivation possible and which has left the villagers in tyranny. It is learnt that there are 42 such families in whose farms the iron ore fines from the mines nearby have destroyed their only source of earning livelihood from agriculture.

# Workshop organized under National Tobacco Control Prog

Central Chronicle News

Bilaspur, Jan 07: Under the National Tobacco Control Program in the district, continuous efforts are being made to discourage the use and consumption of tobacco and tobacco products and for effective compliance of the Kotpa Act 2003.

In the same string of events, under the National Tobacco Control Program, Chief Medical and Health Officer Dr. Anil Srivastava appealed for action in the direction of tobacco control program including compliance with the provisions of the Kotpa Act 2003 by coordinating all the departments.

workshop was organized for the capacity development of the members of the district level enforcement team to strictly follow the provisions of the law for tobacco control in Bilaspur district through the Bloomberg Project.

During the program, Chief Medical and Health Officer Dr. Anil Srivastava appealed for action in the direction of tobacco control program including compliance with the provisions of the Kotpa Act 2003 by coordinating all the departments. District Nodal Officer



Dr. B.K. Vaishnav appealed to make efforts towards tobacco control and to make their offices tobacco free. During the training, District Advisor of Tobacco Control

Program Dr. Anupam Nahak informed about the activities being done in the district and shared his experiences. Senior Technical Advisor Dr. Amit Yadav was present as the

keynote speaker. Sanjay Namev, Divisional Coordinator of Bloomberg Project Bilaspur informed that according to the report of Global Youth Tobacco Survey-4, 8 percent of to-

bacco users in the state of Chhattisgarh are students studying in school in the age group of 13 to 15 years and 39.1 percent of the total population of the state is addicted to tobacco.

Prakash Srivastava of Bloomberg Project Chhattisgarh was also present in this training and it was decided to monitor the provisions of COTPA Act 2003 by the district level enforcement team members twice a week and take appropriate action in case of violation of the provisions of COTPA Act 2003. Representatives of Urban Administration Department, Food and Drug Administration Department, Labor Department, Traffic Department and Railway Police were present in the program.

**SHRI SHANKARACHARYA MAHAVIDYALAYA**  
(Run by Shri Gangajali Education Society, Bhalai)  
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Applications are invited for appointment Under University statute -28

Designation	Post	Qualification
Assistant Professor Chemistry, Botany, Sociology, History, Political Science, Mathematics	1 Post Each	i) A Master Degree with 55% marks (or an equivalent grade in a point-scale wherever the grading system is followed) in a concerned/relevant/allied subject. ii) Besides fulfilling the above qualification, the candidate must have cleared the National Eligibility Test (NET) conducted by the UGC or the CSIR or a similar test accredited by the UGC like SLET/SET or who are or have been awarded a Ph.D Degree in accordance with the University Grants Commission (Minimum Standards and Procedure for Award of M.Phil/Ph.D Degree) Regulations, 2009 or 2016 and their amendments from time to time as the case may be exempted from NET/SLET/SET.
Assistant Professor Computer Science	01 Post	UGC Norms:- i) A master's degree with 55% marks (or an equivalent grade in a point-scale wherever the grading system is followed) in a concerned/relevant/allied subject. ii) Besides fulfilling the above qualification, the candidate must have cleared the National Eligibility Test (NET) conducted by the UGC or the CSIR, or a similar test accredited by the UGC, like SLET/SET or who are or have been awarded a Ph.D Degree in accordance with the University Grants Commission (Minimum Standards and Procedure for award of M.Phil / Ph.D. Degree) Regulations, 2009 or 2016 and their amendments from time to time as the case may be exempted from NET/SLET/SET <b>AICTE Norms</b> BE/B.Tech.& ME/M.Tech.in relevant branch with First Class or equivalent either in BE/B.Tech. or ME/M.Tech. OR BE/B.Tech.&MCA with First Class or equivalent either in BE/B.Tech. or MCA OR MCA with First Class or equivalent with two years relevant experience. Note:- If suitable Candidate is not found according to UGC norms then interim appointment will be made temporarily according to AICTE norms.
Librarian	01 Post	B.Lib. with 55% Marks

SALARY AS PER UGC /STATE GOVT. NORMS 7 TH PAY SCALE

\* Two sets of application with demand draft of Rs.500 payable to Principal, Shri Shankaracharya Mahavidyalaya, Bhalai along with resume, attested mark sheets/certificates and two colored photographs should reach the office of the Principal within 15 days from the date of publication.  
\* At the time of selection, the number of posts may vary according to requirement.

Principal

**यूनियन बैंक** Union Bank of India  
Branch- GE Road, Raipur (Chhattisgarh)

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

Through this notice, we wish to draw the attention of all the Locker holders of our GE Road Branch (SOL ID 17691), Union bank of India located at Vasant Vilas Door No 9/10, Shesh Bada, Tatayapara, GE Road, Raipur, C.G. 492001 that the Lockers will be shifted to our Ashram Road Branch premises situated at Shop No G1 and G2, Guru Ghasi Das Plaza, Ashram Road, Aamapara, Raipur 492001 on 10.03.2023. Please note to call on us in the above new premises for operation of locker from 11.03.2023. We also request you to arrange for removal of the articles if any, kept in the locker which are likely to be damaged during transit, while all care and caution will be taken by the Bank. Please also note that the Bank will not be liable for any loss/damage that may be caused to the articles/items kept in the locker on account of shifting of the locker cabinet. Further we also wish to inform all customer of Ashram Road Branch after shifting accounts under Ashram Branch will also operated under SOL of GE Road Branch (Sol Id 17691). While we regret for the inconvenience may be caused due to reallocation of Branch and Lockers, we assure you, the best of services and attentions.

Date: 08.01.2023 Senior Manager, Union Bank of India, G.E. Road, Raipur Branch

**AXIS BANK LTD.**  
Asset Sales Centre, 2nd Floor, Chawla chambers, Opp. New Bus Stand, Jeevan Bima Marg, Pandri, Raipur 492004  
Controlling office: Axis House, Bombay Dyeing Compound, Pandurang Budhkar Marg, Worli, and Mumbai - 400025.

**APPENDIX -IV (Rule 8(1)) POSSESSION NOTICE**

WHEREAS: The undersigned being the Authorized Officer of the AXIS BANK LTD., Under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of the powers conferred under section 13(12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued, a demand notice, dated 21.10.2022 calling upon the borrowers viz 1.) MR.SATYENDRA SINGH S/O YASHWANT SINGH 2.) MRS.KIRTI SINGH to repay the amount mentioned in the notice being Rs. 18,32,380/- (RUPEES EIGHTEEN LAKH THIRTY TWO THOUSAND THREE HUNDRED EIGHTY ONLY) under Loan A/c. No. PHR013903718241, due as on 21.10.2022, being the amount due on termination of the agreement this amount includes interest till 21.10.2022) within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.

The borrowers and guarantor having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrowers and guarantor and the public in general that the undersigned has taken Physical Possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/her under section 13(4) of the said Act, read with Rule 8 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.

The borrowers and guarantor in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of the AXIS BANK LTD. for an amount Rs. 18,32,380/- (RUPEES EIGHTEEN LAKH THIRTY TWO THOUSAND THREE HUNDRED EIGHTY ONLY) under Loan A/c. No. PHR013903718241, due as on 21.10.2022, being the amount due on termination of the agreement this amount includes interest till 21.10.2022) and further interest thereon, till the date of payment. The borrower's attention is invited to the provisions of Sub Section (8) of Section 13 of the SARFAESI Act, 2002 in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.

**SCHEDULE DESCRIPTION OF ENTIRE IMMovable PROPERTY**

SCHEDULE SECURED IMMovable ASSETS: Collateral Security - KH. NO. 206/19 (PART OF KH NO. 206/3). MALUJA-PURENA, WARD NO. 45, P.H. NO. 67, R.N.M. - RAIPUR, TAHSIL AND DIST- RAIPUR (C.G.). BOUNDARIES: NORTH: LAND OF RAMESH DODAI, SOUTH: ROAD, EAST: LAND OF ARJUN PATHAK, WEST: LAND OF ROSHAN JASUJA

Date: 08-01-2023 Subhishh Krishnan  
Place: Raipur Authorised Officer  
AXIS Bank Ltd

**बैंक ऑफ बड़ोदा** Bank of Baroda  
Regional Office, Jeevan Prakash.L.I.C. Building, Pandri, Raipur (C.G.)  
PH: 0771- 4222611, 4222612, E-mail: recovery.raipur@bankofbaroda.com

**(Publication in the Newspapers in case of return/failure of service of 60 day's Notice U/s.13 (2) of SARFAESI Act, 2002).**

The Authorized Officer, Bank of Baroda has issued 60 day's Notices to under mentioned borrowers / Guarantors U/s.13(2) of Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act,2002 by Registered A/D/speed post. But these Notices were returned by the Postal authorities due to the reason of refusal to take delivery/wrong address/person left the place/city. These borrowers/guarantors have given their under mentioned movable/immovable assets by way of hypothecation / mortgage as security to secure the various credit limits granted by the Bank to the borrower(s).

Due to non-payment of Bank's dues and non-fulfillment of terms and conditions of the loan, default has been committed by the borrower (s) / guarantor (s) in payment of bank loan and interest and the loan account has become NPA as per RBI guidelines.

In view of the above, a 60 days Public Notice is given to the following borrower(s)/guarantor(s) to pay the bank dues as stated below alongwith interest till payment failing which the bank will be constrained to enforce its security interest without intervention of Court or Tribunal by taking recourse to one or more of the measures under Chapter - III of the Act. The borrower/guarantors are also directed by this Notice that in terms of Section 13(13) of the Act they shall not transfer by way of sale/lease or otherwise (other than in ordinary course of business) any of the secured assets charged to the bank without prior consent of the bank. The details of borrower/guarantors and secured assets is as follows, against whom the bank will start initiating action after 60 days in the event of non-payment of banks' dues by them.

Sl No.	Name of the Bank Branch & Phone No.	Name of the Borrower & address	Name and address of guarantor(s)	outstanding as on 29.12.2022	Details of Secured assets
01	Choubey Colony Branch, Raipur 9752098095	M/s. Somvatti Sales Trading Agency Private Limited 30/32, Champa Gally Cross Lane, 1st Floor, Room No. 8, Kalbadevi Road Mumbai City Maharashtra - 400002. Also at: Block-1, Plot - 9, Transport Nagar,Rawabhata, Birgaon, Raipur (C.G.) 492001	Mrs. Ineed Smriti D/o Late Mr. I. P. Bikai, House No. 55/4, Ward No. - 4, Milan Chowk, Radhika Nagar, Bhalai, Durg, C.G. - 490023 Mr. Shachindra Deshmukh S/o Mr. Padmakar Deshmukh MIG (Standard) - 213 (A), Phase - 2, Kabir Nagar, Raipur (C.G.) - 492001. Mr. Yashwant Kumar Sinha S/o Mr. Punit Ram Sinha 435, Ward No. 16, Jheet, Patan Durg (C.G.) 491111.	Rs. 49,98,915.59 + interest + other charges	1. Hypothecation of stocks of Rs.1237.10 Lacs and Book Debts valuing of Rs. 498.04 Lacs net off creditors of Rs. 1250.25 Lacs etc. as per estimates as on 31.03.2022. 2. Equitable mortgage of residential open plot, part of Kh. No. -79/5, P.H.No. - 14/19, Purani Basti Ward No.-09, R.N.M.- Durg, Admeasuring open Plot Area-2,475.00 sq. ft., situated at Mouza - Kohka, Tehsil and Dist. - Durg (C.G.) standing in the name of Mrs. Ineed Smriti D/o Late Mr. Indra prakash Bikai.

Date: 07.01.2023, Place: Raipur (C.G.)  
Authorized Officer, Bank of Baroda

**बैंक ऑफ इंडिया** Bank of India BOI  
SUPELA BRANCH Mob.-8234938925 Auction Date 27.01.2023

**Tender Invitation Notice For Vehicle Sales**

The vehicle tender by our branch are proposed to be sold by tender on the basis of 'As is Where is'.

(1) (2) Name of Borrower	(3) Details of Vehicle	(4) Min. Reserve Price (in Lac)	(5) EMD Price (in Lac)
1. Mr. Kamal Purushwani S/o. Ashok Kumar Purushwani	CG07 BM 4764 date of Registration 05.07.2018, Chassis No. MA3ETDE1S00522099 Engine No. K10BN 2142660 Maruti Celerio ZXI MT Color Silver belonging to Mr. Kamal Purushwani	₹3.20/-	₹0.32/-

Interested buyers should pay 10% (Coloum-5) of the minimum reserve price (Coloum-4) by draft or banker cheque payable in favour of Branch Manager, Bank of India Supela Branch, Submit your offer amount. ID proof, Address and phone number in closed envelope with tender form in plain paper. Interested person can contact the chief manager on the above mentioned number for the terms and conditions of the tender and vehicle inspection information. The last date for submitting the tender form in Bank of India, Supela Branch is 27.01.2023 at 3.00 pm. Date of tender opening 27.01.2023 at 4.00 pm. Place- Bank of India, Supela Branch, has been fixed. The Bank reserves the right to cancel or suspend any tender/complete tender process without assigning any reason.

Place: Bhalai Authorised Officer  
Date : 08.01.2023 Bank of India

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**बैंक ऑफ बड़ोदा** Bank of Baroda  
Regional Office, Jeevan Prakash.L.I.C. Building, Pandri, Raipur (C.G.)  
PH: 0771- 4222611, 4222612, E-mail: recovery.raipur@bankofbaroda.com

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In view of the above, a 60 days Public Notice is given to the following borrower(s)/guarantor(s) to pay the bank dues as stated below alongwith interest till payment failing which the bank will be constrained to enforce its security interest without intervention of Court or Tribunal by taking recourse to one or more of the measures under Chapter - III of the Act. The borrower/guarantors are also directed by this Notice that in terms of Section 13(13) of the Act they shall not transfer by way of sale/lease or otherwise (other than in ordinary course of business) any of the secured assets charged to the bank without prior consent of the bank. The details of borrower/guarantors and secured assets is as follows, against whom the bank will start initiating action after 60 days in the event of non-payment of banks' dues by them.

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Date: 07.01.2023, Place: Raipur (C.G.)  
Authorized Officer, Bank of Baroda

**BRIEF**



**Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha with Sandhya Purecha, Chair W20 India (Women-20), during a meeting, in Jammu, Saturday.**

**Nigerian held**

Hyderabad: A 32-year-old Nigerian national was arrested here on Saturday for allegedly peddling cocaine and 178 grams of the narcotic concealed in a chocolate health drink bottle was seized from him, officials of Prohibition and Excise said. Acting on specific information regarding cocaine transportation and selling, an official team led by State Task Force raided a place in Vanasthalipuram and caught the Nigerian and seized the cocaine. The Nigerian national came to Hyderabad three days ago in a private bus from Bengaluru. He had brought 200 grams of cocaine with him and allegedly sold 22 grams out of it, an official said adding that he was staying "illegally" in India after his visa expired recently.

**Couple hang**

Shahjahanpur (UP): An unmarried couple was found hanging inside a cottage here on Saturday, police said. The bodies of a 22-year-old man and a 17-year-old girl were found hanging inside the cottage in Kataiya village under Poyayan police station, they said. The duo belonged to the same caste, however, their families were against their relationship, they said. Prima facie, it appears that the couple committed suicide on Friday night.

**Two arrested**

Kolkata: Kolkata Police's special task force arrested two persons, suspected to be terrorists allied to the ISIS, from Howrah's Tikiapara area, a senior police officer said on Saturday. Acting on a tip-off from a central investigating agency, a team of Kolkata Police's Special Task Force (STF) picked up the two from their hideout in Tikiapara's Aftabuddin Munshi Lane on Friday night, he said. "Both of them are involved in spreading tentacles of the terror group in Howrah. We are questioning them to understand more about their roles," the officer told PTI.

**Drug cartel**

Chandigarh: Punjab Police and BSF in a joint operation arrested two drug cartel kingpins and seized 31.02 kg of heroin, the state police chief said on Saturday. "In a major breakthrough against trans-border narcotic smuggling networks @FazilkaPolice & #BSF have jointly arrested 2 drug cartel kingpins engaged in drug trafficking on massive scale and recovered 31.02 Kg Heroin," Director General of Police Gaurav Yadav tweeted.

# CM Pushkar Dhami visits Joshimath to assess situation

Dehradun, Jan 7 (PTI)

Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami visited sinking Joshimath on Saturday to assess the situation on the ground.

He met the affected people and assured them of all help, officials said.

The CM also met the team of officials and experts who have been camping in the town since Thursday and took their feedback on the evacuation exercise, they said.

He walked through the narrow streets in the affected areas and also went inside houses in which huge cracks have ap-



**Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami inspects the landslide affected area of Joshimath in Chamoli district, Saturday.**

peared on the walls and ceilings.

"Evacuating affected families in the danger zone to safe locations is the

government's priority for now," Dhami told reporters.

"We are also working on a long term rehabilitation

strategy," he said.

After visiting the affected areas in the Himalayan town, Dhami said that suitable places for relocation of residents near Pipalkoti and Gauchar are also being identified.

Officials have been asked not to get entangled in long procedural complexities and take direct clearance from him for projects related to treatment of drainage and sewage systems in Joshimath, he said.

Dhami said that Joshimath is an important place from the cultural, religious and tourism point of view and all efforts will be made to save it.

## Administrative Tribunal cancels appointment of 3 govt Law College principals

Thiruvananthapuram, Jan 7 (PTI) The Kerala Administrative Tribunal (KAT) has set aside the appointments of three Government Law College principals for being "contrary to the provisions" of the UGC Regulations, 2010.

KAT members Justice P V Asha and P K Kesavan have cancelled the appointments of principals of Thiruvananthapuram, Ernakulam and Thrissur Government Law Colleges.

The Tribunal also directed the government to hold fresh selections in accordance with the UGC Regulations.

"...order dated 19.3.2017, issued by government to the extent it relates to the qualifications for the post of principals, the select list dated 30.8.2018, the promotion ordered on 3.9.2018 are set aside...the select list

is seen drawn, contrary to the provisions contained in the UGC regulations, 2010..." the order dated January 4 said. The order came based on a plea filed by Giri Sankar S S, an associate professor of Ernakulam Law College seeking direction to make appointments to the post of principals in accordance with the UGC Regulations.

"...it is only appropriate that fresh selection is made as against all those vacancies for which that select list was drawn in accordance with the UGC Regulations, 2010," the Tribunal said.

It also directed to constitute a selection committee for conducting the selection for appointment of principals in the Government Law Colleges in accordance with the UGC Regulations.

## Detailed investigation ordered against 'Santro Ravi'

Mysuru, Jan 7 (PTI)

Karnataka Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai said, "You cannot decide based on the photograph but the main issue is that there is a case against him (Ravi). A girl has lodged a complaint against him. If the investigation is taken up then all other cases will also come out and it will help investigate all of them," Bommai told reporters in Mysuru.

The Chief Minister said he has instructed the Mysuru police to strictly investigate the case as there are many complaints against Ravi.

It is said that he is highly connected person and the police will find out his past and would take strict legal action against him, Bommai said.

When asked why no case reached the logical end in the last 20 years, the Chief Minister said this time the State government has taken the complaint against him 'very serious-

ly'. "We will get all the cases against him investigated and get him punished for them," Bommai said.

When asked about the Congress sharing the videos and audios showing Ravi involved in the 'transfer business', the Chief Minister said everything will be investigated.

"He was seen with many former Chief Ministers as well. That's how he created an image for himself. These days anything can be created on WhatsApp but a detailed investigation will reveal what kind of physical transaction he was involved in," Bommai explained.

He also clarified that there was no question of protecting anyone and said everything will come out. To a question that former Chief Minister H D Kumaraswamy released an audio, Bommai said it will also become a part of the investigation.

## ADVOCATES PROTEST



**Advocates raise slogans against Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren during a protest against government's decision to hike the court fees, in Ranchi, Saturday.**

## Woman dies of food poisoning after consuming 'Kuzhimanthi'

Kasaragod (Kerala), Jan 7 (PTI)

Three persons, including the owner of the hotel which had provided 'Kuzhimanthi', were taken into custody here on Saturday after a 20-year-old woman died due to suspected food poisoning upon consuming the biryani dish, police said.

The three persons were taken into custody as part of preventive detention in order to protect them from angered protesters in the area, Kasaragod police said. Meanwhile, Melparamba police said they were awaiting the post-mortem report of the woman in order to take further action.

"Three persons have been taken under preventive detention. The case is registered at Melparamba police station. They will take further action. During the day, there were multiple protests towards the restaurant and so we took them into custody," Kasaragod police told

PTI. Anju Sreeparvathy, the young woman from Perumbala near here, died on Saturday morning allegedly after eating the delicacy bought from a local hotel.

Police said she purchased the dish online from a restaurant named Romansia at Kasaragod on December 31 and has been undergoing treatment since then.

The girl was undergoing treatment at a private hospital, from where she was taken to another hospital at Mangaluru in neighbouring Karnataka, where she died.

Meanwhile, Kerala Health Minister Veena George ordered a probe into the incident.

"Directions have been issued to the Food Safety Commissioner to file a report with regard to the incident. The DMO is also looking into the incident and the treatment given to the girl," George told reporters at Pathanamthitta.

## AAP MLA Dr Balbir sworn in as Minister

Chandigarh, Jan 7 (PTI)

Senior AAP leader and Patiala Rural MLA Dr Balbir Singh was on Saturday sworn in as the new Punjab Cabinet Minister. The development comes shortly after Fauja Singh Sarari resigned as Cabinet minister after he was embroiled in a controversy over an audio clip in

which he allegedly discussed ways to "trap" some contractors in order to "extort" money.

Balbir Singh was administered oath by Punjab Governor Banwarilal Purohit at the Raj Bhavan here Saturday evening in the presence of Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann. Singh, an eye surgeon, had defeated senior

Congress leader Brahm Mohindra's son Mohit Mohindra from the Patiala Rural seat in the assembly polls held last year.

Earlier in the day, Sarari resigned from the Cabinet. AAP's Punjab unit spokesperson Malvinder Singh Kang said Sarari has resigned from the cabinet, citing "personal reasons".

## Caste-based head count begins in Bihar

Patna, Jan 7 (PTI)

Termining the caste-based head count that began in Bihar on Saturday as a "historic step", Deputy Chief Minister Tejashwi Yadav said the exercise will provide scientific data for carrying out welfare schemes for weaker sections of the society.

Noting that all the parties of the ruling 'Mahagathbandhan' were in favour of the exercise, the RJD leader claimed that the BJP was "critical"

about the survey.

"The enumeration exercise began in Bihar from today. It is a historic step taken by the Mahagathbandhan' government in the state. Once the exercise is completed, it will provide scientific data to the state government for carrying out developmental work for people, including those who are deprived," Yadav said, while speaking to media persons here.

He also said, "The BJP is an anti-poor party

which always opposed this exercise and has always been critical about the caste-based head count."

Chief Minister Nitish Kumar had on Friday said that the caste-based enumeration exercise could be beneficial for all.

The caste-based head count process has been a major issue in Bihar, as Kumar's JD(U) and all constituents of the ruling 'Mahagathbandhan' were demanding that the exercise be undertaken at the earliest.

## TMC, BJP exchange barbs on Nandigram anniversary

Nandigram, Jan 7 (PTI)

The Trinamool Congress and BJP mourned the 2007 killing of 14 persons protesting a planned chemical hub here on Saturday by holding rival functions, exchanging political barbs.

Interestingly both programmes, held at a distance of barely 100 meters were held under the banner of Bhumi Uchedh Protirodh Committee (BUPC) or Land Disposition Protest Committee, which supported by Mamata Banerjee had put up a stiff

resistance to the government's plans to acquire fertile land near the sea for a proposed chemical hub by MNCs.

TMC state general secretary and spokesperson Kunal Ghosh chose to attack opposition BJP and its Nandigram lawmaker Suvendu Adhikari, an erstwhile TMC leader who defected to the saffron party ahead of the 2021 state election, while paying floral tributes at a memorial there. "CPI-M harms (goons) who were behind the massacre have now turned saffron. Suvendu Adhikari has

done a great disservice to the people of Nandigram by joining hands with those who were behind the armed atrocities on peaceful anti-land grab protesters. He will not be pardoned by the people of Purba Medinipur."

Bhangabera was the spot where 14 villagers belonging to BUPC, the anti-land acquisition committee, were killed on this day by miscreants suspected to be allied to the then ruling CPI(M) on this day 16 years ago during protests against acquisition of farmland for a chemical hub.

### MATRIMONIAL

**ब्राह्मण**

वधु चाहिये

वधु चाहिए- सरयूपारीय ब्राह्मण- 32/5'10", छत्तीसगढ़ शासन में क्लास-2 अधिकारी (पीएससी सलेक्टेड) हेतु डॉक्टर/ प्रोफेसर/ शासकीय सेवागत वधु चाहिए. मो.- 9302382870 (मैरिज ब्यूरो धमा). (250772)

**वधु चाहिये**

रायपुर छ.ग. निवासी 43 वर्षीय, 5'-5", शुद्ध शाकाहारी, मध्यमवर्गीय, नास्ता दुकान संचालक हिन्दू बंगाली ब्राह्मण युवक हेतु धार्मिक, गृहकार्य दक्ष, घरेलू, पढ़ी-लिखी वधु चाहिए. संपर्क- 9329796182. (250771)

**वर चाहिये**

वर चाहिए- ब्राह्मण 26/5'2", बोकाम रंग गौरा अत्यंत सुन्दर गृह कार्य में दक्ष कन्या मध्यम वर्गीय परिवार हेतु सुयोग्य वर चाहिए. अतिशोच विवाह (सभी ब्राह्मण स्वीकार्य) संपर्क- 9479205416. (250848)

**अग्रवाल**

वर चाहिये

वर चाहिए- तलाकशुदा अग्रवाल 31/5'5", बी.कॉम., अत्यंत सुंदर एकलवती कन्या, पिता का बिजनेस जाति बंधन नहीं हेतु वर चाहिए. संपर्क- मो.- 7415510145, 8871667626. (250851)

**बौद्ध**

वधु चाहिये

अग्रवाल वर चाहिए- 30 कन्याएं सो.ए., 40 डॉक्टर, 50 इंजीनियर, 150 रेजुएशन, 100 सर्विस क्लास, 10 मेट्रिक, 5 माहेश्वरी, 10 जैन, 5 खंडेलवाल, 100 तलाकशुदा-विडोह, मारवाड़ी वर-वधु फोटो बायोडाटा सहित संपर्क- कैं- मिलल मैरिज ब्यूरो अरिहंत काम्प्लेक्स, रेवले स्टेशन के पास रायपुर. व्हाट्सअप-9302454825. (250755)

**बंगाली**

वर चाहिये

बंगाली वर चाहिए- बंगाली कायस्थ तलाक शुदा 30/5'-2", एम. एस.सी. बायोटेक्नोलॉजी, पी .जी.डी.सी.ए. कन्या हेतु सजातीय सुयोग्य वर चाहिए . संपर्क - 9425245395. (250843)

**सामान्य**

वर चाहिये

बंगाली वर चाहिए- बंगाली कायस्थ 32/5'-2", बी.कॉम., एम.ए. (एजुकेशन) पी.जी.डी.सी.ए., इस्ट बंगाल शाकाहारी हेतु वर चाहिए. मो.-8871511083, 07389097192. (250844)

**गुजराती**

वर चाहिये

वर चाहिए- गुजराती 26/5'1", बोकाम रंग गौरा अत्यंत सुन्दर गृह कार्य में दक्ष कन्या पिता व्यवसायी परिवार हेतु सुयोग्य वर चाहिए. अतिशोच विवाह (सभी गुजराती मान्य)-8224906578. (250847)

**तमिल/तेलगू**

वर चाहिये

वर चाहिए- तेलगु 26/5'1", बी.ए. रंग-गौरा अत्यंत सुन्दर गृह कार्य में दक्ष कन्या पिता व्यवसायी मध्यम वर्गीय परिवार हेतु सुयोग्य वर चाहिए अतिशोच विवाह (जाति बंधन नहीं) संपर्क-6266127900. 250849)

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# House will address rise of the Chinese Communist party: McCarthy

Washington, Jan 07 (PTI):

Newly-elected Speaker of the House of Representatives Kevin McCarthy on Saturday said he will look into the issue of public debt and pledged that the House will address the "rise of the Chinese Communist party."

McCarthy, 57, was elected the House Speaker in a historic post-midnight 15th ballot on Saturday.

He replaced Nancy Pelosi, 82, of the Democratic Party.

McCarthy defeated 52-year-old Hakeem Sekou Jeffries by 216 to 212 votes, in the 15th round of votes that went past midnight.

In his maiden speech as Speaker, McCarthy said he wanted the US to win the economic competition with China.

"We will address



America's long-term challenges: the debt and the rise of the Chinese Communist Party. The Congress must speak in one voice on these issues," McCarthy said in his maiden speech as speaker.

The Republican was able to muster a majority from the lawmakers present on the floor only after six of his party rebels voted present, which

brought down the magic number from 218 to 215 votes. "As for the Chinese Communist Party, we will create a bipartisan Select Committee on China to investigate how to bring back the hundreds of thousands of jobs that went to China. Then we will win this economic competition," he said, evoking applause from the lawmakers. McCarthy

said this moment calls for restoring trust within the country, with each other.

"In that spirit, I will work with anyone, everyone who shares our passion to deliver a better future for the nation. I hope you'll join me as a Congress can only operate if we cooperate," he said.

He told his Congressional colleagues that his father always told him it's not important how one starts. "It's how you finish. And now we need to finish strong for the American people," he asserted. McCarthy becomes 55th House speaker after the fifth-longest contest in history. He won the gavel after 15 rounds of voting, making it the longest election for speaker.

The longest vote in US history took place in 1855, lasting 133 rounds over two months.

## A MAN CATCHES A TROUT ON A FROZEN RIVER



A man catches a trout on a frozen river during a trout catching contest in Hwacheon, South Korea, Saturday, Jan. 7, 2023. The contest is part of an annual ice festival which draws over one million visitors every year.

# Thousands protest against rising terrorism in northwest Pakistan

Peshawar, Jan 07 (PTI):

Thousands of tribesmen in Pakistan's northwest took to the streets to protest against rising incidents of terrorism and kidnapping in the country's tribal districts bordering Afghanistan while demanding immediate restoration of peace in the region.

Over 5,000 tribesmen took out a rally on Friday in Wana, the headquarters of the South Waziristan tribal district, against the growing unrest, terrorism, and kidnappings in their areas.

The protest comes amidst rising terrorist attacks in the country, especially in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan provinces that are believed to have been carried out by the banned Tehreek-i-Taliban

Pakistan (TTP) group based in Afghanistan.

Pushtoon nationalist and leader of Pushtoon Tahaffuz Movement (PTM) Manzoor Pushteen addressed the protesters carrying placards and banners.

The protesters demanded the restoration of peace and harmony in the tribal districts.

All the shops and markets were closed in Wana bazaar as a protest against the surge in unrest in the district.

Pushteen said the fresh wave of unrest has scared traders and investors and they were not ready to run their businesses in the prevailing law and order situation.

He said the tribal youth can take up arms like terrorists if the public order was not improved.

The protesters said it is

the responsibility of the government to ensure the protection of the lives and properties of the citizens in the tribal areas.

The government should take measures for the maintenance of peace in the area and the release of hostages from the custody of kidnappers, they said.

The TTP has been blamed for several deadly attacks across Pakistan, including an attack on army headquarters in 2009, assaults on military bases, and the 2008 bombing of the Marriott Hotel in Islamabad.

In 2014, the Pakistani Taliban stormed the Army Public School (APS) in the northwestern city of Peshawar, killing at least 150 people, including 131 students. The attack sent shockwaves across the world, and was widely condemned.

# Kurds from around Europe demonstrate over killings in Paris

Paris, Jan 07 (AP):

Kurdish groups from around France and Europe are marching in Paris on Saturday to show their anger over the unresolved killing of three Kurdish women activists in a French capital 10 years ago. The marchers are also mourning three people killed outside a Kurdish cultural centre in Paris two weeks ago in what prosecutors called a racist attack. Escorted by police, about a dozen buses from Germany, the Netherlands, Switzerland and Belgium carried Kurdish activists to the start of the march, near the Gare du Nord train station in northern Paris. The demonstration is timed to mark the 10th anniversary of the killings of Sakine Cansiz, Fidan Dogan and Leyla Sayilemez on January 9, 2013.

Cansiz was a founder of the Kurdistan Workers'

Party or PKK, which Turkey, the United States and the European Union consider a terrorist group.

Kurdish activists suspect the Turkish intelligence service was involved in the killing.

The suspected attacker, a Turkish citizen, died in French custody before the case reached trial.

Turkish officials suggested at the time that the killings may have been part of an internal feud among Kurdish activists or an attempt to derail peace talks.

Paris police were on alert on Saturday after skirmishes at Kurdish gatherings in the past, notably in response to last month's shooting.

After the December 23 attack, the suspected assailant told investigators he had a "pathological" hatred of non-European foreigners, according to prosecutors.

# India's response to Sri Lanka's request for debt restructuring expected by January end: Wickremesinghe

Colombo, Jan 07 (PTI):

President Ranil Wickremesinghe has said that India's response to cash-strapped Sri Lanka's request for debt restructuring is expected by the end of this month.

Sri Lanka, which is trying to secure a USD 2.9 billion bridge loan from the International Monetary Fund (IMF), has been trying to get financial assurances from its major creditors — China, Japan and India — which is the requisite for Colombo to get the bailout package.

Talking to the media, Wickremesinghe on Friday also said that he is hopeful of obtaining the USD 2.9 billion IMF facility in the first quarter of this year. Sri Lanka had begun debt restructuring



talks with its creditors since September last year as warranted by its agreement with the IMF for the USD 2.9 billion facility over four years.

The cash-strapped country began negotiating with the IMF for a bail-out after having announced its first-ever sovereign debt default in April last year.

Wickremesinghe had earlier said that India and

Sri Lanka held "successful" talks on debt restructuring and the country will also begin discussions with China.

The IMF bailout has been put on a halt as Sri Lanka pursues talks with creditors to meet the global lender's condition for the facility.

