



BRIEF



An artist performs skills on the occasion of 'Shiv Jayanti' festival, in Solapur, Sunday.

Roof collapse

Ghaziabad: Two labourers were killed and a dozen others are feared trapped after the roof of an under-construction building collapsed here on Sunday, police said. The incident took place in the Roop Nagar industrial area in Loni, neighbouring Delhi. "A rescue operation is underway. Four persons have been rescued and rushed to a nearby hospital for treatment."

Mishap

Sultanpur: 60-year-old vegetable seller died after being hit by a speeding vehicle on the Ayodhya-Prayagraj National Highway in this Uttar Pradesh district on Sunday, police said. SHO of Kurebhar police station Praveen Yadav said at around 7.30 am, Raghunath Chaurasia had gone to market to open his vegetable shop. As he was crossing the road, he was hit by an unknown speeding vehicle.

Tremor

Bhopal: A tremor of 3.0 magnitude hit some western districts of Madhya Pradesh on Sunday afternoon, but there was no report of any casualty and damage to property due to it, officials said. The National Centre for Seismology said in a tweet that an earthquake of magnitude 3.0 occurred at 12.54 pm with its epicentre 151 kilometres west south-west of Indore.

Life target

Mumbai: Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Sunday said children must set their life targets in school in order to achieve them. Speaking to students of a school in Kolhapur, Shah said his wife was from the western Maharashtra city and studied in a local school. "Life targets should be finalised during school days. This would help you to overcome your life's challenges. Otherwise those challenges would affect your journey," he said.

Condole

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday condoled the passing away of Nandamuri Taraka Ratna, the grandson of legendary film actor and former Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister late N T Rama Rao. "Pained by the untimely demise of Shri Nandamuri Taraka Ratna Garu. He made a mark for himself in the world of films and entertainment. My thoughts are with his family and admirers in this sad hour. Om Shanti," Prime Minister Modi was quoted as saying in a tweet by his office.

Weather
High 33 Low 16

Ravindra Jadeja & Ashwin send Australia spinning to defeat

New Delhi, Feb 19:

Ravindra Jadeja led the demolition of Australia with the ball as India triumphed by six wickets inside three days in the second Test to retain the Border-Gavaskar Trophy with a 2-0 lead in the four-match series on Sunday.

Australia started the day effectively 62 for 1, had India worried as they raced to 86 for 2, then lost their last eight wickets for 28 runs, as India went on to win a Test that seemed lost on more than one occasion, retaining the Border-Gavaskar Trophy in the process. Ravindra Jadeja registered his best Test figures, 7 for 42, and his second 10-wicket match haul; the other three second-innings wickets went to R Ashwin, who had looked more threatening when Australia were running away with the game. The

Indian bowler Ravindra Jadeja celebrates with teammate Mohammed Siraj after the wicket of Australian batter Matthew Kuhnemann.



sweep, which resulted in six wickets in the second

innings, had actually put India under immense pres-

sure. At one point, Australia had scored 71 runs off 27 sweeps for just two wickets. Usman Khawaja and Marnus Labuschagne had used it to distract India, forcing them to put fielders back for the shot. It was the shot that opened up the field for Labuschagne as Australia had India worried: Jadeja went for 31 in his first six overs, Ashwin was going over four himself, and Australia looked set to go well past 150, which would have been a challenging target on this pitch.

Chasing 115 for victory, India's top order did wobble but the meagre target meant their victory, which came in the second session on day three, was never in doubt. Skipper Rohit Sharma made 31 and Cheteshwar Pujara, who made 31 not out, scored the winning run in his 100th Test.

SENSATIONAL CLAIM

'EC's decision on Sena symbol a Rs 2,000 cr deal'

Mumbai, Feb 19 (PTI):

Shiv Sena (Uddhav Balasaheb Thackeray) leader Sanjay Raut on Sunday claimed a "deal of Rs 2000 crore" has taken place so far to "purchase" the Shiv Sena party name and its 'bow and arrow' symbol.

However, MLA Sada Sarvankar from the camp led by Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde dismissed the claim and asked, "Is Sanjay Raut a cashier?"

Raut in a tweet claimed the Rs 2,000 crore was a preliminary figure and this was 100 per cent true. He also told reporters that a builder close to the ruling dispensation shared this information with him.

The Rajya Sabha member said his claim was backed by proof which he would disclose soon.

The Election Commission on Friday



Sanjay Raut

recognised the Eknath Shinde-led faction as the real Shiv Sena and ordered allocation of the 'bow and arrow' poll symbol to it.

In a 78-page order on the protracted battle for control of the organisation, the EC allowed the Uddhav Thackeray faction to keep the "flaming torch" poll symbol allocated to it till the completion of the Assembly bypolls in the state.

Raut on Sunday said Rs 2,000 crore is not a small amount to "purchase" the name Shiv Sena. "The EC's decision is a deal," he al-

What proof.....

Raut in a tweet claimed the Rs 2,000 crore was a preliminary figure and this was 100 per cent true. He also told reporters that a builder close to the ruling dispensation shared this information with him. The Rajya Sabha member said his claim was backed by proof which he would disclose soon. "Many things will be revealed shortly. Never before this has happened in the country's history," Raut tweeted.

Shinde camp dismisses allegation

However, MLA Sada Sarvankar from the camp led by Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde dismissed the claim and asked, "Is Sanjay Raut a cashier?"

leged. "I have reliable information that there has been a deal of Rs 2000 crore to get the Shiv Sena name and its symbol.

CRPF constable shoots himself dead

Dantewada, Feb 19:

A jawan of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) allegedly committed suicide by shooting himself with his service weapon in Dantewada district, police said on Sunday.

The incident took place on Saturday night at the headquarters of the CRPF's 195th battalion in Barsoor police station area, around 400 km away from capital Raipur, an official said.

The jawan succumbed to injuries at a hospital in Raipur at 1.40 am on Sunday, he said.

"Constable Gunin Das, belonging to CRPF's 195th battalion, shot himself with an Insas rifle at his barrack in the unit. On hearing the gunshot, his

colleagues rushed there and found him seriously injured," he said.

He was immediately taken to the unit's hospital, from where he was shifted to Dantewada district hospital. Later, he was airlifted to Raipur and admitted to a private hospital where he died during treatment, he added. Das, a native of Assam, had joined the duty on Saturday after returning from leave, he said. "No suicide note was found at the spot and investigation is underway to ascertain the exact reason that prompted him to take the extreme step," he added. The CRPF is extensively deployed in south Bastar, which comprises three districts, including Dantewada, for anti-Naxalite operations.

'India's rising population a ticking time bomb'

Requires law for its control

Raipur, Feb 19:

Former Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP) leader Pravin Togadia on Sunday described India's rising population as a "ticking time bomb" and stressed the need to formulate a law to prevent its explosion and the resulting adverse effects.

He also expressed hope that Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah will introduce a law for population control and the Uniform Civil Code (UCC) ahead of next year's parliamentary elections.

Togadia, president of



Pravin Togadia

Antarrashtriya Hindu Parishad, was talking to reporters in Chhattisgarh's capital Raipur ahead of addressing a public meeting in Basna area of state's Mahasamund district.

When asked about the demand to bring a population control law, Togadia said, "The rising population and population imbalance are a time bomb and when it ex-

plodes it will lead to civil wars in cities and villages. Therefore, in order to prevent such a situation there is a need to formulate a population control law."

"I believe that Narendrabhai Modi and Amithbai will go to the 2024 election after formulating laws regarding population control, UCC and construction of temples in Kashi and Mathura. These moves will not only protect Hindus, but also their (Bharatiya Janata Party's) votes," he added.

Replying to another question, he said Bharat is already a Hindu rashtira and we wanted to establish it as a Hindu political state. India is a Hindu majority country and we will not allow Hindus to feel insecure anywhere in India.

PM TO BUREAUCRATS

'Break silos, redress grievances'

New Delhi, Feb 19 (PTI):

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has asked employees of the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions to break down silos and redress grievances with a human touch for nation-building. "Break silos, increase teamwork, rise above hierarchies & redress grievances with a human touch," he was quoted saying in a "chintan shivir" or a brainstorming session organised for the ministry's officials on Saturday. The PM on Saturday addressed the officials. Some details of the deliberations were made public by the government on Sunday.

'Modi taking forward Shivaji Maharaj's work'

Pune, Feb 19 (PTI):

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Sunday hailed Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj for rebuilding the temples destroyed during the rule of Mughals and other foreign invaders, and said the restoration work that continued after the Maratha warrior king is being taken forward by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

He also said that Chhatrapati Shivaji's life was all about revolting against the atrocities, and the fight for 'swaraj' (self-rule) started by him continues still today. Shah was speaking after inaugurating



the first phase of 'Shivrushti', a theme park based on the life of Shivaji Maharaj at Narhe-Ambegaon in Pune, on the occasion of the birth anniversary of the founder of the Maratha empire. Chief Minister Eknath Shinde and Deputy CM Devendra Fadnis were also present on the occasion. The project, which is spread over 21 acres of land, was conceptualised by Padma Vibhushan awardee Shivshahir Babasaheb Purandare, who formed the Maharaja Chhatrapati Pratishthan for its execution. "Several temples were destroyed during the rule of Mughals and other foreign invaders. Last week, Goa Chief Minister Pramod Sawant did the redevelopment of Saptakoteswar temple, which was reconstructed by Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj. Similarly, the temples in south India were also redeveloped by the Maratha warrior king. Shivaji Maharaj constructed grand gates in front of the temples and tried to restore these structures," Shah said.

DISPLAY OF SKILL



Martial artists show their skills during the Kalaripayattu competition, at the Central Stadium in Thiruvananthapuram.

Rijju pitches for institutional arbitration

Says AI can help arbitrators

New Delhi, Feb 19 (PTI):

Law Minister Kiren Rijju on Sunday batted for institutional arbitration in the country and pointed at loopholes in "ad hoc" arbitration, saying such proceedings are susceptible to court interventions which delay the final outcome.

He also said artificial intelligence (AI) can help arbitrators in tasks such as document review and analysis, legal research, and drafting of awards.

Addressing a Delhi Arbitration Weekend event at the Delhi High Court, he said majority of the people go for "ad hoc" arbitrations where the



proceedings are not governed by pre-determined rules.

As a result, these proceedings are susceptible to court intervention at various stages which leads to delay in final decision for the parties involved. On the other hand, Rijju pointed out, institutional arbitrations are regulated by the rules of an institution that provide for a

more structured and secure process.

In addition, parties can benefit from the expertise of the arbitral institution having good quality infrastructure, he said.

He said the government's Vision 2030 is to see arbitration space remain dynamic, amendable to adopting best practices, as also conscious of the needs of time-bound and final adjudication of contractual disputes.

With the emphasis on institutional arbitration, it is essential that new arbitration centres are set up in non-metro cities, he felt.

The whole system of institutional arbitration is crucial in creating and enhancing the 'Ease of Doing Business' (EoDB) environment, he stressed.

'No Oppn unity possible without Cong'

Plenary Session to give direction to such plans

New Delhi, Feb 19 (PTI):

Ahead of its plenary this week, the Congress on Sunday said the party top brass will deliberate and give direction on ways to forge opposition unity during the three-day conclave, asserting that any such effort without it would be unsuccessful.

The plenary session in Chhattisgarh's Nava Raipur will start from February 24 and is expected to be attended by around 15,000 delegates.

Congress general secretary organisation K C Venugopal said the party's



Congress leaders Jairam Ramesh and K.C. Venugopal during a press conference regarding the 85th Plenary Session of Congress, at AICC headquarters in New Delhi, Sunday.

steering committee would meet on the first day of the session and decide whether elections would be held for the party's top decision-making body -- the Congress Working Committee (CWC), a demand made by some from within the organisation.

Agenda of plenary session.....

Venugopal said the agenda for the three-day 85th plenary session of the party from February 24 to 26 would be finalised in the steering committee meeting to be held on the first day and thereafter, the subjects committee will give final shape to the resolutions to be adopted. He said this will be the party's first plenary session to be held outside Delhi since the last one in Hyderabad in 2005. Venugopal termed the plenary session an "important milestone" in the journey towards the 2024 parliamentary elections and that around 15,000 delegates from across the country will participating in it.

Attendance of session

Venugopal termed the plenary session an "important milestone" in the journey towards the 2024 parliamentary elections and that around 15,000 delegates from across the country will participating in it. Giving the break-up of the number of delegates, he said there are 1,338 All India Congress Committee delegates and 487 co-opted ones, which comes to a total of 1,825 delegates. Besides, there will be a total of 9,915 Pradesh Congress Committee delegates attending the session, Venugopal said.

The Congress knows its role in bringing together various opposition parties for forging an alliance

ahead of the 2024 Lok Sabha elections to take on the BJP and oust it from power, he said.

Several irregularities found in surprise inspection at Club & Bar

Lisztomania at Surya Mall closed till further orders



Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Feb 19: On the instructions of Collector Pushpendra Kumar Meena, SDM (Durg) Laxman Tiwari conducted a surprise inspection at Lisztomania Bar and Club located in Surya Treasure Island Mall in Junwani. Several irregularities were found in the club.

The club had appointed more employees than the license, stored cigarettes without permission and the restaurant was being run without the license of

the Food Department. Led by SDM Durg, the inspection was conducted by a joint team of Food and Drug, Excise, Revenue and Police Departments.

Lisztomania Bar and Club is located on the third floor of Surya Mall, Junwani. The team found that the vegetarian and non-vegetarian food items were stored in open containers one above another. A huge amount of garbage and empty liquor bottles were kept on the terrace.

The club has only one counter permit but two



counters were being operated by the club in different floors. The dust area below the washroom of the third floor is open, which is extremely dangerous. The club has only 07 staff licenses but only 01 licensed staff was present to work. In addition to this 47 persons were found working in the club without license.

Food license and Gumasta license were not found and the manager was unable to produce the documents. Large quantity of cigarettes was stored

in the counter without a license. The club had not got the Police verification of the working staff. Large quantity of Hologram stickers was found, which can be affixed to any bottle.

This can cause revenue loss to the Government. No document of any staff working in the club was found. The stock register of liquor, which has to be kept on the counter, was not found. Further, the register of holograms was also not maintained.

The club management

was unable to produce a license for operating DJ, FSSAI license, etc. It is mandatory for the licensee to display the license of the Department of Food and Drugs at the workplace, but it was not found.

The department has collected samples of mutton curry, which will be sent to the State Food Testing Laboratory for examination. Food License, Gumasta license and Cigarette license were not made available by the club on the spot. Later, with the consent of all the people present on the spot and the club director, the club was closed till further orders.

Panchnama was prepared and it was read aloud before all the present persons before getting it signed by them. The club was locked and its keys were handed over to the Food Safety Officer of the Food and Drug Department.

Seventh batch of tribal youth departs for Varanasi



Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Jan 19: With the objectives of providing exposure to the tribal youth and make them understand the cultural ethos, language, lifestyle of the people, socio-economic and cultural development, and the unity in the diversity aspect of our national life, the Border Security Force has sent a group of

tribal youth from Kanker for an exposure visit to Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh.

Under the 14th Tribal Youth Exchange Programme, Border Security Force has selected and sent 20 tribal youth for this tour. It is the seventh group of tribal youth sent on tour of other cities under this programme. The group of tribal youth is being accompanied by

one female and one male officer / personnel of Border Security Force. BSF is organising fourteen such tours this year for about 290 youth.

IG Indraj Singh (BSF Frontier Headquarters, Special Operations, Chhattisgarh) and DIG (Intelligence) Dinesh Murmu have extended greetings and best wishes to the selected youth.

Durg Police nabs kingpin of interstate gang of thieves

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Feb 19: Durg Police camped in Uttar Pradesh for about seven days and succeeded in arresting the kingpin of an interstate gang of thieves. The accused was wanted in connection with a theft incident which occurred in Dhamdha.

On the basis of CCTV footage, Police managed to identify the accused. Police have arrested another notorious thief of this gang. They committed thefts / lifting in Durg, Raipur, Balod, Dhamtari, Bhatgaon, Ambikapur, Bareilly, Khandwa, Butibori, Kotar and other places.

SP Dr Abhishek Pallava



informed that they had received a complaint from Vijendra Singh Baghel of Dhamdha regarding theft of Rs 3.50 lakh from his car on June 07, 2022. The car was parked in front of a Bank and the unidentified thieves had broken the window glass to steal the

cash. The second FIR was lodged by one Fatte Lal Sahu regarding theft of Rs 3 lakh from his bike's dicky. The incident had occurred on December 14, 2022. Police examined the CCTV footage and identified the suspects as Amar of Patthalgaon who was

presently residing in Kanpur and Chandrabhan of Khamrod, Budhar. Two different teams were sent to Kanpur and Khamrod to search for the accused. The police teams made sustained efforts and managed to arrest them. They confessed to have committed thefts at several places in the last two years.

The accused are identified as Amar alias Pappur (32) son of Habbu Nat a resident of Diwanpur, Patthalgaon; and Chandrabhan Nat (38) son of Sudhan Nat a resident of Khamrod, Budhar, Madhya Pradesh. They were produced before the court and have been to jail on judicial remand.

Maharudram marks Mahashivratri celebration at Skandashram

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Feb 19: On the occasion of Mahashivratri, Maharudram was organised from February 15-19, 2023 at Skandashram in Hudco. This was the 14th year of Mahashivratri festival celebration at the Skandashram.

Maharudram was chanted both in the morning and evening. Maharudram (Akhand) chanting was done continuously from 01:00 hrs on February 18 to 04:45 hrs on February 19. Havan Kalash Abhishekam and Mahadeep worship of Lord Shiva were performed from 10:00 hrs on February 19. Giving de-



tailed information through a press communique the media incharge Surendra Singh Kembo explained that Maharudram includes Rudram and Chamkam performed 11 times by 11 Vedacharyas; 11 times Rudrabhiksek; Rudram and Chamkam are chanted 121 times by 11

Vedacharyas for Ekadashi Rudrabhiksek. Maharudram happens when 11 Vedacharyas chant Rudram and Chamkam 11 times in 11 kaals. This was the 14th year of Skandashram Maharudram. Maharudram chanting

was performed by Brahmarshree Bhagyaraj Shatrigal of Salem Tamil Nadu and his associate Shastris. The celebrations of Mahashivratri in Skandashram concluded on Sunday under the guidance of Acharya Shri Maniswamy, the founder of Skandashram.

Payal Jain becomes first woman chairperson of ICAI Bhilai

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Feb 19: The swearing-in ceremony of the new executive body of CA Bhilai branch is being organised on February 21 at the CA Bhawan Civic Centre. Under the new executive of ICAI Bhilai branch, CA Payal Jain will take over as the first woman chairperson of any branch in the history of Chhattisgarh, whereas CA Rahul Batra will take over as Vice President, CA Ankesh Sinha as Secretary, CA Suraj Soni as Treasurer, CA Shivam Chaudhary as CICASA Chairman and CA Pradeep Pal as Executive Member. Present as chief guest will be CA JL Jain, the first chairman of Bhilai branch while CA



CA Payal Jain

Kishore Bardia, vice chairman of the Central India Regional Council and Cicasa chairman CA Anil Yadav will be present as special guests. CA Jai Chhaira from Surat will be present as key speaker, who will give tips on life, profession and business management to the attendees.

Divyang National Cricket Tournament inauguration today

Bhilai, Feb 19: Shaheed Veer Narayan Singh Indian Divyang Cricket T-20 Champions Trophy Tournament will be inaugurated on February 20, 2023 at the Cricket Ground in Indira Place, Civic Centre. The tournament will be inaugurated jointly by Anirban Das Gupta, Director I/C, Bhilai Steel Plant and Dr Abhishek Pallava, Superintendent of Police, Durg. All the four team participating in the tournament have reached and preparations have also been completed, informed Arun Shrivastava, President, Chhattisgarh Divyang Cricket Association, in a press communique.

'Bhole Baba Ki Baraat' finds place in Golden Book of World Records

Bol Bum Sewa Samiti celebrates Mahashivratri in a magnificent manner



Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Feb 19: Bol Bum Sewa and Kalyan Samiti celebrated Mahashivratri in a grand manner for the fifteenth consecutive year. The marriage procession of Bhole Baba was taken out and the marriage of Lord Shiva and Goddess Parvati was performed.

This year, the event "Bhole Baba Ki Baraat" made it to the Golden Book of World Records with the involvement of 151 tableaux. The second record in

the Golden Book was for the highest number of devotees dressing up as "Shiv Gans".

This mega religious event was held on the occasion of Mahashivratri. The grandeur of this event attracts the devotees from different districts of the state. Several dignitaries including former CM Dr Raman Singh, Rajya Sabha member Dr Saroj Pandey, Bollywood celebrity Rimi Sen, BJP District President Brijesh Bichpuria, Brahmakumari Centre Bhilai Director Asha

Didi, Corporator Rikesh Sen and BJP leaders attended the programme.

This year, the organisers had made special arrangements. Tableaux of Kerala were the centre of attraction in the marriage procession of Lord Shiva. The artists were dressed as Lord Shiva, Maa Parvati, Ganesha, Lord Hanuman and other deities.

Tableaux from Vijayawada, Andhra Pradesh also attracted the attention of audiences. Tableaux from different dis-

tricts of Chhattisgarh participated in the procession. Devotees had the glimpses of Ram Darbar, Shri Krishna Leela, Shiv Tandav, Shiv - Parvati Vivah, Radha Krishna and much more. Raut Nacha, Akhada, Panthi, DJ, Dhumaal, Band Party, etc created a devotional atmosphere.

The procession began from Indira Nagar (Hathkhaj) after offering prayers at Ram Janki Mandir. The procession moved across Transport Nagar, Canal Road, Kartikeya Chowk, Bol

Bum Chowk, Nandi Triangle, Zone 1 Shiv mandir and concluded at Durga Puja Ground in Khursipar where the symbolic marriage of Lord Shiva and Goddess Parvati was conducted. This was followed by a reception party for the devotees.

Samiti President Daya Singh appreciated and thanked the office bearers, youth wing, women's wing and members of the Bol Bum Sewa and Kalyan Samiti for their significant efforts in making the programme a grand success.

CPL-T20: 5 wicket win for Bhilai Indians, Abujmand Tigers victory of 82 runs

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Feb 19: In the Chhattisgarh Premier League CPL -T20, being organized under the joint aegis of Chhattisgarh Cricket Council and Veer Sports Club, the first match was played between CV Raman Naya Raipur Challengers and HTC Bhilai Indians at Bhilai Sector 1 Cricket Stadium on the ninth day.

After winning the toss, Naya Raipur decided to bat first and scored 136 runs on the loss of 9 wickets in the stipulated 20 overs. The maximum contribution of runs came from Yash who scored 58 runs and Deepak with a score of 33 runs. Bowling



for Bhilai Indians, Brijesh took 4 important wickets. Chasing the score set up by Raipur Challengers, Bhilai Indian reached the target with 5 wickets to spare in 19.1 overs in a thrilling match. Anup scored 52 runs and Brijesh scored 23 runs. Brijesh was adjudged man of the match, informed Praveen Jain, President of Chhattisgarh Pradesh Congress Committee



Sports Cell and Organizing Committee. The second match was played between Athena Abujmad Tigers and Abis Rajnandgaon Royals. Batting first after winning the toss, Abujmad Tigers put up a total of 200 runs on the loss of 8 wickets in the stipulated 20 overs. Chandrahas scored 60 runs on 35 balls and Ashwini

scored 36 runs on 21 balls for the team. While bowling for Rajnandgaon Royals, Sumit and Jackie took three wickets each. In reply, the Rajnandgaon Royals were bowled out for 118 runs in 18.2 overs. Santosh took 4 wickets, Babul got 2 wickets for Abujmad. Thus, Abujmad Tigers won the match by 82 runs. Chandrahas was adjudged man of the match.

Comprehensive work being done to develop pilgrimage sites of the state: CM

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Feb 19: "We are doing extensive work in the direction of developing the pilgrimage sites of the state. Beautification work is being done at Thakurain Tola to the tune of Rs 3 crore and Laxman Jhula is to be made at a cost of Rs 17 crore. This temple was inaugurated by Saint Pawan Diwan. With every passing year the number of pilgrims visiting the temple is increasing rapidly", stated Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel while addressing the devotees after offering prayers to Lord Shiva in the temple at Thakurain Tola village on the occasion of Mahashivratri.

The Chief Minister asserted that development work is being



done in an area of 55 acres in our important pilgrimage centre Rajim. Accommodation facilities will be available for the passengers coming to the fair after this. Earlier, the fair used to spread till the banks of the river, due to

which there was a possibility of trouble due to filling of murrum in the river. Now this problem will be solved with the new campus. The Chief Minister said that Ram Van Gaman area is being devel-

oped in nine pilgrimage centers between Koriya to Ramaram of Sukma. Shivrinarayan, Chandkhuri and Rajim pilgrimage sites have also been developed. The work of infrastructure development and beautification has been done in the only temple of Kaushalya Mata in the country. As a result, the number of pilgrims visiting the temple has increased.

The Chief Minister also mentioned that the state has also witnessed rapid economic progress and better infrastructure is there in the field of education and health. Satisfaction is our first priority, he added. He also praised the work done by Nishad Samaj for the development of the temple complex.

CM attends 53rd annual sammelan of DKKS

Makes many declarations

Balod, Feb 19:

Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel attended the 53rd annual sammelan of 'Dilliwar Kurmi Kshatriya Samaj' (DKKS) at Gram Parastarai of Balod district here on Sunday. During this he made declaration of construction work worth Rs 1 crore for community building of 'Kurmi Samaj' and Rs 25 lakh for construction of crematorium, waiting room and approach road in Gram Parastarai as per demand by the Sarpanch. On this occasion Parliamentary Secretary and MLA Sangeeta Sinha, V-P State Labour Welfare Board Keshav Bunty Harmukh, President District Panchayat Sonadevi



Deshlahara, President Krishi Upaj Mandi Balod Bholaram Deshmukh, Central President DKKS Dr Rajendra Harmukh, senior social worker Hardev Dilliwar, society's patron Ram Sahai Deshmukh, and other public representatives were present. On this occasion CM also unveiled the statue of Chhatrapati Shivaji and expressed happiness on hearing to know that the statue of Shivaji has been painted with

'Gobar paint'. During this CM highlighted about the unparalleled valour, patriotism, morality and human sentiments of Chhatrapati Shivaji.

He said that even though Shivaji's army was small, but the morale, discipline and patriotism was immense. It was just with his small army that he faced the Mughals with courage and valour. On this occasion highlighting about the characteristics of Dilliwar

Samaj said that they are known for their fooding, lifestyle and trade. Baghel said that he feels honoured being part of this programme and expressed gratitude towards the Samaj and its members. On this occasion Dilliwar Samaj weighed CM along with dishes of Chhattisgarh. On this occasion CM also extended greetings to the youth from Samaj for excelling in various fields and joining different government services. In this programme Collector Kuldeep Sharma, SP JK Yadav, Mahila Samiti President Preeti Deshmukh, Yuwa Samiti President Yogeshwar Deshmukh, general secy. Ashok Kumar Deshmukh, and members of Dilliwar Samaj were present in large number.

National-level seminar held in Science College



Raipur, Feb 19: A national seminar on 'Current Trends and Prospects in Botany' was organized by Department of Botany, Govt. Nagarjuna PG (Autonomous) College of Science, Raipur, on Feb 16 sponsored by CGCOST. The patron of this seminar was principal Dr P.C. Choubey, convener Dr R. Diwan, organizing secretaries Dr VK Kanungo and Dr Suneeta Patra, co-conveners Dr Sangeeta Bajpai and Dr N.B. Singh. Dr KL Verma Vice Chancellor Pt. R.S.U. Raipur was the chief uuest, Arun Pandey (IFS) was the special guest and principal Dr P.C Choubey was the chairman of the inaugural function.

Souvenir was also released on this occasion The keynote address was given by Dr. L.B. Choudhary from NBRI Lucknow. In the technical sessions of Feb 16-17 the invited talks were given by Dr. Sudhir Pandey, Dr. SK Jadhav, Dr. DK Shrivastava Dr. T. Shrinivasa from Nagpur, Dr. Satish Verulkar IGKV Raipur, Dr. DK Kappgate Paleobotanist from Bhandara, Dr. MP Thakur, Dr. ML Naik and Dr. Veenapani Dubey. There were 3 oral presentation and 1 poster presentation sessions for participants. Best three oral and poster presentations were given certificates and cash prizes and one consolation prize was given for

the poster presentation as well. First prize for oral presentation was sponsored by Dr Preeti Tiwari and rest of the prizes were sponsored by organizing department. In the valedictory function the chief was Dr ML Naik, special guest Dr Amit Dubey Scientist D CGCOST and Chairman Dr P.C.Panda. The feedback of the seminar was given by the participants. Faculty members of department and other departments and from different colleges were present in this occasion. There were near about 200 participants and delegates from all over India and 70 abstracts were submitted for the souvenir.

12-year-old girl raped and murdered

Raipur, Feb 19: A case of rape and murder of a minor has come to light in the Arang police station area of the capital Raipur. The dead body of the girl was found near a bore in a field located in Gudguda village. During interrogation, it was found that a young man living in his own neighborhood strangled the girl after raping her. He has been arrested by the police. The deceased girl was studying in the 6th class in the village school. She was only 12 years old. Young man is also a student studying in class 12th. At the time of the incident, the girl was playing in the field just 300 meters away from the house. The intention of the neighboring young man from the village itself was not right towards the girl. Seeing the minor girl playing alone near the farm, he took advantage of the opportunity and raped her. It is being told that when the girl cried for help during the incident, he told her not to disclose the incident to anyone. When the girl resisted him and did not listen, he got angry and hit her head 3-4 times on the borewell. Girl's head was bleeding. After that he strangled her. The police found serious injury marks on the head and neck in the body of the deceased. After the incident, young man fled from the spot. As soon as the news of the dead body was received, Arang police actively questioned the people of the village. It was found that the last time the girl was seen roaming with that boy. Police searched and nabbed him. During interrogation, he tried to mislead by claiming innocence. But under strict interrogation, he confessed to the crime. He told his age as 19 years. Scrutiny of the mark sheet found that the boy was a few months short of turning 18. It has been learned that he committed crimes like one or two thefts in the past as well. Police registered a case of murder. He will now be produced in the court.

Eccentric man attacks girl with sharp-edged weapon

Drags her along road by her hair

Raipur, Feb 19:

An eccentric man entered the house of a minor girl and attacked her with a sharp-edged weapon in Gudhiyari area of Raipur. When the blood-soaked girl ran to save her life, the madman man chased her and started dragging her along the road by her hair. He also attacked himself. Police have arrested attacker.

According to girl's relatives, she used to work in the spice center of attacker Omkar Tiwari. Tiwari allegedly told the girl's mother 'give me your daughter, I will keep her as a wife'. Girl's family refused it. Angered by this, Omkar Tiwari carried out the incident.

Relatives told that on Saturday night the eccentric Omkar Tiwari entered their house with a sharp-edged weapon. He misbehaved with the family members and beat up the girl before attacking her with a sharp edged weapon. The girl sustained injuries on her

neck and other parts of her body. Blood-soaked girl ran outside to escape. But she fell on the road as soon as she ran. The family members of the girl also kept trying to handle her. By then the eccentric man again attacked the girl. Police arrested Tiwari. The victim is undergoing treatment.

According to Alexander Kiro, in-charge of Gudhiyari police station, Omkar Tiwari wanted to marry minor girl but she was continuously denying. They had a dispute on this issue for the last few months. Eventually Tiwari made a fatal attack on the girl. Offence has been registered against him under the Arms Act. Omkar Tiwari alias Manoj (47) resides in Bada Ashok Nagar area near Durga Chowk Anganwadi of Gudhiyari. Tiwari runs a shop named Masala Center in Gudhiyari area itself. The girl had reached 6 months ago in September 2022 to work in his shop. On being fed up with harassment and molestation in Masala Center she left the job.

Over 101 lakh MT paddy lifted for custom milling

Raipur, Feb 19: More than 101 lakh metric tonnes of paddy has been lifted for custom milling so far. DO has been issued for the lifting of more than 104 lakh metric tonnes of paddy. This year, 107.53 lakh metric tonnes of paddy has been successfully procured from the farmers at the support price. With paddy procurement, the lifting of paddy started directly from procurement centers for custom milling this year. Due to all such works state government has seen a significant reduction in transportation expenditure. Long process of paddy lifting after procurement of paddy has also been relieved. The state government has procured 107.53 lakh metric tonnes of paddy from more than 23 lakh 42 thousand farmers till January 31, 2023. Amount of 22 thousand 67 crore has been paid to the farmers for the procurement of paddy.

Millets will be included in the mid-day meal prog

Raipur, Feb 19: Government of India has approved Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel's proposal of including millets under the mid day meal scheme. Now four days a week, under Pradhanmantri Poshan Shakti Yojana, millet based food products will be distributed in place of soya chikki in 12 districts of Chhattisgarh. As per the vision of Chhattisgarh Government, Directorate of public instructions had sent a proposal to Government of India to partially amend the scheme and distribute Millet-based food products in place of soya chikki. This proposal has been approved by the

Director, PM Poshan, Government of India. It is not worthy that farmers in Chhattisgarh are being encouraged to produce millets. Millets such as kudo kutki Ragi are being procured at support price. Moreover, millets producing farmers of the state are being provided input subsidy of Rs 9 thousand. Year 2023 has been declared as the international millet year. It is noteworthy that in the annual action plan of Pradhan Mantri Poshan Shakti Nirman Yojana, central government has sanctioned Rs 1787.20 lakh as Centre's share and Rs 1198.14 lakh as State's share for distribution of soya chikki as nutrient supplement to the children of the state for 55 days. In this way, a total of Rs 2995.34 lakh has been approved for this purpose.

NIT DoA Raipur organizes Archifest -23

Raipur, Feb 19: National Institute of Technology (NIT) Raipur's Department of Architecture (DoA) organized Archifest'23, its two-day annual fest, on 18th and 19th February 2023. The fest was organized under the adept guidance of Dr. Swasti Sthapak, Head of Department, DoA and was coordinated under the supervision of Mr. Sachin Kumar Sahu, Assistant Professor, DoA. The fest was inaugurated on day one by Dr. Debashis Sanyal, Associate Professor, DoA with a lamp lighting ceremony in the name of Maa Saraswati. Dr. D. Sanyal congratulated the students for the successful organization of the fest. Students were divided into four groups, namely, "The Black Cat", "The Gold Bug", "The Pit and the Pendulum" and the "Cask of Amantillado" and various events such as "Jugaad", "Quiz Competition", "Film Making Workshop" and "Vogue - Tips

and Tricks to Sell Your Design" were organized on day one. Day two comprised of competitions such as "Debate", "Sculpture Making", "Treasure Hunt" and "Story Making - Comic Sketch". Distinct cultural and on-spot events were also organized on day one and day two respectively. The fest came to an end with the organization of Aanand Mela and closing ceremony on day two. Team "Pit and the Pendulum" emerged as overall winners, and prizes were distributed to the winners of the other competitions. Numerous student-led exhibitions, seminars and guest lectures were organized over the course of two days. The two-day event was not only open to students, but also, aspiring architects or students who were just curious about the field and it ended successfully, helping the attendees immerse in the world of design and be a part of a supportive community.

LOVED IN

THE WORLD'S FAVOURITE INDIAN

WHEN IS A *pulsar* MORE THAN A *pulsar*?

When traffic-leading torque comes in a breathtaking aerodynamic avatar.

When a road-taming monoshock suspension comes with a night-piercing LED projector headlamp.

And when all of the above comes with the familiar exhilarating rush that comes through at the twist of the throttle.

That's when a *pulsar* becomes more than *pulsar*!

INTRODUCING THE NEXT GEN *pulsar* 150.

ATTRACTIVE DOWN PAYMENT OF ₹ 16,943/-

*Terms and conditions apply. *Down payment for Pulsar P150 SD variant. Down payment is excluding processing fees & other charges and is based on fulfillment of credit parameters. Finance at sole discretion of the financier. Bajaj Auto reserves the right to withdraw any or all offers without prior notice. Stunts have been performed by experts, under professional supervision, in a controlled and enclosed environment, in isolation from general public or public roads. Please do not attempt to replicate these stunts and always follow traffic and safety rules. AMC available on specific models and in specific states. Check with Bajaj dealer for more details. Road Side Assistance is provided by third parties and is subject to their terms and conditions.

Authorised Dealers for Bajaj Auto Ltd.: Raipur: Ashram Chowk (GE Road) VANDANA BAJAJ 4083927, 7000931134, •Devpuri Raipur Arun Bajaj 7415295930, •Baloda Bazar Arun Bajaj 9009399506, •Bhilai AVN BAJAJ 4252700, 7771844400 • Durg VENKATESH BAJAJ 4060122,9826161065 • Dhamtari TIRUPATI BAJAJ 233556, 9399607355 • Jagdalpur T M BAJAJ 9977293466, 222466 • Mahasamund BHAWANI BAJAJ 9424205048, 224789 • Saraipali BHAWANI BAJAJ 9424205048 • Rajnandgaon KAKKAD BAJAJ 9301111111 • Kawardha CHANDRAYAN BAJAJ 9993988333. Authorised Service Centre: Abhanpur 9425510725, Ahiwara 9300771932, Ambagarh Chowki 8085558568, Arang 9425519445,8224026403, Bagbahara 9926161553, Balod 9300007755, Bakhara 7000627684, Basna 9753408127, Baya 7748070011, Bemetra 9303035355, Berla 9424132982, Bhanupratappur 9977911298, Bhatapara, 7611122772, Chandrakhuri 9826764123 Charama 7987079755, Charoda 9907448800, Chhuriya 9111400505, Dallirajhira 9229940000, • Dantewada 9425594844, Dongergaon 8770405245, • Fingeshwar 700189472, Gariyaband 7777888487, Gidhori 9425202238, Gunderdehi 7354060136, Jhalap 9753559579, Kanker 7771852418, Kasdol 9826142260, Khairagarh 6263744912, Koilkukkur 9993988333, Komakhan 8319131967, Kondagaon 9131609699, Kurud 7225807375, Mainpur 7000931134, Nagri 9109099900, Nawagarh: - 9981235777, Nayapara 9826433867, Pakhanjur 9425593572, Pandatari 7470991444, Patan 9893604812, Pharasgaon 9826347547, Pirda 9977377533, Pithoda 9713118410, Rajim-8620257777, Ranitaral 9617444325, Risali 9098847683, Sankra 8120008091, Sargaon 700079773, Singhanpur 9713848382, Simga 8827777456, Tilda 9329068989, Telibandha 7000931134, Tendukona 9425512175, Utai 7566001523.

CM unveils statue of Chhatrapati Shivaji

Cheques worth Rs 4.70 crore distributed to beneficiaries under various public welfare schemes

● Rs 2.84 cr returned to 4,309 investors of the chit fund company

Rajnandgaon, Feb 19:

Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel unveiled the statue of Chhatrapati Shivaji at Chhatrapati Shivaji Park located in Budhasagar of district headquarters Rajnandgaon. On this occasion, Chief Minister Baghel distributed cheques worth Rs. 4.70 cr to the beneficiaries of various public welfare schemes of the government. Besides, he also gave away the certificates of Chhattisgarh Anadhikrit Vikas Ka Niyamitkaran Adhiniyam (Regularization of Chhattisgarh's Unauthorised Development). Chief Minister also handed over the cheques worth Rs 2.84 cr to the 4,309 investors who were duped by the chit fund company Sahara India.

In his address, Chief Minister Baghel stated that the statue was unveiled in commemoration of the historical figure Chhatrapati Veer Shivaji.



