



BRIEF



A worker drinks water in front of Vidhana Soudha, a day before World Water Day, in Bengaluru, Tuesday.

Suspended

New Delhi: Delhi Assembly Speaker Ram Niwas Goel suspended BJP legislator Vijender Gupta on Tuesday for a year till the next Budget session for allegedly obstructing the proceedings of the House. Earlier in the day, Gupta had proposed a breach of privilege motion against Finance Minister Kailash Gahlot and Environment Minister Gopal Rai for leaking Delhi budget details on social media.

Revenue

New Delhi: The Centre has earned Rs 10.25 crore revenue by scrap disposal in February, an official statement issued on Tuesday said. In its monthly report on the secretariat reforms for February, the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG) said 1,05,514 files were weeded out and 3,56,533 public grievances against different government departments were disposed.

Four arrested for helping Amritpal escape

Chandigarh, Mar 21 (PTI):

Four people have been arrested for helping radical preacher Amritpal Singh escape, the Punjab Police said on Tuesday.

They helped him to escape in a car, and during their questioning, it came to the fore that he went to a gurdwara in Nangal Ambian village in Jalandhar, police said.

"There he changed his clothes, and wore a shirt and pant, and escaped along with three others on two bikes," Punjab Inspector General of Police (Headquarters) Sukhchain Singh Gill said while addressing reporters here.

The Khalistan sympathiser managed to escape after changing his vehicle on Saturday when police had launched a crackdown against him and his outfit 'Waris Punjab De'.

Manpreet Singh alias Manna, Gurdeep Singh alias Deepa, Harpreet Singh alias Happy and Gurbhej Singh alias Bheja have been apprehended for helping Amritpal Singh escape, Gill said. The car has been seized, he said, adding that a .315 bore rifle, some swords and a walkie-talkie set were found in it. Police also released four pictures of Amritpal Singh in different attire and appealed to people to help tracing him. The IG further said efforts are on to nab the radical preacher. Chief Minister



Associates of 'Waris Punjab De' founder Amritpal Singh being taken to Dibrugarh Central Jail amid tight security, in Dibrugarh, Tuesday.

'NSA order against Amritpal issued on Sat'

An order to detain radical preacher Amritpal Singh under the stringent National Security Act was issued by the Amritsar district magistrate on Saturday, said a police officer's affidavit which also described how the Waris Punjab De chief gave the cops the slip. The affidavit which was filed in the Punjab and Haryana High Court was in response to a habeas corpus petition filed by petitioner Imaan Singh Khara, seeking the "release" of Amritpal from the alleged custody of police. During the hearing of the petition on Tuesday, the state government said that Amritpal was neither detained nor arrested by police. The Punjab Police on Saturday had launched a major crackdown against Amritpal and members of his outfit Waris Punjab De. According to the affidavit of Senior Superintendent of Police (Amritsar Rural), Satinder Singh, a non-bailable warrant was also issued against the Khalistan sympathiser on Monday. Amritpal was acting in a manner prejudicial to the security of the state and maintenance of public order, said the affidavit, adding that the petitioner had levelled vague, false, misleading and frivolous allegations. It said Amritpal, resident of Jallapur Khera village in Amritsar, has been professing radical ideology and raised the demand of secession of Punjab from India.

Bhagwant Mann is monitoring the situation and taking regular feedback from police officers, Gill said.

Police on Saturday had launched a major crackdown against radical preacher Amritpal Singh

and members of his outfit 'Waris Punjab De'.

The elusive preacher himself, however, gave the police a slip and escaped their dragnet when his cavalcade was intercepted in Jalandhar district.

'Restore Red Notice against Choksi'

New Delhi, Mar 21 (PTI):

The CBI has asked an Interpol body to restore the Red Notice against fugitive diamondaire Mehul Choksi, saying its decision to drop his

name from the list was based on mere "imaginary conjunctures and unproven surmises" and had serious shortcomings, overreach of mandate and mistakes. Red Notice is the highest level of alert by the 195-member strong International Police

cooperation organisation Interpol to locate and provisionally arrest a fugitive pending extradition, surrender, or similar legal action. In a statement on Tuesday, the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) said the Commission for

Control of Interpol's Files (CCF) removed Choksi's name from the Red Notice list in November 2022. The removal of the notice means Choksi can freely travel out of Antigua and Barbuda where he is holed up after fleeing from India in 2018.

'Irresponsible Oppn wilfully stalling Parl'

Congress hits back

New Delhi, Mar 21 (PTI):

The BJP on Tuesday accused the Opposition of wilfully stalling Parliament with its "irresponsible" comments and "unfounded" allegations to mislead the country amid global recognition of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership.

With the all-party meetings called by Rajya Sabha Chairperson Jagdeep Dhankhar and Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla producing no breakthrough to end the deadlock in Parliament, Union ministers Piyush Goyal and Pralhad Joshi accused opposition parties of repeatedly "insulting" Dhankhar.

The Congress hit back at the BJP, noting that Goyal, who is the Leader of the House in Rajya Sabha, got the ruling party MPs to prevent Leader of Opposition in the House Kharge from speaking twice even after the Chairman had permitted him. "Silencing of LoP is also an issue quite apart from the JPC on Adani,"

Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh said on Twitter. He added, "How can the Oppn demand for a JPC into the PM-linked Adani scam be linked to the BJP's demand for an apology from Rahul Gandhi on totally baseless accusations. The JPC is on a real, documented scam. The apology demand is a hoax being raised to divert attention from the Adani scam."

The Rajya Sabha chairperson personally called up several opposition leaders, including Mallikarjun Kharge of the Congress, to attend the meeting but they refused, Joshi said.

After almost the entire opposition except for regional parties like the TDP, YSR Congress and the BJD skipped the first meeting before the noon, Dhankhar called another meeting in afternoon. Though some parties like the TMC and DMK attended the second meeting after the Chairperson's personal intervention, other opposition parties still kept away. This is a "great disrespect" to the Chair, Parliamentary Affairs Minister Joshi said.

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Flex Scam: FIR lodged against erstwhile DMC Commissioner

Bhilai, Mar 21:

On Tuesday, Padmanabhpur Police Station lodged an FIR against government officials including erstwhile Commissioner of Durg Municipal Corporation over an alleged flex scam. On the court's order, Police lodged FIR against the then DMC Commissioner Sunil Agrahari (presently posted as Deputy Commissioner, Rajnandgaon Municipal Corporation), then Revenue Inspectors Chandrakant Sharma and Pawan Nayak and Anil Singh (Partner, Singh Constructions, Sector 4, Bhilai) under sections 420, 468, 471, 120-B/34 of IPC. Aam Admi Party leader Meharban Singh had filed a court petition in this regard. Meharban Singh had come to know about the financial irregularities through the documents he obtained through RTI.

On August 27, 2019, erstwhile DMC Speaker Rajkumar Narayani had made a complaint to the DMC Commissioner regarding corruption in purchase of flex hoardings. Thereafter on August 29, former Corporator Vincent D'Souza had submitted a complaint letter at the office of District Collector. On the instructions of the District Collector, DMC Commissioner Indarjeet Burman conducted a probe and submitted a report on November 23, 2020. He had sent a copy of this report to the SP of Durg District for lodging an FIR. The probe report

found that there was a scam of about Rs 8.65 lakh. Quotations of two firms, who were never indulged in flex printing / works, were found in the official files. The directors of these two firms confirmed that they had never submitted such quotations and the same were forged. In this situation, the work order was issued for the third party i.e. Anil Singh. Prior to the payments, there was an audit objection in all the files but payment was made citing it to be essential work.

Petitioner Meharban Singh had alleged that the Police and the Urban Administration Department did not take any action under the political pressure. Court conducted hearings on this matter and directed the Durg Police to lodge an FIR. In compliance with the court's order, an FIR has been lodged at Padmanabhpur Police Station.

BSP hands over hand-pumps after excavation of tube-wells

In Model Steel villages & peripheral villages



Bhilai, Mar 21: SAIL-Bhilai Steel Plant's Corporate Social Responsibility Department has completed the work of installation of hand-pumps for tubewells dug earlier in some peripheral villages including Model Steel Villages with the objective of making drinking water easily available to the villagers. The tube-wells had been dug earlier by Bhilai Steel Plant in villages Doomardih, Ghughsidih, Machandur, and Borigarika. The hand-pumps were installed later. The tube well and hand-pump installations were handed over to respective village heads on March 20, 2023. Under this initiative, two handpumps were installed for tubewells dug earlier at two different locations in village Doomardih. One tubewell with hand pump was in-

stalled at one location in village Ghughsidih. Two hand pumps were installed for two tubewells at two different locations in village Machandur and two tubewells with hand pumps were installed at two locations in village Borigarika. The total expenditure incurred for the above-mentioned tubewells and pumps installation is approximately Rs 5.62 lakhs. Villagers including Sarpanch expressed their gratitude for the work carried out by Bhilai Steel Plant. Village heads, including village Sarpanch, Panch, Villagers and Assistant Managers of CSR Department, Vivek Mishra, Ashutosh Soni, Assistant Manager from Town Services Department, KK Verma were present at the handing over ceremonies in the villages.

Siksha Kala va Sahitya Akadami organises get together

Bhilai, Mar 21: Shiksha Kala va Sahitya Akadami, Durg organised a get together at Sector 4 on Sunday. Convenor Dr Shivnarayan Dewangan "Aas" informed that they organised a joint get-together for New Year, Women's Day and Holi.

MP Vijay Baghel graced the function as chief guest while District Panchayat President Shalini Rivendra Yadav presided over. Atul Nagle (State Convenor, Prabuddha Parishad Chhattisgarh), Acharya Dr Mahesh Chandra Sharma (Educationist), Parasram Sahu (President Medal Awardee Teacher), Jageshwari Meshram (Chhattisgarhi film actress), Bhavana Pandey (President, New Press Club of Bhilai Nagar), Ramadhar Sharma (litterateur and social worker), Kharari Ram Dewangan (Numismatist), Pramod Jain (President Saksham Jan Foundation), Kaushalendra Patel (State President), Bodhiram Sahu (Treasurer) and Mahetar Lal Dewangan (Secretary) were present as special guests. At the outset, prayers were offered to Goddess



Saraswati. Dr Shivnarayan Dewangan "Aas" (founder and coordinator Shiksha) delivered the welcome address. Kaushalendra Patel administered the oath to the office bearers of State Women's Cell and Durg District. The newly appointed office bearers of Women's Cell are Neeta Tripathi, Jyoti Gajpal, Pratibha Tripathi, Pritichand Mallika, Sarojini Sahu and Durg District office bearers are Horilal Chaturvedi, Sangeeta Chandrakar, PV Sanjana, Ishwari Dewangan, Preeti Tiwari, Pramod Kumar Kurre, Shivkumar Nirmalkar, Prakash Chandra Chelak and Hema Chandra Anshu. Thereafter, the annual calendar of Shiksha was released by chief guest Vijay Baghel. Special guest

Jageshwari Meshram and Dr Mahesh Chandra Sharma appreciated the organisation. Chief Guest Vijay Baghel said that Shiksha is doing very good work under the leadership of coordinator Shivnarayan Dewangan. The organisation is enhancing the talent of teachers. Shalini Yadav said that every program of education is praiseworthy. In the cultural program, drama and dance was presented by the school students. An exhibition of old and new coins was also organized by Kharari Ram Dewangan. Certificates of all the programs and felicitation letters were given to the members. The program was conducted by Sanjay Kumar Maithil and Dr Shivnarayan Dewangan "Aas" Convenor proposed the vote of thanks.

BSP employees felicitated with Pali Shiromani and Karm Shiromani Award



Bhilai, Mar 21: Employees belonging to Power zone of Bhilai Steel Plant were awarded with the 'Pali Shiromani' and 'Karm

Shiromani Puraskar' for their exemplary work performance under the 'Shiromani Puraskar Yojana' of Bhilai Steel Plant.

Pali Shiromani Award winners include Shivam Verma, Manager PBS and Karm Shiromani Award winners Manoj Kumar Jagdale, Master

OCT, PEM, Tribhuwan Lal Sahu, Operator Cum Technician, PBS, Awadhesh Kumar Yadav, Operator Cum Technician, PBS, were

felicitated for their exemplary work. The function was presided over by Rajeev Pandey, CGM (Power Facility). HK Sahu, GM I/c (PBS & PEM), PS Khobragade, GM (PEM), Sanjay Nikhar, GM (PBS), Abhay Kumar, GM (PBS), P Krishan Mohan, GM (PBS) and other officers of Power Zone who presented the award winners with a certificate of merit, memento and appreciation letter for the spouse of the employee. The programme was conducted by Personnel Office of P&E Zone.

Sanjit Dhar secures 11th All India rank in GATE



Bhilai, Mar 21: Sanjit Dhar, a meritorious student from Bhilai has secured All India 11th rank in the Metallurgy branch in Graduate Aptitude Test in Engineering (GATE), 2023. He is currently working as Executive Engineer in Indian Oil Corporation Ltd (IOCL). Sanjit has been a hardworking student throughout his academic life. He completed his Senior Secondary Education from Delhi Public School Bhilai, with 95.4 percent in Class XII following which he completed his B Tech in Metallurgy from National Institute of technology (NIT), Raipur, securing silver medal. Sanjit Dhar's father Sujit Dhar is working as a Section Officer in the Project Department of Bhilai Steel Plant and his mother Tandra Dhar is a Lecturer of Biology in Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya, Durg.

Incident investigation team of Safety Senate felicitated

Bhilai, Mar 21: M/s Swasya Solutions has been appointed as consultant to strengthen safety systems at work place by SAIL-Bhilai Steel Plant management. The consultant has framed an effective safety management system which is strictly being followed and implemented to curtail the hazards and build safety culture within the work place.

As part of the Safety Senate headed by Director In-Charge, Bhilai Steel Plant, Anirban Dasgupta, an I2CFT (Incident Investigation) team, one of the six verticals in the system has been constituted under the chairmanship of Dr Ashok Kr Panda, (Executive Director-F&A) which ensures that all incidents and near-miss cases get reported and root causes of the incident are determined through scientific investigation and the key factors are identified to derive the corrective measures which eliminates recurrence. Ever since the constitution of the I2CFT, all serious and fatal potential incidents and near miss

cases have been investigated to identify the gaps in the system and all corrective actions were recommended and implemented within a time frame. To recognize the efforts put-up by the I2CFT team, 'BEST CFT' award was presented by Director I/c Anirban Dasgupta during National Safety Day celebrations at Kala Mandir on March 07. A felicitation program was arranged on March 16, 2023 in the Conference Hall of ED (F&A) chaired by Dr AK Panda as leader of I2CFT. Panda congratulated all the cluster members of the I2CFT team for their dedicated efforts and further urged all members to work collectively for achieving the desired goal of ZERO accident/incident inside the plant. Cluster members who were present on the occasion included Anup K Datta, CGM (SPs), SK Gajbhiye CGM (Mech), Anish Sengupta, CGM (URM), S Tokdar, CGM(BF), I Sengupta, GM I/c (RMD), BK Mahapatra (CFO), NK Dhete, GM(Converter), B Madhu Pillai, GM (Inst) & AP Pansari, AGM (F&A).