Wickremesinghe said Sri Lanka was only looking from China to extend the period of repayment of Chinese loans over a period of 20 years and Sri Lanka did not ask China to slash its debt.

Sri Lanka was hit by an unprecedented financial crisis in 2022 due to a severe paucity of foreign exchange reserves that also sparked political turmoil in the country which led to the ouster of the all-powerful Rajapaksa family.

## AMX-10 RC TANKS



This undated photo provided by the French Army shows AMX-10 RC tanks. France said it will send French-made AMX-10 RC light tanks to Ukraine, the first tanks from a Western European country, following an afternoon phone call between French President Emmanuel Macron and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy.

# China suspends social media accounts of COVID policy critics

Beijing, Jan 07 (AP):

China has suspended or closed the social media accounts of more than 1,000 critics of the government's policies on the COVID-19 outbreak, as the country moves to further open up.

The popular Sina Weibo social media platform said it had addressed 12,854 violations including attacks on experts, scholars and medical workers and issued temporary or permanent bans on 1,120 accounts. The ruling Communist Party had largely relied on the medical community to justify its harsh lockdowns, quarantine measures and mass testing, almost all of which it abruptly aban-

doned last month, leading to a surge in new cases that have stretched medical resources to their limits. The party allows no direct criticism and imposes strict limits on free speech.

The company "will continue to increase the investigation and cleanup of all kinds of illegal content, and create a harmonious and friendly community environment for the majority of users," Sina Weibo said in a statement dated Thursday.

Criticism has largely focused on open-ended travel restrictions that saw people confined to their homes for weeks, sometimes without adequate food or medical care.

Anger was also vented

over the requirement that anyone who potentially tested positive or had been in contact with such a person be confined for observation in a field hospital, where overcrowding, poor food and hygiene were commonly cited.

The social and economic costs eventually prompted rare street protests in Beijing and other cities, possibly influencing the party's decision to swiftly ease the strictest measures. China is now facing a surge in cases and hospitalisations in major cities and is bracing for a further spread into less developed areas with the start of the Lunar New Year travel rush, set to get underway in coming days.

While international

flights are still reduced, authorities say they expect domestic rail and air journeys will double over the same period last year, bringing overall numbers close to those of the 2019 holiday period before the pandemic hit.

The Transportation Ministry on Friday called on travellers to reduce trips and gatherings, particularly if they involve elderly people, pregnant women, small children and those with underlying conditions.

People using public transport are also urged to wear masks and pay special attention to their health and personal hygiene, Vice Minister Xu Chenguang told reporters at a briefing.

# Iran executes 2 more men detained amid nationwide protests

Dubai, Jan 07 (AP):

Iran said it executed two men Saturday convicted of allegedly killing a paramilitary volunteer during a demonstration, the latest executions aimed at halting the nationwide protests now challenging the country's theocracy.

Iran's judiciary identified those executed as Mohammad Karami and Mohammad Hosseini, making it four men known to have been executed since the demonstrations began in September over the death of Mahsa Amini.

The judiciary's Mizan news agency said the men had been convicted of killing Ruhollah Ajamian, a member of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard's volunteer Basij Force, in the city of Karaj outside of Tehran on Nov. 3. The Basij have deployed in major cities, attacking and detaining protesters, who in many cases have fought back. It wasn't immediately clear which court heard the two men's cases. However, Iran's internationally criticized closed-door Revolutionary Courts have handed down two of

the death sentences.

Activists say at least 16 people have been sentenced to death in closed-door hearings over charges linked to the protests. Death sentences in Iran are typically carried out by hanging.

At least 517 protesters have been killed and over 19,200 people have been arrested, according to Human Rights Activists in Iran, a group that has closely monitored the unrest. Iranian authorities have not provided an official count of those killed or detained.

# Biden faces Israel quandary with new Netanyahu government

Washington, Jan 07 (AP):

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's new government is little more than a week old but it's already giving the Biden administration headaches.

Just days into its mandate, a controversial member of Netanyahu's right-wing Cabinet visited U.S. diplomats with a visit to a Jerusalem holy site that some believe may be harbinger of other contentious moves, including vast expansions of Jewish settlement construction on land claimed by the Palestinians.

And, Netanyahu's gov-

ernment adopted punitive measures against the Palestinians that run in direct opposition to several recent Biden moves to boost U.S.-Palestinian relations, including restoring assistance to the Palestinian Authority that had been cut during the Trump administration and allowing Palestinian officials to visit the United States. The new government is an unwelcome complication for a Biden national security team seeking to shift attention away from the Middle East and toward rivals like China and Russia. It also comes as Republicans take control of the House of



Representatives and are eager to cast Biden as unfriendly to Israel ahead of the 2024 presidential election. Bracing for more turmoil, Biden is dispatching his national security adviser to Israel in mid-January in a bid to forestall potentially deepening rifts be-

tween his administration and its top Mideast partner. That visit by Jake Sullivan may be followed by other high-level trips to Israel, including one by Secretary of State Antony Blinken, according to administration officials.

Their message goes beyond warnings about inflaming tensions with Palestinians: It's also about not cozying up with Russia, particularly now that Moscow is relying on Israel's main enemy, Iran, in its war on Ukraine; and not upsetting the delicate Middle East security balance. Since Netanyahu won hotly contested elections

last year with huge support from the Israeli right, U.S. officials have sought to tamp down predictions of a collision course, saying they will judge his government on actions rather than personalities. Biden himself spoke of his years-long relationship with Netanyahu. "I look forward to working with Prime Minister Netanyahu, who has been my friend for decades, to jointly address the many challenges and opportunities facing Israel and the Middle East region, including threats from Iran," Biden said when Netanyahu took office Dec. 29.



## CENTRAL Chronicle

Established 1974 Volume 48 No. 96

### India's current account deficit touches precarious level

India's current account deficit for the second quarter (July-September) of 2022-23 has reached a massive \$36.4 billion which is 4.4 per cent of the gross domestic product, higher than at any time in the last nine years. It is only in October-December 2012 that the absolute level of the current deficit had been \$32.6 billion which was 6.7 per cent of the GDP. By contrast the current account deficit had been \$18.2 billion in the first quarter of 2022-23 or 2.2 per cent of GDP, and \$9.7 billion or 1.3 per cent of GDP in the second quarter of 2021-22, i.e., exactly a year ago. In other words compared to the first quarter itself there has been a doubling of the current account deficit as a percentage of GDP which is a whopping increase; compared to the second quarter a year ago the increase in GDP percentage is more than three times. Quite apart from the sheer size of the current account deficit, there are at least three reasons why the balance of payments is a cause for serious concern. First, the reason for the increase in the current account deficit, by as much as \$18.2 billion compared to the previous quarter, is an increase in merchandise trade deficit, that is, in the excess of imports over exports of goods. The merchandise trade deficit increased by over \$20 billion, from \$63 billion to \$83.5 billion, between the first and the second quarters. According to the Reserve Bank of India this increase was for two reasons: first, the increase in oil prices that has occurred in the wake of the Ukraine war and pushed up our import bill; and, second, the lacklustre performance of our exports because of the slowing down of the world economy. Economic commentators in the media have adduced other factors, like the weak rupee and the revival of domestic demand, for the widening of the merchandise trade deficit, but these are erroneous assertions: a weak rupee should, if anything, improve rather worsen the trade deficit; and the revival of demand has not been so pronounced as to widen the deficit so much, since the GDP growth itself which is the primary source of income has been low. The problem with the factors identified by the RBI is that they are not going to go away soon. The Ukraine war is not just a conflict between two countries over some bilateral issues. It has to do with the shape that imperialism will have in the future and therefore has a decisive significance; because of this imperialism will resist any easy and amicable solution to the war. Likewise, the inflation that had made an appearance even before the war but has now become exceedingly serious in the metropolitan economies as a consequence of it, is being sought to be combated through the creation of recession and unemployment; this again will be a long drawn-out affair. It follows therefore that the merchandise trade balance will continue to remain as adverse as in the second quarter of 2022-23 for quite some time. The second cause for concern is that this merchandise trade deficit has occurred in the midst of a sharp decline in the exchange rate of the rupee amounting to as much as 10 per cent over the calendar year 2022. Normally, an exchange rate depreciation is supposed to improve the trade balance. Such an improvement of course takes time, so that the simultaneous occurrence of a worsening of the trade balance and an exchange rate depreciation should not be a matter of surprise. But the persistence of a large deficit invariably creates expectations of an exchange rate depreciation, which in turn give rise to an actual exchange rate depreciation by causing financial outflows. Since neither of the factors mentioned by the RBI as underlying the widening trade deficit at present, is going to be affected by any exchange rate depreciation, its impact on the deficit will be marginal even after sufficient time has elapsed, in which case we are entering a period of freefall for the rupee. It is already being called one of the weakest currencies in Asia, but this state of affairs is going to persist, perpetuating inflation in the country through the cost-push effect emanating from imported inputs. It may be thought that India's large foreign exchange reserves should prevent such a free fall of the rupee, but even the current fall has occurred despite nearly a hundred billion dollars being spent by the RBI in its efforts to stabilise the rupee. In the second quarter of 2022-23 itself there was a \$25 billion decline in reserves. The depletion of reserves therefore cannot prevent a fall in the rupee; what is more, as the level of reserves declines, speculation against the rupee will escalate, making matters even worse. It follows therefore that despite our large reserves India's balance of payments have become a serious cause for concern. The third reason why the balance of payments situation portends ill for the economy is as follows: the yawning merchandise trade deficit has occurred in a situation of low GDP growth. The first quarter (April-June) GDP growth in 2022-23 over the corresponding quarter of 2021-22 had been 13.5 per cent, reflecting recovery from a Covid-induced trough. But the second quarter growth has been just 6.3 per cent compared to the second quarter of 2021-22. The growth in gross value added (GVA) in the second quarter, which measures the actual increase in production, ignoring the effects of tax changes that GDP incorporates, was even lower, just 5.6 per cent. The reason for the slowdown in growth was a slowing down of the manufacturing sector which was not an episodic development but a persisting one (People's Democracy, December 25). India's creeping industrial stagnation in short is pulling down its GDP growth rate, and the rise in merchandise trade deficit has occurred despite this growth slowdown. The rise in trade deficit will almost certainly entail a further rise in the interest rates in India. This will be done keeping several objectives in mind: for attracting global capital for financing the deficit; for reducing the deficit by curtailing domestic demand; and for curbing the inflation unleashed by a declining rupee. Neoliberal capitalism has just this one instrument, which creates recession and unemployment, for combating multiple economic woes and it is going to be used vigorously in the coming days. That however will only worsen the growth rate of GDP and accentuate unemployment and distress in the economy. The fact that the yawning merchandise trade deficit is occurring not because of any pronounced boom in the economy but rather in the midst of a creeping industrial stagnation, therefore augurs ill for the economy. Some may argue that there is nothing new in the current situation, that in 2012-13 the country had faced a similar predicament when the tapering off of bond purchases by the Federal Reserve Board of the United States, indicating a tightening of US monetary policy, had caused a similar widening of the merchandise trade deficit (as mentioned earlier) and a fall in the rupee; but that, while heralding a period of economic difficulties for the country, had not precipitated any insurmountable crisis. Why should a similar situation be a matter of such serious concern now? There is a fundamental difference between then and now. The world economy is currently afflicted by high inflation unlike then, because of which there is a general rise in interest rates everywhere and the entire world economy is going into a precipitate recession. At that time the RBI had responded to the situation by raising India's interest rate, while other countries were not increasing rates, which was why the RBI's response succeeded in preventing a crisis. But now, a rise in the interest rate by the RBI simply would not work because all capitalist countries are raising interest rates; this general rise in interest rates will bring about a world recession and hence keep our merchandise trade deficit high for quite some time, thereby precipitating a continuing economic crisis in India as suggested above. All this is indicative of the cul-de-sac that neoliberal capitalism has run into, and the severe challenge to the hegemony of western imperialism that has emerged. World capitalism in short is currently in a state which creates new possibilities of transcending it. But if instead of seizing such an opportunity our economy remains stuck within a regime of neoliberal capitalism, and seeks to overcome its predicament merely by resorting to bailouts through borrowing, then that will only accentuate in future the economic crisis which the country is facing at present.

### KAPIL MUNI TEMPLE



Sagar Island: Kapil Muni temple in Sagar Island in West Bengal, the main centre of attraction of Ganga Sagar Mela.

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

#### Was demonetization right or wrong?

The Prime Minister Narendra Modi led Indian government stopped the circulation of 500 and 1000 notes. After the demonetization many criticized this action and considered it as unwise decision. Since then, this controversial matter was in a court, but finally, the honorable court gave its verdict on 2 January 2023 approving the government decision concerning the demonetization. This is amazing that how the court did not find fault, whereas the decision of demonetization was taken aiming to bring the black money and eradicate the terrorism and corruption. After passing years of demonetization the question still arises that where is the black money for which the government forced the entire nation to stand in queue and compelled the entire nation in commotion? Is there no corruption or terrorism in the country? Off course the answer is No. With such circumstances how the Honorable Court did not find any fault in the decision on the demonetization that is truly unimaginable.

Mohd Faisal, Mumbai

#### SC's humanitarian approach

Kudos to the Supreme Court (SC) of India, when it's timely stays Uttarakhand High Court order for removal of encroachments from 29 acres of land claimed by the railways in Haldwani. Otherwise, thousands of people who faced the prospect of being left homeless in the middle of the harsh North Indian winter. In these 29 acres of land there are 4,365 houses - nearly half of the families claim to have a land lease - the area even has four government schools, 11 private schools, a bank, two overhead water tanks, 10 mosques, and four temples, besides shops, built over decades. This temporary order (next hearing on 6th February, 2023) from a SC bench of Justices S K Kaul and A S Oka is saying to make arrangements for the people who are going to be displaced which is as per law or the government. People unable to understand that why the nearly 100 years old encroached land not to be legalized as per thousand other places in the country, not just Haldwani. On the humanity ground the SC rightly stayed the High Court order to say "It may not be correct to say that paramilitary forces have to be deployed to remove people who have been living there for decades." But the aam aadmi also wants that the SC should not drag the case for long instead to make alternate arrangement for those unfortunate human being of the area covers a 2-km strip of land near the Haldwani railway station - Gafoor Basti, Dholak Basti and Indira Nagar, in Babhulpur area.

Bidyut Kumar Chatterjee, Faridabad

## Bringing in the new revolution in digital financial inclusion

V. ANANTHA NAGESWARAN AND CHANCHAL C. SARKAR



Financial Inclusion, reduced the cost of remittances and increased access to and usage of sustainable formal financial services, thereby expanding opportunities for underserved and excluded households and enterprises.

Technological innovations and the adoption of digital innovation in finance through smartphones, Fintechs, and high-speed internet have been major catalysts in nearly doubling account ownership to 71 per cent in developing countries over the past decade (<https://www.worldbank.org/en/publication/globalfindex>). This shift has been captured by the G20 as well. Digital Financial Inclusion and not just financial inclusion has been a major focus area for the past few years.

The G20 reports and policy guides usher non-member countries to leverage technology, innovation, and digitalisation to further financial inclusion. However, despite the many advances made, what is keeping the world from unlocking the full potential of digital technologies for financial inclusion? What makes India a global bright spot in accelerating financial inclusion?

With about 31 per cent of the world's population, largely women, poor and less educated adults, still being excluded from the formal financial system, the time is ripe for rethinking the digital financial ecosystem and exploring ways to bring in the new wave of revolution for digital financial inclusion.

The India Stack is perhaps the most vivid demonstra-

tion of our country's efforts to advance financial inclusion. The Stack brings together various stakeholders of the digital financial ecosystem, such as policymakers, regulators, the private sector, and users and converges components such as identity, payment systems, databases, open networks, and open interfaces (APIs) into a unified platform to complement one another. Such an ecosystem approach has leapfrogged developmental trajectory as it fosters an environment for regulators to regulate and the private sector to innovate whilst always striking a balance between the two. The India Stack, despite its nomenclature, is not limited to India alone and thus can help and facilitate others; its vision and ambitions go far beyond our national boundaries. The foundational template of the Stack can be applied in other country settings - whether developed or emerging - to fit their unique requirements (<https://indiastack.org/index.html>).

Owing to this unique template, within the last decade, India has achieved 1.3 billion Aadhaar enrolments, overseeing monthly UPI payment volumes of over Rs12 lakh crore (<https://www.npci.org.in/what-we-do/upi/product-statistics>); and banking over 470 million beneficiaries under the Jan Dhan, Aadhaar and Mobile (JAM) trinity, of which 55% are women and 67% live in rural or semi-urban areas (<https://pmjdy.gov.in/account>). With merely seven years to attain our

Sustainable Development Goals, this pace, volume and quality of financial services are needed to usher in digital financial inclusion as a worldwide revolution.

As Kolkata gets ready to host the First GPMI Meeting under G20 India Presidency, one of the key issues would be to address the challenges of financial inclusion by leveraging technology to achieve the threefold objectives of access, usage and quality of financial services, transform people's lives, and enhance productivity in the economy.

The meeting will be accompanied by a dedicated initiative for building financial literacy and awareness among schoolchildren. The event is also looking forward to a showcase of various digital innovations in finance by the Public Sector Banks and Undertakings that have contributed to India's outstanding success in reaching the last mile. Prominent speakers worldwide will also share valuable insights on how countries can leverage their technological capabilities to advance financial inclusion and productivity gains. The first GPMI working group meeting in Kolkata is likely to initiate a long and prosperous journey of India's approach to advancing digital financial inclusion globally.

(V. Anantha Nageswaran and Chanchal C. Sarkar are Chief Economic Advisor and Economic Advisor, respectively, in the Ministry of Finance, Government of India. Their views are personal).

### India's keen interest on green hydrogen

Dr. Krishna Kumar Vepakomma

It is a welcome move by the Center for its approval of the National Green Hydrogen Mission, which would produce 5 million tonnes of green hydrogen yearly over the next five years and is expected to attract investments totaling Rs. 8 lakh crore in the green hydrogen chain. Through investments in infrastructure for alternative fuel generation, storage, and supply lines, the National Green Hydrogen Mission aims to both assist India in achieving its goals for reducing climate change and taking the lead in the availability of green hydrogen. The Mission will make it easier to produce, use, export, and create new demand for green hydrogen. India also set an ambitious target of production of 5 million tonnes of green hydrogen by 2030 in February this year. The National Green Hydrogen Mission was seen by experts to be a "crucial policy move" in making India a pioneer in the creation and production of green hydrogen. In order to construct the infrastructure needed to manufacture and transport green hydrogen from specific nerve centers to production hubs where it may be used in a variety of industrial applications, the Indian industry has to have an environment that supports this effort. In terms of greenhouse gas emissions, India is third in the world. The usage of green hydrogen would help India reduce its reliance on imported fossil fuels and assist it in meeting its emissions targets under the Paris Agreement. Green hydrogen is therefore considered to be a useful method of reducing carbon emissions, but scaling the technology up and making it affordable remain significant obstacles.

## Ragging is nothing but bossing because of seniority

Vinod Chandrashekhhar Dixit

Open down this article apropos the welcome decision by the Assam Government to launch a drive to find out all former students staying illegally in college and university hostels and ask them to leave in order to prevent ragging. The vicious practice of ragging has not only become rampant in our educational institutions but also acquired hideous proportions costing the sanity of the institutions and life of some of the students. Even today, students from the rural areas have a lingering fear when they go to cities for higher studies. To dispel such fears, colleges should prominently display a banner saying their campus is free from ragging. Those who indulge in ragging look for temporary pleasure but end up destroying many lives. Students alone can put an end to it. Anti-ragging steps should be

strictly enforced. Parents and teachers are equally responsible for eliminating the virus. Service organizations and NGOs should too launch awareness campaigns against the menace in educational institutions. The cantankerous behaviour of some students in colleges is often the offshoot of discipline in the schools in which they studied, and uncaring families. Instead of attempting to classify the acts of ragging as "soft" and "hard," we should employ the guidelines of the committee in letter and spirit. If faculty members communicate more informally with them, a healthy academic environment can be created. Ragging and abetting the crime on the college campus will remove the lurking fear in the minds of freshmen, especially those who opt to stay in hostels. The authorities should not stop with just making rules but take effective steps to implement the same and highlight



the ill-effects of ragging through the visual media. The move will implant fear and discipline in the minds of senior students who indulge in ragging. Even today, students from the rural areas have a lingering fear when they go to cities for higher studies. To dispel such fears, colleges should prominently display a banner saying their campus is free from ragging. Those who indulge in ragging look for temporary pleasure but end up

destroying many lives. Students alone can put an end to it. Anti-ragging steps should be strictly enforced. Parents and teachers are equally responsible for eliminating the virus. Service organizations and NGOs should too launch awareness campaigns against the menace in educational institutions.

There was not much awareness in those days and ragging in the past was one way of familiarizing freshers with senior students. But now, the increased incidents of ragging have exposed the errors in our education system which may be successful in churning out academically brilliant students, but has failed to inculcate proper values in them. The cantankerous behaviour of some students in colleges is often the offshoot of indiscipline in the schools in which they studied, and uncaring families. Instead of attempting to classify the acts of ragging as "soft" and "hard," we should employ the

guidelines of the committee in letter and spirit. If faculty members communicate more informally with them, a healthy academic environment can be created.

It is also noticed that those who indulge in ragging do not plan in advance. On most of the occasions, things go out of control. The guilty should not only be expelled but also barred from admission to any other college. Looking to the increase in ragging incidents, active involvement of media and the civil society is essential in tackling the problem of ragging. The mindset of the student has changed and now we need to focus in on enforcing stringent measures like rustication of a student, withholding of scholarship, debarring a student from appearing in any test. If possible students who involve in ragging must be put in jail instead of just being suspended or expelled. An example needs to be set.

**BRIEF**

**Change attitude**



**Pune:** Nationalist Congress Party Chief Sharad Pawar has said that the Union government must change its attitude towards cooperative banks and support them because they serve the common people. There is a misconception that irregularities largely take place in cooperative banks, the former Union agriculture minister said at a function here on Thursday. Pawar was speaking at the closing ceremony of the golden jubilee of Vishweshwar Cooperative Bank Ltd. Nationalised and scheduled banks in the country account for more than 90 per cent of irregularities whereas cooperative sector banks account for only 0.46 per cent irregularities, he said.

**Project clearance**

**Bengaluru:** Karnataka Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai on Thursday appealed to Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari to clear projects worth Rs 1 lakh crore in the state. He also requested him to undertake projects related to ring roads in Raichur, Gadag, Koppal and Shivamogga as well. "We mainly discussed the works of the national highway. Work is presently underway in projects worth around Rs 46,830 crore but still work on projects worth more than Rs 1 lakh has to be done. A decision has been taken to fast track those projects," Bommai told reporters after a meeting with Gadkari here on Thursday.

**5G launch**

**Jaipur:** Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot on Saturday launched 5G internet service in the state, terming it a revolutionary step in the field of information technology and telecommunication. Speaking at an event during which 5G service was launched in Jaipur, Jodhpur and Udaipur, Gehlot said the high-speed connectivity will further strengthen the dream of good governance, transparency and accountability. He, however, cautioned users over rising cyber frauds and the challenges the internet has posed in the recent times.

**Credit outreach**

**Kota (Rajasthan):** Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman is scheduled to participate in a credit outreach program here on Sunday, an official statement said. The finance minister and Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla, who is also the MP from Kota - Bundi, will distribute loans to street vendors, small scale entrepreneurs and cattle rearers under Pradhan Mantri Swanidhi Yojana and Mudra Yojana at Dussehra Ground.

## India looking at multilateral agreements: Piyush Goyal

**That are fair, equitable for all sides**  
New Delhi, Jan 07:

Negotiations for bilateral free trade agreements with several countries are "well on track" and India is also looking at some multilateral pacts that are fair and equitable for all the member countries, Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said on Saturday. India has recently implemented a free trade agreement (FTA) with the UAE in May 2022 and on December 29, 2022 with Australia to boost bilateral trade and investments. The country is negotiating FTAs with countries in-

cluding Canada, European Union and the UK. "We are well on track in discussions with several other countries to look at bilateral trade agreements. We are looking at one or two multilateral trade agreements also where we believe we can get benefit," Goyal said while virtually addressing the 27th Wharton India Economic Forum. In a trade agreement, two or more countries either significantly reduce or eliminate customs duties on the maximum number of goods traded between them. Besides, they ease norms to promote trade in services and investments.

The minister said that it is in India's interest to

enter into bilateral free trade agreements. "It's essential that agreements are balanced and they are in the best interest of both the countries, they address the sensitivities of both the countries and help us protect certain sectors which we need to protect," Goyal added. He said that India can not make every product efficiently and that imports are important for those goods. On the other hand, India is competitive in several sectors such as labour oriented areas like textiles, leather, footwear, and pharma and for that these, trade agreements would be beneficial. Due to this, "we decided that we must talk to like-minded coun-

tries particularly countries which have a rule-based trading order, which are transparent in their economic systems as India is and enter into arrangements which are win-win for both the sides and which are fair, equitable and balanced," the minister said. Talking about Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), which India decided not to join, he said it was a very unfair and unbalanced agreement and one of the member countries (China) in the RCEP group has a "very opaque" trading system. Further, he said that going forward it is important to focus on quality products and services.

## Air India CEO apologises for urinating incidence; crew, pilot de-rostered; reviews alcohol policy

New Delhi, Jan 07:

Tata Group-owned Air India CEO Campbell Wilson on Saturday apologised for a flyer urinating on a fellow female passenger on a flight from New York in November, and said four cabin crew and a pilot have been de-rostered and the airline is reviewing policy of serving alcohol on flights. Facing backlash for the handling of the incident, Wilson in a statement said the airline could have handled the issue better and promised a robust reporting system of unruly behaviour and a system of reporting such incidents. "Air India is deeply concerned about the in-



flight instances where customers have suffered due to the condemnable acts of their co-passengers on our aircraft. We regret and are pained about these experiences," he said. "Air India acknowledges that it could have handled these matters better, both in the air and on the ground and is committed to taking action." With questions being raised about the airline not immediately

reporting the unruly passenger to law enforcement authorities, he advised staff to report all incidents irrespective of a settlement being reached. "In the instance of the incident onboard AI-102 operating between New York and Delhi on November 26, 2022, four cabin crew and one pilot have been issued show cause notices and de-rostered pending investigation," he said, adding internal investigations into whether there were lapses by other staff are ongoing. The airline is investigating aspects including the service of alcohol on flight, incident handling, complaint registration on board and grievance handling.

## Govt to focus on micro credit facility for street vendors in 2023: Vaishnav

New Delhi, Jan 07:

The government will enhance its focus on providing micro-credit facility in the range of Rs 3,000-5,000 to street vendors in 2023, with the help of digital technologies, Union IT and Telecom Minister Ashwini Vaishnav said on Saturday. While speaking at Digital India Awards, Vaishnav said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi has allocated around Rs 52,000 crore for taking 4G and 5G services across all nooks and corners of the country for digitally connecting every citizen. "In 2023 there will be a big focus on providing credit facilities to street vendors in a simplified manner to meet small credit requirements of Rs 3,000-5,000," Vaishnav said. The minister said that the country will see the roll out of indigenously developed 4G and 5G technologies this



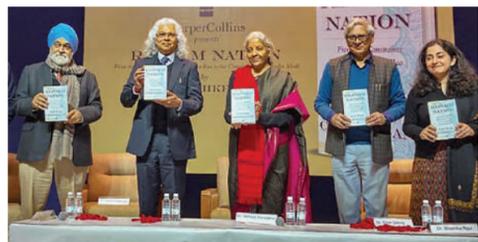
year. He said that very soon the country will witness the setting up of an electronic chip manufacturing plant in the country in line with PM Modi's vision to make India self-reliant in the field of technology. The PM Street Vendor's Atma Nirbhar Nidhi (SVANidhi) Scheme was launched in June 2020 as a Micro-Credit facility which aims to empower street vendors to recover losses incurred as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Through PM SVANidhi, affordable collateral-free loans are given to street vendors.

## Optional tax regime aimed at providing relief to persons in low income bracket: FM

New Delhi, Jan 07:

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Friday said the optional income tax regime with seven tax slabs was brought in by the government to ensure lower rates for those in the low income bracket. Sitharaman said in the old tax regime, every tax assessee can claim about 7-10 exemptions and the income tax rates vary between 10, 20, and 30 per cent, depending on income threshold.

The minister said along with the old tax regime, the government has come up with a parallel system which has no exemptions, but with simpler and more favourable tax rates. "The reason why I had to bring in seven slabs was to make simpler and lower rates for



Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman with others launches the book 'Reform Nation' authored by Gautam Chikermane, in New Delhi. Bibek Debroy, Chairman of the Economic Advisory Council to Prime Minister, and Montek Singh Ahluwalia are also present.

those who are in the lower income (bracket)," Sitharaman said. She was speaking at an event to launch the book 'Reform Nation', authored by Observer Research Foundation Vice President Gautam Chikermane. The government in Budget 2020-21 introduced the op-

## Sony WF-LS900N strikes perfect balance between comfort and performance

Mumbai, Feb 07:

Sony WF-LS900N is the newest true wireless earbuds from the Japanese company. After bringing industry leading noise cancellation with WF-1000XM4 and fully aware design with the LinkBuds (WF-L900), Sony is trying to find a middle ground with the WF-LS900N. In simple terms, Sony took the best from those earbuds and tried to pack it into a mid-range price offering.

The WF-LS900N aims to be a true wireless earbuds that does not have a radical design like the LinkBuds. In other words, it has a conventional design with silicone tips and a comfortable fit for extended listening. It doesn't reach the level of 1000XM4s with sound

quality or noise cancellation but delivers a balance that most people would prefer. Is that enough for WF-LS900N to become Sony's most versatile TWS earbuds yet? Sony offers the WF-LS900N in three colours at the launch: beige, white, and black. These earbuds feature a textured finish that offers a great in-hand feel, and to the delight of the consumers, it eliminates fingerprints that are common in these form factors.

All three models look sharp, clean with the white model looking minimalist, the black being robust, and beige being fun. This is Sony's most refined design yet and shows how much the design language of Sony has evolved since WF-1000XM3 days. This design has a purpose and



willpower of both sides is very strong regarding the FTA," Agrawal said.

He said there are many opportunities to enhance the partnership between the two countries in the sectors such as IT, defence, professional services, legal services, life sciences, and start-ups. The economic relationship between the two countries can be gauged from the fact that Indian companies, including the Tata Group and individ-

Indore, Jan 07:

London Deputy Mayor (trade) Rajesh Agrawal has said the UK and India possess a strong will to give the final shape to the proposed Free Trade Agreement (FTA). Speaking to PTI ahead of the three-day Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD) convention beginning here on Sunday, Agrawal also said both countries have many opportunities to increase their partnerships in Information Technology, defence, professional services, and other sectors. "Several rounds of talks have been held between the UK and India to enhance the bilateral partnership for finalising the FTA. The

**NEW OFFICE**



KONE Elevators India MD & CEO Amit Gossain inaugurates the company's new 'Sustainable office & Warehouse' in Gurugram.

## India and UK have strong will to finalise FTA, says London Dy Mayor

ual IT firms, are providing around 80,000 jobs in London alone, he said.

Even during the fierce COVID-19 outbreak, Indian companies have increased their businesses across the world, which is an indicator of the country's economic progress, Agrawal added. Queried on the possibility of an economic slowdown in the world, Agrawal said, "India's local market is very strong and the country's economy is highly resilient. Although global events do have some impact on every country, I feel India is largely safe from it (from the threat of economic slowdown)". He said India is one of the leading countries in IT

and pharmaceutical manufacturing, and added industrial production activities are also picking up pace. "The world is looking towards India as it is the fastest growing economy and the global growth engine," he said. Agrawal also said in talent-rich India, the government appears to have the will to encourage investment and entrepreneurship. "India's biggest strength is its democracy and friendliness of western countries towards India," he said. Underlining the contribution of the Indian diaspora in the development of the country, Agrawal said the diaspora sends around \$90 billion every year to their country.

## Govt not yet issued quality certificate to 160 Chinese cos for selling toys in India

New Delhi, Jan 07:

The government said it has not yet issued a mandatory quality certificate to around 160 Chinese companies for selling toys in India, and the delay is due to the COVID-19 pandemic. From January 2021, India has made it mandatory to get the quality certification mark of 'ISI' from the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) for the sale of toys in the country.

"Around 160 Chinese toy companies have applied for the BIS quality certification in the last two years. We have not yet issued to them in view of the COVID-19 pandemic," BIS Director General Pramod Kumar Tiwari told reporters. Normally, the BIS quality certifica-

tion is issued after an inspection of the factories. Due to the pandemic restrictions and health concerns, the BIS officials could not visit China, he said.

"Neither they invited us for inspection nor we could visit China because of the pandemic," Tiwari said. Tiwari, who was briefing media about the BIS' achievements on its 76th Foundation day celebration, also clarified that there is no ban as such on the import of Chinese toys but they should comply with the mandatory Indian quality standards. In the last two years, the BIS has granted the quality certificate to 29 foreign toy makers, out of which 14 are from Vietnam, he said.

## Good initial progress made on quota reforms: IMF DMD Sayeh

New Delhi, Jan 07:

Good initial progress has been made on IMF quota reforms in line with the changing nature of the global economy, International Monetary Fund (IMF) deputy managing director Antoinette Sayeh said on Friday. As per an IMF resolution, the 16th General Review of quotas should be concluded by December 15, 2023. Any adjustment in quota shares would be expected to result in an increase in the voting rights of emerging countries in line with their relative positions in the world economy. "We're working of course quite a bit (on quota reforms)...from our experience from the last review, we understand that countries have very different



perspectives about what the results of this quota review should be and we've been working with them to find areas of common ground and to make sure that there is ownership for how we approach the review," she said. Observing that there has been good initial progress being made on that, she said countries are fully aware of the changing nature of

the global economy and the contributions that individual members make to it now.

"There is a need to align our governance structure with those changes...work in progress of course and a long way... but it is our expectation that we will make progress and it will be possible to come to a good outcome," she said. On the fiscal consolidation, she said, this upcoming Budget would contain that and there would be a clear path to fiscal consolidation that also rely on the revenue side. Besides, she said, simplification of GST, Income Tax, and excise tax has improved the aspect of tax collection. "More ambition on the revenue side and more clarity on the medium-term fiscal consolidation.

