

BRIEF



A Boy touches the flowers of a Almond tree in full bloom to mark the arrival of the spring in the Valley, in Pulwama, South Kashmir, Monday.

DRDO projects

New Delhi: Twenty-three of the 55 high-priority projects being implemented by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) could not meet their respective deadlines, the government informed Parliament on Monday. The projects included developing anti-air field weapons, surface-to-air missiles, anti-ship missiles, long-range radars, combat vehicles, combat suits for submarines and submarine periscopes, among others.

YouTuber arrested

Guwahati: A person has been arrested in Assam's Kokrajhar district for allegedly offering to sell parakeets on his YouTube channel, a forest official said on Monday. He was apprehended by Gossaigaon Police and later handed over to the Forest department, he said. Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) of Kachugaon, Bhanu Sinha, told PTI that the accused, Jahidul Islam, was arrested on the basis of a complaint by People for Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA).

Major fire

Mumbai: A major fire broke out in slums in suburban Malad on Monday afternoon, but no casualty was reported, a Fire Brigade official said. The level 3 (major) fire engulfed slums located in the Appa Pada locality and efforts were on to douse the flames, he said. Smoke billowing out of the area could be seen from several kilometres away. According to the official, fire tenders, jumbo water tankers and other equipment were engaged in controlling the blaze. An ambulance has been also stationed at the site.

NCPCR summon

New Delhi: The apex child rights body NCPCR has summoned MCD Commissioner Gyanesh Bhatti and sought an action taken report from him over the death of two siblings reportedly by stray dogs in south-west Delhi's Vasant Kunj area. Two children, aged seven and five, were mauled to death by stray dogs in a forest area in Ruchi Vihar in separate incidents over two days, according to media reports. The police have said they have written to the MCD to take appropriate measures to curb the dog menace.

Weather
High 34 Low 16

MARKET
NIFTY 17,154.30
SENSEX 58,237.85

BULLION
GOLD 57,421
SILVER 66,172

Twin Oscar wins for India

'Naatu Naatu', The Elephant Whisperers' script history

New Delhi, Mar 13 (PTI)

"Naatu Naatu", the irrepressible, fun number from the film "RRR", and documentary short "The Elephant Whisperers" made Oscar history for India on Monday with one Academy Award each, the two wins showcasing cinema beyond Bollywood and the growing might of the Indian non-feature segment.

This is the first time two India-made productions have bagged the cinema world's biggest prize. Dancers took over the stage at Los Angeles' Dolby Theatre, recreating the hugely popular hook steps from the four-minute Telugu track, and actor Deepika Padukone introduced the song to loud cheers.

The win for "Naatu Naatu", "Naacho Naacho" in Hindi, composed by M M Keeravaani and penned by Chandrabose in S S Rajamouli's blockbuster film, is the fourth non-English song to win an Oscar in the category and the first song in foreign language since "Jai Ho" in 2009 to bag the prize. "Naatu Naatu" is as



Music composer M.M. Keeravaani and lyricist Chandrabose after receiving the award for best original song for 'Naatu Naatu' from film 'RRR' at the Oscars 2023.



Guneet Monga accepts the award for best documentary short film for "The Elephant Whisperer" at the Oscars on Sunday, March 12, 2023, at the Dolby Theatre in Los Angeles.

much a jubilant chorus as was "Jai Ho", the foot-tapping number by A R Rahman and Gulzar from the British film "Slumdog Millionaire".

As news of the Oscar win came in, "Naatu Naatu" was the buzz term for the day. Congratulating the team for the prestigious honour, the prime minister said on Twitter, "Exceptional! The popularity of Naatu Naatu is glob-

al. It will be a song that will be remembered for years to come... India is elated and proud. #Oscars." "Congratulations to @EarthSpectrum, @guneetm and the entire team of The Elephant Whisperers' for this honour. Their work wonderfully highlights the importance of sustainable development and living in harmony with nature. #Oscars," he added.

Cong chief alleges misappropriation of DMF fund in Kondagaon

Govt assures to launch probe

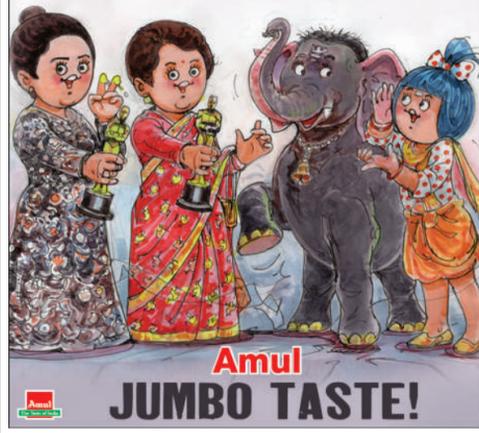
Raipur, Mar 13:

Chhattisgarh Congress chief and MLA Mohan Markam on Monday alleged misappropriation of funds in works sanctioned under the District Mineral Foundation (DMF) in the state's Kondagaon district and demanded a probe.

After Markam raised the issue, state Panchayat

and Rural Development Minister Ravindra Choubey assured the matter will be probed by a state-level officer and action will be taken within a month. Speaking during Question Hour, Markam asked about the number of works sanctioned by the district construction committee to the Rural Engineering Service (RES) division in Kondagaon in the last two financial years as well in the current fiscal till January 31.

HAATHI MERE SAATHI!



Amul JUMBO TASTE!

SC refers pleas for legal validation of same-sex marriages to five-judge constitution bench

New Delhi, Mar 13 (PTI):

The Supreme Court on Monday referred the pleas seeking legal validation of same-sex marriages to a five-judge constitution bench for adjudication, saying it is a "very seminal issue".

A bench headed by Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud said the submissions on the issue involve an interplay between constitutional rights on the one hand and special legislative enactments, including the Special Marriage Act, on the other.

The Centre has opposed in the top court a batch of petitions seeking legal validation of same-sex marriages, claiming they will cause a "complete havoc" with the delicate balance of



personal laws and accepted societal values. The bench, also comprising Justices PS Narasimha and JB Pardiwala, said this is a matter which is important enough to be decided by a constitution bench of five-judges. "Having due regard to the broader context of the petitions before this court, the inter-relationship between the statutory regime and constitutional rights, we are of the considered view that it would be appropriate if the issues

Not interfering in personal lives of citizens but institution of marriage matter of policy: Rijju

New Delhi: A day after the Centre opposed in the Supreme Court legal validation of same-sex marriage, Law Minister Kiren Rijju on Monday said the government does not "disturb" the personal freedom and activities of individuals but the issue related to the institution of marriage is a matter of policy. Responding to a question on the Centre's stand in the top court, Rijju said, "The government is not interfering in the personal life, personal activities of anybody. So there should be no confusion. When it comes to an issue related to the institution of marriage, then it is a matter of policy." "Personal freedom and personal activities of individuals, of the citizens are never being disturbed, regulated, questioned by the government. You must be very clear about it. There is a clear distinction," he told reporters outside the Parliament House.

raised are resolved by a constitution bench of five-judges of this court...," the bench said while referring to Article 145 (3) of the Constitution, while terming it a "very seminal issue".

"We accordingly direct that the hearing of these petitions be placed before a constitution bench," the apex court said while posting the pleas for hearing on April 18.

Govt on Korwa plan

'AK-203 rifles in manufacturing, testing stage'

New Delhi, Mar 13 (PTI)

Kalashnikov AK-203 rifles for Indian armed forces are currently under manufacturing and testing stage at an Indo-Russian joint venture at Korwa in Uttar Pradesh, the government has said.

Minister of State for Defence Ajay Bhatt, in a written reply to a question in Rajya Sabha, said the Indo-Russian Rifles Private Ltd (IRRL) has established all facilities to commence production of the indigenous assault rifles.

"Indo-Russian Rifles Private Limited (IRRL) is a joint venture company established for indigenous production of AK-203 Rifles. IRRL has established all facilities to commence production of indigenous assault rifles at Korwa, Uttar

Pradesh," Bhatt had said last month. "The rifles are currently under manufacturing and testing stage," he said. Bhatt said indigenisation of AK-203 rifles will lead to self sufficiency in respect of assault rifles for Indian defence forces.

The indigenous defence projects listed by Bhatt included 155mm Artillery Gun system 'Dhanush', Light Combat Aircraft Tejas, surface-to air missile system 'Akash', main battle tank 'Arjun', T-90 tank, T-72 tank, Cheetah helicopter and Advanced Light Helicopter Dornier Do-228.

Bhatt said various policy initiatives to encourage indigenous design, development and manufacture of defence equipment in the country are aimed at reducing dependency on imports in the long run.

NIA raids house of suspected Islamic State operative

New Delhi, Mar 13 (PTI)

National Investigation Agency on Monday raided the house of a suspected Islamic State operative here as part of an investigation in a case related to activities of some individuals from Kerala linked to the global terror group, an official said.

The house of Uzair Azhar Bhat, who is suspected to have been part of the Kerala module of the Islamic State - also known as ISIS - was raided at the Karfali Mohalla locality in downtown city, a spokesperson of the federal anti-terror agency said.

The official said digital devices seized from the house during the search are being examined and further investigations are in progress.

In 2021, the NIA had started probe into Mohammed Ameen alias "Abu Yahya" of Kadannamanna, Kerala, who had been running various Islamic State propaganda channels on different social media platforms.

Parl panel recommends resumption of senior citizen concession in rail fare

New Delhi, Mar 13 (PTI)

A parliamentary standing committee has recommended the resumption of the fare concession offered to senior citizens by the railways before the coronavirus pandemic.

The Indian Railways used to offer a 40 per cent discount in fares to males aged 60 years or above and for females, a 50 per cent discount was given if the minimum age was 58 years.

These concessions were granted in fares of all classes of Mail/Express/Rajdhani/Shatabdi/Duranto group of trains but were withdrawn on March 20, 2020.

The Standing Committee on Railways

headed by BJP MP Radha Mohan Singh made the recommendation in its report on the demand for grants which was tabled in both Houses of Parliament on Monday. It had made the same recommendation in a previous report.

The Committee said that from the information furnished by the Railways, the Covid situation has now been normalised and the national transporter has achieved normal growth.

"The Committee, in their 12th Action Taken Report (17th Lok Sabha) on Passenger Reservation System had also desired that the concessions to senior citizens which were available in pre-Covid times may be reviewed

and considered at least in Sleeper Class and 3A Class so that the vulnerable and genuinely needy citizens could avail the facility in these classes.

"The Committee, therefore, reiterate their earlier recommendation contained in their above-said report and urge upon the Railways to consider empathically for resumption of concessions in fares to senior citizens particularly in Sleeper Class and 3A Class under intimation to this Committee," the report said.

The Railways, however, said that it had no immediate plans to resume the concession. It maintained that already giving 50-55 per cent concession was being to all passengers.

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Water to be released from Tandula reservoir in view of falling groundwater level

Man requests allotment of house on ground floor for elderly mother

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Mar 13: Due to increasing heat, the groundwater level of the city is falling rapidly. The water level in tube wells and wells has gone down, due to which the problems of the people are increasing day by day.

In Collector Jandarshan, the villagers of Gram Panchayat Auri Bhathagaon submitted an application to the Collector for release of water from Tandula reservoir. The villagers said that with the commencement of summer season, the water level in the village has dropped considerably.

Water is required for daily use, drinking water

and irrigation of the crops. The problem has increased considerably and at present, about 200 acres of maize crop is grown in village Auri Bhathagaon. Due to lack of irrigation facilities, the crops are getting destroyed and the farmers are likely to face financial loss.

Collector Pushpendra Kumar Meena instructed the Water Resources Department to redress the complaints of villagers at the earliest. Under the Mor Makan Mor Aas Yojana, houses have been made available to the families living as tenants. In this context, an applicant Shankar Lal Soni, son of Sundar Bai Soni (75) had applied for

allotment of house in Gokul Nagar Pulgaon under Mor Makan Mor Aas Yojana.

In his application, he has demanded an allotment of a house on the ground floor as his mother Sundar Bai is very old and she may face a lot of difficulties in climbing the stairs. Considering her physical condition, he requested for allotment of accommodation on the ground floor. In this regard, the Collector ordered the



Municipal Corporation Durg to take appropriate steps. Pradeep Kumar Agarwal, resident of Ward No 18 Jawahar

Nagar, said that residential plots have been made available to class 3 employees in Jawahar Nagar Durg, in which all

Along with this, some members have given their house on rent for the shop. Due to this, movement of vehicles

and outsiders in the colony has increased. He demanded appropriate action in this regard.

The members of the Jeevandeep Committee of the District Hospital met the Collector during Jandarshan. They placed various demands before the Collector for the convenience of the citizens in the district hospital.

Executive members Dilip Thakur and Prashant Dongavkar demanded to convene a meeting of the Jeevan Deep Committee soon. The Collector, after listening seriously to all the demands of the committee, assured to hold a meeting of the committee soon and take necessary steps on the suggestions of the

committee.

Gram Panchayat Aunri Sarpanch filed an application seeking power cut during the water supply timings. He said that due to increased consumption of water during summer, many people are using tullu pumps to fetch more water in their houses. Due to the use of tullu pumps, taps have dried in many houses.

In view of the serious problem of drinking water, he demanded to turn off the power supply from the transformer at the time of water supply in the morning and evening. In view of the water problem, the Collector directed the SDM Patan to take action for immediate resolution.

Rape accused arrested within few hours

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Mar 13: Durg Police arrested a rape accused within few hours after receiving the complaint. The victim had lodged the same complaint in the year 2021 also. The accused was on bail in this case.

CSP Vaibhav Banker informed that they are taking immediate action on the cases related to crime against women. On March 12, a woman lodged a complaint against one Sunil Mahobe (48) of Meenakshi Nagar Durg, who presently resided at Shankar Nagar in Durg.

The victim complained that the accused reached her residence on November 08, 2022 and threatened her of attacking her with acid. He forcefully took the woman to Sai Lodge in Power House and held her hostage in the lodge room.

The accused again raped her and threatened



of dire consequences if she disclosed the happening to anyone. Due to fear, the victim remained silent for a few months and later on March 12, she filed a complaint at Mohan Nagar Police Station.

Police lodged a case under sections 366, 376, 377, 506-B, 342 of IPC. A team was constituted immediately to search for the accused. Police team managed to trace the accused

and took him into custody. He was produced before the court and has been sent to jail on judicial remand.

Inspector Vipin Rangari (SHO, Mohan Nagar), Female Head Constable Monika Gupta, Head Constable Shahid Khan, Constable Kranti Sharma, Ritesh Agnihotri and Shakeel Khan played a vital role in arresting the accused.

12 RIPAs to start soon in rural areas; livelihood centers in urban bodies

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Mar 13: Twelve RIPAs will start functioning soon in the district. In these, many items will be produced from healthy snacks to food items like Jam Jelly and from Garments to LED Lights. Collector Pushpendra Kumar Meena discussed in detail the activities happening in various blocks of the district.

Apart from these 12 RIPAs, livelihood centers will also be started in urban bodies and the Collector gave instructions to prepare a detailed plan. District Panchayat CEO Ashwini Dewangan, Bhilai Municipal Corporation Commissioner Rohit Vyas and other officers were present in the meeting.

In the meeting, the Collector said that according to the intention of Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel, more and more



employment has to be created through RIPA.

For this purpose, he asked the officials to encourage the interested youth by counselling that they can start an enterprise in RIPA. It is worth mentioning that sheds and other infrastructural facilities will be provided by the administration to the entrepreneurs in RIPA and arrangements for bank linkage etc will also be made.

The Collector discussed the main products made in all RIPAs. For example, over the Garment Factory

to be started in RIPA at Dhaba in Durg, he said that the finished product should meet the modern standards in the Garment industry. He asked to work according to the practice going on in the Garment Industry so that their products get a considerable demand in the market.

Milk processing unit in Chandkhuri will start in RIPA. Regarding this unit, he said that there is unlimited potential in the milk business. If quality is taken care of, then the entrepreneurs associated

with it can earn a lot. It will also give a boost to the activities related to livestock. Tomato processing and Jam Jelly Juice packaging unit will start at Hasda in Dhamdha.

Collector gave necessary instructions for this unit also. Stationary and flax unit will be set up in Katro of Durg block. The Collector said that there has been a lot of innovation in the products in all these areas and hence the products should be chosen as per the market demand. It is worth men-

tioning that all the products have been selected according to the possibilities of the market, so that the entrepreneurs could generate a good profit.

The Collector said that instead of going for jobs, many youths prefer self-employment and want to progress in the field of enterprise. Due to the lack of counselling facilities, they are not able to make decisions. Further, due to non availability of areas like RIPA, they hesitated to take initial steps. Now, the youth will get favourable conditions.

The Collector asked the officers to start livelihood centers in urban bodies also. He said that with the opening of such centers in urban bodies, there will be opportunities for young entrepreneurs and they will also be able to generate employment in large numbers. He asked the officials to select activities and start such centers soon.

4500 lease holders suffering due to the negligence of BSP mgmt

Aggrieved citizens approach District Collector

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Mar 13: Due to ongoing tussle between the BSP management and Bhilai Municipal Corporation, more than 4500 lease holders are very upset and confused. The aggrieved citizens have requested the Collector to intervene into this matter.

They requested the Collector to ask the BSP to follow the conditions and procedure prescribed by the state government at the time of land acquisition in relation to the scheme of "SAIL Scheme for Leasing of Company houses to Employees 2002". Along with this, according to the instructions given by the state government in the meeting held on June 7, 2002, a clear policy should be prepared.

Senior Corporator Vashisth Narayan Mishra and former Corporator Lalit Mohan submitted a representation before the District Collector in this regard on Monday. The letter states that the Government of India had given about 32000 acres of land for the construction

of the Plant by issuing a notification to the State Government. It also included Lagani, Aabadi and government land.

The government land was provided free of cost by the state government. For this, certain conditions and policies were set between the state and the central government. There was also a condition that the Plant would not use that land except for Plant (Factory) construction. If the Plant desires to use the land for other purposes, then it will have to take permission from the state government.

When HUDCO Phase 2 was constructed on this land, the state government did not allow the project. Since then, BSP management is not considering it necessary to take permission from the state government for any work.

Not only this, the BSP allotted houses on lease to his former employees by implementing a scheme called 'SAIL Scheme for Leasing of Company houses to Employees' without permission from the state government.

Now 4500 lease holders



are worried due to non-regularization of their houses.

Bhilai Steel Plant has given 4500 houses on long term lease to its employees in different sectors of the township. BSP gave the house but did not give permission for construction. When the lease holders started re-constructing the old houses, the BSP warned them to stop the construction work.

BSP also served notice that if the lease holders make any construction, their lease will be cancelled. Regarding this issue also, the difference of opinion between the lease holders and BSP still exists.

When the matter came

to the notice of the State Government after a dispute in the long-term lease housing scheme, the Durg Collector called a meeting of the Managing Director Bhilai Steel Plant and other officials of the plant on June 7, 2002.

In the meeting, the Collector sought information about the SAIL Housing Lease Scheme 2002 from the SAIL officials. The meeting also discussed other 20 points in the meeting.

The then Collector directed the officers of SAIL to furnish information about the provisions of the construction work and other information about the lease so that the state government

could allow Bhilai Steel Plant to use the acquired land for non-company purposes.

BSP officials have not provided any information about any point of the meeting to the state government till date. Due to this negligent attitude, the problems of the lease holders could not be resolved.

The lease holders asked the Collector to direct the Bhilai Steel Plant, on behalf of the state government, to take permission from the state government for other use of the land.

Further, on the basis of the instructions given in the meeting held in 2022, the BSP management should be directed to frame a clear policy regarding the long-term housing lease scheme and send it to the state government.

Along with this, they requested the Collector to issue necessary instructions to the Municipal Corporation Bhilai to allow the lease holders to obtain building permission for new and additional construction as per the provisions of the Municipal Corporation Act.

Coke Ovens and Blast Furnaces teams bag productivity excellence award

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Mar 13: Two teams from SAIL-Bhilai Steel Plant have excelled in a contest on Productivity, Green Growth & Sustainability organised by Odisha State Productivity Council, Bhubaneswar.

SAIL-BSP's teams from Coke Ovens Dept and Blast Furnaces Dept were awarded Productivity Excellence Award 2022 at the prize-distribution ceremony held in a five-star hotel in Bhubaneswar, recently. The Coke Ovens team was awarded 5 Star Productivity Excellence Award while the Blast Furnaces team was awarded 4 Star Productivity Excellence Award.

The two teams from SAIL-BSP had made an online presentation of their



Technical Papers on the subject under the guidance of GM (Business Excellence Dept) Manoj Dubey. The Coke Ovens team led by Tarun Kanrar, CGM (CO & CCD) comprised of Sashikant Deo, Senior Manager (CO & CCD) and Chetan Ashok Phutane, Deputy Manager. The Blast Furnace Team led by Tokdar, CGM (Blast

Furnaces) comprised of Navin Kumar Tiwari and Manish Kumar Tiwari, both Deputy General Managers in Blast Furnace Department.

In their technical papers, both the teams from Coke Ovens and Blast Furnaces presented projects executed to enhance productivity in their respective departments.



Cong' protest march to Raj Bhavan, demands probe into Adani row

Raipur, Mar 13: Congress leaders and workers on Monday took out protest march to Raj Bhavan here on the row over Adani Group. Congress leaders have alleged collusion between Adani Group and Central Government.

Addressing a meeting organised at Ambedkar Chowk prior to march towards Raj Bhavan, Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel said that Adani was at number 609 and within a few months he became the second richest man in the world. But something was published in Hindenburg after which Adani Group's shares fell with a bang, he said. During the question on Adani issue in Lok Sabha, Rajya Sabha, the speeches of both Rahul Gandhi and Kharge were expunged from the record, he said. He asked why the issue was not being probed. Why does ED not look into Adani issue? He



asked. He alleged government agencies were taking action at the behest of central government. ED does not raid the places where scams worth crores have been committed, he alleged. He also alleged that centre gave public money in SBI and LIC to Adani. PCC in-charge Shelja and other office bearers were present at the meeting. PCC Chief Mohan Markam charged the

Modi Government with shielding Adani group. While PM Modi in his speech often states that country is changing, in fact country is for sale, he alleged. He demanded that hard earned money of people in LIC, State Bank and other banks must be safe. Congress is fighting for people, he said.

After meeting at Ambedkar Chowk

Congress leaders took out march to Raj Bhavan. A delegation comprising 11 Congress leaders including PCC Chief Mohan Markam met Governor Bishwabhushan Harichandan and handed over a memorandum of demand for probe into Adani Group to the Governor.

PCC communication head Sushil Anand Shukla said that the country was suffering due to the crony capitalism policy of the Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the BJP government in favor of Adani. At the time of deep economic crisis, the BJP's Modi government is selling the country's vital infrastructure to the Adani group. According to him savings of crores of poor and middle class people in public sector banks like SBI and LIC are at risk due to policy of Modi Government.

Choubey orders inquiry into sewerage line project of Bilaspur

After Speaker intervened and directed Minister to take into account the drowning incident

MLA Dharamjeet Singh and Santosh Pandey raised the issue during zero-hour



boy fell inside the pit for the sewerage line and died. MLA Dharamjeet Singh said that holes have been dug at different places for Sewerage line and here safety should be ensured. On this the MLA duo demanded action on the concerned officers and direct the Collector and Commissioner of Bilaspur to fill up the holes left open in this sewerage.

MLA Bilaspur Shailesh Pandey raising the issue said that many incidents are taking place due to construction work of sewerage in Bilaspur city and so far many people have died. Santosh demanded action against the

guilty officers and demanded a compensation of Rs 10 lakh to the family of the 17 yr old boy who died falling in the pit for sewerage construction. Pandey charged that sewerage project in city has failed completely and so far its testing too has not being done.

The Speaker State Assembly Dr Charandas Mahant gave instructions for inquiry into the issue based upon demand for investigation into the project and action against the guilty officers and after which the Agriculture and WRD Minister Ravindra Choubey made declaration for holding inquiry into the matter. About the incident, the Speaker asked the Departmental Minister to take into cognizance the said case. It is notable here that one Aditya Vaishnav of Torva in Bilaspur died of drowning in sewerage line under-construction.

Man cheated of 26 lakhs in the name of loan

Raipur, Mar 13: A man was cheated of Rs 26 lakh after he was offered of loan of Rs 17 lakh in Raipur. According to information available a caller offered loan of Rs 17 lakh to one Mehfooj Ansari Hasan. The caller, however, said that some charges would be applicable for sanctioning loan. On being lured into this offer Mehfooj made payment in installments. But he did not get any loan.

According to the information, Mahfooj Ansari Hasan works as a liaison at Bhilai Steel Plant. He received a call from a girl named Sujata on February 16 last year.

She introduced herself as an employee of Mumbai Citibank and offered loan to him.

Hearing this, Mehfooj agreed to obtain loan. After that he called back on that number. He was asked to deposit some amount in the name of processing fee and subsequently charged different fees before sanctioning of loan. In the last one year, Hasan paid around Rs 26 lakh. But he did not get the loan of Rs 17 lakh. Realising that he was cheated of money he lodged complaint with police. On his complaint, the police have registered fraud offence.

Psychiatric Counseling Center inaugurated at MATS University

Raipur, Mar 13: "Psychiatric Counseling Center" (OPD) was inaugurated by the Psychology Department of Mats University on March 13, Monday. The program was inaugurated by lighting the lamp by Gajraj Pagaria, Chancellor of Mats University. The aim of the counseling center is to provide services for the treatment of various types of mental diseases while taking a commendable step towards the progress of mental health. On this occasion, Chancellor of Mats University Mr. Gajraj Pagaria, Director General Mr. Priyesh Pagariya, Prof. VC Dr.



Dipika Dhand, Registrar Gokulnanda Panda and Head of the Department of Psychology Dr. Shahista Ansari and all the professors and students of the department were present.

Three matches played on day one

Raipur, Mar 13: The 20th Inter - Departmental Cricket Competition DRM Cup 2023 organized by South East Central Railway Sports Association (SECRSA) Raipur was inaugurated on Monday in presence of the chief guest, Divisional Railway Manager and SECRSA President Sanjeev Kumar.

The Divisional Railway Manager personally met the captains of all the 18 teams participating in the program and conveyed best wishes for the competition. The DRM Cup's organization and arrangements were appreciated by the Divisional Railway Manager and assured to



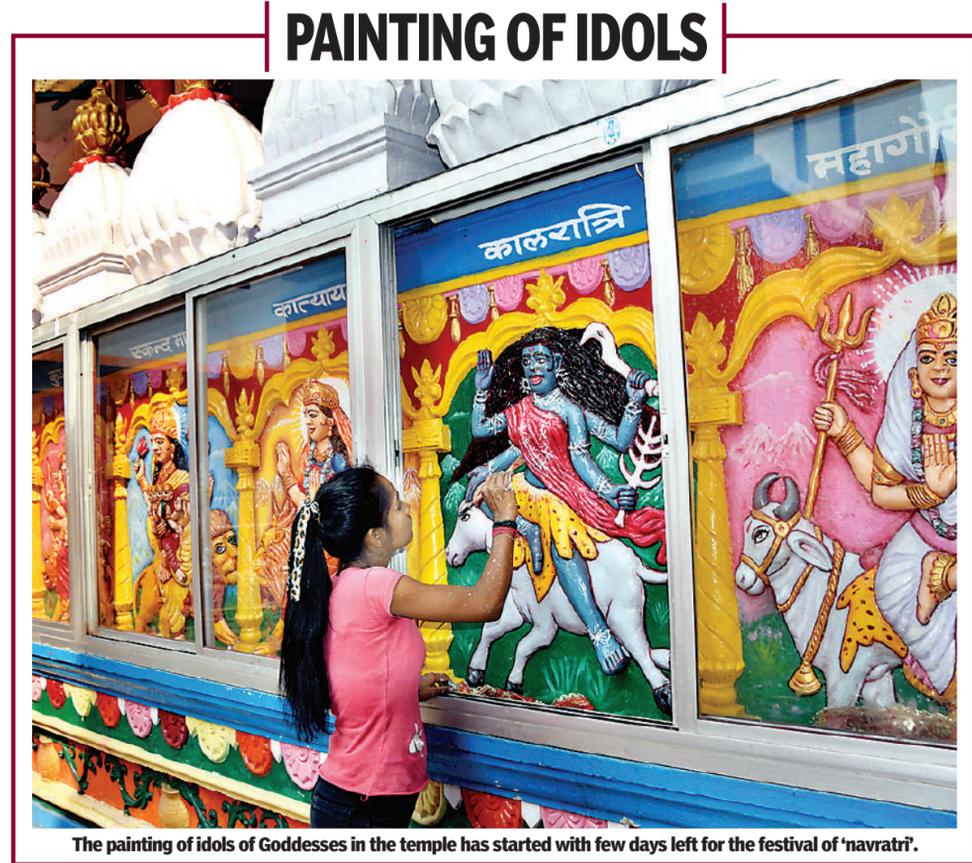
further improve the ground and increase the facilities. Chief Workshop Manager of Wagon Repair Shop Sanjay Tyagi, Chief Store Manager, General Store Depot Shiv Shankar Lakda, Vice President of SECRSA and Additional Divisional Railway Manager (Infra) Ashish Mishra, Senior Divisional Sports Officer Anurag

Tiwari, Divisional Sports Officer Shivashish Kumar and other officers were present. Divisional Sports Secretary Swaran Singh Kalsi said that the tournament has been running for the last 19 years and this year is the 20th edition in which a total of 18 teams will participate. For the first six days, six pools of 18 teams are being made

and league matches are being conducted. After that six teams will play 'The Super Six match' between them. All the matches will be played under floodlights at night, after which the semi-finals between the four teams and the third place match between the losing semi-final teams will be played before the final match, which will be held on March 25.

Man of the match award will be given in every match and many attractive prizes have been kept for the teams and players in the final match. Memento will also be given to the departing teams for participating in the tournament. Best dressed and best disciplined team award will also be given along with it.

A memento will be given on the day of the final by



The painting of idols of Goddesses in the temple has started with few days left for the festival of 'navratri'.

Nine bus agents, hawkers nabbed



From New Bus Stand

On charges of illegally issuing tickets to passengers

Central Chronicle News

Raipur, Mar 13: The capital police was getting complaint about alleged misbehaviour and scolding with passengers from New Bus Stand in Bhatagaon for last few days and based upon which the police team nabbed 9 agents and hawkers of New Bus Stand, Bhatagaon on charges of illegally cutting tickets and recovering amount from the passengers and took action

against them under different sections. It is notable here that the Bus Agents and Hawkers placing their tables and chair illegally in the Bus Stand premises, used to issue tickets to passengers illegally.

It was based upon complaint, SSP directed TI Tikrapara Amit Beria to take action. So TI Tikrapara along with other police staff raided the New Bus Stand in the morning hours and identified such 9 bus agents and hawkers selling ticket illegally to passengers. In addition to this other agents too were issued strict warning not to misbehave with the passengers or trouble them in any manner or else they will face legal action.

Number of dairy farmers is less than half: Vora

As compared to farmers registered in the Dugdha Sangh

Raipur, Mar 13: After purchasing milk from farmers at Rs 33 per liter, the Dugdha Sangh is selling it at Rs.55 per liter. This information was given in response to a written question raised by

Congress MLA Arun Vora in state legislative assembly today. According to this, the number of farmers selling milk is less than half as compared to the farmers registered in the Dugdha Sangh.

Vora asked how many farmers in the state are registered to sell milk in the Sakhari Dugdha Sangh (cooperative milk

federation) and how many of them are selling milk to the Dugdha Sangh. In reply Agriculture Minister Choubey informed that 37356 farmers of the state are registered as members of Dugdha Sakhari Samiti and 13308 of them are selling milk to the Dugdha Sangh through Dugdha Samities.

ASI murdered through contract: Brijmohan

Raipur, Mar 13: BJP MLA Brijmohan Agarwal raised the issue pertaining to recovery of dead body of the ASI of Bango police station under suspicious circumstances in Korba during the budget session of the Chhattisgarh Legislative Assembly, on Monday. He alleged target killing of ASI through contract. MLAs Dharamjeet Singh and Shailesh Pandey raised the issue of death of a child named Aditya

Vaishnav due to drowning in sewerage in Torva of Bilaspur. Expressing concern and sorrow over the incident, the MLAs demanded to cover open sewerage. The Assembly Speaker directed the departmental minister to take the matter into cognizance.

Earlier the former minister Brijmohan Agarwal raised the issue of making bamboo available to the Basod families in calling

attention. Government is not able to make bamboo available across the state, due to which the livelihood of Basod families is being affected, he said. Forest Minister Mohammad Akbar said that bamboo is being made provided to all the districts in accordance with its availability. Forest Minister Akbar told that bamboo is not produced in Raipur district, yet bamboo is being made available according to availability.

Placement camp for educated youth on March 17

Central Chronicle News

Raipur, Mar 13: With a view to provide employment opportunities to local educated unemployed youth of Chhattisgarh, the District Employment and Self-Employment Guidance Center, Raipur is going to organize placement camp on March 17 at Extension Counter, Commercial Complex

Rakhi, Sector-27 Nava Raipur Atal Nagar from 11 am to 2 pm. Domino's Pizza Raipur will recruit 130 posts of Business / Guest Delight Associates through this placement camp. Candidates with qualification of 8th, 10th will be eligible for recruitment for these posts. Selected candidates will be paid Rs 10 to 12 thousand per month.

NIT Raipur students Grab 22.65 LPA pre-placement offers

At ZS Associates

Raipur, Mar 13: National Institute of Technology Raipur's final year students Arnav Tripathi, Vishnu Verma, Gopal Agrawal, Vibhanshu Singh, 7th Sem, Electrical Engineering, Tathagat, Duke John Tiwari, Abhiyash Raj Sona, 7th Sem, Chemical Engineering, Harshita Singh, 7th Sem, Mechanical Engineering, Rohan Verma, Sarangi Poornasri, 7th Sem, Metallurgical and Materials Engineering, Naleen Verma, Priyank Khandelwal, and Adama

Agrawal, 7th Sem, Civil Engineering, Malaya Jhanwar, 7th Sem, Biomedical Engineering grabbed outstanding offers at ZS Associates, a Pharma-based management consulting firm, through Campus Beats, ZS's campus engagement program in India. Every year, ZS identifies and engages students from dozens of top engineering schools through a range of learning activities and case challenges designed to prepare them for the upcoming placement season and learn about ZS's work and culture.

Sarika Goswami awarded Gurantee of HMIF, 'Art for Hope, 2023'

Raipur, Mar 13: Hyundai Motor India Foundation (HMIF), the CSR arm of Hyundai Motor India Limited (HMIL), announced the second edition of its Art CSR initiative 'Art for Hope 2023', supporting 25 artists from across India. Sarika Goswami, a visual artist and printmaker from Bhillai, Chhattisgarh, is one of them. Art for Hope 2023 organised a great opportunity to showcase their artwork from Feb 27th to March 5th at Bikaner House, New Delhi and also going to present at INCO Center Chennai from March 16th to March 19th.

Sarika Goswami based from Bhillai, Chhattisgarh. She studied from S.S.S.S.-4, Bhillai. Her interest takes her too far from her homeland to learn more. Completed her graduation from I.K.S.V, Khairagarh in



2019 & Post Graduation from M.S.U of Baroda, Vadodara in 2021. After her studies she continued her art practice with all dedication and hard work, she achieved various opportunities for workshops, art talks and national and international exhibitions. Presently she is the Research Printmaking Scholar (2021-22) of Lalit Kala Academy, she got Scholarship to work at Regional Centre,

Bhubaneswar. Sarika is very much involved in her art practice and wants to continue in it. She has a big motto to enhance the art scenario of Chhattisgarh and establish a better way for every artist who lives in Chhattisgarh. She wants to make a platform for those who face problems to explore their works. Sarika Goswami said that "Her credits of achievement belong to her mother Suneeta Goswami and her Father Roshan Saheb Goswami. They are the backbone of her confidence and behind her inspiration she admires her elder sister Monika Amit Gupta who gave her a spark and vision to be bright. She is always thankful to her teachers and various artists who guided her at every step.

No matter the society, everyone needs education : CM

CM took part in the Kalar Mahasammelan 2023 event organised by the Kalar Mahasabha

CM announced a voluntary holiday on the birth anniversary of Bahadur Kalarin and establishment of the Mahua Board

Raipur, Mar 13: No one can deny the importance of Kalar society in industry business, but no society can progress without education. Every society requires education, and any society that has severed ties with education is backward. Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel stated this at the Kalar Mahasammelan, which was organised by the Chhattisgarh Kalar Mahasabha on the Science College grounds in Raipur. On this occasion, the



Chief Minister made two major announcements, including the establishment of a Mahua Board in Chhattisgarh. The Chief Minister has declared a voluntary holiday on the anniversary of the birth of the revered mother of Kalar Samaj, Bahadur Kalarin, describing her contribution to women empowerment as incomparable.