Safety Week inaugurated in Raw Materials Department

Bhilai, Mar 21:

SAIL-Bhilai Steel Plant's Raw Materials Department is celebrating Safety Week. The inaugural ceremony was held on Monday, March 20, 2023. As part of this Safety Week, various competitions and safety related lectures shall be organised on various topics, namely gas safety, unsafe work conditions and situations, near miss cases, accident



analysis etc. The chief guest of the inaugural function was Praveer Kumar Sarkar, Chief General Manager

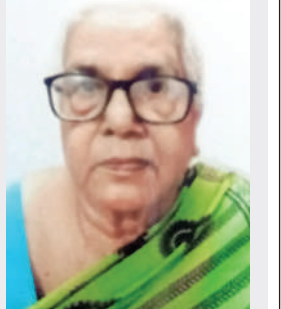
in-Charge (Services). Among the other dignitaries present were Dr Rajeshwar Ram, Joint Deputy Director

(Occupational Health Services), SK Mahto, General Manager, (Safety Engineering Department), Indrajeet Sengupta, HOD,

Raw Material Department and Ranjan Bharti, General Manager (Raw Material Department). Other the members of the department also participated in the inaugural event. Addressing the inaugural session, Dr Rajeshwar Ram, shared insightful ideas and information on Occupational Safety & Health and First Aid. The Safety Week will conclude on, March 25, 2023.

Obituary

Champa Devi Pandey



Bhilai: Champa Devi Pandey, wife of Late Madhav Dutt Pandey left for heavenly abode at the age of 83 years on March 20. Funeral procession will be taken out from her residence situated at Qr 7/B, Street 28, Sector 7 on March 22 around 11:00 hrs and last rites of the mortal remains will be performed at R a m n a g a r Muktdham. She was the mother of BSP employee Rajesh Pandey.

HC grants relief to Chopra Auto Center

Orders BSP to unseal and unlock IOCL Fuel Station

Bhilai, Mar 21:

The High Court of Chhattisgarh had provided relief to the proprietor of Chopra Auto Centre (IOCL Petrol Pump), which was sealed by the Enforcement Department of Bhilai Steel Plant on March 15, 2023 following the order of Estate Court over the pending land lease renewal. During the hearing, counsel for the Indian Oil Corporation submitted that by April 05, 2023, the Indian Oil Corporation would be in a position to take a decision as regards the demand raised by the Steel Authority of India. The Court also considered the fact that the dealership outlet is the source of livelihood and the bread and butter of the petitioner, and directed the Bhilai Steel Plant to unseal and unseal the petrol pump premises immediately till April 05, 2023 subject to further instructions of the

High Court in the writ petition filed by proprietor of Chopra Auto Centre. Steel Authority of India Limited was also directed to seek instructions as regards the charging of GST on the premium amount and also as regards the rate of 18% interest claimed for the pending lease renewal premium.

It needs to be mentioned here that Bhilai Steel Plant had given a land on lease to Chopra Auto Centre (IOCL Dealer) and the lease was first executed on June 10, 1981 and the lease was to expire on March 20, 2013. Immediately after the lease period expired, the Steel Authority of India had made an offer and proposal to the Indian Oil Corporation for renewal of the lease, if they so desired, with an increase in the lease rent and in addition premium amount and other service charges by 25%. The revised lease rent and premium amount pro-



posed by the Steel Authority of India was not acceptable to the Indian Oil Corporation and there has been a series of correspondences and litigations that germinated from the same. In due course of time, vide order dated June 06, 2013, the Steel Authority of India terminated the lease. IOCL went into litigation and the matter has reached the stage of First Appeal before the High Court. Meanwhile,

there was another proceeding drawn under Public Premises (Eviction of Unauthorised Occupants) Act, 1971. An order was passed under this Act on September 22, 2017 which again went into litigation and presently a writ petition is pending consideration before this Court. Subsequently, a series of further correspondences were made between the Steel Authority of India

and the Indian Oil Corporation and negotiations were conducted in respect of lease rent that has been proposed by the Steel Authority of India. The Indian Oil Corporation also had written a correspondence with the Steel Authority of India permitting them to grant time initially up till March 31, 2023 and thereafter until April 30, 2023 for taking an appropriate decision on the revised proposal given by

the Steel Authority of India. A decision in this front is yet to be taken by the Indian Oil Corporation. Later on March 15, 2023, the Officers of Steel Authority of India locked and sealed the Chopra Auto Centre on the order passed by the Estate Officer under the Public Premises (Eviction of Unauthorised Occupants) Act, 1971. The counsel for the petitioner (Chopra Auto Centre) submitted that a huge amount of fuel is still lying in the tanks of the petitioner dealership outlet. Further there are other petroleum products and other perishable articles stocked in the said premises. According to the petitioner, since the matter is in negotiation between the Steel Authority of India and Indian Oil Corporation, the petitioner's source of livelihood and his bread and butter

should not be snatched away abruptly at least till a decision is taken by the Indian Oil Corporation within a period of fortnight's time, till then they should be permitted to continue to operate the same. Counsel for the Indian Oil Corporation submitted that by April 05, 2023, the Indian Oil Corporation would be in a position to take a decision as regards the demand raised by the Steel Authority of India. Considering the petition, the High Court opined that lease renewal matter is still under consideration at the higher level of management of Indian Oil Corporation and a decision shall be taken within a fortnight's time. Accordingly, The High Court will take up the matter on April 05, 2023. Meanwhile, relief was given to the petitioner by directing the BSP to unseal and unseal the fuel station.

Mayor presents RMC budget of Rs 1600 cr

Raipur to get 24 hours water**Flyover to be built on Phool Chowk on public consent**

Raipur, Mar 21: Mayor Aijaz Dhebar today made 32 big promises in the estimated budget of Raipur Municipal Corporation for 2023-24. In his budget speech, he said that the Municipal Corporation will issue a bond of 200 crores in the interest of the general public. The scope of 'Pauni Pasari' and Vending Zone will be expanded for the benefit of small businessmen.

Raipur city will be given tanker free water for 24 hours. Coverage of Mohalla clinics will be increased. Urban Women's Livelihood Center will start. Urban Cartage and Service Industries Park will be set up in the cities on the lines of RIPA. The remaining part of the road from Phool Chowk to Azad Chowk will be widened and a flyover will be constructed on this road with the consent of the local people. Dog shelter will be opened. Mahadev Ghat bridge will be beautified. All drains in the city will be covered. Chaupal will be constructed for the elderly.

Mayor Dhebar started his budget speech after handing over a copy of the budget to the Speaker Pramod Dubey in the general body of the Municipal Corporation. Raipur's development journey has a glorious history, he said. Reading out the lines "The one who has a different vision to see the world, he has the right skill to touch the heights" the Mayor said that this fourth budget of his tenure is of 1600 crore.

While reciting a verse from Gita, he said that he will neither get tired nor stop. The budget is neither of the Congress nor of the BJP, rather it belongs to the people of the entire Raipur city, he said.

"We are moving forward with many big works, one of which is the widening of the main road of the capital Raipur from Azad Chowk to Phool Chowk", he said, adding that state government announced 10 crore for this work. He said that flyover from



Mayor Aijaz Dhebar today made 32 big promises in the estimated budget of Raipur Municipal Corporation for 2023-24. In his budget speech, he said that the Municipal Corporation will issue a bond of 200 crores in the interest of the general public.

Phool Chowk will be built on the consent of people of the area.

Important 32 points of the budget

- Bonds worth Rs 200 crore will be issued for the Raipur Municipal Corporation to generate additional sources of income and for financial management and resources for various income generating projects. The proceeds of the bonds will be used for various income generating projects and the proceeds from these projects will be used to repay the bonds.
- 'Nagar Van Yojana' will be implemented to develop green cover and biodiversity in Raipur Municipal Corporation area. Under this, it has been envisaged to allow urban forest development within 10 kilometers of the urban body's



limits.

- The target of purification of Kharun river will be included in the action plan for the next two years. Ensuring smooth operation of all STPs, purification of water of 17 drains mixed with waste flowing from Raipur city and reaching the river will be implemented effectively. 'Pauni Pasari' and vending zone area will be expanded and small businessmen will be helped for easy business.
- Self-help groups will be linked with livelihood-oriented programs and will be motivated for overall self-reliance by organizing training programs for the manufacture of Gaudhan products such as paint, putty, cow-wood, cow urine distillation, phenyl, decorative items.
- Effective programs will be conducted to connect

every house with cleanliness and cleanliness of Raipur. The entire system of waste segregation and its disposal will be strengthened from every household.

- Apart from "AMRUT MISSION" scheme, the 24X7 water supply scheme will be completed in a targeted period, as well as a tanker-free system will be ensured.
- Health and medical facilities will be expanded in the entire Municipal Corporation area.
- The coverage of Mohalla Clinic and Chief Minister Urban Slum Health Scheme will be increased so that health services can be easily accessible to every household.
- Study, teaching and infrastructural development, intellectual, educational, sports and cultural activities will be promoted in government schools under mu-

nicipal corporation area.

- Playgrounds, ponds and gardens of Raipur will be given a new look in the next two years.
- Efforts will be made for comfortable roads, lighting on all roads and arrangements will be made at the ground level to develop Raipur as best city in cleanliness.
- Various programs will be organized to connect the youth with activities related to traditional sports, art, culture, literature etc. of Chhattisgarh.
- Urban Women's Livelihood Center will 1000 seats will be started.
- BPO will be started in Municipal Corporation Raipur with state-of-the-art software and hardware facilities for employment of youth. A provision of 10 crore has been made for this work.
- Urban Cartage and

Service Industries Park will be set up in the cities on the lines of RIPA. A provision of Rs 2 crore has been made for this work.

- An amount of Rs 5 crore will be provided for modern toilets and lighting and CCTV cameras for continuous monitoring in each ward of Raipur Municipal Corporation.
- Free facilities for BP and blood sugar test will be provided through Smart Health Kiosks. A provision of Rs 3 crore is being made for the establishment of 50 kiosks in Raipur Municipal Corporation area at the rate of Rs 6 lakh per kiosk.
- Provision of Rs 18 crore for the drainage system and flood control in the waterlogged areas of Raipur city and Rs 20 crore for the preparation of the G-20 summit
- The remaining part of Phool Chowk to Azad Chowk road will be widened and a flyover will be constructed with the consent of the local people Provision of Rs 7 crore for e-rickshaws/e-carts in proportion to the population, strengthening the system of garbage collection and environmental protection
- Dog shelter will be constructed by identifying the place under Raipur Municipal Corporation area. For this work, a

provision of Rs 48 lakh 50 thousand has been made in the first phase.

- Women's committee will be formed under special protection for women workers working in Municipal Corporation.
- Shelter homes will be constructed for destitute old people in all zones through NGOs.
- Provision of Rs 1 crore for beautification of Mahadev Ghat bridge, vertical garden and other works.
- All the big ponds of the cities will be treated biologically.
- Sports equipment, slide, swing, and other necessary arrangements will be made for the children in all the gardens of the city. A provision of 2.00 crore has been made for the garden.
- Provision of 4 crore 62 lakh 97 thousand for underground cabling work from Lakhe Nagar Chowk to Amapara Chowk. Lighting, drinking water, toilets, underground cabling, CCTV cameras and other necessary arrangements will be made in all the markets of the city.
- All drains in the city will be covered.
- Construction of 'Chouपाल' in 70 wards for the elderly people.
- Appu Ghar will be constructed for the educational development, sports and entertainment of children from 1 to 10 years.

Eight killed in lightning strikes, hailstorm amid untimely

Raipur, Mar 21: At least eight persons were killed in lightning strikes and a hailstorm, as unseasonal showers lashed several parts of Chhattisgarh in the last couple of days, state Revenue Minister Jaisingh Agrawal told the Assembly on Tuesday.

Damage to crops was reported in different districts and the compensation will be distributed to farmers after assessment, he said. The issue of losses suffered by farmers in several parts of the state due to the untimely spell and hailstorm was raised by opposition BJP MLAs and a discussion was sought by moving an adjournment motion notice.

Speaking in the zero hour, BJP legislator Shivratna Sharma said vegetables, wheat, and gram crops were damaged in several places,

but the state government is yet to survey the losses.

Backing Sharma, BJP MLAs Ajay Chandrakar and Dharamlal Kaushik said farmers were bearing the brunt of poor policies of the state government and they should be provided compensation immediately for the losses caused to crops. They demanded a discussion on the adjournment motion notice.

Deputy Speaker Santram Netam, however, rejected their notice and assured them that the issue will be taken up for discussion in any form later. Subsequently, Agrawal said his department has received reports of crop losses and a directive has been given to collectors to assess the crop damage in all districts including Raipur, Durg, Bemetara and Kabirdham.

"The state witnessed 13.7 mm rainfall on March 19 and 6.2 mm on March 20. As per the information received, seven people died in lightning strikes and one due to a hailstorm. Besides, the rainfall-related incidents have also claimed the lives of 36 animals and partially damaged 209 houses," the minister said. He said crops in about 385.216 hectares were damaged due to untimely rainfall and hailstorm.

There is a provision to provide compensation for losses due to natural calamities within 15 days, the minister added. Leader of Opposition Narayan Chandel said revenue officials should immediately disburse a compensation of Rs 4 lakh to the families of each of the eight persons killed in natural calamities.

'Cashless system in all govt hospitals from June 1'

• Demands for grant of Rs 5122 crore 8 lakh 71 thousand passed for the departments of Singhdeo

Raipur, Mar 21: Demands for grants of Rs 5122 crore 8 lakh 71 thousand for the departments of TS Singhdeo (Minister for Public Health and Family Welfare, Medical Education, Commercial Tax and 20-point Programme Implementation) were passed unanimously in Chhattisgarh Assembly today.

The total amount includes Rs 3207 crore 70 lakh 90 thousand for Public Health and Family Welfare Department, Rs 1574 crore 48 lakh 3 thousand for expenditure relat-

ed to Medical Education Department, Rs 335 crore 76 lakh 63 thousand for expenditure related to Commercial Tax Department and Rs 24 crore 13 lakh 15 thousand for the expenditure related to the program implementation department.

Responding to the discussion on the department's grant demands, Singhdeo told the House that the cashless system would start in all government hospitals of the state from June 1. Patients will not have to pay even a single rupee for treatment, examination and medicines. OPD, IPD, medicines and all kinds of diagnostic services will be made available free of cost to the people of the state. Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel has given his approval on this, he informed.

BJP stages walkout over irregularities in Eklavya School goods purchase

• Minister informs Assembly that DE against two underway

Raipur, Mar 21: Principal opposition Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on Tuesday grilled the Minister for School Education Dr Prem Sai Singh Tekam over irregularities reported in the procurement of various materials for Eklavya Schools in Rajnandgaon and Mohala-Manpur Districts.

Raising the issue during Question Hour, the BJP Legislator Dr Krishnamurthy Bandhi sought the details about the funds sanctioned for the purchase of various goods for the Eklavya School. In his reply, the Minister for School and Tribal Welfare Dr Tekam



accepted that irregularities were unearthed in the procurement as rules for purchase of goods were not followed in the process. He further informed that Department Enquiry was conducted on receiving complaints and subsequently action would be taken against two persons on the issue. He said that one of the accused Principal Narendra Maria died recently and hence no action could be taken now whereas two others including Principal Sangeeta Robbins and

Assistant Commissioner Chabilal Chandravanshi were reported found prime facie responsibility for violation of rules in the procurement process and added that DE against both of them is underway.