## Yash pens special note for his fans ahead of 37th birthday

Ahead of his 37th birthday on January 8, star Yash has penned a heartfelt note for his fans and said that he is working towards clinching something that he believes in but needs more time. As it was decided that Yash will announce his next Yash19 on his birthday, the superstar came to his fans with a note and asked them to be patient regarding the announcement of his next project. In the note, he urged his fans to be patient about the announcement of his next as it is unlikely to be announced by January 8. He wrote: "To, My fans - my strength. The effort you all put in to showcase your love and affection all year round and especially on my birthday, fills my heart with gratitude. I have never been a birthday person, but over the years, witnessing the enthusiasm with which you celebrate and being able to meet you in person to mark the day, has made it special." "I am working towards clinching something that I believe in and am passionate about. You are the ones who empower me to think bigger and better. When I meet you next, I want to share that news and all the details with you. To be able to do that, I need some more time, which seems unlikely by 8th of Jan. So, this year, I ask you all for a specific gift - the gift of your patience and understanding."

## Rakul roots for sex education, awareness in 'Chhatriwali' trailer

The makers of the upcoming film 'Chhatriwali' have unveiled the trailer, which focuses on safe sex and sex education among the youngsters, led by Rakul Preet Singh's character. The over two-minute long trailer begins with the stereotypes in the society surrounding sex and how women have to suffer because of a lack of education. The trailer then focuses on a professor played by Rajesh Tailang thinking how it is not really important and is a taboo to teach children about sex and 'copulation'. Then enters Rakul, who gets married to Sumeet Vyas who doesn't believe in using condoms. Rakul said: "In today's patriarchal society, every household needs a Sanya who holds the courage to single-handedly fight against all odds, traditions,



social norms, and barriers. I hope this character inspires others to find their voice and speak up against unsafe sex and the many health implications of not using protection." She added: "India's youth make up for majority of the population and educating them on safe sex is the need of the hour, so I am glad that Chhatriwali is catering to them and everyone else in a progressive and entertaining manner. I have respect and only respect for the incredible team behind this extraordinary project." Sumeet said: "Raincoat pehenke baarish mein bheegne ka kya mazaa." Later, Rakul is seen making a decision to teach sex education to school children. Sumeet said: "Chhatriwali breaks the wall of awkward silence around sex between Indian parents and children, hus-

bands and wives, teachers and students. Today's generation is curious about the words sex and intimacy because there is always a sense of hush-hush around such topics." Director Tejas Prabha Vijay Deoskar said: "While researching for Chhatriwali, I happened to visit few rural parts in India and spoke to students and villagers over there. I saw a taboo around the word sex and the judgemental attitude of society as well as the pharmacists." "But what was more interesting and alarming was that even the urban population had the same issue barring some pockets in metros. The dire need to normalise this conversation were the driving forces behind the making of this film." 'Chhatriwali' is all set to premiere on ZEE5 from January 20.

## Bhavana Balsaver to appear in 'Meri Saas Bhoot Hai'

Bhavana Balsaver is a renowned actress who has been a part of numerous tv serials and movies. Her onscreen persona has gained her much recognition and she is considered to be one of the best actresses in the television industry. Bhavna Balsaver will soon be seen in Star Bharat's upcoming show 'Meri Saas Bhoot Hai'. The show will be produced under the banner of Film Farm Productions. Bhavna will be seen in a quirky character in the show playing the role of Vibhav Roy's Bua 'Kanchan'. Bhavna gets candid on about her character in the show and speaks about why she agreed to do the show.



She says, "I am excited to be a part of the new show on Star Bharat 'Meri Saas Bhoot Hai'. First and foremost, what intrigued me about the show was the title, it instantly brought a smile to my

lips... Who wouldn't want to watch a show with such a catchy name?? Also, the character I am portraying, Kanchan Bua, is something I have never done earlier. She is sweet and straight on the outside but very crooked on the inside. The complexity of Kanchan Bua attracted me to her. She has shades of negativity smeared on a comical canvas. The genre of this show is something Star Bharat and I will be exploring for the first time: Dramedy. So, the audience is assured to get a good deal of drama mixed with laughter, which means it will be a total entertainer.... What more can one ask for?"

## No chinks in Thalpathi Vijay's marriage, say sources denying rumours of split



Tamil superstar Thalpathi Vijay's fans, who were eagerly awaiting news about the upcoming January 12 release of his much-awaited movie 'Varisu', were instead struck by rumours that their hero's marriage with his wife Sangeetha was heading for splitsville. It all started with Vijay's Wikipedia page reflecting his status as divorced in 2022. The rumours have started doing the rounds yet again, even as fans are celebrating the rushes of 'Varisu'. Sources close to the superstar, however, confirmed that all is fine between Vijay and Sangeetha, who have been married for 22 years. There is no basis for the

rumours, they said. The recent round of rumours started after Sangeetha skipped the baby shower of star director Atlee's wife Priya. Sangeetha's absence from the 'Varisu' music launch only added grist to the rumour mills. Sources say that Sangeetha was with their children in the US when both the events took place. After the disappointment performance of 'Beast' in the box office, Vijay is back with 'Varisu', which has Rashmika Mandanna playing the lead role opposite the superstar. Prakash Raj also has an important role in this movie directed by Vamshi Paidipally and produced by Dil Raju.

## Arjun Kapoor on 'Dhan Te Nan': I have danced my heart out to this song

Actor Arjun Kapoor is a huge fan of Vishal Bhardwaj's 'Kaminey' and said that he was over the moon when the makers of 'Kuttey' revealed to him that the cult hit song from the 2009 film 'Dhan Te Nan', was going to be incorporated in the upcoming movie. Arjun said: "Vishal Bhardwaj's Kaminey is my all-time favourite film and I remember when Dhan Te Nan released, I used to dance to this song at every party. It was a song that was new, edgy and full of swagger." "So, when the makers told me that Dhan Te Nan will be a part of Kuttey and that I would get to dance on it, I was thrilled! It is like a dream come true moment for me." He added: "I have danced my heart out in my own style on this song for Kuttey. I have just let go because I was so happy to be dancing to a song that has so many memories from my past attached to it." "On the day of the shoot of this song, I had to pinch myself several times because I couldn't believe that I was dancing to Dhan Te Nan for my film! It is our ode to the original cult hit." 'Kuttey' is touted to be a caper that also has outstanding actors like Naseeruddin Shah, Konkona Sen Sharma, Tabu, Kumud Mishra and Radhika Madan in it. The film has been directed by debutant Aasmaan Bhardwaj, who is ace film-maker Vishal Bhardwaj's son. It will be released on January 13, 2023.



## Zeenat Aman blesses Debosmita in 'Indian Idol - Season 13'

This weekend at 8:00 PM, Sony Entertainment Television's singing reality show, 'Indian Idol - Season 13' is all set to welcome Poonam Dhillon and Zeenat Aman, the yesteryear beauties to the 'Celebrating Poonam Dhillon and Zeenat Aman' episode. Making for an evening to remember, the Top 10 contestants, Rishi Singh from Ayodhya, Senjuti Das, Debosmita Roy, Sonakshi Kar, Bidipta Chakraborty from Kolkata, Shivam Singh, Kavya Limaye from Gujarat, Chirag Kotwal from Jammu, Navdeep Wadali from Amritsar, and Vineet Singh from Lucknow will be seen delivering some electrifying performances in front of judges Vishal Dadlani



and Himesh Reshammiya along with the special guests. Contestant Debosmita Roy from Kolkata will be seen

delivering a melodious performance on 'Chura Liya Hai' from the 1971 film 'Haré Rama Haré Krishna' and 'Sohni Meri Sohni' from the 1984 film 'Sohni Mahiwal'. After the brilliant performance, Debosmita will be applauded for her graceful and melodious singing with a standing ovation by the judges and the guests. Talking to Debosmita and praising her singing act Poonam ji would be reminiscing about the yesteryears and praising RD Burman for his composition that is still a foot taper even today. Zeenat ji would then be asked by her co-guest her opinion on the performance and her memory of the song.

## Some entertaining twists in &TV shows

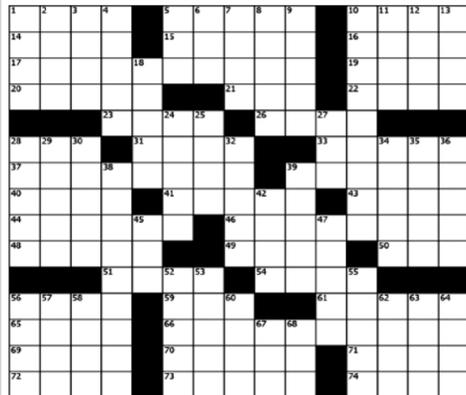
TV shows Doosri & Maa, Happu Ki Ultan Paltan, and Bhabiji Ghar Par Hai will witness some entertaining twists. About &TV's Doosri Maa track, Krishna shares, "To return Gayatri's money, Yashoda (Neha Joshi) decides to sell the necklace that Malti (Anita Pradhan) gave her to wear on her anniversary. At the same time, Ashok (Mohit Dagga) also decides to sell his gold medals. Yashoda goes to a jewellery store and sells her necklace and earrings for Rs. 1 lakh. On her way back home, she gets robbed. Krishna (Aayudh Bhanushali) spots Yashoda and runs behind the thief. Krishna is shocked to see the thief. Meanwhile, Yashoda gets



hurt and learns that Ashok sold his medals and repaid the amount to Gayatri." About &TV's Bhabiji Ghar Par Hai, Angoori Bhabhi shares, "A politician friend of Prem (Vishwajeet Soni) offers

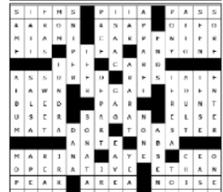
Commissioner appoints Angoori Bhabhi (Shubhangi Atre) as the Anti-Corruption Officer. Tiwari decides to build a hotel on unauthorised land, and when he goes to get a sign from Vibhuti, he demands a bribe. Angoori hires an ex-anti-corruption officer who runs a tea stall to assist her in catching corrupt people. Vibhuti and Chacha (Anup Upadhyay) enjoy their tea at the same stall when Tiwari arrives with the money. Angoori arrests all three and puts them behind bars." Watch Doosri Maa at 8:00 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!

## CROSSWORD



- ACROSS**
- EMT's word
  - In reserve
  - Kin of PDQ
  - Yearning
  - Tear to bits
  - Dummy
  - Nutritious
  - District
  - Tolerate
  - Opposite of NNW
  - Jaunty
  - Fabric joint
  - Rework proofs
  - Doctors' org.
  - Oodles (2 wds.)
  - Continues
  - Pasta ingredient
  - Einstein
  - Tresses
  - Concerned one
  - Fox's home
  - Hire
- DOWN**
- Works on a tan
  - Horse's gait
  - Spanish water
  - Shore birds
  - Pack animal
  - Hush!
  - Eye part
  - Compact
  - Trimmed the border
  - Flexible
  - Achy
  - Copier
  - Bog product
  - Flawless
  - Rocker \_\_\_\_\_ Cooper
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Lisa
  - Not well
  - Fire remains
  - Intended
  - Pedro's friend
  - Gypsy's card
  - Thrones
  - Corry
  - Wheat by-product
  - Long-armed ape
  - Ring
  - Hero's tale
  - Mild exclamation
  - Plant again
  - "Oliver \_\_\_\_\_"
  - \_\_\_\_\_ eclipse
  - Actress \_\_\_\_\_ Winfrey
  - "Star \_\_\_\_\_"
  - Trickle
  - Front
  - She, in Toulouse
  - Mexican meal
  - Article
  - Surrender
  - Neighbor of Mex.
  - Blue

## SOLUTION 526



## Inaugural Women's IPL auction in February; deadline for registration January 26

New Delhi, Jan 07:

The BCCI-organised T20 franchise competition for women, on the lines of the IPL, is likely to be called the Women's T20 League and the five teams - the applications for which have been invited - will be formed via a player auction that will be held in February.

The deadline for Indian players to register for the auction is at or before 5pm IST on January 26. The competition will replace the Women's T20 Challenge, which was a two-team one-off game in 2018 before expanding to a three-team exhibition tournament in 2019 and saw two more editions in 2020 and 2022.

In the document titled 'Guidance note for Indian players' shared by the board with the Indian players, the base price - termed 'reserve price' - for the capped Indian players



is set at INR 30 lakh, INR 40 lakh and INR 50 lakh and that for the uncapped players is at INR 10 lakh and INR 20 lakh. The players are expected to register for the Women's T20 League with their respective State Associations directly and not via agents or managers. In February last year, then BCCI president Sourav Ganguly had said that the Women's IPL

would get off the ground in 2023. In August, the BCCI zeroed in on a window for March. Subsequently, the BCCI advanced the women's domestic calendar, which generally runs from November to April, to accommodate the franchise tournament.

Ever since the formal announcement was made about starting the WIPL, a

number of men's IPL teams have been sending out talent scouts to identify players they can potentially sign for the women's tournament should they be awarded the rights to own a franchise. Rajasthan Royals, Mumbai Indians, Kolkata Knight Riders, Royal Challengers Bangalore and Punjab Kings are all believed to be interested in owning a team in the competition.

Calls for the Women's IPL to kick off have been gaining steam since India's runners-up finish at the ODI World Cup in 2017. When they reached the finals of the T20 World Cup in Australia in 2020, it gained further momentum before Covid-19 stalled women's cricket, and the sport in general.

Last month, the BCCI had invited bids for media rights from 2023-27 for the proposed five-team tournament.

## Australia's hopes raised of series sweep over South Africa

Sydney, Jan 07 (AP):

Australia had a glimpse of what appeared an unlikely victory and a series clean sweep as it took six of the 20 South African wickets it needs after captain Pat Cummins declared the host's first innings at 475-4 on the fourth day of the rain-affected third Test.

Cummins took three wickets in a fearsome display of pace bowling under grey skies at the Sydney Cricket Ground, while Josh Hazlewood picked up two and Nathan Lyon claimed another, amongst a clutch of several near misses, as the Proteas finished Saturday at 149-6, trailing Australia by 327 runs.

To win, Australia needs to capture the four remaining South African first-innings wickets and then enforce the follow-on in a bid to bowl the Proteas out a second time all within three sessions on Sunday's final day.

"Yeah, I think so," said Hazlewood on Australia's prospects of engineering an unlikely final-day victory. "From what we saw



Australia's captain Pat Cummins (C) celebrates with team mates after dismissing South Africa's Khaya Zondo during the third cricket Test match between Australia and South Africa at the Sydney Cricket Ground (SCG) in Sydney.

today we bowled 50-odd overs and took six wickets.

"And the wicket, I think, after a bit of foot traffic at both ends looked quite nice with Gazza (Lyon) bowling into that rough so I think Ashtar (Agar) and Gazza big day tomorrow for them." A win for Australia in this third test would confirm its place in

the world test championship final to be played at Lord's in England in June.

After no play on Friday, further rain on Saturday morning meant play could not resume before lunch, effectively forcing Cummins' hand into declaring. That was despite leaving Usman Khawaja stranded on 195 not out to

give his bowling attack any hope of bowling South Africa out twice to win the match in only five remaining sessions of play. "He was fine, all the batters would be fine with a call like that," said Hazlewood of Khawaja's reaction to not having the chance to complete his first double century.

## Chetan Sharma retained as chairman of new selection panel



New Delhi, Jan 07:

Chetan Sharma was on Saturday retained as the chairman of the senior selection committee, the BCCI announced.

Shiv Sundar Das (East Zone), Salil Ankola (West Zone), Subroto Banerjee (East Zone) and Sridharan Sharath (South Zone) are the other four selectors in the new selection panel.

The previous selection committee was sacked after India's ouster from the T20 World Cup, after losing to India in the semi-finals. "The Cricket Advisory Committee (CAC) comprising Ms Sulakshana Naik, Mr Ashok Malhotra, and Mr Jatin Paranjape undertook an extensive process

for selecting members of the All-India Senior Selection Committee. The Board received around 600 applications following its advertisement for the five posts issued on its official website on 18th November 2022," BCCI said in a media release.

"Upon due deliberation and careful consideration, the CAC shortlisted 11 individuals for personal interviews. Based on the interviews, the Committee has recommended the following candidates for the Senior Men's National Selection Committee.

The committee further recommended Mr Chetan Sharma for the role of Chairman of the senior men's selection committee," it added.

## More Aussies are likely to play in ILT20 after CA downsizes BBL

Sydney, Jan 07 (PTD):

More Australian cricketers are likely to follow the suit of Chris Lynn and Marcus Stoinis in the upcoming ILT20 in the UAE with Cricket Australia (CA) in the process of downsizing the Big Bash League (BBL).

There are efforts underway by CA to downsize the BBL from 61 games to 43 as soon as next season, according to a report in the 'Sydney Morning Herald'.

In that scenario, the BBL will be over around the January 26 long weekend and it would open the door for several Australian players to ply trade in the UAE T20 league.

Lynn had earlier agreed to play 11 games for the Adelaide Strikers and then travel to the ILT20 to link up with Gulf Giants. Stoinis, on the other hand, had signed for Sharjah Warriors.

The report further states that as many as 15 Australian cricketers were approached to play in the ILT20, slated from January 15 to February 13.

"Scarcity can be your friend, not your foe," Australian Cricketers Association (ACA) chief executive Todd Greenberg told SEN Radio on Friday. "A reduction in games potentially will bring a greater level of focus and yield to each of those games.

## Coco Gauff breezes into final of ASB Classic at Auckland



Auckland, Jan 07 (AP):

Top-seeded Coco Gauff advanced to the final of the ASB Classic by beating Danka Kovinic of Montenegro 6-0 6-2 on Saturday.

The American hasn't yet dropped a set at the Auckland hardcourt tournament and needed a little more than an hour to defeat seventh-seeded Kovinic to reach the fourth final of her career. "It means a lot, the last final was the French Open," Gauff said. "But

on the WTA level, the last one was Parma (in 2021), so it's been a while. "Any final is special, especially the first week of the year. I didn't expect this outcome coming into the tournament. I couldn't have asked for a better start to the season, regardless of the result tomorrow."

The 18-year-old Gauff conceded in a courtside interview she's "in the groove" at the start of the year and just over a week ahead of the Australian Open after another im-

pressive win.

"I guess (I'm in the groove)," Gauff said. "I'm in the final so it's hard to say no to that question. It was really good on my behalf."

Gauff was also pleased to compete in front of a crowd after a week in which persistent rain forced the majority of matches indoors without spectators. "I'm glad I was able to play in front of you guys, finally," she said. "It's pretty much a sold-out house so thanks for supporting me."

Gauff completed her win just before rain arrived to delay the second semifinal between qualifiers Ysaline Bonaventure and Rebekka Masarova. "I have a good track record for rain, coming from Florida," Gauff said. "So I knew we had about 20 minutes left and I was pretty much spot on. "I was trying to stay focused on the match and not on the rain coming. But it definitely plays in the back of your head when you know you're close to the end and there's a time constraint."

## Sabalenka advances to Adelaide International women's final

Adelaide, Jan 07 (AP):

Aryna Sabalenka has advanced to the Adelaide International women's singles final with a 6-3 6-2 win on Saturday over Irina-Camelia Begu.

The world's fifth-ranked player had five double-faults but finished the match with her sixth ace. Sabalenka won more than 80 per cent of her points on her first serve and controlled the match from the baseline. She hasn't dropped a set this tournament. "I'm happy with the level I played," Sabalenka said.

"She's playing a little bit different style, so I'm super happy that I was able to win this match."

Sabalenka will meet either teenage qualifier Linda Noskova or top-seeded Ons Jabeur in the final on Sunday. They play their match later Saturday.

Novak Djokovic was scheduled to play Daniil Medvedev in a night men's semifinal.

The winner of that match will face Sebastian Korda, who advanced to the final after Yoshihito Nishioka retired hurt midway through their semifinal.



Korda broke Nishioka's serve in the opening game of the second set and the Japanese left-hander called a medical timeout for treatment on an apparent leg injury. Nishioka returned to play a few more points before retiring midway through their semifinal, with Korda leading 7-6(5) 1-0.

## Venus Williams out of Australian Open due to injury



Melbourne, Jan 07 (AP):

Venus Williams has withdrawn from the Australian Open for an undisclosed injury she sustained while playing in a tournament in Auckland, New Zealand this week.

A seven-time Grand Slam singles champion, Williams received a wild-card entry into the Australian Open last month to compete in what would have been her 22nd major at Melbourne Park. But the Australian Open said on Saturday the 42-year-old Williams had withdrawn from the tournament beginning Jan. 16. It did not provide specifics regarding the injury. It continues a run of misfor-

tunes for Williams, who last played at Melbourne Park in 2021. A two-time Australian Open finalist, Williams injured an ankle and knee in that appearance when stumbling awkwardly at the net in a second-round match against Sara Errani.

Her best efforts at Melbourne Park came when she was beaten by her sister Serena Williams in finals in 2003 and 2017.

Now ranked 1,003, Williams said when granted the wild card in December that she was excited to be returning to Melbourne. "I've been competing in the country for over 20 years now and the Australian community has always supported me wholeheartedly," she said. The five-time Wimbledon singles champion has struggled with injuries over the past two years and was restricted to playing just four tournaments in the US last August. She did not progress beyond the first round in those events and ended her season when beaten by Alison van Uytvanck at the US Open.

## Man United beats Everton 3-1 to advance in FA Cup

Manchester, Jan 07 (AP):

Marcus Rashford scored his fifth goal in as many games after creating two others to help Manchester United beat Everton 3-1 and reach the fourth round of the FA Cup.

Rashford set up Antony's early opener on Friday and saw a second-half cross turned into his own net by Conor Coady, scorer of Everton's equaliser.

Then, in stoppage time, Rashford kept his scoring run going by sending Jordan Pickford the wrong way from the penalty spot after Ben Godfrey fouled Alejandro Garnacho. United was hardly ruthless, grateful to see a potential Dominic Calvert-Lewin equalizer ruled out for a tight offside call. But United did enough to make it seven straight wins in all competitions for the first time since 2019 when Ole Gunnar Solskjaer was in caretaker charge. For Everton, there was consolation in a better performance after losing to Brighton 4-1



Manchester United's English striker Marcus Rashford (C) celebrates after scoring their third goal from the penalty spot during the English FA Cup third round football match between Manchester United and Everton at Old Trafford in Manchester, north west England, on January 6.

midweek left it 18th in the Premier League, the pressure firmly on manager Frank Lampard. Erik ten Hag named a strong side for his first taste of the FA Cup, but notably selected Luke Shaw at center back while Lisandro Martinez without a start since Argentina's World Cup group game against Mexico on Nov. 26 joined Harry Maguire and Victor

Lindelof on the bench. After the horror show of Tuesday night, Lampard reverted to the 3-5-2 system used to frustrate Manchester City last weekend. The 9,000 travelling Everton fans arrived in Manchester still fuming over the latest capitulation, the first chant of "Sack the board" coming 15 minutes before kickoff. Their mood did not improve much.

## Pant undergoes knee surgery for ligament tear



New Delhi, Jan 07 (PTD):

Indian wicketkeeper-batter Rishabh Pant, who miraculously escaped a horrific car accident last week, has successfully undergone a knee surgery at a Mumbai hospital, according to the BCCI sources.

"Rishabh Pant has successfully undergone a knee ligament surgery on Friday. He will be under observation. Further course of action and rehabilitation will be advised by Dr Dinshaw Pardiwala and followed by the BCCI sports science and medicine team," a BCCI source told PTI. The surgery took place at the Kokilaben Dhirubhai Ambani hospital in Andheri West under the supervision of Dr Pardiwala, the head of the Centre for Sports Medicine, and Director of Arthroscopy & Shoulder Service.

## Sania to quit at Dubai meet next month



New Delhi, Jan 07 (PTD):

Veteran Indian tennis player Sania Mirza has decided to draw curtains on her illustrious career at next month's Dubai Duty Free Tennis Championship. The former doubles no.1 has made this announcement to WTA.

Sania initially intended to hang up her racquet at the end of last season, but an elbow injury ruled her out of the US Open and forced her to stop playing in 2022 as early as August.

The 36-year-old Sania, who is married to Pakistan cricketer Shoaib Malik, has been living in Dubai for more than a decade, and

will look to bid adieu to the game at her home base.

"I was going to stop right after the WTA Finals, because we were going to make the WTA Finals, but I tore my tendon in my elbow right before US Open so I had to pull out of everything," Sania told wtatennis.com. "And honestly, the person that I am, I like to do things on my own terms. So I don't want to be forced out by injury. So I've been training." Sania, a six-time major champion - three in doubles and three in mixed doubles - has signed up to compete in this month's Australian Open alongside Kazakhstan's Anna Danilina.

## India should strive to become hub of software products, focus on democratising govt data: President

New Delhi, Jan 07 (PTD):

After proving its power in the field of software, India should strive to become a hub for software products, President Droupadi Murmu said on Saturday. While speaking at the 7th edition of Digital India Awards, Murmu said that there should be focus on democratising government data to help technology enthusiasts in the country develop localised digital solutions.

"We should leverage the prevailing policies and avail the ecosystem to position the country as a global powerhouse of software and hardware products by building made in India technology," Murmu said. She said India has emerged as an important country for use of technology for people-centric governance, especially during the pandemic, which has benefited



President Droupadi Murmu during presentation of the seventh edition of the Digital India Awards, in New Delhi, Saturday.

ted the rest of the world as well. "Digital India is also playing an important role in enhancing the country's profile on the world stage. This becomes all the more

relevant as India takes over the presidency of G20 which is a milestone event," Murmu said. She said India has unveiled indigenously developed 5G

technology and the roll out of the 5G services will transform governance as well. "We should focus on democratising government data so that young technol-

ogy enthusiasts can use it to build localised digital solutions," Murmu said.

At the event, the President conferred awards to 22 government entities in the field of digital governance. She said the pace of change in the future will be fast, driven by the use of technology and in this context social justice should be the prime objective of digital innovation.

Murmu said that India will develop into a knowledge economy only when the digital divide is substantially bridged through the use of technology. "I am confident that India is setting the right example of ensuring the inclusion of vulnerable and marginalised sections of the society, strengthening economic, social and cultural rights in our journey towards Digital Antyodaya," Murmu said.

## Kerala child rights panel 'Frisking students for mobile phones hurts their self-respect'

Thiruvananthapuram, Jan 07 (PTD):

In a significant order, Kerala's child rights panel has directed authorities to stop frisking students to check on them carrying mobile phones in schools, saying it amounts to hurting their "self-respect" and "dignity". The panel ordered that the gadgets can be carried to educational institutions with the permission of parents for certain special needs.

"Body frisking of students and scanning their bags for mobile phones are barbaric and against the democratic culture... It amounts to hurting the dignity and self-respect of children. So, it should be strictly avoided," the panel stated. It was also a violation of national and international child rights laws and the fundamental rights ensured by the Constitution,

the Kerala State Commission for Protection of Child Rights said in its recent order.

Criticising the blanket ban imposed against students carrying mobile phones to schools, it said the gadgets have become an inseparable part of today's life and the need of the hour is a scientific and psychological approach to check them from becoming addicted to it.

At present, the usage of mobile phones is banned in state schools and the Commission's stand is also that children should not use mobile phones in schools, it said.

"Though children have no permission to use mobile phones in schools, they can carry it with the permission of parents for certain special needs. School authorities should make arrangements to keep the

phones after switching off till the class hours are over," the order said.

The full bench of the Commission, comprising its Chairman K V Manoj Kumar and members B Babitha and Reni Antony, came out with the significant directive recently while considering a complaint of a parent of a student whose mobile phone was confiscated by school authorities.

Stating that there was no legal backing for the existing practice of confiscation of mobile phones from students by the school authorities, the panel also ordered to give back the phone to the complainant within three days. Chairman Manoj Kumar said the panel also directed the authorities to implement a programme in schools to make children "social media literate".

## 'Centre willing to start one old age home in each district of Kerala'

Kochi, Jan 07 (PTD):

Union Minister of State for Social Justice and Empowerment Ramdas Athawale on Saturday said the Centre was willing to start one old age home in each district of Kerala with the cooperation of NGOs. Speaking to reporters here, Athawale said the Union government was implementing many schemes for the welfare of all sections of the society irrespective of caste and religion.

"...So far 1,658 old age homes had been established in the country with the help of the Social Justice Department and among them, nine were in Kerala. 109 of the 1,720 de-addiction centers functioning with the financial assistance of the Department of Social Justice are also in Kerala,"



Union Minister of State for Social Justice & Empowerment Ramdas Athawale addresses a press conference, in Kochi, Saturday.

he said. Stressing that schemes like Jan Dhan Yojana, Mudra, Ujjawala, Ayushman Bharat and PM Awas Yojana were acting as catalysts in changing the lives of people from all walks of life, the Union Minister said that the government was keen on implementing these

schemes by adhering to the slogan 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vishwas, Sabka Prayas'. Talking about the implementation of various Central Government schemes in Kerala, Athawale said that under the Jan Dhan Yojana, 53.62 lakh bank accounts had been opened in the State.

## Lion, lioness drown after falling into open well

Amreli, Jan 07 (PTD): A lion and a lioness fell into an open well in the Gir forest division in Gujarat's Amreli district and drowned, a forest official said on Saturday. The big cats, aged five to nine years, were roaming in the area when they fell into the well belonging to a farmer in Kotda village in Khambha taluka on Friday morning, said Rajdeepsinh Zala, deputy conservator of forests (DCF), Gir (East).

"The farmer informed us as soon as he came to know about the incident. However, by the time the rescue team reached the spot, the animals had drowned. Their carcasses were fished out and sent for post-mortem," Zala said. Since 2007-08, at least 11,748 wells in the Gir East division covering Amreli and Gir Somnath districts have been secured with parapets to prevent big cats from falling into them, the official said.

New Delhi, Jan 07 (PTD):

Noting that the entire metro rail project is complete and running, the Supreme Court has refused to stop the Noida metro's operations for the want of an environmental clearance. The court was hearing an appeal filed against a May 31, 2016 order of the National Green Tribunal (NGT), directing that all metro rail projects need an environmental clearance after conducting a proper environment impact assessment.

Keeping the question of law open, a bench of justices M R Shah and C T Ravikumar said the metro services in Delhi and Noida are being used by the public at large. "In that view of the matter, when the entire metro rail project is complete and the metro rail is running, the clock cannot

## 'Cannot put clock back' SC refuses to stop operations of Noida metro

be put back and the same shall not be even in the larger public interest. Under the circumstances, we propose to dispose of the present appeals, keeping the questions of law open," it said. The apex court said the NGT order cannot be acted upon in the peculiar facts and circumstances of the case. "However, the questions of law, if any, more particularly, whether with respect to the rail project or metro rail project, the environmental clearance is required or not and other questions of law, if any, are kept open to be considered in appropriate proceedings and the present order shall not be cited as a precedent in any other matters or cases," the bench said. The NGT had held that all metro rail projects need an environmental clearance after conducting a proper

environment impact assessment. It had said the Noida metro, the construction of which was challenged before it, fell under Schedule 8(b) of the Environment Impact Assessment Notification, 2006, relating to buildings, construction and development projects that are mandated to get a prior environmental clearance. The green panel had also directed the upcoming Noida-Greater Noida metro project to obtain an environmental clearance from the State Level Environment Impact Assessment Authority (SEIAA). The order was passed on a plea filed by environmentalist Vikrant Tongad, seeking directions to the Noida Metro Rail Corporation (NMRC) to obtain an environmental clearance for its project from Noida to Greater Noida after conducting a

proper environment impact assessment.

"From the detailed project report (DPR), it is clear that the total land requirement for the project of metro rail from Noida to Greater Noida is around 2,84,762.01 square metres. However, no Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) report was prepared. This fact was verified by the applicant by inspecting the records of the project under the Right to Information Act, 2005.

"It is submitted that as per 8(b) of the schedule of the EIA Notification, 2006, a project having a covering area of more than 50 hectares or a built-up area of more than 1,50,000 square metres requires an environmental clearance and is to be appraised as a category B1 project," the plea, filed through advocate Rahul Choudhary, had said.

## Bharat Jodo Yatra not taken out to project Rahul Gandhi as PM face, says Jairam

Karnal (Hry), Jan 07 (PTD):

Congress leader Jairam Ramesh on Saturday said the Bharat Jodo Yatra has not been organised to project Rahul Gandhi as a prime ministerial candidate for the 2024 Lok Sabha polls, asserting that the foot march has nothing to do with elections.

The former Union minister also said Gandhi has succeeded in highlighting three big issues during the yatra - economic inequality, social polarisation and political authoritarianism. Replying to a reporter's question here, the Congress general secretary in-charge communications said, "The Bharat Jodo Yatra has not been taken out to project Rahul Gandhi as a prime ministerial candidate.

It is an ideological yatra and Gandhi is its main face. But it is not an individual's yatra." He asserted that the Kanyakumari-Kashmir foot march, which is currently passing through Haryana, is not an "election yatra". Ramesh said it is unfair to ask if the opposition party is projecting Gandhi as its prime ministerial face in the 2024 general election. "No, No, No... We are not, this is not an election yatra," he said in response to the reporter's question. "There



Congress leader Rahul Gandhi during the Bharat Jodo Yatra, in Karnal, Saturday.

are 200 Bharat yatris. It is the Congress party's yatra. The party workers are involved. Obviously, the nation's attention is on Rahul Gandhi because he is the most visible, prominent and dynamic face of the yatra. But this is not meant for one individual, this is not meant to project him as a prime ministerial candidate," he said. Flanked by former Haryana chief minister Bhupinder Singh Hooda, Ramesh said the yatra "is meant to ideologically combat the RSS and the BJP". "Rahul Gandhi has raised three big issues during the Bharat Jodo Yatra - economic inequality, social polarisation and political authoritarian-

ism. He is raising these issues everyday during his walking interactions, his talking interactions, in his rallies. "So I think it is unfair for you to ask this question - 'are we projecting him as a prime ministerial face?' We are not. This is not an election yatra," he said. Ramesh said the foot march is meant to strengthen the Congress's ideology, the party organisation and awaken the country's conscience to the "disaster" and the "damage" being caused by the personality of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, his mode of functioning, policies, politics of harassment and politics of vendetta.