Individuals are the basic building blocks of all societies

Chief Minister, Baghel, stated that the individual is the unit of every society,

and that the state government has started schemes in the last four years with the individual at the centre so that people from all societies can benefit. The Chief Minister stated that if people do not benefit from the schemes, if people remain ill, a strong Chhattisgarh can never be imagined, which is why the Chhattisgarh government has made a provision for money to go into the pockets of the last person in society so that the state's progress is continuous.

According to the Chief

Minister, caste prejudice has no place in Chhattisgarh, where people from various communities coexist. He stated that Chhattisgarh is strong because of the strong social connection among its citizens.

Highest amount has been spent on education

Speaking to the audience at the Kalar Mahasammelan, the Chief Minister mentioned that Chhattisgarh's educational standards have significantly improved over the previous four years. Additionally, long-closed

schools have reopened in Naxalite areas, as have Swami Atmanand English medium schools in rural areas. The state government is constantly working to ensure that students receive high-quality education, which is why the budget has a provision for spending Rs 17,000 crore on education. On the basis of current demand, new trades are being opened in ITI colleges in order to give the youth employment and give them the opportunity to receive the training they need.

On the occasion of Kalar Mahasammelan, Parliamentary Secretary Vikas Upadhyay, MLA Mohan Markam, MLA Vinay Jaiswal, MLA Sangeeta Sinha, Raipur Mayor Ajiz Dhebar, Risali Mayor Shashi Sinha, President of Kalar Mahasabha Chhattisgarh Deepak Sinha, Kalar Mahasammelan Chairman of the convenor committee, Raja Jaiswal, along with other office bearers and members of Kalar Samaj were present.

Tehsil Sahu Sangh pays courtesy call on CM



Raipur, Mar 13: The delegation of Tehsil Sahu Sangh, Patan paid a courtesy visit to Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel at his official residence on Sunday. They invited the Chief Minister as a Chief Guest on the occasion of Bhakt Mata Karma

Jayanti and group marriage to be held on April 22 in Gatapara village in Patan. The Chief Minister thanked the delegation for the invitation.

On this occasion, the Chairman of Tehsil Sahu Sangh Patan Dinesh Sahu, Vice Chairman Gulab Sahu, Executive

Chairman Laleshawar Sahu, Kishan Sahu, Gangadeen Sahu, Mahendra Sahu, Dhanraj Sahu, Tesram Sahu, Suresh Sahu, Vimal Sahu, Jayanti Sahu, Gajendra Sahu, Horilal Sahu, and Boniram Sahu were present.

Athlete Amit qualified for Athletics Youth Int'l competition

Raipur, Mar 13: In the 18th Youth Athletics Championship, held in Guwahati, Assam, Athlete Master Amit Kumar, who is receiving training at the Khelo India State Center of Excellence in Bahtarai, the state's first sports academy, won the bronze medal. He qualified for the Indian contingent camp for the Youth Asia Championship in a 10 km walk, which will be held in Indonesia in July, by completing the qualifier benchmark before the deadline. Amit Kumar finished the 10-kilometer distance at 44:53.56. Amit Kumar is the first athlete from Chhattisgarh to qualify for the event.

Notably, this academy situated in the Bahtarai of Chhattisgarh is state's first sports school that provides residential sports training in hockey, athletics, and archery. More than 100 women and men are being trained here. High-level and international-level trainers, as well as a team to run high-quality training, have been appointed



here. Athletics training is being provided under the direction of Dronacharya Awardee coach J.S. Bhatia. High-Performance managers are always providing day-to-day attention to the high performance of sportspersons by monitoring their fitness, health, dietary information, and personal demands.

The Sports and Youth Welfare Department is continually fulfilling the needs of the trainees. Additional Chief Secretary, Sports Director, and Assistant Director of the Sports Youth Welfare Department, Bilaspur, and Center's Performance Manager congratulated Amit for his achievement.

Bhagat participated in 'Pran Pratishtha' of Shiv Mandir

Gariyaband, Mar 13: State's Food, Civil Supplies, and Consumer Protection; Planning, Economic and Statistics, Culture Minister, and Minister-in-charge of Gariyaband district, Amarjeet Bhagat, participated in the Pran Pratishtha ceremony of Shiv Mandir at village Chichia in Devbhog development block. He dedicated the newly built temple after worshipping Shiva's statue. Ramesh Yadu, State President of Sarv Yadav Samaj, Dhanmati Yadav, Janak Dhruv, Village Sarpanch, Rajkumar Korram, Yadav Samaj, and people from other communities were present in large numbers on this occasion. In his speech on the occasion, Chief Guest and Minister-in-Charge of the District, Amarjeet Bhagat stated that it is a happy moment



for him to participate in the Pran Pratishtha of Shiv Mandir. Lord Shankar loves everyone and everyone is important to the creator of the universe.

That is why there should be no distinction between human beings. Human service is equivalent to Gods service said Minister Bhagat. We must prioritize the growth of everybody with societal harmony. Responding to

the aspirations of the local leaders, Minister Bhagat emphasized the state government's budgetary provisions for the area's development. He promised to provide one lakh rupees toward the temple's construction costs. In addition, Rs 10 lakh was announced for the beautification of the pond close to the shrine. Local government members and a large crowd were present.

Raipur receives a gift as an Int'l Sports Academy

In the state's annual budget 2023-24

Archery Sports Academy to be established in Bastar and Raipur

Provision for the establishment of Adventure Sports Academy in Bastar and Malkhamb Academy in Narayanpur

By Sunil Tripathi, Asst. Director

Raipur, Mar 13: The Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel presented the fifth budget of his tenure on 06 March. It is noteworthy that special attention has been given to everyone from students to sportspersons in this budget. To provide top notch sports facilities for athletes, provisions have been made in the budget for the construction of mini stadium, promotion of women's sports and establishment of various sports academies. Traditional sports are also being promoted in the state. In order to encourage sports activities across the state, Rs 5 crore has been announced to provide training of players from village level and to organise sports competition and national and international level sports events. This budget also has provision for the establishment of sports academies for various nation-

al and international sports such as adventure sports, hockey, football, badminton, tennis and athletics. Similarly, Shaheed Gundadhar Archery and Kayaking and Canoeing Sports Academy will also be established in the state.

Archery sports academies will be established in Bastar and Raipur to encourage archery as a state sport. Provision has also been made for the establishment of Malkhamb Academy in Narayanpur and International Badminton Sports Academy in Raipur.

An amount of 3 crore 70 lakh has been announced for the establishment of Adventure Sports Academy in Bastar district and for the development of adventure sports facilities in village Saliyatoli development block of Kunkuri.

To promote the traditional sports of the state, the organization of Chhattisgarh Olympics has been started from this year, in which women and men of all classes, from children to the elderly, took part with great enthusiasm. In view of the interest and enthusiasm of the local people towards these games due to the successful organization of Chhattisgarh Olympics, a provision of Rs 25 crore has been kept in this budget for the grand event of Chhattisgarh Olympics in the coming year. A provision of Rs 100 crore has been kept in the budget for Rajiv Yuva Mitran Club and Rs 08 crore for organizing Rajiv Yuva Mahotsav as well.

SCI Ch'garh wing pays courtesy call on CM



Raipur, Mar 13: A delegation from the Chhattisgarh wing of the Sindh Council of India (SCI) made a courtesy call

on Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel at his official residence. They requested the Chief Minister to be the chief

guest at the Chetrichandra Utsav Hojmalo 2023, which will be hosted on March 18 at a private hotel in Raipur. Chief Minister while expressing gratitude for the invitation also unveiled the poster for Chetrichandra Utsav Hojmalo 2023. On this occasion, the President of Chhattisgarh Wing of Sindh Council of India Lalit Jaisingh, program coordinator Anil Jotsinghani, Vicky Lohana, Praveen Sundarani, Gautam Railwani and Mahesh Arya were present.

'Crops like cucumber, watermelon spreading greenery and boosting income'

Bijapur, Mar 13: Chhattisgarh government's debt waiver scheme has not only freed farmers from debt, but this scheme has paved the way for their prosperity as well. We got to know about one such progressive farmer Afzal Khan of Bhopalpatnam. Afzal Khan says that he and his family jointly have a total of 15 acres of agricultural land located in Bhopalpatnam. Farmer tells that he has been doing agriculture work for 20-25 years, earlier he used to cultivate only paddy. Used to take Maize and Moong on a small amount of land, but his income was limited. But later we got direct benefit of loan waiver scheme of the head of the state CM Bhupesh Baghel. Earlier due to lack of bore wells we were purely dependent upon seasonal rains and used to take paddy crop. But now bore wells have become successful, sufficient water is available for irrigation and therefore change in crop cultivation.



The flourishing crop in the farmer's field is empowering him financially and mentally. In the last two months, he has earned an income of Rs 2 lakh from crops like Gourd, Cucumber, Barbatti. The summer days have started, while the watermelon crop has also started ripening. Sweet and juicy Watermelons are now available to the residents of the district; watermelons have started reaching the markets in Bhopalpatnam and Bijapur. The farmer told that he is cultivating watermelon for the first time in the district and the crop has also been very good. Now there will be no need for watermelons from other states including Odisha, Telangana. Due to local production, I am selling watermelon to the people

at a reasonable price; the crop is so good that I will be able to supply watermelon to the entire district throughout the season, he added. Farmer Afzal Khan has two sons and two daughters who help him in agricultural work. He also takes the help of nearby labourers for other works including sowing and weeding. They also get employment. Afzal says that he has directly benefited from his hard work and the cooperation of the district administration and the scheme of the state govt. Today, many farmers of the district like him are stepping towards economic progress by cultivating vegetables, for which he said will always be grateful to the district administration and Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel.

GEMS declares first phase of annual result

Scholarships announced for rank holders

Raipur, Mar 13: With much of fun fare, first phase of annual examination result (Class VIII, IX and XI) of Shri Gujrati English Medium Higher Secondary School was declared on Monday at Gyanoday Bhavan in front of a packed house. The office bearers of Shri Gujrati Shikshan Sangh led by its president Naryan Bhai Patel, secretary duo Tulsi Bhai Patel and Ashok Bhai Patel, joint secretary Vithal Bhai Patel, Administrator V K Mishra, Registrar Ashok Jachak were present to declare the results. After lighting the ceremonial lamp and worshipping Goddess Saraswati formal programme got off to



start. School Principal Dr Shailesh Sharma welcomed the parents and wished the students for their results. Secretary Tulsi Bhai Patel asked the parents to admit their children in this school for a safe and bright future. He asked the students to excel

in both academic and co-curricular activities. President Narayan Bhai Patel wished all the students and announced scholarships of Rs 6000, Rs 5000 and Rs 4000 for the first, second and third rank holders of each class. The announcement was

applauded by the parents present inside the auditorium. It was followed by the declaration of result and rank holders along with their parents were invited on the stage for the presentation of memento and certificates. In Class VIII Harshita Patnaik

topped with 94%, Dheeraj Sahu second with 92.67% and Himanshu Sinha third with 91.33%. In Class IX Sonam Garg came first with 89.40%, Vanshika Tahalyani second with 89% and Lucky Sharma third with 81.80%. In Class XI Science stream Kumkum Lunia came first with 83%, Hensi Shankhala second with 77.60% and Rohnit Sinha third with 76.40%. In Class XI Commerce stream Ayushi Shankhala came first with 89.80%, Pooja Sahu second with 85.40% and Isha Padhan third with 85%. In Class XI Humanities Kripa Patel came first with 83%, Mukti Patel second with 79.20% and Joning Harita Noyadas third with 77%. Senior faculty members Sanghamitra Dubey and Shyanti Bhattacharya anchored the programme.

Denizens agitated over not re-starting of under-bridge road

MSS completes its 90th phase

Of Swachchata Abhiyan



Central Chronicle News

Pandaria, Mar 13: Mahamaya Sewa Samiti (MSS) completed 90th phase of Swachchata Abhiyan of cleanliness at Janpad Panchayat premises here on Sunday. In the cleanliness campaign on Sunday, the campaign concluded in the presence of brand ambassador of campaign viz.

Mohan Singh Rajput, Hamid Khan, Mohan Singh Thakur. It is notable here that the Samiti carries out cleaning every Sunday from 7:00 am to 9:00 am at various public

places and they pass on the message of sanitation, cleanliness to denizens of city.

During this Samiti's president- and LS rep- Sanjay Soni, Secretary Abhishek Sahrma, Manager Manendra Shandilya, corporator Anurag Thakur, former corporator Vijay Burman, Pawan Kumbhakar from Pichada Prakash; Kissan Morcha gen. secy. Anil Thakur, Buddhesh Rai Dabhu Raj, Baba Raj, from Girls group- Radhika, Neha, Aarti, Jyoti, and Nagar Panchayat commando gang were present.

Charges railway of sidelining local reps
No action taken even after submission of memorandum by MLA to railway officers

local MLA to responsible railway officers, they are not reaching the concerned venue.

The MLA is forced to hold talks with assistant officers of railways even after submission of memo. Prior to this also the local railway officials have been submitted memorandum by local representatives.

Should talk to responsible officer: Hathel

Former Nagar Palika President Tarun Hathel has expected the local MLA to hold talks with concerned officer of railway sending the memorandum through proper channel. For this Nagar Palika by passing a proposal and through District Collector the responsible railway officer AEN can be called for discussions. If the district administration wants, the road can be started within 24 hrs, he added.

Memo submitted to fill



pot-holes in the road:

The residents of city have submitted memorandum to local administration to level-up the 20 feet deep hole dug just below the bridge during construction of third railway line.

But till date the railway officials have not taken any action in this regard, despite the fact that the construction of third railway track atop the road has been completed way back in 2020.

To fill up this big hole, Virendra Kumar Soni (Maruti) had got signatures done from public reps of the ward and affected citizens.

20 feet deep hole left open for 2 yrs: Maruti

The main road joining two sides of city is lying closed due to sheer negligence on part of the railway even after closure of its work. The 20 feet deep hole dug by the railways for construction of the bridge has not being lev-

elled up and in other words railways are probably waiting for some major accident to take place.

It is notable here that many a devotees of Navratri passes from this route to pay obeisance to Goddess on way to Maa Bamleshwari Temple. VK Soni (Maruti) urged all residents of city to request the local administration and state government to fill up this big hole, so that this route can be started.

Expectations from MP: Few days back, the traders from near the railway chowk and senior BJP leaders have brought it to the attention of LS MP Santosh Pandey in this regard. But till date the MP has only given assurance and on this residents said that if at all MP takes initiatives, then this road can be started the next day.

Central Chronicle News

Dongargarh, Mar 13: The denizens of city are demanding to start the construction of old under-bridge road closed in the name of construction of third railway line for last two years.

Many a times delegation of local trade organisations and others have submitted a memorandum to senior officers of Railways demanding to re-start it soon, but to no avail and till date they have not shown any interest.

In railways the officers are so much dominant that even after submission of memorandum by

'Jal Sakti week' observed in Mungeli



On occasion of Int'l Women's Day

Central Chronicle News

Mungeli, Mar 13: On occasion of 'Jal-Sakti Saptah', under Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) with objective to create awareness among women variety of programmes were organised

and in his women in large number took part.

It was as per instructions by the President Jila Jal & Swachhat Mission (JJSM) Collector Rahul Dev, EE block Mungeli IP Mandavi that on occasion of International Women's Day, 'Jal Shakti Saptah' was organised. In this series, PHE Mungeli organised 'Rangoli' and dance

competition in Mungeli and Patharia block.

In this women from rural areas and children took part and gave variety of presentations. During this coordinator JJM Amit Shriwas, informed women about the importance of JJM and created awareness about quality of water, its conservation and cleanliness.

Central Chronicle News

Rajim, Mar 13: LS MP Mahasamund Chunnalil Sahu inaugurated the newly constructed building of Vipra samaj here on Sunday. Sahu in his address said that some persons are trying to break the 'sanatan dharm' and culture from inside and to save it from breaking, Vipra Samaj will have to come forward.

If one takes a look at the history than in every Rajmahal there used to be a 'purohit' to give advice to the King and it is right since ancient times, 'Purohiths' (pandits) have been given due honour. Sahu further said that it was Lord Shri Parshuram Maharaj who lifted the weapon in order to save

Vipra Samaj must come forward to save 'Sanatan dharm', says Sahu

Declares Rs 10 lakh for construction of building wall and auditorium of Vipra Kul Samaj



'dharm'. LS MP further said that the 15 days Rajim Maghi Punni mela is held every year, whereas the Kumbh is held every 12 months. During ancient times Rajim Mela used to act as marriage bureau. Sahu informed that PM Modi under 'Mahaprasad Yojana' has granted sanction of Rs

56 lakh to Maa Bamleshwari Temple and added that he had also demanded funds in Lok Sabha for development of Rajim.

On request of Secretary Vipra Kul Brahmin Samaj Dhirendra Sharma, a fund of Rs 10 lakh was sanctioned for construction of boundary wall for Vipra

Kul Bhavan. MLA Santosh Upadhyay in his presidential speech welcomed LS MP Sahu and sought funds for boundary wall.

District Panchayat President Shweta Sharma in his address any 'samaj' is divided into different class and creed, but Brahmin is not a caste or religion, it is a culture. She said that they

play important role in showing correct path to those who have become dis-oriented.

The welcome speech was given by V-P of Samaj Sunil Tiwari. On this occasion LS MP Sahu administered oath to newly elected office bearers of Vipra Kul Samaj viz. President- Devendra Sharma; V-P Sunil Tiwari; Krishna Gopal Sharma, Secretary Dhirendra Sharma; Asst. Secy- Sapan Sharma; Treasurer Mahitosh Sharma.

On this occasion Sahu also felicitated the members of Vipra Samaj with a citation certificate and memento. The programme was conducted by Santosh Sharma and Subhash Sharma and vote of thanks was proposed by Devendra Sharma.

Variety of sports competition mark Int'l Women's Day

Women also played festival of colours

Central Chronicle News

Figeshwar, Mar 13: The festival of colours and International Women's Day was celebrated by women from 'Virangana Sanghatan' of city with great enthusiasm. Singing 'Faag geets', playing variety of sports and dance competition marked the occasion.

In this programme, Sheela Yadu of city was felicitated for her involvement in religious and creative works and rendering services to Ramayan Mandali for last 30 years.

In the same way on occasion of International Women's Day, the



President of Jai Maa Mavali Jan Sewa Samiti (JMMJSS) Ganga Bai Dhruv and Seeta Bahi Nishad was felicitated for their social works.

In this programme, variety of sports competitions were also organised for the women. In the Jumping

game, Basanti Sahu came first and Shiv Kumari Sahu second. In the water-

ball competition- Gayatri Chandrakar came first and Madu Chandrakar second. In the passing-

game- Leela Sahu and Madhu Chandrakar came first and second. In the

spoon's race- Basanti Sahu came first and Sangeeta Yadu second.

In this programme, the women also expressed their views on International Women's Day and boosted the morale of their counterparts. They also shared

their experience of how women can be made more self-reliant and how they can take up various employment or works of entrepreneurship. The women were also informed about their fundamental rights and other issues of relevance.

In this programme Bhuneshwari Sahu, Jyoti Rajput, Sarita Shrivastava, Sandhya Haldhare, Chandrika Dhruv, Suman Sriwas, Uma Yadu, Meena Yadu, Sangeeta Yadu, Hema Soni, Basanti Sahu, Shiv Kumari Sahu and others were present.

Residents rejoice over proposal of Y-shape over-bridge

Central Chronicle News

Dongargarh, Mar 13: In the budget presented by Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel, there is an atmosphere of happiness among the common people due to the inclusion of the proposal of the residents of the city to convert the city overbridge into Y shape.

Last year, after the formation of the new Trust Board, a delegation of Shri Bamleshwari Temple Trust Committee,

under the leadership of the MLA, had met Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel and made a proposal regarding converting the over bridge into 'Y' shape, on which the Chief Minister had directed the officials of Setu Nigam to conduct a survey and submit the report.

As per information, after the closure of the railway crossing, the movement of all the vehicles is being done from the under bridge or below in front of the temple, due

to which there is always a possibility of accidents and during Navratri, there is a situation of jam.

Shri Bamleshwari Temple Trust Committee Chairman Manoj Aggarwal and all office bearers and trustees and Block City Congress Committee President Sanjeev Gomasta have expressed gratitude to Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel and MLA for including the proposal of Y shape overbridge in the budget.

Holi celebrated with great enthusiasm

Even villagers used natural colours and 'gula'

Central Chronicle News

Birkoni, Mar 13: The festival of colours was celebrated with great enthusiasm in Gram Birkoni and nearby villages. All celebrated the festival in traditional manner, applying colours and exchanging greetings with each other.

First in the morning, the seniors of village were applied 'tilak' on Holi and the



festival was inaugurated. The villagers to rejoiced on Holi and celebrated it in friendly manner and keeping in mind the environment. No chemical-based colours or items were used, as it causes harm to skin and eyes. In the same way the children too enjoyed the

festival to its full, applying natural colours to each other and flashing water-guns on each other. They even roamed to nearby lanes & by-lanes and not leaving anyone. Later the youth and senior gathered at a chowk in village, and dance to drum beats of 'na-

gadas' and enjoyed the celebrations. On this occasion youth also spread 'gula' in the air and made entire atmosphere colourful and reverberated with colours of nature. This scene continued at many place by evening hours.

In the evening the seniors carrying a stick in their hand performed 'Danda dance' and presented a novel style of dance to all. Along with this 'Faag geets' were also sung by the singers and all got an opportunity to meet each other on this auspicious occasion.

NOTICE

I NO-14667387N HMT TEJRAM SAHOO declare that in my Indian army service record my wife and son Name wrongly entered as my wife INDIRA, correct name is INDIRA SAHU and my son BRAJESH Correct name is BRAJESH SAHU vide affidavit no-IN-CG38819168944573V. Date 06 March 2023

TEJRAM SAHOO
S/o JHADURAM SAHOO
village reda block sarangarh DISTRICT - sarangarh - bilaigarh (C.G.)

इंडियन बैंक
ALLAHABAD

Indian Bank
Branch: Vyapar Vihar Bilaspur (C.G.) 495001

INDIAN BANK
E-AUCTION On 30.03.2022

APPENDIX- IV-A" [See proviso to rule 8 (6)] Sale notice for sale of immovable properties

E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8 (6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower (s) and Guarantor (s) that the below described immovable properties mortgaged/charged to the Secured Creditor, Symbolic Possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of Indian Bank. Secured Creditor, will be sold on As is where is, As is what is and Whatever there is basis for recovery of dues in below mentioned account/s The details of Borrower(s) / Guarantor (s) / Secured Assets/ Dues/ Reserve Price/ e-Auction Date & Time, EMD and Bid Increase Amount are mentioned below -

Sl No.	Name & Address of the Borrower(s) & Guarantor(s) & Branch	Detailed description of the Properties & Encumbrances on properties :-	Outstanding Amount	Reserve Price	EMD	Bid Incremental Amount	Property ID No.
1.	M/s Vadhoo Saree, Shop No. 1, Shri Ram Cloth Market, Agrasen Chowk, Bilaspur (C.G.), Prop- Shri Hemant Chidipal S/o. Lt. Shri B.P. Chidipal, Ward No 15, Sahagal Gali, Masanganj, Bilaspur (C.G.) Guarantor- Smt. Kiran Chidipal W/o Lt. Shri B.P. Chidipal, Ward No -15, Sahagal Gali, Masanganj, Bilaspur (C.G.)	All That part and parcel of property consisting of land and double storied building at Nazul Sheet. No. 22, Plot No. 3/2, Azad Nagar Ward Masanganj, Dist. Bilaspur (C.G.) Area- 1787 Sq.ft in the name of Kiran Chidipal W/o Shri Bramh Prakash Chidipal, Boudaries: North : Nazul Gali, South: Road, East : Government Land, West : House of Agrawal.	Rs. 1,20,76,742.00 as on (13.03.2023) plus interest and charges	Rs. 75.00 Lakhs	Rs. 7.50 Lakhs	Rs. 10,000/-	ID183017 3720824

Date and Times of E-Auction: 30.03.2023, 11.00 am to 04:00 pm

Bidders are advised to visit the website (www.mstccommerce.com) of our e auction service provider MSTC Ltd to participate in online bid. For Technical Assistance Please call MSTC HELPDISK No. 033.22901004 and other help line numbers available in service providers help desk For Registration status with MSTC Ltd, please contact ibapiop@mstccommerce.com and for EMD status please contact ibapiin@mstccommerce.com For property details and photograph of the property and auction terms and conditions please visit. <https://ibapi.in> and for clarifications related to this portal, please contact help line number 18001025026 and 011-41106131. Bidders are advised to use Property ID Number mentioned above while searching for the property in the website with <https://ibapi.in> and www.mstccommerce.com.

Date: 13.03.2023, Place: Bilaspur (C.G.) Authorised Officer, Indian Bank

BRIEF



Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren welcomes newly elected AJSU MLA from Ramgarh Assembly constituency Sunita Choudhary, in Ranchi, Monday.

Arrested

New Delhi: A 29-year-old Nigerian national was arrested for supplying drugs in Delhi-NCR, police said on Monday. They said 1,050 grams of Methaqualone drugs was seized from the accused, identified as Oluebube Damain. Damain came to India from Nigeria on a three-month visa in 2019 and after expiry of visa, he continued to live illegally in the country, police said.

Electrocuted

Sidhi: A tigress allegedly died of electrocution in a buffer zone of Sanjay Tiger Reserve in Madhya Pradesh's Sidhi district, a forest official said on Monday. The big cat, identified as T-32, had allegedly stepped into a trap laid by poachers and got electrocuted in Tamsar buffer zone, the reserve's field director Amit Kumar said.

Summon

New Delhi: The apex child rights body NCPDR has summoned MCD Commissioner Gyanesh Bharti and sought an action taken report from him over the death of two siblings reportedly by stray dogs in southwest Delhi's Vasant Kunj area. Two children, aged seven and five, were maulled to death by stray dogs in a forest area in Ruchi Vihar in separate incidents over two days, according to media reports.

Minor fire

Thane: Four hospital beds and some medical equipment were damaged in a minor fire allegedly triggered by unidentified persons at a defunct hospital in Maharashtra's Thane district, police said on Monday. The incident took place at a hospital in Kalyan city on around 9.15 pm on Sunday, an official said.

Solidarity

Gairsain: Days after a professor was arrested in Uttarakhand for his indecent remarks on the Bhotia tribe, a Congress MLA turned up at the state Assembly on Monday in the traditional attire worn by the tribeswomen. Congress MLA from Haridwar (rural) Anupama Rawat said she had worn the traditional clothes of Bhotia women in protest against indecent remarks made by a professor in an article.

Inspect

Shillong: After inspecting the under-construction assembly building, the dome of which collapsed last year, Meghalaya Speaker Thomas A Sangma on Monday said a high-powered committee would be re-constituted to expedite completion of the structure.

Chaos in J'khand assembly over employment policy

Ranchi, Mar 13 (PTI):

Chaos reigned supreme in the Jharkhand assembly on Monday as members of the opposition demonstrated, seeking clarification from the government over the state's employment policy.

Speaker Rabindra Nath Mahto adjourned the proceedings multiple times as opposition MLAs led by the BJP claimed the government was in contempt of the House as the state cabinet was taking decisions over the issue without any information to the assembly.

"The opposition had raised the issue on March 4. It appeared in the press that the government in-

tends to implement the pre-2016 employment policy after the new policy was scrapped by the high court. As per the rule, the government should bring the new policy in the assembly first, but it did not, which is contempt of the House," BJP MLA Neelkanth Singh Munda said. The state cabinet on Thursday approved amendments to various rules related to the Jharkhand Staff Selection Commission (JSSC) examinations, including doing away with a clause that disallowed candidates with academic certificates from institutions outside the state to appear for it.

The cabinet also gave its nod to the amendments,

which among other changes, added Hindi, English and Sanskrit to the list of languages for the JSSC examination, taking the total number of languages to 15.

Munda also sought clarification on the government's plan of introducing a 60-40 ratio in the employment system as reported in a section of the press.

Independent MLA Amit Yadav asked, "Is the government paying the way for giving jobs to outsiders through the 60-40 ratio? Will the government give relaxation in age due to the non-formulation of employment policy?"

In reply, Parliamentary Affairs Minister Alamgir

Alam said, "An employment policy was passed by the House in 2015. This government made some changes in that policy, which was scrapped by the high court. According to the decision of the court, the government is going to bring some amendments to the employment policy."

He said the government is also considering providing age relaxation to the youths.

As disruptions over the issue continued, the speaker adjourned the proceedings multiple times.

The BJP MLAs said they want a reply from Chief Minister Hemant Soren over the issue.

COMMANDO TRAINING



BSF woman commandos during a training session, at Border Security Force (BSF) center, in Hoshiarpur near Jalandhar, Monday.

CHILD MARRIAGE IN ASSAM

Only 494 convicted out of 8,773 charge-sheeted

Guwahati, Mar 13 (PTI):

A mere 494 persons out of 8,773 people who were charge-sheeted for child marriage and POCSO cases in Assam have been convicted since 2017, Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said on Monday.

Replying to a query by Congress MLA Abdur Rashid Mandal in Assam Assembly, Sarma said a total of 8,773 people have been chargesheeted under Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006 (PCMA) and Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012 (POCSO) between 2017 and February 2023.

"A total of 494 persons were convicted and a total

of 6,174 persons released on bail," he added. This represents a conviction rate of just 5.63 per cent.

Sarma informed the House that 4,049 persons were arrested under the PCMA and 8,908 people have been nabbed under the POCSO (Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act) across Assam from 2017 to February this year.

During the period, 134 boys under the age of 21 years, and 2,975 girls below 18-years of age married (the permissible age of marriage for males and females respectively), he added. Reacting to the data and on the recent crackdown against child marriage accused, Mandal al-

leged that the Assam government is "terrorising" people using the two acts.

On this, Parliamentary Affairs Minister Pijush Hazarika said: "How is it terrorising people. You (Congress government) did not frame the rule. Because of vote bank politics, you did not take any initiative." This led to a noisy scene in the House with both treasury and opposition benches trading charges.

In a separate query by Independent MLA Akhil Gogoi, the Chief Minister stated that 4,111 incidents of child marriage took place in the state from April 2021 to February 2023. "A total of 4,670 cases have been registered naming 7,142 ac-

cused. Already 3,483 persons have been arrested, of which 1,182 are in jail, 2,253 have got bail and notices have been issued to 48 others," he added.

Sarma also informed the legislators that the government has not taken any step to take responsibility for the children born out of child marriages, but said steps will be initiated if any child requires care and security. During the debate on the Motion of Thanks on the Governor's address, Leader of the Opposition Debabrata Saikia said slapping of POCSO and rape cases on child marriage accused have created disturbances in the society with many old people getting arrested.

'Will come up with five books on Goa trees, islands'

Panaji, Mar 13 (PTI):

Goa Governor P S Sreedharan Pillai on Monday said he would be coming out with five books on the ancient trees and islands of the coastal state.

Speaking to reporters on the sidelines of 'heritage yatra' that he undertook in the southern part of the state to learn about the rich eco-cultural traditions attached to the trees, Pillai said such information must reach the people.

"The current yatra would be followed by visits to the islands of Goa. At the end of these initiatives, I will be publishing five books which would be



P S Sreedharan Pillai

distributed free of cost to tourists. The people visiting this state should know the importance of these trees and these places," he said.

On Monday, the Governor visited Margao's Holy Spirit Church, which has a 450-

year-old tree in its compound, as well as a tree near a temple in Quepem town.

The priest of Holy Spirit Church said the tree was planted 450 years ago when the renowned place of worship was founded.

"The Heritage Tour designed by Raj Bhavan aims to highlight the importance of out valuable assets that are ancient trees. Raj Bhavan has initiated a study of 41 ancient trees, of which 31 will be declared as Heritage Trees of Goa," he informed.

Historian Sanjiv Sardesai, who accompanied the governor on the tour, hailed Pillai for the initiative.

AIADMK demands withdrawal of case against EPS

Chennai/Madurai, Mar 13 (PTI)

Tamil Nadu's principal opposition AIADMK on Monday staged state-wide protest demanding that the ruling DMK regime 'withdraw the false case' against party interim chief Edappadi K Palaniswami (EPS).

Former Ministers Sellur K Raju, R B Udhayakumar and AIADMK organising secretary V V Rajan Chellappa led a protest in southern Madurai condemning the DMK government.

Leader of Opposition and AIADMK interim general secretary EPS's name was included by police in an FIR registered in connection with an incident in which a man was allegedly beaten up by party

workers after he shouted slogans against Palaniswami on March 11. Addressing party workers, Udhayakumar slammed Chief Minister M K Stalin as a "doll CM" who was only inaugurating schemes initiated by Palaniswami.

Hitting out at Stalin as an "autocrat," he slammed the DMK regime for filing false case against EPS. "AIADMK workers do not hesitate to go to jail (to protest against the government), this protest is only a trailer," he said.

In Pudukkottai district, senior leader C Vijayabaskar led a human chain. A former Minister, Vijayabaskar said the case against EPS is unacceptable and condemnable. Police should be impartial,

he said and wondered on what grounds police booked a case against Palaniswami.

In Chennai, party workers took out a rally and former Lok Sabha member, J Jayavardhan said Stalin is merely enacting "dramas" rather than working for people's welfare and "the Oscar award for best actor should go to Stalin." Rather than taking action against the person who used defamatory language against EPS, the police has filed a case against Palaniswami said former legislator, IS Inbadurai.

V i l l u p u r a m , T i n d i v a n a m , R a m a n a t h a p u r a m , Thanjavur, Thoonthukudi were among the other places where AIADMK cadres staged protest. "We

condemn the DMK regime, take back the false case against EPS," were among the slogans raised.

When Palaniswami was travelling in an airport bus to reach the exit area after arriving in Madurai from Chennai on March 11, a man who was also inside that vehicle, raised slogans against the former CM and filmed it on his smart phone for a live video broadcast on Facebook.

When the top opposition leader alighted the bus, the man who shouted slogans against EPS was "roughed up" by AIADMK workers.

In this connection, AIADMK workers and Rajeswaran submitted petitions to police seeking action and an FIR was registered.

'Loudspeakers used for Azaan disturb people'

Mangaluru, Mar 13 (PTI):

Senior BJP leader K S Eshwarappa on Monday said loudspeakers used for 'Azaan' (muslim call for prayer) disturb people, especially students who study for examinations and patients in hospitals.

He was responding to a query on his comments on Azaan made during the party's Vijay Sankalp Yatra on Sunday at Shantinagar, which has gone viral on social media.

"Will Allah listen only if the prayers are given through loudspeakers," the former minister had asked, speaking at a rally.

"I have not shown disrespect to any religion by my statement," Eshwarappa told reporters here.

He further said leaders



K S Eshwarappa

of the Muslim community should contemplate the issue and take an appropriate decision.

The former minister also said his party wants only votes of Muslim nationalists in the coming assembly elections.

The BJP had never stated that they do not want the votes of Muslims. "We want the votes of Muslims

who are nationalists," he said. On the corruption charges being levelled against the BJP, Eshwarappa said the Congress is trying to hide their own corrupt deals during the previous government.

About the reception arranged by BJP workers to party MLA Madal Virupakshappa after he received bail in a bribery case, Eshwarappa said he does not approve of such actions by party workers.

"The Congress leaders, who are criticising this, had no qualms when they gave a rousing reception to D K Shivakumar when he got bail," he said.

Eshwarappa expressed confidence that the BJP will emerge victorious in the coming elections.

GANGA MELA



People participate in the 82nd Ganga Mela of Holi, in Kanpur, Monday.

Adfactors PR wins PRPCL



Mumbai, Mar 13:

The Cricket team of India's largest PR consultancy firm, Adfactors United emerged winners of the Public Relations' Premier Cricket League (PRPCL) 2023, West Edition, organized by the Public Relations Consultants Association of India (PRCAI) on 11th March 2023 at Khar Gymkhana, Mumbai.

In the first match of the tournament, Adfactors United set a new record in the history of PRPCL, by scoring 131 runs in

just six overs. The team entered finals with a positive net run rate of +4.77 and also, maintained the highest net run rate throughout the tournament with a difference of +2. Satveer Khairaliya, who scored 248 runs overall, was declared the Man of the Series while also receiving 2 Man of the Match awards. Sushil Mhadgut also picked up the Man of the Match title, while Karthik Bangera was awarded the Fighter of the Match in the semifinals. Commenting on the

win, Nijay N. Nair, CEO, Adfactors PR, said, "For us, sports is very deeply integrated into the cultural fabric of Adfactors PR. Be it our internal development programs or our representation in all industry-level competitions, we take the sportsperson spirit seriously. To bring the trophy home fills our hearts with pride and joy. We will continue to support our people to pursue sports just as they pursue work - with focused effort, love, and perseverance."