In this program, funds are being distributed to the beneficiaries under several government initiatives. He stated that today, 4,309 investors of Sahara India received the cheques of total Rs 2.84 cr. Chhattisgarh is the first state to take action against chit fund companies and refund the money to the investors. He stated that the government runs several public welfare initiatives for the general public. The speed of development in Chhattisgarh's vil-

lages, cities, and towns has accelerated. The government is always attempting to improve health, education, and sanitation. Farmers, businesses, and women are all benefiting from various programmes of the government, and Chhattisgarh is rapidly moving ahead on the path of development. Mr Baghel further said that through Bhent-Mulaqat campaign, he met social leaders, and sanctioned funds for several community buildings on their de-

mand. The purpose of social/community buildings is to promote societal fraternity, communal harmony, overall development and upliftment.

Meanwhile, Mayor Hema Deshmukh said that the land of Rajnandgaon is the land of litterateurs. It is the land associated with litterateurs Dr. Padumlal Punna Lal Bakshi, Shri Gajanan Madhav Muktibodh, and Dr. Baldev Prasad Mishra. The statue of Shivaji in Sanskardhani Nagri is

now a symbol of bravery. She said that despite the COVID crisis, the pace of development remained uninterrupted. She heartily thanked Chief Minister for sanctioning an amount of Rs. 4 crores for the beautification of the city, Rs. 2 crores for the Punni Mela and Rs. 15 crores for social buildings to 11 societies.

In the program, Chairman Chhattisgarh State Rural and Other Backward Classes Areas Development Authority Daleswar Sahu, Khujji MLA Chhanni Sahu, Chairman Chhattisgarh State Antyvasaya Cooperative Finance and Development Corporation Dhanesh Patila, Chairman Chhattisgarh State Youth Commission Jitendra Mudaliar, Chairman District Cooperative Central Bank Maryadit Nawaz Khan, President Rajgami Estate Trust Vivek Wasnik, President of Municipal Corporation Rajnarayan Dheketa, along with many public representatives, officers and a large number of general public were present.

Raipur, Feb 19:

Taking an effective step towards creating a healthier environment in the state and curbing the growing trend of drug addiction among youth, Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel has declared the operation of hookah bars in the state as "illegal". The relevant law was amended with strict provisions to prevent the operation of hookah bars, which came into effect immediately. The decision was made after complaints were received regarding the high consumption of hookah, flavored substances, tobacco, and other addictive substances served in hookah bars operated in various eateries, hotels, and restaurants, especially by the youth. This practice is harmful to their health and also promotes addiction. In response to this unlawful activity, the Chief Minister, Shri Bhupesh Baghel, directed strict action against the hookah bars and the closure of all hookah bars in the state. Acting swiftly on the instructions of the Chief Minister, the police department took strict action against all hookah

● CM takes unprecedented step towards curbing the growing trend of drug addiction among youth
● Operation of hookah bars in Chhattisgarh is a non-bailable offense under amended law

bars, resulting in the closure of all hookah bars in the state. Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel has directed that the aforementioned law should be amended, taking into account the current situation, to prevent the younger generation from becoming addicted to such substances. Accordingly, the Chhattisgarh Government has prepared a draft for necessary amendments to the Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products (Prohibition of Advertisement and Regulation of Trade and Commerce, Production, Supply, and Distribution) Act, 2003. Competent permission was obtained after the amendment proposal of the Act was passed by the Chhattisgarh Legislative Assembly. The Act was published in the Chhattisgarh Gazette on February 10, 2023, by the

Chhattisgarh Law and Legislative Affairs Department. As per the amendments made under the Act, the operation of any kind of hookah bar has been prohibited in the state. In addition, smoking through hookah or 'shisha' in any communal hookah bar has also been banned. A provision has been made to seize any material or object used as a subject or means of use in the hookah bar if it is found to be in operation. Any person found operating a hookah bar will be charged with a non-bailable offense and can face imprisonment for up to 3 years, but not less than 1 year; and a fine of up to Rs 50,000, but not less than Rs 10,000. Similarly, any person found smoking through a hookah in a hookah bar will be fined up to Rs 5,000, but not less than Rs 1,000. These amendments made in the relevant Act have come into effect immediately.

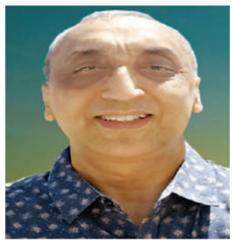
The strict provisions of the law will establish effective control over the operation of hookah bars and the tendency to smoke hookah in groups in the hookah bars.

HNLU to organize lecture on Social Justice

Raipur, Feb 19:

Hidayatullah National Law University will be hosting the Ex Arca (Out of The Box) Digital Platform Lecture on 20.02.2023 at 6.30 P.M. on the occasion of World Day of Social Justice. Parminder Jeet Singh, Director, IT for Change has been invited as the Chief Guest for the event and will deliver a lecture on the topic of 'Digital Age Context of Social Justice'. The address will be delivered in online mode.

Social justice is enshrined in the Preamble to the Indian Constitution and thus plays an impor-



(Dr.) Uday Shankar, Registrar, HNLU. Opening remarks will be given by Prof. (Dr.) VC Vivekanandan, Vice-Chancellor of HNLU. The lecture will be followed by a question-answer session. A vote of thanks will be delivered by Amitesh Deshmukh, Assistant Professor, HNLU.

tant role in the Indian constitutional sentiments. The United Nations has designated February 20th as World Day of Social Justice, understanding social justice in a newer context would refresh the perspective this nation's forefathers brought forth.

The welcome address will be delivered by Prof.

The lecture will be attended by faculties, students and staff members of HNLU and IT for Change as also all the registered participants. The lecture will also be showcased live on the University's YouTube channel (https://youtube.com/hnluofficial).

Teachers' strike on pre-service enumeration today

Jagdalpur, Feb 19:

State Vice President of Chhattisgarh Teachers Association (CTA) Praveen Srivastava said that the Chief Minister had announced Old Pension Scheme (OPS) for all the employees. Under which deduction for OPS has been started by stopping NPS deduction of all teachers from April 2012. Now, after 10 months, the government is depriving thousands of teachers of their old pension by putting a clause that of government service. Due to this lakhs of teachers will get the eligibility for meager pension. Annoyed by this, Sanjay Sharma of Chhattisgarh Teachers' Association (CTA), Virendra Dubey of School Teachers' Association, Kedari Jain of United Teachers Association, Vikas Rajput of Naveen Teachers Association have formed 'Purv-Sewa Ganana Shiksha Morcha' (PSGSM) and announced a strike



on Feb 20. Due to not getting permission for statewide demonstration in Raipur, on Feb 20, teachers called for protest, demonstration, rally in all district headquarters. Due to which most of the teachers have given memorandum to remain on strike.

There will be lockout in thousands of schools on Feb 20 due to widespread teachers' strike. Because all LB cadre teachers are getting affected by the old pension. Along with this, teaching in schools will come to a standstill. Actually, old pension is calculated from the date of first

appointment, full pension after 20 years of service. The demand for pay discrepancy, promotion, promotion of assistant teachers, giving one time relaxation to the employer class is also included. There is a lot of anger among the teachers due to the order by the Finance Department and the Pension Branch to submit irrevocable option letters quickly. Many officials are talking about not giving salary without filling the option letter. Which is being said to be the sign of arbitrary. There is no order to stop salary without alternative. For this rea-

son, teachers have also clashed with many officials and there is anger among the teachers. The Chief Minister has abolished the NPS issued since 2004 with retrospective effect.

In such a situation, the LB cadre who have become government employees should get the benefit. But it is being said that by issuing new orders, the pension of the teachers who have joined after merger with the government school education department will be attacked. Teachers of all classes and cadres have united against this.

On February 20, all the district headquarters will take out a protest rally and hand over the demand letter to the Chief Minister.

Praveen Srivastava, Shiv Singh Chandel, Shiv Raj Thakur, Rajesh Gupta, Shailendra Tiwari, Sudhir Dubey, Tahir Sheikh, Amit Pal, Harendra Rajput, Shatrughan Kashyap, Budhram Kashyap, Manish Thakur, Tuladas Manikpuri, Ashish Das, while giving information about the strike. Mohd Akbar Khan, Indra Kumar Jha, Rudranarayan Bhardwaj, Anil Pandey, Ramprasad Thakur, Sonshish Baghel, Fuldass Singh, Chandrashekar Pandey, Nagesh, Ravindra Singh Thakur, Krishna Singh Thakur, Pitamber Sethia, Neer Lal Kashyap, Dayanidhi Bisai, Lachchu Kashyap, Vishnu Yadav, Lakheram Bisai, Hemant Mandavi, Bhune Nagesh, Amit Awasthi, Ludarshan Kashyap, Kamla Sharma, Praveen Singh, Anil Khandalkar were present.

Organizing Committee meeting held



Kondagaon, Feb 19:

Traditional fair of Kondagaon, district headquarters Kondagaon will be held from February 28 to March 5. In this direction, the meeting of the organizing committee of the fair was held under the chairmanship of Collector Deepak Soni. Meanwhile, Collector Soni

said that this unique gathering of faith-tradition and culture will be organized in the best possible way and will be given full grandeur. Every effort will be made to expand in grandeur, so that this traditional mela is memorable. He also asked the members of the Mela Organizing Committee to give suggestions for better

organization based on the experience of previous years. So that more good and well-planned initiatives can be taken in this direction. The collector asked to accommodate the culture of Chhattisgarh along with the folk culture of Bastar in the cultural program during the mela. At the same time, the concerned officials were

● Of Kondagaon Annual Mela

given the responsibility to ensure all the necessary arrangements for the traditional fair. During the meeting CEO District Panchayat Prem Prakash Sharma, DFO RK Jangade, Addl. SP. Shobharaj Agarwal along with Municipal Council President Varsha Yadav, District Panchayat President Shivilal Mandavi along with various representatives of the area and members of the Mela Organizing Committee, District level officers and dignitaries of the departments were present.

Two junk dealers arrested

Jagdalpur, Feb 19:

Ashish Kumar Das, Senior Manager at NMD Steel Plant in Police Station Nagarnar of the district, had filed a written report of theft of iron on a large scale in the police station. Based on the report, the police were tracing the accused. Stolen items of iron were found kept in the yard near the godown of Devshara scrap, located on Geedam Road, Rajendra Nagar. After identifying the applicant, both were arrested by raiding the houses of Devshara Kabadi and Munshi Gopiram Sahu. Both the junk dealers told that the contractor Umakant Poddar had come to his shop and brought the slip after weighing the iron goods in his truck with Dharmakanta, making settings



the guard of NMD Nagarnar plant. Contractor Umakant Poddar and the driver of the vehicle in which the stolen iron was brought are absconding and police is in search of them.

CSP Vikas Kumar said that the senior manager at Nagarnar Steel Plant, applicant Ashish Kumar Das, while registering the report, said that about 11 MT of iron goods from Nagarnar have been removed from the material gate without permission from

the highway tipper number CG17 KX 3976. Immediately on information, the crime of 379 Bhadvi was registered in Nagarnar police station and the accused were being traced under the guidance of senior police officers.

Meanwhile, the police reached the address given by the informer along with the applicant and the witnesses. Stolen iron goods were found kept in the yard near the godown of Devshara scrap,

● For buying 10.4 tonnes of stolen iron from steel plant

located at Geedam Road, Rajendra Nagar. After identifying the applicant, both were arrested after raiding the houses of Devshara Kabadi and Munshi Gopiram Sahu. In inquiring about the recovered iron, both the junk dealers said that on the evening of February 16, the contractor Umakant Poddar came to his shop and brought the slip after weighing the iron goods in his truck with a Dharmakanta after making setting with the guard of NMD Nagarnar plant. The deal was fixed with the contractor for 10.4 tonnes of iron at the rate of Rs 3800 per quintal.

Scorpio driver arrested with 21 kg Ganja

Jagdalpur, Feb 19:

A total of 21 kg of Ganja was recovered from a white colored Scorpio vehicle near Karkapal railway crossing under Bodhghat police station area of the district. The accused Scorpio driver Suryanand Dwivedi resident of Uttar Pradesh has been arrested by the police. Along with this, the police have taken action by registering a case under section 20 (b) of NDPS.



CSP Vikas Kumar told that this morning the Bodhghat police received information from an informer that a young man was roaming around the Karkapal railway crossing carrying suspicious goods in his white colored Scorpio vehicle. Based upon the information, a police team was sent towards Karkapal railway crossing under the leadership of Bodhghat TI

Dilbag Singh. A white colored Scorpio vehicle UP 92 L 7600 was searched while laying siege by the said team.

During the search, the police recovered about 21 kg of ganja from the vehicle. Whose estimated market value has been estimated at Rs 2.10 lakh. During interrogation, accused driver Suryanand Dwivedi, a resident of Uttar Pradesh, while confessing his crime, told the police that he was roaming around to sell this ganja. The police arrested the accused and seized the Scorpio vehicle along with 21 kg of ganja.

9-year-old Aditya pays tribute to Shivaji

Raipur, Feb 19:

On Shivaji Jayanti, Aditya Raje Singh garlanded the grand bronze statue of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj at Tatyapara Chowk in Raipur and showered rose flowers on our skillful ruler, military strategist, a brave warrior who faced the Mughals and respected all religions; as a tribute to Shivaji Maharaj remembering him on his birth anniversary. Shivaji Jayanti is celebrated with pride not only in Maharashtra but across the country to mark the birth of Shivaji Maharaj.



9-year-old Aditya Raje said that Chhatrapati Shivaji, the hero of the Indian freedom struggle, the best strategist and the founder of the Maratha Empire, is an ideal and always worshipable for all of us. He had developed a new technique of war, Shiva Sutra. We all should follow his ideals and also respect all religions.

BJP touring wards to provide housing to poor

Kondagaon, Feb 19:

Former minister Lata Usendi camped in Bhagat Singh Ward for Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY) and accused the Congress government of Chhattisgarh of withholding money from 16 lakh families of the region under the Awas Yojana of the Centre, charging that the beneficiaries of the Awas Yojana are not getting any benefits due to which they are deprived of this scheme and are not getting housing. Bharatiya Janata Party is meeting with every beneficiary under 'Mor Awas Mor Adhikar Abhiyaan'. Therefore, in order to provide housing to the eligible beneficiaries, the Kondagaon City Mandal of



Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) is organizing 'Mor Awas Mor Adhikar' programme under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY) in all the wards of the city. During this programme many BJP workers including BJP District President Dipesh Arora

Surana Jainendra Thakur Dayaram Patel Bharat Jain Lakshmi Dhruv Narpati Nileshe Patel Bhanu Nag Lallu Parkh Harsh Dhillon Ashok Brahm Timur Patel Raunak Patel Nanu Bharat Chakradhari were present.

Farewell ceremony held at IDGHSS Collector chairs CREDAI meeting



Central Chronicle News

Kasdol, Feb 19: A farewell ceremony of outgoing class 12th student was held at Indira Devi Gaurha Higher Secondary School (IDGHSS), and the program was presided over by former MLA Arun Kumar Mishra and

Chairman of the educational institution Dinesh Kumar Mishra.

The program started with Saraswati Vandana by the girl students, in which the students of class 12 recalled their moments, spent in school and recalled to get immense affection from teachers and

Principal Varsha Sharma.

On this occasion, the chief guest Arun Kumar Mishra said in his address that three things are necessary to be successful in life, first discipline, second humbleness, third goal and having said that the students of class 12th are leaving the school today,

we would like to wish all those students a bright future and wish to pass with good marks by working hard and not only for their educational institution but also for their parents. All the teachers and Principal Varsha Sharma wished the students a bright future.

Central Chronicle News

Bilaspur, Feb 19: Under the chairmanship of District Collector Saurabh Kumar, a joint meeting cum workshop of CREDAI office bearers and officers was organized here. The Collector said in the meeting that according to the promises made to the people, it is the responsibility of the builders to provide houses within the time limit and if there is any complaint of fraud with the consumers, then action will be taken by RERA and district administration as per the rules.

He also listened to the problems of the builders and developers and assured to solve them soon as per the rules. The collector said that swift action will be taken against illegal plotting and Joint



teams of Municipal Corporation, Revenue and Police have been formed and the administration is keeping a close watch on such elements. He said that the real estate sector has an important contribution in the progress of the country and the promoters-builders will have to provide the facility to

the consumer as per their declaration. As per the instructions of the Collector, more rapid action will be taken by the joint staff of Corporation and Revenue in the coming time. The builders told in the workshop that at present only the society registration of the residential colony is being done. Registration

of commercial complex is not being done, of which the Collector assured to solve this problem soon as per the prescribed guidelines. CREDAI Chairman Ajay Srivastava, ADM RA Kuruvanshi, senior officials of concerned departments, builders and colonizers attended the meeting.

'Matra-Pitra' diwas observed in SAGEMS, SSM

Central Chronicle News

Kharora, Feb 19: 'Matra-Pitra Diwas' was observed in Swamy Atmanand Govt English Medium School (SAGEMS) in Dongargarh on Tuesday under the aegis of Primary, Secondary Department of the School. First the photo of Goddess Saraswati was garlanded and traditional lamp was lighted and the programme was started. 'Tilak' was applied to the parents present and they were welcomed presenting them with flower bouquet.

In this programme, Principal YS Rao was felicitated with shawl and srial by the Lioness Club Dongargarh. After the ad-



dress, the senior teacher of the School Farah Anjum cited the importance of this day and YS Rao appealed all the students to offer flowers on the feet of their parents. The programme was conducted by Teacher of School - Bhineshwari Janghel and

Shubha Shrivastava. Apart from this 'Matra-Pitra Diwas' was also observed in Saraswati Shishu Mandir Ramtola and on this occasion members of Saraswati Shiksha Samiti and parents and students were present in large number.

Traffic signals not being utilized

Central Chronicle News

Shakti, Feb 19: The traffic signals installed in the city are proving to be only show pieces and after two months after the formation of the district, there is no visible utility of the signal. Its efficiency is not working well as at times only the yellow light or the red light is working and the police department also does not seem to be interested in getting it started smoothly.

It may be noted that when Sakti came into existence as a district, an attempt was made to indicate that the city would go through many changes as soon as the district was formed and by installing traffic signals in the city's



court square and hospital square, a change was initiated, but this change appears to be a mere formality as on the very second day of the inauguration of the district, poles were in-



stalled to install traffic signals, but the signals have not been started even after 2 months of installation. Efforts made to make better traffic functioning: SP Superintendent of

Police of Sakti district, M.R. Ahire said that a technical fault was the underlying reason behind the improper signal functioning and continuous efforts are being made to make better traffic arrangements in the city. The district is currently grappling with manpower crunch and as soon as the force increases, many works have to be done in the district.

NTPC Lara is moving fast for capacity addition: ED

Central Chronicle News

Lara, Feb 19: If everything will work on its way, very soon NTPC Lara station will become the power hub of Chhattisgarh as it provides 50 percent of generated electricity to home state. Being a developing industry-based state, power demand of Chhattisgarh state is increasing very fast and to maintain the growth rate, electricity is very much essential.

As Lara power houses of power major NTPC Limited provides half of generated capacity hence it is going to be a major source of power supplier



for Chhattisgarh. Present generating capacity of Lara station is 1600 megawatt. Another 1600 megawatt has been proposed by NTPC to build at the existing plant. Public

hearing has been slated on 20th February by CECB said Diwakar Kaushik in press interaction held on 16 Feb. 2023.

In current FY 2022-23, Lara station generated

10076.84 million units with 81.75 percent PLF. All efforts are being done to achieve 100% ash utilization. Lara station is giving priority to community development. After 10 years of establishment the result of developmental works starts to be visible. Before NTPC coming to this place, the picture of backwardness was widely visible. But after execution of so many developmental works and activities in the vicinity, these villages have got a new identity. Various developmental activities on education, health, sanitation, infrastructure, and welfare measures starts visible in

this area. First time Lara successfully conducted Girl Empowerment Mission at Lara. Some big ticket works, attributed to NTPC Lara are construction of IIIT Raipur, upgradation of Raigarh Govt. medical college, development of ITI Pussore, upgradation of KIT, Raigarh and CHC Pussore and PHC Chhapora.

Among other dignitaries Akhilesh Singh, GM (O&M), Rajeev Ranjan, GM (Fuel Management), Samarendra Kumar Roy, GM (Operation), Ravi Shankar, GM (Project), Kanheya Das, AGM(HR) and HoDs were present on this occasion.

NCBC meeting concludes

Central Chronicle News

Gaurela Pendra Marwahi, Feb 19: A meeting of National Congress Backward Classes (NCBC) was concluded here in the auditorium of Sims Bilaspur, on the arrival of National President of National Congress Backward Classes Department Captain Ajay Singh Yadav, and National Secretary Chandan Yadav. The historic program took place in the presence of Dr. Chaleswar Chandrakar, President of Chhattisgarh Government and Thanesar Sahu, Chairman of Backward Classes Commission of Chhattisgarh Government and National Coordinator KK Yadav. Discussion was held and highlighting the welfare



schemes of the government for the backward classes, the strong characters of the backward classes were discussed in the coming assembly elections and Lok Sabha elections. National Secretary of All India Congress, Chandan Yadav said that the economic condition of the backward classes is being polluted by the policies of our present center and to

strengthen it, we have to bring the Congress party to the center, for which we have to use our backward class powers. Pramod Nayak Baijnath Chandrakar Ram Kumar Patel, Atal Srivastava, Vijay Kesharwani Manoj Sahu Gaurela Amit Soni Deepak Puri Manoj Sahu Jayprakash Korja and a large number of workers were present.

Police and district admn should take legal action with sensitivity: Collector

Central Chronicle News



Central Chronicle News

Gourella Pendra Marwahi, Feb 19: Police and district administration should take legal action with sensitivity, said District Collector Priyanka Rishi Mahobia, chairing a meeting regarding law and order. In order to maintain peaceful environment, smooth traffic

ing hall today. The Collector asked the police administration and district administration officials to take legal action with mutual coordination, team spirit and sensitivity and said that any person, party and organization should take permission from the district administration for dharna, demonstration, rally etc. and follow the law. In case of not taking permission, due action will be taken by the police and district administration.

She also appealed to all the residents of the district to park their vehicles at designated places only and avoid posting, commenting and sharing any kind of controversial posts on social media. In the meeting, Additional Collector B.C. Ekka, Joint Director Virendra Singh, Anand Roop Tiwari, A d d i t i o n a l Superintendent of Police Archana Jha, SDM Pendarod Pushpendra Sharma, Deputy Collector Richa Chandrakar and all Tehsildars and station in-charges were present.

and law and order in the district, it is necessary to take prior permission from the district administration for picketing, demonstration, rally etc, she said. In this regard, Collector Priyanka Rishi Mahobia and Superintendent of Police Yogesh Patel took a meeting in the Collectorate's Arpa meet-

TATA CAPITAL FINANCIAL SERVICES LIMITED
 Regd. Address: 11th Floor, Tower A, Peninsula Business Park
 Ganpatrao Kadam Marg, Lower Parel, Mumbai-400013.

DEMAND NOTICE
 Under Section 13 (2) of the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 ("Act") read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 ("Rules").

Whereas the undersigned being the Authorised Officer of Tata Capital Financial Services Limited (TCFSL) under the Act and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13 (12) read with Rule 3 of the Rules already issued detailed Demand Notices dated below under Section 13(2) of the Act, calling upon the Borrower(s)/Co-Borrower(s)/Guarantor(s) (all singularly or together referred to "Obligors")/Legal Heir(s)/Legal Representative(s) listed hereunder, to pay the amounts mentioned in the respective Demand Notice(s), within 60 days from the date of the respective Notice(s), as per details given below. Copies of the said Notice(s) are sent through Registered Post A.D and are available with the undersigned, and the said Obligor(s)/Legal Heir(s)/Legal Representative(s), may, if they so desire, collect the respective copy from the undersigned on any working day during normal office hours.

Since the said Notice has not been properly served, Notice is hereby given, once again, to the said Obligor(s)/Legal Heir(s)/Legal Representative(s) to pay to TCFSL, within 60 days from the date of the respective Notice(s), the amounts indicated herein below against their respective names, together with further interest as detailed below from the respective dates mentioned below in column (d) till the date of payment and/or realisation, read with the loan agreement and other documents/writings, if any, executed by the said Obligor(s). As security for due repayment of the loan, the following Secured Asset(s) have been mortgaged to TCFSL by the said Obligor(s) respectively.

Loan Account No.	Name of Obligor(s)/Legal Heir(s)/ Legal Representative(s)	Total Outstanding Dues (Rs.) as on below date*	Demand Notice Date NPA Date
	Jaydeep Bose, Ishita Bose Both of Flat No. 302, Block B, Dolphin Impress, Vidhan Sabha Road, Raipur, Chhattisgarh - 492001	Rs. 25,83,706.57/ (Rupees Twenty Five Lakh Eighty Three Thousand Six and Paise Fifty Seven Only)	10/01/2023 07/01/2023
20777925	M/s. Aviraj Hospitality Services MIG-1, Kavita Nagar, Opp Cap, Tal Palace, Avanti Vihar, Raipur, Chhattisgarh - 492001	due as on 09/01/2023	

Description of the Secured Assets/Immovable Properties/ Mortgaged Properties: All that piece and parcel of land bearing Part of Kh. No. 48/1-3-4-5-6, Makhakala, RNM Bhilai-3, Tehsil Patan, Gram Panchayat Area, Jila, Durg, Chhattisgarh, Pin Code - 491107 (More Particularly Described in Agreement) the Boundaries are as follows: **Bounded in the: North - Road, South - Road, East - Road, West - Seller Land.**

*with further interest, additional interest at the rate as more particularly stated in respective Demand Notice dated mentioned above, incidental expenses, costs, charges etc incurred till the date of payment and/or realization. If the said Obligor(s) shall fail to make payment to TCFSL as aforesaid, then TCFSL shall proceed against the above Secured Asset(s)/ Immovable Property(ies) under Section 13(4) of the said Act and the applicable Rules entirely at the risk of the said Obligor(s)/Legal Heir(s)/Legal Representative(s) as to the costs and consequences.

The said Obligor(s)/Legal Heir(s)/Legal Representative(s) are prohibited under the said Act to transfer the aforesaid Secured Asset(s)/Immovable Property, whether by way of sale, lease or otherwise without the prior written consent of TCFSL. Any person who contravenes or abets contravention of the provisions of the Act or Rules made thereunder shall be liable for imprisonment and/or penalty as provided under the Act.

Date : 20/02/2023 Sd/- Authorised Officer
 Place : Raipur (Chhattisgarh) For Tata Capital Financial Services Limited

SHUBHAM HOUSING DEVELOPMENT FINANCE CO. LTD.
 Corporate Office : 425, Udyog Vihar Phase IV, Gurgaon-122015 (Haryana)
 Ph.: 0124-4212530/31/32, E-Mail : customercare@shubham.co Website : www.shubham.co

POSSESSION NOTICE (FOR IMMOVABLE PROPERTY)

Whereas the undersigned being the authorized officer of the Shubham Housing Development Finance Company Limited (hereinafter called Shubham) under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(12) read with rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued demand notice calling upon borrowers to repay the amount within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.

The borrowers having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrowers and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described hereinbelow in exercise of powers conferred on him under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with rule 8 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.

The borrowers in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealing with the property will be subject to the charge of Shubham Housing Development Finance Company Limited for an amount detailed below and interest thereon. The borrower's attention is invited to provisions of sub section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets. Details are as below:

S. No.	Loan No., Borrower, Co-Borrower Name	Date of Demand Notice & Amount	Secured Asset	Affixation Date
1	Loan No. 08H1805000005012775, Sumit Kumar, Sakila Devi	29-11-2022 & ₹ 17,60,744/-	Plot No 24, Kh No 147/14, Vill - Khedamara, P.h.no. 12, RNM -1, Teh Dist- Durg, Chhattisgarh, 402121	16.02.2023

Place : Raipur Date : 18.02.2023 Shubham Housing Development Finance Company Limited

MOTILAL OSWAL HOME FINANCE LIMITED
 Regd. Office: Motilal Oswal Tower, Rahimtullah Sayani Road, Opp. Parel ST Depot, Prabhadevi, Mumbai - 400 025. Tel: (022) 47189999 Website: www.motilaloswal.com, Email: hqquery@motilaloswal.com

POSSESSION NOTICE (FOR IMMOVABLE PROPERTY/IES)

Whereas the undersigned being the Authorised Officer of the Motilal Oswal Home Finance Limited (Formerly known as Aspire Home Finance Corporation Ltd), under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets & in compliance of Rule 8(1) of Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002, and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002, issued demand notice(s) on the date mentioned against each account calling upon the respective borrower(s) to repay the amount as mentioned against each account within 60 days from the date of notice(s)/date of receipt of the said notice(s).

The borrower(s) having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower(s) and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property/ies described herein below in exercise powers conferred on him/her under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said Rules on the dates mentioned against each account.

The borrower(s) in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property/ies and any dealing with the property/ies will be subject to the charge of Motilal Oswal Home Finance Limited, for the amount and interest thereon as per loan agreement. The borrower's attention is invited to provisions of Sub-section (8) of Section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.

Sr. No.	Loan Agreement No. / Name of the Borrower / Co Borrower / Guarantor	Demand Notice date & Amount	Date of possession Taken	Description of the Property/ies mortgaged
1	LXDUR00317-180056532 Nandkishor Pyarelal Nishad & Revati Bai Nishad	20-07-2021 for Rs. 530677/-	15-02-2023	KH NO - 319/2, PH NO - 10, RNM GHUMKA VILLAGE - CHARBHATA, DONGARGAON, RAJNADGAON, CHHATTISGARH - 491441

Place: Chhattisgarh Sd/- Authorised Officer
 Dated: 20.02.2023 (Motilal Oswal Home Finance Limited)

BRIEF



Congress General Secretary Priyanka Gandhi with her husband Robert Vadra at snow-covered Gulmarg, on Sunday.

Seized

■ Imphal: Security forces arrested an alleged drug smuggler and seized brown sugar weighing 3.710 kg from his vehicle in Manipur's Tengnoupia district, police said on Sunday.

Rescue

■ Panaji: Goa Police have rescued two Hyderabad residents and detained 11 persons who had allegedly taken them hostage following a dispute with the victims' employer, an official said.

Inspires

■ New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi paid tributes to Maratha empire founder Chhatrapati Shivaji on his birth anniversary on Sunday, saying his courage and emphasis on good governance inspires us.

Campaign

■ Chennai: nassing for ruling DMK-headed Secular Progressive Alliance candidate EVKS Elangovan. This will be the first time Haasan's Makkal Needhi Maiam (MNM) is backing another party in an electoral contest since it has faced all polls, including the 2021 Assembly elections by itself since its founding in 2018.

Assistance

■ Thiruvananthapuram: An Air India Express flight from Dubai to Thiruvananthapuram sought assistance from the airport here on Sunday after the pilot experienced some problem during landing, an airline source said.

Arrested

■ New Delhi: A 22-year-old man was arrested for allegedly being involved in cow slaughter in north Delhi's Gulabi Bagh area, police said on Sunday. Aftab Ahmad alias Lukman was arrested on Saturday in connection with a case registered on February 7 under sections of the Delhi Agricultural Cattle Preservation Act, Indian Penal Code, and Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, Deputy Commissioner of Police (north) Sagar Singh Kalsi said.

Suicide

■ Jaipur: A young man was found hanging on a foot-over bridge at Dahar Ka Balaji railway station here on Sunday morning. The deceased was identified as Manoj Bansal (40), a temporary resident of the Jhotwara area of this Rajasthan city. Railway Police (GRP) Station Officer Sampat Raj said the body of a youth was found hanging on the foot-over bridge of Dahar Ka Balaji railway station on Sunday morning.

BJP launches street corner meetings in Telangana

To reach out to voters

Hyderabad, Feb 19 (PTI):

The BJP in Telangana has launched street corner meetings titled 'Praja Gosa-BJP Bharosa' across the state to reach out to the public ahead of the assembly elections, scheduled to be held this year.

The mass outreach programme, 'Praja Gosa-BJP Bharosa' (people's suffering - BJP's assurance) is aimed at strengthening the party's leadership at the grassroots level and "expose" the BRS government's alleged failures.

The campaign kick-started on February 10 and will go on till February 25. The saffron party has set a target to organise 11,000 street corner meetings in 15 days, BJP vice president in Telangana Kaasam Venkateswarlu, state coordinator for the campaign,

told PTI here on Sunday. The meetings are being conducted at the level of the party's 'shakti kendras' (that comprise three-four polling booths).

While bolstering local leadership, the campaign will "expose" grassroots-level issues, including corruption by ruling party MLAs, without losing sight of the BRS government's failures and its "family rule" at the state level. Besides, the campaign will also highlight the welfare schemes and achievements of the Modi government at the Centre like distribution of free rice, Rs 10,000 loan to street vendors, free COVID-19 vaccines, funds to Gram Panchayats, and recovery of nation's economy post COVID-19 pandemic. The party chose to organise 11,000 street-corner meetings as it boasts of over 9,000 'shakti kendras' and 2,000 more meetings have been added to reach out to remote habitations, Venkateswarlu noted.

As part of the campaign, pamphlets carrying a phone number of the party to give a missed call would be distributed to people. Since January 10, over 3,000 street-corner meetings have been conducted and the party is confident of achieving at least 90 per cent of the target by February 25.

Last month, BJP MP and party OBC Morcha's national president K Laxman had said his party has set a target of 10,000 village-level meetings as part of its Mission-90 (winning 90 out of the total 119 Assembly seats in Telangana).

HC rejects petition seeking cancelling of FIR

Against conversion accused

Prayagraj, Feb 19 (PTI):

The Allahabad High Court has dismissed a writ petition challenging an FIR lodged against 37 people accused of coercing a man to undergo a religious conversion from Hinduism to Christianity through inducements.

The writ petition was filed by Jose Prakash George and 36 Others seeking quashing of the FIR lodged on January 23, 2023, under sections 420, 467, 468, 506, 120-B IPC and section 3/5 (1) of UP Prohibition of Unlawful Conversion of Religion Act at Police Station Kotwali, District Fatehpur.

The petitioner's counsel contended that an FIR on almost identical allegations had been lodged on April 15, 2022, under the same Act. The complainant in the instant case

is one of the witnesses whose statement was recorded by the police in the FIR lodged on April 15, 2022.

The accused in both FIRs are the same barring, one or two persons. Only the informant in both cases is different, and both cases allege mass religious conversion by fraud, coercion, and allurement, the counsel said.

In light of these facts, the counsel contended that the FIR is barred by sections 154 and 158 of the Code of Criminal Procedure.

A division bench comprising Justice Anjani Kumar Mishra and Justice Gajendra Kumar on Friday rejected the petition saying it was of the view that the second FIR, though related to the same incident, cannot be quashed as it has been lodged by a competent person.

Bihar to increase population of greater one horned Rhinos

Patna, Feb 19 (PTI):

■ By 3% annually

The Bihar government has decided to increase the population of greater one horned Rhinos by three per cent annually in the state.

The state government has also decided to increase rhino bearing areas in Valmiki Tiger Reserve (VTR) in West Champaran district by five per cent in the next two years, an official said.

"Decision to increase the population of greater one horned Rhinos by three per cent annually was taken at the 3rd Asian Rhino Range Countries Meeting held at Chitwan (Nepal) from February 3 to 5.

"Five Rhino Range Countries - India, Bhutan, Indonesia,

Malaysia and Nepal - signed the Chitwan Declaration for Asian Rhinos Conservation (2023) and agreed on managing the population of the greater one horned Rhinos, Javan and Sumatran Rhinos with the intention of achieving at least 3 per cent annual growth rate in their population", P K Gupta, Chief Wildlife Warden of Bihar, told PTI.

With an intention to increase the population of greater one horned rhinos in the state also, decisions taken in Chitwan will be implemented in Bihar also, said Gupta, who was also part of the Indian delegation for the

RAAHGIRI CELEBRATIONS



Children play snakes and ladders board game during Raahgiri Day celebrations at Connaught Place in New Delhi, Sunday.

Case against two men for killing friend

■ Six yrs ago

Thane, Feb 19 (PTI):

Six years after a man from Maharashtra's Thane district went missing, the police have registered a case of murder against two of his friends following a court directive, an official said on Sunday.

On January 11, 2017, the two accused came to the house of the 18-year-old victim, Parzej @ Parvesh Chouhan, in Kalwa area and informed him that there was a catering job for him, police inspector (crime) Gajendra Patil said.

The two accused took the victim with him and the latter did not return, he said quoting the complaint. When the victim's

family members enquired about him from the two friends, they gave evasive replies.

After a couple of days, the Dombivili police called up the victim's family and informed that his body was found on railway tracks and that it was a case of accidental death, the official said.

As the family suspected foul play, they approached a court which directed the police to register a case and conduct a probe into it, he said.

The Kalwa police on Saturday registered a case against the two accused under Indian Penal Code Sections 302 (murder) and 34 (common intention), the official said.

No arrest has been made so far and a probe is on into the case, he added.

RELIGIOUS PROCESSION



Devotees participate in a procession commemorating the anniversary of Swami Vivekananda's return from Chicago after giving the historic speech, in Kolkata, Sunday.

APPSC FIASCO

Govt agrees to demands of PAJSC, bandh called off

Itanagar, Feb 19 (PTI):

The Arunachal Pradesh government has agreed to the 13-point demands of the Pan Arunachal Joint Steering Committee (PAJSC), fighting the paper leak issue of the state public service commission. The development came after two days of unrest in the state capital since Friday, over the lack of adequate action against those involved in the Arunachal Pradesh Public Service Commission (APPSC) cash-for-job scam. The decision to agree to the demands, arrived after 8 hours long discussion between state government, representatives of PAJSC, All NYSU Students Union (ANSU), Nari Shakti and activist

Sol Dodum late on Saturday night at civil secretariat here. Chief Minister Pema Khandu, Home Minister Bamang Felix, Water Resource Development Minister Mama Natung were present along with senior bureaucrats in the meeting.

According to the minutes of the meeting made available, the government responded positively to most of the 13 point demands for which, the protestors have withdrawn the bandh call from Sunday. The government informed that the chairman, secretary and members officials of APPSC from 2014 to 2022 and any other official/private persons are already under the purview of investigation. Based on the findings of

the investigation, appropriate action will be taken by the investigating agency, CBI. The state government had written to the Gauhati High Court to designate District and Sessions Court Yupia (or any other District and Sessions Court) as a Special Fast-Track Court to take up the APPSC paper leak cases. The high court has positively responded and agreed to designate district and sessions court Yupia as a special fast-track court to take up the APPSC paper leak cases. The government has agreed to recommend setting up of a standing grievance redressal committee and institutional mechanism to deal with the grievances of the candidates and aspirants.

'MahaMetro looking at 'Neo' system for smaller cities'

Nagpur, Feb 19 (PTI):

MahaMetro is working on the feasibility of implementing the Metro Neo system in cities having a population of up to 20 lakh, with Nashik being the frontrunner, its Managing Director Brijesh Dixit has said.

The Centre and the state government are viewing this development positively. Dixit said at the foundation day programme of the MahaMetro here on Saturday. "We have full faith that we will be successful in this task as well," he said. The 'Metro Neo' is a trolley bus system with overhead electric traction and rubber tyres, and has the capability of being upgraded to a light



Brijesh Dixit

metro system. Dixit said the second phase of Nagpur Metro rail will be completed in the next five years, with work set to begin from April. The 44.5-kilometre second phase comprises a 19-km stretch till Butibori, a 7-km stretch from Lokmanya Nagar to Hingna, a 13-km

route from Automotive Chowk to Kanhan and 5.5 km stretch from Prajapati Nagar to Kapsi, he said.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi in December 2022 inaugurated the first phase of the Nagpur Metro rail project here and travelled in the train with students. He had also laid the foundation stone of phase-II of the Metro project.