## At least 38 JNU, IIT-Delhi professors duped of crores by colleague in real estate fraud

New Delhi, Jan 07 (PTD):

Several professors of JNU and other institutions have accused a former JNU employee of duping them of crores of rupees promising them homes on a DDA plot under a housing development scheme which was never there. After waiting for over seven years, when these academics did not get anything except hollow promises, their patience ran out and they lodged a formal complaint with the Delhi Police.

Prima facie, police have found incriminating evidence against the accused in the matter and have lodged an FIR. In 2015, just before he was due retirement, Dr DP Gaikwad, a technical staff in the Department of Environmental Science of JNU, floated a society and named it Noble Socio-Scientific Welfare Organization (NSSWO). He sold its membership to his peers claiming that the society owned land in the L-Zone in Dwarka Najafgarh Area under the Land Pooling Policy.

He collected from Rs 2 lakh to Rs 16 lakh each from the academic and non-academic staff of JNU, IIT-Delhi, and other nearby institutions for three years in various installments, assuring them that the project was on.

"To make it appear real, he took several of us to show a piece of land, but later it turned out that NSSWO was not the owner

of the land," Professor Gobardhan Das, Chairperson, Molecular Medicine, JNU, said.

"After collecting a hefty amount by cheating all the members, he stopped communicating and blocked all his phone numbers," Das, a victim of the scam, said. After he went uncommunicated, he was however traced in Gurugram by some professors who went there to confront him. All the same, he again reeled them in with the offer of another lucrative scheme.

"He continued to play his trick of cheating and in February 2019, he offered to transfer our membership of NSSWO to another entity named Siddhartha Officers Housing and Social Welfare Society (SOHSWS) through which our flats were to be delivered, however, with a significantly escalated cost," Prof Biswajit Kundu from IIT-Delhi, one of the 10 complainants in the FIR, said.

"He didn't give any explanation for doing so, nor did he provide any details of any consequent changes in the agreement. "In spite of repeated requests by several members, he never called a general body meeting of either society, nor took consent from the members of NSSWO for the changes made unilaterally," Kundu added.

Gaikwad himself admitted that there are 38

professors from JNU who have invested in the project, Das said.

"There are two from IIT and many more from other nearby institutions as far as I know. Initially, in a few cases, he returned 50 to 80 per cent money when he was forced to do so, but later he simply refused to return any money," Das added.

Dr Bindu Dey, a former senior scientist in the Department of Biotechnology in the Ministry of Science and Technology, was another victim of Gaikwad.

Having lost Rs 8 lakh in a bogus scheme, Dey in 2018 filed a complaint against Gaikwad at Vasant Kunj Police Station where an FIR was lodged against him.

"He collected Rs 16 lakh from me in the name of offering an affordable home but kept delaying with one excuse or the other. After a

lot of persuasion and follow-up, he returned Rs 8 lakh but the remaining amount is still with him," Dey, who retired from the DBT, said.

These academics are the

latest in a huge list of victims of real estate fraud in the L-Zone where the Delhi Development Authority had first announced the Land Pooling Policy around 2014.

**बैद्यनाथ** सुपर इन्फ्यूनिटी

असली आयुर्वेद

**क्या आपका परिवार इन्फेक्शन से लड़ने के लिए तैयार है?**

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श्री प्रियम जैस्वाल, रायपुर प्र. मेरी उम्र 45 वर्ष है। शारीरिक कमजोरी आयी है, इस कारण बहुत परेशान हूँ।

उ. बैद्यनाथ वीटा एक्स गोल्ड प्लस कॅप्सूल 1-1 कॅप्सूल सुबह-शाम भोजन के बाद दूध के साथ लें।

श्री विवेक मौर्य, राजनांदगांव प्र. मुझे 4 साल से बवासीर की तकलीफ है। शौच के समय व बाद में उस जगह पर दर्द रहता है। सुई चुभने जैसी पीड़ा रहती है। उपाय बतायें।

उ. बैद्यनाथ सिड्पाईल्स 2-2 टॅबलेट सुबह-शाम पानी के साथ लें तथा बैद्यनाथ अमयाप्त 2-2 चम्मच समभाग पानी के साथ सुबह-शाम भोजन के बाद लें।

श्रीमती राधा राठोड़, धमतरी प्र. मेरी उम्र 54 वर्ष की है। 6 साल से जोड़ों के दर्द की तकलीफ है। ठंड के दिनों में तकलीफ बढ़ जाती है। जोड़ों पर सृजन भी आयी है।

उ. बैद्यनाथ रूमाथो गोल्ड प्लस कॅप्सूल 1-1 कॅप्सूल सुबह-शाम पानी के साथ लें। बैद्यनाथ महाराष्ट्रनादि काड़ा (सुग्गुलु युक्त) 2-2 चम्मच समभाग पानी के साथ सुबह-शाम भोजन के बाद लें। दर्द के स्थानपर बैद्यनाथ महाराष्ट्र तैल की हलकी मसाज करें।

**डॉ. बालु कोलार**

बैद्यनाथ के उत्पादों को आप जगजगत् हीन सुखीनीति जी है। इन का प्रयोग वैदिक विद्यार्थी से करें। अधिक जानकारी के लिए कॉल करें 844 844 8443। www.baidyanath.com

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(अल्ट्रागार्डन) बर्न यूनित

10 इंच सिव आइसोलेशन केयर ग्लास केविन, हेपा फिल्टर/लेमिनर फ्लो 100% जीवाणु रहित ग्लास केविन.

**उ.न.शासन से मान्यता प्राप्त**

**कालड़ा बर्न एवं**

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आर.के.सी.के.सामने, चौबे कालोनी एवं पंचवटी नाका, धमतरी रोड, कलकत्ते मॉल के पास, रायपुर  
कॉल: 9827143060/8871003060

Ajay Advt.

### BRIEF



LGBTQ community members during the annual 'Pride March 2023', in Nagpur, Saturday.

### Rly litigations

**New Delhi:** Union Law Minister Kiren Rijiju and his junior minister S P Singh Baghel have reviewed the performance of matters related to railway litigations. The Ministry of Railways is considered the biggest litigant among government departments. It is a party to over 66,000 cases pending in courts across the country, according to a June, 2017 document of the ministry. The meeting with officials of the Department of Legal Affairs took place on Friday, officials said.

### Bribery case

**New Delhi:** The CBI has arrested an Income Tax officer and a chartered accountant in Chennai for their alleged involvement in a Rs 2.25 lakh bribery case, officials said Saturday. The bureau's action came after an FIR was registered against CPWD's superintendent engineer Sanjay Chinchghare, assistant valuation officer D.Manjunathan and chartered accountant Satgurudas and Suresh, the assessee and property owner, they said. A case was registered by the CBI against the accused on allegations that Suresh had declared a high-value property transaction in his Income Tax return which was referred to the Income Tax Valuation Cell by National Faceless Assessment Centre, New Delhi, the officials said.

### Tourists killed

**Siliguri (WB):** Two persons were killed and five others critically injured after their car rammmed into a truck parked on the roadside in northern West Bengal's Siliguri on Saturday morning, police said. Seven tourists from Nadia district were on the way to Darjeeling when the accident happened near Saidabad tea garden in Phansidewa block in Siliguri subdivision, they said. It is suspected that dense fog in the area led to the accident, they added.

### Life term

**Kota:** A court here on Saturday convicted a 75-year-old man and his son in a four-year-old murder case and awarded them life sentence. Additional Sessions and District Court Judge (V) in Kota city also slapped a penalty of Rs 25,000 each on Jagannath Bairwa and his son Heeralal, residents of Malmoja Karadia, for the murder of Satyanarayan Bairwa (30) in September, 2018 over a land dispute, Public Prosecutor Akhtar Khan Akela said. The two convicts, along with four women of the family, attacked Satyanarayan Bairwa with sticks and sharp weapons, the public prosecutor said, adding the injured was rushed to a hospital where doctors declared him brought dead.

**Weather**  
High 24 Low 12

## 'Govt aiming to make country free of Naxalism before 2024 elections'

**Korba (C'garh), Jan 07 (PTD):**

Naxalite violence has declined over the last decade and efforts are on to rid the country of the Naxal menace before the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, Union Home Minister Amit Shah said on Saturday.

Shah was speaking at a rally at Indira Stadium in Korba city of Chhattisgarh, a state affected by Maoist violence.

Sounding the poll bugle, the BJP leader also urged people to vote out the Bhupesh Baghel-led Congress government in the state in the Assembly elections this year.

People should vote for the Bharatiya Janata Party if



they wanted to see Narendra Modi as Prime Minister once again in 2024, he said, while blaming the Baghel government for a 'rise' in crime and corruption.

"Naxalite incidents declined to 509 in 2021, from 2,258 in 2009 when the Congress was in power at

the Centre," Shah said.

The Narendra Modi government not only ensured that the youth (in Naxalite-affected areas) who used to pick up weapons got access to education and employment, but also worked to eliminate those who wielded weapons, he said.

"Our government's effort is to make the country free of Naxalism before the 2024 parliamentary polls," he added.

Taking a swipe at the Congress government, he said, "I want to ask Bhupesh Baghel what he will tell people if they ask him what he has done in his five years' rule. not that he has done nothing. He has worked to increase corrup-

tion, incidents of rape and crimes, and the cutting of forests of tribals."

Shah also alleged corruption in the management of the District Mineral Foundation (DMF) funds under the Baghel government.

"The Modi government started DMF for the development and welfare of people (in mineral-rich areas) Chhattisgarh received Rs 9,243 crore by way of DMF, but what has this government done with that money? I can tell you where it has gone. See the houses of Congressmen in your area. Those who used to move around on scooter now have an Audi car. Their houses have turned into

three-storey buildings ...Congress committed corruption in DMF funds," the union minister alleged.

Shah urged people to teach a lesson to the Congress by voting it out of power and said a BJP government will seek account of every single rupee from Bhupesh Baghel.

"If you want to add momentum to the vehicle of development then you have to put a double engine in it. There is already one engine (referring to the Modi government) and you need to put another by electing the BJP in this year's Assembly elections. Whatever that has not been done, will be completed in five years," he said.

### CADET PERFORMS



An NCC cadet performs during Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar's visit to the NCC Republic Day 2023 camp at Delhi Cantt., in New Delhi, Saturday.

## RSS does not seek to create pressure group through its volunteers: Bhagwat

**Panaji, Jan 07 (PTD):**

Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh chief Mohan Bhagwat on Saturday said his organization produces volunteers who can contribute to the country in many fields but does not seek to create any "pressure group" through them. He was speaking at a public meeting organised by the RSS here. RSS Swayamsevaks (volunteers) are involved in various social causes at their individual level but that does not mean that the Sangh is a "service organization," he said. "Whatever Swayamsevaks do, it is in their individual capacity. The Sangh

has given them the thought, due to which they work wherever work is needed. They have mastered the art of taking along everyone, that is why they lead society," Bhagwat said.

"This is how volunteers are moulded, they are not moulded to create any influential pressure group in the country. The RSS chief also said that it is in the world's interest that India becomes a strong country. There were various (political and social) experiments in the last 2,000 years but now the world wants India to show the way, he said.



### Kanjhawala accident case

## Court grants bail to man accused of shielding accused

**New Delhi, Dec 07 (PTD):**

A court here on Saturday granted bail to Ankush Khanna who allegedly shielded the accused involved in the Kanjhawala accident case.

Metropolitan Magistrate Sanya Dalal granted the relief to Khanna, who had surrendered on Friday, after observing that the charges against him were bailable.

The judge noted that according to the Investigating Officer (IO), Khanna had in his statement to the police said that accused Deepak was driving the vehicle. However, according to the investigation conducted so far, it has been found that ac-

cused Amit was driving.

The court also noted the investigation officer's submission that Ankush Khanna along with another accused Ashutosh had assisted the co-accused in hiding them at Deepak's residence. "...Offences alleged are bailable in nature. Hence accused is granted bail on furnishing personal bond of Rs 20,000 along with one surety of like amount," the judge said.

The court asked the accused to join the investigation as and when required by the IO, attend the trial and not tamper with evidence. During the proceedings, the prosecution sought 14 days of judicial custody of the accused.

## Peeing episode: Accused arrested

**Air India CEO apologises for incident; crew, pilot de-rostered**

**Bengaluru, Jan 07 (PTD):**

The man who allegedly urinated on a woman co-passenger on an Air India flight was arrested Saturday while the carrier's CEO issued an apology over handling of the incident and said four cabin crew and a pilot have been de-rostered and the policy of serving alcohol on flights is being reviewed.

Delhi Police arrested Shankar Mishra, 34, from Bengaluru after he was traced to that city through technical surveillance, officials said.

A Delhi court later sent Mishra to judicial remand for 14 days while rejecting



Delhi police takes away accused Shankar Mishra after producing him before the Patiala House Court in an Air India flight urinating case, in New Delhi, Saturday.

a plea by police for his custody.

Police had sought his three-day remand, saying he was required to be identified by three cabin crew members and two captains and other co-passengers were also to be examined.

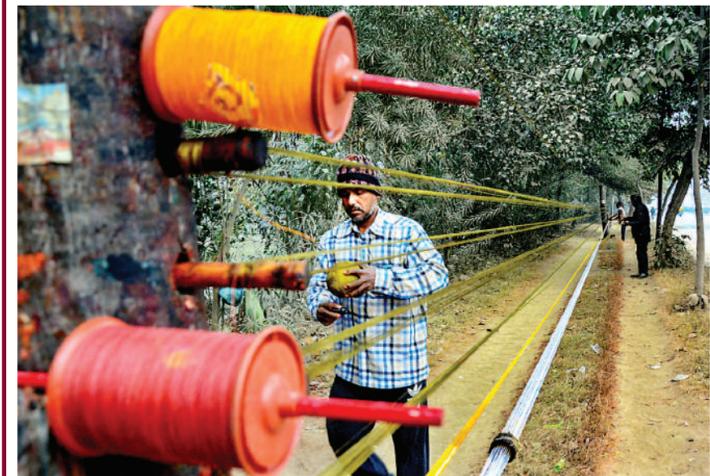
Passing the order, Metropolitan Magistrate Anamika noted that Mishra's custody was not required by police for recording statements of other witnesses, including cabin crew and co-passengers.

"Just because there's public pressure, don't do this. Go by the law," the judge said.

Delhi Police had registered an FIR against him on January 4 on a complaint given by the woman to Air India.

Mishra, who was working with US multinational firm Wells Fargo in India, was sacked on Friday. He allegedly urinated on the woman, a senior citizen, in an inebriated condition in the business class of the Air India flight from New York to Delhi on November 26 last year.

### LOHRI FESTIVAL



A worker prepares 'dor' or 'manjha', a kite-flying string, ahead of Lohri festival, in Amritsar, Saturday.

## Mumbai logs two new COVID-19 cases

**Mumbai, Jan 07 (PTD):**

Mumbai on Saturday recorded two new cases of coronavirus that took the tally of infections to 11,55,153, an official from the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) said. The toll remained unchanged at 19,746 and the count of recoveries stood at 11,35,378, an official said. Mumbai had on Friday logged nine new cases. As per a bulletin issued by the civic body, the city is left with 29 active COVID-19 cases. The average doubling rate of cases is at 2,27,441 days, while the recovery rate is 98.3 per cent, it said. As many as 2,289 swab samples were tested in the last 24 hours, taking the total number of tests conducted in the city to 1,86,51,367.

## Three held for chasing, harassing lions in Gir Wildlife Sanctuary

**Junagadh, Jan 07 (PTD):**

Three persons have been arrested for allegedly harassing lions by chasing them on their vehicles and shooting videos using mobile phones in Gir Wildlife Sanctuary in Junagadh district of Gujarat, a forest official said on Saturday.

Out of six persons involved in the incident, the authorities on Friday arrested three accused, who hail from Rajasthan, after videos of the chase surfaced on social media, an official said.

According to forest officials, the videos were most likely recorded two weeks ago in Gir Wildlife

Sanctuary near Sasan Gir in Junagadh district.

In a video, some persons can be seen following a pride of lions on two vehicles, with one of them sitting on the bonnet of a four-wheeler. Some of the accused shot videos on their mobile phones while driving dangerously close to the lions on what appeared to be a village road.

Offences under relevant provisions of the Wildlife Protection Act have been registered against six persons for trespassing and chasing lions, said Aradhana Sahu, the chief conservator of forests of Junagadh wildlife circle.

"Three of the accused

were arrested and produced in court, as harassing lions is a non-bailable offence. The arrested accused have been sent to judicial custody," the official said. The arrests were made based on videos that went viral and came to the notice of the forest department, she said.

"We had called three of them for inquiry and detained them. They were booked under two offences, one for trespassing and another for chasing lions," Sahu said. Chasing or participating in illegal lion shows invites action under the Wildlife Protection Act and the offence is non-bailable, she said.

## Six more held for church vandalism, attack on cops

**Narayanpur, Jan 7 (PTD)**

Six more persons have been arrested in connection with the alleged vandalism at a church and attack on policemen in Chhattisgarh's Narayanpur district early this week, taking the number of those taken into custody to 11, police said on Saturday.

The church, located on the premises of a private school, in Narayanpur city was targeted on Monday during a protest against alleged religious conversion in the tribal-dominated area.

The protesters also attacked Narayanpur Superintendent of Police Sadanand Kumar and five police personnel when they were trying to disperse the crowd. "Six more persons



Catholic and non-Catholic Churches members holding placards participate in a protest against the alleged vandalisation of Baster Church, near Tipu Sultan mosque, in Kolkata, Saturday.

were arrested on Friday in connection with the incident of riots in Narayanpur during a protest by people of a community," said Kumar, who sustained head injuries in

the attack. The person who attacked the IPS officer is among the six held, said officials. Earlier, the president of the Bharatiya Janata Party's Narayanpur district unit and four oth-

ers were arrested for their alleged role in the violence, the SP said. The police have registered four FIRs under Indian Penal Code sections pertaining to rioting, promoting enmity between different groups on the grounds of religion and race, criminal conspiracy and defiling places of worship.

Adequate security personnel have been deployed to maintain law and order in the Narayanpur district, the police officer said, adding the situation was peaceful and normal.

On Monday, tribals gathered in Narayanpur; nearly 240 km from the state capital Raipur, to protest against a clash between two communities on Sunday over alleged religious conversion in Edka village in the district.

After the meeting, the crowd barged into a church and vandalised it, officials had said. The rioters also attacked a police team led by SP Kumar that arrived to control the situation.

The discord between the Christian and non-Christian communities in the district had been brewing for some time.

Last month, a large number of people belonging to the Christian community staged a protest in front of the Collector's office in Narayanpur alleging "atrocities" against them.

Protesters from at least 14 villages of the tribal-dominated district had claimed they were allegedly assaulted and evicted from their homes for following the Christian faith and sought action by the administration.

## Four PFI members chargesheeted by NIA

**Patna, Jan 07 (PTD):**

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Saturday filed a chargesheet against four members of the Popular Front of India (PFI) in a case related to "unlawful and anti-national" activities by the banned group in Bihar, an official said.

The charge sheet was filed in a special NIA court here against arrested accused - Athar Parvej, Mohd Jalaluddin Khan, Nooruddin Zangi alias "Advocate Nooruddin" and Arman Malik alias "Imteyaz Anwer", a spokesperson of the federal anti-terror agency said.

They were charged under various sections of the Indian Penal Code and the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act. The

spokesperson said the case was initially registered on July 12 last year at the Phulwarisharif police station and re-registered by the NIA 10 days later.

"The case pertains to the involvement of accused/suspected persons, associated with the PFI, in unlawful and anti-national activities, who had assembled in Phulwarisharif area of Patna," the official said.

During investigations, the NIA said Parvej, Khan, Zangi and Malik were arrested for their involvement in the instant case.

"Investigations revealed that the criminal conspiracy was hatched with an intention to carry out acts of terror and violence, leading to an atmosphere of terror and endangering the unity and integrity of the nation," the spokesperson said.

# Absconding thief arrested; one still at large

# Police targets prime factors of road accidents

**Central Chronicle News**

**Bhilai, Jan 07:** With the arrest of three notorious thieves, police claimed to have solved 02 cases of thefts at locked houses in Supela and Smriti Nagar area. The thefts were committed by a gang of four thieves. Police identified the accused with the help of CCTV footage. The accused used to distribute the stolen gold and silver ornaments among themselves. Stolen booty worth Rs 08.75 lakh has been recovered. It was a joint action of Anti Crime and Cyber Unit and Chowki Smriti Nagar.

Under the directions of Superintendent of Police, Dr Abhishek Pallava and supervision of Additional Superintendent of Police (City) Sanjay Dhruv, City Superintendent of Police (Bhilai Nagar) Nikhil Rakhecha and Deputy Superintendent of Police (Crime) Nasar Siddiqui, a

joint team of ACCU, Supela Police Station and Smriti Nagar Chowki led by Inspector Santosh Mishra (I/c ACCU), Inspector Durgesh Sharma (SHO, Supela) and Sub-Inspector Pramod Srivastava (I/c, Smriti Nagar) was keeping an eye on the suspects.

The team interrogated the habitual criminals and criminals released from jail. The network of informers was activated to gather information about the people involved in thefts. After receiving complaints of thefts, the team examined the footage of CCTV cameras installed in the surrounding areas of the crime scene. Some suspects were seen in the footage after which their pics were shared on social media and finally police managed to identify the suspects.

The suspects were identified as Ajay Babu alias Bajji of Camp 01, Rajesh



Nani and Nausad alias Billu of Camp 01. Police arrested the suspect Ajay Babu alias Bajji from Chhawani. Initially he tried to mislead the cops but during sustained interrogation, he confessed to have committed thefts.

Ajay Babu disclosed that he committed theft at a locked house in Shanti Nagar in December. They had distributed the stolen booty among themselves and had kept some items with Vicky alias Sardar. The accused Rajesh alias

Nani and Nausad alias Billu had absconded but police managed to arrest Vicky Verma alias Sardar after which gold and silver coins were recovered from his possession. The two were sent to jail on judicial remand.

Since then, police was continuously tracing the absconding accused Rajesh alias Nani and Nausad alias Billu. Recently, police came to know that Rajesh alias Nani had fled to Bihar and was returning back to Bhilai by Danapur

Express. Police rounded up the accused Rajesh at Railway Station Power House.

During interrogation, he disclosed that apart from the theft of Shantinagar, they had committed a theft at Chandra Nagar Kohka in the month of October. Police recovered some gold and silver jewellery from his possession. He too has been sent to jail on judicial remand. Absconding accused Nausad alias Billu is being traced.

ASI Purna Bahadur, Chandrashekhar Soni, Head Constable Chandrashekhar Banjeer, Constable Santosh Gupta, Anup Sharma, Panne Lal, Jagnu Singh, Upendra Yadav, Vikrant Kumar from ACCU, Sub Inspector Likhani Verma from Chowki Smriti Nagar; ASI BL Sahu, Constable Ashish Prasad and Jaynarayan Yadav played a vital role in arresting the accused.



● **115 fined for over speeding, without helmet and two pillion riders**

**Central Chronicle News**

**Bhilai, Jan 07:** Traffic Police is continuously taking action against the traffic rules violators to make the roads safer for commuters. Now, the cops are focussing on the prime factors which cause road accidents. Under the direc-

tions of Dr Abhishek Pallava, Superintendent of Police, Durg and under the leadership of DSP Satish Thakur and DSP Sadanand Vindhayraj, a special campaign was conducted for traffic awareness. People were asked to follow the traffic rules. Action was taken against a total of 115 drivers who were found violating the traffic rules at the major traffic junctions of the city. People were fined for driving at high speed, driving with two pillion riders

and riding without helmets. Car drivers, who were found moving without seat belts, were also fined. The violators were explained about the significance of traffic rules and were asked to follow them strictly.

Traffic Police Durg has appealed to all the citizens to always follow the traffic rules while driving to stay safe and ensure safety of others on the road. By following the traffic rules, serious road accidents can be avoided.

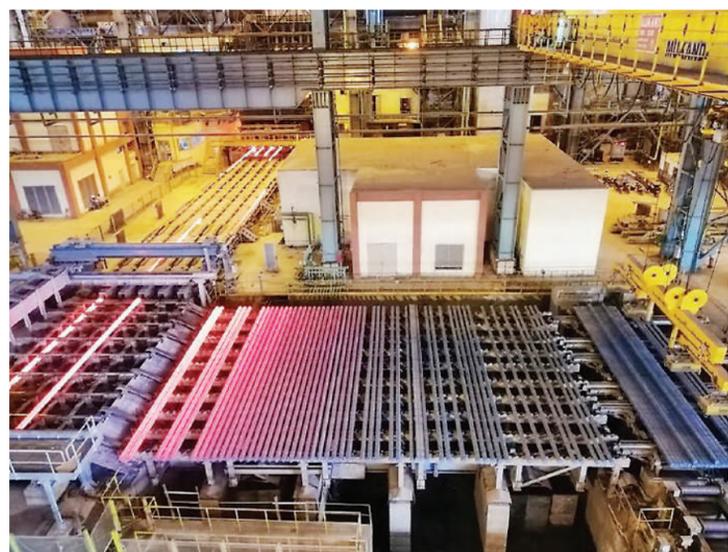
# BSP records all time high production of Finished Steel & Saleable Steel in 2022

**Central Chronicle News**

**Bhilai, Jan 07:** SAIL-Bhilai Steel Plant has recorded all time high production of finished steel and saleable steel in Calendar Year 2022. Modex units, Steel Melting Shop-3, Universal Rail Mill and Bar & Rod Mill too have recorded best ever calendar year performances in 2022.

In the area of sinter production, Sinter Plant-3 recorded production of 5,365,500 T in Year 2022, surpassing previous best of 5,192,267 T achieved in 2021. Total Sinter production at 8,001,700 T was also best ever for any calendar year, surpassing previous best of 7,848,545 T achieved in 2021.

Modex unit, Steel Melting Shop-3 that supplies cast blooms for production of rails and cast billets for production of TMT Bars etc recorded



best ever production of 2,927,600 T of cast steel in 2022, surpassing the previous best of 2,675,258 T achieved in the year 2021.

This included best ever production of Cast Bloom at 1,130,100 T, surpassing the previous best of 1,034,317 T achieved in the

year 2021 and best ever production of Cast Billets at 1,797,500 T, surpassing previous best of 1,640,941 T achieved in 2021.

Universal Rail Mill recorded highest ever Prime Rail production of 743,500 T in 2022, surpassing previous best of 628,922 T achieved in the year 2021. URM also recorded best ever Long Rail Production at 700,700 T, surpassing previous best of 691,986 T achieved in the year 2020.

Total long production from both URM and Rail & Structural Mill in 2022 was also best ever at 843,700 T, surpassing previous best of 691,986 T achieved in the year 2020. The Plant recorded highest ever loading of Long Rails at 866,500 T in 2022, surpassing previous best of 715,644 T achieved in the year 2020.

Modex unit, Bar & Rod Mill recorded best ever finished production at 814,300 T, surpassing previous best of 656,606 T achieved in the year 2021. RMP 3, another Modex unit

recorded highest ever total production of 469,600 T, surpassing previous best of 385,430 T achieved in the year 2021.

The Plant recorded highest ever total Finished Steel production at 4,277,100 T in 2022, surpassing previous best of 3,632,768 T achieved in the year 2021, and highest ever Saleable Steel production at 4,667,800 T, surpassing previous best of 4,660,348 T achieved in the year 2021. Highest ever Total Loading for Direct despatches of 2,676,200 T was recorded, surpassing the previous best of 2,474,061 T achieved in the year 2021.

In the area of techno-economics, highest ever CDI (coal dust injection) rate of 110 Kg per tonne of hot metal has been achieved in Blast Furnaces, surpassing previous best of 77.4 Kg/THM achieved in the year 2021.

# Tension prevails in Khursipar over alleged religious conversion event

**Central Chronicle News**

**Bhilai, Jan 07:** An alleged case of religion conversion has come into light from the New Khursipar area of Steel City. A Punjabi family, which converted recently, had organised a house warming function at their newly constructed house. During this function, a prayer meeting was also organised during which the invitees were allegedly lured for religious conversion.

Local Corporator Daya Singh came to know about the happening after which Bajrang Dal activists reached the spot and created a scene. Under their pressure, the programme was cancelled and the tents were removed.

Brawl like situation was created at the venue due to the verbal clash between the followers of two different religions. Both the groups raised slogans against each other. Locals alleged that the housewarming func-

tion was being deliberately converted into a prayer meeting. Angered locals made the organisers discontinue the event and remove the pandals.

On information, ASP Sanjay Dhruv reached the spot with the teams of three police stations. The cops managed to diffuse the tension and have recorded the statements of both the parties. Police team has been deployed at the locality to avert any possible untoward incident.

Bajrang Dal leader Ravi Nigam stated that the person who was hosting the function was a poor truck driver. Few years back, he accepted another religion and within a few years he became rich. Bajrang Dal demanded an investigation into his sources of income. They further alleged that the converted person was pressuring other locals for religious conversion due to which the locals came forward in his protest.



# 2023 will be the golden year for MSMEs: KK Jha

**Central Chronicle News**

**Bhilai, Jan 07:** MSME District Industry Association Durg President KK Jha has said that the era of MSME industries has arrived. The New Year 2023 will be the golden year of revolution for the MSME industries. Hence this year must be celebrated as "MSME Kranti Udyog". At present, MSME industries have become the backbone of the country and the state as well. The markets across the country are open for MSME industries. Now there is a need to take advantage of the facilities and exemptions

given by the government for MSME industries. MSME industries no longer need to depend only on BSP as there is work for them in the entire country.

Jha further said that it is a big achievement for MSMEs to take advantage of the exemptions and facilities given by the government. For example, there is a technical center in Borai where young entrepreneurs can learn almost everything. Skill development committee in the district provides a lot of guidance. Today, there is scope for MSMEs in many sectors and hence there is no need to depend on BSP.



Today the whole country is open for MSME industries. For which "GEM" (Government E Marketing) has been created. Through "GEM", the MSMEs can work all over the country without any

restriction. Jha added that MSMEs have an open market today. Special facility has been given by the government in Chhattisgarh. If industries are facing any problem, the state's sensi-

and take facilities from them. At present, many facilities are being provided to the MSME industries by the government, such as loans without guarantee, special package of loans for women, 30 to 40% subsidy to newly installed units, subsidy on electricity bills and bank loans and other facilities are being provided.

Jha said that the era of MSME industries has come. Its glimpse was visible in 2022 itself. Just like the Green Revolution, the MSME revolution is going to happen. The year 2023 will be the golden year for MSME industries.

Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel is taking it very seriously. He personally attended the meeting of Chambers / Industries and discusses the issues with everyone. Not only this, whatever matter reaches to him through letters and media, he takes them seriously and tries to solve the problems.

KK Jha said that at present the Prime Minister, Chief Minister, public representatives and bureaucrats all understand the importance of MSMEs. Today MSME has become the backbone of the country and the state. There is a need to provide facilities to them

# Sub Junior boys & girls team to participate in National Fencing Championship

**Central Chronicle News**

**Bhilai, Jan 07:** Chhattisgarh State Sub-Junior Boys and Girls Fencing Teams left for Cochin, Kerala to participate in the 24th Sub-Junior National Fencing Championship. The 24th Sub-Junior Boys and Girls National Fencing Championship is being organized by the Kerala Fencing Association under the aegis of Fencing Federation of India from January 10 to 13, 2023 at Rajiv Gandhi Indoor Stadium, Cochin, Ernakulam, Kerala.

A 28-member team of sub-junior boys and girls from the state of Chhattisgarh is participat-

ing in the said National Championship.

Special training camp for sub-junior boys and girls fencing team of Chhattisgarh state was organised at Multipurpose Hall, Ispat Club, Sector-1, from December 18, 2022 to January 07, 2023 for best performance of the players before participating in the above championship.

The names of the players and officials participating in the above competition are as follows: boys- Yuvraj Sahu, Chandra Sai Tekram, AnshSahu, Shorya Sharaf, Prince Raj, Advaya Nair, Atharva Pratap Singh, Chaitanya Sharma, Melvin John, Naveen Sahu, Manav Mehta, Ashmit Singh,



Coach Mohnish Verma, Manager Ram Pratap Singh; girls- Sneha Yadav,

Navya Verma, Avni Chudasma, Garima Baghel, Anshika Yadav,

Shreya Tiwari, Chaya Yadav, Reeba Beni, Kulraj Kaur, DivyankaSahu,

Vanshika Thakur, Inayat Kaur, Coach Bhupendra Rajput, Manager Anamika

Armo.

The closing ceremony of the above training camp was done today. January 07, 2023, at 01:00 pm in Multipurpose Hall, Ispat Club, Sector-1, Bhilai (Chhattisgarh) by General Secretary of Chhattisgarh Pradesh Fencing Association Mr. Bashir Ahmed Khan.

On this occasion, Shri Ram Pratap Gupta, Treasurer of Chhattisgarh Pradesh Fencing Association, NIS of Chhattisgarh. Instructor Shri V. Johnson Solomon and N.I.S. Instructor Mr. Praveen Kumar Gaonre was present.

Chhattisgarh State Fencing Association's President DrS Bharti

Dasan, IAS, Working President Sunil Kumar Agarwal, Senior Vice President Ajit Singh Patel, Vice President Prince Bhatia, Vice President Kamal Chauhan, Vice President D Kondayya, Joint Secretary Nikhil Kumar Jambhulkar, Joint Secretary Akhilesh Dubey, Joint Secretary Varun Pandey, Joint Secretary Santosh Kumar Sahu, along with office bearers of Chhattisgarh Pradesh Fencing Association and office bearers of various sports associations extended their warm wishes while giving blessings to the sub-junior boys and girls fencing players and coaches of Chhattisgarh state.

## Ch'garh's Bilaspur District Administration website gets National Award

**Bilaspur collector receives National Platinum Award at the hands of the President**



**Raipur, Jan 07:** The website of Bilaspur District Administration of Chhattisgarh has been honored today with the National Platinum Award by President Draupadi Murmu for innovation here. The award was received by District Collector of Bilaspur Saurabh Kumar in a program organized at Vigyan Bhawan in New Delhi on Saturday.