Ram Chandra Paudel sworn in as Nepal's third President

Kathmandu, Mar 13 (PTI):

Senior Nepali Congress leader Ram Chandra Paudel was on Monday sworn in as Nepal's third President, days after he comfortably defeated a candidate fielded by an alliance led by CPN-UML.

At a special ceremony at Sheetal Niwas, the President's Office, Acting Chief Justice Hari Krishna Karki administered the oath to 78-year-old Paudel.

Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda', Vice-President Nanda Bahadur Pun, outgoing President Bidya Devi Bhandari, Speaker Dev Raj Ghimire, National Assembly Chairman Ganesh Prasad Timilsina and other high-ranking government officials were present on the occasion.

Nepali Congress senior leader Paudel was elected the third President of the country on Thursday, defeating Subas Chandra Nembang of the CPN-UML.

Former Speaker and multiple-time minister, Paudel has traversed a long political journey to make it to the country's highest state po-



Senior Nepali Congress leader Ram Chandra Paudel takes the oath of office and secrecy as Nepal's third President, in Kathmandu, Monday.

sition. He spent over a decade in jail. He was a lawmaker six times, a minister five times, and Speaker for one term.

Paudel replaces Bidya Devi Bhandari, whose term ended on March 12.

This is the third presidential election in Nepal since the country became a republic in 2008.

Paudel had support from eight political parties. Out of 52,628 weightage-based votes, Paudel secured 33,802 while Nembang got 15,518 votes.

The outcome of the Presidential election came as a relief for the govern-

ment headed by Prime Minister 'Prachanda' as former premier KP Sharma Oli-led CPN-UML withdrew its support to his government following a rift over backing Paudel for the presidential poll.

Oli on Monday appointed Nembang as the deputy parliamentary party leader.

The term of office of the President will be five years from the date of election and an individual can be elected for the post for only two terms.

Although the post of President is largely ceremonial, Nepal's political

parties have lately shown a growing interest in the post owing to the discretionary powers the Constitution accords to the post.

Born on October 14, 1944, in Bahunpokhari in a middle-class farmers' family, Paudel joined politics at the age of 16. He became the founding central member of the Nepali Students' Union, the student wing of the Nepali Congress, in 1970.

Paudel was appointed Vice president of the Nepali Congress (banned) Tanhu district committee in 1980. He was elevated to

the party's central working committee in 1987 and headed its publicity committee. He became General Secretary in 2005, Vice President in 2007 and acting president of the party in 2015.

He played an active role in the Satyagraha of 1985, People's Movement part I of 1990 and People's Movement part II of 2006. He spent 12 years in jail fighting against the autocratic Panchayat regime.

Paudel was elected to the House of Representatives from Tanhu district for the first time in 1991. Thereafter, he was continuously elected from Tanhu for six consecutive terms.

He was appointed Minister for Local Development in May 1991 and became Agriculture Minister in 1992. Paudel served as Speaker from December 1994 to March 1999. He served as Deputy Prime Minister, Minister for Home and Minister for Information and Communication from 1999 to 2002.

Paudel served as Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Peace and Reconstruction from 2007 to 2008.

MILITARY EXERCISE



U.S. Army's soldiers pass by armored vehicles to cross the Hantan river at a training field in Yeoncheon, near the border with North Korea, Monday.

IS claims bombing at Shiite centre in northern Afghanistan

Islamabad, Mar 13 (AP):

The Islamic State group has claimed responsibility for a bombing on Monday at a cultural centre run by the minority Shiite community in northern Afghanistan that killed one person and wounded eight people.

The Tabian centre of the Hazaras in Balkh's provincial capital, Mazar-e-Sharif, was struck on Saturday, during an event

honouring local journalists.

The regional affiliate of IS known as the Islamic State in Khorasan Province is a key rival of the Taliban and has frequently targeted members of Afghanistan's Shiite minority. The militant group has increased its attacks in Afghanistan since the Taliban takeover of the country in August 2021. IS attacks have also included Taliban patrols.

IS said in a statement posted on its media arm, the Aamaq news agency, that the explosives were planted in a bag that was left hidden at the centre. The statements said those targeted work for an establishment "that engaged in war" against IS.

Abdul Nafi Takor, the Taliban-appointed spokesman for the interior ministry said the person killed was a security guard at the centre.

Pak court issues non-bailable arrest warrant against Imran Khan

● For threatening female judge

Islamabad, Mar 13 (PTI):

A court in Pakistan on Monday issued a non-bailable arrest warrant against ousted prime minister Imran Khan for threatening a woman magistrate while addressing a public gathering here last year. Senior civil judge of Islamabad's district and sessions court Rana Mujahid Rahim has instructed the police to arrest the former prime minister and present him before the court by March 29.

The case against Khan, the chairman of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party was registered in August last year, over his

remarks at a rally here, in which he warned Additional District and Sessions Judge Zeba Chaudhry and top police officials of dire consequences for their "biased" attitude towards his party.

He also blamed them for the treatment meted out to his aide Shehbaz Gill, whom he alleged was subjected to torture in judicial custody. Initially, Imran was booked under various sections of the Pakistan Penal Code after the Islamabad High Court initiated contempt of court proceedings against the former premier.

In September last year, Khan appeared before the sessions judge to personally apologise to Chaudhry.

Consequently, the Islamabad High Court re-

moved terrorism charges against Khan. However, a similar case was filed against him after the FIR was registered. Khan, the 70-year-old former cricketer-turned-politician has heavily criticised the state institutions after a botched attempt by police to arrest him from his residence in the Zaman Park area of Lahore on the weekend. The police raid unfolded on March 5 after a court in Islamabad issued a non-bailable arrest warrant against Khan in the Toshakhana case.

Separately, Judge Zafar Iqbal of the district and sessions court in Islamabad took up the Toshakhana case against Khan on Monday. The PTI chief has been in the crosshairs for buying gifts, including an

expensive Graff wristwatch he had received as the premier at a discounted price from the state depository called Toshakhana and selling them for profit.

The Islamabad court issued a non-bailable arrest warrant in the Toshakhana case against Khan last month for his repeated failure to appear before the court. According to Khan, he was facing at least 80 different cases in various courts across Pakistan.

Khan was ousted from power in April last year after losing a no-confidence vote in his leadership, which he alleged was part of a US-led conspiracy targeting him because of his independent foreign policy decisions on Russia, China, and Afghanistan.

Tunisia's parliament convenes for first time since 2021

Tunis (Tunisia), Mar 13 (AP):

Tunisia's new parliament convened Monday, the first time the country has had a functioning legislature since the president had the previous parliament sealed off by the army in 2021.

The main opposition coalition declared it won't recognise the new parliament, whose members were chosen in December and January in elections boycotted by the president's opponents and ignored by the masses. Just 11 per cent of voters cast ballots.

During Monday's inaugural session, the lawmakers will elect a new speaker of parliament to succeed the leader of Islamist

movement Ennahdha, Rached Ghannouchi, whose party had the largest number of members in the outgoing parliament.

Unusually, only journalists from state broadcasters and the official state news agency were allowed inside the parliament for the opening session, and dozens of reporters protested outside.

The session comes amid a growing crackdown on opposition Islamists and independent media and other dissenting voices, and on migrants from sub-Saharan Africa.

President Kais Saied suspended the previous parliament in July 2021 in what he said was an effort to save the country. Saied

and many Tunisians at the time blamed the Islamist legislators for the country's economic and social crises.

Saied has since legislated by decree and moved to amass more and more power. That has raised concerns internationally, because Tunisia was the birthplace of the Arab Spring uprisings a decade ago and the only country to emerge with a new democratic system.

The new legislature has less power than its predecessor; according to a new constitution that Saied pushed through in a referendum.

It is meant to have 161 members, compared to 217 in the previous parliament. But only 154 candi-

dates were elected in the two-round legislative ballot, because no candidates bothered to run in seven electoral districts representing Tunisians abroad, reflecting widespread disillusionment with the political class.

Most political parties boycotted the elections, considering that the electoral process initiated by Saied was designed to establish his control over the country.

The main opposition coalition, the National Salvation Front, said in a statement Sunday that it doesn't recognise the new parliament "resulting from an illegitimate constitution and elections that were boycotted by a large majority."

FLOODED STREET



A man carries a table through a street flooded by heavy rains of Cyclone Yaku, in Chiclayo, Peru, Monday.

Tens of thousands of doctors kick off 3-day strike

London, Mar 13 (AP):

Tens of thousands of junior doctors went on strike across England on Monday to demand better pay, kicking off three days of widespread disruption at the UK's state-funded hospitals and health clinics. Junior doctors make up 45 per cent of all NHS doctors. Senior doctors and other medics have had to be drafted in to cover for emergency services, critical care and maternity services.

The British Medical Association, the doctors' trade union, says pay for junior doctors has fallen 26 per cent in real terms since 2008, while workload and patient waiting lists are at record highs.

The union says burnout and the UK's cost-of-living crisis are driving doctors away from the public health service. The union said newly qualified medics earn just 14.09 pounds (USD 17) an hour.

Other health workers, including nurses and paramedics, have also staged strikes in recent months to demand better pay and conditions. NHS figures show that more than 100,000 appointments have already been postponed this winter as a result of the nurses' walkouts.

Stephen Powis, medical director of NHS England, said the 72-hour strike this week is expected to have the most serious impact and

will cause "extensive disruption." He said some cancer care will likely be affected, alongside routine appointments and some operations. Prime Minister Rishi Sunak told reporters on Sunday it was

"disappointing that the junior doctors' union are not engaging with the government". The doctors' union said officials have re-

fused to engage with their demands for months, and that a recent invitation to talks came with "unacceptable" preconditions.

SOUTH EAST CENTRAL RAILWAY

APPOINTMENT OF STATION BOOKING AGENTS

No.: 2022/C/Chg./STBA/III/R, Date: 06.03.2023.

(1) Name of Work: Appointment of Station Ticket Booking Agents (STBAs) at Different Stations at NSG-6 Category Stations, over Raipur Division in South East Central Railway for issuing computerized unreserved tickets through computerized unreserved ticketing system (UTS) from interested parties for a period of Three Years. (2) EMD: ₹ 2,000/-. (3) Cost of Tender Document: ₹ 590/- (₹ Five Hundred Ninety only) per application form. (4) Issue of Application Forms: From 10.00 hours to 17.00 hours from 24.03.2023 to 16.04.2023 on all office working days. (5) Last Date & Time for Submission of Application: Up to 15.00 hours on 17.04.2023. (6) Opening of Application Box: At 15.30 hours on 17.04.2023.

Application are to be drop their sealed cover addressed to Sr. Divisional Commercial Manager/ South East Central Railway, Raipur in the Application box kept in the box kept for this purpose in the office of Sr. Divisional Commercial Manager, DRM Office Complex, South East Central Railway, Near Waitlist Level Crossing Gate, RVH Colony, Raipur (Chhattisgarh) up to 15.00 hours of 17.04.2023. Railway reserves its right to either cancel the tender or rejects any or all the tenders without assigning any reason thereof. For details, eligibility criteria, terms & conditions, Stations and complete details for the above work, please contact office of the Sr. DCM/ South East Central Railway, Raipur or refer/download application document which is available on our website: www.secr.indianrailways.gov.in.

DRM (Commercial) Raipur
PR/RS/DCM/II/240 Raipur
South East Central Railway @ seccrail

SOUTH EAST CENTRAL RAILWAY

E-AUCTION NOTICE

Tender Notice no. COM/C/G/R/E-auction 697 Dt. 10.03.2023
E-auction for earning and leasing contracts from Raipur Division has been invited as under:

Sr. No.	Asset Description	Auction Date	Auction Time	
			From	To
1.	Durg station four wheeler Parking	22.03.23	15:00	15:30
2.	Raipur station Three wheeler Parking	22.03.23	15:00	15:40
3.	Bhilai power house station two wheeler Parking	22.03.23	15:00	15:50
4.	Truck and Bus parking at Telghnai naka at Raipur	22.03.23	15:00	16:00

Details of all the E-auction notification is uploaded on website www.ireps.gov.in.

Assistant Commercial Manager SECR, Raipur

PR/RS/DCM/II/240

South East Central Railway @ seccrail

कार्यालय मुख्य चिकित्सा एवं स्वास्थ्य अधिकारी, जिला रायपुर (छ.ग.)

(e-mail :- cmho_raipur@yahoo.co.in) - Ph. No. 0771-2535304, 2535315

क्रमांक/निविदा-डी.एच.एफ.-ब्लड स्टोरेज उपकरण/सत्र/2023/ रायपुर, दिनांक ...

निविदा सूचना

कार्यालय मुख्य चिकित्सा एवं स्वास्थ्य अधिकारी, जिला रायपुर के जिला खनिज संस्थान न्यास अंतर्गत वित्तीय वर्ष 2022-23 के लिए ब्लड स्टोरेज उपकरण क्रय कार्य हेतु संबंधित कार्य में शामिल फर्मों से निविदा आमंत्रित की जाती है। निविदा प्राप्त एवं अन्य जानकारी जिले के वेबसाइट www.raipur.gov.in में प्राप्त की जा सकती है। निविदा प्राप्त हेतु निर्धारित राशि 2000/- (दो हजार रु मात्र) CHIEF MEDICAL & HEALTH OFFICER RAIPUR के नाम से जारी डिमांड ड्राफ्ट/चेक के माध्यम से अनिवार्य रूप दिया जाना होगा, उक्त राशि वापसी योग्य नहीं है। निविदा प्राप्त भ्रकर स्थानीय कार्यालय में रजिस्टर डॉक, स्वीड पोस्ट के माध्यम से जमा कर सकते है।

- निविदा प्रपत्र खरीदने की अंतिम तिथि :-24.04.2023 - समय दोपहर 12.00 बजे तक
- निविदा जमा करने की अंतिम तिथि :-24.04.2023 - समय दोपहर 1.30 बजे तक
- निविदा खोले जाने की अंतिम तिथि :-24.04.2023 - समय अपराह्न 04.00 बजे तक

निविदा खोलने की तिथि एवं समय में अपरिहार्य कारणों से परिवर्तित किया जा सकता है, जिसकी सूचना कार्यालय के सूचना पटल में चप्पा कर दी जाएगी।

मुख्य चिकित्सा एवं स्वास्थ्य अधिकारी जिला रायपुर छ.ग.

G-9922/1

● Retainers include Shehbaz, Nawaz, Imran Khan, Zardari

Islamabad, Mar 13 (PTI):

The Pakistan government has for the first time made public details of foreign gifts retained by officials amidst the controversy over the Toshakhana gifts sold by former premier Imran Khan.

The details of Toshakhana or the state depository were revealed on Sunday on the website of the Cabinet Division, showing the gifts retained by former presidents, prime ministers, federal

cabinet members, politicians, bureaucrats, retired generals, judges, and journalists from 2002 to 2022.

The 446-page document showed those who benefited include President Arif Alvi, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, former prime minister Imran Khan, ex-prime minister Nawaz Sharif, ex-president Asif Ali Zardari, late military dictator Pervez Musharraf, former premier Shaukat Aziz, ex-PM Yousuf Raza Gilani, ex-PM Shahid Khaqan Abbasi, ex-PM Raja Pervaiz Ashraf, ex-PM Zafarullah Khan Jamali, Senate Chairman Sadiq Sanjrani, Finance

Minister Ishaq Dar, Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari, Sheikh Rashid Ahmed, Khurshheed Kasuri, Abdul Hafeez Shaikh, Jehangir Tarin, Shah Mehmood Qureshi, and Attaur Rehman among others.

The document showed that most of the gifts were retained by the office holders free of cost except for a few.

Zardari and Nawaz Sharif received one bulletproof vehicle each during their visits and retained them after paying some money to the Toshakhana.

Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan and his wife

received five precious wristwatches, ornaments, and other items.

Pervez Musharraf and Shaukat Aziz retained hundreds of foreign gifts without paying a penny.

In return for the gifts received from foreign dignitaries, these public office holders, especially the rulers, gave away gifts worth millions of rupees to the foreign delegates.

The details revealed that Zardari retained one BMW 760 Li white (security version) on January 26, 2009. The car's value was fixed at Rs 27.3 million while the former president retained it after paying a little more than Rs 4 million.

In March 2011, he retained a wristwatch worth Rs 1 million after paying Rs 158,250 for the watch and some other items.

In June 2011, he retained a wristwatch worth Rs 1.25 million after paying a sum of Rs 189,219 for the watch and some other items.

In October 2011, the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) leader retained a Cartier wristwatch worth Rs 1 million after making a payment of Rs 321,000 for the watch and a gun.

The PML-N supreme leader was gifted a Mercedes Benz car on April 20, 2008, worth Rs 4.25 million.



CENTRAL Chronicle

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India Shines At Oscars

India's impressive performance at the 95th Oscars on March 12th, 2023, brought the country's cinematic talent to the fore. It was a historic night for India as two films, RRR and The Elephant Whisperers, won Best Original Song and Best Documentary Short, respectively. The recognition for these two films demonstrates the depth and diversity of Indian cinema and culture. RRR, directed by SS Rajamouli, tells the story of two freedom fighters and their bond of brotherhood, while The Elephant Whisperers documents the endearing relationship between a Kattunayakan tribal couple and their orphaned elephants. These films highlight the richness of India's cultural heritage and the varied stories that exist in the country's history. The Oscar wins for India signal that the doors to Hollywood are not only open for actors, filmmakers, and technicians, but also for Indian content. This recognition has been made possible by the emergence of international OTT platforms like Netflix and Amazon Prime Video, which have produced and showcased Indian content globally. The success of The Elephant Whisperers, produced by Guneet Monga's Sikhya Entertainment and distributed by Netflix, is a testament to this trend. In the past, Indian cinema has been largely associated with Bollywood. However, the recognition of RRR and The Elephant Whisperers at the Oscars is a reminder that Indian cinema is a diverse ecosystem comprising multiple regional film industries, each with its unique style and storytelling. These industries produce not only commercial blockbusters but also compelling documentaries and short films. The rise of independent documentaries and short films in India has been phenomenal in the last decade, thanks to the availability of platforms like YouTube. These platforms provide a cost-effective means for creative and talented young filmmakers to showcase their content to a global audience. Short films are increasingly becoming the calling card for aspiring filmmakers, and many feature films have been inspired by them. Filmmakers have also discovered that showcasing their films at international film festivals, big or small, helps them gain recognition and legitimacy in the West. The Oscar wins for RRR and The Elephant Whisperers are a proud moment for India and its film industry, both mainstream and independent. These awards have brought to the forefront the immense talent that exists in the country and the willingness of the West to welcome it. Furthermore, these wins demonstrate that there is a vast potential for Indian cinema to grow and become a force to reckon with in the global film industry. It is worth noting that India has won several Oscars in the past, including the Best Picture award for the film Slumdog Millionaire in 2009. India has also received nominations for various categories, including Best Foreign Language Film, Best Original Song, and Best Documentary Feature. These accolades underscore India's rich cinematic history and its ongoing contribution to the global film industry.

SVB collapse: A blow to Indian startups

Industry experts predict that the collapse of Silicon Valley Bank, the largest vendor in the startup ecosystem, will adversely impact the Indian startup scenario. The bank, which was closed by the California Department of Financial Protection and Innovation and appointed the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) as its receiver, had been a key supporter of Indian startups and provided banking services to many Indian companies doing business in the US. Over the years, Silicon Valley Bank had become a preferred choice of banking for startups and the tech industry in the Silicon Valley due to its understanding of the industry and flexibility in many aspects suiting the startup ecosystem. However, with the bank's collapse, experts feel a significantly large number of Indian-American founders in the Silicon Valley will be impacted as early as next week in terms of basic payments and paychecks to their employees. The collapse of SVB is also expected to have potential implications for the banking system in the US and the rest of the world, with a lot of fintech depending on the bank. The events that unfolded over the past 48 hours have been deeply disappointing and concerning, say a group of Silicon Valley-based venture capitalists after a meeting to discuss the aftermath of the bank's downfall. While some are calling for private investors to purchase the bank and its assets, others are demanding investigations into short sales by executives and clawbacks with penalties of profits made. Indian-American Republican presidential candidate Nikki Haley is against taxpayer bailouts and believes it is not the responsibility of the American taxpayer to step in. On the other hand, Indian-American presidential candidate Vivek Ramaswamy believes the likes of Prince Harry and Meghan Markle should not be bailed out. The implications of the collapse of SVB on Indian-Americans and their companies are very serious, and many are hoping for a resolution. "Hopefully the matter will get resolved, but it is a big hit for Indian startups," says Ashu Garg, a prominent Silicon Valley-based venture capitalist and early-stage investor for over two decades.

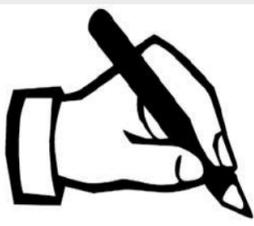
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FULL BLOOM



Shepherds lead a herd of sheep at an Almond Orchard where trees are in full bloom marking the arrival of spring in the Valley, in Pulwama of South Kashmir, Monday.

G20: Driving Women-Led Development

**AMITABH KANT**

India's G20 Presidency comes at a critical juncture and an opportune time. Countries across the world are looking to build back better from the host of crises experienced over the past three years. From the COVID-19 pandemic to the ongoing climate crisis, it is now well-acknowledged that the impacts of a crisis are very often gendered, exacting their highest price on women and girls, impacting their safety, livelihoods and health. India's Presidency of G20 brings an enormous focus on the role of women and gender equality. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has highlighted the imperative need for tackling critical issues of women's access to finance, entrepreneurship, and labor force participation. On the domestic front, the Government of India has taken a conscious decision to place women's empowerment at the heart of its 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' development agenda, with a commitment to supporting their holistic development at all stages of life. The 'Beti Bachao Beti Padhao' scheme has led to a 16-point improvement in the sex ratio at birth since 2014. The MUDRA Scheme that provides microfinance has over 70% women beneficiaries. Mission

Poshan 2.0, an integrated nutrition support programme has served over 1.2 crore pregnant and lactating mothers. Several other steps, from the establishment of working women's hostels, to the launch of various skills-development programmes, and initiatives to secure their safety and freedom from violence - all testify to India's concerted focus on securing the Suraksha (Safety), Suidha (Convenience) and Swabhiman (Independence) of their women. Increasingly and in line with our society's civilisational ethos - the Government is also recognising the centrality of 'Nari Shakti' to affect meaningful society-wide transformation. Simply put, there is a greater focus on the role of women as drivers of growth and agents of changes, and not simply as beneficiaries of development. With India steering the efforts of the G20 in 2023 - the time has come for us to build on the momentum generated so far, and further this agenda of women-led development. Given that gender is a cross-cutting theme - affecting almost all the other development prospects we hope to see a renewed emphasis on gender equality across the entirety of the G20 Agenda, and its en-

agement groups.

In particular, we look forward to advancing concrete actions on the following themes: First, supporting women's digital and financial inclusion. Globally, almost half (42%) of women and girls remain outside the formal financial system. Despite progress in financial inclusion rates, the gender gap has not narrowed and a 7% gap persists. Digital technology innovations, particularly for information & communication, have the potential to accelerate women's economic empowerment. Yet, there remains a Digital Gender Gap, both in access to digital technology and to digital education. India has prioritised women's digital financial inclusion through the JAM or Jan Dhan-Aadhar-Mobile platform and this has allowed significant social protection programs to reach women directly as well as strengthened and women's economic empowerment. Through the G20, we must look at similar concrete ways to strengthen women's digital and financial inclusion.

Second, strengthening women's capacities to make them equal stakeholders in development. This is important both to facilitate the entry of, and to ensure continuity in women's participation in the economy and in society. For instance, despite education being wholly acknowledged as the cornerstone of empowerment - globally only 49% have achieved gender parity in primary education, 42% in lower secondary education, and 24% in upper secondary education. Globally, around 1.1 billion women and girls remain outside the formal financial system, many of whom also have limited access to digital technologies. Similarly, in coun-

tries across the world women perform significantly higher unpaid care work. Therefore, it is crucial that the G20 works together and drives consensus and actions around dismantling these long-term structural barriers that women face and their lives and at work.

Third, enabling women's leadership at all levels of decision making. Today, India is being served by over 1.90 crore women in administrative offices, over 17,000 women elected to Panchayati Raj Institutions, and over 10,000 women in the defense forces. Such an approach to women-led development will be critical for ensuring that their unique perspectives, experiences and leadership styles are brought to the table, which in turn can lead to more inclusive and effective decision-making.

Finally, it is important to ensure the sustainability of the outcomes realised across various initiatives. For this, prioritizing gender-disaggregated data systems will be critical, as investing in the collection and sharing of gender-disaggregated data will be important for developing targeted interventions, and monitoring progress towards gender equality.

Although the interlinked crises the world has faced has set us back from achieving our common development goals - India's G20 presidency offers the opportunity for us to set the agenda for next phase development. In this window of opportunity, it is critical that we place women at the heart of our efforts so as to achieve a better tomorrow.

(Author is G20 Sherpa & Former CEO, NITI Aayog, Govt of India. Views expressed are personal.)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Misuse of central agencies for political gains

The recent letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi by four Chief Ministers of the Opposition, condemning the misuse of central investigative agencies to quell dissenters, has brought to light a serious concern. According to media reports, since 2014, there has been a 4-fold increase in ED cases against politicians, with more than 95% of these cases involving Opposition parties. This raises questions as to why no leader or minister in a BJP-ruled state or in the central government has been targeted by Enforcement Directorate (ED), Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), or others. Central agencies have been seen to act against opposition leaders during political crises or just before state elections, with no major developments. This has led people to believe that these agencies are only concerned about what the present ruling government thinks of them, rather than what the public or the media thinks. Under such circumstances, it is imperative for the Opposition to stand as a united front against the Modi government in the upcoming general election. Otherwise, the misuse of central investigative agencies will continue to remain in power.

Bidyut Kumar Chatterjee, Faridabad

Humiliation

What is the end result of hullabaloo like "red-eye" and "56 inch"? Chinese aggression and intrusion into the Indian territory and Chinese claim that Galwan Valley is Chinese territory are painful to say the least. But the Indian government's prolonged silence on this issue and the Indian foreign minister's recent declaration that China is a bigger economy and India cannot pick a fight with it cause more pain and anguish. This again proves that empty vessels make the most sound. One author has rightly compared this with the events in 1971 revolving around the creation of Bangladesh. Though the American economy was far more bigger than the Indian economy and Americans were threatening to send the Seventh Fleet to Bay of Bengal but that did not prevent India from taking the right and necessary action at that time. It is a pity that now the humiliation at the hands of China has been rationalized with an excuse that puts unwanted pressure and a question mark to our sovereignty.

Sujit De, Kolkata

Breaking Barriers: Including People with Disabilities in India's Development Story

As India approaches its 100th anniversary as a nation, it is also poised to become the world's third-largest economy by 2027. However, it is imperative that this growth story includes people with disabilities, who have long been marginalized and isolated. Despite being a significant part of the population, they continue to face discrimination and barriers to education, employment, and social inclusion.

India has made some strides in protecting the rights of people with disabilities. The Rights for Persons with Disabilities (RPwD) Act, passed in 2016, provides a comprehensive legal framework for promoting equality and prohibiting discrimination. Additionally, the government's Accessibility India cam-

campaign seeks to create a barrier-free environment for independent living. However, the implementation of these policies has been lacking in many cases.

To create an enabling environment for people with disabilities, four areas need to be addressed: disability-specific data, accessibility, finances, and awareness. There is a lack of reliable data on disability and disabled people in India, which leads to exclusion from various programs and services. Disability-specific data needs to be collected and managed across various sectors to ensure that the needs



of people with disabilities are adequately addressed.

Accessibility is another crucial aspect that needs attention. Public spaces, transportation, and websites need to follow the principles of universal design to ensure

that people with disabilities can access education, health-care, employment, and housing. It is essential to create an enabling environment that allows people with disabilities to live with dignity and independence.

Lastly, raising awareness and understanding about disability is critical in breaking down barriers and reducing stigma. People with disabilities face multiple layers of discrimination, particularly women and girls, who are more vulnerable to violence, neglect, and exploitation. Creating an inclusive society requires a concerted effort from policymakers, practitioners, and society as a whole.

In conclusion, India's growth story must include people with disabilities. To ensure this, there needs to be a focus on disability-specific data, accessibility, finances, and awareness. By addressing these issues, we can create an enabling environment that allows people with disabilities to participate fully in India's development and achieve their full potential.

BRIEF

Investor pressure



New Delhi: Industry veteran T V Mohandas Pai has said startups which do almost all their business in India and have all their employees here should resist any pressure from large investors to domicile outside, as the former Infosys director and chairman of Aarin Capital cited key lessons to be drawn from the collapse of Silicon Valley Bank. Pai advised founders of India-centric startups "to be careful" and "not get carried away" by investors who force companies they fund, to domicile in the US and open bank accounts there as well. Pai said Silicon Valley Bank was a startup-friendly bank and its collapse is a "blow" to the startup ecosystem.

LEAN scheme



New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday said the government's MSME Competitive (LEAN) scheme is a part of its efforts to strengthen the MSME sector, which is a key pillar of India's economic growth. The government on Friday launched the revamped MSME Competitive (LEAN) scheme to make it more beneficial for enterprises and stakeholders. Under the revamped scheme, the Centre's contribution will be 90 per cent of the implementation cost for hand holding and consultancy fees as against 80 per cent previously.

SVB collapse impact



New Delhi: Minister of State for Electronics and IT Rajeev Chandrasekhar will meet representatives of start-ups this week to assess the impact of their exposure to Silicon Valley Bank which was deeply entrenched in the tech startup ecosystem. According to various industry players and experts, most Indian software-as-a-services startups with a presence in the US and firms linked to incubator Y Combinator are among entities that will feel the heat of the Silicon Valley Bank collapse but the impact is likely to be short-term. "The SVB Financial closure is certainly disrupting startups across the world. Startups are an imp part of New India Economy. I will meet with Indian Startups this week to understand impact on them how @narendramodi govt can help during this crisis," Chandrasekhar tweeted on Sunday.

E-rupee worth over Rs 130 crore in circulation: Sitharaman

New Delhi, Mar 13:



Digital or e-rupee worth over Rs 130 crore is in circulation on a pilot basis as of February 28, finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman said on Monday. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) had launched pilots in digital rupee in the wholesale segment (e-W) on November 1, 2022 and in the retail segment (e-R) on December 1, 2022. Nine banks, viz., State Bank of India, Bank of Baroda, Union Bank of India, HDFC Bank, ICICI Bank, Kotak Mahindra Bank, Yes Bank, IDFC First Bank and HSBC, have been participating in the digital rupee wholesale pilot, Sitharaman said. "As on February 28, 2023, the total digital rupee - Retail (e-R) and digital rupee - wholesale (e-W) in circulation is Rs 4.14 crore and Rs 126.27

crore, respectively," Sitharaman said in a written reply in the Lok Sabha. The e-R is in the form of a digital token that represents legal tender. It is being issued in the same denominations that paper currency and coins are currently issued. It is being distributed through financial intermediaries, i.e., banks. Users can transact with e-R through a digital wallet offered by the participating banks and stored on mobile

phones/devices. The pilot for retail segment was launched on December 1, 2022 in 5 select locations in closed user group for making Person to Person (P2P) and Person to Merchant (P2M) transactions.

The on-boarded merchants comprise various segments like tea vendors, fruit sellers, street side and sidewalk vendors (including migrant fruit vendors selling on the pavement opposite the RBI's headquarters, Mumbai), small shopkeepers etc," Sitharaman said. Further, institutional merchants like retail chains, petrol pumps etc. have also been on-boarded to enable transactions in digital rupee across various outlets. Few online merchants have also been enabled to accept digital rupee for the convenience of users.

In the approximately

three months of the pilot, the total digital rupee - Retail (e-R) in circulation in the select locations is Rs 4.14 crore, the minister said. "Various use cases, technological architecture and design features are being tested during the pilot... Further steps, including expansion of use case, have to be through a phased implementation strategy on the basis of feedback received during the pilots," Sitharaman added.

The currency in circulation has gone up to Rs 31.33 lakh crore in March 2022, from Rs 13 lakh crore in 2014, finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman said in the Lok Sabha on Monday. The currency in circulation, which includes bank notes and coins, to GDP ratio stood at 13.7 per cent as on March 25, 2022, up from 11.6 per cent as on March 2014.

Retail inflation dips marginally to 6.44 pc in Feb

New Delhi, Mar 13:

Retail inflation dipped marginally to 6.44 per cent in February, mainly on account of a slight easing in prices of food and fuel items, as per government data released on Monday. The inflation rate based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI) stood at 6.52 per cent in January and 6.07 per cent in February 2022. The inflation rate for the food basket was 5.95 per cent in February, lower than 6 per cent in January. Except for November and December 2022, retail inflation has remained above the RBI's

upper tolerance level of 6 per cent since January 2022. The Reserve Bank has projected retail inflation at 6.5 per cent for 2022-23, with the January-December quarter at 5.7 per cent. The central bank has been mandated by the government to ensure the retail inflation remains at 4 per cent with a margin of 2 per cent on either side. To contain the rising prices, the RBI has hiked interest rates by 250 basis points since May last year. The latest rate hike of 25 basis points in February took the benchmark policy rate to 6.50 per cent.

EPF member accounts of 98 pc contributory firms updated till March 6: Labour Min

New Delhi, Mar 13:

Employees' provident fund (EPF) member accounts of 98 per cent of contributory firms or establishments have been updated with the latest interest credit till March 6, 2023, Parliament was informed on Monday. Many members and employees' representatives have raised the issue of not crediting the rate of interest on EPF for 2021-22, which was fixed at 8.1 per cent. "This (interest crediting) is an ongoing process, which has been taken up in a scheduled manner post development



of software and by March 6, 2023, the process has been completed in respect of 98 per cent of contributory establishments," stated Minister of State for Labour and Employment Rameshwar Teli in a written reply to the Lok Sabha

Amitava Mukherjee takes additional charge as CMD NMDC Limited

Hyderabad, Mar 13:

Amitava Mukherjee, Director (Finance), takes additional charge as Chairman-Cum-Managing Director at NMDC Limited, India's largest producer of iron ore and a Navaratna CPSE under the Ministry of Steel.

He belongs to the 1995 Batch of Indian Railway Accounts Service (IRAS). He is also Cost Accountant and holds Master's Degree in Commerce from Guru Ghasidas Vishwavidyalaya, Bilaspur.

During his tenure as Director (Finance), NMDC recorded best ever financial performance in company history with a turnover of Rs 25,882 cr. Profit Before Tax (PBT) of Rs.12,981 cr and Profit



After Tax (PAT) of Rs.9,398 cr in FY22.

He has spearheaded implementation of ERP (S4/HANA), and has been driving other digitalization initiatives like Mine Transportation & Surveillance System, Fleet Management System. Under his stewardship the demerger of NMDC Steel Ltd from NMDC Ltd. was

completed in a time bound manner and shares of NSL were listed in stock exchange on 20.02.2023. Project Management, digital initiatives, and policy formulation are his forte. He has led the Australia operations of NMDC to pre-production stage (Gold) and also finalized a strategic tie up with a large international mining giant Hancock Prospect expeditiously, monetizing Iron Ore mining tenement. Prior to joining NMDC, he was General Manager (Finance) in Rail Vikas Nigam Limited (RVNL). During his service in IRAS from 1996-2016, he held key position in the Eastern Railways. Before joining IRAS, he worked in Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL) from 1994-1997.

LIC's debt exposure in Adani group cos dips marginally to Rs 6,183 crore

New Delhi, Mar 13:

LIC's debt exposure in Adani group companies fell marginally to Rs 6,183 crore as of March 5 from Rs 6,347 crore as of December 31, 2022, Parliament was informed on Monday.

In a written reply to the Lok Sabha, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said, "The Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) has informed that its debt exposure to Adani Group of Companies, was Rs 6,347.32 crore and Rs 6,182.64 crore, as on December 31, 2022, and March 5, 2023, respectively". LIC has a debt exposure of Rs 5,388.60 in Adani Ports and SEZ as of March 5.

LAKME FASHION WEEK



Actor Karishma Kapoor at Lakme Fashion Week, in Mumbai.

Market turmoil leaves investors poorer by more than Rs 4.4 lakh crore

New Delhi, Mar 13:

Domestic equity investors' wealth eroded by more than Rs 4.43 lakh crore on Monday as fears of a financial contagion triggered by one of the biggest bank failures in the US roiled market sentiments. After a strong opening, Indian stocks went into a tailspin with the benchmark 30-share BSE Sensex tumbling nearly 900 points to close at 58,237.85 points - sliding for the third straight trading session.

The NSE Nifty too de-

clined 258.60 points to end at 17,154.30 points. Reflecting the massive sell-off across sectors, the total market valuation of BSE-listed companies stood at Rs 2,58,56,295.60, leaving investors poorer by Rs 4,43,023.89 compared to the closing level on Friday. The total market valuation was at Rs 2,62,99,319.49 at the end of trading on Friday, when the key index had crashed more than 670 points. Out of the 3,757 stocks that traded on the BSE, as many as 2,915 closed in the red while 695 managed gains.