There are 36 stations under phase-I of the project, which covers a distance of 40 km. This project has been developed at a cost of more than Rs 8,650 crore, officials said.

Phase-II of the project will be developed at more than Rs 6,700 crore. It will have 32 stations, they had said.

LATEST CENSUS

Migratory bird arrivals at Harike wetland decline this season

Harike (Punjab), Feb 19 (PTI):

The arrival of migratory birds this year to Harike, northern India's largest wetland, declined 12 per cent from 2021, according to the latest census of these water birds.

The Forest and Wildlife Preservation department census counted 65,624 birds from 85 species at Harike, World Wildlife Fund for Nature (WWF) India Coordinator Gitanjali Kanwar said.

Every winter, 90 species of migratory birds from Siberia, Mongolia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Russia, among others, arrive at



Migratory birds at Harike wetland in Punjab.

the wetland site once the water bodies in their native places start to freeze.

In 2021, the census recorded 74,869 migratory birds from 88 species. The year before, 91,025

from 90 species were counted. There was no census in 2022 due to COVID-19.

In 2018 and 2019, 94,771 birds of 94 species and 1,23,128 birds of 83

species arrived at the wetland site, respectively.

The reason behind the decline in migratory bird arrivals this year is yet to be ascertained. Whether the drop is at a global or a regional level is yet to be seen, Kanwar said.

Punjab witnessed fewer migratory bird arrivals at all wetlands this year, she added.

Spread over 86 square kilometres at the confluence of the Sutlej and the Beas rivers in Tarn Taran, Ferozepur and Kapurthala districts, the Harike wetland is home to rare species of migratory water birds during winters.

Blinken meets China's Wang Yi, warns Beijing against helping Russia

Washington/Munich, Feb 19 (PTI): US Secretary of State Antony Blinken has warned China that its "material support" for Russia's war against Ukraine would attract sanctions and condemned the "unacceptable violation" of American sovereignty by a Chinese spy balloon as he met Beijing's top diplomat Wang Yi.



US strength. "The actions don't show that the US is big and strong, but describe the exact opposite," Wang, the ruling Chinese Communist Party's most senior foreign policy official, asserted.

Wang called the balloon episode a "political farce manufactured by the US" and accused them of "using all means to block and suppress China".

China continues to deny that it sent a spy balloon, even as the US continues to disclose more details of the object to back up its allegation.

Blinken also raised the Russia-Ukraine war during his meeting with Wang, the Director of the Office of the Central Commission for Foreign Affairs. "On Russia's brutal war against Ukraine, the Secretary warned about the implications and consequences if China provides material support to Russia or assistance with systemic sanctions evasion," Price said.

Spokesperson Ned Price said. "During the meeting, Blinken made clear the United States will not stand for any violation of our sovereignty, and that the Chinese high-altitude surveillance balloon programme which has intruded into the airspace of more than 40 countries across five continents has been exposed to the world," he said.

The relations between the US and China strained further after Washington said Beijing flew a spy balloon over America before US fighter jets shot it down on President Joe Biden's orders. The bal-

loon incident prompted Blinken to postpone a planned visit to Beijing. The February 5-6 trip would have been the first by a US secretary of state to China in five years and was seen by both countries as an opportunity to stabilise their strained ties.

The meeting between the two senior officials came hours after Wang on Saturday renewed Beijing's criticism of the US for shooting down what Washington says was a Chinese spy balloon, arguing at the conference in Germany that the move doesn't point to



US Air Force B-1B bomber, top, flies in formation with U.S. Air Force F-16 fighter jets over the South Korea Peninsula during a joint air drill in South Korea, Sunday, Feb. 19.

Pakistan has 'already defaulted': Defence Minister Asif

Islamabad, Feb 19 (PTI):

Defence minister Khawaja Asif has said that Pakistan has already defaulted amid looming fears that the cash-starved country may go bankrupt and blamed the establishment, bureaucracy and politicians for the prevailing economic crisis.



Addressing a ceremony in his home town of Sialkot, he said that standing on its own feet was crucial for Pakistan to stabilise itself.

"You must have heard that Pakistan is going bankrupt or that a default or meltdown is taking place. It (default) has already taken place. We are living in a bankrupt coun-

try," he was quoted as saying by The Express Tribune newspaper.

"The solution to our problems lies within the country. The IMF does not have the solution to Pakistan's problems," he said.

He said that everyone including the establishment, bureaucracy and

politicians are to blame for the current economic mess as the law and Constitution are not followed in Pakistan.

The minister said that most of his time had been spent in the opposition camp and that he has witnessed politics being disgraced for the past 32 years.

Lashing out at the former government, Asif said that terrorists were brought to Pakistan two and a half years ago which eventually resulted in the current wave of terrorism.

Speaking about the attack on the police office in Karachi on Friday, he said that the security agencies bravely fought the attackers.

North Korea confirms ICBM test, warns of more powerful steps

Seoul, Feb 19 (AP):

North Korea said Sunday its latest intercontinental ballistic missile test was meant to further bolster its "fatal" nuclear attack capacity against its rivals, as it threatened additional powerful steps in response to the planned military training between the United States and South Korea.

Saturday's ICBM test, the North's first missile test since Jan. 1, signals its leader Kim Jong Un is using his rivals' drills as a chance to expand his country's nuclear capability to enhance its leverage in future dealings with the United States. An expert says

North Korea may seek to hold regular operational exercises involving its ICBMs. North Korea's official Korean Central News Agency said its launch of the existing Hwasong-15 ICBM was organised "suddenly" without prior notice at the direct order of leader Kim Jong Un.

KCNA said the launch was designed to verify the weapon's reliability and the combat readiness of the country's nuclear force. It said the missile was fired at a high angle and reached a maximum altitude of about 5,770 kilometers (3,585 miles), flying a distance of about 990 kilometers (615 miles) during a 67-minute flight before accurately hitting

a pre-set area in the waters between the Korean Peninsula and Japan. The steep-angle launch was apparently aimed at avoiding neighboring countries. The flight details reported by North Korea, which roughly matched the launch details previously assessed by its neighbours, show the weapon is theoretically capable of reaching the mainland U.S. if fired at a standard trajectory. The Hwasong-15 launch demonstrated the North's "powerful physical nuclear deterrent" and its efforts to "turn its capacity of fatal nuclear counterattack on the hostile forces" into an extremely strong one that cannot be countered, KCNA said.

Whether North Korea has a functioning nuclear-tipped ICBM is still a source of outside debate, as some experts say the North hasn't mastered a technology to protect warheads from the severe conditions of atmospheric reentry. The North has claimed to have acquired such a reentry vehicle technology. The Hwasong-15 is one of North Korea's three existing ICBMs, all of which use liquid propellants that require pre-launch injections and cannot remain fueled for extended periods. The North is pushing to build a solid-fueled ICBM, which would be more mobile and harder-to-detect before its launch.

Russian diplomats ordered out of the Netherlands

The Hague, Feb 18 (AP): The Dutch government said Saturday that "a number" of Russian diplomats will have to leave the Netherlands, accusing Moscow of trying to smuggle spies into the country that is home to institutions including the International Criminal Court and the global chemical weapons watchdog. The announcement is the latest twist in a diplomatic dispute between the two countries that began shortly after Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine nearly a year ago sparked a war on Europe's eastern flank. "Despite numerous attempts by the Netherlands to find a solution, Russia continues to try to get intelligence officers into the Netherlands under diplomatic cover," Foreign Affairs Minister Wopke Hoekstra said in a statement. "We cannot and will not allow that."

CARNIVAL PARADE



Dancers from the Aguia de Ouro samba school perform during a carnival parade in Sao Paulo, Brazil, Sunday, Feb. 19.

Israeli airstrikes kill 5 in Damascus

Damascus, Feb 19 (AP):

Israeli airstrikes targeted a residential neighbourhood in the Syrian capital of Damascus early Sunday, killing at least five people and wounding 15, Syrian state news reported.

Loud explosions were heard over a central area of the capital around 12:30 a.m. local time, and SANA reported that Syrian air defences were "confronting hostile targets in the sky around Damascus."

Syrian state media agency SANA, citing a military source, reported that five people had been killed, among them a soldier, and 15 civilians wounded, along with "destruction of a number of residential buildings."



Syrian security officers inspect the damage in a residential neighborhood after an early morning Israeli airstrike in the capital city of Damascus, Syria, Sunday, Feb. 19.

The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, a U.K.-based war monitor, reported that 15 people, including a woman, were killed in strikes targeting sites connected with Iranian militias and the Lebanese

militant group Hezbollah. They took place in the Damascus countryside and in an Iranian school in the neighbourhood of Kafr Sousa in the capital, it said.

There was no immedi-

ate statement from Israel on the attack.

Israeli airstrikes frequently target sites in the vicinity of Damascus. The Saturday night strikes were the first since a devastating 7.8 magnitude earthquake hit Turkey and Syria on Feb. 6.

The last reported attack on Damascus was on Jan. 2, when the Syrian army reported that Israel's military fired missiles toward the international airport of Syria's capital early Monday, putting it out of service and killing two soldiers and wounding two others.

Israel has carried out hundreds of strikes on targets inside government-controlled parts of Syria in recent years, but rarely acknowledges or discusses the operations.

Nigeria's presidential frontrunners in final push for votes

Abuja (Nigeria), Feb 19 (AP):

The leading contenders in Nigeria's presidential election have made their last push for support, a week before the West African nation's key election. As the campaign period neared its end, both the ruling party's Bola Tinubu and the main opposition's Atiku Abubakar on Saturday held rallies in the northeast, where extremists have waged a decade-long insurgency against Nigeria.

They both promised to improve the lives of residents in the region. On social media, third-party candidate Peter Obi, who has emerged ahead of the other 17 candidates in most polls, said Africa's most populous country needs a "reset and reboot" from the two major parties that have

governed Nigeria since it left military rule in 1999.

The Feb. 25 election that would lead to a transitional government is the most consequential vote in many years for Nigeria, a country of more than 210 million people, according to analysts.

"This is a battle for the soul of the country considering the challenges confronting the country," said Idayat Hassan, who leads the Center for Democracy and Development that promotes democracy in the country.

Nigeria is struggling with a worsening security crisis that has killed thousands in the past year, an ailing economy that has made citizens poorer, and growing separatist agitations in the southern region that have left the country more divided along ethnic lines.

"This is where the future of our state and the country resides in the hands of PDP," the main opposition Peoples Democratic Party's Abubakar told thousands of supporters in Adamawa state as they waved the party's red, green and white colours.

"If you give us your mandate, we promise to lead by our promises to make sure that we have a united country, a peaceful country, a buoyant economy for our country; that we have the best education for our children and also we devolve powers to our states and local governments with corresponding resources," said the 76-year-old, who has taken part in two previous presidential elections, including in 2019 when he lost to incumbent President Muhammadu Buhari.

Suspected female suicide bomber arrested in Pakistan's Balochistan

Quetta, Feb 19 (PTI):

Pakistani security forces arrested a woman with a jacket laden with explosives who was planning to carry out a suicide attack in the Balochistan province, police said on Sunday. The suspect, identified as Mahbal, was arrested on Saturday in Quetta's Satellite Town, a Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) official of the Balochistan police said.

"The woman was arrested on an intelligence tip-off, and a suicide jacket with explosives was also recovered from her bag," the official said.

He said the woman, affiliated to the outlawed insurgent Baloch Liberation Front (BLF), was sent to Quetta for allegedly carrying out a suicide attack. "The woman was arrested from near a park in Quetta's

Satellite Town when teams of CTD and intelligence agencies conducted an operation in the area against the outlawed Baloch Liberation Front," the CTD official said.

"She had a bag with the suicide jacket that had four to five kilograms of explosives on it," he said.

"We got an intelligence tip-off that the BLF had sent a suicide bomber to carry out an attack on a key installation in Quetta. We have identified her as Mahbal, wife of Bebagar alias Nadeem," he added.

Last year in April, a female suicide bomber of the banned Balochistan National Army (BLA) carried out a suicide attack at the Karachi University's Confucius Institute entrance, killing three Chinese teachers and their Pakistani driver.

US frantic to avert Mideast showdown at UN

Washington, Feb 19 (AP):

The Biden administration is scrambling to avert a diplomatic crisis over Israeli settlement activity this week at the United Nations that threatens to overshadow and perhaps derail what the U.S. hopes will be a solid five days of focus on condemning Russia's war with Ukraine. Secretary of State Antony Blinken made two emergency calls on Saturday from the Munich Security Conference, which he is attending in an as-yet unsuccessful bid to avoid or forestall such a showdown. It remained unclear whether another last-minute intervention might salvage the situation, according to diplomats familiar with the ongoing discussions who spoke to The Associated Press on condi-

tion of anonymity. Without giving details, the State Department said in nearly identical statements that Blinken had spoken to Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu from Munich to "reaffirm the U.S. commitment to a negotiated two-state solution and opposition to policies that endanger its viability."

"The secretary underscored the urgent need for Israelis and Palestinians to take steps that restore calm and our strong opposition to unilateral measures that would further escalate tensions," the statements said. Neither statement mentioned the proposed U.N. Security Council resolution demanding an immediate halt to Israeli settlements. The Palestinians want to bring that resolu-

tion to a vote on Monday. And neither statement gave any indication as to how the calls ended.

But diplomats familiar with the conversations said that in his call to Abbas, Blinken reiterated an offer to the Palestinians for a U.S. package of incentives to entice them to drop or at least delay the resolution. Those incentives included a White House meeting for Abbas with President Joe Biden, movement on reopening the American consulate in Jerusalem, and a significant aid package, the diplomats said.

Abbas was noncommittal, the diplomats said, but also suggested he would not be amenable unless the Israelis agreed to a six-month freeze on settlement expansion on land the Palestinians claim for a future state.



CENTRAL Chronicle

Established 1974 Volume 48 No. 138

Overcoming barriers and unleashing opportunities for Social Justice

Every year on February 20, people mark the World Day for Social Justice. The main goal of the World Day of Social Justice celebration is to raise awareness of social injustice and to bring together diverse communities around the world in an effort to eradicate poverty, gender, physical discrimination, illiteracy, and religious discrimination and create a society that is socially integrated. World Social Justice Day is marked to promote social justice and break down barriers based on gender, age, colour, ethnicity, religion, culture, or disability. The theme for this year is "Overcoming Barriers and Unleashing Opportunities for Social Justice," which focuses on the suggestions made in the Common Agenda to promote international cooperation and to restore public confidence in the government. As a result, the 2023 World Day of Social Justice offers a chance to encourage discussion with Member States, young people, social partners, civil society organisations, UN agencies, and other stakeholders about the steps that must be taken to strengthen the social contract that has been shattered by escalating inequality, armed conflicts, and weak institutions that are supposed to protect workers' rights. In spite of these several problems, there are numerous chances to forge a social justice coalition and to increase investments in decent jobs, with an emphasis on the green, digital, and care economies as well as on young people. Poverty and inequalities within and among countries are on the rise in many parts of the world. The economic and social crises of recent years have been exacerbated by the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic, natural disasters due to accelerating climate change, geopolitical tensions and armed conflicts. Beyond the human tragedies associated with them and their impact on the world of work, these crises have highlighted the interlinkages and dependencies of economies and societies around the world and shown the crucial need for concerted action to respond to them, at global, regional and national levels. Social justice makes societies and economies function better and reduces poverty, inequalities and social tensions. It plays an important role in attaining more inclusive and sustainable socio-economic development paths and is key for reaching the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2030 Agenda), especially at a time when the achievement of those goals remains far away. It is more important than ever that the multilateral system coalesce around a set of shared values and goals and identify the means to respond to peoples' aspirations and needs. Social justice has therefore to become one of the cornerstones of the renewed multilateralism that is required; a rallying objective but also a significant instrument for a more efficient multilateral system, ensuring coherence across a range of policy areas.

Social Justice makes societies and economies function better

Vinod Chandrashekar Dixit

Social justice and equality is a significant issue in almost all societies around the world. 20th February is celebrated as the World Day of Social Justice proclaimed by United Nations General Assembly in 2007 in accordance with the goals and objectives of the World Summit for Social Development. Globally, injustice exists more frequently in other forms, such as poverty, hunger, worker's abuse, and severe restrictions on women's rights. The day was created to support efforts of the international community in poverty eradication; for promotion of full employment and decent work and for access to social well-being and justice for all. Social justice is an underlying principle for peaceful and prosperous coexistence within and among nations. We uphold the principles of social justice when we promote gender equality or the rights of indigenous peoples and migrants. We advance social justice when we remove barriers that people face because of gender, age, race, ethnicity, religion, culture or disability. This day motivates people in real sense to look at how social justice impacts poverty eradication. It focuses on achieving full employment and support for social integration. Social justice holds the aims of equal opportunity to every citizen in the matter of social & economic activities and to prevent inequalities. Social Justice is very important for the survival of people prosperously. It also paves way as a way for peace within nations and peaceful coexistence nations. Human dignity is very much essential and United Nations insists on the same. World Day of Justice is observed for the same reason and it tries to support all efforts of the international community to eradicate poverty from any society, promote full employment to the qualified, and provide decent work that helps an individual to make a living and to encourage gender equity that ensures social well-being of all. In society there are people who know they have a voice but are not sure how to use it. Some take things a little too far and create problems on top of problems. Others work hard to see change and are willing to do the work behind it with the help of others. Everyone has a voice no matter how you look or your personal beliefs. The problem is making things work to where everyone can be happy. There are people who care less about making others feel good about where they are in life whereas there are a few who are selfish, arrogant and inconsiderate; but these people have a place in the world too. We have in our country some of the most devoted workers for social justice in the history of India like MG Ranade, Swami Vivekananda, Veer Savarkar, Kulapati Munshi, Mahatma Gandhi, Babasaheb Ambedkar, Tarabai Shinde, and Behramji Malabari among others. Social justice and equality can be factored into welfare designs and deliveries by assessing the needs of the target population. In a globalized economy wherein every action of almost all countries affects each other, we should always take into consideration the three important aspects namely social justice, equality and human rights intersect. "Human rights" are "inherent rights without which we cannot truly live as human beings." We must understand that the intricate relationship between social justice, equality and social welfare is vital in understanding the values, norms and attitudes that individuals in a certain society possess.

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

TULIPS IN BLOOM



Tulips in bloom at lawns near AIIMS, in New Delhi, Friday, Feb. 17. The New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC) has started planting tulips as part of their 'Tulip Festival' for beautification of the national capital, ahead of the G20 Summit.

Mandal Commission : Most Recommendations lay in deep freeze



ER. PRABHAT KISHORE

The Constitution of India ensures right to equality for its citizens, but due to social discrimination, a large section of the society has minimal representation in services & other sectors. To cope up the situation of Socially & Educationally Backward Classes (SEBC), the Second Backward Classes Commission headed by Sri B. P. Mandal was set up by the Janata Party government on 1st January 1979. The Commission submitted its report on 31st December 1980, but it lay in deep freeze for the whole decade of the Congress regime. When the Janata Dal government came to power in 1989, a notification for 27% reservation for SEBC in the services of the Central Government & its public sector undertakings was issued on 13th August 1990.

The report reveals that "The population of OBCs, both Hindu and Non-Hindu, is around 52% of the total population of India. Accordingly, a pro-rata reservation of 52% of all posts under the Central Government should be reserved for them. But this provision would go against the law laid down in a number of Supreme Court judgements wherein it has been held that the total quantum of reservation under article 15(4) & 16(4) of the Constitution should be below 50%. In view of this, the proposed reservation for OBCs would have to be pegged at a figure which,

when added to 22.5% for SCs and STs, remains below 50%. In view of these legal constraints, the Commission recommended a reservation of 27% only, even though their population is twice the figure. States which have already introduced reservation for OBCs exceeding 27% will remain unaffected by this recommendation."

Reservation of only 27% for SEBC has been recommended by the Commission due to the legal constraint of 50% ceiling by the Court, otherwise it would have been as per population proportion i.e. 52%. In 2019, the ceiling has been increased to 60% through the 103rd Constitutional Amendment, for the provision of 10% reservation for the Economically Weaker Sections (EWS) of upper castes. The same process should have been done to provide 52% reservation in place of just 27% to SEBC too, but fragmented depressed sections have never been in the priority list of the Governments. The Janata Dal as well as the following Central governments have not implemented all the recommendations of the Mandal Commission. The recommendations are not for just government services, but for the all-round development of the society. The implementation of following main recommended schemes is still awaited: -

- (1) Candidates belonging to OBCs recruited on the basis of merit in an open

competition should not be adjusted against their reservation quota of 27%.

- (2) The above reservation should also be made applicable to the promotion quota at all levels.
- (3) Reserved quota remaining unfilled should be carried forward for a period of three years and de-reserved thereafter.
- (4) Relaxation in upper age limit for direct recruitment should be extended to the candidates of OBCs in the same manner as is done in the case of SCs & STs.
- (5) A roaster system for each category of posts should be adopted by the concerned authorities in the same manner as is presently done in respect of SC & ST candidates.
- (6) The above scheme of reservation in its toto should also be made applicable to all recruitment to public sector undertakings both under the Central and State Governments, as also to nationalized banks.
- (7) All private sector undertakings which have received financial assistance from the government should recruit personnel on the aforesaid basis.

27% seats should be reserved for OBC students in all scientific, technical and professional institutions run by the Central as well as State Governments. Those states, which have already reserved more than 27% seats for OBC students, will remain unaffected by these recommendations. Special coaching facilities should be arranged for all such students in our technical and professional institutions so that these young people do not feel frustrated & humiliated and also the country not land with ill-equipped & sub-standard engineers, doctors and other professionals.

Separate financial institutions for providing financial and technical assistance should be established for vocational communities (such as village potter, oil crusher, blacksmith, carpenter etc.).

A part of the surplus land becoming available in future as a result of the operation of land ceiling laws etc. should also be allotted to the OBC landless labourers.

MISCELLANEOUS: -

- (1) Certain section of occupational communities like Fisherman, Banjaras, Khatwes, Bansforas etc. who still suffer from untouchability, may be included in the lists of SCs/STs.
- (2) Backward Classes Development Corporations should be set up both at the Central & State level to implement various socio-educational & economic measures for their advancement.
- (3) A separate Ministry/ Department for OBCs at the Centre and States should be created to safeguard their interests.
- (4) To give better representation to very backward sections of OBCs like the Gaddis in H.P., Neo-Buddhists in Maharashtra, Fishermen in Coastal areas, Gujjars in Jammu & Kashmir, areas of their concentration should be made into separate constituencies at the time of delimitation. The commission's report was based on pro-rata basis of last Census of 1931. There is strong demand from public since long time for caste wise survey in Census 2021 and reservation to OBCs in proportion of their population. This will not only help in the formulation of welfare schemes effectively & efficiently, but will also help in eradicating inequality in the society more rapidly.

(Author is a technocrat and academician)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

SC renewed faith among the people

"We want to ensure transparency. In case we take your government's suggestions, from sealed cover, it automatically means the other party (petitioners seeking a probe) won't know and people will think it is a government-appointed committee," Chief Justice of India (CJI) D.Y. Chandrachud told solicitor-general (SG) Tushar Mehta. Due to this bad precedent (followed the same dirty trick while the case was for Rafael and others) CJI was very correct saying that public confidence would take a hit if an impression was created that the Centre was steering the process with the court's nod. Actually, the Modi regime introduced sealed cover arguments in all sensitive cases handled by the apex court for the past 8 years plus shows the present regime is not a transparent one and an opaque administration. It is heartening that the CJI Chandrachud overturned SG Mehta's suggested names since it wanted to protect the interests of the investors as: "There has to be full confidence in the committee for the other side (petitioners) and the public. So, what we will do is that we will form a committee on our own, so that there is a sense of confidence in the committee." This is why the Modi government is after the SC collegium system so that they can handpick people who will say yes to everything. Whatsoever, After CJI's comment Mehta said he had no objections to the court's decision. The court later reserved its order on the constitution of the committee. No wonder the Modi government wants to kill democracy and hire SC judges who will 'tow the line', but this time the present CJI has teeth and due to his firm decision SC again renewed the faith among the people.

Bidyut Kumar Chatterjee, Raichur, Karnataka

Rescue of Donkeys needed

Donkeys are sensitive, intelligent creatures with strong bonds with their families, these gentle animals under threat across the country now. According to reports in the country, there is a lot of illegal donkey trafficking, slaughtering, and selling of donkey flesh taking place. Many young and adult donkeys have their throats slit when they are still conscious. Some are also slaughtered by children across many states. According to reports, most donkeys are slaughtered in various locations across Andhra Pradesh and Telangana. Donkeys are smuggled into Andhra Pradesh and Telangana from other states under the cover of darkness to avoid police interception. It's high time to save these. Concerned parties should conduct immediate investigations and raids to rescue donkeys. There is a widespread belief in the country that donkey flesh and blood can cure diseases. As a result, illegal slaughtering operations are taking place. According to reports, the donkey population dropped by 50% in last five years. Donkeys are entitled to better treatment than this.

Vijay Kumar H K, Raichur, Karnataka

Antarctic sea-ice cover hits record low for second year in a row

Antarctic sea ice extent has been reported to have broken its last year record low, and has also recorded it sooner than when it did last year, according to a statement by the National Snow and Ice Data Center (NSIDC).

On February 13, 2023, Antarctic sea ice extent fell to 1.91 million square kilometers, it said.

This set a new record low, dropping below the previous record of 1.92 million square kilometers set on February 25, 2022, it said.

This year represents only the second year that Antarctic extent has fallen below 2 million square kilometers, the statement said. In past years, the annual

minimum occurred between February 18 and March 3, so, further decline this year is expected, it said.

With a couple more weeks likely left in the melt season, the extent is expected to drop further before reaching its annual minimum, it said. Much of the Antarctic coast is ice free, exposing the ice shelves that fringe the ice sheet to wave action and warmer conditions, the statement said.

The NSIDC is a US information and referral centre in support of polar and cryospheric research.

NSIDC is part of the University of Colorado Boulder Cooperative Institute for Research in

Environmental Sciences (CIRES), and is affiliated with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) National Centers for Environmental Information through a cooperative agreement.

The sea ice extent has tracked well below last year's melt season levels since mid-December, according to the statement by NSIDC.

A positive Southern Annular Mode has led to stronger-than-average westerly winds. Along with a strong Amundsen Sea Low, the weather conditions have brought warm air to the region on both sides of the Antarctic Peninsula, the statement said.

This has largely cleared out the ice cover in the Amundsen and Bellingshausen Seas, and reduced the sea ice extent in the northwestern Weddell Sea, NSIDC said.

Sea ice is patchy and nearly absent over a long stretch of the Pacific-facing coastline of Antarctica, NSIDC said.

Earlier studies have linked low sea ice cover with wave-induced stresses on the floating ice shelves that hem the continent, leading to break up of weaker areas, the statement said.

Antarctic sea ice extent has been highly variable over the last several years. While 2022 and 2023 have had record low minimum extent, four out of

the five highest minimums have occurred since 2008, NSIDC said.

Overall, the trend in Antarctic minimum extent over 1979 to 2023 is near zero, NSIDC said.

The current downward linear trend in the Antarctic minimum extent from 1979 to 2023 is 2,400 square kilometers per year, or 0.9 percent per decade, which is currently not statistically significant, NSIDC said.

Nevertheless, the sharp decline in sea ice extent since 2016 has fuelled research on potential causes and whether sea ice loss in the Southern Hemisphere is developing a significant downward trend, the statement said.

BRIEF

DMRC

New Delhi: Delhi Metro will soon launch an app which will enable commuters to buy a range of products and book various services, including those for last-mile connectivity. 'Momentum 2.0' India's first virtual shopping app for the metro will also include features such as instant recharge of Delhi Metro's smart cards and smart payment options for other utility services, officials said on Sunday.

NARCL

Kolkata: Public sector asset reconstruction company NARCL is likely to revive Srei Infrastructure Finance Ltd (SIFL) and wind up the group's equipment financing arm SEFL after recovering outstanding debt in seven years, a source said on Sunday. NARCL (National Asset Reconstruction Company) on Wednesday won the bid to take over the two Srei group firms - SIFL and Srei Equipment Finance Ltd (SEFL) - through an insolvency process.

Sugar production

Aurangabad: Sugar production in Maharashtra may fall from 137.28 lakh tonnes in 2021-22 to 124 lakh tonnes in 2022-23 due to adverse climatic conditions in different parts of the state, a top official has said. Continuous rains rendered the ground wet for long periods which impacted sugarcane cultivation, Sugar Commissioner Shekhar Gaikwad told PTI on Saturday. "As a result, the production will be going down in Maharashtra in the ongoing season."

RHI Magnesita

New Delhi: Vienna-based RHI Magnesita is investing Rs 3,600 crore in the Indian market over the next two-three years to increase its production capacity and modernise plants, its global CEO Stefan Borgas said. The company has utilised a portion of the Rs 3,600 crore capital expenditure to acquire two refractory assets in India, Borgas told PTI here. "We have earmarked a Rs 3,600 crore investment in India. This would go towards organic and inorganic capacity expansion and modernisation of the Indian manufacturing facilities," the CEO said, adding that the capital infusion will be through its subsidiary RHI Magnesita India Ltd.

Bank of Maharashtra

New Delhi: Bank of Maharashtra (BoM) has emerged as the top performer among state-owned lenders in terms of loan growth percentage during the third quarter of 2022-23, an analysis of the latest financial results of public sector banks showed. The Pune-based lender recorded a 21.67 per cent increase in gross advances on a year-on-year basis, according to the latest quarterly numbers of the public sector bank (PSB). The bank has maintained the top slot in credit growth in percentage terms consistently for the past 10 quarters despite COVID-19 pressures.

India's economy to grow at 6 pc in 2023-24: Rajiv Kumar

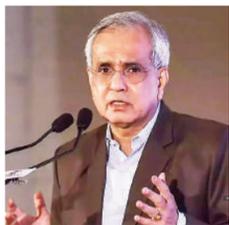
New Delhi, Feb 19 (PTI):

India is likely to clock 6 per cent growth rate next fiscal and the country can persevere with a high growth rate because of several reforms undertaken during the last eight years by the Narendra Modi government, former Niti Aayog Vice Chairman Rajiv Kumar said on Sunday.

Kumar further said major risks going forward will emerge from a synchronized downturn in the North American and European economies.

"India has a good opportunity to persevere with a high growth rate because of the reforms undertaken during the last eight years. We will manage to grow at 6 per cent in 2023-24," he told PTI in an interview.

According to Kumar,



there are several downside risks, especially in the context of an uncertain global situation.

"These will have to be tackled through careful policy measures designed to support our export efforts and at the same time improve the flow of private investment both from domestic sources as well as from foreign sources," he said.

The Reserve Bank has projected India's economic growth at 6.4 per cent for 2023-24, broadly in

line with the estimate of the Economic Survey tabled in Parliament.

Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth is estimated at 7 per cent in 2022-23, according to the first advance estimate of the National Statistical Office (NSO).

The Economic Survey 2022-23 projected a base-line GDP growth of 6.5 per cent in real terms for the next fiscal.

Replying to a question on high inflation, Kumar said the Reserve Bank has said that it will ensure that inflation rate is brought under control.

"Also a good winter crop will help in keeping the food prices low," he noted.

The RBI lowered the consumer price inflation (CPI) forecast to 6.5 per cent for the current fiscal from 6.7 per cent.

Vi expands retail presence

Mumbai, Feb 19:

In line with its strategy to get closer to rural consumers, leading telecom operator, Vi, has launched over 130 new format 'Vi Shops' across Tier 3 locations in Madhya Pradesh & Chhattisgarh. Ramping-up its retail footprint, Vi Shops have been launched in towns like Vidisha, Dabra, Harda, Mandla, Jaora, Kawardha, Sakti, Bhatapara, Bemetara and many others.

Introduced with an intent to deliver a uniform Vi experience to local customers as well as enable quick support and handholding, these Vi Shops have been rolled out in the last three months. The modern design of the new format Vi Shops is in line with signature elements that define existing Vi Stores in urban locations. Vi Shops offer the entire bouquet of Vi prepaid products and services and enable an enhanced customer experience and closer engagement.

FASHION SHOW



A model presents a creation by British designer Richard Quinn during his Autumn/Winter 2023 fashion show collection on the second day of the London Fashion Week, in London, on February 18.

Govt may auction 6 mineral blocks in current month

New Delhi, Feb 19 (PTI):

The government is likely to put on sale six mineral blocks, including four iron ore mines, in the current month.

The move would give a boost to mining sector's contribution to the country's gross domestic product.

The four iron ore blocks, situated in Chhattisgarh, are likely to be auctioned on Tuesday, according to the mines ministry.

The notice inviting tenders for the mines - Chhitpuri B iron ore block, Gomter Wakeli, Bijapur, Hahaladdi, North Bastar Kanker, Lohater, North Bastar Kanker - were floated last year.

The auction of Bandiamottu block in Andhra Pradesh, which has lead and associated minerals such as nickel, cobalt and copper, is also likely to be conducted in February. The notice invit-

ing tender for the block was issued in December last year. Besides, the auction of Udagi Block - a limestone mine in Karnataka - has also been extended to be held in February, the ministry said. Since the new procedure for auctioning of mineral blocks was introduced in 2015, a total of 239 mines have been auctioned so far. In the current fiscal so far 85 blocks have been put on sale, while in the last financial year 46 mines were auctioned. The government is also in the process of identifying mineral blocks like nickel in the sea and would gradually put them on sale, mines secretary Vivek Bharadwaj said on Friday.

The mines ministry is also amending the Offshore Areas Mineral (Development and Regulation) Act, 2002 and has sought the stakeholders' views on the same.

FPIs shift focus back on Indian market

Invests Rs 7,600 cr in a week

New Delhi, Feb 19 (PTI):

Foreign investors seem to have shifted their focus back on the Indian equity markets as they turned net buyers last week with an investment of over Rs 7,600 crore.

This came following a net outflow of Rs 3,920 crore by foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) from equities in the preceding week (February 7-12), data with the depositories showed.

"As the markets began to recover from the Adani shock, the flows from FPIs also improved, suggesting their renewed interest in the prospects of the Indian equity markets,"

Himanshu Srivastava, Associate Director - Manager Research at Morningstar India, said.

It appears that the sustained selling in India witnessed from early January is over but they might sell again at higher levels, VK Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist at Geojit Financial Services, said.

As per the data, FPIs have purchased equities worth a net sum of Rs 7,666 crore in the week ended February 17.

Given a more stable economy, strong macros and prospects of higher economic growth, FPIs are now willing to look beyond their valuation and other concerns, and pay a premium to the Indian markets, which has the potential to deliver better returns, Srivastava added.

FPIs have been net sellers since the beginning of the year and till February 10, they were net sellers to the tune of Rs 38,524 crore in 2023, including Rs 28,852

crore in January amid concerns of the continuing rate hikes by the major central banks globally to curb inflation. Also, the outflows from Indian equities could be attributed to relatively higher valuations, which prompted the FPIs to shift their focus towards other markets having relatively attractive valuations. Markets such as China, which saw significant erosion in their equity markets due to a series of strict lockdowns, attracted foreign investors after it opened up given its attractive valuation.

The distinctive feature of stock market performance this year is India's underperformance with NSE's benchmark index Nifty 50 down by 1.4 per cent so far. On the other hand, Taiwan index is up by 8.3 per cent and Shanghai composite is up by 3.4 per cent.

GAIL imitates Reliance with US ethane plans

New Delhi, Feb 19 (PTI):

India's largest gas firm GAIL is imitating billionaire Mukesh Ambani-led Reliance Industries Ltd in planning to import ethane from the US to replace natural gas and naphtha as feedstock at its petrochemical plants.

"In a bid towards diversification of the feedstock, GAIL is looking to import ethane from ethane-surplus countries with matured export terminal infrastructure through water borne transportation to India and transport it further through GAIL's pipeline systems to demand centres," the company said in a tender document.

It sought quotes to hire a very large ethane carrier (VLEC) for 20 years starting mid-2026 for importing ethane from the US. The ship with capacity of 80,000 to 99,000 cubic me-

tres is targeted to take deliveries from US ports of Marcus Hook, Nederland, Morgan's Point or Beaumont and deliver ethane at Dahej or Hazira in Gujarat or Dabhol in Maharashtra.

GAIL has a petrochemical plant at Pata, near Kanpur in Uttar Pradesh, and is also looking to set up another unit at Usar in Maharashtra. The company had to cut down on run rate at Pata after the government diverted gas supplies from the plant to city gas suppliers. This led to its profitability being impacted and so now the company is looking to supplement the feedstock with ethane. Reliance had in 2014 announced ethane plans in 2014 and started importing the feedstock from the US in 2017. It is importing 1.6 million tonnes per annum of ethane and is using six VLECs for transporting it to India.

Axis Bank launches enhanced Rewards Program

Mumbai, Feb 19:

Axis Bank, India's third-largest private sector bank, announces the launch of its enhanced rewards program in association with airline and hotel loyalty programs across the industry. This program allows Axis bank credit and debit card holders to seamlessly transfer their accumulated EDGE Rewards / Miles across 13 partners such as Singapore Airlines (KrisFlyer), Marriott International (Marriott Bonvoy), ITC Hotels (Club ITC), Turkish Airlines

(Miles and Smiles), Qatar Airways (Privilege Club), United Airlines (MileagePlus) and more.

This new proposition by the Bank gives more power to the customers by giving them a bouquet of rewards to choose from and make exciting additions to their travel plans. It offers seamless and attractive conversion options while delivering value for customer's earned rewards. Axis Bank will continue to expand this program, with an aim to have the largest rewards transfer proposition in the banking industry.

Hero MotoCorp plans to expand electric two-wheeler range

Over next 12-18 months

New Delhi, Feb 19 (PTI):

The country's largest two-wheeler maker Hero MotoCorp plans to expand its electric two-wheeler range over the next 12-18 months as it looks to cater to demand across multiple customer segments, according to a senior company official.

The company, which has already commenced sales of its electric scooter under Vida brand across Delhi, Bengaluru and Jaipur, plans



to introduce the existing range in other cities as well in the next fiscal before it starts to roll out the new products. "With the launch in the three cities - Delhi, Bengaluru and Jaipur - where the customers are really taking up to the product and the overall sales and pre-sales experience... we are really ready to now multiply

into many cities going into FY24 to establish ourselves wider into the market," Hero MotoCorp Head - Emerging Mobility Business Unit (EMBU) - Swadesh Srivastava said during an analyst call. Hero MotoCorp had launched VIDA V1 electric scooter in October last year in two variants Pro and Plus.

The company produces the electric scooter at its Chittoor-based plant in Andhra Pradesh and competes with the likes of Bajaj Chetak, TVS iQube, Ather Energy, Hero Electric and Ola Electric, among others.

Adani-Hindenburg row not to impact India story: KP Singh

New Delhi, Feb 19 (PTI):

The turmoil engulfing Gautam Adani's business empire following damning allegations by a US short seller, has not shaken the faith of global investors in India, real estate doyen K P Singh said rubbishing suggestions that banks would have lent to Adani group on instructions from higher-ups.

The punishing stock market sell-off Adani group companies have seen following the January 24 report of Hindenburg Research is a temporary



blip concerning just one corporate group and hasn't harmed faith in India as an investment opportunity, he told PTI in an interview.