The innovation done by Bilaspur district administration has been appreciated at the national level. The website of the district administration has been awarded the National Platinum Award by the Department of Electronics and Information Technology, Government of India. The website of Bilaspur District Administration

has been given this award under the category of Best Web and Mobile Initiative Compliant with GIGW and accessibility Guidelines.

The website of Bilaspur district has made innovation in the implementation of Central Government's flagship scheme Digital India. In addition to uploading information about Central and State Government schemes in the website prepared by NIC (National

Informatics Center), special facilities have also been provided for the differently-abled. Visually impaired can also listen to the information given in this website through software.

Wherever the mouse cursor will go, the written information will be converted into voice. However, this facility is currently available in English only. In the coming days, this facility will

also be given in Hindi. For this the technical experts of NIC have started working. The special thing is that a special type of software has also been uploaded in the website for the visually impaired. It can be used for free. No extra amount will be charged for this.

NIC Bilaspur's DIO Arvind Yadav and Assistant DIO Manoj Kumar Singh were also present on this occasion.

## Protest against 'Youth Hub' an attempt to divert attention from Skywalk scam

**Raipur, Jan 07:** Describing ongoing protest of BJP and former Minister Rajesh Munat against development of 'Youth Hub' as sheer opportunism, Raipur Mayor Aijaz Dhebar, Municipal Corporation Speaker Pramod Dubey and Congress Communication Wing Head Anand Shukla said that Youth Hub Project was sanctioned in previous BJP rule when Rajesh Munat was Minister. Action plan for Youth Hub included development of bicycle track, vending zone and landscaping and work order for preparing estimate and drawing design for this was issued on June 4, 2018, they said at a press conference here today.

They said that the then Minister Munat himself had conducted site inspection along with the then Smart City Limited officers, Collector and SP. The Congress leaders said that the plan prepared during previous BJP regime was being



moved forward with development of Youth Hub.

Raipur Municipal Corporation's Mayor Dhebar and Speaker Pramod Dubey released the document saying, Rajesh Munat was doing political stunt through this to save his ticket from Raipur West assembly constituency.

In the project of 80 thousand square feet, 74 thousand feet has been left for landscaping, parking etc. There is no ongoing permanent construction at the site and no obstruction is being created in the road width, they said.

Shukla said that Youth

Hub was being developed for the last four months. He asked why there is so much of protest when more than 90 per cent of work has been completed. In fact Rajesh Munat started playing drama by sitting on dharna over Youth Hub especially to divert attention of public from Skywalk scam which is being investigated by EOW, Shukla alleged.

### Anti-Choupati posters, banners seized

As the protest against development of 'Choupati' in Education has intensified, Municipal Corporation removed BJP's posters and banners against 'Choupati' under property defacement act. Reacting to Municipal Corporation's action Munat said that attempt was being made to muzzle voice being raised peacefully through dharna. He said that Congress should not vi-

olate democratic rights.

Meanwhile indefinite dharna of BJP under the leadership of former Minister Rajesh Munat in protest against 'Choupati' in Education Hub continued for 4th day on Saturday. BJP leaders and workers also performed 'Sadbuddhi Yagya' in evening with participation of students and youth to pray for wisdom to Congress government in the state.

## Second day of Income Tax raid, action continues on builders-financers-transporters

**Income Tax Raid in Chhattisgarh**



**Raipur, Jan 23:** The Income Tax Department raided 21 locations of builders-transporters-financers of Raipur, Durg, Bhilai on Friday. On the second on Saturday the search and raid action by the Income Tax Department continued. Income tax sources said that there is a possibility of large amount of tax evasion from these businessmen. Necessary documents have also been seized during the investigation at their locations. The action is likely to be completed in the coming one to two days. It is being told that the builders were being monitored by the Income Tax Department for a long time. Significantly, the Income Tax Department has received three crore cash as well as a huge amount of jewelry from these business groups. Inquiries are being made in this regard by the Income Tax officials. According to the in-

formation, this search is likely to be completed by Sunday. Income Tax Department officials raided the premises of Subodh Singhania, director of Singhania Buildcon, Narendra Agarwal, director of Swastik Group, Sunil Sahu, director of Shree Swastik Group, Mahavir Agarwal, director of Rosby Resort, financier and land trader Kamlesh Baid and are checking documents at their homes and office locations.

A group of officers has also reached Hotel Landmark for investigation. The Income Tax Department team has seized documents related to business as well as several documents of proper-

ty purchased in the name of family members. A team of about 150 Income Tax officers from Indore-Bhopal and Raipur are involved in this action. 100 CRPF personnel are deployed in their security. Different teams of the Income Tax Department started action on several locations simultaneously on Friday morning. The acquaintances and business partners of the business groups are also being questioned.

The raid of Income Tax Department is likely to be completed by late Saturday night or Sunday afternoon. Sources are telling that a large amount of tax evasion is likely to be unearthed in this action.

## CM meets Union Home Minister



**Raipur, Jan 07:** Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel paid a courtesy call on the Union Home Minister Amit Shah at Swami Vivekananda Airport in the capital Raipur today. The Union Home Minister Shah had returned to Raipur from Korba during his stay in Chhattisgarh. Chief Minister Baghel met him directly at the airport after returning from his stay in

Gariaband. Baghel discussed various developmental works that have been done in Chhattisgarh with Union Home Minister Shah. Baghel presented millet-based products manufactured by the self-help groups of Chhattisgarh to the Union Home Minister. He also presented Shah with a memento based on the cultural artwork of Chhattisgarh.

## Sindhi Council makes Website for students to give guidance

**Students of class 10th-12th to get information about courses and admission in better institutions**



**Raipur, Jan 23:** Students of the state will now get necessary information related to education sitting at home. For this, the Chhattisgarh unit of the Sindhi Council of India has prepared a website. It contains information about the social activities of the Sindhi community of the state. More than 100 courses for the students, all the information related to admission has been given. The head of the institution, Lalit Jaisingh said that website contains information about which course to take after 10th. There is always full of confusion for the students on this issues. Sometimes even parents cannot decide what to do, he said. In such a situation, it is not possible for everyone to

get information from a counselor by paying expensive fees. Therefore, this information has been made available free of cost on the website of Sindhi Council of India. Council's Youth Wing President Ravi Gwalani, General Secretary Sunil Wadhwa, Gautam Railwani said that there are many types of entrance exams after 12th. Many students are not aware about the right institutions. We have given information about the best institutes in different courses on the website, it has also been informed how admission can be taken there by giving

exam. Major institutions of India have been included in this. In addition to this information related to Tourism, Physical Study, Library Science, Food Science, Foreign Language, Information Communication and Entertainment, Liberal Studies, Logistics and Supply Chain Management, Event Management, Hospital Management, Hotel Management, Photography, Graphics Designing, Cinematography, Animation, Film Production. Dozens of courses are also available on the website.

## Tickets to be available online from 12th for 1st international cricket match in Raipur



**CCA representatives and Collector-SSP meeting**

**Arrangements for parking, medical and fire brigade discussed**

**Raipur, Jan 07:** The sale of tickets for the first international cricket match to be held at the Shaheed Veer Narayan Singh Stadium in Nava Raipur will start online from January 12. Preparations are in full swing for this cricket match to be held between India and New Zealand. Office bearers of Chhattisgarh Cricket Association (CCA) held a meeting with Collector Dr Sarveshwar Bhure and SSP Prashant Agrawal at the stadium.

Special emphasis was laid by the officers on completing all the preparations on time, taking special care of the facilities of the visitors along with the security. The Collector suggested the representatives of the Cricket Association to make adequate number of ticket counters in the city for the matches. Chhattisgarh Cricket Association President Baldev Singh Bhatia, District Panchayat CEO Akash Chikara and many officials were also present in the meeting.

All necessary arrangements for the first international cricket match were discussed in the meeting. The officials of the Cricket Association spoke on the resources available at the stadium and the cooperation expected from the district administration. From clean-

liness of the stadium, repair of chairs to volunteers and security etc. were discussed. During the match, there will be an ambulance with fire fighting and medical staff at all the entry gates.

Halogen bulbs in stadium's floodlights have also been replaced with LEDs. Necessary preparations for parking arrangements around the stadium premises during the match were also discussed in the meeting. Security arrangements with adequate lights etc. at the parking lots, arrangement of adequate number of sanitation workers and other necessary machines and equipment for cleaning in the stadium premises, leveling of parking lots were discussed. Installation of clear signage was also discussed.

## Practical examinations of CBSE continue

**Practical exams of Chhattisgarh Board to start from January 10**

**Raipur, Jan 07:** The practical examinations of the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) have started from January 2. Instructions have been given by the Chhattisgarh Board of Secondary Education to start practical examinations from January 10. According to the schedule issued by CBSE, it has been asked to complete the practical examinations of class 10th and 12th. There will be project work and internal assessment of the students in practical examination. Instruction has been issued to follow the rules regarding the examinations. Under this, the rules related to corona virus will have to be followed inside the school premises. Practical examination will be conducted by the schools in batches of 15 students each. Practical examinations should be conducted in different batches in several sessions. Only a maxi-



mum of three batches of examinations can be taken in a day. Students have been asked to upload their grades and marks before February 14. CBSE has sent the list of externals to the schools for the examination. School managements are setting their dates by talking to externals as per their convenience. According to the instructions issued by the Board of Secondary Education, the practical examinations of the students of the board are starting from January 10, which have been instructed to be completed by January 30. Invigilators are appointed by the board for practical examinations, under whose supervision students give practical examinations. The school managements de-

cide the date of the subject by talking to their invigilator. If there are marks of practical examination, then it is necessary to upload them on the same day or by the next day. Pre-board exams are conducted by schools as per their convenience. Instructions have been issued by the board that pre-board examinations have to be completed in February. Schools declare the date for pre-board as per their convenience. The school management sets the question paper for Pre-Board. The final examinations for CBSE board are starting from February 15, which will continue till April 5. On the other hand, the CG Board examinations are starting from March 1, which will continue till March 31.

## IIA national convention concludes



**Raipur, Jan 07:** The national convention of architects, organised by the Chhattisgarh Chapter of Indian Institute of Architects (IIA) concluded at Chhattisgarh Chapter at Pt Deendayal Upadhyaya Auditorium here on Saturday. As many as 1100 people from all over the state participated in the technical session held on the concluding day. IIA National President CR Raju and National members of IIA launched Professor Jeet Kumar Gupta's book Decoding

Affordable Housing. Best Chapter Award for the year 2022 was given to IIA Calicut. As many as 220 awards in various categories were received by various IIA Centers and Chapters across the country. IIA Chhattisgarh Chapter President Architect Raj Kumar Prajapati ji honored all the committee members who played an important role in this program and all the architects who came for the technical session were honored with memento.

## Baghel unveils grand idol of lord Shri Ram in Rajim



**Raipur, Jan 07:** Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel today unveiled a 25 feet tall grand statue of Lord Shri Ram at the Rajim Mahotsav site today. It is noteworthy that this idol has been prepared by 20 craftsmen from Odisha in

a short span of 5 months and the idol has been hand carved from the Bilha stone of Chhattisgarh. This magnificent idol has been enshrined in a newly constructed platform of 8 feet height. Chief Minister

Mr. Bhupesh Baghel reached the Shri Rajiv Lochan Temple today and offered prayers and wished for the prosperity and happiness of the people of the state. On this occasion, Chief Minister Mr. Baghel also

performed Bhumi Pujan for the developmental works of widening and strengthening of Rajim-Chaubandha-Navaagon road and the 3.7 kilometer long Laxman Jhula access road. It is notable that Triveni Sangam Rajim is also included under the Ram Vanagaman tourism circuit and the state government has given approval of Rs 13 crore 12 lakh for the development of Ram Vanagaman tourism circuit in Rajim. On this occasion, Home Minister Mr. Tamradhwaj Sahu, Chairman of Chhattisgarh Tourism Board Mr. Atal Srivastava, Vice President Mrs. Chitrarekha Sahu, and Chairman of Gau Seva Aayog Mahant Ram Sunder Das were present.

## Effort to save young generation from tobacco addiction discussed

**NHM Director calls for cooperation of all departments, NGOs and civil societies necessary to control tobacco**



**Raipur, Jan 07:** In order to take effective steps towards tobacco control and save the new generation from its harmful effects, the director of the National Health Mission, Bhoskar Vilas Sandipan held a meeting of the officials of the Health and Family Welfare Department, NGO representatives and members of an organization 'The Union' at Indravati Bhawan. He instructed to make efforts at the social level to save the young generation from tobacco addiction and to work prominently to change the behavior of the people in this regard. All NGOs at the state

level were brought together on a single platform to discuss the seriousness of the ill-effects of tobacco and measures to stop its use. A suggestion was also made in the meeting to prepare a comprehensive action plan to stop the use of tobacco and its products in the state. State Nodal Officer of Tobacco Control Program Dr Kamlesh Jain informed about the works being done under Tobacco Control Program in the state. He said that according to the Global Adult Survey, 39.1 percent of the total population of the state use tobacco products in some form or the other and 21.9 percent of the

population uses tobacco at work place, which is a matter of serious concern. Manufacturers of tobacco products are not fully complying with the provisions of the COTPA Act, 2003. There are many tobacco products in the state which do not comply with section 7 of the COTPA Act, 2003. Section 5 of the COTPA Act is also being violated by direct and indirect advertisement of tobacco and tobacco products through various mediums. Everyone needs to take proper action on this. Ashish Pandey, Deputy Regional Director of 'The Union' informed about the effective laws and policies

in the country and informed about the instructions received by the Health and Family Welfare Department of the Government of India for tobacco control. Dr Amit Yadav, Senior Technical Advisor, 'The Union' gave information about various provisions of COTPA Act, 2003 and online MIS. He told about the role of all departments for tobacco control, vendor licensing for proper monitoring and control. Dr Yadav also explained how the provisions of Section 5 and 7 of the COTPA Act, 2003 are being violated by the manufacturers of tobacco products.

## LHB coaches to offer more berths to railway passengers



**16 trains in SECR with these coaches**

**Bilaspur, Jan 07:** The convenience, safety and safe rail operation of railway passengers is the top most priority of South East Central Railway. In order to provide better travel experience to rail passengers, convenient, comfortable and safe, all trains running on South East Central Railway will be gradually replaced with

new technology LHB (Linke Hofmann Busch) coaches by replacing old ICF (Integral Coach Factory) coaches. South East Central Railway is presently running 16 trains with new technology LHB coaches. The LHB coach is named after the German company Linke Hoffman Busch that first manufactured it. LHB coaches were first introduced in the Indian Railways in the year 1999. Presently it is

being manufactured at Kapurthala Railway Coach Factory. LHB coach is very comfortable for the passengers. LHB coaches are very safe from the point of view of rail operations. If we talk about the speed on the demand of today's time, then the maximum speed of these coaches is 110-130 kmph of normal coaches. It is designed for speeds in excess of 160, and above the maximum speed. These coaches have more space as compared to normal coaches due to which providing more berths in sleeper and AC coaches also helps in providing maximum number of confirmed berths to railway passengers. Hydraulic suspension is used in LHB coaches. Suspension has also been used for the same right-left movement, which makes the journey comfortable.

## Two accused arrested with 2200 no's illegal drugs



**Jagdalpur, Jan 07:** Under Kotwali police station area of the district, 2 accused were caught on Friday with 2200 pieces of illegal banned psychotropic drugs and tablets. Batu Chauhan and Nitesh alias Monu Wasnikar are residents of Jagdalpur among the arrested accused. The accused have been arrested by the police and sent on judicial remand after the proceedings. The estimated market value of the seized medicines has been estimated at Rs 5,217. CSP Vikas Kumar said that the Kotwali police received information that two persons were looking

for a customer along with a bag near Kuharpara Madia Chowk to sell illegal drugs. On information, a team was sent to the incident under the leadership of police station inspector Eman Sahu. The team managed to nabbed Jagdalpur resident Batu Chauhan and Nitesh alias Monu Wasnikar by laying siege to the site. On search, illegal drug Alprazolam tablets were found in possession of the accused. Crime has been registered against the accused under Section 21 of NDPS Act and taken up for investigation.

## CAIT ask Vaishnav for a strong data protection bill

**Raipur, Jan 07:** CAIT National Senior Vice President Amar Parwani, chairman Mangal Maloo, Amar Gidwani, State President Jitendra Doshi, States Working President Vikram Singh Deo, Parmanand Jain, Vashu Makhija, State General Secretary, Suriender Singh, State Working General Secretary Bharat Jain, State Treasurer Ajay Agrawal and state media incharge Sanjay Choubey informed that the Confederation of All India Traders (CAIT) in a communication sent to Union IT Minister Mr. Ashwini Vaishnav, while commenting upon Digital Data Protection Bill, 2022, has strongly advocated the need of Data protection rules to ensure that the retail and ecommerce sectors are not negatively impacted by the data collection and processing activities of big tech companies. The CAIT charged that these large companies misuse the personal data

of Indian consumers to gain a competitive edge over local traders and retailers and therefore protection of data is all the more necessary. CAIT National Senior Vice President Mr. Amar Parwani & State President Mr. Jitendra Doshi said that restrictions are must on cross border data flow to ensure that user data is not misused, especially from the endless and unchecked processing of personal data by technology owners. The global tech giants collect and process global user data, and apply predatory algorithms to benefit their bottom line, at the expense of local sectors and economies. They also misuse personal data by targeting customers using a complex web of preferred sellers and service providers who benefit from preferential treatment such as low or no commission fees, as well as other benefits that give them an undue competitive edge over local entre-

preneurs. Mr. Parwani & Mr. Doshi said that the proposed legislation should also clarify that in the event of conflicts with sectoral rules & regulations, such as in the case of the RBI data localization mandate, the proposed personal data protection legislation is to be read in addition to the sectoral rules, and is not to be construed in derogation of existing rules and frameworks established by sectoral regulators. The trade leaders further said that revised bill has also removed the previous classification of personal data into critical and sensitive personal data, in favor of an umbrella definition that covers all types of personal data. This change ignores the disproportionate potential of harm that accompanies misuse and breach of sensitive information. Sensitive user data should be provided additional safeguards to prevent misuse by data fiduciaries and processors.

## Health check-up camp organized for sanitation workers

**Jagdalpur, Jan 07:** Under the Municipal Corporation, a health check-up camp was organized for the sanitation workers of the Municipal Corporation at Shyama Prasad Mukherjee Town Hall today. The health camp organized by Red Cross Society and Urban Health Mission and Nagar Pali Corporation was inaugurated by Mayor Safira Sahu. In the health camp, BP, sugar, blood test, eye test and other health tests were done for the employees. Collector and District President of Red Cross Society Chandan Kumar praised for this initiative of providing various facilities including health check-up to the sanitation



workers under one roof. He said that this event would help in achieving the objective of taking the schemes of the govern-

ment to the last person. In the health camp organized today, health check-up of the regular employees of the corpora-

tion's sanitation department, placement sweepers, ward supervisors, sanitation didi, vehicle drivers will be done. Apart from the health camp, the work of making Ayushman card, driving license and Aadhaar card, labor card has also been done. Mayor Safira Sahu said that health related check-ups are being conducted by organizing health check-up camps for the employees of the sanitation department, our employees continuously work to make the city clean and beautiful, for which health check-ups of the employees are done from time to time. It is necessary to have health check-up camp being organized today in this con-

text. Along with this, Sanitation Chairman Vikram Singh Dangi and Commissioner Dinesh Kumar Nag gave information about the health camp. During this, MIC members Vikram Singh Dangi, Yashvardhan Rao, Rajesh Rai, Mrs. Sushila Baghel, Councillor Kamlesh Pathak, Surya Pani, Lata Nishad, Neha Dhruv, Dr. Virendra Thakur, Dr. MR Goude, Sanitation Department's Hemant Shriwas, Ajay Banik, Sandeep Vivekar, Vinay Sharma, Alexander Cherian, Damodar, Sushil Karma, Shekhar and other employees from Red Cross Society were present.

## Complete CM's announcements within time limit: Collector

**Bemetara, Jan 07:** Collector Jitendra Kumar Shukla took the weekly time-limit meeting in the meeting room of the district office on Tuesday. First of all, he congratulated and best wishes for the New Year to all the departmental officers and asked them to work with a new resolution in the new calendar year. In the meeting, the Collector said that the Chief Minister's Bhent-Mulauquat programme was successfully completed. To make this programme a success, all the departments should discharge their duties 100% and he wished best wishes to all for this. The Collector said

that it is our first priority to complete the announcements and instructions given by Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel during his Bhent-Mulauquat programme. Work on all the proposals on priority and also complete the old announcements within the time limit. In those places where the Chief Minister has ordered for investigation, take action by forming a team on time, he added. Collector Shukla said that the allotment of land for social buildings during the program should also be completed within the time limit. We came to know about the public problems of the local peo-

ple from the block and district level public redressal camps we organized and this camp was beneficial for the people. In the meeting District Panchayat CEO Leena Mandavi, Additional Collector Dr. Anil Bajpai, SDM Revenue Bemetara Suruchi Singh, Berla Yugal Kishore Urvsha, Nawagarh Praveen Tiwari, Joint Collector Umashankar Bande, Dy. Collector Vishwas Rao Maske, Pinky Manhar, Heera Governa, CMHO District level officers of various departments including the CMO of the urban body and the CEO of the Janpad Panchayat were present.

## Jagdalpur 'bandh' near total

**As per call by Sarv Adivasi Samaj**

**Jagdalpur, Jan 07:** Chhattisgarh Sarv Adivasi Samaj called for Bastar bandh on Thursday in protest against conversion. This bandh also got the support of Bastar Chamber of Commerce. Keeping in view the bandh, strict security arrangements were made by deploying police force on major roads and around the church. During this, Jagdalpur city remained completely closed. In front of the Danteshwari temple of



Bastar divisional headquarters, a protest was held in support of the bandh. A large number of

BJP leaders including BJP's tribal leader Kedar Kashyap addressed in this protest.

## Atma Nirbhar is the ultimate goal, says IGNTU V-C

**Ambikapur, Jan 07:** A nine-day USHA silai training for women was concluded, the event was organized by the Department of Social work Indira Gandhi National Tribal University (IGNTU), in collaboration with the National Institute of women and child development (NIWCYD) Bhopal, sponsored by the USHA Silai school, Bhopal branch. 15 women from 15 villages were selected for this training program. Smt. Chaya Sharma was the master trainer at this event. During the nine days of training, the women were trained in various aspects starting from machine fitting, repair, and training on various aspects. Besides, the women are also trained in life skills



that are useful to develop their businesses. Sheela Tripathi the president Sheel Mandal of IGNTU was the chief guest of this event. Prof. Prakash Mani Tripathi presided the event, besides Prof. Alok Pandya, HOD, Physics, Prof. Ashish Mathur Coordinator livelihood incubation center, IGNTU, Prof. Ranju Hasini Sahoo, HOD Social Work, Harish, Reginal

Manager Usha International Bhopal, Sanjay Singh, Branch Manager NIWCID Bhopal were the guests in this program. Dr. Ramesh B, Assistant Professor, Department of Social Work, and Dr. Krishnamani Bhagabati was the coordinators of the program from IGNTU, Ramesh Maywad coordinated the event from NIWCYD, Bhopal.

Short films on departmental work, Usha silai training etc presented by the organizers. The Livelihood Incubation Centre of IGNTU (LBI) was the co-partner at the event. While addressing the session chief guest Sheela Tripathi stressed that women are powerful but due to unorganized their energy go in vain, underlines the importance of women's education and empowerment thus their capabilities will be used for the family and society. She lauded the efforts of the department of social work department. Prof. Prakash Mani Tripathi, Vice Chancellor, IGNTU made that women have more potential, due to social restriction their abilities sup-

pressed, further he stressed that women to be motivated, educated, and empowered. Also spoke about AtmaNirbhar. He suggested that there is a need to get a brand of local products in the name of "Amarkantakvastr" due to this program. He also stressed the importance of Sui-Daga in day-to-day life. He expressed that due to this training program women able earn Rs. 6000/- pm at the local level. He also lauded the efforts of the USHA Silai School and the efforts of the Department of Social Work and NIWCYD Bhopal, He hoped this is a beginning and he wishes to see 1500 silai schools in the coming days.

# Guru Amardas created right for equality in the society: Tiwari

Attends three-day fair in Chatuvadhhaam

Central Chronicle News

Berla, Jan 07: In the three-day fair organised in Chetuvadhhaam of Berla Vidhan Sabha (VS), Kissan leader Yogesh Tiwari performed prayers to Baba Amardas here on Saturday and sought blessings for peace & prosperity of all in the state and region.

During this Kissan leader Yogesh Tiwari highlighting on the life of Baba Amardas informed that Guru Amardas was born in July 1794 on occasion of 'Guru Poornima' in Giroudpuri.

Guru Amardas taught the lessons of equality to the humanity by creating consciousness among the



not so conscious society and asking them to adhere to their responsibilities.

Speaking further Tiwari informed that Guru Amardas took forward the

half-works of Baba Guru Ghasidas and the most interesting thing here is that it is not the people from Satnami Samaj alone, but people from all other soci-

eties too are following upon the path of Guru Amardas and making their life successful. Guru gave the message of peace, love and harmony and

brotherhood and social equality to the society.

Guru Ghasidas removed the social evils and got the people confronted with the truth and taking the message of peace, removed the differences in the caste and religions in the society. To rekindle the power of truth, he conducted 'Yatras' and taught the lesson of de-addiction to the people and follow social harmony and his messages are still relevant today.

On this occasion Manoj Patel, Manoj Sinha, Topendra Sonwani, Balram Das, Naresh Sinha, Ajay Mishra, Sanju Barle, Bharat Koshale, Balraj Banjare and others were present.

# Students give message of no plastic thru painting

From AVMEMS Jawanga

Central Chronicle News

Geedam/Dantewada, Jan 07: An awareness campaign is being run regarding not using plastic on the orders of the Office of the District Education Officer, Dantewada, Chhattisgarh. Say no to plastic, beat plastic pollution logo (symbol) making competition was organized among the students of Classes ninth to twelfth at Astha Vidya Mandir English Medium School (AVMEMS) Jawanga, Geedam.

The best three logos created by the students were selected. Class IX student Kumma Kunjam got first position, class X students Prakash Markam got second position and Karthik Mandvi got third position.



An awareness message through painting on say no to use plastic, plastic pollution free and use eco friendly green products instead of plastic was given by the students. Lecturer Amujuri Biswanath of Astha Vidya Mandir contributed the time to train the students and organizing the painting competition. District Education Officer Pramod Thakur, District Mission Coordinator Shyamlal Sorli, APC Rajendra Pandey,

Geedam Development Block Education Officer Sheikh Rafiq, Assistant Block Education Officer Bhavani Punem, Aastha Vidya Mandir Principal Gopal Pandey, Jawanga Cluster Coordinator Nitin Vishwakarma, Vice Principals Pramod Gupta, Ravindranath Panigrahi, Superintendents Raviprakash Thakur, Sushma Das and teachers extended their best wishes and congratulations to the students.

# 7 day camp of NSS at village Khamtarai

In Badri Prasad Lodhi PG Govt College



Central Chronicle News

Arang, Jan 07: Under the aegis of National Service Scheme (NSS) of Badri Prasad Lodhi Post Graduate Government College, Arang, a seven-day camp has been organized at village Khamtarai from 4 to 10 January.

The camp was inaugurated by Dr. K.N. Sharma presided over by the chief guest K.K. Chandrakar, sarpanch of village Khamtarai, Lal Sahu,

deputy sarpanch Ram Sahu and panches of the village. All the chief guests present in the stage were welcomed by the program officer and the campers of National Service Scheme by giving them bouquets.

The chief guests gave necessary instructions to the campers of the National Service Scheme in the form of their blessings for the purpose of the National Service Scheme and to follow it. In his address chief guest K.K.

Chandrakar kept the work of the camp on the National Service Scheme and its importance among the campers. Sarpanch Poshan Lal Sahu in his address appealed to all the villagers to cooperate with the campers of the National Service Scheme. Principal of the college, Dr. K.N. Sharma also appealed to the villagers to cooperate for the success of the camp and proper development and leadership ability of the students.

# Villagers stage dharna in front of Mahamaya mines gate

- Not getting any solution from BSP mgmt or district admn
- As water from iron ore mines if flowing down into their farms and have got stuck

Central Chronicle News

Balod, Jan 07: The villagers of Gram Kumurkatta, Nalkasa and Kotagaon affected from the flow of iron ore fines flowing down from the Dalli-Rajhara Mahamaya mines into their farms have sat on strike with demand for permanent job.

Earlier these villagers, under the 'Jan Mukti Morcha' have sat on serial hunger strike from Dec 15 near the Mahamaya Mines. But not finding any solution even after 20

days, the villagers have not started staging protest sitting opposite the main gate of Dalli-Rajhara mines. There are about 42 such families, whose farms have turned red, due to flow of iron-rich fines and water from the Mahamaya mines nearby, and are badly affected from the same.

The iron ore fines problem near the villages of Mahamaya Mines is an old issue and on this issue, neither the BSP nor the government is taken any effective steps till date. This has snatched the only source of earning of livelihood that of farming from the people of the region and now in



order to find out solution as to how they can earn livelihood without any source of earning, they all have re-started indefinite movement. Earlier the local district administration has given assurance to the villagers to provide them temporary work till June

2020, but the BSP management did not provided any permanent work to affected farmers.

It is worthwhile to mention here that the villagers of the affected villages with iron ore fines flowing

down from the mines have put forth their demands before the BSP management and to the government, but they are not getting any fixed solution, as the water of iron ore mines has got stuck in their farms and there is no crop cultivation possible and which has left the villagers in tyranny. It is learnt that there are 42 such families in whose farms the iron ore fines from the mines nearby have destroyed their only source of earning livelihood from agriculture.

# Workshop organized under National Tobacco Control Prog

Central Chronicle News

Bilaspur, Jan 07: Under the National Tobacco Control Program in the district, continuous efforts are being made to discourage the use and consumption of tobacco and tobacco products and for effective compliance of the Kotpa Act 2003.

In the same string of events, under the National Tobacco Control Program, Chief Medical and Health Officer Dr. Anil Srivastava appealed for action in the direction of tobacco control program including compliance with the provisions of the Kotpa Act 2003 by coordinating all the departments.



District Nodal Officer Dr. B.K. Vaishnav appealed to make efforts towards tobacco control and to make their offices tobacco free. During the training, District Advisor of

Tobacco Control Program Dr. Anupam Nahak informed about the activities being done in the district and shared his experiences.

Senior Technical Advisor Dr. Amit Yadav was present as the keynote speaker. Sanjay Namdev, Divisional Coordinator of Bloomberg Project Bilaspur informed that according to the report of Global Youth Tobacco Survey-4, 8 percent of tobacco users in the state of Chhattisgarh are students

studying in school in the age group of 13 to 15 years and 39.1 percent of the total population of the state is addicted to tobacco.

Prakash Srivastava of Bloomberg Project Chhattisgarh was also present in this training and it was decided to monitor the provisions of COTPA Act 2003 by the district level enforcement team members twice a week and take appropriate action in case of violation of the provisions of COTPA Act 2003. Representatives of Urban Administration Department, Food and Drug Administration Department, Labor Department, Traffic Department and Railway Police were present in the program.

# Local BJP leader among five held for attack

On church Central Chronicle News

Narayanpur, Jan 07: A day after a church was vandalised during a protest by a group of tribals in Chhattisgarh's Narayanpur city, five persons including a local Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader were arrested on Tuesday in connection with the incident.

In a related development, police allegedly stopped state BJP leaders from visiting Narayanpur city a day after the violence. Five persons have been arrested in connection

with incidents of riot in Narayanpur on Monday, Inspector General of Police (Bastar range) Sundarraj P told PTI.

Four separate First Information Reports were registered in connection with the incidents under sections 148 (rioting, armed with deadly weapon), 153 (a) (promoting enmity between different groups on ground of religion, race etc and doing acts prejudiced to maintenance of harmony), 120 (b) (criminal conspiracy), 295 (injuring or defiling place of worship with intent to insult a religion) and 295 (A) (deliber-

ate and malicious acts, intended to outrage religious feelings) of the Indian Penal Code.

Adequate security personnel have been deployed to maintain law and order in the Narayanpur district, the senior police official said, adding that the situation was peaceful and normal.

According to BJP sources, one of the arrested men is the party's Narayanpur district president. However, the protest on Monday was not held under the banner of the party, they said.

State BJP chief spokesperson Ajay

Chandrakar claimed a delegation of party leaders including MPs Santosh Pandey and Mohan Mandavi and MLA Shivratna Sharma were stopped at Benour police station when they were heading to Narayanpur to take a stock of the situation.

"The Congress government has been behaving like dictator and murdering democracy. Stopping our leaders from going to Narayanpur clearly indicates that those who are involved in religious conversion have protection of Congress," Chandrakar alleged.

**Indian Bank** Branch - Seepat Road, Bilaspur (C.G.)

**APPENDIX - IV-A** [See proviso to rule 8 (6)]  
**Sale notice for sale of immovable properties**  
**E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8 (6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002**

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower (s) and Guarantor (s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged / charged to the Secured Creditor, the Symbolic Possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of Indian Bank Seepat Road branch, Secured Creditor, will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is", and "Whatever there is" on 10/02/2023, for recovery of Rs. 2290617/- (Rupees Twenty Two Lakh Ninety Thousands Six Hundred Seventeen Only) (as on 07/12/2022) with further interest, costs, other charges and expenses thereon due to the Indian Bank, Seepat Road branch, Secured Creditor, from Borrower - **Abdul Mahmud Khan S/O - Fahim Khan, Ward no - 5, Mahima Nagar, Sirgitti, Bilaspur, CG - 495004, Guarantor- Fatma Khan W/O- Abdul Mahmudkhan, Ward no- 5, Mahima Nagar, Sirgitti, Bilaspur, CG-495004.**

The specific details of the property intended to be brought to sale through e-auction mode are enumerated below:

**Detailed Description of the Property:-**  
 All that part & parcel of the property consisting of Land & Building situated at shyam Residency, 3rd floor, Phase-1, Flat No. GC 303, Kharsa No. 103/38 and 104, Area - 694 Sqft., P.H. No.-46/26/32, Opposite Maa Durga Mandir, Sagardeep Colony Road, Mouza - Ameri, Block and Tahsil- Takahatpur, R.N.M.- Sakri, District- Bilaspur, (CG) - 495004. **Bounded: North- Flat No.G.C.-302, South - Flat No. -304, East- Balcony, West- Common Passage and Balcony.**

Encumbrances on property	Not Known
Reserve Price	Rs. 25,00,000.00
EMD Amount	Rs. 2,50,000.00
Bid incremental amount	Rs 10,000.00
Date and Time of E-auction	10/02/2023, Time- 11.00 AM to 04:00 PM
Property ID No.	IDIB58004946282

Bidders are advised to visit the website ([www.mstcecommerce.com](http://www.mstcecommerce.com)) of our e auction service provider MSTC Ltd to participate in online bid. For Technical Assistance Please call MSTC HELPDESK No. 033-22901004 and other help line numbers available in service providers help desk. For Registration status with MSTC Ltd, please contact [ibapiop@mstcecommerce.com](mailto:ibapiop@mstcecommerce.com) and for EMD status please contact [ibapifin@mstcecommerce.com](mailto:ibapifin@mstcecommerce.com).