Sensex tanks nearly 900 points to close below 59k; Nifty tests 17,000

Mumbai, Mar 13:

Falling for the third straight session, equity benchmark Sensex tanked nearly 900 points to close below the 59,000 mark on Monday due to a massive sell-off in banking, finance and auto stocks amid one of the biggest US bank failures. Besides, unabated flight of foreign capital and a weak domestic currency amid global rate hike fears added to the gloom, traders said. After gaining 375 points in the early trade, the BSE Sensex could not hold to gains and declined 897.28 points or 1.52 per cent to settle at 58,237.85 as 29 of its constituents declined while only one advanced. During the day, it hit a low of 58,094.55 and a high of 59,510.92. The NSE Nifty



fell 258.60 points or 1.49 per cent to end at 17,154.30, with 45 of its scrips ending in the red. IndusInd Bank was the biggest loser in the Sensex pack, shedding 7.46 per cent, followed by SBI, Tata Motors, M&M, Bajaj Finserv, Axis Bank and Infosys. In contrast, Tech Mahindra was the only winner. In the broader market, the BSE small-cap gauge dipped 2.08 per cent and the midcap index declined 1.82 per cent. The US-based SVB Financials, which mainly funds startups, crashed 60 per cent in

the US market last week, triggering concerns over the health of banks' bond portfolios and its possible rippling effects globally. "...jitters over the largest US bank failure since the 2008 financial crisis, driving investors to the safe-haven asset," Navneet Damani, Senior VP - of Commodity Research at Motilal Oswal Financial Services, said. In Asian markets, Shanghai, Hong Kong and Seoul ended in the green, while Tokyo settled lower. European equity markets were trading with significant losses in the afternoon trade. Meanwhile, the rupee declined 10 paise to close at 82.16 against the US dollar on Monday. International oil benchmark Brent crude declined 1.79 per cent to USD 81.30 per barrel.

IDFC Mutual Fund rebrands to Bandhan Mutual Fund

Mumbai, Mar 12:

IDFC Mutual Fund adopted its new brand identity as Bandhan Mutual Fund on Monday, March 13, 2023. Consequently, each scheme of the fund house will be renamed to replace the word 'IDFC' with the word 'Bandhan'. Since the underlying investment strategy, processes, and team continue to remain the same, investors can benefit from the same high-quality investment approach that the fund house is reputed for.

Sharing more insights about the change in brand identity, Vishal Kapoor, CEO of the AMC said, "Our new name reflects our new sponsorship, and we are proud to now be a part of the Bandhan Group. Backed by the legacy, goodwill, and inclusive-



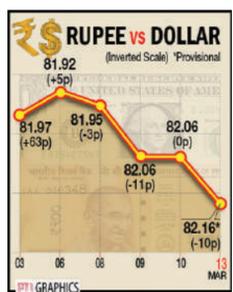
ness that our Sponsors represent, we are confident that our investors will continue to benefit from the same passion, expertise, and focus that they have experienced over the years. With a collective ambition of growing even faster, we are excited about the journey and opportunities that lie ahead. Our new brand identity is a testament to the universality of our commitment and the strength of our resolve to help every saver become an investor."

The fund house brings together a strong foundation in serving investors through a slew of well-defined products and a deep commitment to empowering communities.

Rupee falls 10 paise to close at 82.16 against US dollar

New Delhi, Mar 13:

The rupee pared its initial gains to settle 10 paise down at 82.16 (provisional) against the US dollar on Monday, tracking the weak sentiment in the domestic equity market and unabated foreign fund outflow. Traders said fall in crude oil price and weaker dollar against major currencies, however, restricted the fall of the Indian currency. At the interbank foreign exchange market, the local unit opened stronger at 81.78 against the American currency and touched a low of 82.20 during intra-day. It settled at 82.16 (provisional) against the greenback, registering a loss of 10 paise over its previous close of 82.06. Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength



against a basket of six currencies, fell 0.37 per cent to 104.19. Global oil benchmark Brent crude futures declined 1.72 per cent to USD 81.36 per barrel. On the domestic equity market front, the 30-share BSE Sensex declined 897.28 points or 1.52 per cent to end at 58,237.85, while the broader NSE Nifty fell 258.60 points or 1.49 per cent to 17,154.30.

RBI may hike benchmark lending rates by 25 bps in April policy: DBS Research

New Delhi, Mar 13:

The Reserve Bank is likely to hike benchmark lending rates by 25 basis points in its bi-monthly policy next month to bring down inflation within the central bank's comfort zone, DBS Group Research said on Monday. To contain the rising prices, the RBI has hiked interest rates by 250 basis points since May last year. The latest rate hike of 25 basis points in February took the benchmark policy rate to 6.50 per cent. In an online session on "Growth resilience and sticky inflation", DBS Group Research Executive Director & Senior Economist Radhika Rao said the RBI may hike interest rates by 25 basis points in April and maintain a hawkish bias as retail inflation is still high. Retail inflation in January spiked to 6.52 per cent against 5.72 per cent in December last year.

AI offers many opportunities, also raises concerns on privacy & fairness: CAG Murmu

Guwahati, Mar 13:

Comptroller and Auditor General Girish Chandra Murmu on Monday stressed on responsible use of artificial intelligence, saying while this emerging technology has the potential to contribute USD 15.7 trillion to the global economy by 2030, it also raises concerns related to privacy and fairness. In his opening remarks at the SAI20 Senior Officials' Meeting, the CAG also advocated the need for balance between short-term growth and long-term sustainability of the blue economy, as the blue economy can make all the difference to planet earth and sustenance thereon. SAI20 has chosen two themes representing new-age opportunities and con-



cerns - blue economy (sustainability aspect) and responsible AI (emerging technologies) - and emphasised the need for gender balance in blue economy and principles underlying responsible and ethical use of AI. As India holds the presidency of the G20, the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) is the chair for SAI20 - the engagement group of Supreme Audit Institutions (SAI) of the G20.



Deepshikha comes back strong after undergoing a major surgery

Deepshikha Nagpal is a versatile actress who has portrayed compelling characters in numerous films and serials. She has been a part of Indian Television Industry from a very long time. She currently plays the character of 'Satyavati Raichand' in Star Bharat's 'Na Umra Ki Seema Ho'. Deepshikha Nagpal, who fervently adores her profession, discloses that she recently underwent a major surgery.

She says, "Recently I got sick from food poisoning due to which I had a very bad stomach ache so I consulted a doctor where the doctor asked me to get it checked because the pain was persistent, so I underwent sonography and discovered I had cysts in my stomach. The size of the cysts was comparable to that of a 10-week pregnancy. The doctor advised me to get the cysts removed because they were serious and could complicate and worsen my health if they were left untreated. And since we had a major drama coming up in the show I was fully packed on my schedule so with-

out informing anyone I completed my parts and waited for my day off and then underwent the surgery to get the cyst removed."

She further adds, "After surgery, with the doctor's recommendations and consultation I took a few days off and bounced back to work where I completed the main drama for the forthcoming episode of the show. I also took proper rest in between. When the crew members came to know about my surgery they took complete care of me and the whole team were quite understanding and helpful. I am slowly recovering and for me as an actor, work is always a priority no matter what, so the show must go on, may what happen"

The current sequence of 'Na Umra Ki Seema Ho' has hooked the audience by its twists and turns where Dev and Vidhi have already begun a life together and the audience will witness a major drama in their life as Dev's past get unveiled in the upcoming sequence.

Stay tuned to witness the upcoming drama in 'Na Umra Ki Seema Ho', every Monday to Saturday at 8pm only on Star Bharat.

IIFA 2023: Hattrick for Gangubai Kathiawadi; Drishyam 2

The International Indian Film Academy and Awards (IIFA) returns with its 23rd edition to Yas Island, Abu Dhabi, on May 26th and 27th.

The countdown to the biggest celebration of Indian cinema has begun. With the International Indian Film Academy and Awards (IIFA) scheduled to take place at Yas Island, Abu Dhabi, on May 26th and 27th, 2023, the winners of the Technical Awards for the 23rd edition of IIFA have been announced. IIFA ROCKS will be hosted by producer-director Karan Johar and director-choreographer Farah Khan. There will be live performances by Amit Trivedi, Badshah, Sunidhi Chauhan, Nucleya, Mika Singh, and Sukhbir.

The 9 Categories of Technical Awards include Cinematography, Screenplay, Dialogue, Choreography, Sound Design, Editing, Special Effects (Visuals), Background Score and Sound Design. **Sanjay Leela Bhansali's Alia Bhatt starrer Gangubai Kathiawadi bags 3 Awards**

- Cinematography - Sudeep Chatterjee
- Screenplay- Sanjay Leela Bhansali, Utkarshini Vashishtha
- Dialogue- Utkarshini Vashishtha, Prakash Kapadia

Anees Bazmee's horror comedy, Bhool Bhulaiyaa 2, featuring Kartik Aaryan and



Kiara Advani, wins 2 Awards

- Choreography for title track - Bosco Caesar
- Sound Design - Mandar Kulkarni

Ajay Devgn's crime thriller Drishyam 2 - 1 Award

- Editing - Sandeep Francis Ranbir Kapoor and Alia

Shiva - 1 Award

- Special Effects (Visual) - DNEG, Redefine

Hrithik Roshan and Saif Ali Khan's Vikram Vedha - 1 Award

- Background Score - Sam CS

Rajkumar Rao, Huma Qureshi, Radhika Apte starrer Monica O My Darling - 1 Award

- Sound Mixing - Gunjan A Sah, Boloy Kumar Doloi, Rahul Karpe

The global IIFA AWARDS will be hosted by Vicky Kaushal, and Abhishek Bachchan. The IIFA magic will escalate with live performances by Bollywood A-listers like Salman Khan, Varun Dhawan, Jacqueline Fernandez, Rakul Preet Singh, Nora Fatehi, and many more.

Hrithik mania hits Japan



barriers of language and boundaries, the Hrithik Roshan starrer has found its audience in Japan, as the film is inundated with abundant love for Bang Bang.

Recently a video of a Japanese duo recreating the iconic chartbuster 'Tu Meri' from Bang Bang surfaced on the internet, followed by a huge number of social media reels on 'Tu Meri' as well as 'Uff' from the film. In fact, the viral fever caught on to the Indian audience too, which is evident through the numerous reels on social media, grooving to the song 'Uff' including various TV actors and influencers.

Hrithik Roshan's superstardom has been unparalleled ever since his debut, continuing to rule the audience across the globe. The latest testimony of his unfathomable fan base could be witnessed with audience connecting & being thoroughly entertained with the release of Bang Bang in Japan.

Currently, on the workfront, Hrithik Roshan is gearing for Fighter, which marks his third collaboration with Siddharth Anand after the success of Bang Bang and War.

Heartwarming fan moments!

The undying love of a fan makes an artist into a household name. And often, meeting fans makes a lifetime memory that the artists cherish. During their recent outstation visit, &TV lead actors Kamna Pathak, Rajesh Singh from Happu Ki Ultan Paltan, and Vidisha Srivastava, Anita Bhabi from Bhabiji Ghar Par Hai shared heart-warming moments with their fans. And this is what they had to say about it. Kamna Pathak, essaying Rajesh Singh, shares, "For every actor, there is a fan. And these fans make the actor a household name. I feel that an artist is successful when people start recognising them by their character. It makes me happy when people call me Rajesh or, at times, Dabbang Dulhania. My show, Happu Ki Ultan Paltan, has given me a lot. But I will forever be thankful for the fan following I enjoy because of this show. Whenever I go out, and somebody calls me by my character name, I feel the happiest. The amount of love our fans show us is



unmatchable, and sometimes their gestures make me emotional and memorable. Like recently, I visited my hometown of Indore, as I had come to seek blessings from Mahakal in Ujjain during Mahashivratri. While exploring the famous Sarafa Bazaar, many kids approached me, addressing me as Rajesh. They also asked me, 'Happu Ji kahan hai?' I replied, "Happu ji nyochar lene mein busy hai" (laughs)". Also, during that trip, I met two ladies who came and hugged me tightly, and one of them asked me, 'Yeh 9

bacchon ko kaise sambhal leti hai aap? Humse toh two nahi sambhale jaate, which was very amusing. Even during my Mahakal darshan, our pandit ji called me Rajesh instead of Kamna, which was overwhelming and made me feel quite accomplished. People recognising you as your character in your hometown are very special. I could not be more grateful for the love and appreciation I received from Indorians and people from Ujjain as Rajesh."

Vidisha Srivastava, essaying Anita Bhabi, says,

"Fans are an integral part of every actor's life as they are the ones to make us or break us. It is because of them that we are who we are today. They have different methods of showing love, giving feedback, and reviewing. One such fan moment I vividly remember from my recent Varanasi visit is that of a newly married couple preparing for Ganga Aarti at Dashashwamedh Ghat. The bride saw me and immediately came running towards me with the groom and asked me to bless them on their most memorable day. More than them, I was surprised and touched by that gesture. For a moment, I felt like a guest at their wedding. The newlywed couple was happiest taking pictures with me, and I was no different. I also visited my old house at Kabir Chaura and was delighted to see some of my old neighbours and little kids calling me Anita Bhabi. Honestly, such moments are extraordinary in an actor's life. I feel so fortunate to receive such love and appreciation for my work."

'Bade Acche Lagte Hain 2' takes a 3-year leap

With the 20-year leap, Sony Entertainment Television's most adored show, 'Bade Acche Lagte Hain 2' has garnered massive fan adulation for its fresh perspective of one-sided love in new-age relationships. Layered with relatable issues like class divide and a battle for acceptance, this narrative is brought alive by well-known television actors, Niti Taylor, Pooja Banerjee, Ranndeeep R Rai and Leenesh Mattoo who have impressed the audience with their portrayal of Prachi, Pihu, Raghav and Angad respectively.

So far, viewers have witnessed Raghav's one-sided love for Prachi, but he can't profess his love since he believes she is out of his league and because of his loyalty to LK (Hitesh Tejwani). Simultaneously, Josh has created a misunderstanding between the Kapoor family and Raghav that has landed him trouble with LK asking him to leave the Kapoor Mansion.

The story now moves forward 3 years where



Raghav will be seen as a successful architect with only Pihu and Angad supporting him through these years. His character is sure to see pivotal changes that promises to bring forth an intriguing twist in the tale. Elaborating more on the same Ranndeeep shares, "When someone is deeply hurt, it moulds them into a different personality - making them more cynical towards the world in an effort to protect themselves. I've also gone through a phase where I thought it's better to be alone, than to get hurt - as is Raghav."

'Baalveer' to weave magic once again

Sony SAB is set to bring back its highly popular franchise series, which has captured the hearts of Indian audiences. The new season promises to be an epic adventure that will feature action, drama, and lots of magic. Dev Joshi, who has become synonymous with the titular character, will be reprising his role. The actor has played the character of Baalveer in both the original show and its follow-up series, Baalveer Returns. Sony SAB aims to continue producing family-friendly content that appeals to everyone in the household with the return of Baalveer.



year-old superhero who faces a challenging situation. In the past seasons,



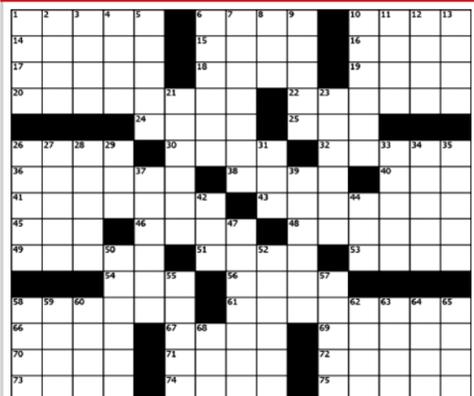
Baalveer has been on a mission to help and rescue people in need. However, this time the show will be pegged on his own journey - his fall and rise, how he gets his lost powers back in addition to helping the needy. Baalveer is stripped of his powers magic and memories, and he is sent to live with a regular family as Veer. The season centers on Baalveer's

quest to reclaim his identity. The beloved superhero must once again rise to the occasion and become the ultimate hero, and viewers will have the opportunity to witness his journey.

Dev Joshi, who is set to don the mantle of Baalveer once again, says, "The new season promises to be filled with thrilling action, engaging drama, and of course, lots of magic. I have grown up playing this role and it has now become a part of me. It's been a long and fulfilling journey and I feel a strong connection to the character and the show. I cherish the invaluable experiences and memories that I have gained from it."

CROSSWORD

586



ACROSS

- Notches
- Fruit drinks
- Tibetan priest
- Subject
- Profound
- Heroic
- Foolish
- Tortoise's opponent
- Gull's kin
- Gave in
- Main dish

DOWN

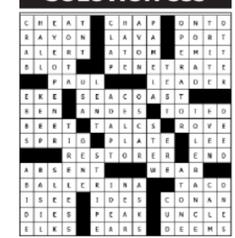
- Canvas cover
- Poor mark
- Probabilities
- Vegetarian's taboo
- Comprehend
- Athens' country
- Valley (vineyard site)
- Bullring cry
- Free tree
- Person on a pension
- Chow down
- Recipe instruction

- Tidier
- Brainy
- Desk light
- Siestas
- Museum offering
- Adjacent
- Walk cautiously
- Allot
- Correct copy
- Pleasing
- Stately home
- Auction off
- Forest plant
- Zeal
- "A ___ of Two Cities"
- Large bodies of water
- Cozy retreats

DOWN

- Agitated
- Unescorted
- Milky stone
- Fork point
- Odor
- Stick fast
- Without expression
- Poet's eternity
- Swiftness
- Mailbox item
- Copier
- Marsh
- Skin woe
- Least wild
- Deny
- Monsters
- Nighttime vision
- River mouth

SOLUTION 585



India win Border-Gavaskar Trophy for 4th consecutive time

Ahmedabad, Mar 13 (PTI):

On an uneventful day of cricket, India qualified for the World Test Championship (WTC) final and clinched the Border-Gavaskar Trophy for the fourth successive time after the fourth and final match against Australia ended in a draw, here on Monday.

India's spot in the WTC final against Australia was locked before the post-lunch session when Sri Lanka lost the Christchurch Test to New Zealand by two wickets as Kane Williamson's magnificent hundred steered his side to one of the most thrilling wins in Test cricket.

Australia were 175 for 2 in 78.1 overs in their second innings with a lead of 84 runs when the two



Indian cricketers pose for photos with the trophy after the end of the fourth test cricket match between India and Australia, at Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad, Monday.

teams agreed to settle for a draw.

India have now beaten Australia by an identical 2-

1 margin in the last four series - 2017 (home), 2018-19 (away), 2020-21 (away) and now 2023 at home.

It was a 'Memorable Monday' for India as a country in both performing arts and sports with

'RRR's song 'Natu Natu' getting the Oscar for the best song and Elephant Whisperers winning the Best Documentary Award'.

By the afternoon, cricket added to the list of global accomplishments and now Rohit Sharma would love to break the decade-long ICC Trophy jinx.

With a featherbed of a track on offer, which former Australian opener Mark Waugh sarcastically said can host a "22-day Test match", an outcome favouring either side was almost impossible, with only two completed innings in four days.

For Australia, it was important that their batters made the best use of the flat surface without being under pressure as they had already qualified for the WTC final.

Dravid on playing WTC final right after IPL

'It is going to be a challenge'

Ahmedabad, Mar 13 (PTI):

Playing the World Test Championship (WTC) final against Australia within one week of the IPL's conclusion is going to be a huge challenge, India head coach Rahul Dravid said on Monday.

Termining it a "challenge", the Indian head coach said they would have to plan it out properly.

"We just qualified at lunchtime today. I wasn't counting my chickens before they hatched. We'll celebrate this for starters," Dravid said after the Test match.

"It is going to be a challenge. There's going to be a lot of logistics involved given the IPL final is only a week before the WTC final. We'll think about it."

The WTC final will be played at The Oval in London from June 7-11,



while the IPL ends on June 1.

Regarding the Test series against Australia, Dravid was most impressed by the Indian team's ability to fight back from extremely difficult situations.

"Whenever we were under pressure with our backs to the wall we had to respond and we always found that. It's one of the heartening things about

coaching this team," Dravid told the official broadcaster Star Sports.

"Rohit led the way in the first Test with a brilliant hundred and it was book-ended by Virat Kohli's brilliant 186. In the middle we had performances from (Ravichandran) Ashwin, (Ravindra) Jadeja, Axar (Patel), Shubman there. I've probably missed out a few. I think our fight stood out."

'Not in a space where I'll go out and prove someone wrong'



Ahmedabad, Mar 13 (PTI):

Indian star batter Virat Kohli, who ended his century drought in Tests with a patient 186 against Australia here, on Monday said he's not in a "space where I will go out and prove someone wrong".

Kohli endured a painful wait of more than three years to notch his Test century number 28, the knock helping India finish with

571 in reply to Australia's 480 in the drawn fourth and final game. "The expectations that I have for myself as a player are more important to me," Kohli told the official broadcasters after being adjudged Player of the Match. "I am not in a space now where I will go out and prove someone wrong. I also need to justify why I am there on the field," Kohli, who now has 75 international centuries, said.

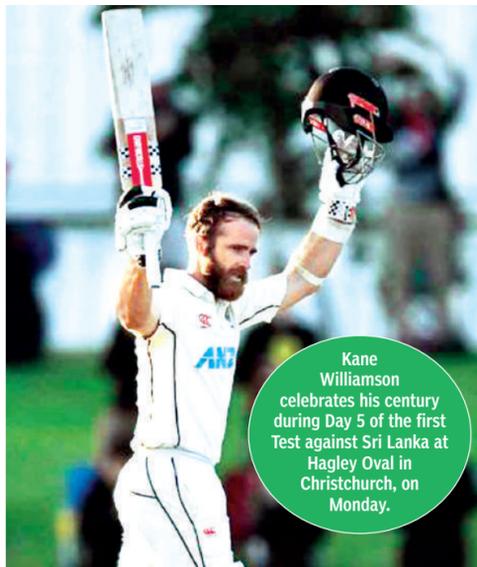
New Zealand beats Lanka on last ball of 1st cricket Test

Christchurch, Mar 13 (AP):

Kane Williamson and Neil Wagner stole a bye from the last ball of the first cricket Test Monday to beat Sri Lanka by two wickets and emphasize New Zealand's aptitude for extraordinary Test match victories.

Only two weeks after New Zealand beat England by a single run at the Basin Reserve, the Black Caps again played a part in one of the most incredible finishes in Test match history.

Rain seemed to have wrecked the final day of the match in Christchurch when it prevented play in the scheduled first two sessions. When it cleared the umpires announced a single extended session in which New Zealand needed 257 runs to win and Sri Lanka needed nine wickets. A winning result



Kane Williamson celebrates his century during Day 5 of the first Test against Sri Lanka at Hagley Oval in Christchurch, on Monday.

seemed impossible though the session was extended to at least 52 overs and

more than 3-1/2 hours. In what turned into a 50-overs match, then a 20-

overs match, Williamson made an unbeaten 121 to guide New Zealand to a narrow victory.

A limpid rainbow hung over Hagley Park as the players came out in the late afternoon to play out the last chapter of an absorbing match. The Sri Lanka fielders were shielding their eyes against the setting sun as the last overs were bowled and darkness engulfed the ground just as the players left the field.

New Zealand needed 131 runs off the last 20 overs, then 101 off the last 15 with Williamson steering the innings. Williamson had support from Daryl Mitchell, who made 102 in the first innings and produced another crucial innings of 81 on Monday, accelerating New Zealand's scoring rate. When he was out New Zealand still needed 53 to win.

Brook beats Jadeja to ICC player of month award

Dubai, Mar 13 (PTI):

England's Harry Brook on Monday overcame India's Ravindra Jadeja and Gudakesh Motie of the West Indies to win the ICC player of the month award for February with Australian Ashleigh Gardner claiming the top prize in the women's section.

Brook bagged his second player of the month award after his exploits in New Zealand Test series, becoming only the second man to win it on two separate occasions along with Babar Azam of Pakistan.

Gardner won the honour following Australia's successful ICC women's T20 World Cup campaign recently. Gardner has also won it two times now, after winning one last December. The outcomes of the ICC



Player of the Month Awards for February replicate the results of December 2022, where both claimed their maiden awards following prolific months for their respective teams in short and long formats of the game, the ICC said in a release. Gardner was crowned after a series of outstanding performances inspired Australia's successful defence of their Women's T20 World Cup crown in South Africa.

'Jadeja will be Chennai Super Kings' X factor in IPL 2023'

Mumbai, Mar 13, (PTI):

Former India and Chennai Super Kings cricketer Harbhajan Singh feels that star all-rounder Ravindra Jadeja will be the X factor for the four-time champions in the upcoming edition of the Indian Premier League.

Jadeja has made a successful return to top-flight cricket after spending several months away due to a knee surgery, playing a vital role in India's 2-1 win in the four-Test series against Australia in the Border-Gavaskar Trophy 2022-23.

The veteran all-rounder will once again be playing



a key role for CSK after a rocky season last year, when he was named the captain with the regular leader for many years, MS Dhoni, stepping down.

But the captaincy stint didn't go well for Jadeja, who has played for Chennai since 2012. The team lost six out of the first eight matches and Jadeja stepped down from

the post, with Dhoni taking over the leadership role once again, which he will continue with in the 2023 IPL.

The IPL 2023 starts on March 31 with Chennai Super Kings slated to face the defending champions Gujarat Titans in the opening match.

Harbhajan told, "The one person who everyone should keep an eye on is Ravindra Jadeja, especially how he bats for CSK. He may be promoted up the order plus he has his four overs. If you look at it from a world cricket perspective, I don't think there's a better all-rounder than him."

Pak rests Babar, Shaheen for T20I series against Afghanistan

Lahore, Mar 13 (PTI)

Senior Pakistan cricketers, including captain Babar Azam and pace spearhead Shaheen Shah Afridi, have been rested for the three-match T20I series against Afghanistan, beginning in Sharjah on March 24.

The Pakistan Cricket Board's (PCB) national selection committee has also not included opener Muhammad Rizwan, Haris Rauf and veteran batter Fakhar Zaman in the squad to be led by all-rounder Shadab Khan.

Four new faces -- fast bowlers Ihsanullah, Zaman Khan and batters Tayyab Tahir and Saim Ayub -- have been included along with sidelined players Azam Khan, Faheem Ashraf and Imad Wasim. "I have spo-

Pakistan squad

Shadab Khan (C), Abdullah Shafique, Azam Khan, Faheem Ashraf, Iftikhar Ahmed, Ihsanullah, Imad Wasim, Muhammad Haris, Muhammad Nawaz, Muhammad Wasim jr, Naseem Shah, Saim Ayub, Shan Masood, Tayyab Tahir, Zaman Khan.

ken to Babar, Rizwan, Haris, Shaheen and Fakhar and taken them into confidence about the fact that we are using this series as a testing ground to try out new players and recall some of those who have performed well in the PSL (Pakistan Super League)," said chairman of the PCB management committee Najam Sethi on Monday.

Lineker to be back on air as BBC apologises for disruption

London, Mar 13 (PTI)

England football legend Gary Lineker said on Monday that he would return to host his flagship Match of the Day BBC show after the broadcaster apologised for days of disruption of his sports coverage due to a Twitter post row.

The BBC has also announced an independent review into its social media usage guidelines after Lineker's tweet criticising the government's migration policy triggered a near revolt in the ranks.

After the former England football team captain and TV personality was asked to step back,



several of his colleagues also refused to present their shows in solidarity.

"Everyone recognises this has been a difficult period for staff, contributors,

presenters and, most importantly, our audiences," said BBC Director-General Tim Davie.

"I apologise for this," he said, adding that the "potential confusion" caused by the grey areas of the BBC's social media guidance that was introduced in 2020 is recognised.

"Accordingly, we are announcing a review led by an independent expert reporting to the BBC on its existing social media guidance, with a particular focus on how it applies to freelancers outside news and current affairs." Lineker said he backs the review announced by the BBC and is looking forward to getting back on air.

'Saika Ishaque knows her game very well'

Mumbai, Mar 13 (PTI):

UP Warriorz and England left-arm spinner Sophie Ecclestone has heaped praise on uncapped India and Mumbai Indians tweeker Saika Ishaque, who has lit up the Women's Premier League with 12 wickets in only four matches, saying she knows her game very well.

Ishaque led Mumbai Indians to a big win on Sunday night against UP Warriorz, after the opposition threatened to run away with the game, taking 3/33 to take her wickets tally far ahead of any of her peers in the league.

World No. 1 ODI bowler, Ecclestone, who is behind the Indian left-arm spinner Ishaque with eight wickets in four matches of WPL, is all praise for her opponent. "She is doing great, she has been around for a lot of years and

played a lot of cricket. She knows her game so well and she got along with us during the game and it has been very exciting for her," Ecclestone told PTI during an exclusive interview on Monday.

The England spinner, who has so far played 70 T20Is, 55 ODIs and five Tests for her country, says her side UP Warriorz have plenty of room for improvement after a mixed start two wins and two losses from four matches to the WPL. "I think the feeling about it is that it has been scratchy in all our games. There is still a lot to improve in this group. We have not bowled our best yet and that is definitely a place where we can improve and hopefully in the next few games we start peaking at the right time in the competition," she said.

I can't be thankful enough to Nat Sciver-Brunt: Harmanpreet

Mumbai, Mar 13 (PTI):

For a moment it looked like England cricketer Nat Sciver-Brunt and her Mumbai Indians captain Harmanpreet Kaur were playing a game of one-upmanship in their Women's Premier League match against UP Warriorz here on Sunday.

The veteran players came to the crease at a juncture when anything could have gone wrong in the chase of a competitive 159 set by the UP side. Yastika Bhatia and Hayley Matthews had just departed one after the other and, at 58/2, things looked far from rosy, with two new batters at the crease.

The game of who will hit more boundaries started, and by the time the match ended, Harmanpreet had smashed nine fours and a

maximum, while Nat Sciver-Brunt had clobbered six boundaries and a six.

The two remained unbeaten at 53 and 45 respectively and their unbroken partnership fetched 106 runs as MI won by eight wickets.

Harmanpreet complimented Nat Sciver-Brunt for the way she made the competitive target look easy. "Thanks to Nat, she played really well. I got time to settle in. We were calculating (the scoring rate) very well. That time (UP Warriorz bowlers) Sophie (Ecclestone) and (Shabnim) Ismail were bowling well so we were calculating that there are other bowlers we can attack," Harmanpreet said after the match.

"Very happy with the performance. I can't be thankful enough, the way we are

playing and we are gelling together. This is the best tournament so far," added the MI skipper.

Harmanpreet conceded that the way Warriorz skipper Alyssa Healy (58) and Tahlia McGrath (50) were batting in the first innings, it put her team under pressure. But with Grace Harris not in the UP Warriorz playing XI on Sunday due to illness, it gave MI hope that they would be able to restrict their opponents to a reasonable total.

"The way they (Healy and McGrath) were batting, we were a little tense. But I knew that if we are able to take one or two wickets, we could stop them, because we knew (Grace) Harris was not playing and they didn't have anyone who could hit hard," said Harmanpreet, explaining the strategy.

Barcelona beats Bilbao amid more refereeing controversy

Madrid, Mar 13 (AP)

Still mired in controversy over its payments to the company of a former refereeing committee official, Barcelona restored its lead over Real Madrid to nine points in the Spanish league on Sunday after a late VAR decision went its way.

Barcelona beat Athletic Bilbao 1-0 after video review disallowed an 87th-minute goal by Bilbao forward Iaki Williams for a handball in the buildup. VAR also was used to confirm Barcelona's winning goal by Raphinha after it was initially disallowed for offside.

"I thought they were looking at offside, but then I saw it on the video board, and I think it was a handball," Barcelona coach Xavi said.

Indian shuttlers face uphill task in quest for All England glory

Birmingham, Mar 13 (PTI):

Returning from injuries and battling indifferent form, Indian shuttlers will have to play out of their skins to end the country's agonising wait for a title at the All England Championships beginning here on Tuesday.

It has been 22 years since India won the coveted title when Pullela Gopichand (2001) followed the legendary Prakash Padukone (1980) to achieve the honour.

While Lakshya Sen came close to securing the crown when he reached the final in the last edition and Saina Nehwal was runners-up in the 2015 edition, other Indians, including two-time Olympic medalist PV Sindhu, couldn't go beyond

the last-four in the prestigious event. This time around, things will only be tougher as both Sen and Sindhu, since returning from a long injury lay-off, had subdued starts to the new season, having made early exits in Malaysia and India Open. World No. 12 Sen is coming into the event after a shock loss to world No. 41 Christo Popov of France in the first round of German Open, while Sindhu, in a desperate measure, has parted ways with Korea's Park Tae-sang a few weeks ahead of the event. Sen will face "Mr. Consistent" Chou Tien Chen of Chinese Taipei, seeded fifth, while Sindhu will be up against tricky Chinese Zhang Yi Man, who has a 1-1 record against her.

Congress writes to LS speaker seeking expunction of remarks made by Rajnath, Joshi

New Delhi, Mar 13 (PTI):

Senior Congress leader Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury wrote to Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla on Monday, demanding that certain remarks of Union ministers Rajnath Singh and Pralhad Joshi seeking Rahul Gandhi's apology over his "democracy under attack" comments be expunged.

In a letter to the speaker, the leader of the Congress in the Lok Sabha said during the Question Hour, Defence Minister Singh made certain comments on Gandhi with regard to speeches delivered by the Congress leader in the United Kingdom recently.

"Minister of Parliamentary Affairs (Joshi) also made remarks

on the above issue. The remarks made by the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs were not in good taste and were unparliamentary," Chowdhury said.

He cited Rule 352, which provides that a member, while speaking, shall not make a personal reference by way of levelling an allegation, imputing a motive to or questioning the bona fide of any other member of the House.

"Rule 353 also states that no allegation of a defamatory or incriminating nature shall be made unless the member has given adequate notice to the speaker. Moreover, 357 provides that the speaker shall allow a member to make a personal explanation if something has been al-



Congress MP Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury and DMK MP TR Bazu speak to the media at Parliament House complex during Budget Session, in New Delhi, Monday.

leged against him," the Congress leader said.

"Today, both the ministers made unsubstantiated remarks against our leader without a prior notice and no opportunity was accorded to the mem-

bers of his party to refute the allegations," he added.

Chowdhury requested Birla to expunge the statements of Singh and Joshi.

After the obituary references in the House, Deputy Leader of the Lok

Sabha Singh stood up and accused Gandhi of trying to defame India in London through his remarks on Indian democracy.

He also told the speaker that the House should condemn Gandhi's remarks and the Congress leader should be directed to tender an apology. "I appeal to you for condemnation of Rahul Gandhi's remarks by this House. You should also direct him to tender an apology in this House for his comments," Singh said.

Joshi asked where was democracy when fundamental rights were "trampled" during the Emergency or when an ordinance duly approved by the Union Cabinet was torn (by Gandhi during the days of the previous Congress-

led UPA government).

He condemned Gandhi for "seeking the intervention of foreign powers like the United States and Europe". "If he has some shame, he should come to this House and tender an apology. This is our demand," the parliamentary affairs minister said.

He said India is the mother of democracy and Gandhi allegedly cast aspersions on the speaker and the chair of the House on foreign soil. "Rahul Gandhi accused the speaker... But his microphone was on. He was given enough opportunity to speak and he spoke in the House freely," Joshi said. On his part, Birla said democracy in India is strong and getting stronger.

SC seeks status report on probe

◆ Murder of receptionist in Uttarakhand resort

New Delhi, Mar 13 (PTI):

The Supreme Court on Monday asked the Uttarakhand government to file a status report on the investigation carried out in the murder of a 19-year-old woman, who worked as a receptionist in a resort owned

by the son of a now sacked BJP leader near Rishikesh. A bench of Justices KM Joseph and BV Nagarathna, which was hearing a plea filed by a journalist and family members of Anika Bhandari, the deceased, seeking a CBI probe in the case, asked Deputy Advocate General Jatinder Kumar Sethi to file a status report with regard to the investigation conducted so far.

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Tejashwi alleges sisters' jewellery was taken off and shown as recovery by ED

Patna, March 13 (PTI):

Bihar Deputy Chief Minister Tejashwi Yadav on Monday alleged that the Enforcement Directorate had finished its raid at his Delhi house last week "in half an hour" but its officials stayed on at his hours awaiting "clearance from above".

Talking to reporters outside the state assembly, Yadav also rubbished the ED's claim of detecting proceeds of crime amounting to Rs 600 crore



and alleged that "used sisters and their in-laws jewellery" of his married was photographed and

shown as "recovery". "Be it Union Home Minister Amit Shah or anybody else, the director who repeats the same script for these agencies must now be changed", the RJD leader said mockingly.