He, however, felt the Adani group needs to "beef up" capital and cut down debt to continue to remain on the high growth trajectory.

Air India, Indian aviation market & tailwinds of growth

New Delhi/ Mumbai, Feb 19 (PTI):

From increased direct international air connectivity to being a showpiece of divestment programme to job creation in faraway US, Air India's mega 470 aircraft order has ignited myriad expectations in and about the world's fastest growing aviation market - India. A raft of factors - surging air traffic demand, rising middle class population and disposable incomes, demographic dividend, over 1,200 planes on order by various Indian carriers and improving aviation infrastructure - are all fuelling the growth of the market. Out of the 470 firm aircraft order, 250 will be supplied by Airbus and 220 by Boeing, while there is also the option to buy another 370 planes from the two plane makers. The firm order includes 70 wide-body aircraft.

Aircraft & Air Traffic

Indian airlines have placed orders for more than 1,100 aircraft that are to be delivered in the coming years. The country's largest airline IndiGo is to take deliveries of around 500 planes, Go First is to receive 72 aircraft, Akasa

Air is to get 56 planes and Vistara is to take 17 aircraft. Besides, SpiceJet has aircraft on order. All of them are narrow-body planes. Together with Air India, the domestic carriers have at least 1,115 planes on order. Around 700 commercial air-



craft are flying in India and majority of them are narrow-body planes. About 470 aircraft of Airbus and around 159 Boeing planes are in commercial service. GE Aerospace's Country Head, South Asia & Indonesia, Vikram Rai said India has the potential to grow both on the wide-body and narrow-body side. Providing a perspective, he said that in India, pre-COVID traffic was around 75 million international passengers and out of them, 60-65 per cent used foreign carriers. "With the economy growing and disposable income growing,

there is a huge opportunity for Indians to travel abroad... This 75 million passengers is likely to go to 120-125 million over the next 7-10 years," he said. India is the world's third largest and the fastest growing aviation market in the world.

Airports

At present, India has at least 147 operational airports and the number of airports have jumped from 74 nearly nine years ago, especially on the back of the government's ambitious regional air connectivity scheme UDAN.

While talking about Air India's plane order, V Thulasidas, who was Air India's chief from December 2003 to March 2008, said that now the country has world class airports which can act as hubs. "In terms of size, India should have not just one hub but several hubs like the EU. The hubs can be Delhi, Mumbai, Bangalore, Hyderabad, Chennai, Kolkata, Kochi and others," he said.

Aviation Experts

A key takeaway once Air India starts operating the new aircraft is that the international travel of Indians will be catered to mostly by the Indian carrier. "Some 125 planes out of the 470 will be for replacement... they have secured their growth plans for at least next 10 years," an aviation industry expert, who has been associated for long with the airlines sector, said.

According to him, the induction of wide-body planes will help in expansion of fleet as well as operations on both the East and the West coast.

"They (Air India) can provide more direct connectivity up to 8-10 hours and 16 hours non-stop flights as long as they are able to meet customer expectations, other parameters in operations. It will be a game changer for them." It will also aid in getting back India's international traffic from overseas carriers. They (Air India) can also create international traffic hubs across the country, which was not possible in the absence of a strong player," the expert said on the condition of anonymity.

Air India Renaissance

"Hundreds of initiatives across 22 broad work streams are underway to transform the airline over three phases:

Taxi, Take Off and Climb," Air India chief Campbell Wilson said on January 27, the day when Tata Group completed the first anniversary of the takeover of the airline. The Tata Group is also merging Air India Express with Air Asia and Vistara with Air India.

With induction of new aircraft, Air India should also look at targeting the routes between India and Gulf countries where there is always a huge demand. The Gulf sector is also profitable, former Civil Aviation Minister Suresh Prabhu said. As Boeing Commercial Airplanes President and CEO Stan Deal put it on February 14, "with the industry-leading fuel efficiency of the 737 MAX, 787 Dreamliner and 777X, Air India is well positioned to achieve its expansion plans and become a world-class global airline with an Indian heart".



Aamna Sharif to enter 'Na Umra Ki Seema Ho'

Aamna Sharif is a prominent name in the television industry. She was last seen in year 2020 in a grey character. Amna has been absent from television for two years and is now making a comeback on television with Star Bharat's show 'Na Umra Ki Seema Ho' alongside Iqbal Khan and Rachana Mistry who plays the lead role of Dev and Vidhi respectively. As per the sources, Aamna will be playing a key part in the upcoming track.

Aamna Sharif who is all set to make her entry in the show, will be seen playing the character named 'Yamini' who will soon enter in Dev and Vidhi's life. It's been reported that Aamna's character is crucial and plays a significant role in the next episodes. It is also noted that her appearance as 'Yamini' is highly distinctive. She will soon begin filming in preparation for her appearance on the show. Aamna's admirers will enjoy seeing her on television once more in a brand-new role and appearance as 'Yamini'.

A lot have changed in Dev and Vidhi's life after their marriage will Yamini's entry create any havoc in their married life? The upcoming episodes of 'Na Umra Ki Seema Ho' will have a lot of revelation and will unfold new twists. Who is 'Yamini' and why has she come in Dev and Vidhi's life?

To know more about the new entry and latest updates of the show keep watching 'Na Umra Ki Seema Ho' every Monday-Saturday at 8:00 PM only on Star Bharat.

Home cooks of 'MasterChef India' visit 'Amul Factory'

This week, on Sony Entertainment Television and SonyLIV's culinary reality show 'MasterChef India', viewers will see the Top 9 home cooks step out of the 'MasterChef Kitchen' and head to the famous 'Amul Factory' in Anand, Gujarat! The Judges - Chefs Ranveer Brar, Garima Arora and Vikas Khanna will introduce some exciting challenges that will push the home cooks to explore different aspects of cooking, with the use of Amul products.

Monday will be the 'Farm To Table' challenge where the home cooks can pick and choose ingredients from the Amul Organic Farms and curate a dish out of fresh produce! Next up, Chef Kunal Kapur will be the guest chef for the day as 'MasterChef India' celebrates 75 years of India and the birth of Amul which led to India's very own 'White Revolution.' The home cooks will be given 75 ingredients to work with and cook up an innovative dish for the challenge themed 'Celebrating India'.



Furthermore, the home cooks will get quite an emotional surprise as they reunite with their family and must cook a dish that defines them in 'Family Challenge'. Ending the week, the contestants will have to face the 'Mystery Box Ki Agni Pariksha' in which the home cooks will not only have to work with fire but also spices!

Talking about the upcoming week in Gujarat, Chef Vikas Khanna

opined, "Going to Anand, to the Amul factory gave us an insight into the complex operations that this home grown brand runs. This week will leave Indian audiences proud of all that they've achieved, and our home cooks will take full advantage of their products that are so loved by one and all. The contestants will be innovating new dishes with fresh organic produce, staying on balance amidst an emotional rollercoast-

ride as some of them meet their families and cooking literally with fire to stay in the competition."

Will the MasterChef home cooks come out of the heat of the kitchen, having learned more secrets of the culinary world after this tough week? Tune in to watch MasterChef India, every Monday to Friday at 9 pm only on Sony Entertainment Television and SonyLIV.

Priyanka finally lets a glimpse of daughter Malti on social media



After revealing her daughter Malti Marie's face to the world at the Hollywood Walk of Fame event for the Jonas Brothers, Priyanka Chopra has shared a picture with her on social media.

On Sunday, Priyanka took to Instagram, where she shared two pictures of her and her baby. She held her close and clicked a selfie, showing Malti's face. In the second image she is in bed holding Malti close to her while hiding

her face with her hand. She captioned her posts: "Days like this." Priyanka and Nick tied the knot in Christian and Hindu ceremonies in Jodhpur's Umaid Bhawan Palace in December 2018. They welcomed their daughter Malti Marie via surrogacy last year. On the work front, Priyanka will be seen in 'Love Again' and the series 'Citadel'. She will also be starring with Alia Bhatt and Katrina Kaif in Farhan Akhtar's 'Jee Le Zaraa'.

Shania Twain doesn't swear when she's in UK



Canadian singer-songwriter Shania Twain curbs her swearing when she is in the UK. The superstar - who is a new panellist on the UK talent contest 'Starstruck' - admits she has a foul mouth.

But she tries not to curse as much when she's this side of the Atlantic, reports Female First UK.

She told Best UK magazine: "It's very much a sister culture for me, coming from Canada. It doesn't feel foreign in many ways. I would drink tea in Canada! There's a much more relaxed sense of humour. We swear more in Canada, so I curb that a bit when I'm

here! I always feel very at home here."

The 'You're Still The One' hitmaker recently revealed her insecurities about her voice and the fact late music icon Prince didn't allow swearing stopped her from accepting his offer to work together. As per Female First UK, Shania was invited by the 'Purple Rain' hitmaker to his Paisley Park estate to make an album produced by him in the vein of Fleetwood Mac's 1997 'Rumours' record amid her split from her first husband, Robert John 'Mutt' Lange, who also produced and co-wrote some of her music.

High-voltage drama this week in &TV's show

High-voltage drama in store this week in &TV's show Doosri Maa, Happu Ki Ultan Paltan and Bhabiji Ghar Par Hai. About &TV's Doosri Maa track, Yashoda shares, "Yashoda (Neha Joshi) finds Krishna (Aayudh Bhanushali) hiding in an orphanage and asks him to come with her, but he refuses. Yashoda then coaxes Krishna into revealing his feelings and manages to convince him to return home. However, upon reaching home with Krishna, Dadaji (Sunil Dutt) asks Yashoda to throw Krishna out of the house."

About &TV's Happu Ki Ultan Paltan track, Rajesh shares, "The Commissioner (Kishore Bhanushali)'s sister, Reshma tends to elope with bachelor boys. Hence, Happu Singh (Yogesh Tripathi) is assigned the duty to always keep

Reshma with him to prevent her disappearance and keep a close watch on her. As Happu gets home with Reshma, the moment she meets Kamlesh (Sanjay Choudhary), she falls head over heels for him and begins pursuing him." About &TV's Bhabiji Ghar Par Hai track, Anita Bhabi shares, "Anita (Vidisha Srivastava) is not home and to make the most of it, Vibhuti's (Aasif Sheikh)'s friend, Prem (Vishwajeet Soni) hatches a plan to celebrate their bachelorhood days. However, Tiwari (Rohitashv Gour) informs Anita about it and she returns home to catch them red-handed. To salvage the situation, Vibhuti cooks up a story of having cousins over. 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!

Tanisha Mehta on recreating iconic scene from 'Kabhi Khushi Kabhie Gham' for her show

'Shubh Laabh - Aapkey Ghar Mein' actress Tanisha Mehta, who is seen playing the role of Ishani in the show 'Lag Ja Gale', talked about recreating the most popular scenes from 'Kabhi Khushi Kabhie Gham' in which Amitabh Bachchan pulls a stool for Jaya Bachchan where she helps him in tying his tie.

Set in Delhi, 'Lag Ja Gale' is a story of a couple, Shiv (Namik Paul) - an affluent, self-made young hotelier and Ishani (Tanisha Mehta), who get married for the sake of their siblings. In every scene where Tanisha has to stand opposite Namik, she has to take the help of a stool to match his height. While talking about recreating the iconic scene, Tanisha said: "Within a few days of shooting, Namik and I started bonding with each other really well and that really helped to pull off our scenes smoothly. But the biggest concern is that because of Namika's height, every time there is a shot where I am standing next to him, I have to stand on a stool. For the scenes which are not close-up shots, I have to wear high heels throughout the sequence." The actress further added that while shooting every scene with him she needed a stool and it reminded her of



the movie 'Kabhi Khushi Kabhie Gham'. "The very first day when we shot together, I was asked to do a scene with him standing on a stool and that just reminded me of the most popular scenes between Jaya and Amitabh Bachchan from Kabhi Khushi Kabhie Gham where she has to fasten his tie. I believe the resemblance of it with our shoot life is so similar that now I have started enjoying it as I am a big 'K3G fan'. I just hope that the audience loves our on-screen chemistry and showers their love on our show," she added.

Riya Sharma, Ishaan Dhawan get into skins of their 'Dhruv Tara' characters

TV actors Riya Sharma and Ishaan Dhawan talked about attending workshops for getting into the skin of their characters in the show, 'Dhruv Tara - Samay Sadi Se Pare', and how the workshops have helped Riya and Ishaan break the ice.

Talking about the experience doing the rehearsals and practicing together, the 'Saat Phero Ki Hera Pherie' actress Riya said: "The workshops were a truly enlightening experience for me. I had the chance to gain insights into Ishaan's acting techniques and focus on enhancing our on-screen chemistry." "I feel incredibly lucky to have collabor-



ated with such a talented and hardworking team. Although the workshops were demanding, they allowed us to build an endearing connection which

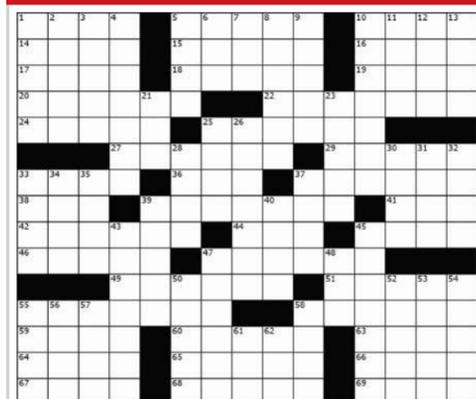
also reflects on-screen, and we are sure they will fall in love with Dhruv and Tara," added the actress known for 'Kashibai Bajirao Ballal' and 'Banni Chow Home

Delivery'. On the other hand, Ishaan, who is a model and actor known for his roles such as Hamid in 'Bebaakee', and Kabeer in 'Zindagi Mere Ghar Aana', among others also added how it was to attend the workshop and shoot for the show with Riya.

"Working with Riya was absolutely amazing, and the workshops were an integral aspect of our journey to create a fantastic show. Not only did they allow us to enhance our acting abilities, but they also helped us to build a strong bond that helped us get comfortable with each other. I am eagerly waiting for our fans to see the fruits of our labor," he added.

CROSSWORD

567



ACROSS

- Tart
- Sirloin, e.g.
- Bedspring
- Traffic barrier
- Howdy!
- Ancient Peruvian
- Fall to mention
- Deduce
- Goblet part
- Alternative
- Renovate

DOWN

- Not here
- Real
- Eats away
- Keyboard instrument
- Ready, willing, and
- Card game
- Brahms piece
- Corp. head
- Changed
- Alamos
- Bother
- Precious stone

45. Tibetan monk
46. Build
47. Briny
49. Hardly ever
51. Soothed
55. Not specific
58. Building cement
59. Medicinal herb
60. Boise's state
63. Memo
64. Singer ____ Campbell
65. More angry
66. December 24 and 31
67. Lip
68. TV host
69. Hideaways

31. Power source
32. Space agency (abbr.)
33. Soreness
34. Teddy
35. Be defeated
37. Truck's vehicle
39. Church table
40. Bank (on)
43. Shows (a movie)
45. Memorized
47. Not often
48. Trinity's boyfriend
50. Lift up
52. Range
53. Dined
54. Attire
55. Jokes
56. She, in Seville
57. Nays
58. In addition
61. Joan of ____
62. Laughing sound

SOLUTION 566

Aussies sweep their way to self-destruction

India retain Border-Gavaskar Trophy

New Delhi, Feb 19 (PTD):

Ravindra Jadeja thoroughly exposed a technically ill-equipped and mentally messed up Australian batting unit with a career-best seven for 42 as India won the second Test by six wickets to retain the Border-Gavaskar Trophy here on Sunday.

The Australian batters paid the price for some atrocious shot selection as Jadeja, who enjoyed a 10-wicket match haul, along with Ravichandran Ashwin (3/59) decimated the visitors in the morning session, bowling them out for 113 in 31.1 overs. The last nine wickets fell for 52 runs. KL Rahul (1) cut a sorry figure but Indian batters showed how to play spin as the target of 115 was completed in 26.4 overs.

Cheteshwar Pujara had something to cheer about on his 100th Test appearance as he remained unbeaten on 31 and fittingly hit the winning boundary.

India have now put one foot in the final of the World Test Championship in England in June, having taken an unassailable 2-0 lead in the four match

Ravindra Jadeja celebrates with teammates after the wicket of Australian batter Matthew Kuhnemann.



Brief Scores

Australia: 263 and 113 all out in 31.1 overs (Travis Head 43, Marnus Labuschagne 35; Ravindra Jadeja 7/42, Ravichandran Ashwin 3/59).
India: 262 and 118 for 6 in 26.4 overs (Rohit Sharma 31, Cheteshwar Pujara 31 not out; Nathan Lyon 2/49).

series. The win was India's 100th against

Australia across formats. The third Test will be played in Indore from February 27. Starting the day at 61 for 1, Jadeja's arm balls became a lethal weapon with as many as five Australian batters getting out trying to play sweep shots of deliveries that kept low on a typical third day Ferozshah Kotla track. Australia lost nine wickets for only 52 runs

and it was not the pitch but the fear of unknown that led to their eventual downfall.

Steve Smith, Matt Renshaw, Alex Carry, Pat Cummins and Matt Kuhnemann were all guilty of playing the ugly slog sweep and some tried non-existent reverse sweep off deliveries bowled on either middle or leg stump line.

They were either bowled or adjudged leg before in the process as the deliveries started keeping low.

Ashwin also played the supporting act to perfection as eight Australian batters failed to reach double figures save overnight pair of Travis Head (45) and Marnus Labuschagne (35), who had briefly counter-attacked

India tighten grip on qualification for WTC Final

The race to qualification for the ICC World Test Championship Final took another turn on Sunday as India claimed a six-wicket victory over Australia to move a step closer to sealing their place in the June 7 game at The Oval. With the top two teams in the WTC

standings securing a place in June's Final, the result still means that Australia and India control their own destiny as they edge towards the conclusion of the competition, the ICC said in a release. Australia remain atop the standings despite the defeat reducing their percentage tally to 66.67%, while India widened the gap between themselves and third spot thanks to their victory in Delhi, moving to 64.06%. As a result of India's victory, the number of teams able to qualify for the Final shrinks from four to three. South Africa drop out of contention, unable to reach the percentage points required to break into the top two, leaving Sri Lanka as the lone challenger for a place in the Final. Sri Lanka currently sit third in the standings on 53.33%, and they head to New Zealand next month knowing that not only must they win both Tests in their two-match series to stand any chance of qualification, but they are also reliant on favourable results in the remaining Tests between India and Australia.

King Kohli breaks Tendulkar's record

Virat Kohli added another feather in his cap on Sunday as he became the sixth and the fastest batter in the world to score 25,000 runs across formats during

the second Test against Australia, which India won by six wickets, at the Arun Jaitley Stadium in Delhi. Kohli achieved the feat when his score reached eight during India's run chase of 115 as he flicked Nathan Lyon for a boundary in the 12th over in the second innings. He had come into his 492nd match overall with 52 runs needed to reach the milestone. He made 44 in India's first innings and was out for 20 in the second essay to end at 25012 runs. "Milestone Unlocked. Congratulations @imVkohli on reaching 25000 runs in international cricket! Simply sensational," BCCI tweeted. "... And heartfelt congratulations to @imVkohli on becoming the fastest to get to 25000 international runs," BCCI secretary Jay Shah said in his tweet to congratulate the team for winning the Tests. The other stalwarts to have scored more than 25,000 runs across formats are Indian icon Sachin Tendulkar (34357 from 664 matches), Sri Lankans Kumar Sangakkara (28016 from 594 matches) and Mahela Jayawardene (25957 from 652 matches), Australian Ricky Ponting (27483 from 560 matches) and South African Jacques Kallis (25534 from 519 matches).

last evening with some degree of success.

When India started the chase, their skipper Rohit Sharma (31 off 20 balls) showed how to tackle the Australian spinners be-

fore being run-out due to a mix-up.

Unlike Labuschagne, who preferred to stay on backfoot even to flighted deliveries, the moment Rohit saw the ball being given air, he

would put a big stride forward and lift it in the arc between sight screen and cow corner. Rohit's stay was short and sweet one but certainly a lesson in playing spinners.

KL Rahul retains his place for last two Tests

Unadkat recalled for ODIs

New Delhi, Feb 19 (PTD):

The Indian selection committee on Sunday retained the team for the third and fourth Tests against Australia, keeping faith in KL Rahul despite his repeated failures. Seasoned left-arm seamer Jaydev Unadkat, who was part of the squad for the first two Tests of the Border-Gavaskar Trophy but was released to represent Saurashtra in the Ranji Trophy final against Bengal, is back in the team for the remaining two matches.

Fresh from leading Saurashtra to a Ranji Trophy title triumph, Unadkat has also made a comeback to the ODI squad for the limited overs series that will take place after the Test rubber.

Speedster Jasprit Bumrah, who has been out of action at the internation-

India's Test squad: Rohit Sharma (captain), KL Rahul, Shubman Gill, Cheteshwar Pujara, Virat Kohli, KS Bharat (wk), Ishan Kishan (wk), Ravichandran Ashwin, Axar Patel, Kuldeep Yadav, Ravindra Jadeja, Mohd. Shami, Mohd. Siraj, Shreyas Iyer, Suryakumar Yadav, Umesh Yadav, Jaydev Unadkat.
India's ODI squad: Rohit Sharma (captain), Shubman Gill, Virat Kohli, Shreyas Iyer, Suryakumar Yadav, K L Rahul, Ishan Kishan (wk), Hardik Pandya (Vice-captain), Ravindra Jadeja, Kuldeep Yadav, Washington Sundar, Yuzvendra Chahal, Mohd. Shami, Mohd. Siraj, Umran Malik, Shardul Thakur, Axar Patel, Jaydev Unadkat.

al level since September 2022 due to back issues, and missed the T20 World Cup, Bangladesh tour, and the home series versus Sri Lanka and New Zealand, is not part of either the Test or the ODI team and will return to play during the IPL.

India look for big win against lowly Ireland

To qualify for Women's T20 WC semis

Gqeberha, Feb 19 (PTD):

A defeat against England denting their confidence, India will look to bounce back with a big win against lowly Ireland to remain in contention for a semifinal berth in the Women's T20 World Cup, here on Monday.

After the 11-run loss to England on Saturday, their first defeat in the showpiece, India are in second spot with four points from three matches behind England (six points from three straight wins) who have qualified for the semifinals.

The Harmanpreet Kaurl side will now need not only a win against Ireland in their last group match on Monday but also a big one to have any chance of filling up the remaining semifinal spot from Group 2. They need to improve their net run rate from the current +0.205. Pakistan, who have lost



Match starts at 6.30pm IST.

to India in their opening match, have two points from two matches and they also have a chance to make it to the last four if they win their last two matches. In that case, they will also have six points.

Currently, Pakistan, who play against the West Indies Sunday night, have a better NRR of +1.542 than that of India, though they are yet to face England who have a NNR of +1.776.

Ireland, on the other hand, are already out of contention for a semifinal berth, having lost all their

three matches.

To win big against Ireland, the Indian batting will need to fire, especially captain Harmanpreet and opener Shafali Verma, as both have not played a significant knock so far.

Harmanpreet's scores in the three matches so far have been 16, 33 and 4, below par by her standards, while Shafali have made 33, 28 and 8.

Young Richa Ghosh has been the most consistent batter for India with scores of 31, 44 and 47 not out, and she would be looking to continue with her

ABC medal shows India can definitely win Sudirman Cup: Vimal Kumar

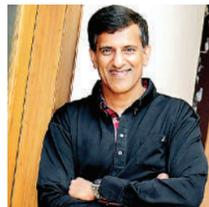
New Delhi, Feb 19 (PTD):

India's first-ever bronze medal at the Asia Badminton Mixed team championships has shown that the country can win the Sudirman Cup this year, feels former national coach Vimal Kumar.

India on Saturday narrowly went down 2-3 to formidable China in the semifinals to sign off their campaign with a maiden bronze medal in Dubai.

It was a creditable performance since India were without the services of an injured Satwiksairaj Rankireddy but the men's pair of Chirag Shetty-Dhruv Kapila and young women's doubles duo of Treesa Jolly-Gayatri Gopichand dished out superlative shows to take India to the semifinals.

"Once Satwik comes back, we will have a strong doubles pair and our singles have always been



strong. Prannoy and Sindhu are also capable of beating anybody. So I feel we have a decent chance to win the Sudirman Cup," Vimal, who was present when the men's team won the Thomas Cup title last year, told PTL.

"The ladies doubles have also shown good level, especially Treesa and Gayatri beating the Malaysian top doubles pair (world no 4 Tan Pearly and Thinaah Muralitharan) will give them a lot of confidence. We can't say it's too ambitious (to win Sudirman Cup). We can.

Broad, Anderson devastate NZ in 1st test



Mount Maunganui, Feb 19 (AP):

For New Zealand the end at least came quickly. England needed less than a session on the fourth day Sunday to complete a 267-run win in the first day-night cricket test and to take a 1-0 lead in the two-match series.

Stuart Broad who clean bowled four New

Zealand top-order batters late on the third day to leave the home side 63-5 overnight and make the win imminent, finished with 4-49. His long-time and record-breaking partner James Anderson took 4-18, sealing the win when he bowled No. 11 Blair Tuckner (8) about 15 minutes before tea as New Zealand was all out for 127.

That raised Anderson and Broad's tally of test wickets in partnership to 1,009 in 103 matches, eclipsing the record of 1,001 previously held by Australians Glenn McGrath and Shane Warne.

England will now take a 1-0 series lead into the second and final test in Wellington from Friday.

"Obviously another great performance. We were very clinical with the bat and obviously very clinical with the ball," England captain Ben Stokes said.

Swiatek sweeps aside Pegula to retain Qatar Open title



Doha, Feb 19 (AP):

Top-ranked Iga Swiatek successfully defended her Qatar Open title after beating No. 4-ranked Jessica Pegula 6-3, 6-0 in the final on Saturday. Swiatek broke Pegula for 2-0 and 4-2 but both times immediately lost her own serve. Pegula couldn't hold again and Swiatek served out to love to take the first set. The second wasn't competitive, and Swiatek swept it to break the American six times in the final. Swiatek dropped only five sets all week en route to her 12th career title. Doha was also Swiatek's first title last year, and the start of a 37-match winning streak which included her second grand slam title at the French Open.

Saurashtra beat Bengal to clinch second title

Kolkata, Feb 19 (PTD):

Left-arm pacer Jaydev Unadkat returned a match haul of nine wickets, including 6/85 in the second innings, as Saurashtra thrashed Bengal by nine wickets in the summit clash to clinch their second Ranji Trophy title here on Sunday.

Having given away a big first innings lead of 230 runs, Bengal, who were overnight 169/4 in their second essay, folded for 241, handing the visitors a mere 12 runs target to win the final.

Saurashtra lost their opening batter Jay Gohil (0) off the bowling of Akash Deep but eventually went past the target, reaching 14 for 1 in 2.4 overs, to wrap up the match with one day and two full sessions to spare.

Saurashtra's earlier triumph was in 2019-20 season when they defeated Bengal on the basis of first innings lead. In the



last 10 seasons, they have made the final on five occasions, underlining their consistency.

A Ranji Trophy title eluded Bengal yet again. They last won it in 1998-99 when they defeated a star-studded Delhi at the same Eden Gardens. Their first title had come in 1938-39 in the pre-independence era.

Earlier in the morning session, Unadkat showed the way after a freak run-out of Bengal batter Shahbaz Ahmed (27). The veteran Saurashtra skipper added four wickets to his overnight tally of two.

The old Bengal warhorse duo of skipper Manoj Tiwari (68) and Anustup Majumdar (61)

slammed valiant half-centuries but the home side were let down by their top-order batters, including the promising Abhimanyu Easwaran who scored 0 and 16 in the two innings.

In-form No. 3 batter Sudip Charami, who is fresh from a 112 and 41 in the semifinal against

Madhya Pradesh and has 800-plus runs this season, also came a cropper and scored 0 and 14 in the two innings. The decision to hand debut to Sumanta Gupta in a Ranji final also will rattle Bengal as he did not show any technique of a top-order batter and perished to an outgoing delivery.

'India saw record over 15,000 organ transplants'

New Delhi, Feb 19 (PTI):

India has witnessed a fast resurgence in organ transplant activities post COVID-19 and, for the first time, achieved more than 15,000 transplants a year in 2022, Union Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan said on Sunday. Along with this, there was an annual increase of 27 per cent in the transplant numbers, Bhushan said at the "National Organ and Tissue Transplant Organisation (NOTTO) Scientific Dialogue 2023", organised by the Union Ministry of Health.

The event was organised to bring all the stakeholders under one roof to brainstorm ideas about interventions and best prac-

tices in the field of organ and tissue transplant that can be taken up for saving lives. Bhushan said there has been a fast resurgence in organ transplant activities post Covid, and for the first time, the country has achieved more than 15,000 transplants a year (2022). There was an annual increase of 27 per cent in the transplant numbers, he added.

The health secretary underlined three priority areas - programmatic restructuring, communication strategy and skilling of professionals. Highlighting the need to



Rajesh Bhushan

update the existing structures and guidelines, he said, "Though we have existing structures at various governance levels like NOTTO at the national level, SOTTO at the state level and ROTTOs at the regional level, it needs to be ensured that they work as a well-oiled machinery while performing their mandate."

Bhushan welcomed the changes that have taken place, such as updated guidelines and the domicile requirement being done away with. He stressed the need for a rational use of the country's

technical manpower and training and channelising them efficiently, along with optimal utilisation of the physical infrastructure and equipment, such as in tertiary care facilities.

Underscoring the changing demography of the country, the health secretary noted that India has a growing geriatric population and to ensure quality of life for them, it is critically important to update the communication and awareness strategy, so that potential organ donors come forward. He suggested wide orientation through training programmes, newly-designed courses and digital interventions for healthcare professionals and domain knowledge experts.

TRIBUTE TO SHIVAJI



Governor of Maharashtra Ramesh Bais pays tribute at the statue of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj on the occasion of Shiv Jayanti celebrations at Shivaji Park, in Mumbai, Sunday.

PM's gift to German chancellor sparks demand for hand-engraved vessels

Of Moradabad

Lucknow, Feb 19 (PTI):

Dilshad Hussain has been hand-engraving brass vessels for decades but never have the demand and popularity for his wares been as high as after Prime Minister Narendra Modi gifted a nickel-coated 'matka' to German Chancellor Olaf Scholz last year.

"The popularity of 'matka' has increased many times since the prime minister chose to present it to the German

chancellor. Now I keep getting orders," Hussain, 75, told PTI. During a G7 Summit last year, Prime Minister Modi gifted to the German chancellor a nickel-coated hand-engraved brass vessel from Moradabad, also known as "Peetal Nagari" or brass city of Uttar Pradesh.

Hussain was recently conferred the Padma Shri, the fourth highest civilian honour of the country, for his work. The septuagenarian artisan said he learnt the craft under the guidance of his grandfather. He also received the "Shilpa Guru" award six



A nickel-coated 'matka' that Prime Minister Narendra Modi gifted to German Chancellor Olaf Scholz last year.

years ago from then presi-

dent Ram Nath Kovind. Hussain said he recently got an order from Mumbai and delivered the vessels at a rate of Rs 18,000 a piece. Orders are coming in from other cities too, he said. Sharing the technique behind his craft, Hussain said the design is first sketched on a paper.

Then an outline of the whole design is done with a fine engraving tool hammered with a wooden block. This particular type of engraving is called "Marodi", he said. Hussain praised Kshipra Shukla, the chairperson of the Uttar Pradesh

Institute of Design and Research (UPIDR), for extending help in popularising his craft.

"I never faced any discrimination due to my religion. Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has praised my work many times," he said. Hussain said he has been training youngsters, many of them women. The UPIDR chairperson said they have been providing help to artisans and craftsmen at the grassroots across the state without any consideration of caste, religion or gender.

New Delhi, Feb 19 (PTI):

Emergency Arbitration has enormous potential in the country and the legislature should take steps to promote and regulate it, Supreme Court judge Justice Hima Kohli has said. The top court judge, who was addressing the Delhi Arbitration Week on Saturday, said Emergency Arbitration (EA) provides a quick and efficient solution to pressing disputes and can help curtail delays and expenses.

But the issues concerning the clarity and consis-



Justice Hima Kohli

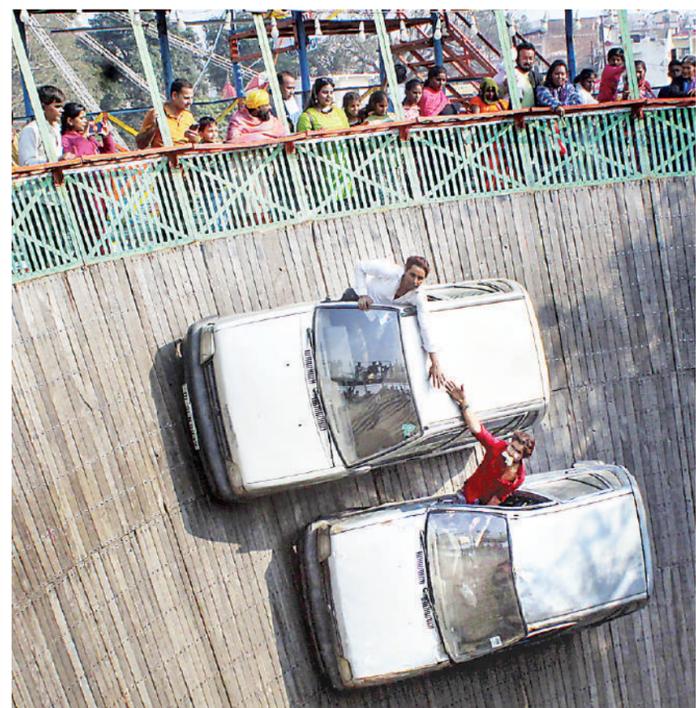
tency in the applicable rules and procedures and the lack of awareness among the stakeholders remain to be addressed, she added.

"EA has an enormous potential in India. To address these challenges, it is essential for the govern-

ment to take steps to legislate, promote and regulate EA in India. This could include amendment to the Arbitration & Conciliation Act, introduction of standard procedures, establishment of a dedicated EA Tribunal, promotion of awareness and education about the benefits of EA," Justice Kohli said.

Under emergency arbitration, a temporary arbitrator is appointed to expeditiously hear and resolve such urgent disputes between the parties which cannot wait for the conclusion of normal arbitration proceedings.

DARE DEVIL ACT



Performers stunt by driving a car in the well of death, at the Shivtrati fair, Tapkeshwar Mahadev Temple, in Dehradun, Sunday.

'Shivaji Maharaj's followers stopped from visiting Pune fort'

CM Shinde assures better arrangements next year

Mumbai, Feb 19 (PTI):

Sambhaji Rajesh Chhatrapati, a member of the former Maratha royal family of Kolhapur, on Sunday claimed police stopped Shivaji Maharaj's followers from going to the Shivneri Fort in Pune, on the occasion of the warrior king's birth anniversary, in view of the visit of some VIPs.

Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde, who visited the fort along with Deputy CM Devendra Fadnis, said they would take steps so that the followers of Shivaji Maharaj do not face any hurdles while visiting the Shivneri Fort next year. Shivaji Maharaj was born at the Shivneri Fort in 1630.

Former Rajya Sabha member Sambhaji Chhatrapati, who could not attend the official function at the Shivneri Fort on Sunday, claimed several



Sambhaji Rajesh Chhatrapati

"Shiv bhakts" were stopped by police in the wake of the visit of some VIPs to the fort.

Addressing a gathering at the fort, he said, "When I was near the fort, some Shiv bhakts approached me and complained of police restricting them from visiting the fort. They told me that police were objecting to their visit, citing crowding which may lead to an untoward incident such as stampede." "This is highly unfair. The follow-

ers of Shiv bhakts should not face any discrimination when it comes to visiting the Shivneri Fort. Had I gone ahead, people would have followed me and this could have led to a stampede," he added. CM Shinde while addressing a function on the Shivaji Jayanti said he has heard Sambhaji Chhatrapati's comments.

"We will take necessary steps so that people do not face any hurdles next year when it comes to visiting the Shivneri Fort," he said.

Deputy CM Fadnis also said there will be better arrangements next year to manage the crowd properly. "We will soon hold a meeting on this," he said. Nationalist Congress Party Lok Sabha member Amol Kolhe, in whose constituency the Shivneri Fort is located, said there should be a permanent "saffron flag" hoisted on the Shivneri Fort.

SII to establish CoE for Infectious Diseases and Pandemic Preparedness

In T'gana Hyderabad, Feb 19 (PTI):

Vaccine maker Serum Institute of India (SII) on Sunday announced that it would set up a 'Centre of Excellence' for Infectious Diseases and Pandemic Preparedness here.

The centre "Dr Cyrus Poonawalla Center of Excellence for Infectious Diseases and Pandemic Preparedness" will be located at the Indian Institute of Public Health, a release said.

The CoE is being set up for providing the community a centralised location for information, resources, and support during times of public health emergencies.

The centre will serve as a hub for public health education, outreach, and response ef-

forts during outbreak of infectious diseases, it said.

Social activist's mission to popularise traditional U'Khand foods

Dehradun, Feb 19 (PTI):

At the peak of Uttarakhand's statehood movement in the 1990s, the hills would often reverberate with the "Kodo-Jhangora khayenge, Uttarakhand banayenge" slogan, remembers Dwarika Prasad Semwal, a social activist who has pioneered a mission to popularise the state's traditional foods.

The slogan appealed to Semwal, at the time a teenager helping his father run a small eatery that frequently served savoury local dishes made of 'manduwa' and 'jhangora' (category of millets) grown abundantly in the village.

"Though just 18 or 19 at the time, I had no doubt that the struggle for statehood was a movement for Uttarakhand's separate identity and its traditional foods and dishes were an integral part of it," Semwal told PTI in an interview.

When Uttarakhand was created in 2000, Semwal's strong conviction about the delicious taste and high nutritional properties of traditional hill food set him on the mission to popularise a typical Uttarakhandi 'thali' made of delicacies of the mountains named "Garh Bhoj". The purpose was two-fold - to keep the state's culture alive by helping people develop a taste for traditional Uttarakhandi food and give a push to



Uttarakhand Education Minister Dhan Singh Rawat with Semwal (right) from 'Himalaya Paryavaran Jadi Booti Agro Sansthan' NGO at a Garh Bhoj feast.

farming of local crops, especially millet-based produce by creating a market for them. Twenty-three years on, Semwal has a

sense of achievement as kodo, jhangora, manduwa and dishes made out of these crops, which grow aplenty in the state, are

being served to students in government schools across the state at least once a week as part of the mid-day meal. 'Garh Bhoj' stalls

dealing in traditional food items like "mandue ka halwa", "jhangore ki kheer", "swale ki puri", "gahat ka fanu", "gahat ki patungi" and "gahat ki roti" can now be seen in all cultural fairs of Uttarakhand, he said.

The state government has issued orders to buy 9,600 metric tonnes of Mandua to supply them to schools. A Minimum Support Price (MSP) of over Rs 3,500 per quintal for mandua has also been announced. Semwal sees the Centre's decision to celebrate 2023-24 as millet year and the subsequent approval recently by the state cabinet to Uttarakhand's Millet Mission as a culmination

of the efforts made collectively by activists like him and the successive governments towards promotion of local cuisine and agricultural produce.

सर्वप्रथम अत्याधुनिक
(अल्ट्रागार्डन) बर्न यूनिट

10 इंचेसिव आइसोलेशन केयर ग्लास केबिन, हेपा फिल्टर/लेमिनर फ्लो 100% जीवाणु रहित ग्लास केबिन.