For property details and photograph of the property and auction terms and conditions please visit: <https://ibapi.in> and for clarifications related to this portal, please contact help line number 18001025026 and 011-41106131.

**Bidders are advised to use Property ID Number mentioned above while searching for the property in the website with <https://ibapi.in> and [www.mstcecommerce.com](http://www.mstcecommerce.com).**

Date: 08.01.2023, Place : Bilaspur Authorised Officer, Indian Bank

**SHRI SHANKARACHARYA MAHAVIDYALAYA**  
 (Run by Shri Gangajali Education Society, Bhalai)  
 97/2, Near Shri Shankaracharya Technical Campus Beside Petrol Pump, Junwanii, Bhalai, Durg (C.G.) - 490 020  
 Ph.0788-2284822, 2298467 Website : [www.ssmv.ac.in](http://www.ssmv.ac.in) Email: [ssmbhalai@hotmail.com](mailto:ssmbhalai@hotmail.com)

**APPOINTMENT**  
 Applications are invited for appointment Under University statute -28

Designation	Post	Qualification
Assistant Professor Chemistry, Botany, Sociology, History, Political Science, Mathematics	1 Post Each	i) A Master Degree with 55 % marks (or an equivalent grade in a point scale wherever the grading system is followed) in a concerned / relevant / allied subject. ii) Besides fulfilling the above qualification, the candidate must have cleared the National Eligibility Test (NET) conducted by the UGC or the CSIR or a similar test accredited by the UGC like SLET/SET or who are or have been awarded a Ph.D Degree in accordance with the University Grants Commission (Minimum Standards and Procedure for Award of M.Phil / Ph.D Degree) Regulations, 2009 or 2016 and their amendments from time to time as the case may be exempted from NET/SLET/SET.
Assistant Professor Computer Science	01 Post	UGC Norms:- i) A master's degree with 55% marks (or an equivalent grade in a point scale wherever the grading system is followed) in a concerned /relevant /allied subject. ii) Besides fulfilling the above qualification, the candidate must have cleared the National Eligibility Test (NET) conducted by the UGC or the CSIR, or a similar test accredited by the UGC, like SLET/SET or who are or have been awarded a Ph.D degree in accordance with the University Grants Commission (Minimum Standards and Procedure for award of M.Phil / Ph.D. Degree) Regulations, 2009or 2016 and their amendments from time to time as the case may be exempted from NET/SLET/SET AICTE Norms BE/B.Tech.& ME/M.Tech.in relevant branch with First Class or equivalent either in BE/B.Tech.or ME/M.Tech. OR BE/B.Tech.&MCA with First Class or equivalent either in BE/B.Tech. or MCA OR MCA with First Class or equivalent with two years relevant experience. Note:- If suitable Candidate is not found according to UGC norms then interim appointment will be made temporarily according to AICTE norms.
Librarian	01 Post	B.Lib. with 55% Marks

**SALARY AS PER UGC /STATE GOVT. NORMS 7 TH PAY SCALE**

\* Two sets of application with demand draft of Rs.500 payable to Principal, Shri Shankaracharya Mahavidyalaya, Bhalai along with resume, attested mark sheets /certificates and two colored photographs should reach the office of the Principal within 15 days from the date of publication.  
 \* At the time of selection, the number of posts may vary according to requirement.

Principal

**Bank of Baroda** Regional Office, Jeevan Prakash.L.I.C. Building, Pandri, Raipur (C.G.)  
 PH: 0771- 4222611, 4222612, E-mail: [recovery.raipur@bankofbaroda.com](mailto:recovery.raipur@bankofbaroda.com)

**(Publication in the Newspapers in case of return/failure of service of 60 day's Notice U/s.13 (2) of SARFAESI Act, 2002).**

The Authorized Officer, Bank of Baroda had issued 60 day's Notices to under mentioned borrowers / Guarantors U/s.13(2) of Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act,2002 by Registered A/D/speed post. But these Notices were returned by the Postal authorities due to the reason of refusal to take delivery/wrong address/person left the place/city. These borrowers/guarantors have given their under mentioned movable/immovable assets by way of hypothecation / mortgage as security to secure the various credit limits granted by the Bank to the borrower(s).

Due to non-payment of Bank's dues and non-fulfillment of terms and conditions of the loan, default has been committed by the borrower (s) / guarantor (s) in payment of bank loan and interest and the loan account has become NPA as per RBI guidelines.

In view of the above, a 60 days Public Notice is given to the following borrower(s)/guarantor(s) to pay the bank dues as stated below alongwith interest till payment failing which the bank will be constrained to enforce its security interest without intervention of Court or Tribunal by taking recourse to one or more of the measures under Chapter - III of the Act. The borrower/guarantors are also directed by this Notice that in terms of Section 13(13) of the Act they shall not transfer by way of sale/lease or otherwise (other than in ordinary course of business) any of the secured assets charged to the bank without prior consent of the bank. The details of borrower/guarantors and secured assets is as follows, against whom the bank will start initiating action after 60 days in the event of non-payment of banks' dues by them.

Sl No.	Name of the Bank Branch & Phone No.	Name of the Borrower & address	Name and address of guarantor(s)	outstanding as on 29.12.2022	Details of Secured assets
01	Choubey Colony Branch, Raipur 9752098095	M/s. Somvatti Sales Trading Agency Private Limited 30/32, Champa Gally Cross Lane, 1st Floor, Room No. 8, Kalbadevi Road Mumbai City Maharashtra - 400002. Also at: Block-1, Plot -9, Transport Nagar,Rawabhata, Bhirgaon, Raipur.(C.G.) 492001	Mrs. Ineed Smriti D/o Late Mr. I. P. Bikai, House No. 55/4, Ward No. -4, Milan Chowk, Radhika Nagar, Bhalai, Durg, C.G. - 490023 Mr. Shachindra Deshmukh S/o Mr. Padmakar Deshmukh MIG (Standard) - 213 (A), Phase - 2, Kabir Nagar, Raipur (C.G.) - 492001. Mr. Yashwant Kumar Sinha S/o Mr. Punit Ram Sinha 435, Ward No. 16, Jheet, Patan Durg (C.G.) 491111.	Rs. 49,98,915.59 + interest + other charges	1. Hypothecation of stocks of Rs.1237.10 Lacs and Book Debts valuing of Rs. 498.04 Lacs net off creditors of Rs. 1250.25 Lacs etc. as per estimates as on 31.03.2022. 2. Equitable mortgage of residential open plot, part of Kh. No. -79/5, P.H.No. - 14/19, Purani Basti Ward No.-09, R.N.M. - Durg, Admeasuring open Plot Area-2,475.00 sq. ft. , situated at Mouza - Kohka, Tehsil and Distt. - Durg (C.G.) standing in the name of Mrs. Ineed Smriti D/o Late Mr. Indra prakash Bikai.

Date: 07.01.2023, Place: Raipur (C.G.) Authorised Officer, Bank of Baroda

## BRIEF



**Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha with Sandhya Purecha, Chair W20 India (Women-20), during a meeting, at Raj Bhavan, in Jammu, Saturday.**

## Nigerian held

Hyderabad: A 32-year-old Nigerian national was arrested here on Saturday for allegedly peddling cocaine and 178 grams of the narcotic concealed in a chocolate health drink bottle was seized from him, officials of Prohibition and Excise said. Acting on specific information regarding cocaine transportation and selling, an official team led by State Task Force raided a place in Vanasthalipuram and caught the Nigerian and seized the cocaine. The Nigerian national came to Hyderabad three days ago in a private bus from Bengaluru. He had brought 200 grams of cocaine with him and allegedly sold 22 grams out of it, an official said adding that he was staying "illegally" in India after his visa expired recently.

## Couple hang

Shahjahanpur (UP): An unmarried couple was found hanging inside a cottage here on Saturday, police said. The bodies of a 22-year-old man and a 17-year-old girl were found hanging inside the cottage in Kataiya village under Powayan police station, they said. The duo belonged to the same caste, however, their families were against their relationship, they said. Prima facie, it appears that the couple committed suicide on Friday night.

## Two arrested

Kolkata: Kolkata Police's special task force arrested two persons, suspected to be terrorists allied to the ISIS, from Howrah's Tikiapara area, a senior police officer said on Saturday. Acting on a tip-off from a central investigating agency, a team of Kolkata Police's Special Task Force (STF) picked up the two from their hideout in Tikiapara's Aftabuddin Munshi Lane on Friday night, he said. "Both of them are involved in spreading tentacles of the terror group in Howrah. We are questioning them to understand more about their roles," the officer told PTI.

## Drug cartel

Chandigarh: Punjab Police and BSF in a joint operation arrested two drug cartel kingpins and seized 31.02 kg of heroin, the state police chief said on Saturday. "In a major breakthrough against trans-border narcotic smuggling networks @FazilkaPolice & #BSF have jointly arrested 2 drug cartel kingpins engaged in drug trafficking on massive scale and recovered 31.02 Kg Heroin," Director General of Police Gaurav Yadav tweeted.

# CM Pushkar Dhami visits Joshimath to assess situation

Dehradun, Jan 7 (PTI)



**Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami inspects the landslide affected area of Joshimath in Chamoli district, Saturday.**

Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami visited sinking Joshimath on Saturday to assess the situation on the ground. He met the affected people and assured them of all help, officials said.

The CM also met the team of officials and experts who have been camping in the town since Thursday and took their feedback on the evacuation exercise, they said.

He walked through the narrow streets in the affected areas and also went inside houses in which huge cracks have ap-

peared on the walls and ceilings.

"Evacuating affected families in the danger zone to safe locations is the

government's priority for now," Dhami told reporters.

"We are also working on a long term rehabilitation

strategy," he said. After visiting the affected areas in the Himalayan town, Dhami said that suitable places for relocation of residents near Pipalkoti and Gauchar are also being identified.

Officials have been asked not to get entangled in long procedural complexities and take direct clearance from him for projects related to treatment of drainage and sewage systems in Joshimath, he said.

Dhami said that Joshimath is an important place from the cultural, religious and tourism point of view and all efforts will be made to save it.

## Administrative Tribunal cancels appointment of 3 govt Law College principals

Thiruvananthapuram, Jan 7 (PTI) The Kerala Administrative Tribunal (KAT) has set aside the appointments of three Government Law College principals for being "contrary to the provisions" of the UGC Regulations, 2010.

KAT members Justice P V Asha and P K Kesavan have cancelled the appointments of principals of Thiruvananthapuram, Ernakulam and Thrissur Government Law Colleges.

The Tribunal also directed the government to hold fresh selections in accordance with the UGC Regulations.

"...order dated 19.3.2017, issued by government to the extent it relates to the qualifications for the post of principals, the select list dated 30.8.2018, the promotion ordered on 3.9.2018 are set aside...the select list

is seen drawn, contrary to the provisions contained in the UGC regulations, 2010..." the order dated January 4 said. The order came based on a plea filed by Giri Sankar S S, an associate professor of Ernakulam Law College seeking direction to make appointments to the post of principals in accordance with the UGC Regulations.

"...it is only appropriate that fresh selection is made as against all those vacancies for which that select list was drawn in accordance with the UGC Regulations, 2010," the Tribunal said.

It also directed to constitute a selection committee for conducting the selection for appointment of principals in the Government Law Colleges in accordance with the UGC Regulations.

## Detailed investigation ordered against 'Santro Ravi'

Mysuru, Jan 7 (PTI)

Karnataka Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai on Saturday said he has ordered a detailed investigation against K S Manjunath, who goes by a nickname 'Santro Ravi'.

With various photographs of Ravi emerging out with the Ministers in the Karnataka government, the Congress charged that all of them have close proximity with him. It is also alleged that Ravi has a criminal background.

The Congress also took to the Twitter and posted his videos and photographs with the Ministers. In one photograph Ravi was seen sitting behind bundles of currency notes spread on the table.

The party sought to know why the Enforcement Directorate and the Income Tax department could not detect him.

Dismissing the charges made by Congress, Bommai said, "You cannot decide based on the photograph but the main issue is that there is a case against him (Ravi). A girl has lodged a complaint against him. If the investigation is taken up then all other cases will also come out and it will help investigate all of them," Bommai told reporters in Mysuru.

The Chief Minister said he has instructed the Mysuru police to strictly investigate the case as there are many complaints against Ravi.

It is said that he is highly connected person and the police will find out his past and would take strict legal action against him, Bommai said.

When asked why no case reached the logical end in the last 20 years, the Chief Minister said this time the State government has taken the complaint against him 'very serious-

## ADVOCATES PROTEST



**Advocates raise slogans against Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren during a protest against government's decision to hike the court fees, in Ranchi, Saturday.**

## Woman dies of food poisoning after consuming 'Kuzhimanthi'

Kasaragod (Kerala), Jan 7 (PTI)

Three persons, including the owner of the hotel which had provided 'Kuzhimanthi', were taken into custody here on Saturday after a 20-year-old woman died due to suspected food poisoning upon consuming the biryani dish, police said.

The three persons were taken into custody as part of preventive detention in order to protect them from angered protesters in the area, Kasaragod police said.

Meanwhile, Melparamba police said they were awaiting the post-mortem report of the woman in order to take further action.

"Three persons have been taken under preventive detention. The case is registered at Melparamba police station. They will take further action. During the day, there were multiple protests towards the restaurant and so we took them into custody," Kasaragod police told

PTI. Anju Sreeparvathy, the young woman from Perumbala near here, died on Saturday morning allegedly after eating the delicacy bought from a local hotel.

Police said she purchased the dish online from a restaurant named Romansia at Kasaragod on December 31 and has been undergoing treatment since then.

The girl was undergoing treatment at a private hospital, from where she was taken to another hospital at Mangaluru in neighbouring Karnataka, where she died.

Meanwhile, Kerala Health Minister Veena George ordered a probe into the incident.

"Directions have been issued to the Food Safety Commissioner to file a report with regard to the incident. The DMO is also looking into the incident and the treatment given to the girl," George told reporters at Pathanamthitta.

## AAP MLA Dr Balbir sworn in as Minister

Chandigarh, Jan 7 (PTI)

Senior AAP leader and Patiala Rural MLA Dr Balbir Singh was on Saturday sworn in as the new Punjab Cabinet Minister. The development comes shortly after Fauja Singh Sarari resigned as Cabinet minister after he was embroiled in a controversy over an audio clip in

which he allegedly discussed ways to "trap" some contractors in order to "extort" money.

Balbir Singh was administered oath by Punjab Governor Banwarilal Purohit at the Raj Bhavan here Saturday evening in the presence of Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann. Singh, an eye surgeon, had defeated senior

Congress leader Brahm Mohindra's son Mohit Mohindra from the Patiala Rural seat in the assembly polls held last year.

Earlier in the day, Sarari resigned from the Cabinet. AAP's Punjab unit spokesperson Malvinder Singh Kang said Sarari has resigned from the cabinet, citing "personal reasons".

## Caste-based head count begins in Bihar

Patna, Jan 7 (PTI)

Termining the caste-based head count that began in Bihar on Saturday as a "historic step", Deputy Chief Minister Tejashwi Yadav said the exercise will provide scientific data to the state government for carrying out welfare schemes for weaker sections of the society.

Noting that all the parties of the ruling 'Mahagathbandhan' were in favour of the exercise, the RJD leader claimed that the BJP was "critical"

about the survey.

"The enumeration exercise began in Bihar from today. It is a historic step taken by the Mahagathbandhan government in the state. Once the exercise is completed, it will provide scientific data to the state government for carrying out developmental work for people, including those who are deprived," Yadav said, while speaking to media persons here.

He also said, "The BJP is an anti-poor party

which always opposed this exercise and has always been critical about the caste-based head count."

Chief Minister Nitish Kumar had on Friday said that the caste-based enumeration exercise could be beneficial for all.

The caste-based head count process has been a major issue in Bihar, as Kumar's JD(U) and all constituents of the ruling 'Mahagathbandhan' were demanding that the exercise be undertaken at the earliest.

## TMC, BJP exchange barbs on Nandigram anniversary

Nandigram, Jan 7 (PTI)

The Trinamool Congress and BJP mourned the 2007 killing of 14 persons protesting a planned chemical hub here on Saturday by holding rival functions, exchanging political barbs.

Interestingly both programmes, held at a distance of barely 100 meters were held under the banner of Bhumi Uchedh Protirodh Committee (BUPC) or Land Disposition Protest Committee, which supported by Mamata Banerjee had put up a stiff

resistance to the government's plans to acquire fertile land near the sea for a proposed chemical hub by MNCs.

TMC state general secretary and spokesperson Kunal Ghosh chose to attack opposition BJP and its Nandigram lawmaker Suvendu Adhikari, an erstwhile TMC leader who defected to the saffron party ahead of the 2021 state election, while paying floral tributes at a memorial there. "CPI-M harms (goons) who were behind the massacre have now turned saffron. Suvendu Adhikari has

done a great disservice to the people of Nandigram by joining hands with those who were behind the armed atrocities on peaceful anti-land grab protesters. He will not be pardoned by the people of Purba Medinipur."

Bhangabera was the spot where 14 villagers belonging to BUPC, the anti-land acquisition committee, were killed on this day by miscreants suspected to be allied to the then ruling CPI(M) on this day 16 years ago during protests against acquisition of farmland for a chemical hub.

## MATRIMONIAL

**ब्राह्मण**  
वधु चाहिये  
वधु चाहिए- सस्युपारीय ब्राह्मण- 32/5'10", छत्तीसगढ़ शासन में क्लास-2 अधिकारी (पीएससी सलेक्टेड) हेतु डॉक्टर/ प्रोफेसर/ शासकीय सेवाएं वधु चाहिए. मो.- 9302382870 (मैरिज ब्यूरो धमा). (250772)

**वधु चाहिये**  
रायपुर छ.ग. निवासी 43 वर्षीय, 5'-5", शुद्ध शाकाहारी, मध्यमवर्गीय, नास्ता दुकान संचालक हिन्दू बंगाली ब्राह्मण युवक हेतु धार्मिक, गृहकार्य दक्ष, घरेलू, पढ़ी-लिखी वधु चाहिए. संपर्क- 9329796182. (250771)

**वधु चाहिये**  
वधु चाहिए- ब्राह्मण 26/5'2", बोकाम रंग गौरा अत्यंत सुन्दर गृह कार्य में दक्ष कन्या मध्यम वर्गीय परिवार हेतु सुयोग्य वर चाहिए. अतिशोच विवाह (सभी ब्राह्मण स्वीकार्य) संपर्क- 9479205416. (250848)

**अग्रवाल**  
वधु चाहिए- तलाकशुदा अग्रवाल 31/5'5", बी.कॉम., अत्यंत सुंदर एकलवती कन्या, पिता का बिजनेस जाति बंधन नहीं हेतु वर चाहिए. संपर्क- मो.- 7415510145, 8871667626. (250851)

**वधु चाहिये**  
अग्रवाल वर चाहिए- 30 कन्याएं सी.ए., 40 डॉक्टर, 50 इंजीनियर, 150 रेजुएशन, 100 सर्विस क्लास, 10 मेट्रिक, 5 माहेश्वरी, 10 जैन, 5 खंडेलवाल, 100 तलाकशुदा-विद्रोह, मारवाड़ी वर-वधु फोटो बायोडाटा सहित संपर्क- कैं- मिलल मैरिज ब्यूरो अरिहंत काम्प्लेक्स, रेलवे स्टेशन के पास रायपुर. व्हाट्सअप-9302454825. (250755)

**बंगाली**  
वधु चाहिए- बंगाली कायस्थ तलाक शुदा 30/5'-2", एम. एस.सी. बायोटेक्नोलॉजी, पी.जी.डी.सी.ए. कन्या हेतु सजातीय सुयोग्य वर चाहिए. संपर्क- 9425245395. (250843)

**सामान्य**  
वर चाहिये  
पारधी (खटोक) मराठी, धर्म-हिन्दू, उम्र-35 वर्ष, रंग-गौरा, शिक्षा-बी.एस.सी. (एमबीए) पुणे में वोडाफोन में कार्यरत गृहकार्य में दक्ष कन्या हेतु वर चाहिए. जाति बंधन नहीं. मोबाइल-94079-35105. (250656)

**वधु चाहिए-कन्या** 27 वर्ष, 5'5" (कतिया) बी.ई. (एम.एन.सी. कम्पनी पुणे) में कार्यरत हेतु सुयोग्य वर चाहिए. साप्ताहिक इंजिनियर / गवर्नमेंट ऑफिसर को प्राथमिकता. मैरिज ब्यूरो धमा. संपर्क- मो.-8349448929. (250770)

**गुजराती**  
वर चाहिए-गुजराती 26/5'1", बोकाम रंग गौरा अत्यंत सुन्दर गृह कार्य में दक्ष कन्या पिता व्यवसायी परिवार हेतु सुयोग्य वर चाहिए. अतिशोच विवाह (सभी गुजराती मान्य)-8224906578. (250847)

**बौद्ध**  
वधु चाहिए- बौद्धिस्त 31/5'11", बोटक (मैकेनिकल इंजीनियर) सिनियर सेक्शन इंजीनियर इन नार्थ रेलवे (सेन्ट्रल गर्वमेंट) आय-11.2 एलपीए, पिता रिटायर्ड अधिकारी. संपर्क-7047855725. (250850)

**तमिल/तेलगू**  
वर चाहिए-तेलुगु 26/5'1", बी.ए. रंग-गौरा अत्यंत सुन्दर गृह कार्य में दक्ष कन्या पिता व्यवसायी मध्यम वर्गीय परिवार हेतु सुयोग्य वर चाहिए अतिशोच विवाह (जाति बंधन नहीं) संपर्क-6266127900. 250849

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# House will address rise of the Chinese Communist party: McCarthy

Washington, Jan 07 (PTI):

Newly-elected Speaker of the House of Representatives Kevin McCarthy on Saturday said he will look into the issue of public debt and pledged that the House will address the "rise of the Chinese Communist party."

McCarthy, 57, was elected the House Speaker in a historic post-midnight 15th ballot on Saturday.

He replaced Nancy Pelosi, 82, of the Democratic Party.

McCarthy defeated 52-year-old Hakeem Sekou Jeffries by 216 to 212 votes, in the 15th round of votes that went past midnight.

In his maiden speech as Speaker, McCarthy said he wanted the US to win the economic competition with China.

"We will address



America's long-term challenges: the debt and the rise of the Chinese Communist Party. The Congress must speak in one voice on these issues," McCarthy said in his maiden speech as speaker.

The Republican was able to muster a majority from the lawmakers present on the floor only after six of his party rebels voted present, which

brought down the magic number from 218 to 215 votes. "As for the Chinese Communist Party, we will create a bipartisan Select Committee on China to investigate how to bring back the hundreds of thousands of jobs that went to China. Then we will win this economic competition," he said, evoking applause from the lawmakers. McCarthy

said this moment calls for restoring trust within the country, with each other.

"In that spirit, I will work with anyone, everyone who shares our passion to deliver a better future for the nation. I hope you'll join me as a Congress can only operate if we cooperate," he said.

He told his Congressional colleagues that his father always told him it's not important how one starts. "It's how you finish. And now we need to finish strong for the American people," he asserted. McCarthy becomes 55th House speaker after the fifth-longest contest in history. He won the gavel after 15 rounds of voting, making it the longest election for speaker.

The longest vote in US history took place in 1855, lasting 133 rounds over two months.

## A MAN CATCHES A TROUT ON A FROZEN RIVER



A man catches a trout on a frozen river during a trout catching contest in Hwacheon, South Korea, Saturday, Jan. 7, 2023. The contest is part of an annual ice festival which draws over one million visitors every year.

# Thousands protest against rising terrorism in northwest Pakistan

Peshawar, Jan 07 (PTI):

Thousands of tribesmen in Pakistan's northwest took to the streets to protest against rising incidents of terrorism and kidnapping in the country's tribal districts bordering Afghanistan while demanding immediate restoration of peace in the region.

Over 5,000 tribesmen took out a rally on Friday in Wana, the headquarters of the South Waziristan tribal district, against the growing unrest, terrorism, and kidnappings in their areas.

The protest comes amidst rising terrorist attacks in the country, especially in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan provinces that are believed to have been carried out by the banned Tehreek-i-Taliban

Pakistan (TTP) group based in Afghanistan.

Pushtoon nationalist and leader of Pushtoon Tahaffuz Movement (PTM) Manzoor Pushteen addressed the protesters carrying placards and banners.

The protesters demanded the restoration of peace and harmony in the tribal districts.

All the shops and markets were closed in Wana bazaar as a protest against the surge in unrest in the district.

Pushteen said the fresh wave of unrest has scared traders and investors and they were not ready to run their businesses in the prevailing law and order situation.

He said the tribal youth can take up arms like terrorists if the public order was not improved.

The protesters said it is

the responsibility of the government to ensure the protection of the lives and properties of the citizens in the tribal areas.

The government should take measures for the maintenance of peace in the area and the release of hostages from the custody of kidnappers, they said.

The TTP has been blamed for several deadly attacks across Pakistan, including an attack on army headquarters in 2009, assaults on military bases, and the 2008 bombing of the Marriott Hotel in Islamabad.

In 2014, the Pakistani Taliban stormed the Army Public School (APS) in the northwestern city of Peshawar, killing at least 150 people, including 131 students. The attack sent shockwaves across the world, and was widely condemned.

# Kurds from around Europe demonstrate over killings in Paris

Paris, Jan 07 (AP):

Kurdish groups from around France and Europe are marching in Paris on Saturday to show their anger over the unresolved killing of three Kurdish women activists in the French capital 10 years ago. The marchers are also mourning three people killed outside a Kurdish cultural centre in Paris two weeks ago in what prosecutors called a racist attack. Escorted by police, about a dozen buses from Germany, the Netherlands, Switzerland and Belgium carried Kurdish activists to the start of the march, near the Gare du Nord train station in northern Paris. The demonstration is timed to mark the 10th anniversary of the killings of Sakine Cansiz, Fidan Dogan and Leyla Sayilemez on January 9, 2013.

Cansiz was a founder of the Kurdistan Workers'

Party or PKK, which Turkey, the United States and the European Union consider a terrorist group.

Kurdish activists suspect the Turkish intelligence service was involved in the killing.

The suspected attacker, a Turkish citizen, died in French custody before the case reached trial.

Turkish officials suggested at the time that the killings may have been part of an internal feud among Kurdish activists or an attempt to derail peace talks.

Paris police were on alert on Saturday after skirmishes at Kurdish gatherings in the past, notably in response to last month's shooting.

After the December 23 attack, the suspected assailant told investigators he had a "pathological" hatred of non-European foreigners, according to prosecutors.

# India's response to Sri Lanka's request for debt restructuring expected by January end: Wickremesinghe

Colombo, Jan 07 (PTI):

President Ranil Wickremesinghe has said that India's response to cash-strapped Sri Lanka's request for debt restructuring is expected by the end of this month.

Sri Lanka, which is trying to secure a USD 2.9 billion bridge loan from the International Monetary Fund (IMF), has been trying to get financial assurances from its major creditors — China, Japan and India — which is the requisite for Colombo to get the bailout package.

Talking to the media, Wickremesinghe on Friday also said that he is hopeful of obtaining the USD 2.9 billion IMF facility in the first quarter of this year. Sri Lanka had begun debt restructuring



talks with its creditors since September last year as warranted by its agreement with the IMF for the USD 2.9 billion facility over four years.

The cash-strapped country began negotiating with the IMF for a bail-out after having announced its first-ever sovereign debt default in April last year.

Wickremesinghe had earlier said that India and

Sri Lanka held "successful" talks on debt restructuring and the country will also begin discussions with China.

The IMF bailout has been put on a halt as Sri Lanka pursues talks with creditors to meet the global lender's condition for the facility.

Wickremesinghe said Sri Lanka was only looking from China to extend the period of repayment of Chinese loans over a period of 20 years and Sri Lanka did not ask China to slash its debt.

Sri Lanka was hit by an unprecedented financial crisis in 2022 due to a severe paucity of foreign exchange reserves that also sparked political turmoil in the country which led to the ouster of the all-powerful Rajapaksa family.

## AMX-10 RC TANKS



This undated photo provided by the French Army shows AMX-10 RC tanks. France said it will send French-made AMX-10 RC light tanks to Ukraine, the first tanks from a Western European country, following an afternoon phone call between French President Emmanuel Macron and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy.

# China suspends social media accounts of COVID policy critics

Beijing, Jan 07 (AP):

China has suspended or closed the social media accounts of more than 1,000 critics of the government's policies on the COVID-19 outbreak, as the country moves to further open up.

The popular Sina Weibo social media platform said it had addressed 12,854 violations including attacks on experts, scholars and medical workers and issued temporary or permanent bans on 1,120 accounts. The ruling Communist Party had largely relied on the medical community to justify its harsh lockdowns, quarantine measures and mass testing, almost all of which it abruptly aban-

doned last month, leading to a surge in new cases that have stretched medical resources to their limits. The party allows no direct criticism and imposes strict limits on free speech.

The company "will continue to increase the investigation and cleanup of all kinds of illegal content, and create a harmonious and friendly community environment for the majority of users," Sina Weibo said in a statement dated Thursday.

Criticism has largely focused on open-ended travel restrictions that saw people confined to their homes for weeks, sometimes without adequate food or medical care.

Anger was also vented

over the requirement that anyone who potentially tested positive or had been in contact with such a person be confined for observation in a field hospital, where overcrowding, poor food and hygiene were commonly cited.

The social and economic costs eventually prompted rare street protests in Beijing and other cities, possibly influencing the party's decision to swiftly ease the strictest measures. China is now facing a surge in cases and hospitalisations in major cities and is bracing for a further spread into less developed areas with the start of the Lunar New Year travel rush, set to get underway in coming days.

While international

flights are still reduced, authorities say they expect domestic rail and air journeys will double over the same period last year, bringing overall numbers close to those of the 2019 holiday period before the pandemic hit.

The Transportation Ministry on Friday called on travellers to reduce trips and gatherings, particularly if they involve elderly people, pregnant women, small children and those with underlying conditions.

People using public transport are also urged to wear masks and pay special attention to their health and personal hygiene, Vice Minister Xu Chengguang told reporters at a briefing.

# Iran executes 2 more men detained amid nationwide protests

Dubai, Jan 07 (AP):

Iran said it executed two men Saturday convicted of allegedly killing a paramilitary volunteer during a demonstration, the latest executions aimed at halting the nationwide protests now challenging the country's theocracy.

Iran's judiciary identified those executed as Mohammad Karami and Mohammad Hosseini, making it four men known to have been executed since the demonstrations began in September over the death of Mahsa Amini.

The judiciary's Mizan news agency said the men had been convicted of killing Ruhollah Ajamian, a member of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard's volunteer Basij Force, in the city of Karaj outside of Tehran on Nov. 3. The Basij have deployed in major cities, attacking and detaining protesters, who in many cases have fought back. It wasn't immediately clear which court heard the two men's cases. However, Iran's internationally criticized closed-door Revolutionary Courts have handed down two of

the death sentences.

Activists say at least 16 people have been sentenced to death in closed-door hearings over charges linked to the protests. Death sentences in Iran are typically carried out by hanging.

At least 517 protesters have been killed and over 19,200 people have been arrested, according to Human Rights Activists in Iran, a group that has closely monitored the unrest. Iranian authorities have not provided an official count of those killed or detained.

# Biden faces Israel quandary with new Netanyahu government

Washington, Jan 07 (AP):

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's new government is little more than a week old but it's already giving the Biden administration headaches.

Just days into its mandate, a controversial member of Netanyahu's right-wing Cabinet visited U.S. diplomats with a visit to a Jerusalem holy site that some believe may be harbinger of other contentious moves, including vast expansions of Jewish settlement construction on land claimed by the Palestinians.

And, Netanyahu's gov-

ernment adopted punitive measures against the Palestinians that run in direct opposition to several recent Biden moves to boost U.S.-Palestinian relations, including restoring assistance to the Palestinian Authority that had been cut during the Trump administration and allowing Palestinian officials to visit the United States. The new government is an unwelcome complication for a Biden national security team seeking to shift attention away from the Middle East and toward rivals like China and Russia. It also comes as Republicans take control of the House of



Representatives and are eager to cast Biden as unfriendly to Israel ahead of the 2024 presidential election. Bracing for more turmoil, Biden is dispatching his national security adviser to Israel in mid-January in a bid to forestall potentially deepening rifts be-

tween his administration and its top Mideast partner. That visit by Jake Sullivan may be followed by other high-level trips to Israel, including one by Secretary of State Antony Blinken, according to administration officials.

Their message goes beyond warnings about inflaming tensions with Palestinians: It's also about not cozying up with Russia, particularly now that Moscow is relying on Israel's main enemy, Iran, in its war on Ukraine; and not upsetting the delicate Middle East security balance. Since Netanyahu won hotly contested elections

last year with huge support from the Israeli right, U.S. officials have sought to tamp down predictions of a collision course, saying they will judge his government on actions rather than personalities. Biden himself spoke of his years-long relationship with Netanyahu. "I look forward to working with Prime Minister Netanyahu, who has been my friend for decades, to jointly address the many challenges and opportunities facing Israel and the Middle East region, including threats from Iran," Biden said when Netanyahu took office Dec. 29.