BJP Legislator Shivratna Sharma raised demand for FIR against the two involved in the irregularities. However, the Minister said that the action against them would be taken only on the basis of the investigation report against them.

BJP members kept on raising slogans against state government and reiterated their demand for a FIR against the accused officials. Unsatisfied with the reply from the Minister, the BJP members staged walkout from the proceedings to register protest.

CM virtually launches 'Mukhyamantri Vriksh Sampada Yojana'

District-level programme held in Sarona, Raipur, attended by the Collector

Tissue culture teak plants planted on a 5-acre land

Raipur, Mar 21: On the occasion of International Day of Forests, Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel on Tuesday virtually launched the "Mukhyamantri Vriksh Sampada Yojana". Several representatives, including Raipur Collector Dr. Sarveshwar Bhure and DFO V. Kumar, participated in the district-level programme held in Sarona, Raipur, and planted saplings of tissue culture teak plants on the land of Dr. Mandharia, a beneficiary of the scheme.

There is great enthusiasm among the beneficiaries of this scheme, including small farmers in rural areas as well as those who own land in urban areas. At today's district-level programme, a total of 1,250 plants of tissue culture teak were planted on 5 acres of land owned by Dr. Nalini Mandharia in



Sarona. The beneficiary couple participated in the programme along with their family and also spoke to Chief Minister Baghel through video conferencing, expressing their gratitude for starting this ambitious scheme.

Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel congratulated and extended his best wishes to all the citizens on the launch of this ambitious scheme. He said that the forests and biodiversity of Chhattisgarh are our identities. Our government is constantly working in the direction of protecting our environment and forests. He added that it is necessary to make efforts to involve a larger number of people from the plains in this scheme. He encouraged forest department officials to inform all beneficiaries of the scheme at the grassroots level, so that as many people as possible can benefit from it. Forest Minister Mohammad Akbar, while

addressing the programme, said that the state of Chhattisgarh is abundant in trees. Along with this, the state government aims to implement the scheme on 1.80 lakh acres over the next 5 years. The citizens of the state will benefit from this scheme.

While speaking to the Chief Minister, Dr. Mandharia, said that people belonging to all sections of society will benefit from this scheme without any discrimination. This scheme will not only bring significant economic benefits to the people but will also prove to be beneficial for environmental protection. He said that now the availability of plants whose wood is used for construction work or medicinal plants will not be limited to forests, but will also reach the fields of farmers and landowners and this scheme will reduce pressure on forests. Dr. Mandharia also ex-

pressed his gratitude to Chief Minister Shri Baghel for starting this visionary and environmentally beneficial scheme. He also stated that this scheme is also beneficial for forest produce production and forest dwellers.

Raipur Collector Dr. Sarveshwar Bhure has appealed to the residents of the district to take maximum advantage of this scheme. He said that this is a better scheme to overcome the shortage of forest area in the district. He explained that under this scheme, 100 per cent grant will be given for tree plantations on area up to 5 acres, and 50 per cent grant will be given for tree plantations on more than 5 acres. DFO Shri V. Kumar provided information on various plants that are included under the scheme. He also explained about intercropping and planting medicinal plants and told about the benefits of the scheme.

Two days National Seminar organised in SRSU

• On 'Transgender, Society and Media'

Raipur, Mar 21: In a two-day national seminar on "Transgender, Society and Media", in collaboration with the Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR), New Delhi, was organized by the Dept of Social Work and Journalism & Mass Communication at Shri Rawatpura Sarkar University (SRSU), Raipur.

In this seminar more than 150 delegations were registered and fifteen resource person share their experiences in three panel presentation session and nine technical sessions along with it 80 papers were presented by research scholar came from various universities across the state.

By appreciating the organizers of the seminar, the Vice Chancellor of the University, Prof. S.K. Singh shares his views to organize the national seminar with an objective to create the academic forum where the people related to different discipline share their experience and knowledge based on transgender society.

Inaugural Chief Guest Dr. Sadanand Shahi, the Vice Chancellor of Shri Shankracharya Professional University, Bilai asserted that the transgender playing an important role from Epic Era to Modern Era. There are many such examples in which this



community has played an active role. But even today there is an inherent cruelty towards this community in our mind. A contempt against this community remains inside us, it is expressed every day. The society has to avoid this prejudice only then an excluded community will be able to join the mainstream. Prof. Shahi said that the transgender community is known for art, music and dance. The spirit of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam should also be shown towards the transgender community. There should be a sense of equality in the use of words with them. Transgender Dhananjay Chauhan, head of Saksham Prakriti Welfare Society, Punjab, an organization working for the transgender community, said that all genders of the society should be considered equal. It is not right to divide the society into first, second and third gender. Minor bullying towards transgender should be banned in the society. Chhattisgarh Mitwa Sankalp Samiti's chief transgen-

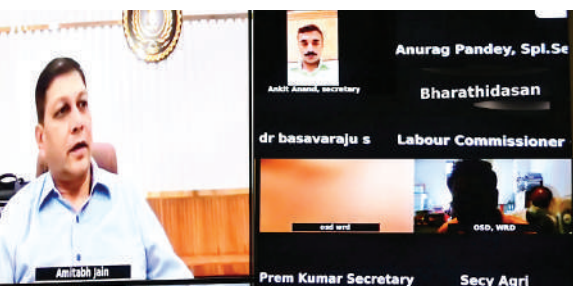
der Vidya Rajput said that today transgender is struggling to be called a human being apart from bread, cloth and house as well as we should not be seen only as a gender but as a human being. And Transgender Rabiha Bariha said that the media inadvertently gives a bad name to the community. This confuses the society further. Transgender should also get a chance to move forward and get acceptance in the family.

In the Inaugural function, books were also unveiled by the Chief Guest, namely "Transgender, Society and Media", "A discourse on Transgender: Society & Media Worldwide based on the transgender community. Valedictory Chief Guest Prof. Baldev Bhai Sharma, the Vice Chancellor of Kushbhau Thakre Patrakrita Avam Jansanchar Vishwavidyalaya, Raipur (C.G) asserted that, it is an act of great courage to candle the neglected section of the society. The aim of the university is not only to pro-

vide education but to awaken the social vision of the business of education in the mind of the student and to conduct research on it.

Along with it he said that, those who have suffered a lot for the recognition in the society over the years, they should get acceptance in our society, should get respect in the society. All knowledge and learning is focused on respect. When it comes to humanity, all the differences go away, whether it is big or small, big or small, caste system. The Pro Chancellor of the University appreciates the concept of the organizing committee and conveners Dr. Manish Verma, Dr. Santosh Kumar, Dr. Naresh Gautam for National Seminar based on the Transgender Society and Media. And the Registrar of the University Dr. C. Rameshkumar congratulates to Organizing Secretary Dr. Sunita Sonwani, Ms. Manish Bose and all cooperative staff members of the University.

Executive Committee meeting of SDRF held



Raipur, Mar 21: The meeting of the State Executive Committee constituted for the operation of the State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF) was held on Monday through video conference at Mantralaya Mahanadi Bhawan under the chairmanship of Chief Secretary Mr. Amitabh Jain. In the meeting, topics were discussed in detail includes State Disaster Mitigation Fund (SDMF), financial grant assistance under revenue book circular, rescue and preparation in the context of summer

season, financial grant assistance to dependents of persons who died due to Novel Corona Virus Covid-19. In the meeting, Secretary, Revenue Department, Mr. NN Ekka, Secretary, Health Department, Mr. R. Prasanna, Secretary, Chief Minister's Secretariat, Mr. Ankit Anand, Secretary, School Education Department, Dr. S. Bharathidasan, Secretary, Home and Forest Department, Mr. S. Basavaraju and other officials of the Revenue

Department were present. The Chief Secretary inquired about the action plan of the Disaster Response Fund.

Officials of the Department of Revenue and Disaster Management said that under the Revenue Book Circular 6-4, in the financial year 2022-23, for providing immediate grant-in-aid to the beneficiaries affected by the natural calamity and for the expenditure incurred in arranging food etc. in the Quarantine Center in the district. An approval allocation of Rs 61 crore 73 lakh 77 thousand has been issued to the collectors from the Revenue Disaster Response Fund. An amount of Rs 4 crore 76 lakh 50 thousand has been released to the districts of the state to provide grant-in-aid to the dependents of the persons who died due to Novel Corona virus Covid-19.



Wheelchair and tricycles distributed to 'Divyangjans'

Meritorious students receive financial assistance

Kanker, Mar 21: Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel reached the Karap village in Kanker district today and provided assistive equipments including wheelchairs, tricycles and hearing aids to 12 Divyangs. During the distribution drive, the children beneficiaries of Chirayu Yojana thanked Chief Minister Mr. Baghel by presenting him with roses. The Chief Minister also wished for the healthy life and bright future of the children. It is noteworthy

that, 4 children have been cured of congenital heart disease and 01 child has been cured of cataract under the Chirayu Yojna. On this occasion, Chief Minister Baghel also distributed cheques to 13 beneficiaries of the 'Medhavi Chaatra Shiksha Protsahan Yojna, 'mukhyamantri Nirman Shramik Mrityu and divyang sahayta yojna, Minimata Mahtari Jatan Yojana and Mukyamantri Noni Sashaktikaran Sahayta Yojna.

60th meeting of DOLC concludes in Raipur Division

Central Chronicle News

Raipur, Mar 21: The 60th meeting of the Divisional Official Language Implementation Committee, Raipur was organized on March 20 under the chairmanship of Divisional Railway Manager Sanjeev Kumar. According to the standard agenda issued by the Railway Board, in this meeting, progress of the official language in the division during the quarter October - December 2022 was reviewed.

First of all, Additional Chief Official Language Officer and Additional Divisional Railway Manager (Operation) Lokesh Vishnoi said in his welcome speech that since our division is located in 'K' region, we have more responsibility and therefore we have to work continuously towards the implementa-



tion of official language Hindi. With mutual co-operation and coordination, the use and spread of the official language has to be increased, he added. Divisional Railway Manager Sanjeev Kumar said in his presidential speech that there has been a lot of increase in official language works in our division as compared to earlier, but still many works have to be done so that target compliance of all the items of

the annual program can be ensured. He directed all the officers present that during their regular inspection, they must inspect at least one item related to official language and mention it in their inspection report. Various branch officers and their representatives were present in this meeting. Official Language Officer Nikesh Kumar Pandey conducted the meeting. The meeting was declared closed with a vote of thanks.

IBITF hosted annual Fintech stakeholder conclave



Raipur, Mar 21: IIT Bhubaneswar Innovation and Technology Foundation (IBITF) hosted its annual Fintech Stakeholder Conclave in a private hotel here on March 15, 2023. The event brought together a diverse group of stakeholders from various industries, including healthcare, agriculture, the environment, renewable energy, banking, etc., to identify innovative fintech-based solutions to some of the most pressing challenges facing these industries. These problems outlined specific challenges encountered by each sector and allowed innovators and fintech startups to showcase their solutions. Some prominent organi-



zations that participated in the conclave included the National Payments Council of India, the National Informatics Centre, the Indian Institute of Management, Raipur, Chhattisgarh State Renewable Energy Development Agency (CREDA), Bhilai Steel Plant, SAIL, the All India Institute of Medical Sciences, Raipur, Avishkaran BioNEST Bio Incubator, the National Institute of Pharmaceutical Education and Research (NIPER), Hyderabad, I-Venture, Indian School of Business, Hyderabad, among others. The conclave featured presentations and discussions on a wide range of problems in the fintech

domain, which could be solved through blockchain technology, the Internet of Things (IoT), Artificial Intelligence (AI), Machine Learning (ML), and e-Payment Systems. Speaking on the occasion, Prof. Rajiv Prakash, Director of IIT Bhubaneswar, said, "Educational institutes in India are renowned for their fundamental research, but applying such research to real-world problem solving needs an entrepreneurial mindset that we must instill. The vision behind this initiative is to ensure that the benefits are not confined only to industry stakeholders. Rather, it should make IIT Bhubaneswar approachable so that even small retailers or farmers

can present their problems and seek help developing innovative and impactful solutions that could benefit society." Dr. Prasant Agnihotri, CEO of IBITF spoke about how the problem statements presented by diverse industries provided a roadmap for IBITF, widening its applicability, to identify opportunities not only within the financial industry but in other sectors that could be addressed through fintech-based solutions. Prof. Ram Kumar Kakani, Director IIM Raipur, addressed the participants in his keynote speech and suggested that IBITF, in achieving the intended objectives, should ensure maintaining innovation within a regulatory framework that protects consumers and maintains market stability. He added that we must embrace innovation, but we must do so responsibly and sustainably, ensuring that fintech solutions do not compromise the safety and security of the financial system. The IBITF Fintech Stakeholder Conclave also included a networking event, allowing attendees to connect with fellow stakeholders and explore potential collaboration opportunities.

HNLU-HNMCC to be held on March 15-17, 2024

Raipur, Mar 21: In the valedictory ceremony of the prestigious event of HNLU, Hidayatullah Memorial National Moot Court Competition (HNMCC), Prof. VC Vivekanandan, Vice Chancellor of HNLU announced "the HNMCC makes a big leap for conducting International Moot named hereafter as Hidayatullah International Moot Court Competition (HIMCC) which will be held on March 15-17 of 2024 at HNLU campus with a substantial budget where we expect world teams to participate." He further remarked, "This evolution is based on the consistent organization capacity of the HNLU Student-Faculty teams of the past HNMCC events and also will be the first global moot event for any law school in the country where the preparations will start from

April 2023". The XIIth edition of the CCI - HNMCC'23, the 3-day flagship event of HNLU, successfully concluded on 19th March 2023. The moot court competition witnessed participation from 38 law schools comprising of 114 students judged by 60 invited judges. After a fiercely competitive conclusion of the semi-finals, the two exceptional teams that made it to the grand finale of this prestigious event were the National Law University, Odisha & University of Petroleum and Energy Studies. Following an intense final, the winners for this year's HNMCC were the University of Petroleum and Energy Studies represented by Yashaswini Parashar, Anshika Agarwal and Utsav Vats, whereas Maharashtra National Law University, Nagpur, represented by Anika Sharma,

Ghanishtha Mishra and Sharwari Motghares bagged the Best Memorial Award. The Best Speaker Award went to Vinayak Sanjay Buckshee, Damodaran Sanjivayya National Law University, while Ayush Morande, Maharashtra Law University, Mumbai, claimed the Best Researcher Award. Justice Goutam Bhaduri, Acting Chief Justice of the High Court of Chhattisgarh, and Chancellor, HNLU participated as the Chief Guest and remarked that all are winners while participating and no losers. He went on to urge student of Six Qualities to imbibe to succeed in life and emphasized 'Respect for Teachers' as a crucial one. He extensively quoted Swami Vivekananda and underlined concentration, hard work and self esteem as fundamental qualities to suc-

ceed in profession and life. The final round was presided over by a special bench of five judges, comprising Prof. Dr. A. David Ambrose, former Professor and Head of the Department of Legal Studies, University of Madras, Prof. (Dr.) Ranbir Singh, Pro-Chancellor IILM University & Member Executive Council and General Council, HNLU, Adv. R. Muralidharan, Patent and Trademark Attorney, Manu Associates, Mr. Ved Prakash Mishra, Advisor (Law) & Head of the Legal Division, Competition Commission of India, and Mr. Bharat Budholia, a Partner at AZB and Partners, which is the official sponsor as well for the event. The event was executed flawlessly by Dr Anindya Tiwari, faculty & Organising Secretary with his team of faculty and students

Woman Maoist killed in an encounter



Bijapur, Mar 21: An encounter between police and Maoists took place on Tuesday morning at around 6:30 am in the forests between Korcholi and Todka under Gangalur police station area of district Bijapur. Security forces action on



the intelligence of the presence of Maoists PLGA Company No. 2 Commander Vella and Gangalur Area Committee Secretary Dinesh and others. A woman Maoist in uniform was killed in the encounter and a 12-Bore rifle, cartridges, Maoist

uniform, backpack, Maoist literature and other daily use material recovered from the spot by the police. Joint operation of DRG, STF and CRPF 85 Bn. On Monday it was as per the intelligence of the presence of PLGA Company No. 2 Commander Vella and Gangalur Area Committee Secretary Dinesh and others in the forests of Korcholi and Todka, a joint party of DRG, STF and CRPF 85 was sent for an

anti-Maoist operation. During the operation, security forces were successful in killing one woman Maoist in uniform s in the forests of Korcholi and Todka at around 6:30 am on Tuesday. During the search on the spot, one no. 12-bore rifle, cartridges, 'Pitthu bag', uniform, Maoist literature and other Naxal materials were recovered. More Maoists are likely to have got injured in the encounter, police says.