उ. न. शासन से मान्यता प्राप्त

कालिदास बर्न एवं प्लास्टिक कार्मेटिक सर्जरी सेंटर
आर.के.सी.के.सामने, चौबे कालोनी एवं पंचपेठे नारा, धर्मपुरी रोड, कलस मॉल के पास, रावपुर कॉल: 9827143060/8871003060
Ajay Advt.

Baidyanath
ASLI AYURVED

Drakshasav
Special

✓ Fortified with exotic dried grapes of the finest quality and valuable herbs

Bring zest back into your life

Customer Care: 844 844 4935
www.baidyanath.co



BRIEF



An artist performs skills on the occasion of 'Shiv Jayanti' festival, in Solapur, Sunday.

Roof collapse

Ghaziabad: Two labourers were killed and a dozen others are feared trapped after the roof of an under-construction building collapsed here on Sunday, police said. The incident took place in the Roop Nagar industrial area in Loni, neighbouring Delhi. "A rescue operation is underway. Four persons have been rescued and rushed to a nearby hospital for treatment.

Mishap

Sultanpur: 60-year-old vegetable seller died after being hit by a speeding vehicle on the Ayodhya-Prayagraj National Highway in this Uttar Pradesh district on Sunday, police said. SHO of Kurebhar police station Praveen Yadav said at around 7.30 am, Raghunath Chaurasia had gone to market to open his vegetable shop. As he was crossing the road, he was hit by an unknown speeding vehicle.

Tremor

Bhopal: A tremor of 3.0 magnitude hit some western districts of Madhya Pradesh on Sunday afternoon, but there was no report of any casualty and damage to property due to it, officials said. The National Centre for Seismology said in a tweet that an earthquake of magnitude 3.0 occurred at 12.54 pm with its epicentre 151 kilometres west south-west of Indore.

Life target

Mumbai: Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Sunday said children must set their life targets in school in order to achieve them. Speaking to students of a school in Kolhapur, Shah said his wife was from the western Maharashtra city and studied in a local school. "Life targets should be finalised during school days. This would help you to overcome your life's challenges. Otherwise those challenges would affect your journey," he said.

Condole

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday condoled the passing away of Nandamuri Taraka Ratna, the grandson of legendary film actor and former Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister late N T Rama Rao. "Pained by the untimely demise of Shri Nandamuri Taraka Ratna Garu. He made a mark for himself in the world of films and entertainment. My thoughts are with his family and admirers in this sad hour. Om Shanti," Prime Minister Modi was quoted as saying in a tweet by his office.

Weather
High 33 Low 16

Ravindra Jadeja & Ashwin send Australia spinning to defeat

New Delhi, Feb 19:

Ravindra Jadeja led the demolition of Australia with the ball as India triumphed by six wickets inside three days in the second Test to retain the Border-Gavaskar Trophy with a 2-0 lead in the four-match series on Sunday.

Australia started the day effectively 62 for 1, had India worried as they raced to 86 for 2, then lost their last eight wickets for 28 runs, as India went on to win a Test that seemed lost on more than one occasion, retaining the Border-Gavaskar Trophy in the process. Ravindra Jadeja registered his best Test figures, 7 for 42, and his second 10-wicket match haul; the other three second-innings wickets went to R Ashwin, who had looked more threatening when Australia were running away with the game. The

Indian bowler Ravindra Jadeja celebrates with teammate Mohammed Siraj after the wicket of Australian batter Matthew Kuhnemann.



sweep, which resulted in six wickets in the second

innings, had actually put India under immense pres-

sure. At one point, Australia had scored 71 runs off 27 sweeps for just two wickets. Usman Khawaja and Marnus Labuschagne had used it to distract India, forcing them to put fielders back for the shot. It was the shot that opened up the field for Labuschagne as Australia had India worried: Jadeja went for 31 in his first six overs, Ashwin was going over four himself, and Australia looked set to go well past 150, which would have been a challenging target on this pitch.

Chasing 115 for victory, India's top order did wobble but the meagre target meant their victory, which came in the second session on day three, was never in doubt. Skipper Rohit Sharma made 31 and Cheteshwar Pujara, who made 31 not out, scored the winning run in his 100th Test.

CRPF constable shoots himself dead

Dantewada, Feb 19:

A jawan of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) allegedly committed suicide by shooting himself with his service weapon in Dantewada district, police said on Sunday. The incident took place on Saturday night at the headquarters of the CRPF's 195th battalion in Barsoor police station area, around 400 km away from capital Raipur, an official said.

The jawan succumbed to injuries at a hospital in Raipur at 1.40 am on Sunday, he said. "Constable Gunin Das, belonging to CRPF's 195th battalion, shot himself with an Insas rifle at his barrack in the unit. On hearing the gunshot, his

colleagues rushed there and found him seriously injured," he said.

He was immediately taken to the unit's hospital, from where he was shifted to Dantewada district hospital. Later, he was airlifted to Raipur and admitted to a private hospital where he died during treatment, he added. Das, a native of Assam, had joined the duty on Saturday after returning from leave, he said. "No suicide note was found at the spot and investigation is underway to ascertain the exact reason that prompted him to take the extreme step," he added. The CRPF is extensively deployed in south Bastar, which comprises three districts, including Dantewada, for anti-Naxalite operations.

'India's rising population a ticking time bomb'

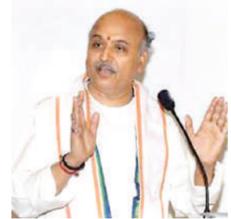
■ Requires law for its control

Raipur, Feb 19:

Former Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP) leader Pravin Togadia on Sunday described India's rising population as a "ticking time bomb" and stressed the need to formulate a law to prevent its explosion and the resulting adverse effects.

He also expressed hope that Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah will introduce a law for population control and the Uniform Civil Code (UCC) ahead of next year's parliamentary elections.

Togadia, president of



Pravin Togadia

Antarrashtriya Hindu Parishad, was talking to reporters in Chhattisgarh's capital Raipur ahead of addressing a public meeting in Basna area of state's Mahasamund district.

When asked about the demand to bring a population control law, Togadia said, "The rising population and population imbalance are a time bomb and when it ex-

SENSATIONAL CLAIM

'EC's decision on Sena symbol a Rs 2,000 cr deal'

Mumbai, Feb 19 (PTI):

Shiv Sena (Uddhav Balasaheb Thackeray) leader Sanjay Raut on Sunday claimed a "deal of Rs 2000 crore" has taken place so far to "purchase" the Shiv Sena party name and its 'bow and arrow' symbol.

However, MLA Sada Sarvankar from the camp led by Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde dismissed the claim and asked, "Is Sanjay Raut a cashier?"

Raut in a tweet claimed the Rs 2,000 crore was a preliminary figure and this was 100 per cent true. He also told reporters that a builder close to the ruling dispensation shared this information with him.

The Rajya Sabha member said his claim was backed by proof which he would disclose soon.

The Election Commission on Friday



Sanjay Raut

recognised the Eknath Shinde-led faction as the real Shiv Sena and ordered allocation of the 'bow and arrow' poll symbol to it.

In a 78-page order on the protracted battle for control of the organisation, the EC allowed the Uddhav Thackeray faction to keep the "flaming torch" poll symbol allocated to it till the completion of the Assembly bypolls in the state.

Raut on Sunday said Rs 2,000 crore is not a small amount to "purchase" the name Shiv Sena. "The EC's decision is a deal," he al-

What proof.....

Raut in a tweet claimed the Rs 2,000 crore was a preliminary figure and this was 100 per cent true. He also told reporters that a builder close to the ruling dispensation shared this information with him. The Rajya Sabha member said his claim was backed by proof which he would disclose soon. "Many things will be revealed shortly. Never before this has happened in the country's history," Raut tweeted.

Shinde camp dismisses allegation

However, MLA Sada Sarvankar from the camp led by Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde dismissed the claim and asked, "Is Sanjay Raut a cashier?"

leged. "I have reliable information that there has been a deal of Rs 2000 crore to get the Shiv Sena name and its symbol.

Naxalites torch three machines

■ Engaged in road construction work

Kanker, Feb 19:

Women Naxalites have set blaze three machines engaged in road construction work in Chhattisgarh's Kanker district, police said on Sunday.

No one was injured in the incident which took place on Saturday evening between Kamteda and Gattakal villages under Partapur police station limits, about 200 km from the state capital Raipur. A d d i t i o n a l Superintendent of Police (Pakhanjore) Dharendra Patel said.

The road construction work was being carried out under the Prime Minister Gram Sadak Yojna. According to pre-

liminary information, a group of armed women Naxalites, clad in uniform, stormed the construction site, threatened the workers to stop the work and snatched their mobile phones, the official said. The Naxalites then set ablaze two earth-moving machines and a mixture machine and fled, he said.

Soon after being alerted, a police team was sent to the spot, Patel said, adding a search operation was underway there to trace the culprits.

Naxalites have frequently tried to disrupt road construction works in Chhattisgarh's Bastar division, which consists of seven districts including Kanker; by launching attacks on security forces and damaging the roads, vehicles and machines used in the work, according to police.

DISPLAY OF SKILL



Martial artists show their skills during the Kalaripayattu competition, at the Central Stadium in Thiruvananthapuram.

Rijju pitches for institutional arbitration

■ Says AI can help arbitrators

New Delhi, Feb 19 (PTI):

Law Minister Kiren Rijju on Sunday batted for institutional arbitration in the country and pointed at loopholes in "ad hoc" arbitration, saying such proceedings are susceptible to court interventions which delay the final outcome.

He also said artificial intelligence (AI) can help arbitrators in tasks such as document review and analysis, legal research, and drafting of awards.

Addressing a Delhi Arbitration Weekend event at the Delhi High Court, he said majority of the people go for "ad hoc" arbitrations where the



proceedings are not governed by pre-determined rules.

As a result, these proceedings are susceptible to court intervention at various stages which leads to delay in final decision for the parties involved. On the other hand, Rijju pointed out, institutional arbitrations are regulated by the rules of an institution that provide for a

more structured and secure process.

In addition, parties can benefit from the expertise of the arbitral institution having good quality infrastructure, he said.

He said the government's Vision 2030 is to see arbitration space remain dynamic, amendable to adopting best practices, as also conscious of the needs of time-bound and final adjudication of contractual disputes.

With the emphasis on institutional arbitration, it is essential that new arbitration centres are set up in non-metro cities, he felt.

The whole system of institutional arbitration is crucial in creating and enhancing the 'Ease of Doing Business' (EoDB) environment, he stressed.

PM TO BUREAUCRATS

'Break silos, redress grievances'

New Delhi, Feb 19 (PTI):

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has asked employees of the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions to break down silos and redress grievances with a human touch for nation-building. "Break silos, increase teamwork, rise above hierarchies & redress grievances with a human touch," he was quoted saying in a "chintan shivir" or a brainstorming session organised for the ministry's officials on Saturday. The PM on Saturday addressed the officials. Some details of the deliberations were made public by the government on Sunday.

'Modi taking forward Shivaji Maharaj's work'

Pune, Feb 19 (PTI):

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Sunday hailed Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj for rebuilding the temples destroyed during the rule of Mughals and other foreign invaders, and said the restoration work that continued after the Maratha warrior king is being taken forward by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

He also said that Chhatrapati Shivaji's life was all about revolting against the atrocities, and the fight for 'swaraj' (self-rule) started by him continues still today. Shah was speaking after inaugurating



the first phase of 'Shivrushti', a theme park based on the life of Shivaji Maharaj at Narhe-Ambegaon in Pune, on the occasion of the birth anniversary of the founder of the Maratha empire. Chief Minister Eknath Shinde and Deputy CM Devendra Fadnis were also present on the occasion. The project, which is spread over 21 acres of land, was conceptualised by Padma Vibhushan awardee Shivshahir Babasaheb Purandare, who formed the Maharaja Chhatrapati Pratishthan for its execution. "Several temples were destroyed during the rule of Mughals and other foreign invaders. Last week, Goa Chief Minister Pramod Sawant did the redevelopment of Saptakoteswar temple, which was reconstructed by Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj. Similarly, the temples in south India were also redeveloped by the Maratha warrior king. Shivaji Maharaj constructed grand gates in front of the temples and tried to restore these structures," Shah said.

'No Oppn unity possible without Cong'

■ Plenary Session to give direction to such plans

New Delhi, Feb 19 (PTI):

Ahead of its plenary this week, the Congress on Sunday said the party top brass will deliberate and give direction on ways to forge opposition unity during the three-day conclave, asserting that any such effort without it would be unsuccessful.

The plenary session in Chhattisgarh's Nava Raipur will start from February 24 and is expected to be attended by around 15,000 delegates.

Congress general secretary organisation K C Venugopal said the party's



Congress leaders Jairam Ramesh and K.C. Venugopal during a press conference regarding the 85th Plenary Session of Congress, at AICC headquarters in New Delhi, Sunday.

steering committee would meet on the first day of the session and decide whether elections would be held for the party's top decision-making body -- the Congress Working Committee (CWC), a demand made by some from within the organisation.

Agenda of plenary session.....

Venugopal said the agenda for the three-day 85th plenary session of the party from February 24 to 26 would be finalised in the steering committee meeting to be held on the first day and thereafter, the subjects committee will give final shape to the resolutions to be adopted. He said this will be the party's first plenary session to be held outside Delhi since the last one in Hyderabad in 2005. Venugopal termed the plenary session an "important milestone" in the journey towards the 2024 parliamentary elections and that around 15,000 delegates from across the country will participating in it.

Attendance of session

Venugopal termed the plenary session an "important milestone" in the journey towards the 2024 parliamentary elections and that around 15,000 delegates from across the country will participating in it. Giving the break-up of the number of delegates, he said there are 1,338 All India Congress Committee delegates and 487 co-opted ones, which comes to a total of 1,825 delegates. Besides, there will be a total of 9,915 Pradesh Congress Committee delegates attending the session, Venugopal said.

The Congress knows its role in bringing together various opposition parties for forging an alliance

ahead of the 2024 Lok Sabha elections to take on the BJP and oust it from power; he said.

Several irregularities found in surprise inspection at Club & Bar

Lisztomania at Surya Mall closed till further orders



Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Feb 19: On the instructions of Collector Pushpendra Kumar Meena, SDM (Durg) Laxman Tiwari conducted a surprise inspection at Lisztomania Bar and Club located in Surya Treasure Island Mall in Junwani. Several irregularities were found in the club.

The club had appointed more employees than the license, stored cigarettes without permission and the restaurant was being run without the license of

the Food Department. Led by SDM Durg, the inspection was conducted by a joint team of Food and Drug, Excise, Revenue and Police Departments.

Lisztomania Bar and Club is located on the third floor of Surya Mall, Junwani. The team found that the vegetarian and non-vegetarian food items were stored in open containers one above another. A huge amount of garbage and empty liquor bottles were kept on the terrace.

The club has only one counter permit but two



counters were being operated by the club in different floors. The dust area below the washroom of the third floor is open, which is extremely dangerous. The club has only 07 staff licenses but only 01 licensed staff was present to work. In addition to this 47 persons were found working in the club without license.

Food license and Gumasta license were not found and the manager was unable to produce the documents. Large quantity of cigarettes was stored

in the counter without a license. The club had not got the Police verification of the working staff. Large quantity of Hologram stickers was found, which can be affixed to any bottle.

This can cause revenue loss to the Government. No document of any staff working in the club was found. The stock register of liquor, which has to be kept on the counter, was not found. Further, the register of holograms was also not maintained.

The club management

was unable to produce a license for operating DJ, FSSAI license, etc. It is mandatory for the licensee to display the license of the Department of Food and Drugs at the workplace, but it was not found.

The department has collected samples of mutton curry, which will be sent to the State Food Testing Laboratory for examination. Food License, Gumasta license and Cigarette license were not made available by the club on the spot. Later, with the consent of all the people present on the spot and the club director, the club was closed till further orders.

Panchnama was prepared and it was read aloud before all the present persons before getting it signed by them. The club was locked and its keys were handed over to the Food Safety Officer of the Food and Drug Department.

Seventh batch of tribal youth departs for Varanasi



Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Jan 19: With the objectives of providing exposure to the tribal youth and make them understand the cultural ethos, language, lifestyle of the people, socio-economic and cultural development, and the unity in the diversity aspect of our national life, the Border Security Force has sent a group of

tribal youth from Kanker for an exposure visit to Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh. Under the 14th Tribal Youth Exchange Programme, Border Security Force has selected and sent 20 tribal youth for this tour. It is the seventh group of tribal youth sent on tour of other cities under this programme. The group of tribal youth is being accompanied by

one female and one male officer / personnel of Border Security Force. BSF is organising fourteen such tours this year for about 290 youth. IG Indraj Singh (BSF Frontier Headquarters, Special Operations, Chhattisgarh) and DIG (Intelligence) Dinesh Murmu have extended greetings and best wishes to the selected youth.

Durg Police nabs kingpin of interstate gang of thieves

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Feb 19: Durg Police camped in Uttar Pradesh for about seven days and succeeded in arresting the kingpin of an interstate gang of thieves. The accused was wanted in connection with a theft incident which occurred in Dhamdha.

On the basis of CCTV footage, Police managed to identify the accused. Police have arrested another notorious thief of this gang. They committed thefts / lifting in Durg, Raipur, Balod, Dhamtari, Bhatgaon, Ambikapur, Bareilly, Khandwa, Butibori, Kotar and other places.

SP Dr Abhishek Pallava



informed that they had received a complaint from Vijendra Singh Baghel of Dhamdha regarding theft of Rs 3.50 lakh from his car on June 07, 2022. The car was parked in front of a Bank and the unidentified thieves had broken the window glass to steal the

cash. The second FIR was lodged by one Fatte Lal Sahu regarding theft of Rs 3 lakh from his bike's dicky. The incident had occurred on December 14, 2022. Police examined the CCTV footage and identified the suspects as Amar of Patthalgaon who was

presently residing in Kanpur and Chandrabhan of Khamrod, Budhar. Two different teams were sent to Kanpur and Khamrod to search for the accused. The police teams made sustained efforts and managed to arrest them. They confessed to have committed thefts at several places in the last two years.

The accused are identified as Amar alias Pappur (32) son of Habbu Nat a resident of Diwanpur, Patthalgaon; and Chandrabhan Nat (38) son of Sudhan Nat a resident of Khamrod, Budhar, Madhya Pradesh. They were produced before the court and have been to jail on judicial remand.

Maharudram marks Mahashivratri celebration at Skandashram

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Feb 19: On the occasion of Mahashivratri, Maharudram was organised from February 15-19, 2023 at Skandashram in Hudco. This was the 14th year of Mahashivratri festival celebration at the Skandashram.

Maharudram was chanted both in the morning and evening. Maharudram (Akhand) chanting was done continuously from 01:00 hrs on February 18 to 04:45 hrs on February 19. Havan Kalash Abhishekam and Mahadeep worship of Lord Shiva were performed from 10:00 hrs on February 19. Giving de-



tailed information through a press communique the media incharge Surendra Singh Kembo explained that Maharudram includes Rudram and Chamkam performed 11 times by 11 Vedacharyas; 11 times Rudrabhiksek; Rudram and Chamkam are chanted 121 times by 11

Vedacharyas for Ekadashi Rudrabhiksek. Maharudram happens when 11 Vedacharyas chant Rudram and Chamkam 11 times in 11 kaals. This was the 14th year of Skandashram Maharudram. Maharudram chanting

was performed by Brahmarshree Bhagyaraj Shatrigal of Salem Tamil Nadu and his associate Shastris. The celebrations of Mahashivratri in Skandashram concluded on Sunday under the guidance of Acharya Shri Maniswamy, the founder of Skandashram.

Payal Jain becomes first woman chairperson of ICAI Bhilai

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Feb 19: The swearing-in ceremony of the new executive body of CA Bhilai branch is being organised on February 21 at the CA Bhawan Civic Centre. Under the new executive of ICAI Bhilai branch, CA Payal Jain will take over as the first woman chairperson of any branch in the history of Chhattisgarh, whereas CA Rahul Batra will take over as Vice President, CA Ankesh Sinha as Secretary, CA Suraj Soni as Treasurer, CA Shivam Chaudhary as CICASA Chairman and CA Pradeep Pal as Executive Member. Present as chief guest will be CA JL Jain, the first chairman of Bhilai branch while CA



CA Payal Jain

Kishore Bardia, vice chairman of the Central India Regional Council and Cicasa chairman CA Anil Yadav will be present as special guests. CA Jai Chhaira from Surat will be present as key speaker, who will give tips on life, profession and business management to the attendees.

Divyang National Cricket Tournament inauguration today

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Feb 19: Shaheed Veer Narayan Singh Indian Divyang Cricket T-20 Champions Trophy Tournament will be inaugurated on February 20, 2023 at the Cricket Ground in Indira Place, Civic Centre. The tournament will be inaugurated jointly by Anirban Das Gupta, Director I/C, Bhilai Steel Plant and Dr Abhishek Pallava, Superintendent of Police, Durg. All the four team participating in the tournament have reached and preparations have also been completed, informed Arun Shrivastava, President, Chhattisgarh Divyang Cricket Association, in a press communique.

'Bhole Baba Ki Baraat' finds place in Golden Book of World Records

Bol Bum Sewa Samiti celebrates Mahashivratri in a magnificent manner



Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Feb 19: Bol Bum Sewa and Kalyan Samiti celebrated Mahashivratri in a grand manner for the fifteenth consecutive year. The marriage procession of Bhole Baba was taken out and the marriage of Lord Shiva and Goddess Parvati was performed. This year, the event "Bhole Baba Ki Baraat" made it to the Golden Book of World Records with the involvement of 151 tableaux. The second record in

the Golden Book was for the highest number of devotees dressing up as "Shiv Gans".

This mega religious event was held on the occasion of Mahashivratri. The grandeur of this event attracts the devotees from different districts of the state. Several dignitaries including former CM Dr Raman Singh, Rajya Sabha member Dr Saroj Pandey, Bollywood celebrity Rimi Sen, BJP District President Brijesh Bichpuria, Brahmakumari Centre Bhilai Director Asha

Didi, Corporator Rikesh Sen and BJP leaders attended the programme.

This year, the organisers had made special arrangements. Tableaux of Kerala were the centre of attraction in the marriage procession of Lord Shiva. The artists were dressed as Lord Shiva, Maa Parvati, Ganesha, Lord Hanuman and other deities.

Tableaux from Vijayawada, Andhra Pradesh also attracted the attention of audiences. Tableaux from different dis-

tricts of Chhattisgarh participated in the procession. Devotees had the glimpses of Ram Darbar, Shri Krishna Leela, Shiv Tandav, Shiv - Parvati Vivah, Radha Krishna and much more. Raut Nacha, Akhada, Panthi, DJ, Dhumaal, Band Party, etc created a devotional atmosphere.

The procession began from Indira Nagar (Hathkhaj) after offering prayers at Ram Janki Mandir. The procession moved across Transport Nagar, Canal Road, Kartikeya Chowk, Bol

Bum Chowk, Nandi Triangle, Zone 1 Shiv mandir and concluded at Durga Puja Ground in Khursipar where the symbolic marriage of Lord Shiva and Goddess Parvati was conducted. This was followed by a reception party for the devotees.

Samiti President Daya Singh appreciated and thanked the office bearers, youth wing, women's wing and members of the Bol Bum Sewa and Kalyan Samiti for their significant efforts in making the programme a grand success.

CPL-T20: 5 wicket win for Bhilai Indians, Abujmand Tigers victory of 82 runs

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Feb 19: In the Chhattisgarh Premier League CPL -T20, being organized under the joint aegis of Chhattisgarh Cricket Council and Veer Sports Club, the first match was played between CV Raman Naya Raipur Challengers and HTC Bhilai Indians at Bhilai Sector 1 Cricket Stadium on the ninth day.

After winning the toss, Naya Raipur decided to bat first and scored 136 runs on the loss of 9 wickets in the stipulated 20 overs. The maximum contribution of runs came from Yash who scored 58 runs and Deepak with a score of 33 runs. Bowling



for Bhilai Indians, Brijesh took 4 important wickets. Chasing the score set up by Raipur Challengers, Bhilai Indian reached the target with 5 wickets to spare in 19.1 overs in a thrilling match. Anup scored 52 runs and Brijesh scored 23 runs. Brijesh was adjudged man of the match, informed Praveen Jain, President of Chhattisgarh Pradesh Congress Committee



Sports Cell and Organizing Committee. The second match was played between Athena Abujmad Tigers and Abis Rajnandgaon Royals. Batting first after winning the toss, Abujmad Tigers put up a total of 200 runs on the loss of 8 wickets in the stipulated 20 overs. Chandrahas scored 60 runs on 35 balls and Ashwini

scored 36 runs on 21 balls for the team. While bowling for Rajnandgaon Royals, Sumit and Jackie took three wickets each. In reply, the Rajnandgaon Royals were bowled out for 118 runs in 18.2 overs. Santosh took 4 wickets, Babul got 2 wickets for Abujmad. Thus, Abujmad Tigers won the match by 82 runs. Chandrahas was adjudged man of the match.

Comprehensive work being done to develop pilgrimage sites of the state: CM

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Feb 19: "We are doing extensive work in the direction of developing the pilgrimage sites of the state. Beautification work is being done at Thakurain Tola to the tune of Rs 3 crore and Laxman Jhula is to be made at a cost of Rs 17 crore. This temple was inaugurated by Saint Pawan Diwan. With every passing year the number of pilgrims visiting the temple is increasing rapidly", stated Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel while addressing the devotees after offering prayers to Lord Shiva in the temple at Thakurain Tola village on the occasion of Mahashivratri.

The Chief Minister asserted that development work is being



done in an area of 55 acres in our important pilgrimage centre Rajim. Accommodation facilities will be available for the passengers coming to the fair after this. Earlier, the fair used to spread till the banks of the river, due to

which there was a possibility of trouble due to filling of murrum in the river.

Now this problem will be solved with the new campus. The Chief Minister said that Ram Van Gaman area is being devel-

oped in nine pilgrimage centers between Koriya to Ramaram of Sukma. Shivrinarayan, Chandkhuri and Rajim pilgrimage sites have also been developed. The work of infrastructure development and beautification has been done in the only temple of Kaushalya Mata in the country. As a result, the number of pilgrims visiting the temple has increased.

The Chief Minister also mentioned that the state has also witnessed rapid economic progress and better infrastructure is there in the field of education and health. Satisfaction is our first priority, he added. He also praised the work done by Nishad Samaj for the development of the temple complex.

CM attends 53rd annual sammelan of DKKS

Makes many declarations

Balod, Feb 19:

Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel attended the 53rd annual sammelan of 'Dilliwar Kurmi Kshatriya Samaj' (DKKS) at Gram Parastarai of Balod district here on Sunday. During this he made declaration of construction work worth Rs 1 crore for community building of 'Kurmi Samaj' and Rs 25 lakh for construction of crematorium, waiting room and approach road in Gram Parastarai as per demand by the Sarpanch. On this occasion Parliamentary Secretary and MLA Gunderdehi Kunwar Singh Nishad, Sanjari-Balod MLA Sangeeta Sinha, V-P State Labour Welfare Board Keshav Buntty Harmukh, President District Panchayat Sonadevi



Deshlahara, President Krishi Upaj Mandi Balod Bholaram Deshmukh, Central President DKKS Dr Rajendra Harmukh, senior social worker Hardev Dilliwar, society's parvon Ram Sahai Deshmukh, and other public representatives were present. On this occasion CM also unveiled the statue of Chhatrapati Shivaji and expressed happiness on hearing to know that the statue of Shivaji has been painted with

'Gobar paint'. During this CM highlighted about the unparalleled valour, patriotism, morality and human sentiments of Chhatrapati Shivaji.

He said that even though Shivaji's army was small, but the morale, discipline and patriotism was immense. It was just with his small army that he faced the Mughals with courage and valour. On this occasion highlighting about the characteristics of Dilliwar

Samaj said that they are known for their fooding, lifestyle and trade. Baghel said that he feels honoured being part of this programme and expressed gratitude towards the Samaj and its members. On this occasion Dilliwar Samaj weighed CM along with dishes of Chhattisgarh. On this occasion CM also extended greetings to the youth from Samaj for excelling in various fields and joining different government services. In this programme Collector Kuldeep Sharma, SP JK Yadav, Mahila Samiti President Preeti Deshmukh, Yuwa Samiti President Yogeshwar Deshmukh, general secy. Ashok Kumar Deshmukh, and members of Dilliwar Samaj were present in large number.

National-level seminar held in Science College



Raipur, Feb 19: A national seminar on 'Current Trends and Prospects in Botany' was organized by Department of Botany, Govt. Nagarjuna PG (Autonomous) College of Science, Raipur, on Feb 16 sponsored by CGCOST. The patron of this seminar was principal Dr P.C. Choubey, convener Dr R. Diwan, organizing secretaries Dr VK Kanungo and Dr Suneeta Patra, co-conveners Dr Sangeeta Bajpai and Dr N.B. Singh. Dr KL Verma Vice Chancellor Pt. R.S.U. Raipur was the chief uuest, Arun Pandey (IFS) was the special guest and principal Dr P.C Choubey was the chairman of the inaugural function.

Souvenir was also released on this occasion The keynote address was given by Dr. L.B. Choudhary from NBRI Lucknow. In the technical sessions of Feb 16-17 the invited talks were given by Dr. Sudhir Pandey, Dr. SK Jadhav, Dr. DK Shrivastava Dr. T. Shrinivasa from Nagpur, Dr. Satish Verulkar IGVV Raipur, Dr. DK Kappate Paleobotanist from Bhandara, Dr. MP Thakur, Dr. ML Naik and Dr. Veenapani Dubey. There were 3 oral presentation and 1 poster presentation sessions for participants. Best three oral and poster presentations were given certificates and cash prizes and one consolation prize was given for

the poster presentation as well. First prize for oral presentation was sponsored by Dr Preeti Tiwari and rest of the prizes were sponsored by organizing department. In the valedictory function the chief was Dr ML Naik, special guest Dr Amit Dubey Scientist D CGCOST and Chairman Dr P.C.Panda. The feedback of the seminar was given by the participants. Faculty members of department and other departments and from different colleges were present in this occasion. There were near about 200 participants and delegates from all over India and 70 abstracts were submitted for the souvenir.

12-year-old girl raped and murdered

Raipur, Feb 19: A case of rape and murder of a minor has come to light in the Arang police station area of the capital Raipur. The dead body of the girl was found near a bore in a field located in Gudguda village. During interrogation, it was found that a young man living in his own neighborhood strangled the girl after raping her. He has been arrested by the police. The deceased girl was studying in the 6th class in the village school. She was only 12 years old. Young man is also a student studying in class 12th. At the time of the incident, the girl was playing in the field just 300 meters away from the house. The intention of the neighboring young man from the village itself was not right towards the girl. Seeing the minor girl playing alone near the farm, he took advantage of the opportunity and raped her. It is being told that when the girl cried for help during the incident, he told her not to disclose the incident to anyone. When the girl resisted him and did not listen, he got angry and hit her head 3-4 times on the borewell. Girl's head was bleeding. After that he strangled her. The police found serious injury marks on the head and neck in the body of the deceased. After the incident, young man fled from the spot. As soon as the news of the dead body was received, Arang police actively questioned the people of the village. It was found that the last time the girl was seen roaming with that boy. Police searched and nabbed him. During interrogation, he confessed to the crime. He told his age as 19 years. Scrutiny of the mark sheet found that the boy was a few months short of turning 18. It has been learned that he committed crimes like one or two thefts in the past as well. Police registered a case of murder. He will now be produced in the court.

Eccentric man attacks girl with sharp-edged weapon

Drags her along road by her hair

Raipur, Feb 19:

An eccentric man entered the house of a minor girl and attacked her with a sharp-edged weapon in Gudhiyari area of Raipur. When the blood-soaked girl ran to save her life, the madman man chased her and started dragging her along the road by her hair. He also attacked himself. Police have arrested attacker.

According to girl's relatives, she used to work in the spice center of attacker Omkar Tiwari. Tiwari allegedly told the girl's mother 'give me your daughter, I will keep her as a wife'. Girl's family refused it. Angered by this, Omkar Tiwari carried out the incident.

Relatives told that on Saturday night the eccentric Omkar Tiwari entered their house with a sharp-edged weapon. He misbehaved with the family members and beat up the girl before attacking her with a sharp edged weapon. The girl sustained injuries on her

neck and other parts of her body. Blood-soaked girl ran outside to escape. But she fell on the road as soon as she ran. The family members of the girl also kept trying to handle her. By then the eccentric man again attacked the girl. Police arrested Tiwari. The victim is undergoing treatment.

According to Alexander Kiro, in-charge of Gudhiyari police station, Omkar Tiwari wanted to marry minor girl but she was continuously denying. They had a dispute on this issue for the last few months. Eventually Tiwari made a fatal attack on the girl. Offence has been registered against him under the Arms Act. Omkar Tiwari alias Manoj (47) resides in Bada Ashok Nagar area near Durga Chowk Anganwadi of Gudhiyari. Tiwari runs a shop named Masala Center in Gudhiyari area itself. The girl had reached 6 months ago in September 2022 to work in his shop. On being fed up with harassment and molestation in Masala Center she left the job.

Over 101 lakh MT paddy lifted for custom milling

Raipur, Feb 19: More than 101 lakh metric tonnes of paddy has been lifted for custom milling so far. DO has been issued for the lifting of more than 104 lakh metric tonnes of paddy. This year, 107.53 lakh metric tonnes of paddy has been successfully procured from the farmers at the support price. With paddy procurement, the lifting of paddy started directly from procurement centers for custom milling this year. Due to all such works state government has seen a significant reduction in transportation expenditure. Long process of paddy lifting after procurement of paddy has also been relieved. The state government has procured 107.53 lakh metric tonnes of paddy from more than 23 lakh 42 thousand farmers till January 31, 2023. Amount of 22 thousand 67 crore has been paid to the farmers for the procurement of paddy.

Millets will be included in the mid-day meal prog

Raipur, Feb 19: Government of India has approved Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel's proposal of including millets under the mid day meal scheme. Now four days a week, under Pradhanmantri Poshan Shakti Yojana, millet based food products will be distributed in place of soya chikki in 12 districts of Chhattisgarh. As per the vision of Chhattisgarh Government, Directorate of public instructions had sent a proposal to Government of India to partially amend the scheme and distribute Millet-based food products in place of soya chikki. This proposal has been approved by the

Director, PM Poshan, Government of India. It is not worthy that farmers in Chhattisgarh are being encouraged to produce millets. Millets such as kudo kutki Ragi are being procured at support price. Moreover, millets producing farmers of the state are being provided input subsidy of Rs 9 thousand. Year 2023 has been declared as the international millet year. It is noteworthy that in the annual action plan of Pradhan Mantri Poshan Shakti Nirman Yojana, central government has sanctioned Rs 1787.20 lakh as Centre's share and Rs 1198.14 lakh as State's share for distribution of soya chikki as nutrient supplement to the children of the state for 55 days. In this way, a total of Rs 2995.34 lakh has been approved for this purpose.

NIT DoA Raipur organizes Archifest -23

Raipur, Feb 19: National Institute of Technology (NIT) Raipur's Department of Architecture (DoA) organized Archifest'23, its two-day annual fest, on 18th and 19th February 2023. The fest was organized under the adept guidance of Dr. Swasti Sthapak, Head of Department, DoA and was coordinated under the supervision of Mr. Sachin Kumar Sahu, Assistant Professor, DoA. The fest was inaugurated on day one by Dr. Debashis Sanyal, Associate Professor, DoA with a lamp lighting ceremony in the name of Maa Saraswati. Dr. D. Sanyal congratulated the students for the successful organization of the fest. Students were divided into four groups, namely, "The Black Cat", "The Gold Bug", "The Pit and the Pendulum" and the "Cask of Amantillado" and various events such as "Jugaad", "Quiz Competition", "Film Making Workshop" and "Vogue - Tips

and Tricks to Sell Your Design" were organized on day one. Day two comprised of competitions such as "Debate", "Sculpture Making", "Treasure Hunt" and "Story Making - Comic Sketch". Distinct cultural and on-spot events were also organized on day one and day two respectively. The fest came to an end with the organization of Aanand Mela and closing ceremony on day two. Team "Pit and the Pendulum" emerged as overall winners, and prizes were distributed to the winners of the other competitions. Numerous student-led exhibitions, seminars and guest lectures were organized over the course of two days. The two-day event was not only open to students, but also, aspiring architects or students who were just curious about the field and it ended successfully, helping the attendees immerse in the world of design and be a part of a supportive community.

LOVED IN

COUNTRIES

THE WORLD'S FAVORITE INDIAN

WHEN IS A *pulsar* MORE THAN A *pulsar*?

When traffic-leading torque comes in a breathtaking aerodynamic avatar.

When a road-taming monoshock suspension comes with a night-piercing LED projector headlamp.

And when all of the above comes with the familiar exhilarating rush that comes through at the twist of the throttle.

That's when a *pulsar* becomes more than *pulsar*!

INTRODUCING THE NEXT GEN *pulsar* 150.

ATTRACTIVE DOWN PAYMENT OF ₹ 16943/-

72198 21111 | BAJAJ FINANCE LTD. AF | BAJAJ SECURE | *Terms and conditions apply. *Down payment for Pulsar P150 SD variant. Down payment is excluding processing fees & other charges and is based on fulfillment of credit parameters. Finance at sole discretion of the financier. Bajaj Auto reserves the right to withdraw any or all offers without prior notice. Stunts have been performed by experts, under professional supervision, in a controlled and enclosed environment, in isolation from general public or public roads. Please do not attempt to replicate these stunts and always follow traffic and safety rules. AMC available on specific models and in specific states. Check with Bajaj dealer for more details. Road Side Assistance is provided by third parties and is subject to their terms and conditions.

Authorised Dealers for Bajaj Auto Ltd.: Bilaspur: Tifra Over bridge TRIPUR BAJAJ 9752133444, 07752- 400444 • Naya Sarkanda KHANDELWAL BAJAJ 9300998989, 9165552222 • Old Bus Stand TRIPUR BAJAJ 7999848912, 419333 • Mungeli : KHANDELWAL BAJAJ 9399021705, 07755299124 • Ambikapur LAXMI BAJAJ 231501,9074816511 • Janjgir SHREE SALASAR BAJAJ 9179981000 • Champa 9926012330 • Korba TIRUPATI BAJAJ 6232103042, 7879313041 • Dipka TIRUPATI BAJAJ 6232103063 • Raigarh JINDAL BAJAJ 9589905646,7067109202 • Jashpur JINDAL BAJAJ 8817775566, Baikunthpur KOREA BAJAJ 7089904408. Authorised Service Centre: Akaltara 9300672917, Bagicha 8889105139, Bagbahar 9340462499, Baloda 9926165736, Baramkela 9329337258, Balrampur 6261982600, Baradwar 9131988365, Batouli 8817294969, Bhaiyathan 8717818700, Bishrampur 07441143400, Chakarbhata 7415967052, Churcha 7828109004, Jajjapur9098505388, Jarhi 8959616468, Kansabel 9993641010, Katghora 9981527526, Kharasia 7771078078, Kota 9424158177, Kusmi 07693929918, Kusmunda 8516960508, Lalilunga 9424187790, Lormi 9399021708, Manendragarh 9893808250, Nawagarh 9981550386, Pali 7489606177, 9575370010, Pathalgaon 9424180227, Pendra 8109692873, Pratappur 7509007575, Pussore 9993223334, Pathariya 7987188192, Rahod 9926909427, Rajpur 7000810536, Ramanujanji 9977907755, Ratanpur 9399998235, Sakri 9752133444, Sargaon 7089006614, Shakti 9300373738, Saranggarh 9300566800, Seepat 9926569656, Surajpur 8319944087, Takhatpur 9893742811, Urga 7773000774, Seorinarayan-9926907321, Sitapur 8109861007, Wadrafnagar 750900664, Shrinagar 7987897837.