"We are not, like the BJP-RSS, students of entire political science. We are practitioners of real politics and have the conviction and public support to take them on. But they are scared and are trying to run away from the political battle", added Yadav.

Tourism Ministry has no roadmap to leverage G20 opportunity, promote tourism, increase forex: Parl panel

New Delhi, Mar 13 (PTI):

A parliamentary standing committee has rued the lack of a clear roadmap from the Tourism Ministry to leverage the opportunity presented to the country in view of its presidency of the G20 to increase tourist footfalls. The report of the Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Transport, Tourism and Culture, which was submitted on Monday, stated the ministry should have also set aside a budget for promotional activities for G20.

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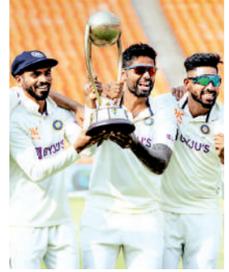
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BRIEF



A Boy touches the flowers of a Almond tree in full bloom to mark the arrival of the spring in the Valley, in Pulwama, South Kashmir, Monday.

DRDO projects

New Delhi: Twenty-three of the 55 high-priority projects being implemented by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) could not meet their respective deadlines, the government informed Parliament on Monday. The projects included developing anti-air field weapons, surface-to-air missiles, anti-ship missiles, long-range radars, combat vehicles, combat suits for submarines and submarine periscopes, among others.

YouTuber arrested

Guwahati: A person has been arrested in Assam's Kokrajhar district for allegedly offering to sell parakeets on his YouTube channel, a forest official said on Monday. He was apprehended by Gossaigaon Police and later handed over to the Forest department, he said. Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) of Kachugaon, Bhanu Sinha, told PTI that the accused, Jahidul Islam, was arrested on the basis of a complaint by People for Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA).

Major fire

Mumbai: A major fire broke out in slums in suburban Malad on Monday afternoon, but no casualty was reported, a Fire Brigade official said. The level 3 (major) fire engulfed slums located in the Appa Pada locality and efforts were on to douse the flames, he said. Smoke billowing out of the area could be seen from several kilometres away. According to the official, fire tenders, jumbo water tankers and other equipment were engaged in controlling the blaze. An ambulance has been also stationed at the site.

NCPCR summon

New Delhi: The apex child rights body NCPCR has summoned MCD Commissioner Gyanesh Bhatti and sought an action taken report from him over the death of two siblings reportedly by stray dogs in south-west Delhi's Vasant Kunj area. Two children, aged seven and five, were mauled to death by stray dogs in a forest area in Ruchi Vihar in separate incidents over two days, according to media reports. The police have said they have written to the MCD to take appropriate measures to curb the dog menace.

Weather
High 34 Low 16

MARKET
NIFTY 17,154.30
SENSEX 58,237.85

BULLION
GOLD 57,421
SILVER 66,172

Twin Oscar wins for India

'Naatu Naatu', The Elephant Whisperers' script history

New Delhi, Mar 13 (PTI)

"Naatu Naatu", the irrepressible, fun number from the film "RRR", and documentary short "The Elephant Whisperers" made Oscar history for India on Monday with one Academy Award each, the two wins showcasing cinema beyond Bollywood and the growing might of the Indian non-feature segment.

This is the first time two India-made productions have bagged the cinema world's biggest prize. Dancers took over the stage at Los Angeles' Dolby Theatre, recreating the hugely popular hook steps from the four-minute Telugu track, and actor Deepika Padukone introduced the song to loud cheers.

The win for "Naatu Naatu", "Naacho Naacho" in Hindi, composed by M M Keeravaani and penned by Chandrabose in S S Rajamouli's blockbuster film, is the fourth non-English song to win an Oscar in the category and the first song in foreign language since "Jai Ho" in 2009 to bag the prize. "Naatu Naatu" is as



Music composer M.M. Keeravaani and lyricist Chandrabose after receiving the award for best original song for 'Naatu Naatu' from film 'RRR' at the Oscars 2023.



Guneet Monga accepts the award for best documentary short film for "The Elephant Whisperer" at the Oscars on Sunday, March 12, 2023, at the Dolby Theatre in Los Angeles.

much a jubilant chorus as was "Jai Ho", the foot-tapping number by A R Rahman and Gulzar from the British film "Slumdog Millionaire".

As news of the Oscar win came in, "Naatu Naatu" was the buzz term for the day. Congratulating the team for the prestigious honour, the prime minister said on Twitter, "Exceptional! The popularity of Naatu Naatu is glob-

al. It will be a song that will be remembered for years to come... India is elated and proud. #Oscars." "Congratulations to @EarthSpectrum, @guneetm and the entire team of The Elephant Whisperers' for this honour. Their work wonderfully highlights the importance of sustainable development and living in harmony with nature. #Oscars," he added.

Govt on Korwa plan

'AK-203 rifles in manufacturing, testing stage'

New Delhi, Mar 13 (PTI)

Kalashnikov AK-203 rifles for Indian armed forces are currently under manufacturing and testing stage at an Indo-Russian joint venture at Korwa in Uttar Pradesh, the government has said.

Minister of State for Defence Ajay Bhatt, in a written reply to a question in Rajya Sabha, said the Indo-Russian Rifles Private Ltd (IRRPL) has established all facilities to commence production of the indigenous assault rifles.

"Indo-Russian Rifles Private Limited (IRRPL) is a joint venture company established for indigenous production of AK-203 Rifles. IRRPL has established all facilities to commence production of indigenous assault rifles at Korwa, Uttar

Pradesh," Bhatt had said last month. "The rifles are currently under manufacturing and testing stage," he said. Bhatt said indigenisation of AK-203 rifles will lead to self sufficiency in respect of assault rifles for Indian defence forces.

The indigenous defence projects listed by Bhatt included 155mm Artillery Gun system 'Dhanush', Light Combat Aircraft Tejas, surface-to air missile system 'Akash', main battle tank 'Arjun', T-90 tank, T-72 tank, Cheetah helicopter and Advanced Light Helicopter Dornier Do-228.

Bhatt said various policy initiatives to encourage indigenous design, development and manufacture of defence equipment in the country are aimed at reducing dependency on imports in the long run.

NIA raids house of suspected Islamic State operative

New Delhi, Mar 13 (PTI)

National Investigation Agency on Monday raided the house of a suspected Islamic State operative here as part of an investigation in a case related to activities of some individuals from Kerala linked to the global terror group, an official said.

The house of Uzair Azhar Bhat, who is suspected to have been part of the Kerala module of the Islamic State - also known as ISIS - was raided at the Karfali Mohalla locality in downtown city, a spokesperson of the federal anti-terror agency said.

The official said digital devices seized from the house during the search are being examined and further investigations are in progress.

In 2021, the NIA had started probe into Mohammed Ameen alias "Abu Yahya" of Kadannamanna, Kerala, who had been running various Islamic State propaganda channels on different social media platforms.

Parl panel recommends resumption of senior citizen concession in rail fare

New Delhi, Mar 13 (PTI)

A parliamentary standing committee has recommended the resumption of the fare concession offered to senior citizens by the railways before the coronavirus pandemic.

The Indian Railways used to offer a 40 per cent discount in fares to males aged 60 years or above and for females, a 50 per cent discount was given if the minimum age was 58 years.

These concessions were granted in fares of all classes of Mail/Express/Rajdhani/Shatabdi/Duranto group of trains but were withdrawn on March 20, 2020.

The Standing Committee on Railways

headed by BJP MP Radha Mohan Singh made the recommendation in its report on the demand for grants which was tabled in both Houses of Parliament on Monday. It had made the same recommendation in a previous report.

The Committee said that from the information furnished by the Railways, the Covid situation has now been normalised and the national transporter has achieved normal growth.

"The Committee, in their 12th Action Taken Report (17th Lok Sabha) on Passenger Reservation System had also desired that the concessions to senior citizens which were available in pre-Covid times may be reviewed

and considered at least in Sleeper Class and 3A Class so that the vulnerable and genuinely needy citizens could avail the facility in these classes.

"The Committee, therefore, reiterate their earlier recommendation contained in their above-said report and urge upon the Railways to consider empathically for resumption of concessions in fares to senior citizens particularly in Sleeper Class and 3A Class under intimation to this Committee," the report said.

The Railways, however, said that it had no immediate plans to resume the concession. It maintained that already giving 50-55 per cent concession was being to all passengers.

Cong chief alleges misappropriation of DMF fund in Kondagaon

Govt assures to launch probe

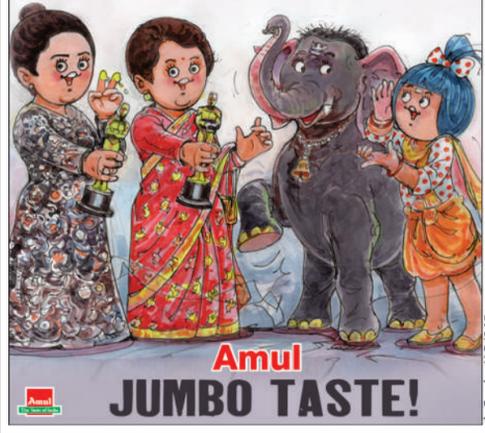
Raipur, Mar 13:

Chhattisgarh Congress chief and MLA Mohan Markam on Monday alleged misappropriation of funds in works sanctioned under the District Mineral Foundation (DMF) in the state's Kondagaon district and demanded a probe.

After Markam raised the issue, state Panchayat

and Rural Development Minister Ravindra Choubey assured the matter will be probed by a state-level officer and action will be taken within a month. Speaking during Question Hour, Markam asked about the number of works sanctioned by the district construction committee to the Rural Engineering Service (RES) division in Kondagaon in the last two financial years as well in the current fiscal till January 31.

HAATHI MERE SAATHI!



SC refers pleas for legal validation of same-sex marriages to five-judge constitution bench

New Delhi, Mar 13 (PTI):

The Supreme Court on Monday referred the pleas seeking legal validation of same-sex marriages to a five-judge constitution bench for adjudication, saying it is a "very seminal issue".

A bench headed by Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud said the submissions on the issue involve an interplay between constitutional rights on the one hand and special legislative enactments, including the Special Marriage Act, on the other.

The Centre has opposed in the top court a batch of petitions seeking legal validation of same-sex marriages, claiming they will cause a "complete havoc" with the delicate balance of



personal laws and accepted societal values. The bench, also comprising Justices PS Narasimha and JB Pardiwala, said this is a matter which is important enough to be decided by a constitution bench of five-judges. "Having due regard to the broader context of the petitions before this court, the inter-relationship between the statutory regime and constitutional rights, we are of the considered view that it would be appropriate if the issues

Not interfering in personal lives of citizens but institution of marriage matter of policy: Rijju

New Delhi: A day after the Centre opposed in the Supreme Court legal validation of same-sex marriage, Law Minister Kiren Rijju on Monday said the government does not "disturb" the personal freedom and activities of individuals but the issue related to the institution of marriage is a matter of policy. Responding to a question on the Centre's stand in the top court, Rijju said, "The government is not interfering in the personal life, personal activities of anybody. So there should be no confusion. When it comes to an issue related to the institution of marriage, then it is a matter of policy." "Personal freedom and personal activities of individuals, of the citizens are never being disturbed, regulated, questioned by the government. You must be very clear about it. There is a clear distinction," he told reporters outside the Parliament House.

raised are resolved by a constitution bench of five-judges of this court...," the bench said while referring to Article 145 (3) of the Constitution, while terming it a "very seminal issue".

"We accordingly direct that the hearing of these petitions be placed before a constitution bench," the apex court said while posting the pleas for hearing on April 18.

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Water to be released from Tandula reservoir in view of falling groundwater level

Man requests allotment of house on ground floor for elderly mother

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Mar 13: Due to increasing heat, the groundwater level of the city is falling rapidly. The water level in tube wells and wells has gone down, due to which the problems of the people are increasing day by day.

In Collector Jandarshan, the villagers of Gram Panchayat Auri Bhathagaon submitted an application to the Collector for release of water from Tandula reservoir. The villagers said that with the commencement of summer season, the water level in the village has dropped considerably.

Water is required for daily use, drinking water

and irrigation of the crops. The problem has increased considerably and at present, about 200 acres of maize crop is grown in village Auri Bhathagaon. Due to lack of irrigation facilities, the crops are getting destroyed and the farmers are likely to face financial loss.

Collector Pushendra Kumar Meena instructed the Water Resources Department to redress the complaints of villagers at the earliest. Under the Mor Makan Mor Aas Yojana, houses have been made available to the families living as tenants. In this context, an applicant Shankar Lal Soni, son of Sundar Bai Soni (75) had applied for

allotment of house in Gokul Nagar Pulgaon under Mor Makan Mor Aas Yojana.

In his application, he has demanded an allotment of a house on the ground floor as his mother Sundar Bai is very old and she may face a lot of difficulties in climbing the stairs.

Considering her physical condition, he requested for allotment of accommodation on the ground floor. In this regard, the Collector ordered the



Municipal Corporation Durg to take appropriate steps. Pradeep Kumar Agarwal, resident of Ward No 18 Jawahar

Nagar, said that residential plots have been made available to class 3 employees in Jawahar Nagar Durg, in which all

Along with this, some members have given their house on rent for the shop. Due to this, movement of vehicles

and outsiders in the colony has increased. He demanded appropriate action in this regard.

The members of the Jeevandeep Committee of the District Hospital met the Collector during Jandarshan. They placed various demands before the Collector for the convenience of the citizens in the district hospital.

Executive members Dilip Thakur and Prashant Dongavkar demanded to convene a meeting of the Jeevan Deep Committee soon. The Collector, after listening seriously to all the demands of the committee, assured to hold a meeting of the committee soon and take necessary steps on the suggestions of the

committee.

Gram Panchayat Aunri Sarpanch filed an application seeking power cut during the water supply timings. He said that due to increased consumption of water during summer, many people are using tullu pumps to fetch more water in their houses. Due to the use of tullu pumps, taps have dried in many houses.

In view of the serious problem of drinking water, he demanded to turn off the power supply from the transformer at the time of water supply in the morning and evening. In view of the water problem, the Collector directed the SDM Patan to take action for immediate resolution.

Rape accused arrested within few hours

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Mar 13: Durg Police arrested a rape accused within few hours after receiving the complaint. The victim had lodged the same complaint in the year 2021 also. The accused was on bail in this case.

CSP Vaibhav Banker informed that they are taking immediate action on the cases related to crime against women. On March 12, a woman lodged a complaint against one Sunil Mahobe (48) of Meenakshi Nagar Durg, who presently resided at Shankar Nagar in Durg.

The victim complained that the accused reached her residence on November 08, 2022 and threatened her of attacking her with acid. He forcefully took the woman to Sai Lodge in Power House and held her hostage in the lodge room.

The accused again raped her and threatened



of dire consequences if she disclosed the happening to anyone. Due to fear, the victim remained silent for a few months and later on March 12, she filed a complaint at Mohan Nagar Police Station.

Police lodged a case under sections 366, 376, 377, 506-B, 342 of IPC. A team was constituted immediately to search for the accused. Police team managed to trace the accused

and took him into custody. He was produced before the court and has been sent to jail on judicial remand.

Inspector Vipin Rangari (SHO, Mohan Nagar), Female Head Constable Monika Gupta, Head Constable Shahid Khan, Constable Kranti Sharma, Ritesh Agnihotri and Shakeel Khan played a vital role in arresting the accused.

12 RIPAs to start soon in rural areas; livelihood centers in urban bodies

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Mar 13: Twelve RIPAs will start functioning soon in the district. In these, many items will be produced from healthy snacks to food items like Jam Jelly and from Garments to LED Lights. Collector Pushendra Kumar Meena discussed in detail the activities happening in various blocks of the district.

Apart from these 12 RIPAs, livelihood centers will also be started in urban bodies and the Collector gave instructions to prepare a detailed plan. District Panchayat CEO Ashwini Dewangan, Bhilai Municipal Corporation Commissioner Rohit Vyas and other officers were present in the meeting.

In the meeting, the Collector said that according to the intention of Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel, more and more



employment has to be created through RIPA.

For this purpose, he asked the officials to encourage the interested youth by counselling that they can start an enterprise in RIPA. It is worth mentioning that sheds and other infrastructural facilities will be provided by the administration to the entrepreneurs in RIPA and arrangements for bank linkage etc will also be made.

The Collector discussed the main products made in all RIPAs. For example, over the Garment Factory

to be started in RIPA at Dhaba in Durg, he said that the finished product should meet the modern standards in the Garment industry. He asked to work according to the practice going on in the Garment Industry so that their products get a considerable demand in the market.

Milk processing unit in Chandkhuri will start in RIPA. Regarding this unit, he said that there is unlimited potential in the milk business. If quality is taken care of, then the entrepreneurs associated

with it can earn a lot. It will also give a boost to the activities related to livestock. Tomato processing and Jam Jelly Juice packaging unit will start at Hasda in Dhamdha.

Collector gave necessary instructions for this unit also. Stationary and flax unit will be set up in Katro of Durg block. The Collector said that there has been a lot of innovation in the products in all these areas and hence the products should be chosen as per the market demand. It is worth men-

tioning that all the products have been selected according to the possibilities of the market, so that the entrepreneurs could generate a good profit.

The Collector said that instead of going for jobs, many youths prefer self-employment and want to progress in the field of enterprise. Due to the lack of counselling facilities, they are not able to make decisions. Further, due to non availability of areas like RIPA, they hesitated to take initial steps. Now, the youth will get favourable conditions.

The Collector asked the officers to start livelihood centers in urban bodies also. He said that with the opening of such centers in urban bodies, there will be opportunities for young entrepreneurs and they will also be able to generate employment in large numbers. He asked the officials to select activities and start such centers soon.

4500 lease holders suffering due to the negligence of BSP mgmt

Aggrieved citizens approach District Collector

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Mar 13: Due to ongoing tussle between the BSP management and Bhilai Municipal Corporation, more than 4500 lease holders are very upset and confused. The aggrieved citizens have requested the Collector to intervene into this matter.

They requested the Collector to ask the BSP to follow the conditions and procedure prescribed by the state government at the time of land acquisition in relation to the scheme of "SAIL Scheme for Leasing of Company houses to Employees 2002". Along with this, according to the instructions given by the state government in the meeting held on June 7, 2002, a clear policy should be prepared.

Senior Corporator Vashisth Narayan Mishra and former Corporator Lalit Mohan submitted a representation before the District Collector in this regard on Monday. The letter states that the Government of India had given about 32000 acres of land for the construction

of the Plant by issuing a notification to the State Government. It also included Lagani, Aabadi and government land.

The government land was provided free of cost by the state government. For this, certain conditions and policies were set between the state and the central government. There was also a condition that the Plant would not use that land except for Plant (Factory) construction. If the Plant desires to use the land for other purposes, then it will have to take permission from the state government.

When HUDCO Phase 2 was constructed on this land, the state government did not allow the project. Since then, BSP management is not considering it necessary to take permission from the state government for any work.

Not only this, the BSP allotted houses on lease to his former employees by implementing a scheme called 'SAIL Scheme for Leasing of Company houses to Employees' without permission from the state government.

Now 4500 lease holders



are worried due to non-regularization of their houses.

Bhilai Steel Plant has given 4500 houses on long term lease to its employees in different sectors of the township. BSP gave the house but did not give permission for construction. When the lease holders started re-constructing the old houses, the BSP warned them to stop the construction work.

BSP also served notice that if the lease holders make any construction, their lease will be cancelled. Regarding this issue also, the difference of opinion between the lease holders and BSP still exists.

When the matter came

to the notice of the State Government after a dispute in the long-term lease housing scheme, the Durg Collector called a meeting of the Managing Director Bhilai Steel Plant and other officials of the plant on June 7, 2002.

In the meeting, the Collector sought information about the SAIL Housing Lease Scheme 2002 from the SAIL officials. The meeting also discussed other 20 points in the meeting.

The then Collector directed the officers of SAIL to furnish information about the provisions of the construction work and other information about the lease so that the state government

could allow Bhilai Steel Plant to use the acquired land for non-company purposes.

BSP officials have not provided any information about any point of the meeting to the state government till date. Due to this negligent attitude, the problems of the lease holders could not be resolved.

The lease holders asked the Collector to direct the Bhilai Steel Plant, on behalf of the state government, to take permission from the state government for other use of the land.

Further, on the basis of the instructions given in the meeting held in 2022, the BSP management should be directed to frame a clear policy regarding the long-term housing lease scheme and send it to the state government.

Along with this, they requested the Collector to issue necessary instructions to the Municipal Corporation Bhilai to allow the lease holders to obtain building permission for new and additional construction as per the provisions of the Municipal Corporation Act.

Coke Ovens and Blast Furnaces teams bag productivity excellence award

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Mar 13: Two teams from SAIL-Bhilai Steel Plant have excelled in a contest on Productivity, Green Growth & Sustainability organised by Odisha State Productivity Council, Bhubaneswar.

SAIL-BSP's teams from Coke Ovens Dept and Blast Furnaces Dept were awarded Productivity Excellence Award 2022 at the prize-distribution ceremony held in a five-star hotel in Bhubaneswar, recently. The Coke Ovens team was awarded 5 Star Productivity Excellence Award while the Blast Furnaces team was awarded 4 Star Productivity Excellence Award.

The two teams from SAIL-BSP had made an online presentation of their



Technical Papers on the subject under the guidance of GM (Business Excellence Dept) Manoj Dubey. The Coke Ovens team led by Tarun Kanrar, CGM (CO & CCD) comprised of Sashikant Deo, Senior Manager (CO & CCD) and Chetan Ashok Phutane, Deputy Manager. The Blast Furnace Team led by Tokdar, CGM (Blast

Furnaces) comprised of Navin Kumar Tiwari and Manish Kumar Tiwari, both Deputy General Managers in Blast Furnace Department.

In their technical papers, both the teams from Coke Ovens and Blast Furnaces presented projects executed to enhance productivity in their respective departments.



Cong' protest march to Raj Bhavan, demands probe into Adani row

Raipur, Mar 13: Congress leaders and workers on Monday took out protest march to Raj Bhavan here on the row over Adani Group. Congress leaders have alleged collusion between Adani Group and Central Government.

Addressing a meeting organised at Ambedkar Chowk prior to march towards Raj Bhavan, Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel said that Adani was at number 609 and within a few months he became the second richest man in the world. But something was published in Hindenburg after which Adani Group's shares fell with a bang, he said. During the question on Adani issue in Lok Sabha, Rajya Sabha, the speeches of both Rahul Gandhi and Kharge were expunged from the record, he said. He asked why the issue was not being probed. Why does ED not look into Adani issue? He



asked. He alleged government agencies were taking action at the behest of central government. ED does not raid the places where scams worth crores have been committed, he alleged. He also alleged that centre gave public money in SBI and LIC to Adani. PCC in-charge Shelja and other office bearers were present at the meeting. PCC Chief Mohan Markam charged the

Modi Government with shielding Adani group. While PM Modi in his speech often states that country is changing, in fact country is for sale, he alleged. He demanded that hard earned money of people in LIC, State Bank and other banks must be safe. Congress is fighting for people, he said.

After meeting at Ambedkar Chowk

Congress leaders took out march to Raj Bhavan. A delegation comprising 11 Congress leaders including PCC Chief Mohan Markam met Governor Bishwabhushan Harichandra and handed over a memorandum of demand for probe into Adani Group to the Governor.

PCC communication head Sushil Anand Shukla said that the country was suffering due to the crony capitalism policy of the Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the BJP government in favor of Adani. At the time of deep economic crisis, the BJP's Modi government is selling the country's vital infrastructure to the Adani group. According to him savings of crores of poor and middle class people in public sector banks like SBI and LIC are at risk due to policy of Modi Government.

PAINTING OF IDOLS



The painting of idols of Goddesses in the temple has started with few days left for the festival of 'navratri'.

Choubey orders inquiry into sewerage line project of Bilaspur

After Speaker intervened and directed Minister to take into account the drowning incident

MLA Dharamjeet Singh and Santosh Pandey raised the issue during zero-hour



boy fell inside the pit for the sewerage line and died. MLA Dharamjeet Singh said that holes have been dug at different places for Sewerage line and here safety should be ensured. On this the MLA duo demanded action on the concerned officers and direct the Collector and Commissioner of Bilaspur to fill up the holes left open in this sewerage.

MLA Bilaspur Shailesh Pandey raising the issue said that many incidents are taking place due to construction work of sewerage in Bilaspur city and so far many people have died. Santosh demanded action against the

guilty officers and demanded a compensation of Rs 10 lakh to the family of the 17 yr old boy who died falling in the pit for sewerage construction. Pandey charged that sewerage project in city has failed completely and so far its testing too has not being done.

The Speaker State Assembly Dr Charandas Mahant gave instructions for inquiry into the issue based upon demand for investigation into the project and action against the guilty officers and after which the Agriculture and WRD Minister Ravindra Choubey made declaration for holding inquiry into the matter. About the incident, the Speaker asked the Departmental Minister to take into cognizance the said case. It is notable here that one Aditya Vaishnav of Torva in Bilaspur died of drowning in sewerage line under-construction.

Nine bus agents, hawkers nabbed



From New Bus Stand

On charges of illegally issuing tickets to passengers

Central Chronicle News

Raipur, Mar 13: The capital police was getting complaint about alleged misbehaviour and scolding with passengers from New Bus Stand in Bhatagaon for last few days and based upon which the police team nabbed 9 agents and hawkers of New Bus Stand, Bhatagaon on charges of illegally cutting tickets and recovering amount from the passengers and took action

against them under different sections. It is notable here that the Bus Agents and Hawkers placing their tables and chair illegally in the Bus Stand premises, used to issue tickets to passengers illegally.

It was based upon complaint, SSP directed TI Tikrapara Amit Beria to take action. So TI Tikrapara along with other police staff raided the New Bus Stand in the morning hours and identified such 9 bus agents and hawkers selling ticket illegally to passengers. In addition to this other agents too were issued strict warning not to misbehave with the passengers or trouble them in any manner or else they will face legal action.

Number of dairy farmers is less than half: Vora

As compared to farmers registered in the Dugdha Sangh

Raipur, Mar 13: After purchasing milk from farmers at Rs 33 per liter, the Dugdha Sangh is selling it at Rs.55 per liter. This information was given in response to a written question raised by

Congress MLA Arun Vora in state legislative assembly today. According to this, the number of farmers selling milk is less than half as compared to the farmers registered in the Dugdha Sangh.

Vora asked how many farmers in the state are registered to sell milk in the Sakhari Dugdha Sangh (cooperative milk

federation) and how many of them are selling milk to the Dugdha Sangh. In reply Agriculture Minister Choubey informed that 37356 farmers of the state are registered as members of Dugdha Sakhari Samiti and 13308 of them are selling milk to the Dugdha Sangh through Dugdha Samities.

ASI murdered through contract: Brijmohan

Raipur, Mar 13: BJP MLA Brijmohan Agarwal raised the issue pertaining to recovery of dead body of the ASI of Bango police station under suspicious circumstances in Korba during the budget session of the Chhattisgarh Legislative Assembly, on Monday. He alleged target killing of a child named Aditya

Vaishnav due to drowning in sewerage in Torva of Bilaspur. Expressing concern and sorrow over the incident, the MLAs demanded to cover open sewerage. The Assembly Speaker directed the departmental minister to take the matter into cognizance.

Earlier the former minister Brijmohan Agarwal raised the issue of making bamboo available to the Basod families in calling

attention. Government is not able to make bamboo available across the state, due to which the livelihood of Basod families is being affected, he said. Forest Minister Mohammad Akbar said that bamboo is being made provided to all the districts in accordance with its availability. Forest Minister Akbar told that bamboo is not produced in Raipur district, yet bamboo is being made available according to availability.

Man cheated of 26 lakhs in the name of loan

Raipur, Mar 13: A man was cheated of Rs 26 lakh after he was offered of loan of Rs 17 lakh in Raipur. According to information available a caller offered loan of Rs 17 lakh to one Mehfooj Ansari Hasan. The caller, however, said that some charges would be applicable for sanctioning loan. On being lured into this offer Mehfooj made payment in installments. But he did not get any loan.

According to the information, Mehfooj Ansari Hasan works as a liaison at Bhilai Steel Plant. He received a call from a girl named Sujata on February 16 last year.

She introduced herself as an employee of Mumbai Citibank and offered loan to him.

Hearing this, Mehfooj agreed to obtain loan. After that he called back on that number. He was asked to deposit some amount in the name of processing fee and subsequently charged different fees before sanctioning of loan. In the last one year, Hasan paid around Rs 26 lakh. But he did not get the loan of Rs 17 lakh. Realising that he was cheated of money he lodged complaint with police. On his complaint, the police have registered fraud offence.

Psychiatric Counseling Center inaugurated at MATS University

Raipur, Mar 13: "Psychiatric Counseling Center" (OPD) was inaugurated by the Psychology Department of Mats University on March 13, Monday. The program was inaugurated by lighting the lamp by Gajraj Pagaria, Chancellor of Mats University. The aim of the counseling center is to provide services for the treatment of various types of mental diseases while taking a commendable step towards the progress of mental health. On this occasion, Chancellor of Mats University Mr. Gajraj Pagariya, Director General Mr. Priyesh Pagariya, Prof. VC Dr.



Dipika Dhand, Registrar Gulnanda Panda and Head of the Department of Psychology Dr. Shahista Ansari and all the professors and students of the department were present.

Placement camp for educated youth on March 17

Central Chronicle News

Raipur, Mar 13: With a view to provide employment opportunities to local educated unemployed youth of Chhattisgarh, the District Employment and Self-Employment Guidance Center, Raipur is going to organize placement camp on March 17 at Extension Counter, Commercial Complex

Rakhi, Sector-27 Nava Raipur Atal Nagar from 11 am to 2 pm. Domino's Pizza Raipur will recruit 130 posts of Business / Guest Delight Associates through this placement camp. Candidates with qualification of 8th, 10th will be eligible for recruitment for these posts. Selected candidates will be paid Rs 10 to 12 thousand per month.

NIT Raipur students Grab 22.65 LPA pre-placement offers

At ZS Associates

Raipur, Mar 13: National Institute of Technology Raipur's final year students Arnav Tripathi, Vishnu Verma, Gopal Agrawal, Vibhanshu Singh, 7th Sem, Electrical Engineering, Tathagat, Duke John Tiwari, Abhyash Raj Sona, 7th Sem, Chemical Engineering, Harshita Singh, 7th Sem, Mechanical Engineering, Rohan Verma, Sarangi Poornasri, 7th Sem, Metallurgical and Materials Engineering, Naleen Verma, Priyank Khandelwal, and Adama

Agrawal, 7th Sem, Civil Engineering, Malaya Jhanwar, 7th Sem, Biomedical Engineering grabbed outstanding offers at ZS Associates, a Pharma-based management consulting firm, through Campus Beats, ZS's campus engagement program in India. Every year, ZS identifies and engages students from dozens of top engineering schools through a range of learning activities and case challenges designed to prepare them for the upcoming placement season and learn about ZS's work and culture.

Grand inauguration of 'DRM Cup 2023'

Three matches played on day one

Raipur, Mar 13: The 20th Inter - Departmental Cricket Competition DRM Cup 2023 organized by South East Central Railway Sports Association (SECRSA) Raipur was inaugurated on Monday in presence of the chief guest, Divisional Railway Manager and SECRSA President Sanjeev Kumar.

The Divisional Railway Manager personally met the captains of all the 18 teams participating in the program and conveyed best wishes for the competition. The DRM Cup's organization and arrangements were appreciated by the Divisional Railway Manager and assured to



further improve the ground and increase the facilities. Chief Workshop Manager of Wagon Repair Shop Sanjay Tyagi, Chief Store Manager, General Store Depot Shiv Shankar Lakda, Vice President of SECRSA and Additional Divisional Railway Manager (Infra) Ashish Mishra, Senior Divisional Sports Officer Anurag

Tiwari, Divisional Sports Officer Shivashish Kumar and other officers were present. Divisional Sports Secretary Swaran Singh Kalsi said that the tournament has been running for the last 19 years and this year is the 20th edition in which a total of 18 teams will participate. For the first six days, six pools of 18 teams are being made

and league matches are being conducted. After that six teams will play 'The Super Six match' between them. All the matches will be played under floodlights at night, after which the semi-finals between the four teams and the third place match between the losing semi-final teams will be played before the final match, which will be held on March 25.

Man of the match award will be given in every match and many attractive prizes have been kept for the teams and players in the final match. Memento will also be given to the departing teams for participating in the tournament. Best dressed and best disciplined team award will also be given along with it.

A memento will be given on the day of the final by

the Railway players for bringing medals in their field of sports.

Monday's first match was played between Diesel Shed and Electrical TRD in which Diesel Shed's Masood Alam was declared man of the match. The second match was played between Accounts Department and GSD in which Rahul Behra of Accounts was declared Man of the Match. The third match was played between Signal and Telecom and Medical Department, in which Jitendra Vegad of Signal and Telecom was the man of the match.

Match referees were Brijesh Pandey, Harpreet Singh, Javed, Chandan Suresh and Piyush while Rajesh Prakash, Ravish Patk were in the role of scorers

Sarika Goswami awarded Gurantee of HMIF, 'Art for Hope, 2023'

Raipur, Mar 13: Hyundai Motor India Foundation (HMIF), the CSR arm of Hyundai Motor India Limited (HMIL), announced the second edition of its Art CSR initiative 'Art for Hope 2023', supporting 25 artists from across India. Sarika Goswami, a visual artist and printmaker from Bhillai, Chhattisgarh, is one of them. Art for Hope 2023 organised a great opportunity to showcase their artwork from Feb 27th to March 5th at Bikaner House, New Delhi and also going to present at INCO Center Chennai from March 16th to March 19th.

Sarika Goswami based from Bhillai, Chhattisgarh. She studied from S.S.S.S.-4, Bhillai. Her interest takes her too far from her homeland to learn more. Completed her graduation from I.K.S.V, Khairagarh in



2019 & Post Graduation from M.S.U of Baroda, Vadodara in 2021. After her studies she continued her art practice with all dedication and hard work, she achieved various opportunities for workshops, art talks and national and international exhibitions. Presently she is the Research Printmaking Scholar (2021-22) of Lalit Kala Academy, she got Scholarship to work at Regional Centre,

Bhubaneswar. Sarika is very much involved in her art practice and wants to continue in it. She has a big motto to enhance the art scenario of Chhattisgarh and establish a better way for every artist who lives in Chhattisgarh. She wants to make a platform for those who face problems to explore their works. Sarika Goswami said that "Her credits of achievement belong to her mother Suneeta Goswami and her Father Roshan Saheb Goswami. They are the backbone of her confidence and behind her inspiration she admires her elder sister Monika Amit Gupta who gave her a spark and vision to be bright. She is always thankful to her teachers and various artists who guided her at every step.

No matter the society, everyone needs education : CM

CM took part in the Kalar Mahasammelan 2023 event organised by the Kalar Mahasabha

CM announced a voluntary holiday on the birth anniversary of Bahadur Kalarin and establishment of the Mahua Board

Raipur, Mar 13: No one can deny the importance of Kalar society in industry business, but no society can progress without education. Every society requires education, and any society that has severed ties with education is backward. Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel stated this at the Kalar Mahasammelan, which was organised by the Chhattisgarh Kalar Mahasabha on the Science College grounds in Raipur. On this occasion, the



Chief Minister made two major announcements, including the establishment of a Mahua Board in Chhattisgarh. The Chief Minister has declared a voluntary holiday on the anniversary of the birth of the revered mother of Kalar Samaj, Bahadur Kalarin, describing her contribution to women empowerment as incomparable.

Individuals are the basic building blocks of all societies

Chief Minister, Baghel, stated that the individual is the unit of every society,

and that the state government has started schemes in the last four years with the individual at the centre so that people from all societies can benefit. The Chief Minister stated that if people do not benefit from the schemes, if people remain ill, a strong Chhattisgarh can never be imagined, which is why the Chhattisgarh government has made a provision for money to go into the pockets of the last person in society so that the state's progress is continuous.

According to the Chief

Minister, caste prejudice has no place in Chhattisgarh, where people from various communities coexist. He stated that Chhattisgarh is strong because of the strong social connection among its citizens.

Highest amount has been spent on education

Speaking to the audience at the Kalar Mahasammelan, the Chief Minister mentioned that Chhattisgarh's educational standards have significantly improved over the previous four years. Additionally, long-closed

schools have reopened in Naxalite areas, as have Swami Atmanand English medium schools in rural areas. The state government is constantly working to ensure that students receive high-quality education, which is why the budget has a provision for spending Rs 17,000 crore on education. On the basis of current demand, new trades are being opened in ITI colleges in order to give the youth employment and give them the opportunity to receive the training they need.