Jindal Steel gets India's first BIS licence

To manufacture Fire Resistant Steel

Raigarh, Mar 21: Jindal Steel & Power (JSP) has received BIS certification to manufacture India's First Fire Resistant Steel Structures at its Rail Mill & Special Profile Mill in Raigarh, Chhattisgarh. The Hot Rolled Structural Steel, manufactured as per IS 15103, can be used for high-temperature or fire-prone areas and can withstand temperatures up to 600 degrees Celsius for a maximum duration of 3 hours. Fire protection has been a challenge in the design of steel structures. The availability of Fire Resistant Steel will result



in more efficient designs of structures. The new BIS 15103 grade will be used to manufacture steel structures for infrastructure projects such as industrial structures, refineries, bridges, metro projects, and steel & power plants as well as in hospitals, and commercial and residential buildings.

Bimlendra Jha, Managing Director of Jindal Steel & Power, said in a statement, "The license provided to Jindal Steel & Power to produce Fire Resistant Steel will be a game-changer in strengthening India's infrastructure & its safety standards. Fire Resistant Steel will provide much-

needed assurance to the end users for fire safety, building a safer AtmaNirbhar Bharat". A felicitation ceremony for the BIS certifications was held during the World Consumer Rights Day celebration at Vanijya Bhawan, New Delhi in which the license was formally granted to Jindal Steel & Power. It is noteworthy that JSP is an industrial powerhouse with a dominant presence in the steel, mining and infrastructure sectors. With an investment of 12 billion USD across the globe, the Company is continuously scaling its capacity utilization and efficiencies to capture opportunities for building a self-reliant India.

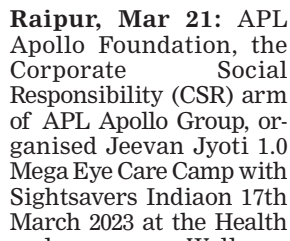
GEMS holds Graduation Ceremony



Raipur, Mar 21: It was the day for Tini Tots who after a hard fought year successfully sailed to next class. The results of Pre-Primary sections (Nursery, PPI and PP 2) were announced along with Class I and II at the Gyanodaya Bhawan of Shri Gujrati English Medium School. In presence of President of Shri Gujrati Shikshan Sangh Naryan Bhai Patel, Secretary duo Tulsi Bhai Patel and Ashok Bhai Patel and co-secretary Vithal Das Patel results were announced by the teachers Mrs Anupama Dubey and Mrs Priyanka. Principal Dr Shailesh Sharma blessed the children in his ever charming speech while president and co-secretary also addressed the parents. After completing the formality of lighting the cere-

monial lamp and worshipping Goddess Sarsawati, results were announced. In Nursery section Parth Dhutra stood first with 95.60%, Dhaanvi Rathod second with 95.20% and Aashi Thawait third with 94.80%. In PP-I Mohammad Adam Khan stot first, Khyati Janghel second and Vansh Patel third. In PP-II Avni Kumari was first, Tanishq Saini second and Kanish Soni third. In Class I Sarthi Yadav stood first with 98.25%, Krishna Parpani second with 96.5% and Hanshika Sachdev third with 96%. In Class II Jyotsna Kashyap was first, S Sai Akshit second and Likhita Patel bagged third position. All the position holders were congratulated by the school committee members.

APL Apollo Foundation conducts Mega Eye Camp



Raipur, Mar 21: APL Apollo Foundation, the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) arm of APL Apollo Group, organised Jeevan Jyoti 1.0 Mega Eye Care Camp with Sightsavers India on 17th March 2023 at the Health and Wellness Center Kesda, VikaskhandSimga, Zila Baloda Bazar - Bhatapara. Eye Health is global health and development issue across various nations, as it is associated with quality of life and survival expectancy among the middle-aged and elderly population. Today, 2.2 billion people or 1/3rd population globally is affected with vision impairment and blindness. Eye Health also makes an essential contribution to the 2030 Agenda for United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), and APL Apollo Foundation, in collaboration with



Sightsavers India, is honoured to play its part in achieving the SDG target of ensuring healthy lives and promoting well-being for all. According to Ms Kiran Dhruw, Sarpanch, Kesda Village, District Baloda Bazar - Bhatapara "Millions in India go blind due to lack of awareness and availability of basic infrastructure. While blindness is not fatal, it is still a major contributor to poverty as he/she becomes most vulnerable to losing opportunities." Ramdulari Kashyap, Sarpanch, Ringni Village, District Baloda Bazar - Bhatapara said, "My message to the people of this community is to get their

eyes tested at least once a year. Keeping eye health and overall well-being in mind, I congratulate the efforts of APL Apollo Building and APL Apollo Foundation on organising this Mega Eye Camp in collaboration with Sightsavers India." Mr Anil Mittal, CEO, APL Apollo Building Products Private Limited, said - "Preventing blindness increases access to education, employment and prosperity and enables a greater participation in all spheres of life. Access to eye care services thus becomes extremely important especially in the rural areas where opportunities and facilities

are limited. APL Apollo Building Products and APL Apollo Foundation organised this Mega Eye Camp-Jeevan Jyoti 1.0 at Simga block to provide eye care access to the people residing in Kesda, Ringni and Newdha villages. APL Apollo Foundation will channelise its efforts to ensure that optimum health-care services are made available to people who need it the most." Mr RN Mohanty, CEO of Sightsavers India, said, "Eye care is the most neglected while being the most critical aspect of our lives. A lot of eye-health-related challenges can be addressed through early detection. I am glad that APL Apollo Foundation is conducting a Mega Eye Camp to ensure access to eye care services and chart a path that helps us continue working towards our mission to ensure no person goes blind needlessly".

Two accused nabbed with 10 kg 'Ganja'

Jagdalpur, Mar 21: On Monday, the police arrested two accused with 10 kg of Hemp from Chhepadaguda Chowk of village Asna under Kotwali police station of the district. One of the arrested accused is a minor. The estimated market value of the recovered hemp has been estimated at Rs 50,000. The police have also seized the bike and mobile from the possession of the accused. After the proceedings, the minor has been sent to a juvenile home, while the other accused was presented in the court and later sent to jail. The police received a tip from informer that bike riders were coming to Jagdalpur from Odisha Road and are carrying Ganja. The police had already deployed in Asan Chowk. The police team stopped two people riding a bike at Asana Chhepadaguda Chowk. During interrogation, the bike rider told his name as Manohar Samrath resident of



Navrangpur Odisha. The other one was a minor. The police recovered 10 kg of Ganja during the search of his bag. The estimated value of the seized ganja has been estimated at Rs 50,000. Ganja smugglers are continuously adopting new tactics for smuggling. Even, they have started fielding minor children for smuggling Ganja. It may be noted that in the past also a minor was caught smuggling ganja. That minor was also sent to a juvenile home. If the police does not take action at the inter-state level in the case of Ganja smuggling, then in the coming times more minors will be involved in smuggling.

World Water Day - 2023

Continuous falling water level alarming in the region

Mungeli, Mar 21:

The source of water level in Mungeli district is continuously falling, due to lack of social concern as well as administrative initiative, as there is no initiative to face the water crisis in the district. In the coming times, the district may have to go through a period of water crisis, and as per rules water harvesting was to be done to protect the water sources, but the unfortunate thing is that even the government offices have not followed the government orders.

To save rain water, a plan was made by the administration, under which water harvesting was to be constructed at all private and government places, so that water labels could be maintained, but due to government apathy, this plan also remained confined to papers only. This scheme of the government could not be implemented even in the government offices, due to which the water level in the district is decreasing every year.

Though municipal officials issue NOC for construction of houses only on the condition of making water harvesting in urban areas, the implementation is not fool proof. The government has made water harvesting system mandatory, and for this, a token amount is deposited, but the engineers

of the municipality do not have time to test how many people have built it, due to which people get houses built, but not the harvesting system.

The officials cannot even take action on them because the municipality does not have any record of making water harvesting system and permission is also not to be given to construct buildings without water harvesting in urban areas. For almost five years, the responsibility of water harvesting along with the building permission was given to the employee of NAPA, but as the relevant information is not available, the officials have not been able to investigate it, it has not been considered proper to call the concerned employee and get the important records rectified.

As per information, 25 years ago, there were more than 30 public and private wells in the city to meet the need of water, but presently many of them have dried completely. The rapid decline in the groundwater level of the district started in the 90s, after the water of the city went below 35 feet, the existence of wells started disappearing. Presently sufficient water is available only after 100 feet. And in most of the places shallow handpumps get closed in summer.

Collector annoyed over late-comers

Manendragarh- Chirmiri-Bharatpur, Mar 21: Collector PS Dhruv conducted surprise inspection in different offices of District Collectorate here on Monday. During the inspection he checked the cleanliness, sitting arrangements. He expressed annoyance over the staff coming late to the office and those found absent while-on-duty in their desks and directed them to ensure strictness. He went to each department in the Collectorate and took information from the officers and employees about the work being done and directed to complete all the official and government's work on priority basis and keep all the documents well-organised and upto-date. He warned that strict action will be taken for any dereliction of duty or carelessness.

BJP workers hear President's message



Nandini-Ahirwara, Mar 21: It was under the guidance of the Ahirwara Mandal President Liman Sahu, general secretary Sudarshan Giri and Sanjay Pande, that BJP party workers heard the message by the President of India Draupadi Murmu in the shop of Dau Anand

Tamrakar. Apart from this meeting of BJP party workers was held in context of strengthening of the booths. During this Ahirwara BJYM Mandal gen. secy. Rahul Chandel, V-P Jitendra Vyas, Lokesh Sendre, Nagar V-P Sahil Khan, Raunak Tamrakar and others were present.

SPS condoles Vidyashankar Shukla



Masturi, Mar 21: First state president of Chhattisgarh Shramjeev Patrakar Sangh (SPS) senior journalist Vidyashankar Shukla, (Babla Bhaiya) resident of Anupam Nagar passed away on Tuesday, 14th March. He worked in a daily news organization for a long time. As per the resolution taken by him, the body has been handed over to Medical College Raipur. With the news of Shukla's demise, Chhattisgarh Shramjeev Patrakar Sangh

Masturi unit organized a condolence meeting on Wednesday and paid tribute to Shukla and remembered his tenure. On this occasion, journalists Santosh Thakur, Om Prakash Pandey, Sunhar Ram Chandel, Basant Agarwal, Krishnapal Dev

Khatkar, Nanku Ram Sahu, Suresh Dubey, Uday Singh Thakur, Hari Shankar Pandey, Jagannath Netam, Sanjay Pandey, Durga Prajapati, Krishna Kumar Chandel, Sunil Singh and other journalist colleagues were present.

Advertisement for GODAWARI POWER AND ISPAT LIMITED. It includes contact information for the Raipur office, a notice of record date for a buyback, and the name of the company secretary, Y. C. Rao.

Advertisement for Canara Bank. It features a 'Branch: Baloda Bazar (C.G.)' and a 'POSSESSION NOTICE' regarding the enforcement of security interest on immovable properties. The notice includes details of the borrower, the amount due, and the date of possession.

Advertisement for MANAPPURAM FINANCE LTD. It contains a 'GOLD AUCTION NOTICE' where the company is notified to conduct an auction of gold ornaments pledged to the bank. The notice lists various gold ornaments and their details.

Advertisement for Bank of Baroda. It features a 'POSSESSION NOTICE' regarding the enforcement of security interest on immovable properties. The notice includes details of the borrower, the amount due, and the date of possession.

Earthen pots to be lit in temple

Of Goddess Mahamaya of Kamalkshetra



Rajim, Mar 21: Special preparations are being made for Navratri this time in the adorable Goddess Maa Mahamaya Temple of Kamalkshetra and new office bearers have been elected by the Management Committee. The phase of painting and cutting receipts is going on with full enthusiasm and Valmiki Dhivar of the temple committee told that till now more than 500 receipts have been cut for Manokamna Jyoti Kalash.

Management Committee, Lileshwar Yadu said that a total of 12 CCTV cameras have been installed in the entire temple premises so that the devotees coming for the Navratri festival do not face any kind of problem and with this, the entire campus will be visible on one screen. He also said that Mother Mahamaya Devi has been considered the adorable goddess of Kamalkshetra, that's why a large number of devotees start arriving from the first day itself and Prasad and Jyoti Kalash for all, a mirror has been placed in the house for darshan.

DPRC responsible for parking, cleaning, maintenance and cottages



At Amritdhara tourist destination Decision taken in the general body meeting of ZP

At the beginning of the meeting, the topics of the previous meeting were apprised by the departmental heads and action taken on them was informed to the members. The District Panchayat CEO instructed the department heads to work within the time limit for resolving all the demand problems. District Panchayat member in this meeting Mrs. Phoolmati Singh, Mrs. Usha Singh, Mrs. Chhuni Paikra, Mrs. Sunita Kurre, Mrs. Jyotsna Rajwade, Mrs. Vandana Rajwade, Mr. Drigpal Singh, Mr. Ravishankar Singh and President of District Panchayat Baikunthpur, Mrs. Saubhagyavati Singh, District President of Khadgawan, Mrs. Sonmati Urre, District Panchayat Bharatpur Mrs. Rajkumari Baiga, Sonhat District Panchayat President Mrs. Lalli Singh and heads of offices of all departments were present.