CM unveils statue of Chhatrapati Shivaji

Cheques worth Rs 4.70 crore distributed to beneficiaries under various public welfare schemes

Rs 2.84 cr returned to 4,309 investors of the chit fund company

Rajnandgaon, Feb 19:

Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel unveiled the statue of Chhatrapati Shivaji at Chhatrapati Shivaji Park located in Budhasagar of district headquarters Rajnandgaon. On this occasion, Chief Minister Baghel distributed cheques worth Rs. 4.70 cr to the beneficiaries of various public welfare schemes of the government. Besides, he also gave away the certificates of Chhattisgarh Anadhikrit Vikas Ka Niyamitkaran Adhuniyaam (Regularization of Chhattisgarh's Unauthorised Development). Chief Minister also handed over the cheques worth Rs 2.84 cr to the 4,309 investors who were duped by the chit fund company Sahara India.

In his address, Chief Minister Baghel stated that the statue was unveiled in commemoration of the historical figure Chhatrapati Veer Shivaji.



In this program, funds are being distributed to the beneficiaries under several government initiatives. He stated that today, 4,309 investors of Sahara India received the cheques of total Rs 2.84 cr. Chhattisgarh is the first state to take action against chit fund companies and refund the money to the investors. He stated that the government runs several public welfare initiatives for the general public. The speed of development in Chhattisgarh's vil-

lages, cities, and towns has accelerated. The government is always attempting to improve health, education, and sanitation. Farmers, businesses, and women are all benefiting from various programmes of the government, and Chhattisgarh is rapidly moving ahead on the path of development. Mr Baghel further said that through Bhent-Mulaqat campaign, he met social leaders, and sanctioned funds for several community buildings on their de-

mand. The purpose of social/community buildings is to promote societal fraternity, communal harmony, overall development and upliftment. Meanwhile, Mayor Hema Deshmukh said that the land of Rajnandgaon is the land of litterateurs. It is the land associated with litterateurs Dr. Padumlal Punna Lal Bakshi, Shri Gajanan Madhav Muktibodh, and Dr. Baldev Prasad Mishra. The statue of Shivaji in Sanskardhani Nagri is

now a symbol of bravery. She said that despite the COVID crisis, the pace of development remained uninterrupted. She heartily thanked Chief Minister for sanctioning an amount of Rs. 4 crores for the beautification of the city, Rs. 2 crores for the Punni Mela and Rs. 15 crores for social buildings to 11 societies.

In the program, Chairman Chhattisgarh State Rural and Other Backward Classes Areas Development Authority Daleswar Sahu, Khujji MLA Chhanni Sahu, Chairman Chhattisgarh State Antyavasaya Cooperative Finance and Development Corporation Dhanesh Patila, Chairman Chhattisgarh State Youth Commission Jitendra Mudaliar, Chairman District Cooperative Central Bank Maryadit Nawaz Khan, President Rajgami Estate Trust Vivek Wasnik, President of Municipal Corporation Rajnarayan Dheketa, along with many public representatives, officers and a large number of general public were present.

Raipur, Feb 19:

Taking an effective step towards creating a healthier environment in the state and curbing the growing trend of drug addiction among youth, Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel has declared the operation of hookah bars in the state as "illegal". The relevant law was amended with strict provisions to prevent the operation of hookah bars, which came into effect immediately. The decision was made after complaints were received regarding the high consumption of hookah, flavored substances, tobacco, and other addictive substances served in hookah bars operated in various eateries, hotels, and restaurants, especially by the youth. This practice is harmful to their health and also promotes addiction. In response to this unlawful activity, the Chief Minister, Shri Bhupesh Baghel, directed strict action against the hookah bars and the closure of all hookah bars in the state. Acting swiftly on the instructions of the Chief Minister, the police department took strict action against all hookah

CM takes unprecedented step toward curbing the growing trend of drug addiction among youth
Operation of hookah bars in Chhattisgarh is a non-bailable offense under amended law

bars, resulting in the closure of all hookah bars in the state. Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel has directed that the aforementioned law should be amended, taking into account the current situation, to prevent the younger generation from becoming addicted to such substances. Accordingly, the Chhattisgarh Government has prepared a draft for necessary amendments to the Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products (Prohibition of Advertisement and Regulation of Trade and Commerce, Production, Supply, and Distribution) Act, 2003. Competent permission was obtained after the amendment proposal of the Act was passed by the Chhattisgarh Legislative Assembly. The Act was published in the Chhattisgarh Gazette on February 10, 2023, by the

Chhattisgarh Law and Legislative Affairs Department. As per the amendments made under the Act, the operation of any kind of hookah bar has been prohibited in the state. In addition, smoking through hookah or 'shisha' in any communal hookah bar has also been banned. A provision has been made to seize any material or object used as a subject or means of use in the hookah bar if it is found to be in operation. Any person found operating a hookah bar will be charged with a non-bailable offense and can face imprisonment for up to 3 years, but not less than 1 year; and a fine of up to Rs 50,000, but not less than Rs 10,000. Similarly, any person found smoking through a hookah in a hookah bar will be fined up to Rs 5,000, but not less than Rs 1,000. These amendments made in the relevant Act have come into effect immediately.

The strict provisions of the law will establish effective control over the operation of hookah bars and the tendency to smoke hookah in groups in the hookah bars.

HNLU to organize lecture on Social Justice

Raipur, Feb 19:

Hidayatullah National Law University will be hosting the Ex Arca (Out of The Box) Digital Platform Lecture on 20.02.2023 at 6.30 P.M. on the occasion of World Day of Social Justice. Parminder Jeet Singh, Director, IT for Change has been invited as the Chief Guest for the event and will deliver a lecture on the topic of 'Digital Age Context of Social Justice'. The address will be delivered in online mode.

Social justice is enshrined in the Preamble to the Indian Constitution and thus plays an impor-



(Dr.) Uday Shankar, Registrar, HNLU. Opening remarks will be given by Prof. (Dr.) VC Vivekanandan, Vice-Chancellor of HNLU. The lecture will be followed by a question-answer session. A vote of thanks will be delivered by Amitesh Deshmukh, Assistant Professor, HNLU.

tant role in the Indian constitutional sentiments. The United Nations has designated February 20th as World Day of Social Justice, understanding social justice in a newer context would refresh the perspective this nation's forefathers brought forth.

The welcome address will be delivered by Prof.

The lecture will be attended by faculties, students and staff members of HNLU and IT for Change as also all the registered participants. The lecture will also be showcased live on the University's YouTube channel (https://youtube.com/hnluofficial).

Teachers' strike on pre-service enumeration today

Jagdalpur, Feb 19:

State Vice President of Chhattisgarh Teachers Association (CTA) Praveen Srivastava said that the Chief Minister had announced Old Pension Scheme (OPS) for all the employees. Under which deduction for OPS has been started by stopping NPS deduction of all teachers from April 2012. Now, after 10 months, the government is depriving thousands of teachers of their old pension by putting a clause that of government service. Due to this lakhs of teachers will get the eligibility for meager pension. Annoyed by this, Sanjay Sharma of Chhattisgarh Teachers' Association (CTA), Virendra Dubey of School Teachers' Association, Kedari Jain of United Teachers Association, Vikas Rajput of Naveen Teachers Association have formed 'Purv-Sewa Ganana Shiksha Morcha' (PSGSM) and announced a strike



on Feb 20. Due to not getting permission for statewide demonstration in Raipur, on Feb 20, teachers called for protest, demonstration, rally in all district headquarters. Due to which most of the teachers have given memorandum to remain on strike.

There will be lockout in thousands of schools on Feb 20 due to widespread teachers' strike. Because all LB cadre teachers are getting affected by the old pension. Along with this, teaching in schools will come to a standstill. Actually, old pension is calculated from the date of first

appointment, full pension after 20 years of service. The demand for pay discrepancy, promotion, promotion of assistant teachers, giving one time relaxation to the employer class is also included. There is a lot of anger among the teachers due to the order by the Finance Department and the Pension Branch to submit irrevocable option letters quickly. Many officials are talking about not giving salary without filling the option letter. Which is being said to be the sign of arbitrary. There is no order to stop salary without alternative. For this rea-

son, teachers have also clashed with many officials and there is anger among the teachers. The Chief Minister has abolished the NPS issued since 2004 with retrospective effect.

In such a situation, the LB cadre who have become government employees should get the benefit. But it is being said that by issuing new orders, the pension of the teachers who have joined after merger with the government school education department will be attacked. Teachers of all classes and cadres have united against this.

On February 20, all the district headquarters will take out a protest rally and hand over the demand letter to the Chief Minister.

Praveen Srivastava, Shiv Singh Chandel, Shiv Raj Thakur, Rajesh Gupta, Shailendra Tiwari, Sudhir Dubey, Tahir Sheikh, Amit Pal, Harendra Rajput, Shatrughan Kashyap, Budhram Kashyap, Manish Thakur, Tuladas Manikpuri, Ashish Das, while giving information about the strike. Mohd Akbar Khan, Indra Kumar Jha, Rudranarayan Bhardwaj, Anil Pandey, Ramprasad Thakur, Sonshish Baghel, Fuldass Singh, Chandrashekar Pandey, Nagesh, Ravindra Singh Thakur, Krishna Singh Thakur, Pitamber Sethia, Neur Lal Kashyap, Dayanidhi Bisai, Lachchu Kashyap, Vishnu Yadav, Lakheram Bisai, Hemant Mandavi, Bhune Nagesh, Amit Awasthi, Ludarshan Kashyap, Kamla Sharma, Praveen Singh, Anil Khandalkar were present.

Organizing Committee meeting held



Kondagaon, Feb 19:

Traditional fair of Kondagaon, district headquarters Kondagaon will be held from February 28 to March 5. In this direction, the meeting of the organizing committee of the fair was held under the chairmanship of Collector Deepak Soni. Meanwhile, Collector Soni

said that this unique gathering of faith-tradition and culture will be organized in the best possible way and will be given full grandeur. Every effort will be made to expand in grandeur, so that this traditional mela is memorable. He also asked the members of the Mela Organizing Committee to give suggestions for better

organization based on the experience of previous years. So that more good and well-planned initiatives can be taken in this direction. The collector asked to accommodate the culture of Chhattisgarh along with the folk culture of Bastar in the cultural program during the mela. At the same time, the concerned officials were

Of Kondagaon Annual Mela

given the responsibility to ensure all the necessary arrangements for the traditional fair. During the meeting CEO District Panchayat Prem Prakash Sharma, DFO RK Jangade, Addl. SP. Shobharaj Agarwal along with Municipal Council President Varsha Yadav, District Panchayat President Shivilal Mandavi along with various representatives of the area and members of the Mela Organizing Committee, District level officers and dignitaries of the departments were present.

Jagdalpur, Feb 19:

Ashish Kumar Das, Senior Manager at NDC Steel Plant in Police Station Nagarnar of the district, had filed a written report of theft of iron on a large scale in the police station. Based on the report, the police were tracing the accused. Stolen items of iron were found kept in the yard near the godown of Devshara scrap, located on Geedam Road, Rajendra Nagar. After identifying the applicant, both were arrested by raiding the houses of Devshara Kabadi and Munshi Gopiram Sahu. Both the junk dealers told that the contractor Umakant Poddar had come to his shop and brought the slip after weighing the iron goods in his truck with Dharmakanta, making settings



the guard of NMDC Nagarnar plant. Contractor Umakant Poddar and the driver of the vehicle in which the stolen iron was brought are absconding and police is in search of them.

CSP Vikas Kumar said that the senior manager at Nagarnar Steel Plant, applicant Ashish Kumar Das, while registering the report, said that about 11 MT of iron goods from Nagarnar have been removed from the material gate without permission from

the highway tipper number CG17 KX 3976. Immediately on information, the crime of 379 Bhadvi was registered in Nagarnar police station and the accused were being traced under the guidance of senior police officers.

Meanwhile, the police reached the address given by the informer along with the applicant and the witnesses. Stolen iron goods were found kept in the yard near the godown of Devshara scrap,

For buying 10.4 tonnes of stolen iron from steel plant

located at Geedam Road, Rajendra Nagar. After identifying the applicant, both were arrested after raiding the houses of Devshara Kabadi and Munshi Gopiram Sahu. In inquiring about the recovered iron, both the junk dealers said that on the evening of February 16, the contractor Umakant Poddar came to his shop and brought the slip after weighing the iron goods in his truck with a Dharmakanta after making setting with the guard of NMDC Nagarnar plant. The deal was fixed with the contractor for 10.4 tonnes of iron at the rate of Rs 3800 per quintal.

Scorpio driver arrested with 21 kg Ganja

Jagdalpur, Feb 19:

A total of 21 kg of Ganja was recovered from a white colored Scorpio vehicle near Karkapal railway crossing under Bodhghat police station area of the district. The accused Scorpio driver Suryanand Dwivedi resident of Uttar Pradesh has been arrested by the police. Along with this, the police have taken action by registering a case under section 20 (b) of NDPS.



CSP Vikas Kumar told that this morning the Bodhghat police received information from an informer that a young man was roaming around the Karkapal railway crossing carrying suspicious goods in his white colored Scorpio vehicle. Based upon the information, a police team was sent towards Karkapal railway crossing under the leadership of Bodhghat TI

Dilbag Singh. A white colored Scorpio vehicle UP 92 L 7600 was searched while laying siege by the said team.

During the search, the police recovered about 21 kg of ganja from the vehicle. Whose estimated market value has been estimated at Rs 2.10 lakh. During interrogation, accused driver Suryanand Dwivedi, a resident of Uttar Pradesh, while confessing his crime, told the police that he was roaming around to sell this ganja. The police arrested the accused and seized the Scorpio vehicle along with 21 kg of ganja.

9-year-old Aditya pays tribute to Shivaji

Raipur, Feb 19:

On Shivaji Jayanti, Aditya Raje Singh garlanded the grand bronze statue of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj at Tatyapara Chowk in Raipur and showered rose flowers on our skillful ruler, military strategist, a brave warrior who faced the Mughals and respected all religions; as a tribute to Shivaji Maharaj remembering him on his birth anniversary. Shivaji Jayanti is celebrated with pride not only in Maharashtra but across the country to mark the birth of Shivaji Maharaj.

9-year-old Aditya Raje said that Chhatrapati Shivaji, the hero of the



Indian freedom struggle, the best strategist and the founder of the Maratha Empire, is an ideal and always worshipable for all of us. He had developed a new technique of war, Shiva Sutra. We all should follow his ideals and also respect all religions.

BJP touring wards to provide housing to poor

Kondagaon, Feb 19:

Former minister Lata Usendi camped in Bhagat Singh Ward for Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY) and accused the Congress government of Chhattisgarh of withholding money from 16 lakh families of the region under the Awas Yojana of the Centre, charging that the beneficiaries of the Awas Yojana are not getting any benefits due to which they are deprived of this scheme and are not getting housing. Bharatiya Janata Party is meeting with every beneficiary under 'Mor Awas Mor Adhikar Abhiyaan'. Therefore, in order to provide housing to the eligible beneficiaries, the Kondagaon City Mandal of



Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) is organizing 'Mor Awas Mor Adhikar' programme under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY) in all the wards of the city. During this programme many BJP workers including BJP District President Dipesh Arora

Jitendra Surana, Jaiendra Thakur, Dayaram Patel, Bharat Jain, Lakshmi Dhruv, Narpati Nileshe Patel, Buntari Nag Lallu, Parkh Harsh Dhillon, Ashok Brahm, Timur Patel, Raunak Patel, Nanu Bharat Chakradhari were present.

Farewell ceremony held at IDGHSS Collector chairs CREDAI meeting

**Central Chronicle News**

Kasdol, Feb 19: A farewell ceremony of outgoing class 12th student was held at Indira Devi Gaurha Higher Secondary School (IDGHSS), and the program was presided over by former MLA Arun Kumar Mishra and

Chairman of the educational institution Dinesh Kumar Mishra.

The program started with Saraswati Vandana by the girl students, in which the students of class 12 recalled their moments, spent in school and recalled to get immense affection from teachers and

Principal Varsha Sharma.

On this occasion, the chief guest Arun Kumar Mishra said in his address that three things are necessary to be successful in life, first discipline, second humbleness, third goal and having said that the students of class 12th are leaving the school today,

we would like to wish all those students a bright future and wish to pass with good marks by working hard and not only for their educational institution but also for their parents. All the teachers and Principal Varsha Sharma wished the students a bright future.

Central Chronicle News

Bilaspur, Feb 19: Under the chairmanship of District Collector Saurabh Kumar, a joint meeting cum workshop of CREDAI office bearers and officers was organized here. The Collector said in the meeting that according to the promises made to the people, it is the responsibility of the builders to provide houses within the time limit and if there is any complaint of fraud with the consumers, then action will be taken by RERA and district administration as per the rules.

He also listed to the problems of the builders and developers and assured to solve them soon as per the rules. The collector said that swift action will be taken against illegal plotting and Joint



teams of Municipal Corporation, Revenue and Police have been formed and the administration is keeping a close watch on such elements. He said that the real estate sector has an important contribution in the progress of the country and the promoters-builders will have to provide the facility to

the consumer as per their declaration. As per the instructions of the Collector, more rapid action will be taken by the joint staff of Corporation and Revenue in the coming time. The builders told in the workshop that at present only the society registration of the residential colony is being done. Registration

of commercial complex is not being done, of which the Collector assured to solve this problem soon as per the prescribed guidelines. CREDAI Chairman Ajay Srivastava, ADM RA Kuruvanshi, senior officials of concerned departments, builders and colonizers attended the meeting.

'Matra-Pitra' diwas observed in SAGEMS, SSM

Central Chronicle News

Kharora, Feb 19: 'Matra-Pitra Diwas' was observed in Swamy Atmanand Govt English Medium School (SAGEMS) in Dongargarh on Tuesday under the aegis of Primary, Secondary Department of the School. First the photo of Goddess Saraswati was garlanded and traditional lamp was lighted and the programme was started. 'Tilak' was applied to the parents present and they were welcomed presenting them with flower bouquet.

In this programme, Principal YS Rao was felicitated with shawl and srial by the Lioness Club Dongargarh. After the ad-



dress, the senior teacher of the School Farah Anjum cited the importance of this day and YS Rao appealed all the students to offer flowers on the feet of their parents. The programme was conducted by Teacher of School - Bhineshwari Janghel and

Shubha Shrivastava. Apart from this 'Matra-Pitra Diwas' was also observed in Saraswati Shishu Mandir Ramtola and on this occasion members of Saraswati Shiksha Samiti and parents and students were present in large number.

Central Chronicle News

Shakti, Feb 19: The traffic signals installed in the city are proving to be only show pieces and after two months after the formation of the district, there is no visible utility of the signal. Its efficiency is not working well as at times only the yellow light or the red light is working and the police department also does not seem to be interested in getting it started smoothly.

It may be noted that when Sakti came into existence as a district, an attempt was made to indicate that the city would go through many changes as soon as the district was formed and by installing traffic signals in the city's



court square and hospital square, a change was initiated, but this change appears to be a mere formality as on the very second day of the inauguration of the district, poles were in-

stalled to install traffic signals, but the signals have not been started even after 2 months of installation.

Efforts made to make better traffic functioning: SP Superintendent of



Police of Sakti district, M.R. Ahire said that a technical fault was the underlying reason behind the improper signal functioning and continuous efforts are being made to make

better traffic arrangements in the city. The district is currently grappling with manpower crunch and as soon as the force increases, many works have to be done in the district.

NTPC Lara is moving fast for capacity addition: ED

Central Chronicle News

Lara, Feb 19: If everything will work on its way, very soon NTPC Lara station will become the power hub of Chhattisgarh as it provides 50 percent of generated electricity to home state. Being a developing industry-based state, power demand of Chhattisgarh is increasing very fast and to maintain the growth rate, electricity is very much essential.

As Lara power houses of power major NTPC Limited provides half of generated capacity hence it is going to be a major source of power supplier



for Chhattisgarh. Present generating capacity of Lara station is 1600 megawatt. Another 1600 megawatt has been proposed by NTPC to build at the existing plant. Public

hearing has been slated on 20th February by CECB said Diwakar Kaushik in press interaction held on 16 Feb. 2023.

In current FY 2022-23, Lara station generated

10076.84 million units with 81.75 percent PLF. All efforts are being done to achieve 100% ash utilization. Lara station is giving priority to community development. After 10 years of establishment the result of developmental works starts to be visible. Before NTPC coming to this place, the picture of backwardness was widely visible. But after execution of so many developmental works and activities in the vicinity, these villages have got a new identity. Various developmental activities on education, health, sanitation, infrastructure, and welfare measures starts visible in

this area. First time Lara successfully conducted Girl Empowerment Mission at Lara. Some big ticket works, attributed to NTPC Lara are construction of IIIT Raipur, upgradation of Raigarh Govt. medical college, development of ITI Pussore, upgradation of KIT, Raigarh and CHC Pussore and PHC Chhapora.

Among other dignitaries Akhilesh Singh, GM (O&M), Rajeev Ranjan, GM (Fuel Management), Samarendra Kumar Roy, GM (Operation), Ravi Shankar, GM (Project), Kanheya Das, AGM(HR) and HoDs were present on this occasion.

NCBC meeting concludes

Central Chronicle News

Gaurela Pendra Marwahi, Feb 19: A meeting of National Congress Backward Classes (NCBC) was concluded here in the auditorium of Sims Bilaspur, on the arrival of National President of National Congress Backward Classes Department Captain Ajay Singh Yadav, and National Secretary Chandan Yadav. The historic program took place in the presence of Dr. Chaleswar Chandrakar, President of Chhattisgarh Government and Thaneswar Sahu, Chairman of Backward Classes Commission of Chhattisgarh Government and National Coordinator KK Yadav. Discussion was held and highlighting the welfare



schemes of the government for the backward classes, the strong characters of the backward classes were discussed in the coming assembly elections and Lok Sabha elections.

National Secretary of All India Congress, Chandan Yadav said that the economic condition of the backward classes is being polluted by the policies of our present center and to

strengthen it, we have to bring the Congress party to the center, for which we have to use our backward class powers. Pramod Nayak Baijnath Chandrakar Ram Kumar Patel, Atal Srivastava, Vijay Kesharwani Manoj Sahu Gaurela Amit Soni Deepak Puri Manoj Sahu Jayprakash Korja and a large number of workers were present.

Police and district admn should take legal action with sensitivity: Collector

**Central Chronicle News**

Gourella Pendra Marwahi, Feb 19: Police and district administration should take legal action with sensitivity, said District Collector Priyanka Rishi Mahobia, chairing a meeting regarding law and order. In order to maintain peaceful environment, smooth traffic

ing hall today. The Collector asked the police administration and district administration officials to take legal action with mutual coordination, team spirit and sensitivity and said that any person, party and organization should take permission from the district administration for dharna, demonstration, rally etc. and follow the law. In case of not taking permission, due action will be taken by the police and district administration.

She also appealed to all the residents of the district to park their vehicles at designated places only and avoid posting, commenting and sharing any kind of controversial posts on social media. In the meeting, Additional Collector B.C. Ekka, Joint Director Virendra Singh, Anand Roop Tiwari, a d d i t i o n a l Superintendent of Police Archana Jha, SDM Pendarod Pushpendra Sharma, Deputy Collector Richa Chandrakar and all Tehsildars and station in-charges were present.

and law and order in the district, it is necessary to take prior permission from the district administration for picketing, demonstration, rally etc, she said.

PANIC OF THE TIGER Free movement of tiger creates terror among villagers

- Afraid of leaving houses

Central Chronicle News

Surajpur, Feb 19: The terror of wild animals is not stopping in the border area of Chandni Biharpur of the district. Wild animals are coming out of the forests to the residential areas. There is an atmosphere of panic among the villagers. With the arrival of tiger, elephant, bear, leopard, villagers are now under the shadow of panic. It has become difficult for the villagers to leave their homes due to the movement of the tiger in the villages.

The villagers are forced to live in the shadow of fear and terror: Being a national park area, the forest staff is putting the responsibility on the horticulture department, while the later have closed their eyes by telling responsibility to the forest department, both the departments are sitting idle towards the movement of the tiger, although the conscious villagers have

captured the picture of the tiger and its paws and shared it with the employees of both the departments on social media.

It is worth mentioning that since last 5 days there is movement of tiger in Lulah, Baijanpath, Khohir, Mahuli, Kolhua. Many villagers also had a face-to-face encounter with the tiger. The villagers got together and chased away the tiger. Last Friday evening tiger reached Bagh Mahuli and threatened the villagers. The tiger was present in the village for a while, and as it reached the nearby river bank, the villagers chased the tiger towards the Kachhware forest with fire and torches in their hands.

At present, the panic among the villagers has increased due to the free movement of the tiger and they fear of falling prey to the tiger. Here, the villagers are not getting any kind of help from the department regarding their safety of the people. The villagers have demanded to catch the tiger and rescue them from its terror.

**Pug marks of tiger on the ground near human habitat.****A tiger moving towards the forest captured in the camera.**

Tiger footprints found inside these villages

In more than half a dozen villages, tiger's footprints were found at many places after the arrival of the tiger. On Saturday morning in Mahuli village, along with the villagers, the beatguard of the garden took the measurement of the tiger's paw marks. However, even after five days of information about the tiger, the department hasn't tried to find it. Nor is the work of rescuing the tiger being done.

Poachers active...

The poachers who hunt wild animals have become active, due to the free

movement of the tiger, the hunters are behind it. From this area, a large number of wild animals have fallen victims of smugglers and are involved in smuggling of their skins and nails. A few months ago, a tiger and a leopard skin was recovered from the same area. The action has been taken against some people while the main accused is still absconding. At present, due to the inaction of the field officer staff of the wildlife protection department, the wood smugglers along with the poachers are openly able to carry out their work without any action against them.

What officials say...

"The people of the village say that there is an uproar in the area regarding the tiger. As evening falls, people get locked in their homes. On the other hand, the Forest Range Officer said that two tigers in the area have come from the border area of Madhya Pradesh, from their movement it seems that either one of them is pregnant or may be old and are moving towards the village in search of food." Mevalal Patel- Forest Ranger.

BRIEF



Congress General Secretary Priyanka Gandhi with her husband Robert Vadra at snow-covered Gulmarg, on Sunday.

Seized

■ Imphal: Security forces arrested an alleged drug smuggler and seized brown sugar weighing 3.710 kg from his vehicle in Manipur's Tengnoupia district, police said on Sunday.

Rescue

■ Panaji: Goa Police have rescued two Hyderabad residents and detained 11 persons who had allegedly taken them hostage following a dispute with the victims' employer, an official said.

Inspires

■ New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi paid tributes to Maratha empire founder Chhatrapati Shivaji on his birth anniversary on Sunday, saying his courage and emphasis on good governance inspires us.

Campaign

■ Chennai: nassing for ruling DMK-headed Secular Progressive Alliance candidate EVKS Elangovan. This will be the first time Haasan's Makkal Needhi Maiam (MNM) is backing another party in an electoral contest since it has faced all polls, including the 2021 Assembly elections by itself since its founding in 2018.

Assistance

■ Thiruvananthapuram: An Air India Express flight from Dubai to Thiruvananthapuram sought assistance from the airport here on Sunday after the pilot experienced some problem during landing, an airline source said.

Arrested

■ New Delhi: A 22-year-old man was arrested for allegedly being involved in cow slaughter in north Delhi's Gulabi Bagh area, police said on Sunday. Aftab Ahmad alias Lukman was arrested on Saturday in connection with a case registered on February 7 under sections of the Delhi Agricultural Cattle Preservation Act, Indian Penal Code, and Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, Deputy Commissioner of Police (north) Sagar Singh Kalsi said.

Suicide

■ Jaipur: A young man was found hanging on a foot-over bridge at Dahar Ka Balaji railway station here on Sunday morning. The deceased was identified as Manoj Bansal (40), a temporary resident of the Jhotwara area of this Rajasthan city. Railway Police (GRP) Station Officer Sampat Raj said the body of a youth was found hanging on the foot-over bridge of Dahar Ka Balaji railway station on Sunday morning.

BJP launches street corner meetings in Telangana

To reach out to voters

Hyderabad, Feb 19 (PTI):

The BJP in Telangana has launched street corner meetings titled 'Praja Gosa-BJP Bharosa' across the state to reach out to the public ahead of the assembly elections, scheduled to be held this year.

The mass outreach programme, 'Praja Gosa-BJP Bharosa' (people's suffering - BJP's assurance) is aimed at strengthening the party's leadership at the grassroots level and "expose" the BRS government's alleged failures.

The campaign kick-started on February 10 and will go on till February 25. The saffron party has set a target to organise 11,000 street corner meetings in 15 days, BJP vice president in Telangana Kaasam Venkateswarlu, state coordinator for the campaign,

told PTI here on Sunday.

The meetings are being conducted at the level of the party's 'shakti kendras' (that comprise three-four polling booths).

While bolstering local leadership, the campaign will "expose" grassroots-level issues, including corruption by ruling party MLAs, without losing sight of the BRS government's failures and its "family rule" at the state level. Besides, the campaign will also highlight the welfare schemes and achievements of the Modi government at the Centre like distribution of free rice, Rs 10,000 loan to street vendors, free COVID-19 vaccines, funds to Gram Panchayats, and recovery of nation's economy post COVID-19 pandemic. The party chose to organise 11,000 street-corner meetings as it boasts of over 9,000 'shakti kendras' and 2,000 more meetings have been added to reach out to remote habitations, Venkateswarlu noted.

As part of the campaign, pamphlets carrying a phone number of the party to give a missed call would be distributed to people.

Since January 10, over 3,000 street-corner meetings have been conducted and the party is confident of achieving at least 90 per cent of the target by February 25.

Last month, BJP MP and party OBC Morcha's national president K Laxman had said his party has set a target of 10,000 village-level meetings as part of its Mission-90 (winning 90 out of the total 119 Assembly seats in Telangana).

HC rejects petition seeking cancelling of FIR

Against conversion accused

Prayagraj, Feb 19 (PTI):

The Allahabad High Court has dismissed a writ petition challenging an FIR lodged against 37 people accused of coercing a man to undergo a religious conversion from Hinduism to Christianity through inducements.

The writ petition was filed by Jose Prakash George and 36 Others seeking quashing of the FIR lodged on January 23, 2023, under sections 420, 467, 468, 506, 120-B IPC and section 3/5 (1) of UP Prohibition of Unlawful Conversion of Religion Act at Police Station Kotwali, District Fatehpur.

The petitioner's counsel contended that an FIR on almost identical allegations had been lodged on April 15, 2022, under the same Act. The complainant in the instant case

is one of the witnesses whose statement was recorded by the police in the FIR lodged on April 15, 2022.

The accused in both FIRs are the same barring, one or two persons. Only the informant in both cases is different, and both cases allege mass religious conversion by fraud, coercion, and allurement, the counsel said.

In light of these facts, the counsel contended that the FIR is barred by sections 154 and 158 of the Code of Criminal Procedure.

A division bench comprising Justice Anjani Kumar Mishra and Justice Gajendra Kumar on Friday rejected the petition saying it was of the view that the second FIR, though related to the same incident, cannot be quashed as it has been lodged by a competent person.

Bihar to increase population of greater one horned Rhinos

Patna, Feb 19 (PTI):

■ By 3% annually

The Bihar government has decided to increase the population of greater one horned Rhinos by three per cent annually in the state.

The state government has also decided to increase rhino bearing areas in Valmiki Tiger Reserve (VTR) in West Champaran district by five per cent in the next two years, an official said.

"Decision to increase the population of greater one horned Rhinos by three per cent annually was taken at the 3rd Asian Rhino Range Countries Meeting held at Chitwan (Nepal) from February 3 to 5.

"Five Rhino Range Countries - India, Bhutan, Indonesia,

Malaysia and Nepal - signed the Chitwan Declaration for Asian Rhinos Conservation (2023) and agreed on managing the population of the greater one horned Rhinos, Javan and Sumatran Rhinos with the intention of achieving at least 3 per cent annual growth rate in their population", P K Gupta, Chief Wildlife Warden of Bihar, told PTI.

With an intention to increase the population of greater one horned rhinos in the state also, decisions taken in Chitwan will be implemented in Bihar also, said Gupta, who was also part of the Indian delegation for the

RAAHGIRI CELEBRATIONS



Children play snakes and ladders board game during Raahgiri Day celebrations at Connaught Place in New Delhi, Sunday.

Case against two men for killing friend

■ Six yrs ago

Thane, Feb 19 (PTI):

Six years after a man from Maharashtra's Thane district went missing, the police have registered a case of murder against two of his friends following a court directive, an official said on Sunday.

On January 11, 2017, the two accused came to the house of the 18-year-old victim, Parzej @ Parvesh Chouhan, in Kalwa area and informed him that there was a catering job for him, police inspector (crime) Gajendra Patil said.

The two accused took the victim with him and the latter did not return, he said quoting the complaint. When the victim's

family members enquired about him from the two friends, they gave evasive replies.

After a couple of days, the Dombivili police called up the victim's family and informed that his body was found on railway tracks and that it was a case of accidental death, the official said.

As the family suspected foul play, they approached a court which directed the police to register a case and conduct a probe into it, he said.

The Kalwa police on Saturday registered a case against the two accused under Indian Penal Code Sections 302 (murder) and 34 (common intention), the official said.

No arrest has been made so far and a probe is on into the case, he added.

'MahaMetro looking at 'Neo' system for smaller cities'

Nagpur, Feb 19 (PTI):

MahaMetro is working on the feasibility of implementing the Metro Neo system in cities having a population of up to 20 lakh, with Nashik being the frontrunner, its Managing Director Brijesh Dixit has said.

The Centre and the state government are viewing this development positively. Dixit said at the foundation day programme of the MahaMetro here on Saturday. "We have full faith that we will be successful in this task as well," he said. The 'Metro Neo' is a trolley bus system with overhead electric traction and rubber tyres, and has the capability of being upgraded to a light



Brijesh Dixit

metro system. Dixit said the second phase of Nagpur Metro rail will be completed in the next five years, with work set to begin from April. The 44.5-kilometre second phase comprises a 19-km stretch till Butibori, a 7-km stretch from Lokmanya Nagar to Hingna, a 13-km

route from Automotive Chowk to Kanhan and 5.5 km stretch from Prajapati Nagar to Kapsi, he said.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi in December 2022 inaugurated the first phase of the Nagpur Metro rail project here and travelled in the train with students. He had also laid the foundation stone of phase-II of the Metro project.

There are 36 stations under phase-I of the project, which covers a distance of 40 km. This project has been developed at a cost of more than Rs 8,650 crore, officials said.

Phase-II of the project will be developed at more than Rs 6,700 crore. It will have 32 stations, they had said.

RELIGIOUS PROCESSION



Devotees participate in a procession commemorating the anniversary of Swami Vivekananda's return from Chicago after giving the historic speech, in Kolkata, Sunday.

APPSC FIASCO

Govt agrees to demands of PAJSC, bandh called off

Itanagar, Feb 19 (PTI):

The Arunachal Pradesh government has agreed to the 13-point demands of the Pan Arunachal Joint Steering Committee (PAJSC), fighting the paper leak issue of the state public service commission. The development came after two days of unrest in the state capital since Friday, over the lack of adequate action against those involved in the Arunachal Pradesh Public Service Commission (APPSC) cash-for-job scam. The decision to agree to the demands, arrived after 8 hours long discussion between state government, representatives of PAJSC, All NYSU Students Union (ANSU), Nari Shakti and activist

Sol Dodum late on Saturday night at civil secretariat here. Chief Minister Pema Khandu, Home Minister Bamang Felix, Water Resource Development Minister Mama Natung were present along with senior bureaucrats in the meeting.

According to the minutes of the meeting made available, the government responded positively to most of the 13 point demands for which, the protestors have withdrawn the bandh call from Sunday. The government informed that the chairman, secretary and members officials of APPSC from 2014 to 2022 and any other official/private persons are already under the purview of investigation. Based on the findings of

the investigation, appropriate action will be taken by the investigating agency, CBI. The state government had written to the Gauhati High Court to designate District and Sessions Court Yupia (or any other District and Sessions Court) as a Special Fast-Track Court to take up the APPSC paper leak cases. The high court has positively responded and agreed to designate district and sessions court Yupia as a special fast-track court to take up the APPSC paper leak cases. The government has agreed to recommend setting up of a standing grievance redressal committee and institutional mechanism to deal with the grievances of the candidates and aspirants.

LATEST CENSUS

Migratory bird arrivals at Harike wetland decline this season

Harike (Punjab), Feb 19 (PTI):

The arrival of migratory birds this year to Harike, northern India's largest wetland, declined 12 per cent from 2021, according to the latest census of these water birds.

The Forest and Wildlife Preservation department census counted 65,624 birds from 85 species at Harike, World Wildlife Fund for Nature (WWF) India Coordinator Gitanjali Kanwar said.

Every winter, 90 species of migratory birds from Siberia, Mongolia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Russia, among others, arrive at



Migratory birds at Harike wetland in Punjab.

the wetland site once the water bodies in their native places start to freeze.

In 2021, the census recorded 74,869 migratory birds from 88 species. The year before, 91,025

from 90 species were counted. There was no census in 2022 due to COVID-19.

In 2018 and 2019, 94,771 birds of 94 species and 1,23,128 birds of 83

species arrived at the wetland site, respectively.

The reason behind the decline in migratory bird arrivals this year is yet to be ascertained. Whether the drop is at a global or a regional level is yet to be seen, Kanwar said.

Punjab witnessed fewer migratory bird arrivals at all wetlands this year, she added.

Spread over 86 square kilometres at the confluence of the Sutlej and the Beas rivers in Tarn Taran, Ferozepur and Kapurthala districts, the Harike wetland is home to rare species of migratory water birds during winters.

Blinken meets China's Wang Yi, warns Beijing against helping Russia

Washington/Munich, Feb 19 (PTI): US Secretary of State Antony Blinken has warned China that its "material support" for Russia's war against Ukraine would attract sanctions and condemned the "unacceptable violation" of American sovereignty by a Chinese spy balloon as he met Beijing's top diplomat Wang Yi.



US strength. "The actions don't show that the US is big and strong, but describe the exact opposite," Wang, the ruling Chinese Communist Party's most senior foreign policy official, asserted.

Wang called the balloon episode a "political farce manufactured by the US" and accused them of "using all means to block and suppress China".

China continues to deny that it sent a spy balloon, even as the US continues to disclose more details of the object to back up its allegation.

Blinken also raised the Russia-Ukraine war during his meeting with Wang, the Director of the Office of the Central Commission for Foreign Affairs. "On Russia's brutal war against Ukraine, the Secretary warned about the implications and consequences if China provides material support to Russia or assistance with systemic sanctions evasion," Price said.

Spokesperson Ned Price said. "During the meeting, Blinken made clear the United States will not stand for any violation of our sovereignty, and that the Chinese high-altitude surveillance balloon programme which has intruded into the airspace of more than 40 countries across five continents has been exposed to the world," he said.