## CENTRAL Chronicle

Since 1974 Volume 10 No. 279

### India's current account deficit touches precarious level

India's current account deficit for the second quarter (July-September) of 2022-23 has reached a massive \$36.4 billion which is 4.4 per cent of the gross domestic product, higher than at any time in the last nine years. It is only in October-December 2012 that the absolute level of the current deficit had been \$32.6 billion which was 6.7 per cent of the GDP. By contrast the current account deficit had been \$18.2 billion in the first quarter of 2022-23 or 2.2 per cent of GDP, and \$9.7 billion or 1.3 per cent of GDP in the second quarter of 2021-22, i.e., exactly a year ago. In other words compared to the first quarter itself there has been a doubling of the current account deficit as a percentage of GDP which is a whopping increase; compared to the second quarter a year ago the increase in GDP percentage is more than three times. Quite apart from the sheer size of the current account deficit, there are at least three reasons why the balance of payments is a cause for serious concern. First, the reason for the increase in the current account deficit, by as much as \$18.2 billion compared to the previous quarter, is an increase in merchandise trade deficit, that is, in the excess of imports over exports of goods. The merchandise trade deficit increased by over \$20 billion, from \$63 billion to \$83.5 billion, between the first and the second quarters. According to the Reserve Bank of India this increase was for two reasons: first, the increase in oil prices that has occurred in the wake of the Ukraine war and pushed up our import bill; and, second, the lacklustre performance of our exports because of the slowing down of the world economy. Economic commentators in the media have adduced other factors, like the weak rupee and the revival of domestic demand, for the widening of the merchandise trade deficit, but these are erroneous assertions: a weak rupee should, if anything, improve rather worsen the trade deficit; and the revival of demand has not been so pronounced as to widen the deficit so much, since the GDP growth itself which is the primary source of income has been low. The problem with the factors identified by the RBI is that they are not going to go away soon. The Ukraine war is not just a conflict between two countries over some bilateral issues. It has to do with the shape that imperialism will have in the future and therefore has a decisive significance; because of this imperialism will resist any easy and amicable solution to the war. Likewise, the inflation that had made an appearance even before the war but has now become exceedingly serious in the metropolitan economies as a consequence of it, is being sought to be combated through the creation of recession and unemployment; this again will be a long drawn-out affair. It follows therefore that the merchandise trade balance will continue to remain as adverse as in the second quarter of 2022-23 for quite some time. The second cause for concern is that this merchandise trade deficit has occurred in the midst of a sharp decline in the exchange rate of the rupee amounting to as much as 10 per cent over the calendar year 2022. Normally, an exchange rate depreciation is supposed to improve the trade balance. Such an improvement of course takes time, so that the simultaneous occurrence of a worsening of the trade balance and an exchange rate depreciation should not be a matter of surprise. But the persistence of a large deficit invariably creates expectations of an exchange rate depreciation, which in turn give rise to an actual exchange rate depreciation by causing financial outflows. Since neither of the factors mentioned by the RBI as underlying the widening trade deficit at present, is going to be affected by any exchange rate depreciation, its impact on the deficit will be marginal even after sufficient time has elapsed, in which case we are entering a period of freefall for the rupee. It is already being called one of the weakest currencies in Asia, but this state of affairs is going to persist, perpetuating inflation in the country through the cost-push effect emanating from imported inputs. It may be thought that India's large foreign exchange reserves should prevent such a free fall of the rupee, but even the current fall has occurred despite nearly a hundred billion dollars being spent by the RBI in its efforts to stabilise the rupee. In the second quarter of 2022-23 itself there was a \$25 billion decline in reserves. The depletion of reserves therefore cannot prevent a fall in the rupee; what is more, as the level of reserves declines, speculation against the rupee will escalate, making matters even worse. It follows therefore that despite our large reserves India's balance of payments have become a serious cause for concern. The third reason why the balance of payments situation portends ill for the economy is as follows: the yawning merchandise trade deficit has occurred in a situation of low GDP growth. The first quarter (April-June) GDP growth in 2022-23 over the corresponding quarter of 2021-22 had been 13.5 per cent, reflecting recovery from a Covid-induced trough. But the second quarter growth has been just 6.3 per cent compared to the second quarter of 2021-22. The growth in gross value added (GVA) in the second quarter, which measures the actual increase in production, ignoring the effects of tax changes that GDP incorporates, was even lower, just 5.6 per cent. The reason for the slowdown in growth was a slowing down of the manufacturing sector which was not an episodic development but a persisting one (People's Democracy, December 25). India's creeping industrial stagnation in short is pulling down its GDP growth rate, and the rise in merchandise trade deficit has occurred despite this growth slowdown. The rise in trade deficit will almost certainly entail a further rise in the interest rates in India. This will be done keeping several objectives in mind: for attracting global capital for financing the deficit; for reducing the deficit by curtailing domestic demand; and for curbing the inflation unleashed by a declining rupee. Neoliberal capitalism has just this one instrument, which creates recession and unemployment, for combating multiple economic woes and it is going to be used vigorously in the coming days. That however will only worsen the growth rate of GDP and accentuate unemployment and distress in the economy. The fact that the yawning merchandise trade deficit is occurring not because of any pronounced boom in the economy but rather in the midst of a creeping industrial stagnation, therefore augurs ill for the economy. Some may argue that there is nothing new in the current situation, that in 2012-13 the country had faced a similar predicament when the tapering off of bond purchases by the Federal Reserve Board of the United States, indicating a tightening of US monetary policy, had caused a similar widening of the merchandise trade deficit (as mentioned earlier) and a fall in the rupee; but that, while heralding a period of economic difficulties for the country, had not precipitated any insurmountable crisis. Why should a similar situation be a matter of such serious concern now? There is a fundamental difference between then and now. The world economy is currently afflicted by high inflation unlike then, because of which there is a general rise in interest rates everywhere and the entire world economy is going into a precipitate recession. At that time the RBI had responded to the situation by raising India's interest rate, while other countries were not increasing rates, which was why the RBI's response succeeded in preventing a crisis. But now, a rise in the interest rate by the RBI simply would not work because all capitalist countries are raising interest rates; this general rise in interest rates will bring about a world recession and hence keep our merchandise trade deficit high for quite some time, thereby precipitating a continuing economic crisis in India as suggested above. All this is indicative of the cul-de-sac that neoliberal capitalism has run into, and the severe challenge to the hegemony of western imperialism that has emerged. World capitalism in short is currently in a state which creates new possibilities of transcending it. But if instead of seizing such an opportunity our economy remains stuck within a regime of neoliberal capitalism, and seeks to overcome its predicament merely by resorting to bailouts through borrowing, then that will only accentuate in future the economic crisis which the country is facing at present.

### KAPIL MUNI TEMPLE



Sagar Island: Kapil Muni temple in Sagar Island in West Bengal, the main centre of attraction of Ganga Sagar Mela.

## Bringing in the new revolution in digital financial inclusion

V. ANANTHA NAGESWARAN AND CHANCHAL C. SARKAR



Financial Inclusion has long been recognised as a key enabler of economic growth and development. It plays a significant role in reducing poverty and empowering and connecting people within the ambit of a productive economy. Financial inclusion thus was rightly identified as an enabler for seven of the seventeen Sustainable Development Goals. In late 2010 against the backdrop of the global financial crisis, the G20 Leaders recognised financial inclusion as one of the main pillars of the global development agenda. They endorsed a Financial Inclusion Action Plan (FIAP) and established the Global Partnership for Financial Inclusion (GPII) to implement it in G20 countries and beyond. GPII thus works for those even beyond G20 countries. Since then, much work for advancing financial inclusion has been steered by the GPII. It has produced many useful policy documents and implemented them, including G20 High-Level Principles for Digital

Financial Inclusion, reduced the cost of remittances and increased access to and usage of sustainable formal financial services, thereby expanding opportunities for underserved and excluded households and enterprises.

Technological innovations and the adoption of digital innovation in finance through smartphones, Fintechs, and high-speed internet have been major catalysts in nearly doubling account ownership to 71 per cent in developing countries over the past decade (<https://www.worldbank.org/en/publication/globalfindex>). This shift has been captured by the G20 as well. Digital Financial Inclusion and not just financial inclusion has been a major focus area for the past few years.

The G20 reports and policy guides usher non-member countries to leverage technology, innovation, and digitalisation to further financial inclusion. However, despite the many advances made, what is keeping the world from unlocking the full potential of digital technologies for financial inclusion? What makes India a global bright spot in accelerating financial inclusion?

With about 31 per cent of the world's population, largely women, poor and less educated adults, still being excluded from the formal financial system, the time is ripe for rethinking the digital financial ecosystem and exploring ways to bring in the new wave of revolution for digital financial inclusion.

The India Stack is perhaps the most vivid demonstra-

tion of our country's efforts to advance financial inclusion. The Stack brings together various stakeholders of the digital financial ecosystem, such as policymakers, regulators, the private sector, and users and converges components such as identity, payment systems, databases, open networks, and open interfaces (APIs) into a unified platform to complement one another. Such an ecosystem approach has leapfrogged developmental trajectory as it fosters an environment for regulators to regulate and the private sector to innovate whilst always striking a balance between the two. The India Stack, despite its nomenclature, is not limited to India alone and thus can help and facilitate others; its vision and ambitions go far beyond our national boundaries. The foundational template of the Stack can be applied in other country settings— whether developed or emerging—to fit their unique requirements (<https://indiastack.org/index.html>).

Owing to this unique template, within the last decade, India has achieved 1.3 billion Aadhaar enrolments, overseeing monthly UPI payment volumes of over Rs12 lakh crore (<https://www.npci.org.in/what-we-do/upi/product-statistics>); and banking over 470 million beneficiaries under the Jan Dhan, Aadhaar and Mobile (JAM) trinity, of which 55% are women and 67% live in rural or semi-urban areas (<https://pmjdy.gov.in/account>). With merely seven years to attain our

Sustainable Development Goals, this pace, volume and quality of financial services are needed to usher in digital financial inclusion as a worldwide revolution.

As Kolkata gets ready to host the First GPFII Meeting under G20 India Presidency, one of the key issues would be to address the challenges of financial inclusion by leveraging technology to achieve the threefold objectives of access, usage and quality of financial services, transform people's lives, and enhance productivity in the economy.

The meeting will be accompanied by a dedicated initiative for building financial literacy and awareness among schoolchildren. The event is also looking forward to a showcase of various digital innovations in finance by the Public Sector Banks and Undertakings that have contributed to India's outstanding success in reaching the last mile. Prominent speakers worldwide will also share valuable insights on how countries can leverage their technological capabilities to advance financial inclusion and productivity gains. The first GPFII working group meeting in Kolkata is likely to initiate a long and prosperous journey of India's approach to advancing digital financial inclusion globally.

(V. Anantha Nageswaran and Chanchal C. Sarkar are Chief Economic Advisor and Economic Advisor, respectively, in the Ministry of Finance, Government of India. Their views are personal).

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

#### Was demonetization right or wrong?

The Prime Minister Narendra Modi led Indian government stopped the circulation of 500 and 1000 notes. After the demonetization many criticized this action and considered it as unwise decision. Since then, this controversial matter was in a court, but finally, the honorable court gave its verdict on 2 January 2023 approving the government decision concerning the demonetization. This is amazing that how the court did not find fault, whereas the decision of demonetization was taken aiming to bring the black money and eradicate the terrorism and corruption. After passing years of demonetization the question still arises that where is the black money for which the government forced the entire nation to stand in queue and compelled the entire nation in commotion? Is there no corruption or terrorism in the country? Off course the answer is No. With such circumstances how the Honorable Court did not find any fault in the decision on the demonetization that is truly unimaginable.

Mohd Faisal, Mumbai

#### SC's humanitarian approach

Kudos to the Supreme Court (SC) of India, when it's timely stays Uttarakhnd High Court order for removal of encroachments from 29 acres of land claimed by the railways in Haldwani. Otherwise, thousands of people who faced the prospect of being left homeless in the middle of the harsh North Indian winter. In these 29 acres of land there are 4,365 houses - nearly half of the families claim to have a land lease - the area even has four government schools, 11 private schools, a bank, two overhead water tanks, 10 mosques, and four temples, besides shops, built over decades. This temporary order (next hearing on 6th February, 2023) from a SC bench of Justices S K Kaul and A S Oka is saying to make arrangements for the people who are going to be displaced which is as per law or the government. People unable to understand that why the nearly 100 years old encroached land not to be legalized as per thousand other places in the country, not just Haldwani. On the humanity ground the SC rightly stayed the High Court order to say "It may not be correct to say that paramilitary forces have to be deployed to remove people who have been living there for decades." But the aam aadmi also wants that the SC should not drag the case for long instead to make alternate arrangement for those unfortunate human being of the area covers a 2-km strip of land near the Haldwani railway station - Gafoor Basti, Dholak Basti and Indira Nagar, in Babhulpur area.

Bidyut Kumar Chatterjee, Faridabd

### India's keen interest on green hydrogen

Dr. Krishna Kumar Vepakomma

It is a welcome move by the Center for its approval of the National Green Hydrogen Mission, which would produce 5 million tonnes of green hydrogen yearly over the next five years and is expected to attract investments totaling Rs. 8 lakh crore in the green hydrogen chain. Through investments in infrastructure for alternative fuel generation, storage, and supply lines, the National Green Hydrogen Mission aims to both assist India in achieving its goals for reducing climate change and taking the lead in the availability of green hydrogen. The Mission will make it easier to produce, use, export, and create new demand for green hydrogen. India also set an ambitious target of production of 5 million tonnes of green hydrogen by 2030 in February this year. The National Green Hydrogen Mission was seen by experts to be a "crucial policy move" in making India a pioneer in the creation and production of green hydrogen. In order to construct the infrastructure needed to manufacture and transport green hydrogen from specific nerve centers to production hubs where it may be used in a variety of industrial applications, the Indian industry has to have an environment that supports this effort. In terms of greenhouse gas emissions, India is third in the world. The usage of green hydrogen would help India reduce its reliance on imported fossil fuels and assist it in meeting its emissions targets under the Paris Agreement. Green hydrogen is therefore considered to be a useful method of reducing carbon emissions, but scaling the technology up and making it affordable remain significant obstacles.

## Ragging is nothing but bossing because of seniority

Vinod Chandrashekhhar Dixit

Open down this article apropos the welcome decision by the Assam Government to launch a drive to find out all former students staying illegally in college and university hostels and ask them to leave in order to prevent ragging. The vicious practice of ragging has not only become rampant in our educational institutions but also acquired hideous proportions costing the sanity of the institutions and life of some of the students. Even today, students from the rural areas have a lingering fear when they go to cities for higher studies. To dispel such fears, colleges should prominently display a banner saying their campus is free from ragging. Those who indulge in ragging look for temporary pleasure but end up destroying many lives. Students alone can put an end to it. Anti-ragging steps should be

strictly enforced. Parents and teachers are equally responsible for eliminating the virus. Service organizations and NGOs should too launch awareness campaigns against the menace in educational institutions. The cantankerous behaviour of some students in colleges is often the offshoot of discipline in the schools in which they studied, and uncaring families. Instead of attempting to classify the acts of ragging as "soft" and "hard," we should employ the guidelines of the committee in letter and spirit. If faculty members communicate more informally with them, a healthy academic environment can be created. Ragging and abetting the crime on the college campus will remove the lurking fear in the minds of freshmen, especially those who opt to stay in hostels. The authorities should not stop with just making rules but take effective steps to implement the same and highlight



the ill-effects of ragging through the visual media. The move will implant fear and discipline in the minds of senior students who indulge in ragging. Even today, students from the rural areas have a lingering fear when they go to cities for higher studies. To dispel such fears, colleges should prominently display a banner saying their campus is free from ragging. Those who indulge in ragging look for temporary pleasure but end up

destroying many lives. Students alone can put an end to it. Anti-ragging steps should be strictly enforced. Parents and teachers are equally responsible for eliminating the virus. Service organizations and NGOs should too launch awareness campaigns against the menace in educational institutions.

There was not much awareness in those days and ragging in the past was one way of familiarizing freshers with senior students. But now, the increased incidents of ragging have exposed the errors in our education system which may be successful in churning out academically brilliant students, but has failed to inculcate proper values in them. The cantankerous behaviour of some students in colleges is often the offshoot of indiscipline in the schools in which they studied, and uncaring families. Instead of attempting to classify the acts of ragging as "soft" and "hard," we should employ the

guidelines of the committee in letter and spirit. If faculty members communicate more informally with them, a healthy academic environment can be created.

It is also noticed that those who indulge in ragging do not plan in advance. On most of the occasions, things go out of control. The guilty should not only be expelled but also barred from admission to any other college. Looking to the increase in ragging incidents, active involvement of media and the civil society is essential in tackling the problem of ragging. The mindset of the student has changed and now we need to focus in on enforcing stringent measures like rustication of a student, withholding of scholarship, debarring a student from appearing in any test. If possible students who involve in ragging must be put in jail instead of just being suspended or expelled. An example needs to be set.

**BRIEF**

**Change attitude**



**Pune:** Nationalist Congress Party Chief Sharad Pawar has said that the Union government must change its attitude towards cooperative banks and support them because they serve the common people. There is a misconception that irregularities largely take place in cooperative banks, the former Union agriculture minister said at a function here on Thursday. Pawar was speaking at the closing ceremony of the golden jubilee of Vishweshwar Cooperative Bank Ltd. Nationalised and scheduled banks in the country account for more than 90 per cent of irregularities whereas cooperative sector banks account for only 0.46 per cent irregularities, he said.

**Project clearance**

**Bengaluru:** Karnataka Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai on Thursday appealed to Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari to clear projects worth Rs 1 lakh crore in the state. He also requested him to undertake projects related to ring roads in Raichur, Gadag, Koppal and Shivamogga as well. "We mainly discussed the works of the national highway. Work is presently underway in projects worth around Rs 46,830 crore but still work on projects worth more than Rs 1 lakh has to be done. A decision has been taken to fast track those projects," Bommai told reporters after a meeting with Gadkari here on Thursday.

**5G launch**

**Jaipur:** Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot on Saturday launched 5G internet service in the state, terming it a revolutionary step in the field of information technology and telecommunication. Speaking at an event during which 5G service was launched in Jaipur, Jodhpur and Udaipur, Gehlot said the high-speed connectivity will further strengthen the dream of good governance, transparency and accountability. He, however, cautioned users over rising cyber frauds and the challenges the internet has posed in the recent times.

**Credit outreach**

**Kota (Rajasthan):** Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman is scheduled to participate in a credit outreach program here on Sunday, an official statement said. The finance minister and Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla, who is also the MP from Kota - Bundi, will distribute loans to street vendors, small scale entrepreneurs and cattle rearers under Pradhan Mantri Swanidhi Yojana and Mudra Yojana at Dussehra Ground.

## India looking at multilateral agreements: Piyush Goyal

**That are fair, equitable for all sides**  
New Delhi, Jan 07:

Negotiations for bilateral free trade agreements with several countries are "well on track" and India is also looking at some multilateral pacts that are fair and equitable for all the member countries, Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said on Saturday. India has recently implemented a free trade agreement (FTA) with the UAE in May 2022 and on December 29, 2022 with Australia to boost bilateral trade and investments. The country is negotiating FTAs with countries in-

cluding Canada, European Union and the UK. "We are well on track in discussions with several other countries to look at bilateral trade agreements. We are looking at one or two multilateral trade agreements also where we believe we can get benefit," Goyal said while virtually addressing the 27th Wharton India Economic Forum. In a trade agreement, two or more countries either significantly reduce or eliminate customs duties on the maximum number of goods traded between them. Besides, they ease norms to promote trade in services and investments.

The minister said that it is in India's interest to

enter into bilateral free trade agreements. "It's essential that agreements are balanced and they are in the best interest of both the countries, they address the sensitivities of both the countries and help us protect certain sectors which we need to protect," Goyal added. He said that India can not make every product efficiently and that imports are important for those goods. On the other hand, India is competitive in several sectors such as labour oriented areas like textiles, leather, footwear, and pharma and for that these, trade agreements would be beneficial. Due to this, "we decided that we must talk to like-minded coun-

tries particularly countries which have a rule-based trading order, which are transparent in their economic systems as India is and enter into arrangements which are win-win for both the sides and which are fair, equitable and balanced," the minister said. Talking about Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), which India decided not to join, he said it was a very unfair and unbalanced agreement and one of the member countries (China) in the RCEP group has a "very opaque" trading system. Further, he said that going forward it is important to focus on quality products and services.

## Air India CEO apologises for urinating incidence; crew, pilot de-rostered; reviews alcohol policy

New Delhi, Jan 07:

Tata Group-owned Air India CEO Campbell Wilson on Saturday apologised for a flyer urinating on a fellow female passenger on a flight from New York in November, and said four cabin crew and a pilot have been de-rostered and the airline is reviewing policy of serving alcohol on flights. Facing backlash for the handling of the incident, Wilson in a statement said the airline could have handled the issue better and promised a robust reporting system of unruly behaviour and a system of reporting such incidents. "Air India is deeply concerned about the in-



flight instances where customers have suffered due to the condemnable acts of their co-passengers on our aircraft. We regret and are pained about these experiences," he said. "Air India acknowledges that it could have handled these matters better, both in the air and on the ground and is committed to taking action." With questions being raised about the airline not immediately

reporting the unruly passenger to law enforcement authorities, he advised staff to report all incidents irrespective of a settlement being reached. "In the instance of the incident onboard AI-102 operating between New York and Delhi on November 26, 2022, four cabin crew and one pilot have been issued show cause notices and de-rostered pending investigation," he said, adding internal investigations into whether there were lapses by other staff are ongoing. The airline is investigating aspects including the service of alcohol on flight, incident handling, complaint registration on board and grievance handling.

## Govt to focus on micro credit facility for street vendors in 2023: Vaishnav

New Delhi, Jan 07:

The government will enhance its focus on providing micro-credit facility in the range of Rs 3,000-5,000 to street vendors in 2023, with the help of digital technologies, Union IT and Telecom Minister Ashwini Vaishnav said on Saturday. While speaking at Digital India Awards, Vaishnav said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi has allocated around Rs 52,000 crore for taking 4G and 5G services across all nooks and corners of the country for digitally connecting every citizen. "In 2023 there will be a big focus on providing credit facilities to street vendors in a simplified manner to meet small credit requirements of Rs 3,000-5,000," Vaishnav said. The minister said that the country will see the roll out of indigenously developed 4G and 5G technologies this



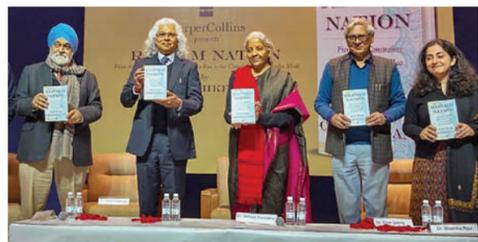
year. He said that very soon the country will witness the setting up of an electronic chip manufacturing plant in the country in line with PM Modi's vision to make India self-reliant in the field of technology. The PM Street Vendor's Atma Nirbhar Nidhi (SVANidhi) Scheme was launched in June 2020 as a Micro-Credit facility which aims to empower street vendors to recover losses incurred as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Through PM SVANidhi, affordable collateral-free loans are given to street vendors.

## Optional tax regime aimed at providing relief to persons in low income bracket: FM

New Delhi, Jan 07:

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Friday said the optional income tax regime with seven tax slabs was brought in by the government to ensure lower rates for those in the low income bracket. Sitharaman said in the old tax regime, every tax assessee can claim about 7-10 exemptions and the income tax rates vary between 10, 20, and 30 per cent, depending on income threshold.

The minister said along with the old tax regime, the government has come up with a parallel system which has no exemptions, but with simpler and more favourable tax rates. "The reason why I had to bring in seven slabs was to make simpler and lower rates for



Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman with others launches the book 'Reform Nation' authored by Gautam Chikermane, in New Delhi. Bibek Debroy, Chairman of the Economic Advisory Council to Prime Minister, and Montek Singh Ahluwalia are also present.

those who are in the lower income (bracket)," Sitharaman said. She was speaking at an event to launch the book 'Reform Nation', authored by Observer Research Foundation Vice President Gautam Chikermane. The government in Budget 2020-21 introduced the op-

## Sony WF-LS900N strikes perfect balance between comfort and performance

Mumbai, Feb 07:

Sony WF-LS900N is the newest true wireless earbuds from the Japanese company. After bringing industry leading noise cancellation with WF-1000XM4 and fully aware design with the LinkBuds (WF-L900), Sony is trying to find a middle ground with the WF-LS900N. In simple terms, Sony took the best from those earbuds and tried to pack it into a mid-range price offering.

The WF-LS900N aims to be a true wireless earbuds that does not have a radical design like the LinkBuds. In other words, it has a conventional design with silicone tips and a comfortable fit for extended listening. It doesn't reach the level of 1000XM4s with sound

quality or noise cancellation but delivers a balance that most people would prefer. Is that enough for WF-LS900N to become Sony's most versatile TWS earbuds yet? Sony offers the WF-LS900N in three colours at the launch: beige, white, and black. These earbuds feature a textured finish that offers a great in-hand feel, and to the delight of the consumers, it eliminates fingerprints that are common in these form factors.

All three models look sharp, clean with the white model looking minimalist, the black being robust, and beige being fun. This is Sony's most refined design yet and shows how much the design language of Sony has evolved since WF-1000XM3 days. This design has a purpose and



willpower of both sides is very strong regarding the FTA," Agrawal said.

He said there are many opportunities to enhance the partnership between the two countries in the sectors such as IT, defence, professional services, legal services, life sciences, and start-ups. The economic relationship between the two countries can be gauged from the fact that Indian companies, including the Tata Group and individ-

Indore, Jan 07:

London Deputy Mayor (trade) Rajesh Agrawal has said the UK and India possess a strong will to give the final shape to the proposed Free Trade Agreement (FTA). Speaking to PTI ahead of the three-day Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD) convention beginning here on Sunday, Agrawal also said both countries have many opportunities to increase their partnerships in Information Technology, defence, professional services, and other sectors. "Several rounds of talks have been held between the UK and India to enhance the bilateral partnership for finalising the FTA. The

**NEW OFFICE**



KONE Elevators India MD & CEO Amit Gossain inaugurates the company's new 'Sustainable office & Warehouse' in Gurugram.

## India and UK have strong will to finalise FTA, says London Dy Mayor

ual IT firms, are providing around 80,000 jobs in London alone, he said.

Even during the fierce COVID-19 outbreak, Indian companies have increased their businesses across the world, which is an indicator of the country's economic progress, Agrawal added. Queried on the possibility of an economic slowdown in the world, Agrawal said, "India's local market is very strong and the country's economy is highly resilient. Although global events do have some impact on every country, I feel India is largely safe from it (from the threat of economic slowdown)". He said India is one of the leading countries in IT

and pharmaceutical manufacturing, and added industrial production activities are also picking up pace. "The world is looking towards India as it is the fastest growing economy and the global growth engine," he said. Agrawal also said in talent-rich India, the government appears to have the will to encourage investment and entrepreneurship. "India's biggest strength is its democracy and friendliness of western countries towards India," he said. Underlining the contribution of the Indian diaspora in the development of the country, Agrawal said the diaspora sends around \$90 billion every year to their country.

## Govt not yet issued quality certificate to 160 Chinese cos for selling toys in India

New Delhi, Jan 07:

The government said it has not yet issued a mandatory quality certificate to around 160 Chinese companies for selling toys in India, and the delay is due to the COVID-19 pandemic. From January 2021, India has made it mandatory to get the quality certification mark of 'ISI' from the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) for the sale of toys in the country.

"Around 160 Chinese toy companies have applied for the BIS quality certification in the last two years. We have not yet issued to them in view of the COVID-19 pandemic," BIS Director General Pramod Kumar Tiwari told reporters. Normally, the BIS quality certifica-

tion is issued after an inspection of the factories. Due to the pandemic restrictions and health concerns, the BIS officials could not visit China, he said.

"Neither they invited us for inspection nor we could visit China because of the pandemic," Tiwari said. Tiwari, who was briefing media about the BIS' achievements on its 76th Foundation day celebration, also clarified that there is no ban as such on the import of Chinese toys but they should comply with the mandatory Indian quality standards. In the last two years, the BIS has granted the quality certificate to 29 foreign toy makers, out of which 14 are from Vietnam, he said.

## Good initial progress made on quota reforms: IMF DMD Sayeh

New Delhi, Jan 07:

Good initial progress has been made on IMF quota reforms in line with the changing nature of the global economy, International Monetary Fund (IMF) deputy managing director Antoinette Sayeh said on Friday. As per an IMF resolution, the 16th General Review of quotas should be concluded by December 15, 2023. Any adjustment in quota shares would be expected to result in an increase in the voting rights of emerging countries in line with their relative positions in the world economy. "We're working of course quite a bit (on quota reforms)...from our experience from the last review, we understand that countries have very different



perspectives about what the results of this quota review should be and we've been working with them to find areas of common ground and to make sure that there is ownership for how we approach the review," she said. Observing that there has been good initial progress being made on that, she said countries are fully aware of the changing nature of

the global economy and the contributions that individual members make to it now.

"There is a need to align our governance structure with those changes...work in progress of course and a long way... but it is our expectation that we will make progress and it will be possible to come to a good outcome," she said. On the fiscal consolidation, she said, this upcoming Budget would contain that and there would be a clear path to fiscal consolidation that also rely on the revenue side. Besides, she said, simplification of GST, Income Tax, and excise tax has improved the aspect of tax collection. "More ambition on the revenue side and more clarity on the medium-term fiscal consolidation.

## Rakul roots for sex education, awareness in 'Chhatriwali' trailer

The makers of the upcoming film 'Chhatriwali' have unveiled the trailer, which focuses on safe sex and sex education among the youngsters, led by Rakul Preet Singh's character.

The over two-minute long trailer begins with the stereotypes in the society surrounding sex and how women have to suffer because of a lack of education. The trailer then focuses on a professor played by Rajesh Tailang thinking how it is not really important and is a taboo to teach children about sex and 'copulation'.

Then enters Rakul, who gets married to Sumeet Vyas who doesn't believe in using condoms.

Rakul said: "In today's patriarchal society, every household needs a Sanya who holds the courage to single-handedly fight against all odds, traditions,



social norms, and barriers. I hope this character inspires others to find their voice and speak up against unsafe sex and the many health implications of not using protection."

She added: "India's youth make up for majority of the population and educating them on safe sex is the need of the hour, so I am glad that Chhatriwali is catering to them and everyone else in a progressive and entertaining manner. I have respect and only respect for the incredible team behind this extraordinary project."

Sumeet said: "Raincoat pehenke baarish mein bheegne ka kya mazaa." Later, Rakul is seen making a decision to teach sex education to school children. Sumeet said: "Chhatriwali breaks the wall of awkward silence around sex between Indian parents and children, hus-

bands and wives, teachers and students. Today's generation is curious about the words sex and intimacy because there is always a sense of hush-hush around such topics."

Director Tejas Prabha Vijay Deoskar said: "While researching for Chhatriwali, I happened to visit few rural parts in India and spoke to students and villagers over there. I saw a taboo around the word sex and the judgemental attitude of society as well as the pharmacists."

"But what was more interesting and alarming was that even the urban population had the same issue barring some pockets in metros. The dire need to normalise this conversation were the driving forces behind the making of this film." 'Chhatriwali' is all set to premiere on ZEE5 from January 20.

## Yash pens special note for his fans ahead of 37th birthday

Ahead of his 37th birthday on January 8, star Yash has penned a heartfelt note for his fans and said that he is working towards clinching something that he believes in but needs more time.

As it was decided that Yash will announce his next Yash19 on his birthday, the superstar came to his fans with a note and asked them to be patient regarding the announcement of his next project.

In the note, he urged his fans to be patient about the announcement of his next as it is unlikely to be announced by January 8.

He wrote: "To, My fans - my strength. The effort you all put in to showcase your love and affection all year round and especially on my birthday, fills my heart with gratitude. I have never been a birthday person, but over the years, witnessing the enthusiasm with which you celebrate and being able to meet you in person to mark the day, has made it special."

"I am working towards clinching something that I believe in and am passionate about. You are the ones who empower me to think bigger and better. When I meet you next, I want to share that news and all the details with you. To be able to do that, I need some more time, which seems unlikely by 8th of Jan. So, this year, I ask you all for a specific gift - the gift of your patience and understanding."



## Arjun Kapoor on 'Dhan Te Nan': I have danced my heart out to this song

Actor Arjun Kapoor is a huge fan of Vishal Bhardwaj's 'Kaminey' and said that he was over the moon when the makers of 'Kuttey' revealed to him that the cult hit song from the 2009 film 'Dhan Te Nan', was going to be incorporated in the upcoming movie.

Arjun said: "Vishal Bhardwaj's Kaminey is my all-time favourite film and I remember when Dhan Te Nan released, I used to dance to this song at every party. It was a song that was new, edgy and full of swagger." "So, when the makers told me that Dhan Te Nan will be a part of Kuttey and that I would get to dance on it, I was thrilled! It is like a dream come true moment for me." He added: "I have danced my heart out in my own style on this song for Kuttey. I have just let go because I was so happy to be dancing to a song that has so many memories from my past attached to it." "On the day of the shoot of this song, I had to pinch myself several times because I couldn't believe that I was dancing to Dhan Te Nan for my film! It is our ode to the original cult hit." 'Kuttey' is touted to be a caper that also has outstanding actors like Naseeruddin Shah, Konkona Sen Sharma, Tabu, Kumud Mishra and Radhika Madan in it. The film has been directed by debutant Aasmaan Bhardwaj, who is ace film-maker Vishal Bhardwaj's son. It will be released on January 13, 2023.



## Bhavana Balsaver to appear in 'Meri Saas Bhoot Hai'

Bhavna Balsaver is a renowned actress who has been a part of numerous tv serials and movies. Her onscreen persona has gained her much recognition and she is considered to be one of the best actresses in the television industry. Bhavna Balsaver will soon be seen in Star Bharat's upcoming show 'Mere Saas Bhoot Hai' The show will be produced under the banner of Film Farm Productions. Bhavna will be seen in a quirky character in the show playing the role of Vibhav Roy's Bua 'Kanchan'. Bhavna gets candid on about her character in the show and speaks about why she agreed to do the show.