On the occasion of Kalar Mahasammelan, Parliamentary Secretary Vikas Upadhyay, MLA Mohan Markam, MLA Vinay Jaiswal, MLA Sangeeta Sinha, Raipur Mayor Ajjaz Dhebar, Risali Mayor Shashi Sinha, President of Kalar Mahasabha Chhattisgarh Deepak Sinha, Kalar Mahasammelan Chairman of the convenor committee, Raja Jaiswal, along with other office bearers and members of Kalar Samaj were present.

Tehsil Sahu Sangh pays courtesy call on CM



Raipur, Mar 13: The delegation of Tehsil Sahu Sangh, Patan paid a courtesy visit to Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel at his official residence on Sunday. They invited the Chief Minister as a Chief Guest on the occasion of Bhakt Mata Karma

Jayanti and group marriage to be held on April 22 in Gatapara village in Patan. The Chief Minister thanked the delegation for the invitation. On this occasion, the Chairman of Tehsil Sahu Sangh Patan Dinesh Sahu, Vice Chairman Gulab Sahu, Executive

Chairman Laleshawar Sahu, Kishan Sahu, Gangadeen Sahu, Mahendra Sahu, Dhanraj Sahu, Tesram Sahu, Suresh Sahu, Vimal Sahu, Jayanti Sahu, Gajendra Sahu, Horilal Sahu, and Boniram Sahu were present.

Athlete Amit qualified for Athletics Youth Int'l competition

Raipur, Mar 13: In the 18th Youth Athletics Championship, held in Guwahati, Assam, Athlete Master Amit Kumar, who is receiving training at the Khelo India State Center of Excellence in Bahtarai, the state's first sports academy, won the bronze medal.



He qualified for the Indian contingent camp for the Youth Asia Championship in a 10 km walk, which will be held in Indonesia in July, by completing the qualifier benchmark before the deadline. Amit Kumar finished the 10-kilometer distance at 44:53.56. Amit Kumar is the first athlete from Chhattisgarh to qualify for the event.

Notably, this academy situated in the Bahtarai of Chhattisgarh is state's first sports school that provides residential sports training in hockey, athletics, and archery. More than 100 women and men are being trained here. High-level and international-level trainers, as well as a team to run high-quality training, have been appointed

here. Athletics training is being provided under the direction of Dronacharya Awardee coach J.S. Bhatia. High-Performance managers are always providing day-to-day attention to the high performance of sportspersons by monitoring their fitness, health, dietary information, and personal demands. The Sports and Youth Welfare Department is continually fulfilling the needs of the trainees. Additional Chief Secretary, Sports Director, and Assistant Director of the Sports Youth Welfare Department, Bilaspur, and Center's Performance Manager congratulated Amit for his achievement.

Bhagat participated in 'Pran Pratishtha' of Shiv Mandir

Gariyaband, Mar 13: State's Food, Civil Supplies, and Consumer Protection; Planning, Economic and Statistics, Culture Minister, and Minister-in-charge of Gariyaband district, Amarjeet Bhagat, participated in the Pran Pratishtha ceremony of Shiv Mandir at village Chichia in Devbhog development block. He dedicated the newly built temple after worshipping Shiva's statue. Ramesh Yadu, State President of Sarv Yadav Samaj, Dhanmati Yadav, Janak Dhruv, Village Sarpanch, Rajkumar Korram, Yadav Samaj, and people from other communities were present in large numbers on this occasion. In his speech on the occasion, Chief Guest and Minister-in-Charge of the District, Amarjeet Bhagat stated that it is a happy moment



for him to participate in the Pran Pratishtha of Shiv Mandir. Lord Shankar loves everyone and everyone is important to the creator of the universe.

That is why there should be no distinction between human beings. Human service is equivalent to Gods service said Minister Bhagat. We must prioritize the growth of everybody with societal harmony. Responding to

the aspirations of the local leaders, Minister Bhagat emphasized the state government's budgetary provisions for the area's development. He promised to provide one lakh rupees toward the temple's construction costs. In addition, Rs 10 lakh was announced for the beautification of the pond close to the shrine. Local government members and a large crowd were present.

Raipur receives a gift as an Int'l Sports Academy

In the state's annual budget 2023-24

Archery Sports Academy to be established in Bastar and Raipur

Provision for the establishment of Adventure Sports Academy in Bastar and Malkhamb Academy in Narayanpur

By Sunil Tripathi, Asst. Director

Raipur, Mar 13: The Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel presented the fifth budget of his tenure on 06 March. It is noteworthy that special attention has been given to everyone from students to sportspersons in this budget. To provide top notch sports facilities for athletes, provisions have been made in the budget for the construction of mini stadium, promotion of women's sports and establishment of various sports academies. Traditional sports are also being promoted in the state. In order to encourage sports activities across the state, Rs 5 crore has been announced to provide training of players from village level and to organise sports competition and national and international level sports events. This budget also has provision for the establishment of sports academies for various nation-

al and international sports such as adventure sports, hockey, football, badminton, tennis and athletics. Similarly, Shaheed Gundadhar Archery and Kayaking and Canoeing Sports Academy will also be established in the state.

Archery sports academies will be established in Bastar and Raipur to encourage archery as a state sport. Provision has also been made for the establishment of Malkhamb Academy in Narayanpur and International Badminton Sports Academy in Raipur.

An amount of 3 crore 70 lakh has been announced for the establishment of Adventure Sports Academy in Bastar district and for the development of adventure sports facilities in village Saliyatoli development block of Kunkuri.

To promote the traditional sports of the state, the organization of Chhattisgarh Olympics has been started from this year, in which women and men of all classes, from children to the elderly, took part with great enthusiasm. In view of the interest and enthusiasm of the local people towards these games due to the successful organization of Chhattisgarh Olympics, a provision of Rs 25 crore has been kept in this budget for the grand event of Chhattisgarh Olympics in the coming year. A provision of Rs 100 crore has been kept in the budget for Rajiv Yuva Mitran Club and Rs 08 crore for organizing Rajiv Yuva Mahotsav as well.

SCI Ch'garh wing pays courtesy call on CM



Raipur, Mar 13: A delegation from the Chhattisgarh wing of the Sindh Council of India (SCI) made a courtesy call

on Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel at his official residence. They requested the Chief Minister to be the chief

guest at the Chetrichandra Utsav Hojmalo 2023, which will be hosted on March 18 at a private hotel in Raipur. Chief Minister while expressing gratitude for the invitation also unveiled the poster for Chetrichandra Utsav Hojmalo 2023. On this occasion, the President of Chhattisgarh Wing of Sindh Council of India Lalit Jaisingh, program coordinator Anil Jotsinghani, Vicky Lohana, Praveen Sundarani, Gautam Railwani and Mahesh Arya were present.

'Crops like cucumber, watermelon spreading greenery and boosting income'

Bijapur, Mar 13: Chhattisgarh government's debt waiver scheme has not only freed farmers from debt, but this scheme has paved the way for their prosperity as well. We got to know about one such progressive farmer Afzal Khan of Bhopalpatnam. Afzal Khan says that he and his family jointly have a total of 15 acres of agricultural land located in Bhopalpatnam. Farmer tells that he has been doing agriculture work for 20-25 years, earlier he used to cultivate only paddy. Used to take Maize and Moong on a small amount of land, but his income was limited. But later we got direct benefit of loan waiver scheme of the head of the state CM Bhupesh Baghel. Earlier due to lack of bore wells we were purely dependent upon seasonal rains and used to take paddy crop. But now bore wells have become successful, sufficient water is available for irrigation and therefore change in crop cultivation.



The flourishing crop in the farmer's field is empowering him financially and mentally. In the last two months, he has earned an income of Rs 2 lakh from crops like Gourd, Cucumber, Barbatti. The summer days have started, while the watermelon crop has also started ripening. Sweet and juicy Watermelons are now available to the residents of the district; watermelons have started reaching the markets in Bhopalpatnam and Bijapur. The farmer told that he is cultivating watermelon for the first time in the district and the crop has also been very good. Now there will be no need for watermelons from other states including Odisha, Telangana. Due to local production, I am selling watermelon to the people

at a reasonable price; the crop is so good that I will be able to supply watermelon to the entire district throughout the season, he added. Farmer Afzal Khan has two sons and two daughters who help him in agricultural work. He also takes the help of nearby labourers for other works including sowing and weeding. They also get employment. Afzal says that he has directly benefited from his hard work and the cooperation of the district administration and the scheme of the state govt. Today, many farmers of the district like him are stepping towards economic progress by cultivating vegetables, for which he said will always be grateful to the district administration and Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel.

GEMS declares first phase of annual result

Scholarships announced for rank holders

Raipur, Mar 13: With much of fun fare, first phase of annual examination result (Class VIII, IX and XI) of Shri Gujrati English Medium Higher Secondary School was declared on Monday at Gyanoday Bhavan in front of a packed house. The office bearers of Shri Gujrati Shikshan Sangh led by its president Naryan Bhai Patel, secretary duo Tulsi Bhai Patel and Ashok Bhai Patel, joint secretary Vithal Bhai Patel, Administrator V K Mishra, Registrar Ashok Jachak were present to declare the results. After lighting the ceremonial lamp and worshipping Goddess Saraswati formal programme got off to



start. School Principal Dr Shailesh Sharma welcomed the parents and wished the students for their results. Secretary Tulsi Bhai Patel asked the parents to admit their children in this school for a safe and bright future. He asked the students to excel

in both academic and co-curricular activities. President Narayan Bhai Patel wished all the students and announced scholarships of Rs 6000, Rs 5000 and Rs 4000 for the first, second and third rank holders of each class. The announcement was

applauded by the parents present inside the auditorium. It was followed by the declaration of result and rank holders along with their parents were invited on the stage for the presentation of memento and certificates. In Class VIII Harshita Patnaik

topped with 94%, Dheeraj Sahu second with 92.67% and Himanshu Sinha third with 91.33%. In Class IX Sonam Garg came first with 89.40%, Vanshika Tahalyani second with 89% and Lucky Sharma third with 81.80%. In Class XI Science stream Kumkum Lunia came first with 83%, Hensi Shankhala second with 77.60% and Rohnit Sinha third with 76.40%. In Class XI Commerce stream Ayushi Shankhala came first with 89.80%, Pooja Sahu second with 85.40% and Isha Padhan third with 85%. In Class XI Humanities Kripa Patel came first with 83%, Mukti Patel second with 79.20% and Joning Harita Noyadas third with 77%. Senior faculty members Sanghamitra Dubey and Shyanti Bhattacharya anchored the programme.

Denizens agitated over not re-starting of under-bridge road

- Charges railway of sidelining local reps
- No action taken even after submission of memorandum by MLA to railway officers

local MLA to responsible railway officers, they are not reaching the concerned venue.

The MLA is forced to hold talks with assistant officers of railways even after submission of memo. Prior to this also the local railway officials have been submitted memorandum by local representatives.

Should talk to responsible officer: Hathel

Former Nagar Palika President Tarun Hathel has expected the local MLA to hold talks with concerned officer of railway sending the memorandum through proper channel. For this Nagar Palika by passing a proposal and through District Collector the responsible railway officer AEN can be called for discussions. If the district administration wants, the road can be started within 24 hrs, he added.

Memo submitted to fill



pot-holes in the road:

The residents of city have submitted memorandum to local administration to level-up the 20 feet deep hole dug just below the bridge during construction of third railway line.

But till date the railway officials have not taken any action in this regard, despite the fact that the construction of third railway track atop the road has been completed way back in 2020.

To fill up this big hole, Virendra Kumar Soni (Maruti) had got signatures done from public reps of the ward and affected citizens.

20 feet deep hole left open for 2 yrs: Maruti

The main road joining two sides of city is lying closed due to sheer negligence on part of the railway even after closure of its work. The 20 feet deep hole dug by the railways for construction of the bridge has not being lev-

elled up and in other words railways are probably waiting for some major accident to take place.

It is notable here that many a devotees of Navratri passes from this route to pay obeisance to Goddess on way to Maa Bamleshwari Temple. VK Soni (Maruti) urged all residents of city to request the local administration and state government to fill up this big hole, so that this route can be started.

Expectations from MP: Few days back, the traders from near the railway chowk and senior BJP leaders have brought it to the attention of LS MP Santosh Pandey in this regard. But till date the MP has only given assurance and on this residents said that if at all MP takes initiatives, then this road can be started the next day.

MSS completes its 90th phase

Of Swachchata Abhiyan



Central Chronicle News

Pandaria, Mar 13: Mahamaya Sewa Samiti (MSS) completed 90th phase of Swachchata Abhiyan of cleanliness at Janpad Panchayat premises here on Sunday. In the cleanliness campaign on Sunday, the campaign concluded in the presence of brand ambassador of campaign viz.

Mohan Singh Rajput, Hamid Khan, Mohan Singh Thakur. It is notable here that the Samiti carries out cleaning every Sunday from 7:00 am to 9:00 am at various public

places and they pass on the message of sanitation, cleanliness to denizens of city.

During this Samiti's president- and LS rep- Sanjay Soni, Secretary Abhishek Sahrma, Manager Manendra Shandilya, corporator Anurag Thakur, former corporator Vijay Burman, Pawan Kumbhakar from Pichada Prakosth; Kissan Morcha gen. secy. Anil Thakur, Buddhesh Rai Dabhu Raj, Baba Raj, from Girls group- Radhika, Neha, Aarti, Jyoti, and Nagar Panchayat commando gang were present.

Central Chronicle News

Dongargarh, Mar 13: The denizens of city are demanding to start the construction of old under-bridge road closed in the name of construction of third railway line for last two years.

Many a times delegation of local trade organisations and others have submitted a memorandum to senior officers of Railways demanding to re-start it soon, but to no avail and till date they have not shown any interest.

In railways the officers are so much dominant that even after submission of memorandum by

'Jal Sakti week' observed in Mungeli



On occasion of Int'l Women's Day

Central Chronicle News

Mungeli, Mar 13: On occasion of 'Jal-Sakti Saptah', under Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) with objective to create awareness among women variety of programmes were organ-

ised and in his women in large number took part.

It was as per instructions by the President Jila Jal & Swachch Mission (JJSM) Collector Rahul Dev, EE block Mungeli IP Mandavi that on occasion of International Women's Day, 'Jal Shakti Saptah' was organised. In this series, PHE Mungeli organised 'Rangoli' and dance

competition in Mungeli and Patharia block.

In this women from rural areas and children took part and gave variety of presentations. During this coordinator JJM Amit Shriwas, informed women about the importance of JJM and created awareness about quality of water, its conservation and cleanliness.

Central Chronicle News

Rajim, Mar 13: LS MP Mahasamund Chunnal Sahu inaugurated the newly constructed building of Vipra samaj here on Sunday. Sahu in his address said that some persons are trying to break the 'sanatan dharm' and culture from inside and to save it from breaking, Vipra Samaj will have to come forward.

If one takes a look at the history than in every Rajmahal there used to be a 'purohit' to give advice to the King and it is right since ancient times, 'Purohiths' (pandits) have been given due honour. Sahu further said that it was Lord Shri Parshuram Maharaj who lifted the weapon in order to save

Vipra Samaj must come forward to save 'Sanatan dharm', says Sahu

Declares Rs 10 lakh for construction of building wall and auditorium of Vipra Kul Samaj



'dharm'.

LS MP further said that the 15 days Rajim Maghi Punni mela is held every year, whereas the Kumbh is held every 12 months. During ancient times Rajim Mela used to act as marriage bureau. Sahu informed that PM Modi under 'Mahaprasad Yojana' has granted sanction of Rs

56 lakh to Maa Bamleshwari Temple and added that he had also demanded funds in Lok Sabha for development of Rajim.

On request of Secretary Vipra Kul Brahmin Samaj Dhirendra Sharma, a fund of Rs 10 lakh was sanctioned for construction of boundary wall for Vipra

Kul Bhavan. MLA Santosh Upadhyay in his presidential speech welcomed LS MP Sahu and sought funds for boundary wall.

District Panchayat President Shweta Sharma in his address any 'samaj' is divided into different class and creed, but Brahmin is not a caste or religion, it is a culture. She said that they

play important role in showing correct path to those who have become dis-oriented.

The welcome speech was given by V-P of Samaj Sunil Tiwari. On this occasion LS MP Sahu administered oath to newly elected office bearers of Vipra Kul Samaj viz. President Devendra Sharma; V-P Sunil Tiwari; Krishna Gopal Sharma, Secretary Dhirendra Sharma; Asst. Secy. Sapan Sharma; Treasurer Mahitosh Sharma.

On this occasion Sahu also felicitated the members of Vipra Samaj with a citation certificate and memento. The programme was conducted by Santosh Sharma and Subhash Sharma and vote of thanks was proposed by Devendra Sharma.

Residents rejoice over proposal of Y-shape over-bridge

Dongargarh, Mar 13: In the budget presented by Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel, there is an atmosphere of happiness among the common people due to the inclusion of the proposal of the residents of the city to convert the city overbridge into Y shape. Last year, after the formation of the new Trust Board, a delegation of Shri Bamleshwari Temple Trust Committee, under the leadership of the MLA, had met Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel and made a proposal regarding converting the over bridge into 'Y' shape, on which the Chief Minister had directed the officials of Setu Nigam to conduct a survey and submit the report.

As per information, after the closure of the railway crossing, the movement of all the vehicles is being done from the under bridge or below in front of the temple, due to which there is always a possibility of accidents and during Navratri, there is a situation of jam. Shri Bamleshwari Temple Trust Committee Chairman Manoj Aggarwal and all office bearers and trustees and Block City Congress Committee President Sanjeev Gomasta have expressed gratitude to Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel and MLA for including the proposal of Y shape overbridge in the budget.

Variety of sports competition mark Int'l Women's Day

Women also played festival of colours

Central Chronicle News

Figeshwar, Mar 13: The festival of colours and International Women's Day was celebrated by women from 'Virangana Sanghatan' of city with great enthusiasm. Singing 'Faag geets', playing variety of sports and dance competition marked the occasion.

In this programme, Sheela Yadu of city was felicitated for her involvement in religious and creative works and rendering services to Ramayan Mandali for last 30 years.

In the same way on occasion of International



Women's Day, the President of Jai Maa Mavali Jan Sewa Samiti (JMMJSS) Ganga Bai Dhruv and Seeta Bahi Nishad was felicitated for their social works.

In this programme, variety of sports competi-

tions were also organised for the women. In the Jumping game, Basanti Sahu came first and Shiv Kumari Sahu second. In the spoon's race- Basanti Sahu came first and Sangeeta Yadu second.

In this programme, the women also expressed

their views on International Women's Day and boosted the morale of their counterparts. They also shared their experience of how women can be made more self-reliant and how they can take up various employment or works of entrepreneurship. The women were also informed about their fundamental rights and other issues of relevance.

In this programme Bhuneshwari Sahu, Jyoti Rajput, Sarita Shrivastava, Sandhya Haldhare, Chandrika Dhruv, Suman Sriwas, Uma Yadu, Meena Yadu, Sangeeta Yadu, Hema Soni, Basanti Sahu, Shiv Kumari Sahu and others were present.

the passing-game- Leela Sahu and Madhu Chandrakar came first and second. In the spoon's race- Basanti Sahu came first and Sangeeta Yadu second.

In this programme, the women also expressed

Holi celebrated with great enthusiasm

Even villagers used natural colours and 'gula'

Central Chronicle News

Birkoni, Mar 13: The festival of colours was celebrated with great enthusiasm in Gram Birkoni and nearby villages. All celebrated the festival in traditional manner, applying colours and exchanging greetings with each other.

First in the morning, the seniors of village were applied 'tilak' on Holi and the festival was inaugurated. The villagers to re-



joiced on Holi and celebrated it in friendly manner and keeping in mind the environment. No chemical-based colours or items were used, as it causes harm to skin and eyes.

In the same way the children too enjoyed the festival to its full, applying natural colours to each other and flashing water-guns on each other. They even roamed to nearby lanes & by-lanes and not leaving anyone. Later the youth and senior gathered

at a chowk in village, and dance to drum beats of 'nagadas' and enjoyed the celebrations.

On this occasion youth also spread 'gula' in the air and made entire atmosphere colourful and reverberated with colours of nature. This scene continued at many place by

evening hours. In the evening the seniors carrying a stick in their hand performed 'Danda dance' and presented a novel style of dance to all. Along with this 'Faag geets' were also sung by the singers and all got an opportunity to meet each other on this auspicious occasion.

Two boys drown in check dam

Central Chronicle News

Bilaspur, Mar 13: Two boys drowned in an anicut (check dam) after celebrating Holi in Gaurela-Pendra-Marwahi (GPM) district on Wednesday afternoon, police said.

The deceased were identified as Nikhil Prajapati and Prakash, both aged 13 years and residents of Lalpur village, said Yuvraj Tiwari, Station House Officer, Gaurela.

The two along with three other friends had gone to the anicut on the Tipan

river near Satokpur Harratola for bathing after Holi celebrations, he said.

About the mishap

The deceased were identified as Nikhil Prajapati and Prakash, both aged 13 years and residents of Lalpur village. The two along with three other friends had gone to the anicut on the Tipan river near Satokpur Harratola for bathing after Holi celebrations.

	Bank of Maharashtra राष्ट्रीय बैंक	Zonal Office-1st Floor, Chawla Complex, Sai (Devedra) Nagar, Raipur, Tel.: 0771-4265602 E-mail: dzmr@raipur@mahabank.co.in	
हेड ऑफिस: लोकांगल, 1501, शिववाजिनगर, पुणे-5		2011	
AX49/SARFES/Lavgeneral/13(4)/2022-23 Date-14/03/2023			
Appendix IV POSSESSION NOTICE (for Immovable property) [Rule - 8 (1)]			
Whereas, the Authorised Officer of Bank of Maharashtra under Securitisation & Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 & in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13 (12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a demand notice dated 30/12/2022 under Section 13 (2) of the said Act and called upon you Borrower- M/S LAV GENERAL STORE, through its Proprietor- Mr. LAB PANIGRAHI S/o Mr. HARI PANIGRAHI and Guarantor- Mr. PRASHANT PANIGRAHI S/o Mr. LAB PANIGRAHI to repay the amount mentioned in the said notice being Total Rs 20,59,803/- (Rupees Twenty Lakhs fifty nine thousand eight hundred & three only) plus unapplied interest from 31/12/2022 and expenses incurred for recovery against Mortgage of Scheduled properties, within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice. The said notice was sent by R.F.A.D.			
The Borrower having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has taken Symbolic possession of the properties described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him under sub-section (4) of Section 13 of Act read with Rule 8 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 on 07/03/2023			
The Borrower in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the properties and any dealings with the properties will be subject to the charge of Bank of Maharashtra for an amount mentioned above.			
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.			
Description of the Properties:			
Description of the Moveable Properties: Primary- Hypothecation of stock receivables upto 90 days and other current assets.			
Description of the Immoveable Properties: Equitable Mortgage of Shop No. 10, Ready Made Market Camp-02, Vyasaayaik Yojna, Ward No. 25, Ravidas Nagar Ward, Circular Market, Bhlai, Dist.- Durg (C.G.) Total area - 80 SQFT, North: Gali & Plot No. 11, East: NPN Shop, South: Market Road, West: Market Road			
Date: 14.03.2023, Place: Durg Authorised Officer & Chief Manager			

	Central Bank of India राष्ट्रीय बैंक
हेड ऑफिस: लोकांगल, 1501, शिववाजिनगर, पुणे-5	
TENDER FOR AMC OF COMPUTER HARDWARE	
Central Bank of India, Regional Office, Raipur invites sealed tender from interested bidder for AMC of computer hardware in Regional Office & branches. For more information, format, terms & conditions. Please refer our website www.centralbankofindia.co.in . Last Date of Submission of Tender is 11/04/2023 by 03.00 PM.	
Regional Head	

BRIEF



Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren welcomes newly elected ASJU MLA from Ramgarh Assembly constituency Sunita Choudhary, in Ranchi, Monday.

Arrested

New Delhi: A 29-year-old Nigerian national was arrested for supplying drugs in Delhi-NCR, police said on Monday. They said 1,050 grams of Methaqualone drugs was seized from the accused, identified as Oluebube Damain. Damain came to India from Nigeria on a three-month visa in 2019 and after expiry of visa, he continued to live illegally in the country, police said.

Electrocuted

Sidhi: A tigress allegedly died of electrocution in a buffer zone of Sanjay Tiger Reserve in Madhya Pradesh's Sidhi district, a forest official said on Monday. The big cat, identified as T-32, had allegedly stepped into a trap laid by poachers and got electrocuted in Tamsar buffer zone, the reserve's field director Amit Kumar said.

Summon

New Delhi: The apex child rights body NCPDR has summoned MCD Commissioner Gyanesh Bharti and sought an action taken report from him over the death of two siblings reportedly by stray dogs in southwest Delhi's Vasant Kunj area. Two children, aged seven and five, were mauled to death by stray dogs in a forest area in Ruchi Vihar in separate incidents over two days, according to media reports.

Minor fire

Thane: Four hospital beds and some medical equipment were damaged in a minor fire allegedly triggered by unidentified persons at a defunct hospital in Maharashtra's Thane district, police said on Monday. The incident took place at a hospital in Kalyan city on around 9.15 pm on Sunday, an official said.

Solidarity

Gairsain: Days after a professor was arrested in Uttarakhand for his indecent remarks on the Bhotia tribe, a Congress MLA turned up at the state Assembly on Monday in the traditional attire worn by the tribeswomen. Congress MLA from Haridwar (rural) Anupama Rawat said she had worn the traditional clothes of Bhotia women in protest against indecent remarks made by a professor in an article.

Inspect

Shillong: After inspecting the under-construction assembly building, the dome of which collapsed last year, Meghalaya Speaker Thomas A Sangma on Monday said a high-powered committee would be re-constituted to expedite completion of the structure.

Chaos in J'khand assembly over employment policy

Ranchi, Mar 13 (PTI):

Chaos reigned supreme in the Jharkhand assembly on Monday as members of the opposition demonstrated, seeking clarification from the government over the state's employment policy.

Speaker Rabindra Nath Mahto adjourned the proceedings multiple times as opposition MLAs led by the BJP claimed the government was in contempt of the House as the state cabinet was taking decisions over the issue without any information to the assembly.

"The opposition had raised the issue on March 4. It appeared in the press that the government in-

tends to implement the pre-2016 employment policy after the new policy was scrapped by the high court. As per the rule, the government should bring the new policy in the assembly first, but it did not, which is contempt of the House," BJP MLA Neelkanth Singh Munda said. The state cabinet on Thursday approved amendments to various rules related to the Jharkhand Staff Selection Commission (JSSC) examinations, including doing away with a clause that disallowed candidates with academic certificates from institutions outside the state to appear for it.

The cabinet also gave its nod to the amendments,

which among other changes, added Hindi, English and Sanskrit to the list of languages for the JSSC examination, taking the total number of languages to 15.

Munda also sought clarification on the government's plan of introducing a 60-40 ratio in the employment system as reported in a section of the press.

Independent MLA Amit Yadav asked, "Is the government paying the way for giving jobs to outsiders through the 60-40 ratio? Will the government give relaxation in age due to the non-formulation of employment policy?"

In reply, Parliamentary Affairs Minister Alamgir

Alam said, "An employment policy was passed by the House in 2015. This government made some changes in that policy, which was scrapped by the high court. According to the decision of the court, the government is going to bring some amendments to the employment policy."

He said the government is also considering providing age relaxation to the youths.

As disruptions over the issue continued, the speaker adjourned the proceedings multiple times.

The BJP MLAs said they want a reply from Chief Minister Hemant Soren over the issue.

COMMANDO TRAINING



BSF woman commandos during a training session, at Border Security Force (BSF) center, in Hoshiarpur near Jalandhar, Monday.

'Will come up with five books on Goa trees, islands'

Panaji, Mar 13 (PTI):

Goa Governor P S Sreedharan Pillai on Monday said he would be coming out with five books on the ancient trees and islands of the coastal state.

Speaking to reporters on the sidelines of 'heritage yatra' that he undertook in the southern part of the state to learn about the rich eco-cultural traditions attached to the trees, Pillai said such information must reach the people.

"The current yatra would be followed by visits to the islands of Goa. At the end of these initiatives, I will be publishing five books which would be



P S Sreedharan Pillai

distributed free of cost to tourists. The people visiting this state should know the importance of these trees and these places," he said.

On Monday, the Governor visited Margao's Holy Spirit Church, which has a 450-

year-old tree in its compound, as well as a tree near a temple in Quepem town.

The priest of Holy Spirit Church said the tree was planted 450 years ago when the renowned place of worship was founded.

"The Heritage Tour designed by Raj Bhavan aims to highlight the importance of out valuable assets that are ancient trees. Raj Bhavan has initiated a study of 41 ancient trees, of which 31 will be declared as Heritage Trees of Goa," he informed.

Historian Sanjiv Sardesai, who accompanied the governor on the tour, hailed Pillai for the initiative.

Only 494 convicted out of 8,773 charge-sheeted

Guwahati, Mar 13 (PTI):

A mere 494 persons out of 8,773 people who were charge-sheeted for child marriage and POCSO cases in Assam have been convicted since 2017, Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said on Monday.

Replying to a query by Congress MLA Abdur Rashid Mandal in Assam Assembly, Sarma said a total of 8,773 people have been chargesheeted under Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006 (PCMA) and Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012 (POCSO) between 2017 and February 2023.

"A total of 494 persons were convicted and a total

of 6,174 persons released on bail," he added. This represents a conviction rate of just 5.63 per cent.

Sarma informed the House that 4,049 persons were arrested under the PCMA and 8,908 people have been nabbed under the POCSO (Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act) across Assam from 2017 to February this year.

During the period, 134 boys under the age of 21 years, and 2,975 girls below 18-years of age married (the permissible age of marriage for males and females respectively), he added. Reacting to the data and on the recent crackdown against child marriage accused, Mandal al-

leged that the Assam government is "terrorising" people using the two acts.

On this, Parliamentary Affairs Minister Pijush Hazarika said: "How is it terrorising people. You (Congress government) did not frame the rule. Because of vote bank politics, you did not take any initiative." This led to a noisy scene in the House with both treasury and opposition benches trading charges. In a separate query by Independent MLA Akhil Gogoi, the Chief Minister stated that 4,111 incidents of child marriage took place in the state from April 2021 to February 2023. "A total of 4,670 cases have been registered naming 7,142 ac-

cused. Already 3,483 persons have been arrested, of which 1,182 are in jail, 2,253 have got bail and notices have been issued to 48 others," he added. Sarma also informed the legislators that the government has not taken any step to take responsibility for the children born out of child marriages, but said steps will be initiated if any child requires care and security. During the debate on the Motion of Thanks on the Governor's address, Leader of the Opposition Debabrata Saikia said slapping of POCSO and rape cases on child marriage accused have created disturbances in the society with many old people getting arrested.

AIADMK demands withdrawal of case against EPS

Chennai/Madurai, Mar 13 (PTI)

Tamil Nadu's principal opposition AIADMK on Monday staged state-wide protest demanding that the ruling DMK regime 'withdraw the false case' against party interim chief Edappadi K Palaniswami (EPS).

Former Ministers Sellur K Raju, R B Udhayakumar and AIADMK organising secretary V V Rajan Chellappa led a protest in southern Madurai condemning the DMK government.

Leader of Opposition and AIADMK interim general secretary EPS's name was included by police in an FIR registered in connection with an incident in which a man was allegedly beaten up by party

workers after he shouted slogans against Palaniswami on March 11. Addressing party workers, Udhayakumar slammed Chief Minister M K Stalin as a "doll CM" who was only inaugurating schemes initiated by Palaniswami.

Hitting out at Stalin as an "autocrat," he slammed the DMK regime for filing false case against EPS. "AIADMK workers do not hesitate to go to jail (to protest against the government), this protest is only a trailer," he said.

In Pudukkottai district, senior leader C Vijayabaskar led a human chain. A former Minister, Vijayabaskar said the case against EPS is unacceptable and condemnable. Police should be impartial,

he said and wondered on what grounds police booked a case against Palaniswami.

In Chennai, party workers took out a rally and former Lok Sabha member, J Jayavardhan said Stalin is merely enacting "dramas" rather than working for people's welfare and "the Oscar award for best actor should go to Stalin." Rather than taking action against the person who used defamatory language against EPS, the police has filed a case against Palaniswami said former legislator, IS Inbadurai.

V i l l u p u r a m , T i n d i v a n a m , R a m a n a t h a p u r a m , Thanjavur, Thoothukudi were among the other places where AIADMK cadres staged protest. "We

condemn the DMK regime, take back the false case against EPS," were among the slogans raised.

When Palaniswami was travelling in an airport bus to reach the exit area after arriving in Madurai from Chennai on March 11, a man who was also inside that vehicle, raised slogans against the former CM and filmed it on his smart phone for a live video broadcast on Facebook.

When the top opposition leader alighted the bus, the man who shouted slogans against EPS was "roughed up" by AIADMK workers.

In this connection, AIADMK workers and Rajeswaran submitted petitions to police seeking action and an FIR was registered.

'Loudspeakers used for Azaan disturb people'

Mangaluru, Mar 13 (PTI):

Senior BJP leader K S Eshwarappa on Monday said loudspeakers used for 'Azaan' (muslim call for prayer) disturb people, especially students who study for examinations and patients in hospitals.

He was responding to a query on his comments on Azaan made during the party's Vijay Sankalp Yatra on Sunday at Shantinagar, which has gone viral on social media.

"Will Allah listen only if the prayers are given through loudspeakers," the former minister had asked, speaking at a rally.

"I have not shown disrespect to any religion by my statement," Eshwarappa told reporters here.

He further said leaders



K S Eshwarappa

of the Muslim community should contemplate the issue and take an appropriate decision.

The former minister also said his party wants only votes of Muslim nationalists in the coming assembly elections.

The BJP had never stated that they do not want the votes of Muslims. "We want the votes of Muslims

who are nationalists," he said. On the corruption charges being levelled against the BJP, Eshwarappa said the Congress is trying to hide their own corrupt deals during the previous government.

About the reception arranged by BJP workers to party MLA Madal Virupakshappa after he received bail in a bribery case, Eshwarappa said he does not approve of such actions by party workers.

"The Congress leaders, who are criticising this, had no qualms when they gave a rousing reception to D K Shivakumar when he got bail," he said.

Eshwarappa expressed confidence that the BJP will emerge victorious in the coming elections.

GANGA MELA



People participate in the 82nd Ganga Mela of Holi, in Kanpur, Monday.

Adfactors PR wins PRPCL



Mumbai, Mar 13:

The Cricket team of India's largest PR consultancy firm, Adfactors United emerged winners of the Public Relations' Premier Cricket League (PRPCL) 2023, West Edition, organized by the Public Relations Consultants Association of India (PRCAI) on 11th March 2023 at Khar Gymkhana, Mumbai.

In the first match of the tournament, Adfactors United set a new record in the history of PRPCL, by scoring 131 runs in

just six overs. The team entered finals with a positive net run rate of +4.77 and also, maintained the highest net run rate throughout the tournament with a difference of +2. Satveer Khairaliya, who scored 248 runs overall, was declared the Man of the Series while also receiving 2 Man of the Match awards. Sushil Mhadgut also picked up the Man of the Match title, while Karthik Bangera was awarded the Fighter of the Match in the semifinals. Commenting on the

win, Nijay N. Nair, CEO, Adfactors PR, said, "For us, sports is very deeply integrated into the cultural fabric of Adfactors PR. Be it our internal development programs or our representation in all industry-level competitions, we take the sportsperson spirit seriously. To bring the trophy home fills our hearts with pride and joy. We will continue to support our people to pursue sports just as they pursue work - with focused effort, love, and perseverance."

Ram Chandra Paudel sworn in as Nepal's third President

Kathmandu, Mar 13 (PTI):

Senior Nepali Congress leader Ram Chandra Paudel was on Monday sworn in as Nepal's third President, days after he comfortably defeated a candidate fielded by an alliance led by CPN-UML.

At a special ceremony at Sheetal Niwas, the President's Office, Acting Chief Justice Hari Krishna Karki administered the oath to 78-year-old Paudel.

Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda', Vice-President Nanda Bahadur Pun, outgoing President Bidya Devi Bhandari, Speaker Dev Raj Ghimire, National Assembly Chairman Ganesh Prasad Timilsina and other high-ranking government officials were present on the occasion.

Nepali Congress senior leader Paudel was elected the third President of the country on Thursday, defeating Subas Chandra Nembang of the CPN-UML.

Former Speaker and multiple-time minister, Paudel has traversed a long political journey to make it to the country's highest state po-



Senior Nepali Congress leader Ram Chandra Paudel takes the oath of office and secrecy as Nepal's third President, in Kathmandu, Monday.

sition. He spent over a decade in jail. He was a lawmaker six times, a minister five times, and Speaker for one term.

Paudel replaces Bidya Devi Bhandari, whose term ended on March 12.

This is the third presidential election in Nepal since the country became a republic in 2008.