The relations between the US and China strained further after Washington said Beijing flew a spy balloon over America before US fighter jets shot it down on President Joe Biden's orders. The bal-

loon incident prompted Blinken to postpone a planned visit to Beijing. The February 5-6 trip would have been the first by a US secretary of state to China in five years and was seen by both countries as an opportunity to stabilise their strained ties.

The meeting between the two senior officials came hours after Wang on Saturday renewed Beijing's criticism of the US for shooting down what Washington says was a Chinese spy balloon, arguing at the conference in Germany that the move doesn't point to



US Air Force B-1B bomber, top, flies in formation with U.S. Air Force F-16 fighter jets over the South Korea Peninsula during a joint air drill in South Korea, Sunday, Feb. 19.

Pakistan has 'already defaulted': Defence Minister Asif

Islamabad, Feb 19 (PTI):

Defence minister Khawaja Asif has said that Pakistan has already defaulted amid looming fears that the cash-starved country may go bankrupt and blamed the establishment, bureaucracy and politicians for the prevailing economic crisis.



Addressing a ceremony in his home town of Sialkot, he said that standing on its own feet was crucial for Pakistan to stabilise itself.

"You must have heard that Pakistan is going bankrupt or that a default or meltdown is taking place. It (default) has already taken place. We are living in a bankrupt coun-

try," he was quoted as saying by The Express Tribune newspaper.

"The solution to our problems lies within the country. The IMF does not have the solution to Pakistan's problems," he said.

He said that everyone including the establishment, bureaucracy and

politicians are to blame for the current economic mess as the law and Constitution are not followed in Pakistan.

The minister said that most of his time had been spent in the opposition camp and that he has witnessed politics being disgraced for the past 32 years.

Lashing out at the former government, Asif said that terrorists were brought to Pakistan two and a half years ago which eventually resulted in the current wave of terrorism.

Speaking about the attack on the police office in Karachi on Friday, he said that the security agencies bravely fought the attackers.

North Korea confirms ICBM test, warns of more powerful steps

Seoul, Feb 19 (AP):

North Korea said Sunday its latest intercontinental ballistic missile test was meant to further bolster its "fatal" nuclear attack capacity against its rivals, as it threatened additional powerful steps in response to the planned military training between the United States and South Korea.

Saturday's ICBM test, the North's first missile test since Jan. 1, signals its leader Kim Jong Un is using his rivals' drills as a chance to expand his country's nuclear capability to enhance its leverage in future dealings with the United States. An expert says

North Korea may seek to hold regular operational exercises involving its ICBMs. North Korea's official Korean Central News Agency said its launch of the existing Hwasong-15 ICBM was organised "suddenly" without prior notice at the direct order of leader Kim Jong Un.

KCNA said the launch was designed to verify the weapon's reliability and the combat readiness of the country's nuclear force. It said the missile was fired at a high angle and reached a maximum altitude of about 5,770 kilometers (3,585 miles), flying a distance of about 990 kilometers (615 miles) during a 67-minute flight before accurately hitting

a pre-set area in the waters between the Korean Peninsula and Japan. The steep-angle launch was apparently aimed at avoiding neighboring countries. The flight details reported by North Korea, which roughly matched the launch details previously assessed by its neighbours, show the weapon is theoretically capable of reaching the mainland U.S. if fired at a standard trajectory. The Hwasong-15 launch demonstrated the North's "powerful physical nuclear deterrent" and its efforts to "turn its capacity of fatal nuclear counterattack on the hostile forces" into an extremely strong one that cannot be countered, KCNA said.

Whether North Korea has a functioning nuclear-tipped ICBM is still a source of outside debate, as some experts say the North hasn't mastered a technology to protect warheads from the severe conditions of atmospheric reentry. The North has claimed to have acquired such a reentry vehicle technology. The Hwasong-15 is one of North Korea's three existing ICBMs, all of which use liquid propellants that require pre-launch injections and cannot remain fueled for extended periods. The North is pushing to build a solid-fueled ICBM, which would be more mobile and harder-to-detect before its launch.

Russian diplomats ordered out of the Netherlands

The Hague, Feb 18 (AP): The Dutch government said Saturday that "a number" of Russian diplomats will have to leave the Netherlands, accusing Moscow of trying to smuggle spies into the country that is home to institutions including the International Criminal Court and the global chemical weapons watchdog. The announcement is the latest twist in a diplomatic dispute between the two countries that began shortly after Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine nearly a year ago sparked a war on Europe's eastern flank. "Despite numerous attempts by the Netherlands to find a solution, Russia continues to try to get intelligence officers into the Netherlands under diplomatic cover," Foreign Affairs Minister Wopke Hoekstra said in a statement. "We cannot and will not allow that."

CARNIVAL PARADE



Dancers from the Aguia de Ouro samba school perform during a carnival parade in Sao Paulo, Brazil, Sunday, Feb. 19.

Israeli airstrikes kill 5 in Damascus

Damascus, Feb 19 (AP):

Israeli airstrikes targeted a residential neighbourhood in the Syrian capital of Damascus early Sunday, killing at least five people and wounding 15, Syrian state news reported.

Loud explosions were heard over a central area of the capital around 12:30 a.m. local time, and SANA reported that Syrian air defences were "confronting hostile targets in the sky around Damascus."

Syrian state media agency SANA, citing a military source, reported that five people had been killed, among them a soldier, and 15 civilians wounded, along with "destruction of a number of residential buildings."



Syrian security officers inspect the damage in a residential neighborhood after an early morning Israeli airstrike in the capital city of Damascus, Syria, Sunday, Feb. 19.

The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, a U.K.-based war monitor, reported that 15 people, including a woman, were killed in strikes targeting sites connected with Iranian militias and the Lebanese

militant group Hezbollah. They took place in the Damascus countryside and in an Iranian school in the neighbourhood of Kafr Sousa in the capital, it said.

There was no immedi-

ate statement from Israel on the attack.

Israeli airstrikes frequently target sites in the vicinity of Damascus. The Saturday night strikes were the first since a devastating 7.8 magnitude earthquake hit Turkey and Syria on Feb. 6.

The last reported attack on Damascus was on Jan. 2, when the Syrian army reported that Israel's military fired missiles toward the international airport of Syria's capital early Monday, putting it out of service and killing two soldiers and wounding two others.

Israel has carried out hundreds of strikes on targets inside government-controlled parts of Syria in recent years, but rarely acknowledges or discusses the operations.

Nigeria's presidential frontrunners in final push for votes

Abuja (Nigeria), Feb 19 (AP):

The leading contenders in Nigeria's presidential election have made their last push for support, a week before the West African nation's key election. As the campaign period neared its end, both the ruling party's Bola Tinubu and the main opposition's Atiku Abubakar on Saturday held rallies in the northeast, where extremists have waged a decade-long insurgency against Nigeria.

They both promised to improve the lives of residents in the region. On social media, third-party candidate Peter Obi, who has emerged ahead of the other 17 candidates in most polls, said Africa's most populous country needs a "reset and reboot" from the two major parties that have

governed Nigeria since it left military rule in 1999.

The Feb. 25 election that would lead to a transitional government is the most consequential vote in many years for Nigeria, a country of more than 210 million people, according to analysts.

"This is a battle for the soul of the country considering the challenges confronting the country," said Idayat Hassan, who leads the Center for Democracy and Development that promotes democracy in the country.

Nigeria is struggling with a worsening security crisis that has killed thousands in the past year, an ailing economy that has made citizens poorer, and growing separatist agitations in the southern region that have left the country more divided along ethnic lines.

"This is where the future of our state and the country resides in the hands of PDP," the main opposition Peoples Democratic Party's Abubakar told thousands of supporters in Adamawa state as they waved the party's red, green and white colours.

"If you give us your mandate, we promise to lead by our promises to make sure that we have a united country, a peaceful country, a buoyant economy for our country; that we have the best education for our children and also we devolve powers to our states and local governments with corresponding resources," said the 76-year-old, who has taken part in two previous presidential elections, including in 2019 when he lost to incumbent President Muhammadu Buhari.

Suspected female suicide bomber arrested in Pakistan's Balochistan

Quetta, Feb 19 (PTI):

Pakistani security forces arrested a woman with a jacket laden with explosives who was planning to carry out a suicide attack in the Balochistan province, police said on Sunday. The suspect, identified as Mahbal, was arrested on Saturday in Quetta's Satellite Town, a Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) official of the Balochistan police said.

"The woman was arrested on an intelligence tip-off, and a suicide jacket with explosives was also recovered from her bag," the official said.

He said the woman, affiliated to the outlawed insurgent Baloch Liberation Front (BLF), was sent to Quetta for allegedly carrying out a suicide attack. "The woman was arrested from near a park in Quetta's

Satellite Town when teams of CTD and intelligence agencies conducted an operation in the area against the outlawed Baloch Liberation Front," the CTD official said.

"She had a bag with the suicide jacket that had four to five kilograms of explosives on it," he said.

"We got an intelligence tip-off that the BLF had sent a suicide bomber to carry out an attack on a key installation in Quetta. We have identified her as Mahbal, wife of Bebagar alias Nadeem," he added.

Last year in April, a female suicide bomber of the banned Balochistan National Army (BLA) carried out a suicide attack at the Karachi University's Confucius Institute entrance, killing three Chinese teachers and their Pakistani driver.

US frantic to avert Mideast showdown at UN

Washington, Feb 19 (AP):

The Biden administration is scrambling to avert a diplomatic crisis over Israeli settlement activity this week at the United Nations that threatens to overshadow and perhaps derail what the U.S. hopes will be a solid five days of focus on condemning Russia's war with Ukraine. Secretary of State Antony Blinken made two emergency calls on Saturday from the Munich Security Conference, which he is attending in an as-yet unsuccessful bid to avoid or forestall such a showdown. It remained unclear whether another last-minute intervention might salvage the situation, according to diplomats familiar with the ongoing discussions who spoke to The Associated Press on condi-

tion of anonymity. Without giving details, the State Department said in nearly identical statements that Blinken had spoken to Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu from Munich to "reaffirm the U.S. commitment to a negotiated two-state solution and opposition to policies that endanger its viability."

"The secretary underscored the urgent need for Israelis and Palestinians to take steps that restore calm and our strong opposition to unilateral measures that would further escalate tensions," the statements said. Neither statement mentioned the proposed U.N. Security Council resolution demanding an immediate halt to Israeli settlements. The Palestinians want to bring that resolu-

tion to a vote on Monday. And neither statement gave any indication as to how the calls ended.

But diplomats familiar with the conversations said that in his call to Abbas, Blinken reiterated an offer to the Palestinians for a U.S. package of incentives to entice them to drop or at least delay the resolution. Those incentives included a White House meeting for Abbas with President Joe Biden, movement on reopening the American consulate in Jerusalem, and a significant aid package, the diplomats said.

Abbas was noncommittal, the diplomats said, but also suggested he would not be amenable unless the Israelis agreed to a six-month freeze on settlement expansion on land the Palestinians claim for a future state.



CENTRAL Chronicle

Since 1974 Volume 10 No. 321

Overcoming barriers and unleashing opportunities for Social Justice

Every year on February 20, people mark the World Day for Social Justice. The main goal of the World Day of Social Justice celebration is to raise awareness of social injustice and to bring together diverse communities around the world in an effort to eradicate poverty, gender, physical discrimination, illiteracy, and religious discrimination and create a society that is socially integrated. World Social Justice Day is marked to promote social justice and break down barriers based on gender, age, colour, ethnicity, religion, culture, or disability. The theme for this year is "Overcoming Barriers and Unleashing Opportunities for Social Justice," which focuses on the suggestions made in the Common Agenda to promote international cooperation and to restore public confidence in the government. As a result, the 2023 World Day of Social Justice offers a chance to encourage discussion with Member States, young people, social partners, civil society organisations, UN agencies, and other stakeholders about the steps that must be taken to strengthen the social contract that has been shattered by escalating inequality, armed conflicts, and weak institutions that are supposed to protect workers' rights. In spite of these several problems, there are numerous chances to forge a social justice coalition and to increase investments in decent jobs, with an emphasis on the green, digital, and care economies as well as on young people. Poverty and inequalities within and among countries are on the rise in many parts of the world. The economic and social crises of recent years have been exacerbated by the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic, natural disasters due to accelerating climate change, geopolitical tensions and armed conflicts. Beyond the human tragedies associated with them and their impact on the world of work, these crises have highlighted the interlinkages and dependencies of economies and societies around the world and shown the crucial need for concerted action to respond to them, at global, regional and national levels. Social justice makes societies and economies function better and reduces poverty, inequalities and social tensions. It plays an important role in attaining more inclusive and sustainable socio-economic development paths and is key for reaching the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2030 Agenda), especially at a time when the achievement of those goals remains far away. It is more important than ever that the multilateral system coalesce around a set of shared values and goals and identify the means to respond to peoples' aspirations and needs. Social justice has therefore to become one of the cornerstones of the renewed multilateralism that is required; a rallying objective but also a significant instrument for a more efficient multilateral system, ensuring coherence across a range of policy areas.

Social Justice makes societies and economies function better

Vinod Chandrashekar Dixit

Social justice and equality is a significant issue in almost all societies around the world. 20th February is celebrated as the World Day of Social Justice proclaimed by United Nations General Assembly in 2007 in accordance with the goals and objectives of the World Summit for Social Development. Globally, injustice exists more frequently in other forms, such as poverty, hunger, worker's abuse, and severe restrictions on women's rights. The day was created to support efforts of the international community in poverty eradication; for promotion of full employment and decent work and for access to social well-being and justice for all. Social justice is an underlying principle for peaceful and prosperous coexistence within and among nations. We uphold the principles of social justice when we promote gender equality or the rights of indigenous peoples and migrants. We advance social justice when we remove barriers that people face because of gender, age, race, ethnicity, religion, culture or disability. This day motivates people in real sense to look at how social justice impacts poverty eradication. It focuses on achieving full employment and support for social integration. Social justice holds the aims of equal opportunity to every citizen in the matter of social & economic activities and to prevent inequalities. Social Justice is very important for the survival of people prosperously. It also paves way as a way for peace within nations and peaceful coexistence nations. Human dignity is very much essential and United Nations insists on the same. World Day of Justice is observed for the same reason and it tries to support all efforts of the international community to eradicate poverty from any society, promote full employment to the qualified, and provide decent work that helps an individual to make a living and to encourage gender equity that ensures social well-being of all. In society there are people who know they have a voice but are not sure how to use it. Some take things a little too far and create problems on top of problems. Others work hard to see change and are willing to do the work behind it with the help of others. Everyone has a voice no matter how you look or your personal beliefs. The problem is making things work to where everyone can be happy. There are people who care less about making others feel good about where they are in life whereas there are a few who are selfish, arrogant and inconsiderate; but these people have a place in the world too. We have in our country some of the most devoted workers for social justice in the history of India like MG Ranade, Swami Vivekananda, Veer Savarkar, Kulapati Munshi, Mahatma Gandhi, Babasaheb Ambedkar, Tarabai Shinde, and Behramji Malabari among others. Social justice and equality can be factored into welfare designs and deliveries by assessing the needs of the target population. In a globalized economy wherein every action of almost all countries affects each other, we should always take into consideration the three important aspects namely social justice, equality and human rights intersect. "Human rights" are "inherent rights without which we cannot truly live as human beings." We must understand that the intricate relationship between social justice, equality and social welfare is vital in understanding the values, norms and attitudes that individuals in a certain society possess.

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

TULIPS IN BLOOM



Tulips in bloom at lawns near AIIMS, in New Delhi, Friday, Feb. 17. The New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC) has started planting tulips as part of their 'Tulip Festival' for beautification of the national capital, ahead of the G20 Summit.

Mandal Commission : Most Recommendations lay in deep freeze



ER. PRABHAT KISHORE

The Constitution of India ensures right to equality for its citizens, but due to social discrimination, a large section of the society has minimal representation in services & other sectors. To cope up the situation of Socially & Educationally Backward Classes (SEBC), the Second Backward Classes Commission headed by Sri B. P. Mandal was set up by the Janata Party government on 1st January 1979. The Commission submitted its report on 31st December 1980, but it lay in deep freeze for the whole decade of the Congress regime. When the Janata Dal government came to power in 1989, a notification for 27% reservation for SEBC in the services of the Central Government & its public sector undertakings was issued on 13th August 1990.

The report reveals that "The population of OBCs, both Hindu and Non-Hindu, is around 52% of the total population of India. Accordingly, a pro-rata reservation of 52% of all posts under the Central Government should be reserved for them. But this provision would go against the law laid down in a number of Supreme Court judgements wherein it has been held that the total quantum of reservation under article 15(4) & 16(4) of the Constitution should be below 50%. In view of this, the proposed reservation for OBCs would have to be pegged at a figure which,

when added to 22.5% for SCs and STs, remains below 50%. In view of these legal constraints, the Commission recommended a reservation of 27% only, even though their population is twice the figure. States which have already introduced reservation for OBCs exceeding 27% will remain unaffected by this recommendation."

Reservation of only 27% for SEBC has been recommended by the Commission due to the legal constraint of 50% ceiling by the Court, otherwise it would have been as per population proportion i.e. 52%. In 2019, the ceiling has been increased to 60% through the 103rd Constitutional Amendment, for the provision of 10% reservation for the Economically Weaker Sections (EWS) of upper castes. The same process should have been done to provide 52% reservation in place of just 27% to SEBC too, but fragmented depressed sections have never been in the priority list of the Governments. The Janata Dal as well as the following Central governments have not implemented all the recommendations of the Mandal Commission. The recommendations are not for just government services, but for the all-round development of the society. The implementation of following main recommended schemes is still awaited:-

- (1) Candidates belonging to OBCs recruited on the basis of merit in an open

competition should not be adjusted against their reservation quota of 27%.

- (2) The above reservation should also be made applicable to the promotion quota at all levels.
- (3) Reserved quota remaining unfilled should be carried forward for a period of three years and de-reserved thereafter.
- (4) Relaxation in upper age limit for direct recruitment should be extended to the candidates of OBCs in the same manner as is done in the case of SCs & STs.
- (5) A roaster system for each category of posts should be adopted by the concerned authorities in the same manner as is presently done in respect of SC & ST candidates.
- (6) The above scheme of reservation in its toto should also be made applicable to all recruitment to public sector undertakings both under the Central and State Governments, as also to nationalized banks.
- (7) All private sector undertakings which have received financial assistance from the government should recruit personnel on the aforesaid basis.

27% seats should be reserved for OBC students in all scientific, technical and professional institutions run by the Central as well as State Governments. Those states, which have already reserved more than 27% seats for OBC students, will remain unaffected by these recommendations. Special coaching facilities should be arranged for all such students in our technical and professional institutions so that these young people do not feel frustrated & humiliated and also the country not land with ill-equipped & sub-standard engineers, doctors and other professionals.

Separate financial institutions for providing financial and technical assistance should be established for vocational communities (such as village potter, oil crusher, blacksmith, carpenter etc.).

A part of the surplus land becoming available in future as a result of the operation of land ceiling laws etc. should also be allotted to the OBC landless labourers.

MISCELLANEOUS:-

- (1) Certain section of occupational communities like Fisherman, Banjaras, Khatwes, Bansforas etc. who still suffer from untouchability, may be included in the lists of SCs/STs.
- (2) Backward Classes Development Corporations should be set up both at the Central & State level to implement various socio-educational & economic measures for their advancement.
- (3) A separate Ministry/ Department for OBCs at the Centre and States should be created to safeguard their interests.
- (4) To give better representation to very backward sections of OBCs like the Gaddis in H.P., Neo-Buddhists in Maharashtra, Fishermen in Coastal areas, Gujjars in Jammu & Kashmir, areas of their concentration should be made into separate constituencies at the time of delimitation. The commission's report was based on pro-rata basis of last Census of 1931. There is strong demand from public since long time for caste wise survey in Census 2021 and reservation to OBCs in proportion of their population. This will not only help in the formulation of welfare schemes effectively & efficiently, but will also help in eradicating inequality in the society more rapidly.

(Author is a technocrat and academician)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

SC renewed faith among the people

"We want to ensure transparency. In case we take your government's suggestions, from sealed cover, it automatically means the other party (petitioners seeking a probe) won't know and people will think it is a government-appointed committee," Chief Justice of India (CJI) D.Y. Chandrachud told solicitor-general (SG) Tushar Mehta. Due to this bad precedent (followed the same dirty trick while the case was for Rafael and others) CJI was very correct saying that public confidence would take a hit if an impression was created that the Centre was steering the process with the court's nod. Actually, the Modi regime introduced sealed cover arguments in all sensitive cases handled by the apex court for the past 8 years plus shows the present regime is not a transparent one and an opaque administration. It is heartening that the CJI Chandrachud overturned SG Mehta's suggested names since it wanted to protect the interests of the investors as: "There has to be full confidence in the committee for the other side (petitioners) and the public. So, what we will do is that we will form a committee on our own, so that there is a sense of confidence in the committee." This is why the Modi government is after the SC collegium system so that they can handpick people who will say yes to everything. Whatsoever, After CJI's comment Mehta said he had no objections to the court's decision. The court later reserved its order on the constitution of the committee. No wonder the Modi government wants to kill democracy and hire SC judges who will 'tow the line', but this time the present CJI has teeth and due to his firm decision SC again renewed the faith among the people.

Bidyut Kumar Chatterjee, Faridabad

Rescue of Donkeys needed

Donkeys are sensitive, intelligent creatures with strong bonds with their families, these gentle animals under threat across the country now. According to reports in the country, there is a lot of illegal donkey trafficking, slaughtering, and selling of donkey flesh taking place. Many young and adult donkeys have their throats slit when they are still conscious. Some are also slaughtered by children across many states. According to reports, most donkeys are slaughtered in various locations across Andhra Pradesh and Telangana. Donkeys are smuggled into Andhra Pradesh and Telangana from other states under the cover of darkness to avoid police interception. It's high time to save these. Concerned parties should conduct immediate investigations and raids to rescue donkeys. There is a widespread belief in the country that donkey flesh and blood cure diseases. As a result, illegal slaughtering operations are taking place. According to reports, the donkey population dropped by 50% in last five years. Donkeys are entitled to better treatment than this.

Vijay Kumar H K, Raichur, Karnataka

Antarctic sea-ice cover hits record low for second year in a row

Antarctic sea ice extent has been reported to have broken its last year record low, and has also recorded it sooner than when it did last year, according to a statement by the National Snow and Ice Data Center (NSIDC).

On February 13, 2023, Antarctic sea ice extent fell to 1.91 million square kilometers, it said.

This set a new record low, dropping below the previous record of 1.92 million square kilometers set on February 25, 2022, it said.

This year represents only the second year that Antarctic extent has fallen below 2 million square kilometers, the statement said. In past years, the annual

minimum occurred between February 18 and March 3, so, further decline this year is expected, it said.

With a couple more weeks likely left in the melt season, the extent is expected to drop further before reaching its annual minimum, it said. Much of the Antarctic coast is ice free, exposing the ice shelves that fringe the ice sheet to wave action and warmer conditions, the statement said.

The NSIDC is a US information and referral centre in support of polar and cryospheric research.

NSIDC is part of the University of Colorado Boulder Cooperative Institute for Research in

Environmental Sciences (CIRES), and is affiliated with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) National Centers for Environmental Information through a cooperative agreement.

The sea ice extent has tracked well below last year's melt season levels since mid-December, according to the statement by NSIDC.

A positive Southern Annular Mode has led to stronger-than-average westerly winds. Along with a strong Amundsen Sea Low, the weather conditions have brought warm air to the region on both sides of the Antarctic Peninsula, the statement said.

This has largely cleared out the ice cover in the Amundsen and Bellingshausen Seas, and reduced the sea ice extent in the northwestern Weddell Sea, NSIDC said.

Sea ice is patchy and nearly absent over a long stretch of the Pacific-facing coastline of Antarctica, NSIDC said.

Earlier studies have linked low sea ice cover with wave-induced stresses on the floating ice shelves that hem the continent, leading to break up of weaker areas, the statement said.

Antarctic sea ice extent has been highly variable over the last several years. While 2022 and 2023 have had record low minimum extent, four out of

the five highest minimums have occurred since 2008, NSIDC said.

Overall, the trend in Antarctic minimum extent over 1979 to 2023 is near zero, NSIDC said.

The current downward linear trend in the Antarctic minimum extent from 1979 to 2023 is 2,400 square kilometers per year, or 0.9 percent per decade, which is currently not statistically significant, NSIDC said.

Nevertheless, the sharp decline in sea ice extent since 2016 has fuelled research on potential causes and whether sea ice loss in the Southern Hemisphere is developing a significant downward trend, the statement said.

BRIEF

DMRC

New Delhi: Delhi Metro will soon launch an app which will enable commuters to buy a range of products and book various services, including those for last-mile connectivity. 'Momentum 2.0' India's first virtual shopping app for the metro will also include features such as instant recharge of Delhi Metro's smart cards and smart payment options for other utility services, officials said on Sunday.

NARCL

Kolkata: Public sector asset reconstruction company NARCL is likely to revive Srei Infrastructure Finance Ltd (SIFL) and wind up the group's equipment financing arm SEFL after recovering outstanding debt in seven years, a source said on Sunday. NARCL (National Asset Reconstruction Company) on Wednesday won the bid to take over the two Srei group firms - SIFL and Srei Equipment Finance Ltd (SEFL) - through an insolvency process.

Sugar production

Aurangabad: Sugar production in Maharashtra may fall from 137.28 lakh tonnes in 2021-22 to 124 lakh tonnes in 2022-23 due to adverse climatic conditions in different parts of the state, a top official has said. Continuous rains rendered the ground wet for long periods which impacted sugarcane cultivation, Sugar Commissioner Shekhar Gaikwad told PTI on Saturday. "As a result, the production will be going down in Maharashtra in the ongoing season."

RHI Magnesita

New Delhi: Vienna-based RHI Magnesita is investing Rs 3,600 crore in the Indian market over the next two-three years to increase its production capacity and modernise plants, its global CEO Stefan Borgas said. The company has utilised a portion of the Rs 3,600 crore capital expenditure to acquire two refractory assets in India, Borgas told PTI here. "We have earmarked a Rs 3,600 crore investment in India. This would go towards organic and inorganic capacity expansion and modernisation of the Indian manufacturing facilities," the CEO said, adding that the capital infusion will be through its subsidiary RHI Magnesita India Ltd.

Bank of Maharashtra

New Delhi: Bank of Maharashtra (BoM) has emerged as the top performer among state-owned lenders in terms of loan growth percentage during the third quarter of 2022-23, an analysis of the latest financial results of public sector banks showed. The Pune-based lender recorded a 21.67 per cent increase in gross advances on a year-on-year basis, according to the latest quarterly numbers of the public sector bank (PSB). The bank has maintained the top slot in credit growth in percentage terms consistently for the past 10 quarters despite COVID-19 pressures.

India's economy to grow at 6 pc in 2023-24: Rajiv Kumar

New Delhi, Feb 19 (PTI):



India is likely to clock 6 per cent growth rate next fiscal and the country can persevere with a high growth rate because of several reforms undertaken during the last eight years by the Narendra Modi government, former Niti Aayog Vice Chairman Rajiv Kumar said on Sunday.

Kumar further said major risks going forward will emerge from a synchronized downturn in the North American and European economies.

"India has a good opportunity to persevere with a high growth rate because of the reforms undertaken during the last eight years. We will manage to grow at 6 per cent in 2023-24," he told PTI in an interview.

According to Kumar,

there are several downside risks, especially in the context of an uncertain global situation.

"These will have to be tackled through careful policy measures designed to support our export efforts and at the same time improve the flow of private investment both from domestic sources as well as from foreign sources," he said.

The Reserve Bank has projected India's economic growth at 6.4 per cent for 2023-24, broadly in

line with the estimate of the Economic Survey tabled in Parliament.

Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth is estimated at 7 per cent in 2022-23, according to the first advance estimate of the National Statistical Office (NSO).

The Economic Survey 2022-23 projected a base-line GDP growth of 6.5 per cent in real terms for the next fiscal.

Replying to a question on high inflation, Kumar said the Reserve Bank has said that it will ensure that inflation rate is brought under control.

"Also a good winter crop will help in keeping the food prices low," he noted.

The RBI lowered the consumer price inflation (CPI) forecast to 6.5 per cent for the current fiscal from 6.7 per cent.

Vi expands retail presence

Mumbai, Feb 19:

In line with its strategy to get closer to rural consumers, leading telecom operator, Vi, has launched over 130 new format 'Vi Shops' across Tier 3 locations in Madhya Pradesh & Chhattisgarh. Ramping-up its retail footprint, Vi Shops have been launched in towns like Vidisha, Dabra, Harda, Mandla, Jaora, Kawardha, Sakti, Bhatapara, Bemetara and many others. Introduced with an intent to deliver a uniform Vi experience to local customers as well as enable quick support and handholding, these Vi Shops have been rolled out in the last three months. The modern design of the new format Vi Shops is in line with signature elements that define existing Vi Stores in urban locations. Vi Shops offer the entire bouquet of Vi prepaid products and services and enable an enhanced customer experience and closer engagement.

FASHION SHOW



A model presents a creation by British designer Richard Quinn during his Autumn/Winter 2023 fashion show collection on the second day of the London Fashion Week, in London, on February 18.

Govt may auction 6 mineral blocks in current month

New Delhi, Feb 19 (PTI):

The government is likely to put on sale six mineral blocks, including four iron ore mines, in the current month.

The move would give a boost to mining sector's contribution to the country's gross domestic product.

The four iron ore blocks, situated in Chhattisgarh, are likely to be auctioned on Tuesday, according to the mines ministry.

The notice inviting tenders for the mines - Chhitpuri B iron ore block, Gomter Wakeli, Bijapur, Hahaladdi, North Bastar Kanker, Lohater, North Bastar Kanker - were floated last year.

The auction of Bandiamottu block in Andhra Pradesh, which has lead and associated minerals such as nickel, cobalt and copper, is also likely to be conducted in February. The notice invit-

ing tender for the block was issued in December last year. Besides, the auction of Udagi Block - a limestone mine in Karnataka - has also been extended to be held in February, the ministry said. Since the new procedure for auctioning of mineral blocks was introduced in 2015, a total of 239 mines have been auctioned so far. In the current fiscal so far 85 blocks have been put on sale, while in the last financial year 46 mines were auctioned. The government is also in the process of identifying mineral blocks like nickel in the sea and would gradually put them on sale, mines secretary Vivek Bharadwaj said on Friday.

The mines ministry is also amending the Offshore Areas Mineral (Development and Regulation) Act, 2002 and has sought the stakeholders' views on the same.

FPIs shift focus back on Indian market

Invests Rs 7,600 cr in a week

New Delhi, Feb 19 (PTI):

Foreign investors seem to have shifted their focus back on the Indian equity markets as they turned net buyers last week with an investment of over Rs 7,600 crore.

This came following a net outflow of Rs 3,920 crore by foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) from equities in the preceding week (February 7-12), data with the depositories showed.

"As the markets began to recover from the Adani shock, the flows from FPIs also improved, suggesting their renewed interest in the prospects of the Indian equity markets,"

Himanshu Srivastava, Associate Director - Manager Research at Morningstar India, said.

It appears that the sustained selling in India witnessed from early January is over but they might sell again at higher levels, VK Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist at Geojit Financial Services, said.

As per the data, FPIs have purchased equities worth a net sum of Rs 7,666 crore in the week ended February 17.

Given a more stable economy, strong macros and prospects of higher economic growth, FPIs are now willing to look beyond their valuation and other concerns, and pay a premium to the Indian markets, which has the potential to deliver better returns, Srivastava added.

FPIs have been net sellers since the beginning of the year and till February 10, they were net sellers to the tune of Rs 38,524 crore in 2023, including Rs 28,852

crore in January amid concerns of the continuing rate hikes by the major central banks globally to curb inflation. Also, the outflows from Indian equities could be attributed to relatively higher valuations, which prompted the FPIs to shift their focus towards other markets having relatively attractive valuations. Markets such as China, which saw significant erosion in their equity markets due to a series of strict lockdowns, attracted foreign investors after it opened up given its attractive valuation.

The distinctive feature of stock market performance this year is India's underperformance with NSE's benchmark index Nifty 50 down by 1.4 per cent so far. On the other hand, Taiwan index is up by 8.3 per cent and Shanghai composite is up by 3.4 per cent.

GAIL imitates Reliance with US ethane plans

New Delhi, Feb 19 (PTI):

India's largest gas firm GAIL is imitating billionaire Mukesh Ambani-led Reliance Industries Ltd in planning to import ethane from the US to replace natural gas and naphtha as feedstock at its petrochemical plants.

"In a bid towards diversification of the feedstock, GAIL is looking to import ethane from ethane-surplus countries with mature export terminal infrastructure through water borne transportation to India and transport it further through GAIL's pipeline systems to demand centres," the company said in a tender document.

It sought quotes to hire a very large ethane carrier (VLEC) for 20 years starting mid-2026 for importing ethane from the US. The ship with capacity of 80,000 to 99,000 cubic me-

tres is targeted to take deliveries from US ports of Marcus Hook, Nederland, Morgan's Point or Beaumont and deliver ethane at Dahej or Hazira in Gujarat or Dabhol in Maharashtra.

GAIL has a petrochemical plant at Pata, near Kanpur in Uttar Pradesh, and is also looking to set up another unit at Usar in Maharashtra. The company had to cut down on run rate at Pata after the government diverted gas supplies from the plant to city gas suppliers. This led to its profitability being impacted and so now the company is looking to supplement the feedstock with ethane. Reliance had in 2014 announced ethane plans in 2014 and started importing the feedstock from the US in 2017. It is importing 1.6 million tonnes per annum of ethane and is using six VLECs for transporting it to India.

Axis Bank launches enhanced Rewards Program

Mumbai, Feb 19:

Axis Bank, India's third-largest private sector bank, announces the launch of its enhanced rewards program in association with airline and hotel loyalty programs across the industry. This program allows Axis bank credit and debit card holders to seamlessly transfer their accumulated EDGE Rewards / Miles across 13 partners such as Singapore Airlines (KrisFlyer), Marriott International (Marriott Bonvoy), ITC Hotels (Club ITC), Turkish Airlines

(Miles and Smiles), Qatar Airways (Privilege Club), United Airlines (MileagePlus) and more.

This new proposition by the Bank gives more power to the customers by giving them a bouquet of rewards to choose from and make exciting additions to their travel plans. It offers seamless and attractive conversion options while delivering value for customer's earned rewards. Axis Bank will continue to expand this program, with an aim to have the largest rewards transfer proposition in the banking industry.

Hero MotoCorp plans to expand electric two-wheeler range

Over next 12-18 months

New Delhi, Feb 19 (PTI):



The country's largest two-wheeler maker Hero MotoCorp plans to expand its electric two-wheeler range over the next 12-18 months as it looks to cater to demand across multiple customer segments, according to a senior company official.

The company, which has already commenced sales of its electric scooter under Vida brand across Delhi, Bengaluru and Jaipur, plans

to introduce the existing range in other cities as well in the next fiscal before it starts to roll out the new products. "With the launch in the three cities - Delhi, Bengaluru and Jaipur - where the customers are really taking up to the product and the overall sales and pre-sales experience...we are really ready to now multiply

into many cities going into FY24 to establish ourselves wider into the market," Hero MotoCorp Head - Emerging Mobility Business Unit (EMBU) - Swadesh Srivastava said during an analyst call. Hero MotoCorp had launched VIDA V1 electric scooter in October last year in two variants Pro and Plus.

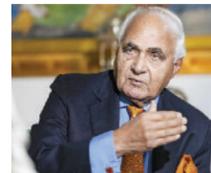
The company produces the electric scooter at its Chittoor-based plant in Andhra Pradesh and competes with the likes of Bajaj Chetak, TVS iQube, Ather Energy, Hero Electric and Ola Electric, among others.

Adani-Hindenburg row not to impact India story: KP Singh

New Delhi, Feb 19 (PTI):

The turmoil engulfing Gautam Adani's business empire following damning allegations by a US short seller, has not shaken the faith of global investors in India, real estate doyen K P Singh said ruffling suggestions that banks would have lent to Adani group on instructions from higher-ups.

The punishing stock market sell-off Adani group companies have seen following the January 24 report of Hindenburg Research is a temporary



blip concerning just one corporate group and hasn't harmed faith in India as an investment opportunity, he told PTI in an interview.

He, however, felt the Adani group needs to "beef up" capital and cut down debt to continue to remain on the high growth trajectory.

Air India, Indian aviation market & tailwinds of growth

New Delhi/ Mumbai, Feb 19 (PTI):

From increased direct international air connectivity to being a showpiece of divestment programme to job creation in faraway US, Air India's mega 470 aircraft order has ignited myriad expectations in and about the world's fastest growing aviation market - India. A raft of factors - surging air traffic demand, rising middle class population and disposable incomes, demographic dividend, over 1,200 planes on order by various Indian carriers and improving aviation infrastructure - are all fuelling the growth of the market. Out of the 470 firm aircraft order, 250 will be supplied by Airbus and 220 by Boeing, while there is also the option to buy another 370 planes from the two plane makers. The firm order includes 70 wide-body aircraft.

Aircraft & Air Traffic
Indian airlines have placed orders for more than 1,100 aircraft that are to be delivered in the coming years. The country's largest airline IndiGo is to take deliveries of around 500 planes, Go First is to receive 72 aircraft, Akasa

Air is to get 56 planes and Vistara is to take 17 aircraft. Besides, SpiceJet has aircraft on order. All of them are narrow-body planes. Together with Air India, the domestic carriers have at least 1,115 planes on order. Around 700 commercial air-



craft are flying in India and majority of them are narrow-body planes. About 470 aircraft of Airbus and around 159 Boeing planes are in commercial service. GE Aerospace's Country Head, South Asia & Indonesia, Vikram Rai said India has the potential to grow both on the wide-body and narrow-body side. Providing a perspective, he said that in India, pre-COVID traffic was around 75 million international passengers and out of them, 60-65 per cent used foreign carriers. "With the economy growing and disposable income growing,

there is a huge opportunity for Indians to travel abroad... This 75 million passengers is likely to go to 120-125 million over the next 7-10 years," he said. India is the world's third largest and the fastest growing aviation market in the world.

Airports
At present, India has at least 147 operational airports and the number of airports have jumped from 74 nearly nine years ago, especially on the back of the government's ambitious regional air connectivity scheme UDAN.

While talking about Air India's plane order, V Thulasidas, who was Air India's chief from December 2003 to March 2008, said that now the country has world class airports which can act as hubs. "In terms of size, India should have not just one hub but several hubs like the EU. The hubs can be Delhi, Mumbai, Bangalore, Hyderabad, Chennai, Kolkata, Kochi and others," he said.