Parking of vehicles, cottages, cleanliness arrangements near Amritdhara Tourism Center will now be looked after by the in-charge of DPRC. The General Assembly of the District Panchayat passed the resolution giving consensus on this. District Panchayat President Mrs. Renuka Singh advised to observe for the next three months and to continue after that. The General Assembly meeting under the chairmanship of District Panchayat President Mrs. Renuka Singh was held, her other day. In this meeting, departmental heads discussed the progress of implementation of departmental plans. Information was provided and several important proposals were discussed and decided upon. District Panchayat Vice President Vedanti Tiwari, Chief Executive Officer of District Panchayat Mrs. Namrata Jain and other elected members participated in the General Assembly meet-

Advertisement for Bank of Baroda. It features a 'CORRIGENDUM - POSSESSION NOTICE' regarding a correction in the details of a property mentioned in a previous notice.

Child protection prog held

Nandini-Ahirwara, Mar 21: In Nandini city ward No. 9 (100) unit Anganbadi centre, child protection programme was held and in this CMO Yamini Yadav Supervisor, Meena Verma Nandini Nagar Ahirwara (200) Unit



Mitanin- Seema Chandravanshi, Santoshi and Anganbadi assistant Prama were present. In this a total of 27 children were administered Vitamin 'A' syrup, iron syrup and vaccination to 10 children was done.

Advertisement for Bank of India. It features a 'POSSESSION NOTICE (For Immovable Properties)' regarding the enforcement of security interest on immovable properties. The notice includes details of the borrower, the amount due, and the date of possession.

Advertisement for Bank of India. It features a 'NOTICE UNDER SECTION 13(2) OF THE SECURITISATION AND RECONSTRUCTION OF FINANCIAL ASSETS AND ENFORCEMENT OF SECURITY INTEREST ACT, 2002 (SARFAESI ACT)' regarding the enforcement of security interest on immovable properties.

Advertisement for Bank of Baroda. It features a 'नाम परिवर्तन' (Name Change) notice regarding the change of name of a borrower in a loan account.

Advertisement for Bank of Baroda. It features a 'POSSESSION NOTICE' regarding the enforcement of security interest on immovable properties. The notice includes details of the borrower, the amount due, and the date of possession.

BRIEF



BRS MLC K Kavitha arrives at the Enforcement Directorate (ED) office in connection with the Delhi excise policy case, in New Delhi, Tuesday.

Lifer

Alwar: A local court on Tuesday awarded life imprisonment to a woman and her paramour for the gruesome murder of her husband, three sons and a nephew. "Additional District and Sessions Judge (No. 2) Renu Srivastava had convicted the woman Sandhya alias Santosh and her paramour Hanuman in the case on Monday and awarded life imprisonment to them today," Additional Public Prosecutor Ashok Sharma said.

Fraud

Noida: The Noida Police on Tuesday said they have arrested six people on charges of fraud worth "lakhs of rupees" after a raid at a fake call centre. The centre was being run as a front of a 'Panchkarm Chooran' (herbal powder) company, and the accused sold adulterated product for Rs 3,000 to Rs 6,000 per bottle, police said.

Explosion

Bareilly: Two people were injured in an explosion due to technical fault in a machine during a programme here on Monday, officials said. Minister of State for Forests (Independent Charge) Arun Kumar, Commissioner Soumya Agarwal, Municipal Commissioner Nidhi Gupta and District Magistrate Shivakant Dwivedi and other senior officials of the Electricity Department who were attending the programme escaped narrowly, the officials said.

Adjourned

New Delhi: Rajya Sabha proceedings were adjourned till 2 pm on Tuesday after MPs from treasury benches created uproar over Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's democracy remarks. Opposition members too were on their feet after Chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar rejected 11 notices under Rule 267 to suspend the scheduled business of the day and take up issues related to the Adani Group of companies.

Fire

New Delhi: A fire broke out at a godown in north Delhi's Wazirabad area on Tuesday morning, Delhi Fire Services officials said. So far no injuries or casualty has been reported, they said. A call about a fire was received at 10:45 am and nine fire tenders were rushed to the site, said Atul Garg, Director of Delhi Fire Services.

Demolished

Surat: A 30-year-old cooling tower of a power station in Gujarat's Surat city was demolished on Tuesday through a controlled explosion. The 85-metre tall RCC tower with an around 72-metre diameter of the gas-based Utran Power Station was brought down at around 11:10 am.

Heavy unseasonal rains lash Mumbai and satellite cities

Mumbai, Mar 21 (PTD):

Heavy unseasonal rains lashed Mumbai and satellite cities on Tuesday morning, bringing down the temperature by 2.6 degrees Celsius.

Satellite cities like Thane, Mira-Bhayander, and Vasai-Virar too received a spell of heavy showers in the morning.

The India Meteorological Department attributed the westerly wind and moisture incursion from the Arabian Sea as the reason behind the spell.

It is unusual for Mumbai to witness rains in March.

The Colaba observatory recorded a minimum temperature of 20.6 degrees Celsius and Santacruz observatory recorded 21.2 degrees Celsius. The Colaba and Santacruz recorded a departure of 2.6 and 0.3 degree Celsius than the normal.

The Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) said that some parts of Mumbai city and suburbs have recorded up to 20-25 mm of rain between 7 am and 8 am.

In the island city, Central Mumbai areas like Mandvi fire station, Memonwada fire station, Byculla fire station, and BMC headquarters re-

ported 28 mm, 25 mm, 23 mm, and 19 mm rainfall, respectively.

Eastern suburbs like Mulund, Gavanpada, and Bhandup Complex recorded 20 mm and 19 mm rainfall respectively between 6 am and 7 am. In the Western suburbs, Dahisar fire station and Chincholi fire station reported 18 mm and 14 mm rainfall, respectively.

Authorities said public transport services like railways and Brihanmumbai Electric Supply and Transport (BEST) remained unaffected.

The civic body said the BEST bus operations

were normal, and nowhere in the city, bus routes were changed due to rain or waterlogging.

Railway authorities said train services in the city on all three suburban corridors main line, harbour line and western line were running normally.

"Heavy rain was reported in various sections of the Mumbai division, but trains are running smoothly," said Shivaji Sutar, chief public relations officer of Central Railway.

However, commuter associations said trains were late by nearly 15 minutes as the day progressed.

ARYA SAMAJ FOUNDATION DAY



Union Home Minister Amit Shah and Gujarat Governor Acharya Devvrat at the 148th foundation day function of Arya Samaj, in New Delhi, Tuesday.

CONRAD TO ASSEMBLY

'Mukroh part of Meghalaya'

Shillong, Mar 21 (PTD):

Dismissing his Assam counterpart's claim, Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad K Sangma on Tuesday asserted in the assembly that Mukroh village on the disputed interstate border, where a violent clash claimed six lives last year, is a part of the hill state. He said residents of Mukroh are beneficiaries of various schemes of his government.

Sangma's statement comes weeks after Assam CM Himanta Biswa Sarma said in the assembly that Mukroh is a part of his state. "I have clearly stated that Mukroh is very much a part of Meghalaya. Facts and figures indicate that. Other statements may have been



made but our stand is clear," Sangma told the assembly. "Census code states that Mukroh is under the West Jaintia Hills district. Voting during the recent Meghalaya assembly polls took place in Mukroh as well. The village has 1,500 voters, two polling stations and is a part of Mokaia constituency," he said, while

replying to a supplementary question raised by Voice of the People's Party MLA Adelbert Nongrum.

He said Mukroh has a village employment council with over 500 beneficiaries of MGNREGA.

The CM said the village has two fair price shops with over 2,200 beneficiaries and a school and health centre have been built by the Meghalaya government. According to Sangma, other central schemes such as Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojna (Grameen) or PMAYG, Jal Jeevan and Swachh Bharat Mission (SVM) have also been implemented in the village.

Six people five from Mukroh and a forest guard from Assam were killed in a clash that broke

out along the disputed border on November 22 last year after a truck laden with "illegally felled timber" was allegedly intercepted by the forest personnel from the neighbouring state. On the clash, he said lack of communication and coordination between officials of the two states sometimes leads to tension and sporadic violence.

"We have realised that communication and coordination with our counterparts are very important to avoid building up of tension," he said, adding that SOPs have been approved to address the gaps. Sangma said that a probe by an inquiry commission is underway into the November 22 violence.

NIA makes first arrest in NGO terror funding case

Srinagar, Mar 21 (PTD):

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) has arrested a close associate of a human rights activist in connection with its ongoing investigation into an NGO terror funding case here, an official said on Tuesday.

Irfan Mehraj, a resident of Srinagar, was the first accused arrested following comprehensive investigations into the NGO terror funding case registered in October 2020, a spokesperson of the federal agency said.

"Mehraj was a close associate of (human rights activist) Khurram Parvez and was working with his organisation, Jammu and Kashmir Coalition of Civil

Societies (JKCCS)," he said.

The agency alleged that the investigation revealed that the JKCCS was funding terror activities and had also been propagating a secessionist agenda in the Valley under the garb of the protection of human rights.

"Involvement of some Valley-based NGOs, Trusts and Societies in funding of terror-related activities is being probed in this case," the spokesperson said.

The official said some NGOs, both registered as well as unregistered, have been noticed collecting funds domestically and abroad under the cover of doing charity and various welfare activities, includ-

ing public health and education.

"But some of these organisations have developed links with proscribed terrorist organisations, such as Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and Hizbul Mujahideen (HM)," the spokesperson said.

Parvez was arrested in November 2021 by the NIA and chargesheeted on May 13 next year along with six others for alleged anti-national activities including collecting information regarding vital installations and deployment of security forces, procuring official secret documents and passing the same to LeT handlers through encrypted communication channels for monetary consideration.

Mamata to meet Naveen during Odisha trip

Kolkata, Mar 21 (PTD):

After meeting Samajwadi Party leader Akhilesh Yadav during his recent visit to Kolkata, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee is likely to call on her Odisha counterpart Naveen Patnaik during her three-day trip to the neighbouring state, officials said on Tuesday.

The Trinamool Congress supremo, who is scheduled to reach Bhubaneswar on Tuesday afternoon, will go to Puri by road and offer puja at the Shree Jagannath Temple on Wednesday.

Although it's a personal trip of the CM, the fiery leader may hold a meeting with Patnaik before boarding the return flight to the

eastern metropolis on Thursday, they said.

Party insiders said the two non-BJP CMs may hold discussions on strategies for next year's Lok Sabha polls.

"This meeting gains importance as the country is heading for Lok Sabha elections in a year's time. Banerjee is the driving force behind the anti-BJP thrust. The two CMs may hold discussions on strategies for the polls," a senior TMC leader told PTI on condition of anonymity.

Banerjee, however, had skipped a meeting called by Delhi CM and Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) supremo Arvind Kejriwal for forming a third front ahead of the 2024 polls.

NAVRATRI PREPARATIONS



Devotees at the Barah Devi temple ahead of the upcoming Navratri festival, in Kanpur district, Tuesday.

Actor-politician Kirron Kher tests positive

For COVID-19

Mumbai, Mar 21 (PTD):

Actor-politician Kirron Kher has tested positive for coronavirus. The 70-year-old veteran shared the news in a post on Twitter on Monday evening and urged all those who came in contact with her to get tested.

"I have tested positive for Covid. So anyone who has come in contact with me please get yourself tested," Kher tweeted.

The BJP MP from Chandigarh is best known for appearances

in critically-acclaimed movies such as "Bariwali", "Devdas", "Main Hoon Na", "Veer-Zaara", "Apne" and "Dostana". She is married to veteran actor Anupam Kher.

In 2021, she was diagnosed with multiple myeloma, a type of blood cancer. She bounced back after undergoing treatment.

According to the Union Health Ministry data updated on Tuesday, India logged 699 new cases of coronavirus, while the active cases increased to 6,559. The death toll increased to 5,30,808 with two deaths.

Let's Make EVERY Drop Count: World Water Day 2023

Har Ghar, Nal se Jal scheme was launched in 2019. The scheme of the Ministry of Jal Shakti aims to provide piped drinking water to every rural household by 2024 and is a component of the government's Jal Jeevan Mission. The scheme is based on a unique model, where water committees (Jal Samiti) of the villagers will decide what they will pay for the water they consume. The tariff they fix will not be the same for everyone in the village. Those with larger households will have to pay more, while poorer households or households with no earning member will be exempted.



Priyanka Saurabh

source of livelihood for many people in rural areas. This can lead to increased productivity and economic growth. The initiative is expected to improve the health and hygiene of rural households by providing safe and clean drinking water, thereby reducing the incidence of waterborne diseases.

Access to piped water supply will save time and effort for rural households, especially women, who have traditionally been responsible for collecting water from distant sources. Increased access to sanitation: The initiative will also increase access to sanitation facilities, as piped water supply can be used for household toilets. The

initiative will reduce dependence on groundwater sources, which will help in conserving groundwater resources and contribute to overall environmental sustainability.

The Nal Se Jal initiative, which aims to supply piped water to every household by 2024, faces several challenges. The biggest challenge in implementing the tap water initiative is the lack of infrastructure in many areas, especially in rural areas. Building a piped water supply system requires significant investment in infrastructure, which includes pipes, pumps, and treatment plants. The initiative requires significant funding to build the necessary infrastructure, and the government may face challenges in securing sufficient funding for the initiative.

The success of the initiative also depends on the political will and administrative capacity to effectively implement the scheme at the local level. Ensuring the quality of water supplies is a significant challenge, as contamination and pollution of water sources can pose health risks and reduce the effectiveness of initiatives.

The success of the initiative also depends on changing the behavior of people in terms of water usage, conservation, and sanitation practices. Some states may have inter-state disputes over sharing of water resources, which may hamper the progress of the initiative.

Climate change may affect the availability of water resources, and hence, the sustainability of the initiative. The mission is based on a community approach to water and includes extensive information, education, and communication as a key component of mission. JIM wants to create a mass movement for water, making it everyone's priority. The fund-sharing pattern between the Center and States is 90:10 for Himalayan and North Eastern States, 50:50 for other States, and 100% for Union Territories.

Even after 70 years of independence, almost 50% of Indian people do not have access to drinking water. Different governments at the central and state level have worked for this, but the reality remains that the people of the country, especially women, have to walk miles to get drink-

ing water. That's why PM Modi announced Jal Jeevan Mission from Red Fort. Jal Jeevan Mission is implemented by the Ministry of Jal Shakti in partnership with the States. It aims to provide adequate drinking water of prescribed quality to every rural household in the country on a regular and long-term basis by 2024.

The central government has allocated Rs 3.6 lakh crore under the PM Jal Jeevan Mission. The PM has also expressed confidence in making India completely open and defecation-free (ODF). The Mission focuses on service delivery and not on infrastructure creation. Prime Minister Modi has credited various states, villages, and local bodies for making a strong campaign towards this. The Nal Se Jal initiative aims to supply piped water to every household in rural India by 2024. The initiative has a socio-economic impact and contributes to the overarching goal of universal access to water and sanitation.

(Writer is Research Scholar in Political Science, Poetess, freelance journalist, and columnist.)

WSJ: BJP key foreign party for US interests

New York, Mar 21 (PTI):

An opinion piece in the influential Wall Street Journal has described the BJP as the most important foreign political party in the world for America's national interests and the "linchpin" of the US strategy in the Indo-Pacific amidst China's increasing assertiveness in the region.

The BJP may also be the least understood, the opinion piece written by Walter Russell Mead, a leading American academic, commented. He added that the party combines the most striking principles of three major political entities in the world - the Likud Party of Israel, the Communist Party of China and the Muslim Brotherhood of Egypt.