Paudel had support from eight political parties. Out of 52,628 weightage-based votes, Paudel secured 33,802 while Nembang got 15,518 votes.

The outcome of the Presidential election came as a relief for the govern-

ment headed by Prime Minister 'Prachanda' as former premier KP Sharma Oli-led CPN-UML withdrew its support to his government following a rift over backing Paudel for the presidential poll.

Oli on Monday appointed Nembang as the deputy parliamentary party leader.

The term of office of the President will be five years from the date of election and an individual can be elected for the post for only two terms.

Although the post of President is largely ceremonial, Nepal's political

parties have lately shown a growing interest in the post owing to the discretionary powers the Constitution accords to the post.

Born on October 14, 1944, in Bahupokhari in a middle-class farmers' family, Paudel joined politics at the age of 16. He became the founding central member of the Nepal Students' Union, the student wing of the Nepali Congress, in 1970.

Paudel was appointed Vice president of the Nepali Congress (banned) Tanhu district committee in 1980. He was elevated to

the party's central working committee in 1987 and headed its publicity committee. He became General Secretary in 2005, Vice President in 2007 and acting president of the party in 2015.

He played an active role in the Satyagraha of 1985, People's Movement part I of 1990 and People's Movement part II of 2006. He spent 12 years in jail fighting against the autocratic Panchayat regime.

Paudel was elected to the House of Representatives from Tanhu district for the first time in 1991. Thereafter, he was continuously elected from Tanhu for six consecutive terms.

He was appointed Minister for Local Development in May 1991 and became Agriculture Minister in 1992. Paudel served as Speaker from December 1994 to March 1999. He served as Deputy Prime Minister, Minister for Home and Minister for Information and Communication from 1999 to 2002.

Paudel served as Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Peace and Reconstruction from 2007 to 2008.

MILITARY EXERCISE



U.S. Army's soldiers pass by armored vehicles to cross the Hantan river at a training field in Yeoncheon, near the border with North Korea, Monday.

IS claims bombing at Shiite centre in northern Afghanistan

Islamabad, Mar 13 (AP):

The Islamic State group has claimed responsibility for a bombing on Monday at a cultural centre run by the minority Shiite community in northern Afghanistan that killed one person and wounded eight people.

The Taliban centre of the Hazaras in Balkh's provincial capital, Mazar-e-Sharif, was struck on Saturday, during an event

honouring local journalists.

The regional affiliate of IS known as the Islamic State in Khorasan Province is a key rival of the Taliban and has frequently targeted members of Afghanistan's Shiite minority. The militant group has increased its attacks in Afghanistan since the Taliban takeover of the country in August 2021. IS attacks have also included Taliban patrols.

IS said in a statement posted on its media arm, the Amaq news agency, that the explosives were planted in a bag that was left hidden at the centre. The statements said those targeted work for an establishment "that engaged in war" against IS.

Abdul Nafi Takor, the Taliban-appointed spokesman for the interior ministry said the person killed was a security guard at the centre.

Pak court issues non-bailable arrest warrant against Imran Khan

For threatening female judge

Islamabad, Mar 13 (PTI):

A court in Pakistan on Monday issued a non-bailable arrest warrant against ousted prime minister Imran Khan for threatening a woman magistrate while addressing a public gathering here last year. Senior civil judge of Islamabad's district and sessions court Rana Mujahid Rahim has instructed the police to arrest the former prime minister and present him before the court by March 29.

The case against Khan, the chairman of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party was registered in August last year, over his

remarks at a rally here, in which he warned Additional District and Sessions Judge Zeba Chaudhry and top police officials of dire consequences for their "biased" attitude towards his party.

He also blamed them for the treatment meted out to his aide Shehbaz Gill, whom he alleged was subjected to torture in judicial custody. Initially, Imran was booked under various sections of the Pakistan Penal Code after the Islamabad High Court initiated contempt of court proceedings against the former premier.

In September last year, Khan appeared before the sessions judge to personally apologise to Chaudhry.

Consequently, the Islamabad High Court re-

moved terrorism charges against Khan. However, a similar case was filed against him after the FIR was registered. Khan, the 70-year-old former cricketer-turned-politician has heavily criticised the state institutions after a botched attempt by police to arrest him from his residence in the Zaman Park area of Lahore on the weekend. The police raid unfolded on March 5 after a court in Islamabad issued a non-bailable arrest warrant against Khan in the Toshakhana case.

Separately, Judge Zafar Iqbal of the district and sessions court in Islamabad took up the Toshakhana case against Khan on Monday. The PTI chief has been in the crosshairs for buying gifts, including an

expensive Graff wristwatch he had received as the premier at a discounted price from the state depository called Toshakhana and selling them for profit.

The Islamabad court issued a non-bailable arrest warrant in the Toshakhana case against Khan last month for his repeated failure to appear before the court. According to Khan, he was facing at least 80 different cases in various courts across Pakistan.

Khan was ousted from power in April last year after losing a no-confidence vote in his leadership, which he alleged was part of a US-led conspiracy targeting him because of his independent foreign policy decisions on Russia, China, and Afghanistan.

Tunisia's parliament convenes for first time since 2021

Tunis (Tunisia), Mar 13 (AP):

Tunisia's new parliament convened Monday, the first time the country has had a functioning legislature since the president had the previous parliament sealed off by the army in 2021.

The main opposition coalition declared it won't recognise the new parliament, whose members were chosen in December and January in elections boycotted by the president's opponents and ignored by the masses. Just 11 per cent of voters cast ballots.

During Monday's inaugural session, the lawmakers will elect a new speaker of parliament to succeed the leader of Islamist

movement Ennahdha, Rached Ghannouchi, whose party had the largest number of members in the outgoing parliament.

Unusually, only journalists from state broadcasters and the official state news agency were allowed inside the parliament for the opening session, and dozens of reporters protested outside.

The session comes amid a growing crackdown on opposition Islamists and independent media and other dissenting voices, and on migrants from sub-Saharan Africa.

President Kais Saied suspended the previous parliament in July 2021 in what he said was an effort to save the country. Saied

and many Tunisians at the time blamed the Islamist legislators for the country's economic and social crises.

Saied has since legislated by decree and moved to amass more and more power. That has raised concerns internationally, because Tunisia was the birthplace of the Arab Spring uprisings a decade ago and the only country to emerge with a new democratic system.

The new legislature has less power than its predecessor, according to a new constitution that Saied pushed through in a referendum.

It is meant to have 161 members, compared to 217 in the previous parliament. But only 154 candi-

dates were elected in the two-round legislative ballot, because no candidates bothered to run in seven electoral districts representing Tunisians abroad, reflecting widespread disillusionment with the political class.

Most political parties boycotted the elections, considering that the electoral process initiated by Saied was designed to establish his control over the country.

The main opposition coalition, the National Salvation Front, said in a statement Sunday that it doesn't recognise the new parliament "resulting from an illegitimate constitution and elections that were boycotted by a large majority."

FLOODED STREET



A man carries a table through a street flooded by heavy rains of Cyclone Yaku, in Chiclayo, Peru, Monday.

Tens of thousands of doctors kick off 3-day strike

London, Mar 13 (AP):

Tens of thousands of junior doctors went on strike across England on Monday to demand better pay, kicking off three days of widespread disruption at the UK's state-funded hospitals and health clinics. Junior doctors make up 45 per cent of all NHS doctors. Senior doctors and other medics have had to be drafted in to cover for emergency services, critical care and maternity services.

The British Medical Association, the doctors' trade union, says pay for junior doctors has fallen 26 per cent in real terms since 2008, while workload and patient waiting lists are at record highs.

The union says burnout and the UK's cost-of-living crisis are driving doctors away from the public health service. The union said newly qualified medics earn just 14.09 pounds (USD 17) an hour.

Other health workers, including nurses and paramedics, have also staged strikes in recent months to demand better pay and conditions. NHS figures show that more than 100,000 appointments have already been postponed this winter as a result of the nurses' walkouts.

Stephen Powis, medical director of NHS England, said the 72-hour strike this week is expected to have the most serious impact and

will cause "extensive disruption." He said some cancer care will likely be affected, alongside routine appointments and some operations. Prime Minister Rishi Sunak told reporters on Sunday it was

"disappointing that the junior doctors' union are not engaging with the government". The doctors' union said officials have re-

fused to engage with their demands for months, and that a recent invitation to talks came with "unacceptable" preconditions.

Pak govt makes public record of Toshakhana gifts

Retainers include Shehbaz, Nawaz, Imran Khan, Zardari

Islamabad, Mar 13 (PTI):

The Pakistan government has for the first time made public details of foreign gifts retained by officials amidst the controversy over the Toshakhana gifts sold by former premier Imran Khan.

The details of Toshakhana or the state depository were revealed on Sunday on the website of the Cabinet Division, showing the gifts retained by former presidents, prime ministers, federal

cabinet members, politicians, bureaucrats, retired generals, judges, and journalists from 2002 to 2022.

The 446-page document showed those who benefited include President Arif Alvi, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, former prime minister Imran Khan, ex-prime minister Nawaz Sharif, ex-president Asif Ali Zardari, late military dictator Pervez Musharraf, former premier Shaukat Aziz, ex-PM Yousuf Raza Gilani, ex-PM Shahid Khaqan Abbasi, ex-PM Raja Pervaiz Ashraf, ex-PM Zafarullah Khan Jamali, Senate Chairman Sadiq Sanjrani, Finance

Minister Ishaq Dar, Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari, Sheikh Rashid Ahmed, Khurshid Kasuri, Abdul Hafeez Shaikh, Jehangir Tarin, Shah Mehmood Qureshi, and Attaur Rehman among others.

The document showed that most of the gifts were retained by the office holders free of cost except for a few.

Zardari and Nawaz Sharif received one bulletproof vehicle each during their visits and retained them after paying some money to the Toshakhana.

Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan and his wife

received five precious wristwatches, ornaments, and other items.

Pervez Musharraf and Shaukat Aziz retained hundreds of foreign gifts without paying a penny.

In return for the gifts received from foreign dignitaries, these public office holders, especially the rulers, gave away gifts worth millions of rupees to the foreign delegates.

The details revealed that Zardari retained one BMW 760 Li white (security version) on January 26, 2009. The car's value was fixed at Rs 27.3 million while the former president retained it after paying a little more than Rs 4 million.

In March 2011, he retained a wristwatch worth Rs 1 million after paying Rs 158,250 for the watch and some other items.

In June 2011, he retained a wristwatch worth Rs 1.25 million after paying a sum of Rs 189,219 for the watch and some other items.

In October 2011, the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) leader retained a Cartier wristwatch worth Rs 1 million after making a payment of Rs 321,000 for the watch and a gun.

The PML-N supreme leader was gifted a Mercedes Benz car on April 20, 2008, worth Rs 4.25 million.

SOUTH EAST CENTRAL RAILWAY
APPOINTMENT OF STATION BOOKING AGENTS

No.: 2022/C/Chg./STBA/III/R, Date: 06.03.2023.

(1) Name of Work: Appointment of Station Ticket Booking Agents (STBAs) at Different Stations at NSG-6 Category Stations, over Raipur Division in South East Central Railway for issuing computerized unreserved tickets through computerized unreserved ticketing system (UTS) from interested parties for a period of Three Years. (2) EMD: ₹ 2,000/- (3) Cost of Tender Document: ₹ 590/- (₹ Five Hundred Ninety only) per application form. (4) Issue of Application Forms: From 10.00 hours to 17.00 hours from 24.03.2023 to 16.04.2023 on all office working days. (5) Last Date & Time for Submission of Application: Up to 15.00 hours on 17.04.2023. (6) Opening of Application Box: At 15.30 hours on 17.04.2023.

Application are to be drop their sealed cover addressed to Sr. Divisional Commercial Manager/ South East Central Railway, Raipur in the Application box kept in the box kept for this purpose in the office of Sr. Divisional Commercial Manager, DRM Office Complex, South East Central Railway, Near Waitlist Level Crossing Gate, RVH Colony, Raipur (Chhattisgarh) up to 15.00 hours of 17.04.2023. Railway reserves its right to either cancel the tender or rejects any or all the tenders without assigning any reason thereof. For details, eligibility criteria, terms & conditions, Stations and complete details for the above work, please contact office of the Sr. DCM/ South East Central Railway, Raipur or refer/download application document which is available on our website: www.secr.indianrailways.gov.in.

DRM (Commercial) / Raipur
PR/RS/DCM/II/240
South East Central Railway @ seccrail

SOUTH EAST CENTRAL RAILWAY
E-AUCTION NOTICE

Tender Notice no. COM/C/G/R/E-auction 697 Dt. 10.03.2023
E-auction for earning and leasing contracts from Raipur Division has been invited as under:

Sr. No.	Asset Description	Auction Date		Auction Time	
		From	To	From	To
1.	Durg station four wheeler Parking	22.03.23	15:00	15:00	15:30
2.	Raipur station Three wheeler Parking	22.03.23	15:00	15:00	15:40
3.	Bhilai power house station two wheeler Parking	22.03.23	15:00	15:00	15:50
4.	Truck and Bus parking at Telghnai naka at Raipur	22.03.23	15:00	15:00	16:00

Details of all the E-auction notification is uploaded on website www.ireps.gov.in.

Assistant Commercial Manager
SECR, Raipur
PR/RS/DCM/II/242
South East Central Railway @ seccrail

कार्यालय मुख्य चिकित्सा एवं स्वास्थ्य अधिकारी, जिला रायपुर (छ.ग.)
(e-mail :- cmho_raipur@yahoo.co.in) - Ph. No. 0771-2535304, 2535315
क्रमांक/निविदा-डी.एच.एफ.-ब्लड स्टोरेज उपकरण / सत्र/2023/ रायपुर, दिनांक ...

निविदा सूचना

कार्यालय मुख्य चिकित्सा एवं स्वास्थ्य अधिकारी, जिला रायपुर के जिला खनिज संस्थान न्यास अंतर्गत वित्तीय वर्ष 2022-23 के लिए ब्लड स्टोरेज उपकरण क्रय कार्य हेतु संबंधित कार्यों में शामिल फर्मों से निविदा आमंत्रित की जाती है। निविदा प्राप्त एवं अन्य जानकारी जिले के वेबसाइट www.raipur.gov.in में प्राप्त की जा सकती है। निविदा प्राप्त हेतु निर्धारित राशि 2000/- (दो हजार रु मात्र) CHIEF MEDICAL & HEALTH OFFICER RAIPUR के नाम से जारी डिमांड ड्राफ्ट/चेक के माध्यम से अनिवार्य रूप दिया जाना होगा, उक्त राशि वापसी योग्य नहीं है। निविदा प्राप्त भ्रकर स्थानीय कार्यालय में रजिस्टर डॉक, स्वीड पोस्ट के माध्यम से जमा कर सकते है।

- निविदा प्रपत्र खरीदने की अंतिम तिथि :-24.04.2023 - समय दोपहर 12.00 बजे तक
- निविदा जमा करने की अंतिम तिथि :-24.04.2023 - समय दोपहर 1.30 बजे तक
- निविदा खोले जाने की अंतिम तिथि :-24.04.2023 - समय अपराह्न 04.00 बजे तक

निविदा खोलने की तिथि एवं समय में अपरिहार्य कारणों से परिवर्तित किया जा सकता है, जिसकी सूचना कार्यालय के सूचना पटल में चर्चा कर दी जाएगी।

मुख्य चिकित्सा एवं स्वास्थ्य अधिकारी
जिला रायपुर छ.ग.
G-99221/1



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India Shines At Oscars

India's impressive performance at the 95th Oscars on March 12th, 2023, brought the country's cinematic talent to the fore. It was a historic night for India as two films, RRR and The Elephant Whisperers, won Best Original Song and Best Documentary Short, respectively. The recognition for these two films demonstrates the depth and diversity of Indian cinema and culture. RRR, directed by SS Rajamouli, tells the story of two freedom fighters and their bond of brotherhood, while The Elephant Whisperers documents the endearing relationship between a Kattunayakan tribal couple and their orphaned elephants. These films highlight the richness of India's cultural heritage and the varied stories that exist in the country's history. The Oscar wins for India signal that the doors to Hollywood are not only open for actors, filmmakers, and technicians, but also for Indian content. This recognition has been made possible by the emergence of international OTT platforms like Netflix and Amazon Prime Video, which have produced and showcased Indian content globally. The success of The Elephant Whisperers, produced by Guneet Monga's Sikhya Entertainment and distributed by Netflix, is a testament to this trend. In the past, Indian cinema has been largely associated with Bollywood. However, the recognition of RRR and The Elephant Whisperers at the Oscars is a reminder that Indian cinema is a diverse ecosystem comprising multiple regional film industries, each with its unique style and storytelling. These industries produce not only commercial blockbusters but also compelling documentaries and short films. The rise of independent documentaries and short films in India has been phenomenal in the last decade, thanks to the availability of platforms like YouTube. These platforms provide a cost-effective means for creative and talented young filmmakers to showcase their content to a global audience. Short films are increasingly becoming the calling card for aspiring filmmakers, and many feature films have been inspired by them. Filmmakers have also discovered that showcasing their films at international film festivals, big or small, helps them gain recognition and legitimacy in the West. The Oscar wins for RRR and The Elephant Whisperers are a proud moment for India and its film industry, both mainstream and independent. These awards have brought to the forefront the immense talent that exists in the country and the willingness of the West to welcome it. Furthermore, these wins demonstrate that there is a vast potential for Indian cinema to grow and become a force to reckon with in the global film industry. It is worth noting that India has won several Oscars in the past, including the Best Picture award for the film Slumdog Millionaire in 2009. India has also received nominations for various categories, including Best Foreign Language Film, Best Original Song, and Best Documentary Feature. These accolades underscore India's rich cinematic history and its ongoing contribution to the global film industry.

SVB collapse: A blow to Indian startups

Industry experts predict that the collapse of Silicon Valley Bank, the largest vendor in the startup ecosystem, will adversely impact the Indian startup scenario. The bank, which was closed by the California Department of Financial Protection and Innovation and appointed the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) as its receiver, had been a key supporter of Indian startups and provided banking services to many Indian companies doing business in the US. Over the years, Silicon Valley Bank had become a preferred choice of banking for startups and the tech industry in the Silicon Valley due to its understanding of the industry and flexibility in many aspects suiting the startup ecosystem. However, with the bank's collapse, experts feel a significantly large number of Indian-American founders in the Silicon Valley will be impacted as early as next week in terms of basic payments and paychecks to their employees. The collapse of SVB is also expected to have potential implications for the banking system in the US and the rest of the world, with a lot of fintech depending on the bank. The events that unfolded over the past 48 hours have been deeply disappointing and concerning, say a group of Silicon Valley-based venture capitalists after a meeting to discuss the aftermath of the bank's downfall. While some are calling for private investors to purchase the bank and its assets, others are demanding investigations into short sales by executives and clawbacks with penalties of profits made. Indian-American Republican presidential candidate Nikki Haley is against taxpayer bailouts and believes it is not the responsibility of the American taxpayer to step in. On the other hand, Indian-American presidential candidate Vivek Ramaswamy believes the likes of Prince Harry and Meghan Markle should not be bailed out. The implications of the collapse of SVB on Indian-Americans and their companies are very serious, and many are hoping for a resolution. "Hopefully the matter will get resolved, but it is a big hit for Indian startups," says Ashu Garg, a prominent Silicon Valley-based venture capitalist and early-stage investor for over two decades.

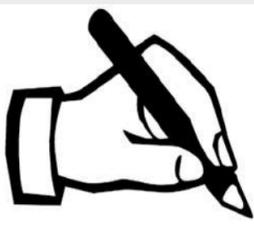
Central Chronicle invites articles, write-ups, and comments on a wide range of issues for our editorial page. Submissions should be between 800-900 words in length. In addition, we welcome letters to the editor for this page. While letters may be edited for clarity, we aim to preserve the integrity of the original message, and ask that they be kept to around 50-60 words. Submissions can be sent via email to editorcentralchronicle@gmail.com.

FULL BLOOM



Shepherds lead a herd of sheep at an Almond Orchard where trees are in full bloom marking the arrival of spring in the Valley, in Pulwama of South Kashmir, Monday.

G20: Driving Women-Led Development

**AMITABH KANT**

India's G20 Presidency comes at a critical juncture and an opportune time. Countries across the world are looking to build back better from the host of crises experienced over the past three years. From the COVID-19 pandemic to the ongoing climate crisis, it is now well-acknowledged that the impacts of a crisis are very often gendered, exacting their highest price on women and girls, impacting their safety, livelihoods and health. India's Presidency of G20 brings an enormous focus on the role of women and gender equality. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has highlighted the imperative need for tackling critical issues of women's access to finance, entrepreneurship, and labor force participation. On the domestic front, the Government of India has taken a conscious decision to place women's empowerment at the heart of its 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' development agenda, with a commitment to supporting their holistic development at all stages of life. The 'Beti Bachao Beti Padhao' scheme has led to a 16-point improvement in the sex ratio at birth since 2014. The MUDRA Scheme that provides microfinance has over 70% women beneficiaries. Mission

Poshan 2.0, an integrated nutrition support programme has served over 1.2 crore pregnant and lactating mothers. Several other steps, from the establishment of working women's hostels, to the launch of various skills-development programmes, and initiatives to secure their safety and freedom from violence - all testify to India's concerted focus on securing the Suraksha (Safety), Suidha (Convenience) and Swabhiman (Independence) of their women. Increasingly and in line with our society's civilisational ethos - the Government is also recognising the centrality of 'Nari Shakti' to affect meaningful society-wide transformation. Simply put, there is a greater focus on the role of women as drivers of growth and agents of changes, and not simply as beneficiaries of development. With India steering the efforts of the G20 in 2023 - the time has come for us to build on the momentum generated so far, and further this agenda of women-led development. Given that gender is a cross-cutting theme - affecting almost all the other development prospects we hope to see a renewed emphasis on gender equality across the entirety of the G20 Agenda, and its en-

agement groups.

In particular, we look forward to advancing concrete actions on the following themes: First, supporting women's digital and financial inclusion. Globally, almost half (42%) of women and girls remain outside the formal financial system. Despite progress in financial inclusion rates, the gender gap has not narrowed and a 7% gap persists. Digital technology innovations, particularly for information & communication, have the potential to accelerate women's economic empowerment. Yet, there remains a Digital Gender Gap, both in access to digital technology and to digital education. India has prioritised women's digital financial inclusion through the JAM or Jan Dhan-Aadhar-Mobile platform and this has allowed significant social protection programs to reach women directly as well as strengthened and women's economic empowerment. Through the G20, we must look at similar concrete ways to strengthen women's digital and financial inclusion.

Second, strengthening women's capacities to make them equal stakeholders in development. This is important both to facilitate the entry of, and to ensure continuity in women's participation in the economy and in society. For instance, despite education being wholly acknowledged as the cornerstone of empowerment - globally only 49% have achieved gender parity in primary education, 42% in lower secondary education, and 24% in upper secondary education. Globally, around 1.1 billion women and girls remain outside the formal financial system, many of whom also have limited access to digital technologies. Similarly, in coun-

tries across the world women perform significantly higher unpaid care work. Therefore, it is crucial that the G20 works together and drives consensus and actions around dismantling these long-term structural barriers that women face and their lives and at work.

Third, enabling women's leadership at all levels of decision making. Today, India is being served by over 1.90 crore women in administrative offices, over 17,000 women elected to Panchayati Raj Institutions, and over 10,000 women in the defense forces. Such an approach to women-led development will be critical for ensuring that their unique perspectives, experiences and leadership styles are brought to the table, which in turn can lead to more inclusive and effective decision-making.

Finally, it is important to ensure the sustainability of the outcomes realised across various initiatives. For this, prioritizing gender-disaggregated data systems will be critical, as investing in the collection and sharing of gender-disaggregated data will be important for developing targeted interventions, and monitoring progress towards gender equality.

Although the interlinked crises the world has faced has set us back from achieving our common development goals - India's G20 presidency offers the opportunity for us to set the agenda for next phase development. In this window of opportunity, it is critical that we place women at the heart of our efforts so as to achieve a better tomorrow.

(Author is G20 Sherpa & Former CEO, NITI Aayog, Govt of India. Views expressed are personal.)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Misuse of central agencies for political gains

The recent letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi by four Chief Ministers of the Opposition, condemning the misuse of central investigative agencies to quell dissenters, has brought to light a serious concern. According to media reports, since 2014, there has been a 4-fold increase in ED cases against politicians, with more than 95% of these cases involving Opposition parties. This raises questions as to why no leader or minister in a BJP-ruled state or in the central government has been targeted by Enforcement Directorate (ED), Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), or others. Central agencies have been seen to act against opposition leaders during political crises or just before state elections, with no major developments. This has led people to believe that these agencies are only concerned about what the present ruling government thinks of them, rather than what the public or the media thinks. Under such circumstances, it is imperative for the Opposition to stand as a united front against the Modi government in the upcoming general election. Otherwise, the misuse of central investigative agencies will continue to remain in power.

Bidyut Kumar Chatterjee, Faridabad

Humiliation

What is the end result of hullabaloo like "red-eye" and "56 inch"? Chinese aggression and intrusion into the Indian territory and Chinese claim that Galwan Valley is Chinese territory are painful to say the least. But the Indian government's prolonged silence on this issue and the Indian foreign minister's recent declaration that China is a bigger economy and India cannot pick a fight with it cause more pain and anguish. This again proves that empty vessels make the most sound. One author has rightly compared this with the events in 1971 revolving around the creation of Bangladesh. Though the American economy was far more bigger than the Indian economy and Americans were threatening to send the Seventh Fleet to Bay of Bengal but that did not prevent India from taking the right and necessary action at that time. It is a pity that now the humiliation at the hands of China has been rationalized with an excuse that puts unwanted pressure and a question mark to our sovereignty.

Sujit De, Kolkata

Breaking Barriers: Including People with Disabilities in India's Development Story

As India approaches its 100th anniversary as a nation, it is also poised to become the world's third-largest economy by 2027. However, it is imperative that this growth story includes people with disabilities, who have long been marginalized and isolated. Despite being a significant part of the population, they continue to face discrimination and barriers to education, employment, and social inclusion.

India has made some strides in protecting the rights of people with disabilities. The Rights for Persons with Disabilities (RPwD) Act, passed in 2016, provides a comprehensive legal framework for promoting equality and prohibiting discrimination. Additionally, the government's Accessibility India cam-

campaign seeks to create a barrier-free environment for independent living. However, the implementation of these policies has been lacking in many cases.

To create an enabling environment for people with disabilities, four areas need to be addressed: disability-specific data, accessibility, finances, and awareness. There is a lack of reliable data on disability and disabled people in India, which leads to exclusion from various programs and services. Disability-specific data needs to be collected and managed across various sectors to ensure that the needs



of people with disabilities are adequately addressed.

Accessibility is another crucial aspect that needs attention. Public spaces, transportation, and websites need to follow the principles of universal design to ensure

that people with disabilities can access education, health-care, employment, and housing. It is essential to create an enabling environment that allows people with disabilities to live with dignity and independence.

Lastly, raising awareness and understanding about disability is critical in breaking down barriers and reducing stigma. People with disabilities face multiple layers of discrimination, particularly women and girls, who are more vulnerable to violence, neglect, and exploitation. Creating an inclusive society requires a concerted effort from policymakers, practitioners, and society as a whole.

In conclusion, India's growth story must include people with disabilities. To ensure this, there needs to be a focus on disability-specific data, accessibility, finances, and awareness. By addressing these issues, we can create an enabling environment that allows people with disabilities to participate fully in India's development and achieve their full potential.

BRIEF

Investor pressure



New Delhi: Industry veteran T V Mohandas Pai has said startups which do almost all their business in India and have all their employees here should resist any pressure from large investors to domicile outside, as the former Infosys director and chairman of Aarin Capital cited key lessons to be drawn from the collapse of Silicon Valley Bank. Pai advised founders of India-centric startups "to be careful" and "not get carried away" by investors who force companies they fund, to domicile in the US and open bank accounts there as well. Pai said Silicon Valley Bank was a startup-friendly bank and its collapse is a "blow" to the startup ecosystem.

LEAN scheme



New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday said the government's MSME Competitive (LEAN) scheme is a part of its efforts to strengthen the MSME sector, which is a key pillar of India's economic growth. The government on Friday launched the revamped MSME Competitive (LEAN) scheme to make it more beneficial for enterprises and stakeholders. Under the revamped scheme, the Centre's contribution will be 90 per cent of the implementation cost for hand holding and consultancy fees as against 80 per cent previously.

SVB collapse impact



New Delhi: Minister of State for Electronics and IT Rajeev Chandrasekhar will meet representatives of start-ups this week to assess the impact of their exposure to Silicon Valley Bank which was deeply entrenched in the tech startup ecosystem. According to various industry players and experts, most Indian software-as-a-services startups with a presence in the US and firms linked to incubator Y Combinator are among entities that will feel the heat of the Silicon Valley Bank collapse but the impact is likely to be short-term. "The SVB Financial closure is certainly disrupting startups across the world. Startups are an imp part of New India Economy. I will meet with Indian Startups this week to understand impact on them how @narendramodi govt can help during this crisis," Chandrasekhar tweeted on Sunday.

E-rupee worth over Rs 130 crore in circulation: Sitharaman

New Delhi, Mar 13:



Digital or e-rupee worth over Rs 130 crore is in circulation on a pilot basis as of February 28, finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman said on Monday. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) had launched pilots in digital rupee in the wholesale segment (e-W) on November 1, 2022 and in the retail segment (e-R) on December 1, 2022. Nine banks, viz., State Bank of India, Bank of Baroda, Union Bank of India, HDFC Bank, ICICI Bank, Kotak Mahindra Bank, Yes Bank, IDFC First Bank and HSBC, have been participating in the digital rupee wholesale pilot, Sitharaman said. "As on February 28, 2023, the total digital rupee - Retail (e-R) and digital rupee - wholesale (e-W) in circulation is Rs 4.14 crore and Rs 126.27

crore, respectively," Sitharaman said in a written reply in the Lok Sabha. The e-R is in the form of a digital token that represents legal tender. It is being issued in the same denominations that paper currency and coins are currently issued. It is being distributed through financial intermediaries, i.e., banks. Users can transact with e-R through a digital wallet offered by the participating banks and stored on mobile

phones/devices. The e pilot for retail segment was launched on December 1, 2022 in 5 select locations in closed user group for making Person to Person (P2P) and Person to Merchant (P2M) transactions.

The on-boarded merchants comprise various segments like tea vendors, fruit sellers, street side and sidewalk vendors (including migrant fruit vendors selling on the pavement opposite the RBI's headquarters, Mumbai), small shopkeepers etc," Sitharaman said. Further, institutional merchants like retail chains, petrol pumps etc. have also been on-boarded to enable transactions in digital rupee across various outlets. Few online merchants have also been enabled to accept digital rupee for the convenience of users.

In the approximately

three months of the pilot, the total digital rupee - Retail (e-R) in circulation in the select locations is Rs 4.14 crore, the minister said. "Various use cases, technological architecture and design features are being tested during the pilot... Further steps, including expansion of use case, have to be through a phased implementation strategy on the basis of feedback received during the pilots," Sitharaman added.

The currency in circulation has gone up to Rs 31.33 lakh crore in March 2022, from Rs 13 lakh crore in 2014, finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman said in the Lok Sabha on Monday. The currency in circulation, which includes bank notes and coins, to GDP ratio stood at 13.7 per cent as on March 25, 2022, up from 11.6 per cent as on March 2014.

Retail inflation dips marginally to 6.44 pc in Feb

New Delhi, Mar 13:

Retail inflation dipped marginally to 6.44 per cent in February, mainly on account of a slight easing in prices of food and fuel items, as per government data released on Monday. The inflation rate based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI) stood at 6.52 per cent in January and 6.07 per cent in February 2022. The inflation rate for the food basket was 5.95 per cent in February, lower than 6 per cent in January. Except for November and December 2022, retail inflation has remained above the RBI's

upper tolerance level of 6 per cent since January 2022. The Reserve Bank has projected retail inflation at 6.5 per cent for 2022-23, with the January-December quarter at 5.7 per cent. The central bank has been mandated by the government to ensure the retail inflation remains at 4 per cent with a margin of 2 per cent on either side. To contain the rising prices, the RBI has hiked interest rates by 250 basis points since May last year. The latest rate hike of 25 basis points in February took the benchmark policy rate to 6.50 per cent.

EPF member accounts of 98 pc contributory firms updated till March 6: Labour Min

New Delhi, Mar 13:

Employees' provident fund (EPF) member accounts of 98 per cent of contributory firms or establishments have been updated with the latest interest credit till March 6, 2023, Parliament was informed on Monday. Many members and employees' representatives have raised the issue of not crediting the rate of interest on EPF for 2021-22, which was fixed at 8.1 per cent. "This (interest crediting) is an ongoing process, which has been taken up in a scheduled manner post development



of software and by March 6, 2023, the process has been completed in respect of 98 per cent of contributory establishments," stated Minister of State for Labour and Employment Rameshwar Teli in a written reply to the Lok Sabha

Amitava Mukherjee takes additional charge as CMD NMDC Limited

Hyderabad, Mar 13:

Amitava Mukherjee, Director (Finance), takes additional charge as Chairman-Cum-Managing Director at NMDC Limited, India's largest producer of iron ore and a Navaratna CPSE under the Ministry of Steel.

He belongs to the 1995 Batch of Indian Railway Accounts Service (IRAS). He is also Cost Accountant and holds Master's Degree in Commerce from Guru Ghasidas Vishwavidyalaya, Bilaspur.

During his tenure as Director (Finance), NMDC recorded best ever financial performance in company history with a turnover of Rs 25,882 cr. Profit Before Tax (PBT) of Rs.12,981 cr and Profit



After Tax (PAT) of Rs.9,398 cr in FY22.

He has spearheaded implementation of ERP (S4/HANA), and has been driving other digitalization initiatives like Mine Transportation & Surveillance System, Fleet Management System. Under his stewardship the demerger of NMDC Steel Ltd from NMDC Ltd. was

completed in a time bound manner and shares of NSL were listed in stock exchange on 20.02.2023. Project Management, digital initiatives, and policy formulation are his forte. He has led the Australia operations of NMDC to pre-production stage (Gold) and also finalized a strategic tie up with a large international mining giant Hancock Prospect expeditiously, monetizing Iron Ore mining tenement. Prior to joining NMDC, he was General Manager (Finance) in Rail Vikas Nigam Limited (RVNL). During his service in IRAS from 1996-2016, he held key position in the Eastern Railways. Before joining IRAS, he worked in Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL) from 1994-1997.

LIC's debt exposure in Adani group cos dips marginally to Rs 6,183 crore

New Delhi, Mar 13:

LIC's debt exposure in Adani group companies fell marginally to Rs 6,183 crore as of March 5 from Rs 6,347 crore as of December 31, 2022, Parliament was informed on Monday.

In a written reply to the Lok Sabha, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said, "The Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) has informed that its debt exposure to Adani Group of Companies, was Rs 6,347.32 crore and Rs 6,182.64 crore, as on December 31, 2022, and March 5, 2023, respectively". LIC has a debt exposure of Rs 5,388.60 in Adani Ports and SEZ as of March 5.

LAKME FASHION WEEK



Actor Karishma Kapoor at Lakme Fashion Week, in Mumbai.

Market turmoil leaves investors poorer by more than Rs 4.4 lakh crore

New Delhi, Mar 13:

Domestic equity investors' wealth eroded by more than Rs 4.43 lakh crore on Monday as fears of a financial contagion triggered by one of the biggest bank failures in the US roiled market sentiments. After a strong opening, Indian stocks went into a tailspin with the benchmark 30-share BSE Sensex tumbling nearly 900 points to close at 58,237.85 points - sliding for the third straight trading session.

The NSE Nifty too de-

clined 258.60 points to end at 17,154.30 points. Reflecting the massive sell-off across sectors, the total market valuation of BSE-listed companies stood at Rs 2,58,56,295.60, leaving investors poorer by Rs 4,43,023.89 compared to the closing level on Friday. The total market valuation was at Rs 2,62,99,319.49 at the end of trading on Friday, when the key index had crashed more than 670 points. Out of the 3,757 stocks that traded on the BSE, as many as 2,915 closed in the red while 695 managed gains.