She says, "I am excited to be a part of the new show on Star Bharat 'Meri Saas Bhoot Hai'. First and foremost, what intrigued me about the show was the title, it instantly brought a smile to my

lips... Who wouldn't want to watch a show with such a catchy name?? Also, the character I am portraying, Kanchan Bua, is something I have never done earlier. She is sweet and straight on the outside but very crooked on the inside.

The complexity of Kanchan Bua attracted me to her. She has shades of negativity smeared on a comical canvas. The genre of this show is something Star Bharat and I will be exploring for the first time: Dramedy. So, the audience is assured to get a good deal of drama mixed with laughter, which means it will be a total entertainer .... What more can one ask for?"

## Zeenat Aman blesses Debosmita in 'Indian Idol - Season 13'

This weekend at 8:00 PM, Sony Entertainment Television's singing reality show, 'Indian Idol - Season 13' is all set to welcome Poonam Dhillon and Zeenat Aman, the yesteryear beauties to the 'Celebrating Poonam Dhillon and Zeenat Aman' episode. Making for an evening to remember, the Top 10 contestants, Rishi Singh from Ayodhya, Senjuti Das, Debosmita Roy, Sonakshi Kar, Bidipta Chakraborty from Kolkata, Shivam Singh, Kavya Limaye from Gujarat, Chirag Kotwal from Jammu, Navdeep Wadali from Amritsar, and Vineet Singh from Lucknow will be seen delivering some electrifying performances in front of judges Vishal Dadlani



and Himesh Reshammiya along with the special guests. Contestant Debosmita Roy from Kolkata will be seen

delivering a melodious performance on 'Chura Liya Hai' from the 1971 film 'Haré Rama Haré Krishna' and 'Sohni Meri Sohni' from the 1984 film 'Sohni Mahiwal'. After the brilliant performance, Debosmita will be applauded for her graceful and melodious singing with a standing ovation by the judges and the guests. Talking to Debosmita and praising her singing act Poonam ji would be reminiscing about the yesteryears and praising RD Burman for his composition that is still a foot taper even today. Zeenat ji would then be asked by her co-guest her opinion on the performance and her memory of the song.

## No chinks in Thalpathi Vijay's marriage, say sources denying rumours of split



Tamil superstar Thalpathi Vijay's fans, who were eagerly awaiting news about the upcoming January 12 release of his much-awaited movie 'Varisu', were instead struck by rumours that their hero's marriage with his wife Sangeetha was heading for splitsville.

It all started with Vijay's Wikipedia page reflecting his status as divorced in 2022. The rumours have started doing the rounds yet again, even as fans are celebrating the rushes of 'Varisu'. Sources close to the superstar, however, confirmed that all is fine between Vijay and Sangeetha, who have been married for 22 years. There is no basis for the

rumours, they said. The recent round of rumours started after Sangeetha skipped the baby shower of star director Atlee's wife Priya. Sangeetha's absence from the 'Varisu' music launch only added grist to the rumour mills. Sources say that Sangeetha was with their children in the US when both the events took place. After the disappointment performance of 'Beast' in the box office, Vijay is back with 'Varisu', which has Rashmika Mandanna playing the lead role opposite the superstar. Prakash Raj also has an important role in this movie directed by Vamshi Paidipally and produced by Dil Raju.

## Some entertaining twists in &TV shows

TV shows Doosri & Maa, Happu Ki Ultan Paltan, and Bhabiji Ghar Par Hai will witness some entertaining twists. About &TV's Doosri Maa track, Krishna shares, "To return Gayatri's money, Yashoda (Neha Joshi) decides to sell the necklace that Malti (Anita Pradhan) gave her to wear on her anniversary. At the same time, Ashok (Mohit Dagga) also decides to sell his gold medals. Yashoda goes to a jewellery store and sells her necklace and earrings for Rs. 1 lakh. On her way back home, she gets robbed. Krishna (Aayudh Bhanushali) spots Yashoda and runs behind the thief. Krishna is shocked to see the thief. Meanwhile, Yashoda gets

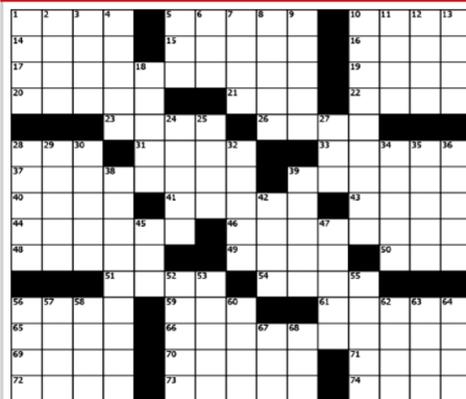


hurt and learns that Ashok sold his medals and repaid the amount to Gayatri." About &TV's Bhabiji Ghar Par Hai, Angoori Bhabhi shares, "A politician friend of Prem (Vishwajeet Soni) offers

Commissioner appoints Angoori Bhabhi (Shubhangi Atre) as the Anti-Corruption Officer. Tiwari decides to build a hotel on unauthorised land, and when he goes to get a sign from Vibhuti, he demands a bribe. Angoori hires an ex-anti-corruption officer who runs a tea stall to assist her in catching corrupt people. Vibhuti and Chacha (Anup Upadhyay) enjoy their tea at the same stall when Tiwari arrives with the money. Angoori arrests all three and puts them behind bars."

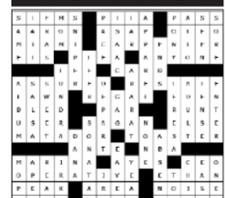
Watch Doosri Maa at 8:00 pm, Happu Ki Ultan Paltan at 10:00 pm, and Bhabiji Ghar Par Hai at 10:30 pm, airing every Monday to Friday only on &TV!

## CROSSWORD



- ACROSS**
- EMT's word
  - In reserve
  - Kin of PDQ
  - Yearning
  - Tear to bits
  - Dummy
  - Nutritious
  - District
  - Tolerate
  - Opposite of NNW
  - Jaunty
  - Fabric joint
  - Rework proofs
  - Doctors' org.
  - Oodles (2 wds.)
  - Continues
  - Pasta ingredient
  - Einstein
  - Tresses
  - Concerned one
  - Fox's home
  - Hire
- DOWN**
- Works on a tan
  - Horse's gait
  - Spanish water
  - Shore birds
  - Pack animal
  - Hush!
  - Eye part
  - Compact
  - Trimmed the border
  - Flexible
  - Achy
  - Copier
  - Box product
  - Flawless
  - Rocker \_\_\_\_\_ Cooper
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Lisa
  - Not well
  - Fire remains
  - Intended
  - Pedro's friend
  - Gypsy's card
  - Thrones
  - Corry
  - Wheat by-product
  - Long-armed ape
  - Ring
  - Hero's tale
  - Mild exclamation
  - Plant again
  - "Oliver \_\_\_\_\_"
  - \_\_\_\_\_ eclipse
  - Actress \_\_\_\_\_ Winfrey
  - "Star \_\_\_\_\_"
  - Trickle
  - Front
  - She, in Toulouse
  - Mexican meal
  - Article
  - Surrender
  - Neighbor of Mex.
  - Blue

## SOLUTION 526



## Inaugural Women's IPL auction in February; deadline for registration January 26

New Delhi, Jan 07:

The BCCI-organised T20 franchise competition for women, on the lines of the IPL, is likely to be called the Women's T20 League and the five teams - the applications for which have been invited - will be formed via a player auction that will be held in February.

The deadline for Indian players to register for the auction is at or before 5pm IST on January 26. The competition will replace the Women's T20 Challenge, which was a two-team one-off game in 2018 before expanding to a three-team exhibition tournament in 2019 and saw two more editions in 2020 and 2022.

In the document titled 'Guidance note for Indian players' shared by the board with the Indian players, the base price - termed 'reserve price' - for the capped Indian players



is set at INR 30 lakh, INR 40 lakh and INR 50 lakh and that for the uncapped players is at INR 10 lakh and INR 20 lakh. The players are expected to register for the Women's T20 League with their respective State Associations directly and not via agents or managers. In February last year, then BCCI president Sourav Ganguly had said that the Women's IPL

would get off the ground in 2023. In August, the BCCI zeroed in on a window for March. Subsequently, the BCCI advanced the women's domestic calendar, which generally runs from November to April, to accommodate the franchise tournament.

Ever since the formal announcement was made about starting the WIPL, a

number of men's IPL teams have been sending out talent scouts to identify players they can potentially sign for the women's tournament should they be awarded the rights to own a franchise. Rajasthan Royals, Mumbai Indians, Kolkata Knight Riders, Royal Challengers Bangalore and Punjab Kings are all believed to be interested in owning a team in the competition.

Calls for the Women's IPL to kick off have been gaining steam since India's runners-up finish at the ODI World Cup in 2017. When they reached the finals of the T20 World Cup in Australia in 2020, it gained further momentum before Covid-19 stalled women's cricket, and the sport in general.

Last month, the BCCI had invited bids for media rights from 2023-27 for the proposed five-team tournament.

## Australia's hopes raised of series sweep over South Africa

Sydney, Jan 07 (AP):

Australia had a glimpse of what appeared an unlikely victory and a series clean sweep as it took six of the 20 South African wickets it needs after captain Pat Cummins declared the host's first innings at 475-4 on the fourth day of the rain-affected third Test.

Cummins took three wickets in a fearsome display of pace bowling under grey skies at the Sydney Cricket Ground, while Josh Hazlewood picked up two and Nathan Lyon claimed another, amongst a clutch of several near misses, as the Proteas finished Saturday at 149-6, trailing Australia by 327 runs.

To win, Australia needs to capture the four remaining South African first-innings wickets and then enforce the follow-on in a bid to bowl the Proteas out a second time all within three sessions on Sunday's final day.

"Yeah, I think so," said Hazlewood on Australia's prospects of engineering an unlikely final-day victory. "From what we saw



Australia's captain Pat Cummins (C) celebrates with team mates after dismissing South Africa's Khaya Zondo during the third cricket Test match between Australia and South Africa at the Sydney Cricket Ground (SCG) in Sydney.

today we bowled 50-odd overs and took six wickets.

"And the wicket, I think, after a bit of foot traffic at both ends looked quite nice with Gazza (Lyon) bowling into that rough so I think Ashtar (Agar) and Gazza big day tomorrow for them." A win for Australia in this third test would confirm its place in

the world test championship final to be played at Lord's in England in June.

After no play on Friday, further rain on Saturday morning meant play could not resume before lunch, effectively forcing Cummins' hand into declaring. That was despite leaving Usman Khawaja stranded on 195 not out to

give his bowling attack any hope of bowling South Africa out twice to win the match in only five remaining sessions of play. "He was fine, all the batters would be fine with a call like that," said Hazlewood of Khawaja's reaction to not having the chance to complete his first double century.

## Chetan Sharma retained as chairman of new selection panel



New Delhi, Jan 07:

Chetan Sharma was on Saturday retained as the chairman of the senior selection committee, the BCCI announced.

Shiv Sundar Das (East Zone), Salil Ankola (West Zone), Subroto Banerjee (East Zone) and Sridharan Sharath (South Zone) are the other four selectors in the new selection panel.

The previous selection committee was sacked after India's ouster from the T20 World Cup, after losing to India in the semi-finals. "The Cricket Advisory Committee (CAC) comprising Ms Sulakshana Naik, Mr Ashok Malhotra, and Mr Jatin Paranjape undertook an extensive process

for selecting members of the All-India Senior Selection Committee. The Board received around 600 applications following its advertisement for the five posts issued on its official website on 18th November 2022," BCCI said in a media release.

"Upon due deliberation and careful consideration, the CAC shortlisted 11 individuals for personal interviews. Based on the interviews, the Committee has recommended the following candidates for the Senior Men's National Selection Committee.

The committee further recommended Mr Chetan Sharma for the role of Chairman of the senior men's selection committee," it added.

## Venus Williams out of Australian Open due to injury



Melbourne, Jan 07 (AP):

Venus Williams has withdrawn from the Australian Open for an undisclosed injury she sustained while playing in a tournament in Auckland, New Zealand this week.

A seven-time Grand Slam singles champion, Williams received a wild-card entry into the Australian Open last month to compete in what would have been her 22nd major at Melbourne Park. But the Australian Open said on Saturday the 42-year-old Williams had withdrawn from the tournament beginning Jan. 16. It did not provide specifics regarding the injury. It continues a run of misfor-

tunes for Williams, who last played at Melbourne Park in 2021. A two-time Australian Open finalist, Williams injured an ankle and knee in that appearance when stumbling awkwardly at the net in a second-round match against Sara Errani.

Her best efforts at Melbourne Park came when she was beaten by her sister Serena Williams in finals in 2003 and 2017.

Now ranked 1,003, Williams said when granted the wild card in December that she was excited to be returning to Melbourne.

"I've been competing in the country for over 20 years now and the Australian community has always supported me wholeheartedly," she said. The five-time Wimbledon singles champion has struggled with injuries over the past two years and was restricted to playing just four tournaments in the US last August. She did not progress beyond the first round in those events and ended her season when beaten by Alison van Uytvanck at the US Open.

## More Aussies are likely to play in ILT20 after CA downsizes BBL

Sydney, Jan 07 (PTD):

More Australian cricketers are likely to follow the suit of Chris Lynn and Marcus Stoinis in the upcoming ILT20 in the UAE with Cricket Australia (CA) in the process of downsizing the Big Bash League (BBL).

There are efforts underway by CA to downsize the BBL from 61 games to 43 as soon as next season, according to a report in the 'Sydney Morning Herald'.

In that scenario, the BBL will be over around the January 26 long weekend and it would open the door for several Australian players to ply trade in the UAE T20 league.

Lynn had earlier agreed to play 11 games for the Adelaide Strikers and then travel to the ILT20 to link up with Gulf Giants. Stoinis, on the other hand, had signed for Sharjah Warriors.

The report further states that as many as 15 Australian cricketers were approached to play in the ILT20, slated from January 15 to February 13. "Scarcity can be your friend, not your foe," Australian Cricketers Association (ACA) chief executive Todd Greenberg told SEN Radio on Friday. "A reduction in games potentially will bring a greater level of focus and yield to each of those games.

## Coco Gauff breezes into final of ASB Classic at Auckland



Auckland, Jan 07 (AP):

Top-seeded Coco Gauff advanced to the final of the ASB Classic by beating Danka Kovinic of Montenegro 6-0 6-2 on Saturday.

The American hasn't yet dropped a set at the Auckland hardcourt tournament and needed a little more than an hour to defeat seventh-seeded Kovinic to reach the fourth final of her career. "It means a lot, the last final was the French Open," Gauff said. "But

on the WTA level, the last one was Parma (in 2021), so it's been a while. "Any final is special, especially the first week of the year. I didn't expect this outcome coming into the tournament. I couldn't have asked for a better start to the season, regardless of the result tomorrow."

The 18-year-old Gauff conceded in a courtside interview she's "in the groove" at the start of the year and just over a week ahead of the Australian Open after another im-

pressive win. "I guess (I'm in the groove)," Gauff said. "I'm in the final so it's hard to say no to that question. It was really good on my behalf."

Gauff was also pleased to compete in front of a crowd after a week in which persistent rain forced the majority of matches indoors without spectators. "I'm glad I was able to play in front of you guys, finally," she said. "It's pretty much a sold-out house so thanks for supporting me."

Gauff completed her win just before rain arrived to delay the second semifinal between qualifiers Ysaline Bonaventure and Rebekka Masarova. "I have a good track record for rain, coming from Florida," Gauff said. "So I knew we had about 20 minutes left and I was pretty much spot on. "I was trying to stay focused on the match and not on the rain coming. But it definitely plays in the back of your head when you know you're close to the end and there's a time constraint."

## Man United beats Everton 3-1 to advance in FA Cup

Manchester, Jan 07 (AP):

Marcus Rashford scored his fifth goal in as many games after creating two others to help Manchester United beat Everton 3-1 and reach the fourth round of the FA Cup.

Rashford set up Antony's early opener on Friday and saw a second-half cross turned into his own net by Conor Coady, scorer of Everton's equaliser.

Then, in stoppage time, Rashford kept his scoring run going by sending Jordan Pickford the wrong way from the penalty spot after Ben Godfrey fouled Alejandro Garnacho. United was hardly ruthless, grateful to see a potential Dominic Calvert-Lewin equalizer ruled out for a tight offside call. But United did enough to make it seven straight wins in all competitions for the first time since 2019 when Ole Gunnar Solskjaer was in caretaker charge. For Everton, there was consolation in a better performance after losing to Brighton 4-1



Manchester United's English striker Marcus Rashford (C) celebrates after scoring their third goal from the penalty spot during the English FA Cup third round football match between Manchester United and Everton at Old Trafford in Manchester, north west England, on January 6.

midweek left it 18th in the Premier League, the pressure firmly on manager Frank Lampard. Erik ten Hag named a strong side for his first taste of the FA Cup, but notably selected Luke Shaw at center back while Lisandro Martinez without a start since Argentina's World Cup group game against Mexico on Nov. 26 joined Harry Maguire and Victor

Lindelof on the bench. After the horror show of Tuesday night, Lampard reverted to the 3-5-2 system used to frustrate Manchester City last weekend. The 9,000 travelling Everton fans arrived in Manchester still fuming over the latest capitulation, the first chant of "Sack the board" coming 15 minutes before kickoff. Their mood did not improve much.

## Pant undergoes knee surgery for ligament tear



New Delhi, Jan 07 (PTD):

Indian wicketkeeper-batter Rishabh Pant, who miraculously escaped a horrific car accident last week, has successfully undergone a knee surgery at a Mumbai hospital, according to the BCCI sources.

"Rishabh Pant has successfully undergone a knee ligament surgery on Friday. He will be under observation. Further course of action and rehabilitation will be advised by Dr Dinshaw Pardiwala and followed by the BCCI sports science and medicine team," a BCCI source told PTI. The surgery took place at the Kokilaben Dhirubhai Ambani hospital in Andheri West under the supervision of Dr Pardiwala, the head of the Centre for Sports Medicine, and Director of Arthroscopy & Shoulder Service.

## Sania to quit at Dubai meet next month



New Delhi, Jan 07 (PTD):

Veteran Indian tennis player Sania Mirza has decided to draw curtains on her illustrious career at next month's Dubai Duty Free Tennis Championship. The former doubles no.1 has made this announcement to WTA.

Sania initially intended to hang up her racquet at the end of last season, but an elbow injury ruled her out of the US Open and forced her to stop playing in 2022 as early as August.

The 36-year-old Sania, who is married to Pakistan cricketer Shoaib Malik, has been living in Dubai for more than a decade, and

will look to bid adieu to the game at her home base.

"I was going to stop right after the WTA Finals, because we were going to make the WTA Finals, but I tore my tendon in my elbow right before US Open so I had to pull out of everything," Sania told wtatennis.com. "And honestly, the person that I am, I like to do things on my own terms. So I don't want to be forced out by injury. So I've been training." Sania, a six-time major champion - three in doubles and three in mixed doubles - has signed up to compete in this month's Australian Open alongside Kazakhstan's Anna Danilina.

## India should strive to become hub of software products, focus on democratising govt data: President

New Delhi, Jan 07 (PTD):

After proving its power in the field of software, India should strive to become a hub for software products, President Droupadi Murmu said on Saturday. While speaking at the 7th edition of Digital India Awards, Murmu said that there should be focus on democratising government data to help technology enthusiasts in the country develop localised digital solutions.

"We should leverage the prevailing policies and avail the ecosystem to position the country as a global powerhouse of software and hardware products by building made in India technology," Murmu said. She said India has emerged as an important country for use of technology for people-centric governance, especially during the pandemic, which has benefi-



President Droupadi Murmu during presentation of the seventh edition of the Digital India Awards, in New Delhi, Saturday.

ted the rest of the world as well. "Digital India is also playing an important role in enhancing the country's profile on the world stage. This becomes all the more

relevant as India takes over the presidency of G20 which is a milestone event," Murmu said. She said India has unveiled indigenously developed 5G

technology and the roll out of the 5G services will transform governance as well. "We should focus on democratising government data so that young technol-

ogy enthusiasts can use it to build localised digital solutions," Murmu said.

At the event, the President conferred awards to 22 government entities in the field of digital governance. She said the pace of change in the future will be fast, driven by the use of technology and in this context social justice should be the prime objective of digital innovation.

Murmu said that India will develop into a knowledge economy only when the digital divide is substantially bridged through the use of technology. "I am confident that India is setting the right example of ensuring the inclusion of vulnerable and marginalised sections of the society, strengthening economic, social and cultural rights in our journey towards Digital Antyodaya," Murmu said.

## Kerala child rights panel 'Frisking students for mobile phones hurts their self-respect'

Thiruvananthapuram, Jan 07 (PTD):

In a significant order, Kerala's child rights panel has directed authorities to stop frisking students to check on them carrying mobile phones in schools, saying it amounts to hurting their "self-respect" and "dignity". The panel ordered that the gadgets can be carried to educational institutions with the permission of parents for certain special needs.

"Body frisking of students and scanning their bags for mobile phones are barbaric and against the democratic culture... It amounts to hurting the dignity and self-respect of children. So, it should be strictly avoided," the panel stated. It was also a violation of national and international child rights laws and the fundamental rights ensured by the Constitution,

the Kerala State Commission for Protection of Child Rights said in its recent order.

Criticising the blanket ban imposed against students carrying mobile phones to schools, it said the gadgets have become an inseparable part of today's life and the need of the hour is a scientific and psychological approach to check them from becoming addicted to it.

At present, the usage of mobile phones is banned in state schools and the Commission's stand is also that children should not use mobile phones in schools, it said.

"Though children have no permission to use mobile phones in schools, they can carry it with the permission of parents for certain special needs. School authorities should make arrangements to keep the

phones after switching off till the class hours are over," the order said.

The full bench of the Commission, comprising its Chairman K V Manoj Kumar and members B Babitha and Reni Antony, came out with the significant directive recently while considering a complaint of a parent of a student whose mobile phone was confiscated by school authorities.

Stating that there was no legal backing for the existing practice of confiscation of mobile phones from students by the school authorities, the panel also ordered to give back the phone to the complainant within three days. Chairman Manoj Kumar said the panel also directed the authorities to implement a programme in schools to make children "social media literate".

## 'Centre willing to start one old age home in each district of Kerala'

Kochi, Jan 07 (PTD):

Union Minister of State for Social Justice and Empowerment Ramdas Athawale on Saturday said the Centre was willing to start one old age home in each district of Kerala with the cooperation of NGOs. Speaking to reporters here, Athawale said the Union government was implementing many schemes for the welfare of all sections of the society irrespective of caste and religion.

"...So far 1,658 old age homes had been established in the country with the help of the Social Justice Department and among them, nine were in Kerala. 109 of the 1,720 de-addiction centers functioning with the financial assistance of the Department of Social Justice are also in Kerala,"



Union Minister of State for Social Justice & Empowerment Ramdas Athawale addresses a press conference, in Kochi, Saturday.

he said. Stressing that schemes like Jan Dhan Yojana, Mudra, Ujjawala, Ayushman Bharat and PM Awas Yojana were acting as catalysts in changing the lives of people from all walks of life, the Union Minister said that the government was keen on implementing these

schemes by adhering to the slogan 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vishwas, Sabka Prayas'. Talking about the implementation of various Central Government schemes in Kerala, Athawale said that under the Jan Dhan Yojana, 53.62 lakh bank accounts had been opened in the State.

## Lion, lioness drowned after falling into open well

Amreli, Jan 07 (PTD):

A lion and a lioness fell into an open well in the Gir forest division in Gujarat's Amreli district and drowned, a forest official said on Saturday. The big cats, aged five to nine years, were roaming in the area when they fell into the well belonging to a farmer in Kotda village in Khambha taluka on Friday morning, said Rajdeepsinh Zala, deputy conservator of forests (DCF), Gir (East).

"The farmer informed us as soon as he came to know about the incident. However, by the time the rescue team from the forest department reached the spot, the animals had drowned. Their carcasses were fished out and sent for post-mortem," Zala said. Since 2007-08, at least 11,748 wells in the Gir East division covering Amreli and Gir Somnath districts have been secured with parapets to prevent big cats from falling into them, the official said.

New Delhi, Jan 07 (PTD):

Noting that the entire metro rail project is complete and running, the Supreme Court has refused to stop the Noida metro's operations for the want of an environmental clearance. The court was hearing an appeal filed against a May 31, 2016 order of the National Green Tribunal (NGT), directing that all metro rail projects need an environmental clearance after conducting a proper environment impact assessment.

Keeping the question of law open, a bench of justices M R Shah and C T Ravikumar said the metro services in Delhi and Noida are being used by the public at large. "In that view of the matter, when the entire metro rail project is complete and the metro rail is running, the clock cannot

## 'Cannot put clock back' SC refuses to stop operations of Noida metro

be put back and the same shall not be even in the larger public interest. Under the circumstances, we propose to dispose of the present appeals, keeping the questions of law open," it said. The apex court said the NGT order cannot be acted upon in the peculiar facts and circumstances of the case. "However, the questions of law, if any, more particularly, whether with respect to the rail project or metro rail project, the environmental clearance is required or not and other questions of law, if any, are kept open to be considered in appropriate proceedings and the present order shall not be cited as a precedent in any other matters or cases," the bench said. The NGT had held that all metro rail projects need an environmental clearance after conducting a proper

environment impact assessment. It had said the Noida metro, the construction of which was challenged before it, fell under Schedule 8(b) of the Environment Impact Assessment Notification, 2006, relating to buildings, construction and development projects that are mandated to get a prior environmental clearance. The green panel had also directed the upcoming Noida-Greater Noida metro project to obtain an environmental clearance from the State Level Environment Impact Assessment Authority (SEIAA). The order was passed on a plea filed by environmentalist Vikrant Tongad, seeking directions to the Noida Metro Rail Corporation (NMRC) to obtain an environmental clearance for its project from Noida to Greater Noida after conducting a

proper environment impact assessment.

"From the detailed project report (DPR), it is clear that the total land requirement for the project of metro rail from Noida to Greater Noida is around 2,84,762.01 square metres. However, no Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) report was prepared. This fact was verified by the applicant by inspecting the records of the project under the Right to Information Act, 2005.

"It is submitted that as per 8(b) of the schedule of the EIA Notification, 2006, a project having a covering area of more than 50 hectares or a built-up area of more than 1,50,000 square metres requires an environmental clearance and is to be appraised as a category B1 project," the plea, filed through advocate Rahul Choudhary, had said.

## Bharat Jodo Yatra not taken out to project Rahul Gandhi as PM face, says Jairam

Karnal (Hry), Jan 07 (PTD):

Congress leader Jairam Ramesh on Saturday said the Bharat Jodo Yatra has not been organised to project Rahul Gandhi as a prime ministerial candidate for the 2024 Lok Sabha polls, asserting that the foot march has nothing to do with elections.

The former Union minister also said Gandhi has succeeded in highlighting three big issues during the yatra - economic inequality, social polarisation and political authoritarianism. Replying to a reporter's question here, the Congress general secretary in-charge communications said, "The Bharat Jodo Yatra has not been taken out to project Rahul Gandhi as a prime ministerial candidate. It is an ideological yatra and Gandhi is its main face. But it is not an individual's yatra." He asserted that the Kanyakumari-Kashmir foot march, which is currently passing through Haryana, is not an "election yatra". Ramesh said it is unfair to ask if the opposition party is projecting Gandhi as its prime ministerial face in the 2024 general election. "No, No, No... We are not, this is not an election yatra," he said in response to the reporter's question. "There



Congress leader Rahul Gandhi during the Bharat Jodo Yatra, in Karnal, Saturday.

are 200 Bharat yatris. It is the Congress party's yatra. The party workers are involved. Obviously, the nation's attention is on Rahul Gandhi because he is the most visible, prominent and dynamic face of the yatra. But this is not meant for one individual, this is not meant to project him as a prime ministerial candidate," he said. Flanked by former Haryana chief minister Bhupinder Singh Hooda, Ramesh said the yatra "is meant to ideologically combat the RSS and the BJP". "Rahul Gandhi has raised three big issues during the Bharat Jodo Yatra - economic inequality, social polarisation and political authoritarian-

ism. He is raising these issues everyday during his walking interactions, his talking interactions, in his rallies. "So I think it is unfair for you to ask this question - 'are we projecting him as a prime ministerial face?' We are not. This is not an election yatra," he said. Ramesh said the foot march is meant to strengthen the Congress's ideology, the party organisation and awaken the country's conscience to the "disaster" and the "damage" being caused by the personality of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, his mode of functioning, policies, politics of harassment and politics of vendetta.

## At least 38 JNU, IIT-Delhi professors duped of crores by colleague in real estate fraud

New Delhi, Jan 07 (PTD):

Several professors of JNU and other institutions have accused a former JNU employee of duping them of crores of rupees promising them homes on a DDA plot under a housing development scheme which was never there. After waiting for over seven years, when these academics did not get anything except hollow promises, their patience ran out and they lodged a formal complaint with the Delhi Police.

Prima facie, police have found incriminating evidence against the accused in the matter and have lodged an FIR. In 2015, just before he was due retirement, Dr DP Gaikwad, a technical staff in the Department of Environmental Science of JNU, floated a society and named it Noble Socio-Scientific Welfare Organization (NSSWO). He sold its membership to his peers claiming that the society owned land in the L-Zone in Dwarka Najafgarh Area under the Land Pooling Policy.

He collected from Rs 2 lakh to Rs 16 lakh each from the academic and non-academic staff of JNU, IIT-Delhi, and other nearby institutions for three years in various installments, assuring them that the project was on.

"To make it appear real, he took several of us to show a piece of land, but later it turned out that NSSWO was not the owner

of the land," Professor Gobardhan Das, Chairperson, Molecular Medicine, JNU, said.

"After collecting a hefty amount by cheating all the members, he stopped communicating and blocked all his phone numbers," Das, a victim of the scam, said. After he went uncommunicated, he was however traced in Gurugram by some professors who went there to confront him. All the same, he again reeled them in with the offer of another lucrative scheme.

"He continued to play his trick of cheating and in February 2019, he offered to transfer our membership of NSSWO to another entity named Siddhartha Officers Housing and Social Welfare Society (SOHSWS) through which our flats were to be delivered, however, with a significantly escalated cost," Prof Biswajit Kundu from IIT-Delhi, one of the 10 complainants in the FIR, said.

"He didn't give any explanation for doing so, nor did he provide any details of any consequent changes in the agreement. "In spite of repeated requests by several members, he never called a general body meeting of either society, nor took consent from the members of NSSWO for the changes made unilaterally," Kundu added.

Gaikwad himself admitted that there are 38

professors from JNU who have invested in the project, Das said.

"There are two from IIT and many more from other nearby institutions as far as I know. Initially, in a few cases, he returned 50 to 80 per cent money when he was forced to do so, but later he simply refused to return any money," Das added.

Dr Bindu Dey, a former senior scientist in the Department of Biotechnology in the Ministry of Science and Technology, was another victim of Gaikwad.

Having lost Rs 8 lakh in a bogus scheme, Dey in 2018 filed a complaint against Gaikwad at Vasant Kunj Police Station where an FIR was lodged against him.

"He collected Rs 16 lakh from me in the name of offering an affordable home but kept delaying with one excuse or the other. After a

lot of persuasion and follow-up, he returned Rs 8 lakh but the remaining amount is still with him," Dey, who retired from the DBT, said.

These academics are the

latest in a huge list of victims of real estate fraud in the L-Zone where the Delhi Development Authority had first announced the Land Pooling Policy around 2014.

**बैद्यनाथ** सुपर इन्फ्यूनिटी

असली आयुर्वेद

**क्या आपका परिवार इन्फेक्शन से लड़ने के लिए तैयार है?**

**च्यवनप्राश स्पेशल**

नैचुरल विटामिन सी से भरपूर

**शुद्ध**

उसी दाम में 1kg पैक पर **100g की**

श्री प्रियम जैस्वाल, रायपुर प्र. मेरी उम्र 45 वर्ष है। शारीरिक कमजोरी आयी है, इस कारण बहुत परेशान हूँ।

उ. बैद्यनाथ वीटा एक्स गोल्ड प्लस कॅम्प्लू 1-1 कॅम्प्लू सुबह-शाम भोजन के बाद दूध के साथ लें।

श्री विवेक मौर्य, राजनांदगांव प्र. मुझे 4 साल से बवासीर की तकलीफ है। शौच के समय व बाद में उस जगह पर दर्द रहता है। सुई चुभने जैसी पीड़ा रहती है। उपाय बतायें।

उ. बैद्यनाथ सिड्पाईल्स 2-2 टॅबलेट सुबह-शाम पानी के साथ लें तथा बैद्यनाथ अमयामृत 2-2 चम्मच समयाग पानी के साथ सुबह-शाम भोजन के बाद लें।

श्रीमती राधा राठोड़, धमतरी प्र. मेरी उम्र 54 वर्ष की है। 6 साल से जोड़ों के दर्द की तकलीफ है। ठंड के दिनों में तकलीफ बढ़ जाती है। जोड़ों पर सृजन भी आयी है।

उ. बैद्यनाथ रूमाथो गोल्ड प्लस कॅम्प्लू 1-1 कॅम्प्लू सुबह-शाम पानी के साथ लें। बैद्यनाथ महाराष्ट्रनादि काड़ा (सुग्गुलु युक्त) 2-2 चम्मच समयाग पानी के साथ सुबह-शाम भोजन के बाद लें। दर्द के स्थानपर बैद्यनाथ महाराष्ट्रनाथ तैल की हलकी मसाज करें।

**डॉ. बालु कोलार**

बैद्यनाथ के उत्पादों को सच मानकर ही हेल्थ केनिंगी ली है। इन का प्रयोग वैदिक विचारों से है। अधिक जानकारी लीं लीं 011-2611-4411/4412/4413/4414/4415/4416/4417/4418/4419/4420/4421/4422/4423/4424/4425/4426/4427/4428/4429/4430/4431/4432/4433/4434/4435/4436/4437/4438/4439/4440/4441/4442/4443/4444/4445/4446/4447/4448/4449/4450/4451/4452/4453/4454/4455/4456/4457/4458/4459/4460/4461/4462/4463/4464/4465/4466/4467/4468/4469/4470/4471/4472/4473/4474/4475/4476/4477/4478/4479/4480/4481/4482/4483/4484/4485/4486/4487/4488/4489/4490/4491/4492/4493/4494/4495/4496/4497/4498/4499/4500