According to the opinion piece published on Monday, the BJP is poorly understood in the West because it grows out of a political and cultural history unfamiliar to most non-Indians.

The BJP's electoral dominance reflects the success of a "once obscure and marginal social movement of national renewal based on efforts by generations of social thinkers and activists to chart a distinctively Hindu path to modernisation", it says.

"Like the Muslim Brotherhood, the BJP rejects many ideas and priorities of Western liberalism even as it embraces key features of modernity. Like the Chinese Communist Party, the BJP hopes to lead a nation with more than a billion people to become a global superpower," Mead writes.

"Like the Likud Party in Israel, the BJP combines a basically pro-market economic stance with populist rhetoric and traditionalist values, even as it channels the anger of those who've felt excluded and despised by a cosmopolitan, Western-focused cultural and political elite," the 70-year-old academic says.

"After an intensive se-

ries of meetings with senior BJP and RSS leaders, as well as some of their critics, I am convinced that Americans and Westerners generally need to engage much more deeply with a complex and powerful movement," Mead says.

From a fringe of mostly marginalised intellectuals and religious enthusiasts, the RSS has become perhaps the most powerful civil-society organisation in the world, he writes.

Mead also highlights the importance of stronger ties between the US and India.

"It's important because the BJP - which came to power in 2014, won a second term in 2019, and is headed for a repeat victory in 2024 - sits securely at the helm of Indian politics at a time when India is emerging both as a leading economic power and, along with Japan, as the linchpin of American strategy in the Indo-Pacific," he writes.

"For the foreseeable fu-

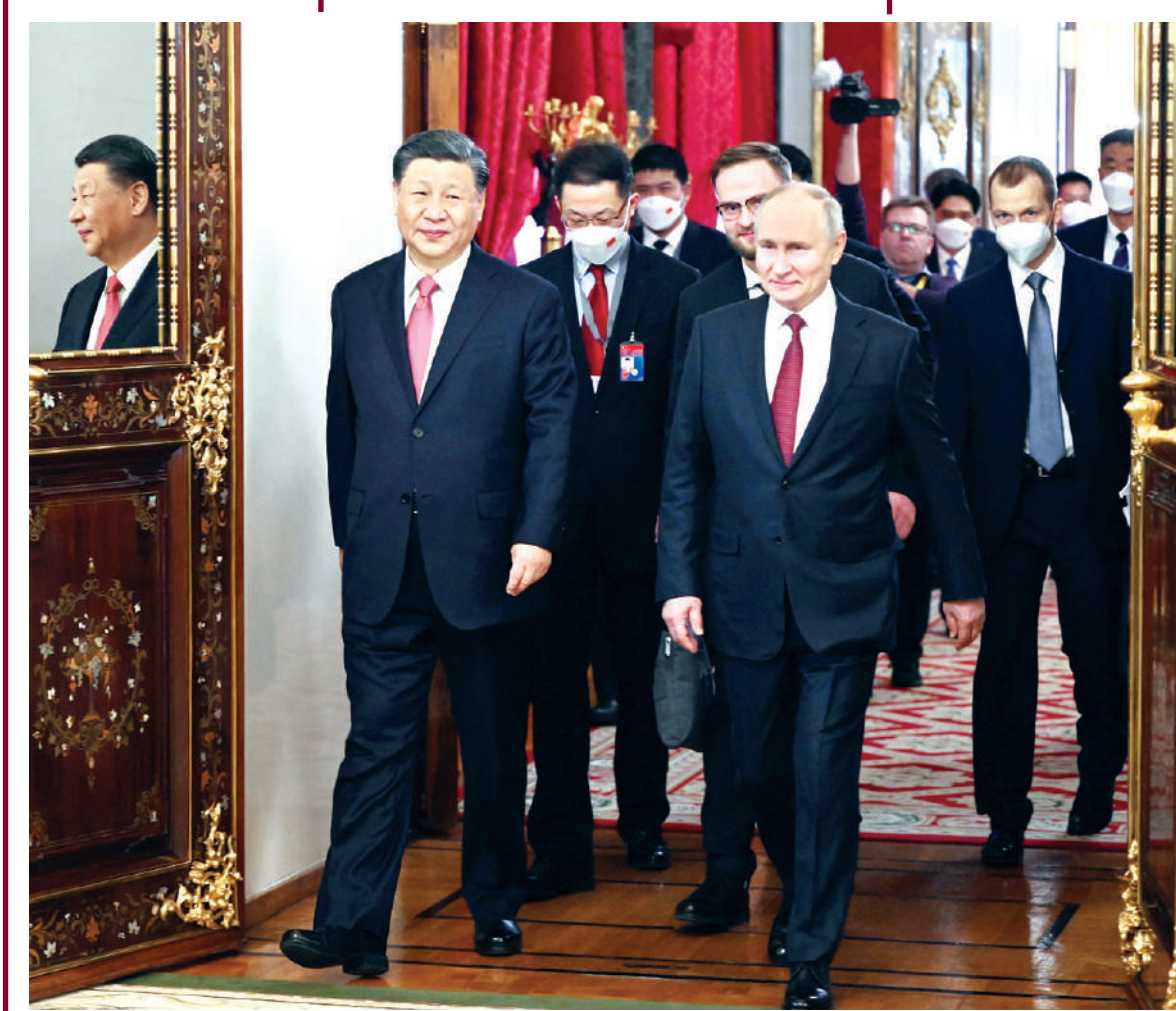
ture, the BJP will be calling the shots in a country without whose help American efforts to balance rising Chinese power are likely to fall short," Mead writes.

The invitation to engage with the BJP and RSS is one that Americans can't afford to reject, Mead says.

"As tensions with China rise, the US needs India as both an economic and political partner. Understanding the ideology and the trajectory of the Hindu nationalist movement is as important for business leaders and investors seeking to engage economically with India as it is for diplomats and policymakers wanting to put the strategic relationship on a stable footing," he writes.

The US, India and several other world powers have been talking about the need to ensure a free, open and thriving Indo-Pacific in the backdrop of China's rising military manoeuvring in the resource-rich region.

XI MEETS PUTIN



Russian President Vladimir Putin and Chinese President Xi Jinping enter a hall for their talks at The Grand Kremlin Palace in the Kremlin in Moscow, Russia, Tuesday, March 21.

Indian students urge UK PM Rishi Sunak to act over English test scandal

London, Mar 21 (PTI):

A group of international students, including many from India, have delivered a petition to British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak urging him to act against the "unjust" revocation of their visas following an English test scandal.

The issue dates back to 2014 when a BBC Panorama investigation showed some cheating had occurred at two of the UK's testing centres for a compulsory language test required for visas.

The UK government responded by a widespread crackdown on such centres, which had the fallout of the revocation of tens of thousands of students' visas linked with those centres.

The Migrant Voice voluntary group has been supporting the students impacted and coordinated the latest petition delivered at 10 Downing Street



on Monday

"This is one of the biggest scandals in contemporary British history. The initial government reaction was unjust and has been allowed to drag on for years," said Nazek Ramadan, director of Migrant Voice.

"It could have been resolved by a simple solution, such as allowing the tests to be retaken. The students came here to get a world-class education and best student experience in the world, but instead their lives have been wrecked. It is time for the government to step in and end this nightmare. All it takes to bring this to an end is leadership," she

said. With no right to stay, work or in a few cases to appeal, most of the accused students returned home.

Those who stayed to clear their names have struggled with homelessness, huge legal fees, stress-induced illnesses and have missed family weddings, births and deaths, the petition appeals.

Parliamentary and watchdog reports over the years have highlighted some flaws in the Home Office evidence used in the case in the past. Although some students won their legal challenges, scores of other students many of them Indian are still in limbo.

Migrant Voice is now underlining the importance of Sunak "addressing the injustice at a time when numbers of students and migrant workers form part of UK-India trade negotiations".

Indian envoy in Canada cancels event due to security concerns

Toronto, Mar 21 (PTI):

An event to be attended by the Indian envoy to Canada in British Columbia province had to be cancelled due to security concerns after a violent protest by Khalistan supporters.

The event had been organised on Sunday at the Taj Park Convention Centre Surrey to welcome the high commissioner of India, Sanjay Kumar Verma's first visit to the west coast.

The event was ultimately cancelled for security reasons, Global News, the news and current affairs division of the Canadian Global Television Network, reported.

High Commissioner Verma was scheduled to attend the event.

Indian-origin journalist Sameer Kaushal, who was at the venue to cover the protest, was also assaulted by protesters. Kaushal, a journalist

and news director with AM600 Sher E Punjab Radio, said when he arrived at the venue, he found a large protest and said demonstrators would not allow him to access the event.

When he identified himself as a journalist and asked the protesters if he could interview their organisers about their concerns, things quickly went sour, he told Global News on Monday.

"They tried to instigate the whole crowd. Approximately 50 to 60 youngsters, they came around me, they made a circle, they had covered their faces with clothes, and they were just pushing me and threatening me and abusing me in my mother tongue," he said.

"By the time the RCMP cops saw me and they just took me out from the crowd and said, You have to leave this place for your own safety as we cannot give you the security over here."

Solidarity meet planned at Indian mission in UK

● After attack by Khalistan extremists

London, Mar 21 (PTI):

Several Indian diaspora groups have called for a "We Stand By High Commission of India" demonstration outside India House here on Tuesday, as a show of solidarity following vandalism at the premises by Khalistan extremists over the weekend.

Indian High Commissioner to the UK Vikram Doraiswami hosted a diaspora briefing at India House on Monday evening and addressed the concerns of the community leaders following the attack that resulted in broken windows.

An attempted pull down by the extremists of the Indian tricolour that flies at the Indian High Commission was intercepted by an official and has been followed up by an

additional larger Tiranga on the main facade.

"Appreciated their solidarity following the attack on the High Commission on Sunday," the Indian High Commission here tweeted following the diaspora briefing.

The Metropolitan Police said its "enquiries continue" and one person arrested on suspicion of violent disorder has since been bailed to appear in court in mid-June.

Friends of India Society International (FISI) UK, one of the organisations behind Tuesday's solidarity meet, said the Indian diaspora is deeply shocked by the "disgraceful and abominable act" of desecration of the Indian flag by extremist forces.

"We are equally shocked to see the failure of the UK government to take preventive measures to prohibit such shameful incidents that endanger the Indian diplomatic officials," said FISI UK. "In

this particular incident, an Indian High Commission official braved the hooligans and restored the pride of India by taking the flag away from them. The Indian official had to act due to lack of appropriate security present at the premises," it said. The National Indian Students and Alumni Union (NISAU) UK was among several groups to voice their condemnation of the vandalism.

"We call for swift and firm action being taken to bring the perpetrators of this hooliganism to justice. Measures should be urgently put in place to prevent the recurrence of such incidents," it said.

The Indian government has lodged a strong protest and called on the British authorities to ensure adequate security at the Indian High Commission, which has seen a very visible Metropolitan Police presence in the wake of the attack.

Pak court reserves verdict on ex-PM Imran's exemption plea

Islamabad, Mar 21 (PTI):

An anti-terrorism court (ATC) in Islamabad on Tuesday reserved the decision on ousted premier Imran Khan's plea for an exemption from hearing in a case registered against him under the provisions of terrorism.

Khan's lawyer Sardar Masroof Khan appeared before the court. The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chief's legal team filed a request for exemption from Tuesday's attendance on his behalf.

The lawyer appeared be-



fore the ATC Judge Raja Jawad Abbas and stated that 70-year-old Khan's previous appearance at the judicial complex in Islamabad was available for all to see, adding that he would have been assassinated at the complex. The lawyer said Khan him-

self wanted to go to the judicial complex, however, the current situation did not permit it.

Intense clashes erupted outside the Islamabad Judicial Complex on Saturday when Khan arrived in Islamabad from Lahore to attend a much-awaited hearing in the Toshakhana case.

During the confrontation between PTI workers and police, over 25 security personnel were injured, prompting Additional District and Sessions Judge Zafar Iqbal to defer the court hearing till March 30.

Afghan Taliban delegation visits Pakistan to discuss TTP issue

Islamabad, Mar 21 (PTI):

An Afghan Taliban delegation, comprising intelligence and security officials, quietly visited Islamabad recently to discuss a way forward towards addressing Pakistan's concerns regarding the banned Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), according to a media report on Tuesday.

Taliban ranks in Kabul also confirmed that a mid-level delegation led by Abdullah Ghazanavi, the head of the General Directorate of Intelligence (GDI), travelled to Islamabad for discussion on the TTP and threats to Pakistan, the Express

Tribune newspaper reported, citing sources.

The visit was a follow-up of last month's trip to Kabul by a high-powered delegation led by Defence Minister Khawaja Asif, which received a briefing on the

steps taken by the Afghan government to deal with the TTP.

The Pakistani delegation, however, deemed those steps unsatisfactory and sought concerted actions. Pakistan also confronted the

Afghan Taliban leadership with proofs about the whereabouts of the TTP leadership.

According to the paper, during its stay in

Islamabad, the Afghan delegation met with the relevant authorities to discuss the security situation and the fate of the TTP and its affiliates.

Sri Lanka to be first country in Asia to come under IMF's governance diagnostic exercise



People arrive for their daily work in the central market area in Colombo, Sri Lanka, Tuesday, March 21. The International Monetary Fund said Monday that its executive board has approved a nearly \$3 billion bailout program for Sri Lanka over four years to help salvage the country's bankrupt economy.

Colombo, Mar 21 (PTI):

Sri Lanka will be the first country in Asia to undergo a governance diagnostic exercise by the IMF which will assess corruption and governance vulnerabilities

in the debt-trapped country, the global lender said on Tuesday. The International Monetary Fund's Executive Board approved on Monday a 48-month extended arrangement under its Extended Fund Facility

(EFF) with an amount of SDR 2.286 billion (about USD 3 billion) to help Sri Lanka overcome its economic crisis. The IMF emphasised the importance of anti-corruption and governance reforms as a central pillar of the EFF-supported programme. "We emphasise the importance of anti-corruption and governance reforms as a central pillar of the EFF-supported programme they are indispensable to ensure the hard-won gains from the reforms benefit the Sri Lankan people," Peter Breuer, the senior IMF official responsible for Sri Lanka, told reporters.

SOUTH EAST CENTRAL RAILWAY
E-TENDER NOTICE FOR MISCELLANEOUS WORK
 Tender Notice No. TRD-R-2022-E-08
 Date: 16.03.2023
 Name of Work : "TRD works in connection to different track renewal works (TRR,TRR,CTR & CRR) over Raipur division. Tender Value: ₹ 76,38,792.60/-, EMD: ₹ 1,56,800/-, Submission of Tender: upto 12.00 hours, on dt. 13.04.2023, Opening of Tender: upto 12.30 hour dt. 13.04.2023.
 For further details of tender document, eligibility criteria & the complete details for the above work, please contact office of the Senior Divisional Electrical Engineer (TRD)/SECR Raipur or refer/download tender document which is available on our website www.ireps.gov.in.
 Sr. Divl. Elec. Engg. (TRD) PR/IR/TRA/AN/245 S.E.C.R., Raipur
 South East Central Railway @seccrail

CHHATTISGARH STATE POWER DISTRIBUTION COMPANY LTD.
 No.02-08/CW/2022-23/Tr.No.-2174/5608 Raipur Dt- 15.03.2023
NOTICE FOR E-TENDER
 Online bids are invited through CSPDCL tendering system (SAP SRM) from Eligible Contractor for following works.