Sensex tanks nearly 900 points to close below 59k; Nifty tests 17,000

Mumbai, Mar 13:

Falling for the third straight session, equity benchmark Sensex tanked nearly 900 points to close below the 59,000 mark on Monday due to a massive sell-off in banking, finance and auto stocks amid one of the biggest US bank failures. Besides, unabated flight of foreign capital and a weak domestic currency amid global rate hike fears added to the gloom, traders said. After gaining 375 points in the early trade, the BSE Sensex could not hold to gains and declined 897.28 points or 1.52 per cent to settle at 58,237.85 as 29 of its constituents declined while only one advanced. During the day, it hit a low of 58,094.55 and a high of 59,510.92. The NSE Nifty



fell 258.60 points or 1.49 per cent to end at 17,154.30, with 45 of its scrips ending in the red. IndusInd Bank was the biggest loser in the Sensex pack, shedding 7.46 per cent, followed by SBI, Tata Motors, M&M, Bajaj Finserv, Axis Bank and Infosys. In contrast, Tech Mahindra was the only winner. In the broader market, the BSE small-cap gauge dipped 2.08 per cent and the midcap index declined 1.82 per cent. The US-based SVB Financials, which mainly funds startups, crashed 60 per cent in

the US market last week, triggering concerns over the health of banks' bond portfolios and its possible rippling effects globally. "...jitters over the largest US bank failure since the 2008 financial crisis, driving investors to the safe-haven asset," Navneet Damani, Senior VP - of Commodity Research at Motilal Oswal Financial Services, said. In Asian markets, Shanghai, Hong Kong and Seoul ended in the green, while Tokyo settled lower. European equity markets were trading with significant losses in the afternoon trade. Meanwhile, the rupee declined 10 paise to close at 82.16 against the US dollar on Monday. International oil benchmark Brent crude declined 1.79 per cent to USD 81.30 per barrel.

IDFC Mutual Fund rebrands to Bandhan Mutual Fund

Mumbai, Mar 12:

IDFC Mutual Fund adopted its new brand identity as Bandhan Mutual Fund on Monday, March 13, 2023. Consequently, each scheme of the fund house will be renamed to replace the word 'IDFC' with the word 'Bandhan'. Since the underlying investment strategy, processes, and team continue to remain the same, investors can benefit from the same high-quality investment approach that the fund house is reputed for.

Sharing more insights about the change in brand identity, Vishal Kapoor, CEO of the AMC said, "Our new name reflects our new sponsorship, and we are proud to now be a part of the Bandhan Group. Backed by the legacy, goodwill, and inclusive-



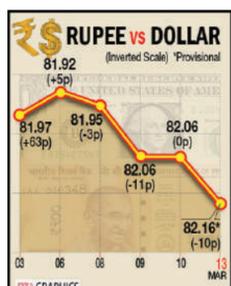
ness that our Sponsors represent, we are confident that our investors will continue to benefit from the same passion, expertise, and focus that they have experienced over the years. With a collective ambition of growing even faster, we are excited about the journey and opportunities that lie ahead. Our new brand identity is a testament to the universality of our commitment and the strength of our resolve to help every saver become an investor."

The fund house brings together a strong foundation in serving investors through a slew of well-defined products and a deep commitment to empowering communities.

Rupee falls 10 paise to close at 82.16 against US dollar

New Delhi, Mar 13:

The rupee pared its initial gains to settle 10 paise down at 82.16 (provisional) against the US dollar on Monday, tracking the weak sentiment in the domestic equity market and unabated foreign fund outflow. Traders said fall in crude oil price and weaker dollar against major currencies, however, restricted the fall of the Indian currency. At the interbank foreign exchange market, the local unit opened stronger at 81.78 against the American currency and touched a low of 82.20 during intra-day. It settled at 82.16 (provisional) against the greenback, registering a loss of 10 paise over its previous close of 82.06. Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength



against a basket of six currencies, fell 0.37 per cent to 104.19. Global oil benchmark Brent crude futures declined 1.72 per cent to USD 81.36 per barrel. On the domestic equity market front, the 30-share BSE Sensex declined 897.28 points or 1.52 per cent to end at 58,237.85, while the broader NSE Nifty fell 258.60 points or 1.49 per cent to 17,154.30.

RBI may hike benchmark lending rates by 25 bps in April policy: DBS Research

New Delhi, Mar 13:

The Reserve Bank is likely to hike benchmark lending rates by 25 basis points in its bi-monthly policy next month to bring down inflation within the central bank's comfort zone, DBS Group Research said on Monday. To contain the rising prices, the RBI has hiked interest rates by 250 basis points since May last year. The latest rate hike of 25 basis points in February took the benchmark policy rate to 6.50 per cent. In an online session on "Growth resilience and sticky inflation", DBS Group Research Executive Director & Senior Economist Radhika Rao said the RBI may hike interest rates by 25 basis points in April and maintain a hawkish bias as retail inflation is still high. Retail inflation in January spiked to 6.52 per cent against 5.72 per cent in December last year.

AI offers many opportunities, also raises concerns on privacy & fairness: CAG Murmu

Guwahati, Mar 13:

Comptroller and Auditor General Girish Chandra Murmu on Monday stressed on responsible use of artificial intelligence, saying while this emerging technology has the potential to contribute USD 15.7 trillion to the global economy by 2030, it also raises concerns related to privacy and fairness. In his opening remarks at the SAI20 Senior Officials' Meeting, the CAG also advocated the need for balance between short-term growth and long-term sustainability of the blue economy, as the blue economy can make all the difference to planet earth and sustenance thereon. SAI20 has chosen two themes representing new-age opportunities and con-



cerns - blue economy (sustainability aspect) and responsible AI (emerging technologies) - and emphasised the need for gender balance in blue economy and principles underlying responsible and ethical use of AI. As India holds the presidency of the G20, the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) is the chair for SAI20 - the engagement group of Supreme Audit Institutions (SAI) of the G20.



Deepshikha comes back strong after undergoing a major surgery

Deepshikha Nagpal is a versatile actress who has portrayed compelling characters in numerous films and serials. She has been a part of Indian Television Industry from a very long time. She currently plays the character of 'Satyavati Raichand' in Star Bharat's 'Na Umra Ki Seema Ho'. Deepshikha Nagpal, who fervently adores her profession, discloses that she recently underwent a major surgery.

She says, "Recently I got sick from food poisoning due to which I had a very bad stomach ache so I consulted a doctor where the doctor asked me to get it checked because the pain was persistent, so I underwent sonography and discovered I had cysts in my stomach. The size of the cysts was comparable to that of a 10-week pregnancy. The doctor advised me to get the cysts removed because they were serious and could complicate and worsen my health if they were left untreated. And since we had a major drama coming up in the show I was fully packed on my schedule so with-

out informing anyone I completed my parts and waited for my day off and then underwent the surgery to get the cyst removed."

She further adds, "After surgery, with the doctor's recommendations and consultation I took a few days off and bounced back to work where I completed the main drama for the forthcoming episode of the show. I also took proper rest in between. When the crew members came to know about my surgery they took complete care of me and the whole team were quite understanding and helpful. I am slowly recovering and for me as an actor, work is always a priority no matter what, so the show must go on, may what happen"

The current sequence of 'Na Umra Ki Seema Ho' has hooked the audience by its twists and turns where Dev and Vidhi have already begun a life together and the audience will witness a major drama in their life as Dev's past get unveiled in the upcoming sequence.

Stay tuned to witness the upcoming drama in 'Na Umra Ki Seema Ho', every Monday to Saturday at 8pm only on Star Bharat.

IIFA 2023: Hattrick for Gangubai Kathiawadi; Drishyam 2

The International Indian Film Academy and Awards (IIFA) returns with its 23rd edition to Yas Island, Abu Dhabi, on May 26th and 27th.

The countdown to the biggest celebration of Indian cinema has begun. With the International Indian Film Academy and Awards (IIFA) scheduled to take place at Yas Island, Abu Dhabi, on May 26th and 27th, 2023, the winners of the Technical Awards for the 23rd edition of IIFA have been announced. IIFA ROCKS will be hosted by producer-director Karan Johar and director-choreographer Farah Khan. There will be live performances by Amit Trivedi, Badshah, Sunidhi Chauhan, Nucleya, Mika Singh, and Sukhbir.

The 9 Categories of Technical Awards include Cinematography, Screenplay, Dialogue, Choreography, Sound Design, Editing, Special Effects (Visuals), Background Score and Sound Design. **Sanjay Leela Bhansali's Alia Bhatt starrer Gangubai Kathiawadi bags 3 Awards**

- Cinematography - Sudeep Chatterjee
- Screenplay- Sanjay Leela Bhansali, Utkarshini Vashishtha
- Dialogue- Utkarshini Vashishtha, Prakash Kapadia

Anees Bazmee's horror comedy, Bhool Bhulaiyaa 2, featuring Kartik Aaryan and



Kiara Advani, wins 2 Awards

- Choreography for title track - Bosco Caesar
- Sound Design - Mandar Kulkarni

Ajay Devgn's crime thriller Drishyam 2 - 1 Award

- Editing - Sandeep Francis Ranbir Kapoor and Alia

Bhatt's action adventure, Brahmastra: Part One-

- Special Effects (Visual) - DNEG, Redefine
- Hritik Roshan and Saif Ali Khan's Vikram Vedha - 1 Award
- Background Score - Sam CS
- Rajkumar Rao, Huma Qureshi, Radhika Apte starrer Monica O My Darling - 1 Award
- Sound Mixing - Gunjan A Sah, Boloy Kumar Doloi, Rahul Karpe

The global IIFA AWARDS will be hosted by Vicky Kaushal, and Abhishek Bachchan. The IIFA magic will escalate with live performances by Bollywood A-listers like Salman Khan, Varun Dhawan, Jacqueline Fernandez, Rakul Preet Singh, Nora Fatehi, and many more.

Hrithik mania hits Japan



barriers of language and boundaries, the Hrithik Roshan starrer has found its audience in Japan, as the film is inundated with abundant love for Bang Bang.

Recently a video of a Japanese duo recreating the iconic chartbuster 'Tu Meri' from Bang Bang surfaced on the internet, followed by a huge number of social media reels on 'Tu Meri' as well as 'Uff' from the film. In fact, the viral fever caught on to the Indian audience too, which is evident through the numerous reels on social media, grooving to the song 'Uff' including various TV actors and influencers.

Hrithik Roshan's superstardom has been unparalleled ever since his debut, continuing to rule the audience across the globe. The latest testimony of his unfathomable fan base could be witnessed with audience connecting & being thoroughly entertained with the release of Bang Bang in Japan.

Currently, on the workfront, Hrithik Roshan is gearing for Fighter, which marks his third collaboration with Siddharth Anand after the success of Bang Bang and War.

Heartwarming fan moments!

The undying love of a fan makes an artist into a household name. And often, meeting fans makes a lifetime memory that the artists cherish. During their recent outstation visit, &TV lead actors Kamna Pathak, Rajesh Singh from Happu Ki Ultan Paltan, and Vidisha Srivastava, Anita Bhabi from Bhabiji Ghar Par Hai shared heart-warming moments with their fans. And this is what they had to say about it. Kamna Pathak, essaying Rajesh Singh, shares, "For every actor, there is a fan. And these fans make the actor a household name. I feel that an artist is successful when people start recognising them by their character. It makes me happy when people call me Rajesh or, at times, Dabbang Dulhania. My show, Happu Ki Ultan Paltan, has given me a lot. But I will forever be thankful for the fan following I enjoy because of this show. Whenever I go out, and somebody calls me by my character name, I feel the happiest. The amount of love our fans show us is



unmatchable, and sometimes their gestures make me emotional and memorable. Like recently, I visited my hometown of Indore, as I had come to seek blessings from Mahakal in Ujjain during Mahashivratri. While exploring the famous Sarafa Bazaar, many kids approached me, addressing me as Rajesh. They also asked me, 'Happu Ji kahan hai?' I replied, "Happu ji nyochar lene mein busy hai" (laughs)". Also, during that trip, I met two ladies who came and hugged me tightly, and one of them asked me, 'Yeh 9

bacchon ko kaise sambhal leti hai aap? Humse toh two nahi sambhale jaate, which was very amusing. Even during my Mahakal darshan, our pandit ji called me Rajesh instead of Kamna, which was overwhelming and made me feel quite accomplished. People recognising you as your character in your hometown are very special. I could not be more grateful for the love and appreciation I received from Indorians and people from Ujjain as Rajesh."

Vidisha Srivastava, essaying Anita Bhabi, says,

"Fans are an integral part of every actor's life as they are the ones to make us or break us. It is because of them that we are who we are today. They have different methods of showing love, giving feedback, and reviewing. One such fan moment I vividly remember from my recent Varanasi visit is that of a newly married couple preparing for Ganga Aarti at Dashashwamedh Ghat. The bride saw me and immediately came running towards me with the groom and asked me to bless them on their most memorable day. More than them, I was surprised and touched by that gesture. For a moment, I felt like a guest at their wedding. The newlywed couple was happiest taking pictures with me, and I was no different. I also visited my old house at Kabir Chaura and was delighted to see some of my old neighbours and little kids calling me Anita Bhabi. Honestly, such moments are extraordinary in an actor's life. I feel so fortunate to receive such love and appreciation for my work."

'Bade Acche Lagte Hain 2' takes a 3-year leap

With the 20-year leap, Sony Entertainment Television's most adored show, 'Bade Acche Lagte Hain 2' has garnered massive fan adulation for its fresh perspective of one-sided love in new-age relationships. Layered with relatable issues like class divide and a battle for acceptance, this narrative is brought alive by well-known television actors, Niti Taylor, Pooja Banerjee, Ranndeeep R Rai and Leenesh Mattoo who have impressed the audience with their portrayal of Prachi, Pihu, Raghav and Angad respectively.

So far, viewers have witnessed Raghav's one-sided love for Prachi, but he can't profess his love since he believes she is out of his league and because of his loyalty to LK (Hitesh Tejwani). Simultaneously, Josh has created a misunderstanding between the Kapoor family and Raghav that has landed him trouble with LK asking him to leave the Kapoor Mansion.

The story now moves forward 3 years where



Raghav will be seen as a successful architect with only Pihu and Angad supporting him through these years. His character is sure to see pivotal changes that promises to bring forth an intriguing twist in the tale. Elaborating more on the same Ranndeeep shares, "When someone is deeply hurt, it moulds them into a different personality - making them more cynical towards the world in an effort to protect themselves. I've also gone through a phase where I thought it's better to be alone, than to get hurt - as is Raghav."

'Baalveer' to weave magic once again

Sony SAB is set to bring back its highly popular franchise series, which has captured the hearts of Indian audiences. The new season promises to be an epic adventure that will feature action, drama, and lots of magic. Dev Joshi, who has become synonymous with the titular character, will be reprising his role. The actor has played the character of Baalveer in both the original show and its follow-up series, Baalveer Returns. Sony SAB aims to continue producing family-friendly content that appeals to everyone in the household with the return of Baalveer.

The upcoming season focuses on Baalveer; a 24-



year-old superhero who faces a challenging situation. In the past seasons,



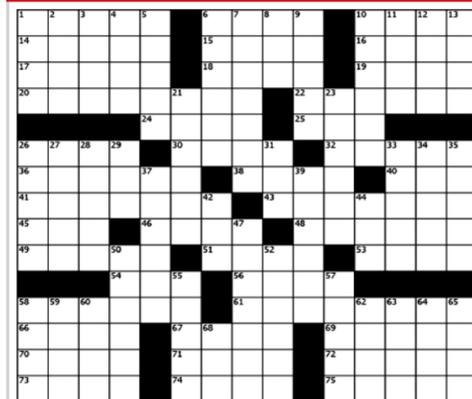
Baalveer has been on a mission to help and rescue people in need. However, this time the show will be pegged on his own journey - his fall and rise, how he gets his lost powers back in addition to helping the needy. Baalveer is stripped of his powers magic and memories, and he is sent to live with a regular family as Veer. The season centers on Baalveer's

quest to reclaim his identity. The beloved superhero must once again rise to the occasion and become the ultimate hero, and viewers will have the opportunity to witness his journey.

Dev Joshi, who is set to don the mantle of Baalveer once again, says, "The new season promises to be filled with thrilling action, engaging drama, and of course, lots of magic. I have grown up playing this role and it has now become a part of me. It's been a long and fulfilling journey and I feel a strong connection to the character and the show. I cherish the invaluable experiences and memories that I have gained from it."

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ACROSS

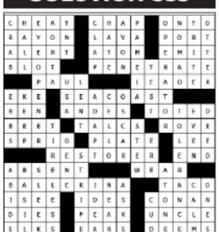
- Notches
- Fruit drinks
- Tibetan priest
- Subject
- Profound
- Heroic
- Foolish
- Tortoise's opponent
- Gull's kin
- Gave in
- Main dish

DOWN

- Agitated
- Unescorted
- Milky stone
- Fork point
- Odor
- Stick fast
- Without expression
- Poet's eternity
- Swiftness
- Mailbox item
- Copier
- Marsh
- Skin woe
- Least wild
- Deny
- Monsters
- Nighttime vision
- River mouth

- Tidier
- Brainy
- Desk light
- Siestas
- Museum offering
- Adjacent
- Walk cautiously
- Allot
- Correct copy
- Pleasing
- Stately home
- Auction off
- Forest plant
- Zeal
- "A ___ of Two Cities"
- Large bodies of water
- Cozy retreats
- Observe
- Road material
- Large artery
- Slumber
- Looks intently
- Fidel
- Mail friend (2 wds.)
- Slippery fish
- Bond creator ___ Fleming
- Cure-all
- Infant's toy
- Free-for-alls
- Portable shelters
- Director ___ Polanski
- Exam
- Brainstorm
- Tablet
- Show concern
- No ifs, ___ or butts
- Horn sound
- Miscalculates
- Great anger

SOLUTION 585



India win Border-Gavaskar Trophy for 4th consecutive time

Ahmedabad, Mar 13 (PTI):

On an uneventful day of cricket, India qualified for the World Test Championship (WTC) final and clinched the Border-Gavaskar Trophy for the fourth successive time after the fourth and final match against Australia ended in a draw, here on Monday.

India's spot in the WTC final against Australia was locked before the post-lunch session when Sri Lanka lost the Christchurch Test to New Zealand by two wickets as Kane Williamson's magnificent hundred steered his side to one of the most thrilling wins in Test cricket.

Australia were 175 for 2 in 78.1 overs in their second innings with a lead of 84 runs when the two



Indian cricketers pose for photos with the trophy after the end of the fourth test cricket match between India and Australia, at Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad, Monday.

teams agreed to settle for a draw.

India have now beaten Australia by an identical 2-

1 margin in the last four series - 2017 (home), 2018-19 (away), 2020-21 (away) and now 2023 at home.

It was a 'Memorable Monday' for India as a country in both performing arts and sports with

'RRR's song 'Natu Natu' getting the Oscar for the best song and Elephant Whisperers winning the Best Documentary Award'.

By the afternoon, cricket added to the list of global accomplishments and now Rohit Sharma would love to break the decade-long ICC Trophy jinx.

With a featherbed of a track on offer, which former Australian opener Mark Waugh sarcastically said can host a "22-day Test match", an outcome favouring either side was almost impossible, with only two completed innings in four days.

For Australia, it was important that their batters made the best use of the flat surface without being under pressure as they had already qualified for the WTC final.

Dravid on playing WTC final right after IPL

'It is going to be a challenge'

Ahmedabad, Mar 13 (PTI):

Playing the World Test Championship (WTC) final against Australia within one week of the IPL's conclusion is going to be a huge challenge, India head coach Rahul Dravid said on Monday.

Termining it a "challenge", the Indian head coach said they would have to plan it out properly.

"We just qualified at lunchtime today. I wasn't counting my chickens before they hatched. We'll celebrate this for starters," Dravid said after the Test match.

"It is going to be a challenge. There's going to be a lot of logistics involved given the IPL final is only a week before the WTC final. We'll think about it."

The WTC final will be played at The Oval in London from June 7-11,



while the IPL ends on June 1.

Regarding the Test series against Australia, Dravid was most impressed by the Indian team's ability to fight back from extremely difficult situations.

"Whenever we were under pressure with our backs to the wall we had to respond and we always found that. It's one of the heartening things about

coaching this team," Dravid told the official broadcaster Star Sports.

"Rohit led the way in the first Test with a brilliant hundred and it was book-ended by Virat Kohli's brilliant 186. In the middle we had performances from (Ravichandran) Ashwin, (Ravindra) Jadeja, Axar (Patel), Shubman there. I've probably missed out a few. I think our fight stood out."

'Not in a space where I'll go out and prove someone wrong'



Ahmedabad, Mar 13 (PTI):

Indian star batter Virat Kohli, who ended his century drought in Tests with a patient 186 against Australia here, on Monday said he's not in a "space where I will go out and prove someone wrong".

Kohli endured a painful wait of more than three years to notch his Test century number 28, the knock helping India finish with

571 in reply to Australia's 480 in the drawn fourth and final game. "The expectations that I have for myself as a player are more important to me," Kohli told the official broadcasters after being adjudged Player of the Match. "I am not in a space now where I will go out and prove someone wrong. I also need to justify why I am there on the field," Kohli, who now has 75 international centuries, said.

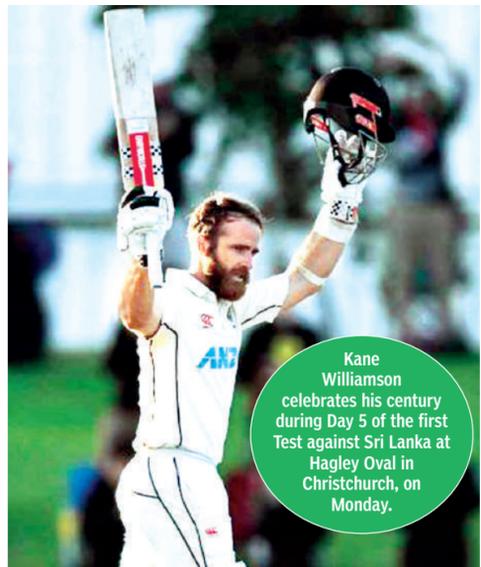
New Zealand beats Lanka on last ball of 1st cricket Test

Christchurch, Mar 13 (AP):

Kane Williamson and Neil Wagner stole a bye from the last ball of the first cricket Test Monday to beat Sri Lanka by two wickets and emphasize New Zealand's aptitude for extraordinary Test match victories.

Only two weeks after New Zealand beat England by a single run at the Basin Reserve, the Black Caps again played a part in one of the most incredible finishes in Test match history.

Rain seemed to have wrecked the final day of the match in Christchurch when it prevented play in the scheduled first two sessions. When it cleared the umpires announced a single extended session in which New Zealand needed 257 runs to win and Sri Lanka needed nine wickets. A winning result



Kane Williamson celebrates his century during Day 5 of the first Test against Sri Lanka at Hagley Oval in Christchurch, on Monday.

seemed impossible though the session was extended to at least 52 overs and

more than 3-1/2 hours. In what turned into a 50-overs match, then a 20-

overs match, Williamson made an unbeaten 121 to guide New Zealand to a narrow victory.

A limpid rainbow hung over Hagley Park as the players came out in the late afternoon to play out the last chapter of an absorbing match. The Sri Lanka fielders were shielding their eyes against the setting sun as the last overs were bowled and darkness engulfed the ground just as the players left the field.

New Zealand needed 131 runs off the last 20 overs, then 101 off the last 15 with Williamson steering the innings. Williamson had support from Daryl Mitchell, who made 102 in the first innings and produced another crucial innings of 81 on Monday, accelerating New Zealand's scoring rate. When he was out New Zealand still needed 53 to win.

Brook beats Jadeja to ICC player of month award

Dubai, Mar 13 (PTI):

England's Harry Brook on Monday overcame India's Ravindra Jadeja and Gudakesh Motie of the West Indies to win the ICC player of the month award for February with Australian Ashleigh Gardner claiming the top prize in the women's section.

Brook bagged his second player of the month award after his exploits in New Zealand Test series, becoming only the second man to win it on two separate occasions along with Babar Azam of Pakistan.

Gardner won the honour following Australia's successful ICC women's T20 World Cup campaign recently. Gardner has also won it two times now, after winning one last December. The outcomes of the ICC



Player of the Month Awards for February replicate the results of December 2022, where both claimed their maiden awards following prolific months for their respective teams in short and long formats of the game, the ICC said in a release. Gardner was crowned after a series of outstanding performances inspired Australia's successful defence of their Women's T20 World Cup crown in South Africa.

'Jadeja will be Chennai Super Kings' X factor in IPL 2023'

Mumbai, Mar 13, (PTI):

Former India and Chennai Super Kings cricketer Harbhajan Singh feels that star all-rounder Ravindra Jadeja will be the X factor for the four-time champions in the upcoming edition of the Indian Premier League.

Jadeja has made a successful return to top-flight cricket after spending several months away due to a knee surgery, playing a vital role in India's 2-1 win in the four-Test series against Australia in the Border-Gavaskar Trophy 2022-23.

The veteran all-rounder will once again be playing



a key role for CSK after a rocky season last year, when he was named the captain with the regular leader for many years, MS Dhoni, stepping down.

But the captaincy stint didn't go well for Jadeja, who has played for Chennai since 2012. The team lost six out of the first eight matches and Jadeja stepped down from

the post, with Dhoni taking over the leadership role once again, which he will continue with in the 2023 IPL.

The IPL 2023 starts on March 31 with Chennai Super Kings slated to face the defending champions Gujarat Titans in the opening match.

Harbhajan told, "The one person who everyone should keep an eye on is Ravindra Jadeja, especially how he bats for CSK. He may be promoted up the order plus he has his four overs. If you look at it from a world cricket perspective, I don't think there's a better all-rounder than him."

Pak rests Babar, Shaheen for T20I series against Afghanistan

Lahore, Mar 13 (PTI)

Senior Pakistan cricketers, including captain Babar Azam and pace spearhead Shaheen Shah Afridi, have been rested for the three-match T20I series against Afghanistan, beginning in Sharjah on March 24.

The Pakistan Cricket Board's (PCB) national selection committee has also not included opener Muhammad Rizwan, Haris Rauf and veteran batter Fakhar Zaman in the squad to be led by all-rounder Shadab Khan.

Four new faces -- fast bowlers Ihsanullah, Zaman Khan and batters Tayyab Tahir and Saim Ayub -- have been included along with sidelined players Azam Khan, Faheem Ashraf and Imad Wasim. "I have spo-

Pakistan squad

Shadab Khan (C), Abdullah Shafique, Azam Khan, Faheem Ashraf, Iftikhar Ahmed, Ihsanullah, Imad Wasim, Muhammad Haris, Muhammad Nawaz, Muhammad Wasim jr, Naseem Shah, Saim Ayub, Shan Masood, Tayyab Tahir, Zaman Khan.

ken to Babar, Rizwan, Haris, Shaheen and Fakhar and taken them into confidence about the fact that we are using this series as a testing ground to try out new players and recall some of those who have performed well in the PSL (Pakistan Super League)," said chairman of the PCB management committee Najam Sethi on Monday.

Lineker to be back on air as BBC apologises for disruption

London, Mar 13 (PTI)

England football legend Gary Lineker said on Monday that he would return to host his flagship Match of the Day BBC show after the broadcaster apologised for days of disruption of his sports coverage due to a Twitter post row.

The BBC has also announced an independent review into its social media usage guidelines after Lineker's tweet criticising the government's migration policy triggered a near revolt in the ranks.

After the former England football team captain and TV personality was asked to step back,



several of his colleagues also refused to present their shows in solidarity. "Everyone recognises this has been a difficult period for staff, contributors,

presenters and, most importantly, our audiences," said BBC Director-General Tim Davie.

"I apologise for this," he said, adding that the "potential confusion" caused by the grey areas of the BBC's social media guidance that was introduced in 2020 is recognised.

"Accordingly, we are announcing a review led by an independent expert reporting to the BBC on its existing social media guidance, with a particular focus on how it applies to freelancers outside news and current affairs." Lineker said he backs the review announced by the BBC and is looking forward to getting back on air.

'Saika Ishaque knows her game very well'

Mumbai, Mar 13 (PTI):

UP Warriorz and England left-arm spinner Sophie Ecclestone has heaped praise on uncapped India and Mumbai Indians tweeker Saika Ishaque, who has lit up the Women's Premier League with 12 wickets in only four matches, saying she knows her game very well.

Ishaque led Mumbai Indians to a big win on Sunday night against UP Warriorz, after the opposition threatened to run away with the game, taking 3/33 to take her wickets tally far ahead of any of her peers in the league.

World No. 1 ODI bowler, Ecclestone, who is behind the Indian left-arm spinner Ishaque with eight wickets in four matches of WPL, is all praise for her opponent. "She is doing great, she has been around for a lot of years and

played a lot of cricket. She knows her game so well and she got along with us during the game and it has been very exciting for her," Ecclestone told PTI during an exclusive interview on Monday.

The England spinner, who has so far played 70 T20Is, 55 ODIs and five Tests for her country, says her side UP Warriorz have plenty of room for improvement after a mixed start two wins and two losses from four matches to the WPL. "I think the feeling about it is that it has been scratchy in all our games. There is still a lot to improve in this group. We have not bowled our best yet and that is definitely a place where we can improve and hopefully in the next few games we start peaking at the right time in the competition," she said.

I can't be thankful enough to Nat Sciver-Brunt: Harmanpreet

Mumbai, Mar 13 (PTI):

For a moment it looked like England cricketer Nat Sciver-Brunt and her Mumbai Indians captain Harmanpreet Kaur were playing a game of one-upmanship in their Women's Premier League match against UP Warriorz here on Sunday.

The veteran players came to the crease at a juncture when anything could have gone wrong in the chase of a competitive 159 set by the UP side. Yastika Bhatia and Hayley Matthews had just departed one after the other and, at 58/2, things looked far from rosy, with two new batters at the crease.

The game of who will hit more boundaries started, and by the time the match ended, Harmanpreet had smashed nine fours and a

maximum, while Nat Sciver-Brunt had clobbered six boundaries and a six.

The two remained unbeaten at 53 and 45 respectively and their unbroken partnership fetched 106 runs as MI won by eight wickets.

Harmanpreet complimented Nat Sciver-Brunt for the way she made the competitive target look easy. "Thanks to Nat, she played really well. I got time to settle in. We were calculating (the scoring rate) very well. That time (UP Warriorz bowlers) Sophie (Ecclestone) and (Shabnim) Ismail were bowling well so we were calculating that there are other bowlers we can attack," Harmanpreet said after the match.

"Very happy with the performance. I can't be thankful enough, the way we are

playing and we are gelling together. This is the best tournament so far," added the MI skipper.

Harmanpreet conceded that the way Warriorz skipper Alyssa Healy (58) and Tahlia McGrath (50) were batting in the first innings, it put her team under pressure. But with Grace Harris not in the UP Warriorz playing XI on Sunday due to illness, it gave MI hope that they would be able to restrict their opponents to a reasonable total.

"The way they (Healy and McGrath) were batting, we were a little tense. But I knew that if we are able to take one or two wickets, we could stop them, because we knew (Grace) Harris was not playing and they didn't have anyone who could hit hard," said Harmanpreet, explaining the strategy.

Barcelona beats Bilbao amid more refereeing controversy

Madrid, Mar 13 (AP)

Still mired in controversy over its payments to the company of a former refereeing committee official, Barcelona restored its lead over Real Madrid to nine points in the Spanish league on Sunday after a late VAR decision went its way.

Barcelona beat Athletic Bilbao 1-0 after video review disallowed an 87th-minute goal by Bilbao forward Iaki Williams for a handball in the buildup. VAR also was used to confirm Barcelona's winning goal by Raphinha after it was initially disallowed for offside.

"I thought they were looking at offside, but then I saw it on the video board, and I think it was a handball," Barcelona coach Xavi said.

Indian shuttlers face uphill task in quest for All England glory

Birmingham, Mar 13 (PTI):

Returning from injuries and battling indifferent form, Indian shuttlers will have to play out of their skins to end the country's agonising wait for a title at the All England Championships beginning here on Tuesday.

It has been 22 years since India won the coveted title when Pullela Gopichand (2001) followed the legendary Prakash Padukone (1980) to achieve the honour.

While Lakshya Sen came close to securing the crown when he reached the final in the last edition and Saina Nehwal was runners-up in the 2015 edition, other Indians, including two-time Olympic medalist PV Sindhu, couldn't go beyond

the last-four in the prestigious event. This time around, things will only be tougher as both Sen and Sindhu, since returning from a long injury lay-off, had subdued starts to the new season, having made early exits in Malaysia and India Open. World No. 12 Sen is coming into the event after a shock loss to world No. 41 Christo Popov of France in the first round of German Open, while Sindhu, in a desperate measure, has parted ways with Korea's Park Tae-sang a few weeks ahead of the event. Sen will face "Mr. Consistent" Chou Tien Chen of Chinese Taipei, seeded fifth, while Sindhu will be up against tricky Chinese Zhang Yi Man, who has a 1-1 record against her.

Congress writes to LS speaker seeking expunction of remarks made by Rajnath, Joshi

New Delhi, Mar 13 (PTI):

Senior Congress leader Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury wrote to Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla on Monday, demanding that certain remarks of Union ministers Rajnath Singh and Pralhad Joshi seeking Rahul Gandhi's apology over his "democracy under attack" comments be expunged.

In a letter to the speaker, the leader of the Congress in the Lok Sabha said during the Question Hour, Defence Minister Singh made certain comments on Gandhi with regard to speeches delivered by the Congress leader in the United Kingdom recently.

"Minister of Parliamentary Affairs (Joshi) also made remarks

on the above issue. The remarks made by the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs were not in good taste and were unparliamentary," Chowdhury said.

He cited Rule 352, which provides that a member, while speaking, shall not make a personal reference by way of levelling an allegation, imputing a motive to or questioning the bona fide of any other member of the House.

"Rule 353 also states that no allegation of a defamatory or incriminating nature shall be made unless the member has given adequate notice to the speaker. Moreover, 357 provides that the speaker shall allow a member to make a personal explanation if something has been al-



Congress MP Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury and DMK MP TR Baalu speak to the media at Parliament House complex during Budget Session, in New Delhi, Monday.

leged against him," the Congress leader said.

"Today, both the ministers made unsubstantiated remarks against our leader without a prior notice and no opportunity was accorded to the mem-

bers of his party to refute the allegations," he added.

Chowdhury requested Birla to expunge the statements of Singh and Joshi.

After the obituary references in the House, Deputy Leader of the Lok

Sabha Singh stood up and accused Gandhi of trying to defame India in London through his remarks on Indian democracy.

He also told the speaker that the House should condemn Gandhi's remarks and the Congress leader should be directed to tender an apology. "I appeal to you for condemnation of Rahul Gandhi's remarks by this House. You should also direct him to tender an apology in this House for his comments," Singh said.

Joshi asked where was democracy when fundamental rights were "trampled" during the Emergency or when an ordinance duly approved by the Union Cabinet was torn (by Gandhi during the days of the previous Congress-

led UPA government).

He condemned Gandhi for "seeking the intervention of foreign powers like the United States and Europe". "If he has some shame, he should come to this House and tender an apology. This is our demand," the parliamentary affairs minister said.

He said India is the mother of democracy and Gandhi allegedly cast aspersions on the speaker and the chair of the House on foreign soil. "Rahul Gandhi accused the speaker... But his microphone was on. He was given enough opportunity to speak and he spoke in the House freely," Joshi said. On his part, Birla said democracy in India is strong and getting stronger.

SC seeks status report on probe

◆ Murder of receptionist in Uttarakhand resort

New Delhi, Mar 13 (PTI):

The Supreme Court on Monday asked the Uttarakhand government to file a status report on the investigation carried out in the murder of a 19-year-old woman, who worked as a receptionist in a resort owned

by the son of a now sacked BJP leader near Rishikesh. A bench of Justices KM Joseph and BV Nagarathna, which was hearing a plea filed by a journalist and family members of Anika Bhandari, the deceased, seeking a CBI probe in the case, asked Deputy Advocate General Jatinder Kumar Sethi to file a status report with regard to the investigation conducted so far.

Tejashwi alleges sisters' jewellery was taken off and shown as recovery by ED

Patna, March 13 (PTI):

Bihar Deputy Chief Minister Tejashwi Yadav on Monday alleged that the Enforcement Directorate had finished its raid at his Delhi house last week "in half an hour" but its officials stayed on at his hours awaiting "clearance from above".

Talking to reporters outside the state assembly, Yadav also rubbished the ED's claim of detecting proceeds of crime amounting to Rs 600 crore



and alleged that "used sisters and their in-laws jewellery" of his married was photographed and

shown as "recovery". "Be it Union Home Minister Amit Shah or anybody else, the director who repeats the same script for these agencies must now be changed", the RJD leader said mockingly.

"We are not, like the BJP-RSS, students of entire political science. We are practitioners of real politics and have the conviction and public support to take them on. But they are scared and are trying to run away from the political battle", added Yadav.

Tourism Ministry has no roadmap to leverage G20 opportunity, promote tourism, increase forex: Parl panel

New Delhi, Mar 13 (PTI):

A parliamentary standing committee has rued the lack of a clear roadmap from the Tourism Ministry to leverage the opportunity presented to the country in view of its presidency of the G20 to increase tourist footfalls. The report of the Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Transport, Tourism and Culture, which was submitted on Monday, stated the ministry should have also set aside a budget for promotional activities for G20.

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