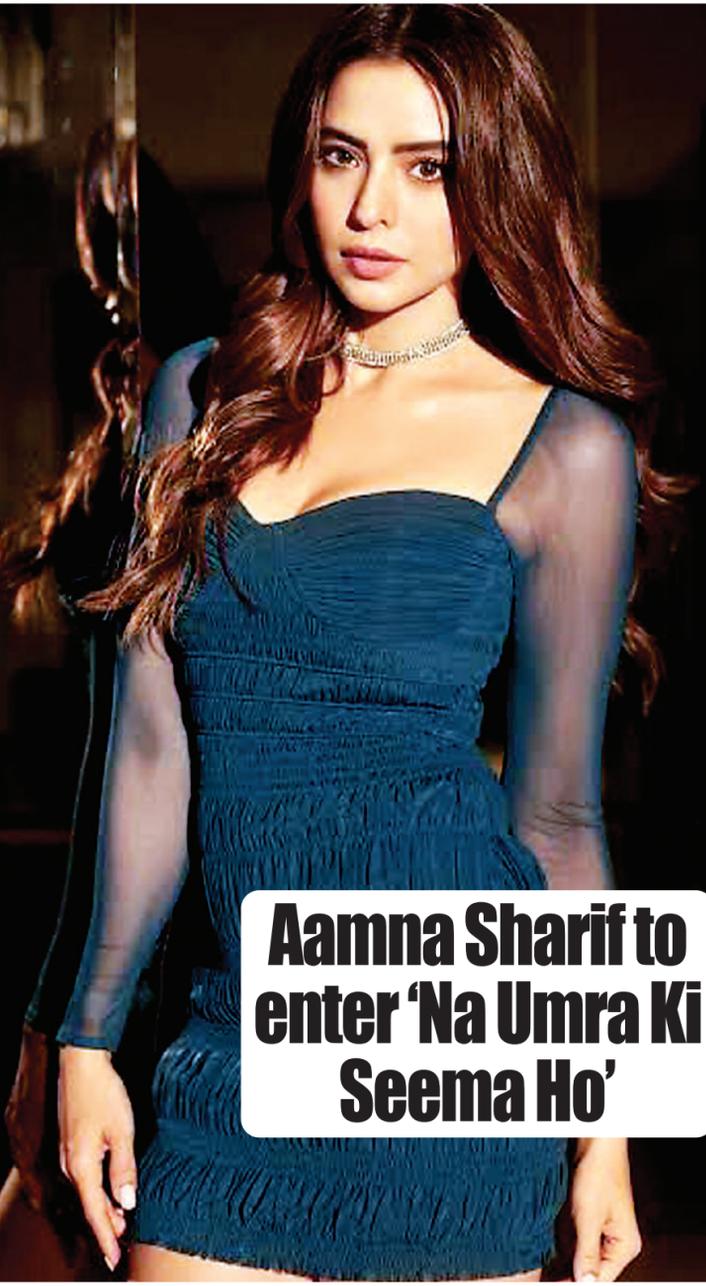
Aviation Experts
A key takeaway once Air India starts operating the new aircraft is that the international travel of Indians will be catered to mostly by the Indian carrier. "Some 125 planes out of the 470 will be for replacement... they have secured their growth plans for at least next 10 years," an aviation industry expert, who has been associated for long with the airlines sector, said.

According to him, the induction of wide-body planes will help in expansion of fleet as well as operations on both the East and the West coast.

"They (Air India) can provide more direct connectivity up to 8-10 hours and 16 hours non-stop flights as long as they are able to meet customer expectations, other parameters in operations. It will be a game changer for them." It will also aid in getting back India's international traffic from overseas carriers. They (Air India) can also create international traffic hubs across the country, which was not possible in the absence of a strong player," the expert said on the condition of anonymity.

Air India Renaissance
"Hundreds of initiatives across 22 broad work streams are underway to transform the airline over three phases:

Taxi, Take Off and Climb," Air India chief Campbell Wilson said on January 27, the day when Tata Group completed the first anniversary of the takeover of the airline. The Tata Group is also merging Air India Express with Air Asia and Vistara with Air India. With induction of new aircraft, Air India should also look at targeting the routes between India and Gulf countries where there is always a huge demand. The Gulf sector is also profitable, former Civil Aviation Minister Suresh Prabhu said. As Boeing Commercial Airplanes President and CEO Stan Deal put it on February 14, "with the industry-leading fuel efficiency of the 737 MAX, 787 Dreamliner and 777X, Air India is well positioned to achieve its expansion plans and become a world-class global airline with an Indian heart".



Aamna Sharif to enter 'Na Umra Ki Seema Ho'

Aamna Sharif is a prominent name in the television industry. She was last seen in year 2020 in a grey character. Amna has been absent from television for two years and is now making a comeback on television with Star Bharat's show 'Na Umra Ki Seema Ho' alongside Iqbal Khan and Rachana Mistry who plays the lead role of Dev and Vidhi respectively. As per the sources, Aamna will be playing a key part in the upcoming track.

Aamna Sharif who is all set to make her entry in the show, will be seen playing the character named 'Yamini' who will soon enter in Dev and Vidhi's life. It's been reported that Aamna's character is crucial and plays a significant role in the next episodes. It is also noted that her appearance as 'Yamini' is highly distinctive. She will soon begin filming in preparation for her appearance on the show. Aamna's admirers will enjoy seeing her on television once more in a brand-new role and appearance as 'Yamini'.

A lot have changed in Dev and Vidhi's life after their marriage will Yamini's entry create any havoc in their married life? The upcoming episodes of 'Na Umra Ki Seema Ho' will have a lot of revelation and will unfold new twists. Who is 'Yamini' and why has she come in Dev and Vidhi's life?

To know more about the new entry and latest updates of the show keep watching 'Na Umra Ki Seema Ho' every Monday-Saturday at 8:00 PM only on Star Bharat.

Home cooks of 'MasterChef India' visit 'Amul Factory'

This week, on Sony Entertainment Television and SonyLIV's culinary reality show 'MasterChef India', viewers will see the Top 9 home cooks step out of the 'MasterChef Kitchen' and head to the famous 'Amul Factory' in Anand, Gujarat! The Judges - Chefs Ranveer Brar, Garima Arora and Vikas Khanna will introduce some exciting challenges that will push the home cooks to explore different aspects of cooking, with the use of Amul products.

Monday will be the 'Farm To Table' challenge where the home cooks can pick and choose ingredients from the Amul Organic Farms and curate a dish out of fresh produce! Next up, Chef Kunal Kapur will be the guest chef for the day as 'MasterChef India' celebrates 75 years of India and the birth of Amul which led to India's very own 'White Revolution.' The home cooks will be given 75 ingredients to work with and cook up an innovative dish for the challenge themed 'Celebrating India'.



Furthermore, the home cooks will get quite an emotional surprise as they reunite with their family and must cook a dish that defines them in 'Family Challenge'. Ending the week, the contestants will have to face the 'Mystery Box Ki Agni Pariksha' in which the home cooks will not only have to work with fire but also spices!

Talking about the upcoming week in Gujarat, Chef Vikas Khanna

opined, "Going to Anand, to the Amul factory gave us an insight into the complex operations that this home grown brand runs. This week will leave Indian audiences proud of all that they've achieved, and our home cooks will take full advantage of their products that are so loved by one and all. The contestants will be innovating new dishes with fresh organic produce, staying on balance amidst an emotional rollercoast-

er ride as some of them meet their families and cooking literally with fire to stay in the competition."

Will the MasterChef home cooks come out of the heat of the kitchen, having learned new secrets of the culinary world after this tough week? Tune in to watch MasterChef India, every Monday to Friday at 9 pm only on Sony Entertainment Television and SonyLIV.

Priyanka finally lets a glimpse of daughter Malti on social media



After revealing her daughter Malti Marie's face to the world at the Hollywood Walk of Fame event for the Jonas Brothers, Priyanka Chopra has shared a picture with her on social media.

On Sunday, Priyanka took to Instagram, where she shared two pictures of her and her baby. She held her close and clicked a selfie, showing Malti's face. In the second image she is in bed holding Malti close to her while hiding

her face with her hand. She captioned her posts: "Days like this." Priyanka and Nick tied the knot in Christian and Hindu ceremonies in Jodhpur's Umaid Bhawan Palace in December 2018. They welcomed their daughter Malti Marie via surrogacy last year. On the work front, Priyanka will be seen in 'Love Again' and the series 'Citadel'. She will also be starring with Alia Bhatt and Katrina Kaif in Farhan Akhtar's 'Jee Le Zaraa'.

Shania Twain doesn't swear when she's in UK



Canadian singer-songwriter Shania Twain curbs her swearing when she is in the UK. The superstar - who is a new panellist on the UK talent contest 'Starstruck' - admits she has a foul mouth.

But she tries not to curse as much when she's this side of the Atlantic, reports Female First UK.

She told Best UK magazine: "It's very much a sister culture for me, coming from Canada. It doesn't feel foreign in many ways. I would drink tea in Canada! There's a much more relaxed sense of humour. We swear more in Canada, so I curb that a bit when I'm

here! I always feel very at home here."

The 'You're Still The One' hitmaker recently revealed her insecurities about her voice and the fact late music icon Prince didn't allow swearing stopped her from accepting his offer to work together. As per Female First UK, Shania was invited by the 'Purple Rain' hitmaker to his Paisley Park estate to make an album produced by him in the vein of Fleetwood Mac's 1997 'Rumours' record amid her split from her first husband, Robert John 'Mutt' Lange, who also produced and co-wrote some of her music.



Tanisha Mehta on recreating iconic scene from 'Kabhi Khushi Kabhie Gham' for her show

'Shubh Laabh - Aapkey Ghar Mein' actress Tanisha Mehta, who is seen playing the role of Ishani in the show 'Lag Ja Gale', talked about recreating the most popular scenes from 'Kabhi Khushi Kabhie Gham' in which Amitabh Bachchan pulls a stool for Jaya Bachchan where she helps him in tying his tie.

Set in Delhi, 'Lag Ja Gale' is a story of a couple, Shiv (Namik Paul) - an affluent, self-made young hotelier and Ishani (Tanisha Mehta), who get married for the sake of their siblings. In every scene where Tanisha has to stand opposite Namik, she has to take the help of a stool to match his height. While talking about recreating the iconic scene, Tanisha said: "Within a few days of shooting, Namik and I started bonding with each other really well and that really helped to pull off our scenes smoothly. But the biggest concern is that because of Namika's height, every time there is a shot where I am standing next to him, I have to stand on a stool. For the scenes which are not close-up shots, I have to wear high heels throughout the sequence." The actress further added that while shooting every scene with him she needed a stool and it reminded her of



the movie 'Kabhi Khushi Kabhie Gham'. "The very first day when we shot together, I was asked to do a scene with him standing on a stool and that just reminded me of the most popular scenes between Jaya and Amitabh Bachchan from Kabhi Khushi Kabhie Gham where she has to fasten his tie. I believe the resemblance of it with our shoot life is so similar that now I have started enjoying it as I am a big 'K3G fan'. I just hope that the audience loves our on-screen chemistry and showers their love on our show," she added.

High-voltage drama this week in &TV's show

High-voltage drama in store this week in &TV's show Doosri Maa, Happu Ki Ultan Paltan and Bhabiji Ghar Par Hai. About &TV's Doosri Maa track, Yashoda shares, "Yashoda (Neha Joshi) finds Krishna (Aayudh Bhanushali) hiding in an orphanage and asks him to come with her, but he refuses. Yashoda then coaxes Krishna into revealing his feelings and manages to convince him to return home. However, upon reaching home with Krishna, Dadaji (Sunil Dutt) asks Yashoda to throw Krishna out of the house."

About &TV's Happu Ki Ultan Paltan track, Rajesh shares, "The Commissioner (Kishore Bhanushali)'s sister, Reshma tends to elope with bachelor boys. Hence, Happu Singh (Yogesh Tripathi) is assigned the duty to always keep

Reshma with him to prevent her disappearance and keep a close watch on her. As Happu gets home with Reshma, the moment she meets Kamlesh (Sanjay Choudhary), she falls head over heels for him and begins pursuing him." About &TV's Bhabiji Ghar Par Hai track, Anita Bhabi shares, "Anita (Vidisha Srivastava) is not home and to make the most of it, Vibhuti's (Aasif Sheikh)'s friend, Prem (Vishwajeet Soni) hatches a plan to celebrate their bachelorhood days. However, Tiwari (Rohitashv Gour) informs Anita about it and she returns home to catch them red-handed. To salvage the situation, Vibhuti cooks up a story of having cousins over. 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!

Riya Sharma, Ishaan Dhawan get into skins of their 'Dhruv Tara' characters

TV actors Riya Sharma and Ishaan Dhawan talked about attending workshops for getting into the skin of their characters in the show, 'Dhruv Tara - Samay Sadi Se Pare', and how the workshops have helped Riya and Ishaan break the ice.



Talking about the experience doing the rehearsals and practicing together, the 'Saat Phero Ki Hera Pherie' actress Riya said: "The workshops were a truly enlightening experience for me. I had the chance to gain insights into Ishaan's acting techniques and focus on enhancing our on-screen chemistry." "I feel incredibly lucky to have collabor-

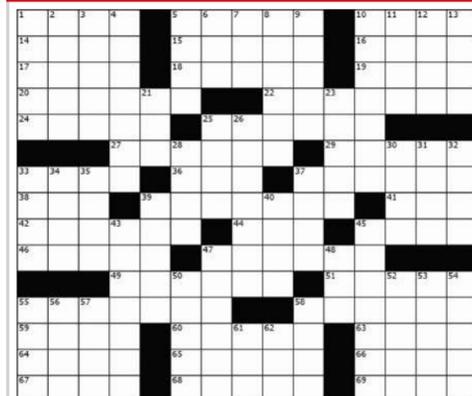
ated with such a talented and hardworking team. Although the workshops were demanding, they allowed us to build an endearing connection which also reflects on-screen, and we are sure they will fall in love with Dhruv and Tara," added the actress known for 'Kashibai Bajirao Ballal' and 'Banni Chow Home

Delivery'. On the other hand, Ishaan, who is a model and actor known for his roles such as Hamid in 'Bebaakee', and Kabeer in 'Zindagi Mere Ghar Aana', among others also added how it was to attend the workshop and shoot for the show with Riya.

"Working with Riya was absolutely amazing, and the workshops were an integral aspect of our journey to create a fantastic show. Not only did they allow us to enhance our acting abilities, but they also helped us to build a strong bond that helped us get comfortable with each other. I am eagerly waiting for our fans to see the fruits of our labor," he added.

CROSSWORD

567



ACROSS

- Tart
- Sirloin, e.g.
- Bedspring
- Traffic barrier
- Howdy!
- Ancient Peruvian
- Fall to mention
- Deduce
- Goblet part
- Alternative
- Renovate

DOWN

- Not here
- Real
- Eats away
- Keyboard instrument
- Ready, willing, and
- Card game
- Brahms piece
- Corp. head
- Changed
- Alamos
- Bother
- Precious stone

45. Tibetan monk
46. Build
47. Briny
49. Hardly ever
51. Soothed
55. Not specific
58. Building cement
59. Medicinal herb
60. Boise's state
63. Memo
64. Singer ____ Campbell
65. More angry
66. December 24 and 31
67. Lip
68. TV host
69. Hideaways

31. Power source
32. Space agency (abbr.)
33. Soreness
34. Teddy
35. Be defeated
37. Truck's vehicle
39. Church table
40. Bank (on)
43. Shows (a movie)
45. Memorized
47. Not often
48. Trinity's boyfriend
50. Lift up
52. Range
53. Dined
54. Attire
55. Jokes
56. She, in Seville
57. Nays
58. In addition
61. Joan of ____
62. Laughing sound

SOLUTION 566

Aussies sweep their way to self-destruction

India retain Border-Gavaskar Trophy

New Delhi, Feb 19 (PTD):

Ravindra Jadeja thoroughly exposed a technically ill-equipped and mentally messed up Australian batting unit with a career-best seven for 42 as India won the second Test by six wickets to retain the Border-Gavaskar Trophy here on Sunday.

The Australian batters paid the price for some atrocious shot selection as Jadeja, who enjoyed a 10-wicket match haul, along with Ravichandran Ashwin (3/59) decimated the visitors in the morning session, bowling them out for 113 in 31.1 overs. The last nine wickets fell for 52 runs. KL Rahul (1) cut a sorry figure but Indian batters showed how to play spin as the target of 115 was completed in 26.4 overs.

Cheteshwar Pujara had something to cheer about on his 100th Test appearance as he remained unbeaten on 31 and fittingly hit the winning boundary.

India have now put one foot in the final of the World Test Championship in England in June, having taken an unassailable 2-0 lead in the four match

Ravindra Jadeja celebrates with teammates after the wicket of Australian batter Matthew Kuhnemann.



Brief Scores

Australia: 263 and 113 all out in 31.1 overs (Travis Head 43, Marnus Labuschagne 35; Ravindra Jadeja 7/42, Ravichandran Ashwin 3/59).
India: 262 and 118 for 6 in 26.4 overs (Rohit Sharma 31, Cheteshwar Pujara 31 not out; Nathan Lyon 2/49).

series. The win was India's 100th against

Australia across formats. The third Test will be played in Indore from February 27. Starting the day at 61 for 1, Jadeja's arm balls became a lethal weapon with as many as five Australian batters getting out trying to play sweep shots of deliveries that kept low on a typical third day Ferozshah Kotla track. Australia lost nine wickets for only 52 runs

and it was not the pitch but the fear of unknown that led to their eventual downfall.

Steve Smith, Matt Renshaw, Alex Carry, Pat Cummins and Matt Kuhnemann were all guilty of playing the ugly slog sweep and some tried non-existent reverse sweep off deliveries bowled on either middle or leg stump line.

They were either bowled or adjudged leg before in the process as the deliveries started keeping low.

Ashwin also played the supporting act to perfection as eight Australian batters failed to reach double figures save overnight pair of Travis Head (45) and Marnus Labuschagne (35), who had briefly counter-attacked

India tighten grip on qualification for WTC Final

The race to qualification for the ICC World Test Championship Final took another turn on Sunday as India claimed a six-wicket victory over Australia to move a step closer to sealing their place in the June 7 game at The Oval. With the top two teams in the WTC

standings securing a place in June's Final, the result still means that Australia and India control their own destiny as they edge towards the conclusion of the competition, the ICC said in a release. Australia remain atop the standings despite the defeat reducing their percentage tally to 66.67%, while India widened the gap between themselves and third spot thanks to their victory in Delhi, moving to 64.06%. As a result of India's victory, the number of teams able to qualify for the Final shrinks from four to three. South Africa drop out of contention, unable to reach the percentage points required to break into the top two, leaving Sri Lanka as the lone challenger for a place in the Final. Sri Lanka currently sit third in the standings on 53.33%, and they head to New Zealand next month knowing that not only must they win both Tests in their two-match series to stand any chance of qualification, but they are also reliant on favourable results in the remaining Tests between India and Australia.

King Kohli breaks Tendulkar's record

Virat Kohli added another feather in his cap on Sunday as he became the sixth and the fastest batter in the world to score 25,000 runs across formats during

the second Test against Australia, which India won by six wickets, at the Arun Jaitley Stadium in Delhi. Kohli achieved the feat when his sores reached eight during India's run chase of 115 as he flicked Nathan Lyon for a boundary in the 12th over in the second innings. He had come into his 492nd match overall with 52 runs needed to reach the milestone. He made 44 in India's first innings and was out for 20 in the second essay to end at 25012 runs. "Milestone Unlocked. Congratulations @imVkohli on reaching 25000 runs in international cricket! Simply sensational," BCCI tweeted. "... And heartfelt congratulations to @imVkohli on becoming the fastest to get to 25000 international runs," BCCI secretary Jay Shah said in his tweet to congratulate the team for winning the Tests. The other stalwarts to have scored more than 25,000 runs across formats are Indian icon Sachin Tendulkar (34357 from 664 matches), Sri Lankans Kumar Sangakkara (28016 from 594 matches) and Mahela Jayawardene (25957 from 652 matches), Australian Ricky Ponting (27483 from 560 matches) and South African Jacques Kallis (25534 from 519 matches).

last evening with some degree of success.

When India started the chase, their skipper Rohit Sharma (31 off 20 balls) showed how to tackle the Australian spinners be-

fore being run-out due to a mix-up.

Unlike Labuschagne, who preferred to stay on backfoot even to flighted deliveries, the moment Rohit saw the ball being given air, he

would put a big stride forward and lift it in the arc between sight screen and cow corner. Rohit's stay was short and sweet one but certainly a lesson in playing spinners.

KL Rahul retains his place for last two Tests

Unadkat recalled for ODIs

New Delhi, Feb 19 (PTD):

The Indian selection committee on Sunday retained the team for the third and fourth Tests against Australia, keeping faith in KL Rahul despite his repeated failures. Seasoned left-arm seamer Jaydev Unadkat, who was part of the squad for the first two Tests of the Border-Gavaskar Trophy but was released to represent Saurashtra in the Ranji Trophy final against Bengal, is back in the team for the remaining two matches.

Fresh from leading Saurashtra to a Ranji Trophy title triumph, Unadkat has also made a comeback to the ODI squad for the limited overs series that will take place after the Test rubber.

Speedster Jasprit Bumrah, who has been out of action at the international

India's Test squad: Rohit Sharma (captain), KL Rahul, Shubman Gill, Cheteshwar Pujara, Virat Kohli, KS Bharat (wk), Ishan Kishan (wk), Ravichandran Ashwin, Axar Patel, Kuldeep Yadav, Ravindra Jadeja, Mohd. Shami, Mohd. Siraj, Shreyas Iyer, Suryakumar Yadav, Umesh Yadav, Jaydev Unadkat.
India's ODI squad: Rohit Sharma (captain), Shubman Gill, Virat Kohli, Shreyas Iyer, Suryakumar Yadav, K L Rahul, Ishan Kishan (wk), Hardik Pandya (Vice-captain), Ravindra Jadeja, Kuldeep Yadav, Washington Sundar, Yuzvendra Chahal, Mohd. Shami, Mohd. Siraj, Umran Malik, Shardul Thakur, Axar Patel, Jaydev Unadkat.

level since September 2022 due to back issues, and missed the T20 World Cup, Bangladesh tour, and the home series versus Sri Lanka and New Zealand, is not part of either the Test or the ODI team and will return to play during the IPL.

India look for big win against lowly Ireland

To qualify for Women's T20 WC semis

Gqeberha, Feb 19 (PTD):

A defeat against England denting their confidence, India will look to bounce back with a big win against lowly Ireland to remain in contention for a semifinal berth in the Women's T20 World Cup, here on Monday.

After the 11-run loss to England on Saturday, their first defeat in the showpiece, India are in second spot with four points from three matches behind England (six points from three straight wins) who have qualified for the semifinals.

The Harmanpreet Kaur-led side will now need not only a win against Ireland in their last group match on Monday but also a big one to have any chance of filling up the remaining semifinal spot from Group 2. They need to improve their net run rate from the current +0.205.

Pakistan, who have lost



Match starts at 6.30pm IST.

to India in their opening match, have two points from two matches and they also have a chance to make it to the last four if they win their last two matches. In that case, they will also have six points.

Currently, Pakistan, who play against the West Indies Sunday night, have a better NRR of +1.542 than that of India, though they are yet to face England who have a NNR of +1.776.

Ireland, on the other hand, are already out of contention for a semifinal berth, having lost all their

three matches.

To win big against Ireland, the Indian batting will need to fire, especially captain Harmanpreet and opener Shafali Verma, as both have not played a significant knock so far.

Harmanpreet's scores in the three matches so far have been 16, 33 and 4, below par by her standards, while Shafali have made 33, 28 and 8.

Young Richa Ghosh has been the most consistent batter for India with scores of 31, 44 and 47 not out, and she would be looking to continue with her

ABC medal shows India can definitely win Sudirman Cup: Vimal Kumar

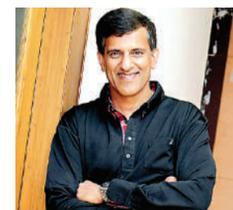
New Delhi, Feb 19 (PTD):

India's first-ever bronze medal at the Asia Badminton Mixed team championships has shown that the country can win the Sudirman Cup this year, feels former national coach Vimal Kumar.

India on Saturday narrowly went down 2-3 to formidable China in the semi-finals to sign off their campaign with a maiden bronze medal in Dubai.

It was a creditable performance since India were without the services of an injured Satwiksairaj Rankireddy but the men's pair of Chirag Shetty-Dhruv Kapila and young women's doubles duo of Treesa Jolly-Gayatri Gopichand dished out superlative shows to take India to the semifinals.

"Once Satwik comes back, we will have a strong doubles pair and our singles have always been



strong. Prannoy and Sindhu are also capable of beating anybody. So I feel we have a decent chance to win the Sudirman Cup," Vimal, who was present when the men's team won the Thomas Cup title last year, told PTL.

"The ladies doubles have also shown good level, especially Treesa and Gayatri beating the Malaysian top doubles pair (world no 4 Tan Pearly and Thinaah Muralitharan) will give them a lot of confidence. We can't say it's too ambitious (to win Sudirman Cup). We can.

Broad, Anderson devastate NZ in 1st test



Zealand top-order batters late on the third day to leave the home side 63-5 overnight and make the win imminent, finished with 4-49. His long-time and record-breaking partner James Anderson took 4-18, sealing the win when he bowled No. 11 Blair Tuckner (8) about 15 minutes before tea as New Zealand was all out for 127.

That raised Anderson and Broad's tally of test wickets in partnership to 1,009 in 103 matches, eclipsing the record of 1,001 previously held by Australians Glenn McGrath and Shane Warne.

England will now take a 1-0 series lead into the second and final test in Wellington from Friday.

"Obviously another great performance. We were very clinical with the bat and obviously very clinical with the ball," England captain Ben Stokes said.

Swiatek sweeps aside Pegula to retain Qatar Open title



Doha, Feb 19 (AP):

Top-ranked Iga Swiatek successfully defended her Qatar Open title after beating No. 4-ranked Jessica Pegula 6-3, 6-0 in the final on Saturday. Swiatek broke Pegula for 2-0 and 4-2 but both times immediately lost her own serve. Pegula couldn't hold again and Swiatek served out to love to take the first set. The second wasn't competitive, and Swiatek swept it to break the American six times in the final. Swiatek dropped only five sets all week en route to her 12th career title. Doha was also Swiatek's first title last year, and the start of a 37-match winning streak which included her second grand slam title at the French Open.

Saurashtra beat Bengal to clinch second title

Kolkata, Feb 19 (PTD):

Left-arm pacer Jaydev Unadkat returned a match haul of nine wickets, including 6/85 in the second innings, as Saurashtra thrashed Bengal by nine wickets in the summit clash to clinch their second Ranji Trophy title here on Sunday.

Having given away a big first innings lead of 230 runs, Bengal, who were overnight 169/4 in their second essay, folded for 241, handing the visitors a mere 12 runs target to win the final.

Saurashtra lost their opening batter Jay Gohil (0) off the bowling of Akash Deep but eventually went past the target, reaching 14 for 1 in 2.4 overs, to wrap up the match with one day and two full sessions to spare.

Saurashtra's earlier triumph was in 2019-20 season when they defeated Bengal on the basis of first innings lead. In the



last 10 seasons, they have made the final on five occasions, underlining their consistency.

A Ranji Trophy title eluded Bengal yet again. They last won it in 1998-99 when they defeated a star-studded Delhi at the same Eden Gardens. Their first title had come in 1938-39 in the pre-independence era.

Earlier in the morning session, Unadkat showed the way after a freak run-out of Bengal batter Shehbaz Ahmed (27). The veteran Saurashtra skipper added four wickets to his overnight tally of two.

The old Bengal warhorse duo of skipper Manoj Tiwari (68) and Anustup Majumdar (61)

slammed valiant half-centuries but the home side were let down by their top-order batters, including the promising Abhimanyu Easwaran who scored 0 and 16 in the two innings.

In-form No. 3 batter Sudip Charami, who is fresh from a 112 and 41 in the semifinal against

Madhya Pradesh and has 800-plus runs this season, also came a cropper and scored 0 and 14 in the two innings. The decision to hand debut to Sumanta Gupta in a Ranji final also will rattle Bengal as he did not show any technique of a top-order batter and perished to an outgoing delivery.

'India saw record over 15,000 organ transplants'

New Delhi, Feb 19 (PTI):

India has witnessed a fast resurgence in organ transplant activities post COVID-19 and, for the first time, achieved more than 15,000 transplants a year in 2022, Union Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan said on Sunday. Along with this, there was an annual increase of 27 per cent in the transplant numbers, Bhushan said at the "National Organ and Tissue Transplant Organisation (NOTTO) Scientific Dialogue 2023", organised by the Union Ministry of Health.

The event was organised to bring all the stakeholders under one roof to brainstorm ideas about interventions and best prac-

tices in the field of organ and tissue transplant that can be taken up for saving lives. Bhushan said there has been a fast resurgence in organ transplant activities post Covid, and for the first time, the country has achieved more than 15,000 transplants a year (2022). There was an annual increase of 27 per cent in the transplant numbers, he added.

The health secretary underlined three priority areas - programmatic restructuring, communication strategy and skilling of professionals. Highlighting the need to



Rajesh Bhushan

update the existing structures and guidelines, he said, "Though we have existing structures at various governance levels like NOTTO at the national level, SOTTO at the state level and ROTTOs at the regional level, it needs to be ensured that they work as a well-oiled machinery while performing their mandate."

Bhushan welcomed the changes that have taken place, such as updated guidelines and the domicile requirement being done away with. He stressed the need for a rational use of the country's

technical manpower and training and channelising them efficiently, along with optimal utilisation of the physical infrastructure and equipment, such as in tertiary care facilities.

Underscoring the changing demography of the country, the health secretary noted that India has a growing geriatric population and to ensure quality of life for them, it is critically important to update the communication and awareness strategy, so that potential organ donors come forward. He suggested wide orientation through training programmes, newly-designed courses and digital interventions for healthcare professionals and domain knowledge experts.

TRIBUTE TO SHIVAJI



Governor of Maharashtra Ramesh Bais pays tribute at the statue of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj on the occasion of Shiv Jayanti celebrations at Shivaji Park, in Mumbai, Sunday.

PM's gift to German chancellor sparks demand for hand-engraved vessels

Of Moradabad

Lucknow, Feb 19 (PTI):

Dilshad Hussain has been hand-engraving brass vessels for decades but never have the demand and popularity for his wares been as high as after Prime Minister Narendra Modi gifted a nickel-coated 'matka' to German Chancellor Olaf Scholz last year.

"The popularity of 'matka' has increased many times since the prime minister chose to present it to the German

chancellor. Now I keep getting orders," Hussain, 75, told PTI. During a G7 Summit last year, Prime Minister Modi gifted to the German chancellor a nickel-coated hand-engraved brass vessel from Moradabad, also known as "Peetal Nagari" or brass city of Uttar Pradesh.

Hussain was recently conferred the Padma Shri, the fourth highest civilian honour of the country, for his work. The septuagenarian artisan said he learnt the craft under the guidance of his grandfather. He also received the "Shilpa Guru" award six



A nickel-coated 'matka' that Prime Minister Narendra Modi gifted to German Chancellor Olaf Scholz last year.

years ago from then presi-

dent Ram Nath Kovind. Hussain said he recently got an order from Mumbai and delivered the vessels at a rate of Rs 18,000 a piece. Orders are coming in from other cities too, he said. Sharing the technique behind his craft, Hussain said the design is first sketched on a paper.

Then an outline of the whole design is done with a fine engraving tool hammered with a wooden block. This particular type of engraving is called "Marodi", he said. Hussain praised Kshipra Shukla, the chairperson of the Uttar Pradesh

Institute of Design and Research (UPIDR), for extending help in popularising his craft.

"I never faced any discrimination due to my religion. Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has praised my work many times," he said. Hussain said he has been training youngsters, many of them women. The UPIDR chairperson said they have been providing help to artisans and craftsmen at the grassroots across the state without any consideration of caste, religion or gender.

New Delhi, Feb 19 (PTI):

Emergency Arbitration has enormous potential in the country and the legislature should take steps to promote and regulate it, Supreme Court judge Justice Hima Kohli has said. The top court judge, who was addressing the Delhi Arbitration Week on Saturday, said Emergency Arbitration (EA) provides a quick and efficient solution to pressing disputes and can help curtail delays and expenses.

But the issues concerning the clarity and consis-



Justice Hima Kohli

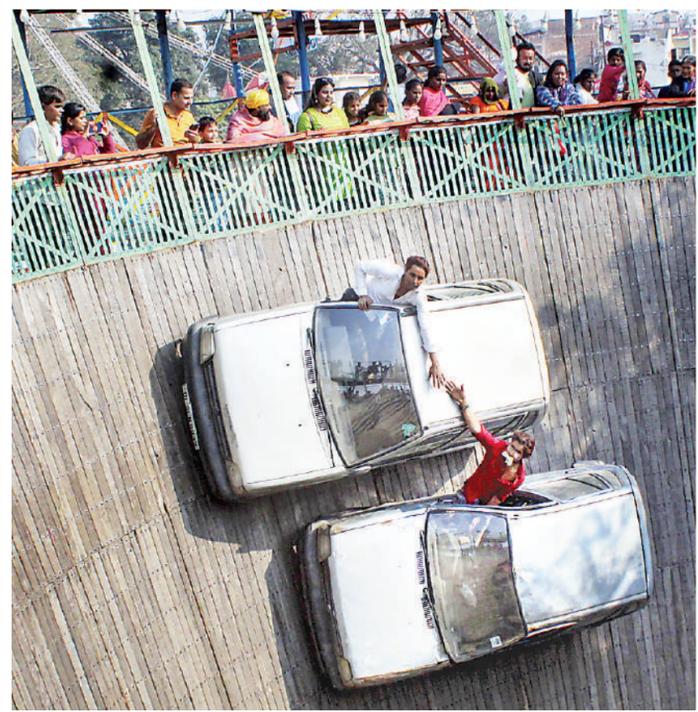
tency in the applicable rules and procedures and the lack of awareness among the stakeholders remain to be addressed, she added.

"EA has an enormous potential in India. To address these challenges, it is essential for the govern-

ment to take steps to legislate, promote and regulate EA in India. This could include amendment to the Arbitration & Conciliation Act, introduction of standard procedures, establishment of a dedicated EA Tribunal, promotion of awareness and education about the benefits of EA," Justice Kohli said.

Under emergency arbitration, a temporary arbitrator is appointed to expeditiously hear and resolve such urgent disputes between the parties which cannot wait for the conclusion of normal arbitration proceedings.

DARE DEVIL ACT



Performers stunt by driving a car in the well of death, at the Shivtrati fair, Tapkeshwar Mahadev Temple, in Dehradun, Sunday.

'Shivaji Maharaj's followers stopped from visiting Pune fort'

CM Shinde assures better arrangements next year

Mumbai, Feb 19 (PTI):

Sambhaji Raju Chhatrapati, a member of the former Maratha royal family of Kolhapur, on Sunday claimed police stopped Shivaji Maharaj's followers from going to the Shivneri Fort in Pune, on the occasion of the warrior king's birth anniversary, in view of the visit of some VIPs.

Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde, who visited the fort along with Deputy CM Devendra Fadnis, said they would take steps so that the followers of Shivaji Maharaj do not face any hurdles while visiting the Shivneri Fort next year. Shivaji Maharaj was born at the Shivneri Fort in 1630.

Former Rajya Sabha member Sambhaji Chhatrapati, who could not attend the official function at the Shivneri Fort on Sunday, claimed several



Sambhaji Raju Chhatrapati

"Shiv bhakts" were stopped by police in the wake of the visit of some VIPs to the fort.

Addressing a gathering at the fort, he said, "When I was near the fort, some Shiv bhakts approached me and complained of police restricting them from visiting the fort. They told me that police were objecting to their visit, citing crowding which may lead to an untoward incident such as stampede." "This is highly unfair. The follow-

ers of Shiv bhakts should not face any discrimination when it comes to visiting the Shivneri Fort. Had I gone ahead, people would have followed me and this could have led to a stampede," he added. CM Shinde while addressing a function on the Shivaji Jayanti said he has heard Sambhaji Chhatrapati's comments.

"We will take necessary steps so that people do not face any hurdles next year when it comes to visiting the Shivneri Fort," he said.

Deputy CM Fadnis also said there will be better arrangements next year to manage the crowd properly. "We will soon hold a meeting on this," he said. Nationalist Congress Party Lok Sabha member Amol Kolhe, in whose constituency the Shivneri Fort is located, said there should be a permanent "saffron flag" hoisted on the Shivneri Fort.

SII to establish CoE for Infectious Diseases and Pandemic Preparedness

In T'gana Hyderabad, Feb 19 (PTI):

Vaccine maker Serum Institute of India (SII) on Sunday announced that it would set up a 'Centre of Excellence' for Infectious Diseases and Pandemic Preparedness here.

The centre "Dr Cyrus Poonawalla Center of Excellence for Infectious Diseases and Pandemic Preparedness" will be located at the Indian Institute of Public Health, a release said.

The CoE is being set up for providing the community a centralised location for information, resources, and support during times of public health emergencies.

The centre will serve as a hub for public health education, outreach, and response ef-

forts during outbreak of infectious diseases, it said.

Social activist's mission to popularise traditional U'Khand foods

Dehradun, Feb 19 (PTI):

At the peak of Uttarakhand's statehood movement in the 1990s, the hills would often reverberate with the "Kodo-Jhangora khayenge, Uttarakhand banayenge" slogan, remembers Dwarika Prasad Semwal, a social activist who has pioneered a mission to popularise the state's traditional foods.

The slogan appealed to Semwal, at the time a teenager helping his father run a small eatery that frequently served savoury local dishes made of 'manduwa' and 'jhangora' (category of millets) grown abundantly in the village.

"Though just 18 or 19 at the time, I had no doubt that the struggle for statehood was a movement for Uttarakhand's separate identity and its traditional foods and dishes were an integral part of it," Semwal told PTI in an interview.

When Uttarakhand was created in 2000, Semwal's strong conviction about the delicious taste and high nutritional properties of traditional hill food set him on the mission to popularise a typical Uttarakhandi 'thali' made of delicacies of the mountains named "Garh Bhoj". The purpose was two-fold - to keep the state's culture alive by helping people develop a taste for traditional Uttarakhandi food and give a push to



Uttarakhand Education Minister Dhan Singh Rawat with Semwal (right) from 'Himalaya Paryavaran Jadi Booti Agro Sansthan' NGO at a Garh Bhoj feast.

farming of local crops, especially millet-based produce by creating a market for them. Twenty-three years on, Semwal has a

sense of achievement as kodo, jhangora, manduwa and dishes made out of these crops, which grow aplenty in the state, are

being served to students in government schools across the state at least once a week as part of the mid-day meal. 'Garh Bhoj' stalls

dealing in traditional food items like "mandue ka halwa", "jhangore ki kheer", "swale ki puri", "gahat ka fanu", "gahat ki patungi" and "gahat ki roti" can now be seen in all cultural fairs of Uttarakhand, he said.

The state government has issued orders to buy 9,600 metric tonnes of Mandua to supply them to schools. A Minimum Support Price (MSP) of over Rs 3,500 per quintal for mandua has also been announced. Semwal sees the Centre's decision to celebrate 2023-24 as millet year and the subsequent approval recently by the state cabinet to Uttarakhand's Millet Mission as a culmination

of the efforts made collectively by activists like him and the successive governments towards promotion of local cuisine and agricultural produce.

सर्वप्रथम अत्याधुनिक
(अल्ट्रागार्डन) बर्न युनिट

10 हर्ट्ज आइसोलेशन केयर ग्लास केबिन, हेपा फिल्टर/लेमिनर फ्लो 100% जीवाणु रहित ग्लास केबिन.

उ. न. शासन से मान्यता प्राप्त

कालिदास बर्न एंड प्लास्टिक कार्मेटिक सर्जरी सेंटर
आर.के.सी.के.सामने, चौथी कालोनी एवं पंचपेठे नानका, धर्मपुरी रोड, कलस मॉल के पास, रावपुर कॉल: 98271 43060/8871 003060
Ajay Advt.

Baidyanath
ASLI AYURVED

Drakshasav
Special

✓ Fortified with exotic dried grapes of the finest quality and valuable herbs

Bring zest back into your life

Customer Care: 844 844 4935
www.baidyanath.co