Tender No / Rfx no.	Name of work	Tender amount (excl. GST) (IN Rs)	Completion period	Time & Due date of submission
Tr.No 2174 RFX- 8100030377	Engagement of 05 no. Computer Operator for Olo CE (Project) CSPDCL Raipur through Outsourcing	18,58,200.00	24 Months	12.00 noon 05.04.2023

 Note: 1. The registration of contractor will remain open. For details and further notifications keep visiting http://www.cspdcl.co.in ->project department->ebidding portal.2. Bid information must be submitted in the prescribed format only. No deviation shall be permitted.
CHIEF ENGINEER (PROJECT) CSPDCL: RAIPUR

उत्तीसगढ़ स्टेट पावर ट्रांसमिशन कम्पनी लिमिटेड
 (उत्तीसगढ़ शासन का एक उपक्रम)
कार्यालय कार्यपालन यंत्री (उपकेंद्र) संभाग-1, गुडियारी रायपुर
 वेबसाइट- www.cspdc.co.in मो.नं. 7898987481
 ईमेल- eesttrans.raipur@cspdc.co.in
 क्रमांक 10-63/स्था./2395 रायपुर, दिनांक 21/03/2023
 //निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना//
 ● लाईट कॉम्पैक्ट वाहन (रिक्सा) 1.0 से 1.5 टन क्षमता) के अस्थाई अल्पकालीन अनुबंध हेतु ●
 332 के.डी. उपकेंद्र, छ.ग.स्टेट पावर ट्रांसमिशन कम्पनी लिमिटेड, सिंगम के लिए वाहन चालक सहित 01 नंग लाईट कॉम्पैक्ट वाहन (रिक्सा) 1.0 से 1.5 टन क्षमता) वाहन के अस्थाई अल्पकालीन अनुबंध (तीन वर्ष) हेतु पंजीकृत/उपयुक्त ठेकेदारों से मुहूर्तद निविदाएं आमंत्रित की जाती हैं।
 निविदा प्रपत्र क्रय करने की तिथि/प्रस्तुत करने की तिथि/निविदाओं को खोलने की तिथि व समय
 दिनांक 10.04.2023 समय 17:00 बजे तक दिनांक 11.04.2023 समय 15:00 बजे तक दिनांक 11.04.2023 समय 15:30 बजे तक
 उपरोक्त कार्य की निविदा की सामान्य शर्तें, धरोहर राशि, विस्तृत निविदा विज्ञापित व अन्य जानकारी विभागीय वेबसाइट http://cspdc.co.in से डाउनलोड की जा सकती है।
 (इंजी. धनेश कुमार देवांगन) कार्यपालन यंत्री (उपकेंद्र) संभाग-1 छ.ग. स्टेट पावर ट्रांस.क.लिमि., रायपुर

कार्यालय अधीक्षण अभियंता, लोक निर्माण विभाग, रायपुर मण्डल क्रमांक 2 (छत्तीसगढ़)
ई-प्रोक्युरमेंट निविदा सूचना
 दिनांक 17.03.2023
 निम्नांकित कार्य हेतु ऑनलाइन निविदा "डी" श्रेणी एवं अधिक श्रेणी के ठेकेदारों हेतु निविदा आमंत्रित की जाती है।

एन.आई.टी.क्र. / निविदा क्र.	कार्य का नाम	कार्य की अनुमानित लागत (लाख में)	ऑनलाइन निविदा डाउनलोड करने की अंतिम तिथि
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NIT NO. 356 Tender No. 128265	जिला गरियाबंद के विकासखण्ड मैनपुर अंतर्गत धुरवागुड़ी में हायर सेकेंड्री स्कूल भवन का निर्माण कार्य। (द्वितीय आमंत्रण)	₹. 118.84 लाख	31.03.2023
NIT NO. 357 Tender No. 128267	जिला धमतरी के पदमपुर पहुंच मार्ग लंबाई 1/2 से 3/6 = 2.60 कि.मी. पर बी.टी. रिनीयल का कार्य। (तृतीय आमंत्रण)	₹. 32.99 लाख	27.03.2023

 उपरोक्त निर्माण कार्य की निविदा की सामान्य शर्तें, धरोहर राशि, विस्तृत निविदा विज्ञापित व अन्य जानकारी ई-प्रोक्युरमेंट वेब पोर्टल https://eproc.cgstate.gov.in अथवा विभागीय वेबसाइट https://eproc.cgstate.gov.in से डाउनलोड की जा सकती है। (राशि ₹. 100.00 के नान ज्यूडिशियल स्टाम्प पर निर्धारित प्रपत्र में शपथ-पत्र एवं न्यूनतम राशि ₹. 10.00 के नान ज्यूडिशियल स्टाम्प पर एनेक्चर-3 का शपथ पत्र (डिडिकेपेसीटी उपलब्धता बाबत जानकारी एवं अन्य जानकारी एनआईटी के 2.10 में संलग्न संशोधित प्रपत्रानुसार प्रस्तुत करें।)
 निविदा में होने वाले समस्त संशोधन का प्रकाशन केवल उपरोक्त वेबसाइट पर किया जावेगा, पृथक से समाचार पत्रों में प्रकाशन नहीं किया जावेगा।
अधीक्षण अभियंता
 लो.नि.वि., रायपुर मण्डल क्र. 2 (छ.ग.)
 G-99440/3 **Credible Chhattisgarh** आपकी थी चाह, हमने बनाई राह



CENTRAL Chronicle

Established 1974 Volume 48 No. 165

AQUATIC GALLERY



A man feeds lemon shark and other fish inside the Aquatic Gallery of Science City in Ahmedabad, Tuesday, March 21.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

A Call for a Balanced Approach

The recent crackdown by the Punjab police against Amritpal Singh, a radical Sikh preacher and Khalistan sympathizer, has raised concerns about public safety and the preservation of peace in the region. As head of Waris Punjab De, Singh has been vocal about his mission to fight for the rights of Punjab and raise social issues. However, his association with Khalistan and his followers' espousal of its cause has caused unrest in the state. While the Punjab government has taken necessary steps to prevent any incitement to violence and urged the public to avoid rumors, there is a need for a well-balanced approach to address the situation. The BJP-Akali Dal alliance was formed to strengthen the social fabric of different religions and societies in Punjab, and the state has a history of deep-rooted relations among its people. As the situation remains fluid, it is crucial to handle it with caution and prevent any disturbance of the hard-earned peace in Punjab.

Yash pal Ralhan,
Jalandhar

What is Rahul's vision?

In his recent speech in London, Rahul Gandhi missed an opportunity to articulate his political vision and philosophy on revamping Indian agriculture, industry, education, and health to provide jobs for millions of Indian youth. Instead, he spent most of his time criticizing Prime Minister Modi's style of functioning. The Congress party lacks a grassroots-level, ideologically cohesive cadre, and its top brass and state-level leaders often disagree on national issues. In a multi-lingual and multi-ethnic country like India, no party can monopolize power for long. While the Congress can be voted out of power, so can the BJP. At present, a weak Congress and a divided opposition do not pose a serious challenge to the ruling party. Rahul Gandhi needs to provide a clear and compelling vision for India's future to win back the confidence of the electorate.

Manoj Kumar, Raipur
BJP must introspect

One is amused to see the BJP talk of democracy when its unabashed aim, and that of its mentor, the RSS, is the establishment of a 'Hindu Rashtra'. The BJP government and its leaders are after Rahul Gandhi for saying that democracy in India is under threat. But they are not acceding to his request to allow him to speak in Parliament, which shows that they have got scant regard for democratic principles. Opposition leaders are being hounded by Central agencies, thus curtailing their fundamental right to freedom of expression. An ordinary Indian is a witness to the withering of our democracy.

Beant Singh Bedi, Mohali

DebtLIGHTenment

As global debt markets experience a sharp turnaround in the wake of the recent failures of Silicon Valley Bank (SVB) and Signature Bank, Indian investors are left wondering if the year 2023 could be the much-anticipated comeback year for the country's debt markets. According to analysts at brokerage house and research firm ICICI Direct, the end of the rate hike cycle and significantly increased yields have made debt markets an attractive investment option. "Indian debt markets have become attractive after the continued rise in yields in the last few years. The yields across debt mutual funds have risen and offer excellent investment opportunity," the brokerage said. With expectations of one last rate hike of 25 basis points in April 2023, Indian debt markets could reach their peak investment potential, with higher returns expected during the peak of the rate cycle. Both accrual funds and duration funds offer investment opportunities for investors, with longer-dated products helping to lock in coupons or interest rates and shielding investors from the interest rate cycle. While aggressive investors may consider allocating a higher amount to dynamic mutual funds or long-duration funds, conservative and moderate investors may prefer to invest a higher amount in medium-term funds or corporate bond funds. The longer-dated (20-25 year) government securities offering a return of around 7.6% is also a good long-term fixed-income investment option, offering higher accrual while removing re-investment risk. RBI's rate hike cycle has peaked in India, with the central bank having raised repo rates by 250 bps since May 2022 till February 2023, from 4.0% to 6.5%. With CPI for FY23-24 projected at 5.3%, Repo rate at 6.5% offers a real rate of 1.20%, which falls into RBI's target range of 1%-2%. While global central bankers, particularly the US Federal Reserve, had continued their hawkish stance until recently, yields particularly in the US have fallen significantly in the last few days, with the 2-year yield down by 50 bps from 4.4% to 3.9%, while the 10-year is down by more than 25bps to less than 3.5% from 3.7%. As a result, the US Federal Reserve is now expected to cut rates by 100 bps in the calendar year 2023, after one last probable rate hike of 25 bps in its March 22nd, 2023, policy meeting. The fall in commodity prices, particularly crude oil prices, has also improved the inflation outlook, leading the brokerage to believe that RBI will maintain the status quo on the benchmark repo rate in its upcoming policy meeting and in the foreseeable future. The terminal repo rate is likely to remain at the current rate of 6.5% in the near term. With the end of the rate hike cycle and significantly increased yields, debt markets have become an attractive investment option for Indian investors. As the global debt markets experience a sharp turnaround, Indian investors should consider lump-sum investment opportunities, with both accrual funds and duration funds offering investment opportunities. The longer-dated government securities offering a return of around 7.6% is also a good long-term fixed-income investment option, offering higher accrual while removing re-investment risk. Investors should keep a close eye on the upcoming policy meeting and consider their investment options carefully.

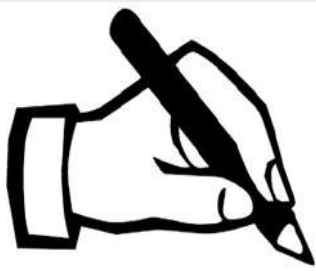
Collegium system not perfect but best available

The controversy over the Collegium system of judges' appointments in India has been an ongoing issue between the government and the judiciary for a long time. The latest statement of Chief Justice of India (CJI) D Y Chandrachud, defending the system, has once again brought this issue to the forefront. The CJI's statement that "Not every system is perfect but this is the best system developed by the judiciary" indicates that the judiciary is not ready to make any changes in the system. The Collegium system of appointments, which was established by the Supreme Court in 1993, has been criticized by many as being opaque, arbitrary, and lacking in accountability. The system gives the power to appoint judges to the higher judiciary, which includes the Chief Justice of India and a few senior judges. The process of appointments is not transparent, and there have been allegations of nepotism and favoritism. However, CJI Chandrachud, speaking at the India Today Conclave, 2023, defended the Collegium system, stating that the system was developed to maintain independence and that it should be insulated from outside influences. He said that the judiciary must be kept independent, and the Collegium system was designed to do just that. While it is true that the independence of the judiciary is a cardinal value, the question that arises is whether the Collegium system is the best way to ensure that independence. There have been several instances where the system has failed to deliver on this value. The fact that the appointments are made by a few judges, without any checks and balances, has led to allegations of favoritism and nepotism. The controversy over the rejection of names for appointment as judges of constitutional courts by the government is a case in point. The reasons cited by the government for rejecting the names recommended by the Collegium have been made public, which has led to a tussle between the government and the judiciary. The CJI, however, defended the Collegium's decision to make the reasons public, stating that the judiciary lacked transparency, and making the reasons public would foster greater confidence in the citizens. The controversy over the rejection of Saurabh Kirpal's name for appointment as a judge of the Delhi High Court because of his sexual orientation also highlights the shortcomings of the Collegium system. The CJI said that the sexual orientation of a candidate had nothing to do with his ability, and the candidate was openly gay, and the Intelligence Bureau's report was already in the public domain. However, the fact that the Collegium had to reiterate its decision to appoint Kirpal after the government rejected his name indicates that the system is not foolproof. The CJI's statement that there is absolutely no pressure from the government on how to decide cases is reassuring. However, the fact remains that there is a large backlog of cases, and the people's faith in the judiciary is at stake. The CJI's acknowledgment of the dearth of infrastructure in the judiciary and the need to modernize it is a step in the right direction. The judiciary needs to be more efficient in reducing the backlog of cases and delivering justice. While the Collegium system of judges' appointments is not perfect, it is the best system available, according to the CJI. However, the system's shortcomings cannot be ignored, and there is a need for more transparency and accountability in the appointments. The independence of the judiciary must be maintained, but it should not be at the cost of accountability. The need of the hour is to modernize the judiciary and make it more efficient in delivering justice.

There is no other alternative to water in the world



DR. SATYAWAN 'SAURABH'



We forget that without water they are all useless. We keep using more water than we need. At least each of us can make proper use of water in our homes and workplaces. Many times it is seen that water is flowing from the taps on the roadside and going to waste, but we pass by and do not bother to close the tap. We should think about these topics and try to save water as far as possible in our daily life. At this time, to save life on the planet earth, the biggest need is to save water; How will water resources be managed to ensure that everyone in the country gets the same amount of water?

As the population and economy grow, so does the water demand. With limited water and competing needs, drinking water management has become challenging. Other difficulties, such as depletion of groundwater and erratic rainfall. These difficulties have put a strain on the rural population, who meet their water needs with traditional knowledge and water wisdom. When it comes to health, people in rural areas need piped water. To maintain the relationship between water and energy, special attention should be paid to increasing water conservation and saving natural water sources as it is also very important for future energy production.

Most of us wonder what a single person can do to save water. With this type of thinking, we waste water every day. In today's world, everyone is in a race to have big bathrooms in their homes, but we forget that they are useless without water. We keep using more water than we need. At least each of us can make proper use of water in our homes and workplaces. Many times

it is seen that water is flowing from the taps on the roadside and going to waste, but we pass by and do not bother to close the tap. We should think about these topics and try to save water as far as possible in our daily life.

If we talk about India, it rains in abundance here, but due to the increase in population, water scarcity is being felt in the country. Due to the increase in population, there is more use of natural resources. Water sources, local ponds, pools, rivers, and reservoirs are getting polluted and their water is decreasing. At present, clean drinking water is not available to the growing population of the country. Apart from this, agriculture in India is also dependent on rain. The success of agriculture in India depends on the availability of water, in which rainwater plays an important role. A good rain means a good crop. There is a great need to save rainwater and it should be ensured that no acidic elements are mixed in it as this will pollute the water and its sources. That's why Jal Jeevan Mission is the foundation of the

National Jal Jeevan Kosh. On 15th August 2019 Honorable Prime Minister of India made a big announcement regarding a government program. The main objective of the Jal Jeevan Mission is to supply 55 liters of water per person per day to every rural household through functional household tap connections by 2024. Rainwater harvesting and water conservation are also the most important aspects of the mission. The focus is on using recycled water and recharging structures, developing waterways, and planting trees. Traditional and other water bodies are being renovated.

This mission will remove the shortage of tap water connections by harnessing the tap connections. This is based on local management of how much water is used and how much is available. The mission will create local infrastructure for things like harvesting water, injecting water directly into the ground, and managing domestic wastewater so it can be reused. By 2024, every person in a rural household will be able to get 55 liters of water per day from a tap connection. The mission helps the community come up with a plan for the water that includes lots of information, education, and communication. An amount of Rs 3 lakh crore was given in this scheme. Everyone in this mission helps to give top priority to the mass movement for water. For the Himalayan and North Eastern States, the fund is divided 90:10 between the Center and the State, 50:50 for the rest of the States, and 100% for the Union Territories.

Under the Jal Jeevan Mission, tap water is provided to every rural household even in SC/ST-dominated villages in Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra, so that "no one is left out." Also, tap water is given top priority in places where water quality is poor, such as desert and drought-prone areas, SC/ST majority villages, Sansad Adarsh Gramin Yojana villages, etc. The water supply system of the village is also in good condition in the scheme of water committees, which systematically operate the system. At least half of these associations have 10 to 15 members, at least half of whom are

women. Other members come from self-help groups, recognized social and health workers, anganwadi teachers, and other places. The committees prepare one-time action plans for the village utilizing all its resources.

There are some problems in the implementation of the National Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Mission, the main one being the lack of reliable drinking water sources. In areas such as water-stressed, drought-prone, and subtropical, groundwater, uneven terrain, and scattered rural settlements have the presence of location-specific contaminants, as well as the involvement of local village communities in managing and operating the village water supply infrastructure. Disability comes in the way. In some states, especially after the Covid-19 pandemic, the delay in issuing matching state shares is also coming in the way of the success of this mission. If we look at the progress made so far in Jal Jeevan Mission, at the time Jal Jeevan Mission was announced, 17.1% of the 18.93 crore rural households had tap water connections. This means that 3.23 crore rural households had tap water connections. So far, 5.38 crore (28%) rural households have been provided with tap water connections under JJM. Therefore, out of 19.22 billion rural households in the country, 8.62 billion (or 44.84 percent) have potable tap water. States like Goa, Telangana, Andaman, Nicobar Islands, and Puducherry have reached 100% of households in rural areas with running water from taps. "Har Ghar Jal" has become everyone's topmost priority. The primary objective of the mission is to save water while wasting as little as possible. At this time, to save life on the planet earth, the biggest need is to save water; This will be done by managing water resources to ensure that everyone in the country gets the same amount of water.

The earth is saved from the water, the sky is from the water!

Life is connected with water, everyone has faith!!
(Writer is Research scholar, poet, freelance journalist and columnist, All India Radio and TV panelist.)

Different Strocks

Speed Breakers: A nuisance to the Progress

T.Sreeelal Nair

Policing speed, setting logical limits according to areas, and prescribing punishments for violations is the job of the government. Individuals cannot unilaterally decide to close off roads, build barricades, or cause obstructions. The justifications offered above boil down to one single thing- abdication of moral, ethical, and physical responsibility by the state. This just proves my point that while I understand the need for speed breakers in any city, they can be a big nuisance if placed without any thought. Let me explain what I mean by this. Here in Mathpurena (Raipur),

where I live, they have placed three speed breakers just 100m from the steeped road to the main road and that too on a curve, which is on a mild incline adjusting a pond. In fact, every house from Mathpurena to Davara society heading towards Ramakrishna hospital comprises more than 28 speed breakers. The permission they had from the local Parshad was not in written form. All of this translates to more headache for drivers because apart from the natural deterrents, we now have man-made obstacles to navigate. This can sometimes cause traffic jams and even accidents. While I am all for speed breakers because, sadly, the majority of

Indian drivers have no other way to effectively slow down, if they are placed in such inconvenient locations, they only add to the problem. Speed breakers are not there to brake the speed; they are there to break the car. They are unscientific and unmarked, and nobody knows the proper specifications. Technically, in-between the two humps, the tyre must touch the road, but such scientific speed breakers are non-existent, and your car/bike takes the path of a sign wave, breaking the back of the riders. When I was on my way to the hospital, the twelfth breaker near Davara colony was so high that my child got hurt standing in front of the bike. Well,

that is an unfortunate reality check. Foreign countries are more considerate towards the vehicles driving over them as compared to their Indian counterparts. I agree that some form of speed restricting device is required in India as well, but the commonly encountered one-foot hump with a sharp edge is simply a punishment to drive on. A car breaker is more like it. But coming to the OPs metaphorical use of the speed breaker, I believe it is more of a symptom of society than a cause/reason for our pace of progress. My recent visit to Kerala showed a way to a different country within the Indian union. Some of the best roads I have seen have

been of quality. The larger point I am making is that we are a country doomed to go slow in every sphere. The innocuous speed breaker is the symbol of our collective failure to unclog our society of unnecessary encumbrances. We suffer from an overload of rules, regulations, and laws in every sphere of life in India. Additionally, we see a lot more of people clamouring for even more control and regulations by the government in practically all aspects of life. What we lack is discipline and respect for others. If existing laws are enforced sufficiently, there would be no need for coercive measures like speed breakers.

BRIEF

New CEO



Washington: Starbucks officially has a new CEO. The Seattle coffee giant said on Monday that Laxman Narasimhan has assumed the role of CEO and joined the company's board of directors. Narasimhan succeeds longtime Starbucks leader Howard Schultz, who came out of retirement last spring to serve as interim CEO while the company searched for a new chief executive. Schultz will remain on the company's board. Starbucks announced last September that Narasimhan would become its new CEO. Narasimhan, 55, most recently served as CEO of Reckitt, a UK-based consumer health, hygiene and nutrition company.

Resignation



New Delhi: Tyre maker CEAT Ltd on Monday said its Managing Director and CEO Anant Goenka has resigned to focus on group activities and has been named as its Vice Chairman. The company's board has also approved the appointment of Arnab Banerjee, currently Chief Operating Officer, as its new MD and CEO. Goenka expressed his desire to hand over the charge of the company to a successor with a view to focus on initiatives at the group level. Accordingly, he sought to be relieved of his duties as MD & CEO of the company with effect from close of business hours of March 31, 2023, while continuing as a board member. CEAT Ltd said in a regulatory filing.

Enormous opportunities



New Delhi: The integration of Air India Express and AirAsia India is expected to be complete by the end of next financial year and the merged entity will have "enormous growth opportunities" in the coming years, according to a top executive. Air India, Air India Express, Vistara and AirAsia India, now rebranded as AIX Connect are part of the Tata Group. The merger process of Air India Express and AirAsia India as well as that of Vistara with Air India is underway. Air India Express CEO Aloke Singh said the businesses of the airline and AIX Connect are complementary.

GDP to grow at 7pc; inflation set to moderate: Finmin Report

New Delhi, Mar 21:

Indian economy is expected to grow at 7 per cent in FY23 despite global headwinds while retail inflation would moderate in line with wholesale inflation which fell to a 25-month low in January, the Finance Ministry said on Monday.

Supported by the gains from high services exports, the moderation in oil prices, and the recent fall in import-intensive consumption demand, India's current account deficit is estimated to fall in FY23 and FY24, providing a buffer to the rupee in uncertain times, Monthly Economic Review by the ministry said. This will

provide a much-needed cushion to India's external sector at a time when the Fed is likely to raise rates further and ensure that India's external finances are not a major cause of concern, it said. The jump in net service exports over the previous year is a critical development as India increases its market share in both IT and non-IT services, whose demand has been triggered by the pandemic, it said, adding, imports are also less costly now with the easing of global commodity prices. "With a manageable current account deficit and a growth rate highest among the major economies in FY23, the Indian economy has

shown a new-found resilience in sailing through the turbulence caused by the pandemic and geopolitical stress," it said. Macroeconomic stability is likely to receive a further boost in FY23 as the current account deficit is set to narrow from the year-beginning estimates, it added.

With regard to growth, the report said, real GDP estimates for Q3 of 2022-23 reaffirm the ability of the Indian economy to grow on the strength of its domestic demand even as a rise in global uncertainties slows global output. Indian economy witnessed a growth of 4.4 per cent in the third quarter that ended in December 2022.

Growth momentum gathered in Q3 of 2022-23 is likely to be sustained in Q4, as reflected in the performance of High-Frequency Indicators for January/February 2023, it said.

GST collections have now, in February 2023 crossed the Rs 1.4 lakh crore benchmark for twelve successive months. Noting that falling international commodity prices and government measures have aided in easing inflationary pressures, the report said, inflationary pressures eased in February, with a slight moderation in CPI inflation and WPI inflation softening to a 25-month low.

India has great opportunities, says Clark

New Delhi, Mar 21:

Leading Gulf carrier Emirates Airline's President Sir Tim Clark on Tuesday said opportunities are great in India and that it will bring new products into the market. According to him, it has been a "good story" for Emirates in terms of coming back after the coronavirus pandemic. Emirates, a significant player connecting India and the Gulf, has also been looking for enhanced bilateral rights to operate more flights to India. "Opportunities here (in India) are great," Clark said, adding that the country is really on the move. Like for other markets, new products will be brought into the Indian market, he said. Meanwhile, the airline is set to announce its financial results next month and Clark said, "it has been a good story".

Sensex, Nifty rebound nearly 1 pc on firm global trends, buying in Reliance

Mumbai, Mar 21:

Benchmark Sensex and Nifty rebounded nearly 1 per cent at close on Tuesday amid firm trends in global equities and buying in index major Reliance Industries and banking stocks. The 30-share BSE Sensex climbed 445.73 points or 0.77 per cent to settle at 58,074.68. During the day, it rallied 504.38 points or 0.87 per cent to 58,133.33. The broader NSE Nifty advanced 119.10 points or 0.70 per cent to settle at 17,107.50. Among the Sensex stocks, Reliance Industries climbed the most by 3.11 per cent. Bajaj Finance, Titan, Axis Bank, ICICI Bank, Bajaj Finserv, IndusInd Bank, UltraTech Cement, Larsen & Toubro,



HDFC Bank, HDFC and Kotak Mahindra Bank were among the other major winners. Power Grid, Hindustan Unilever, Tech Mahindra, Tata Consultancy Services, Infosys and Asian Paints were among the biggest laggards. In Asia, Seoul, Hong Kong and Shanghai markets ended higher. European markets were trading in the green during afternoon trade.

Tata Motors hikes commercial vehicle prices by 5pc from Apr 1



Mumbai, Mar 21:

Tata Motors on Tuesday announced increasing the prices of commercial vehicles by up to 5 per cent from April 1. The price increase comes in the wake of the implementation of the more stringent BS-VI phase II emission norms from next month, it said.

The price increase will be applicable across the entire range of commercial vehicles, with the exact amount varying according to the individual model and variant, the company said in a statement.

"Tata Motors will be implementing a price increase of up to 5 per cent on its commercial vehicles, starting from April," the company said. Tata Motors said it is upgrading its entire vehicle portfolio to conform to the stricter emission norms, which are set to come into force from April 1.

NMDC hikes iron ore lump rate by Rs 100/tonne

New Delhi, Mar 21:

State-owned NMDC on Tuesday said it has hiked price of iron ore lumps by Rs 100 to Rs 4,500 per tonne with immediate effect. The country's largest iron ore miner has also increased rate of iron ore fines by Rs 200 to Rs 4,110/tonne, NMDC said in a regulatory filing. The prices are effective from Tuesday and exclude royalty, district mineral fund (DMF), National Mineral Exploration Trust (DMET), cess, forest permit fee and other taxes, the company said. Lump ore or high-grade iron ore contains 65.53 per cent Fe (iron), while fines are inferior grade ore with 64 per cent and less Fe content.

Hyundai drives in new Verna starting at Rs 10.89 lakh

New Delhi, Mar 21:

Hyundai Motor India on Tuesday introduced a new version of its mid-sized sedan Verna in the country priced between Rs 10.89 lakh and Rs 17.37 lakh (ex-showroom), hotting up the competition in the segment. The new Verna competes with the likes of Honda City, Skoda Slavia, Volkswagen Virtus and Maruti Suzuki Ciaz in the domestic market. The 1.5 litre trims of the 6th generation Verna are priced between Rs 10.89 lakh and Rs 16.19 lakh while the 1.5 litre turbo petrol variants, which come with enhanced power, are priced between Rs 14.83 lakh and Rs 17.37 lakh (all prices ex-showroom). As per the company, the model delivers fuel efficiency



Hyundai Motor India Ltd. MD & CEO Unsoo Kim with Chief Operating Officer Tarun Garg at the launch of the new Hyundai Verna, at Aerocity in New Delhi, Tuesday, March 21.

ranging between 18.6 to 20.6 km per litre, depending upon the engine options. Hyundai Motor India MD and CEO Unsoo Kim said Verna has been one of the company's most iconic models globally. He noted

the company has sold 4.65 lakh units of the sedan in the domestic market and also exported around 4.5 lakh units of the model till date. Kim said the new Verna would also be exported. Hyundai had first

launched the Verna brand in India in 2006. The automaker said the new Verna comes with 30 standard safety features including six airbags, 17 Level 2-ADAS features and over 65 connected car features. In an interaction with PTI, Hyundai Motor India Chief Operating Officer Tarun Garg said the company aims to sell close to 40,000 units of the sedan this year, doubling volumes from 2022. The country's second largest carmaker had sold around 19,000 Verna units last year. "We believe that with a product like Verna, we have a winner in hand. It is now larger as compared with the outgoing model, comes with advanced technology like level II ADAS system and other connected features," Garg said.

Govt not in favour of putting caps on airfares: Bansal



New Delhi, Mar 21:

The government is not in favour of interfering in a free market economy by putting caps on airfares, Civil Aviation Secretary Rajiv Bansal said on Tuesday amid concerns over possible predatory pricing of air tickets. The remarks also come against the backdrop of a Parliamentary panel, earlier this month, asking the civil aviation ministry to cap the upper and lower levels of airfares, and ensure that predatory pricing mechanism is not adopted by airlines under the cloak of free market economy. "Fundamentally, putting (fare) caps and interfering in the market economy is

not good and we are not in favour of it. We are not in favour of putting lower or upper caps. I don't think the government should interfere in a free market economy at all..." Bansal said. However, he said "we have taken up with airlines to see that passengers are not unduly charged or inconvenienced because of very high fare buckets, the highest bucket".

According to him, tickets are sold in around 16 fare buckets. "I would feel that the lower fare buckets on any sector are comparable to AC train fares..." In its report tabled in Parliament on March 13, the panel also said a perfect balance has to be maintained between the commercial interest of the private airlines and the interest of passengers. The recommendations have been made by the Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Transport, Tourism and Culture in its report on the ministry's demand for grants for 2023-24.

India exploited 29pc of hydropower potential: Power Minister

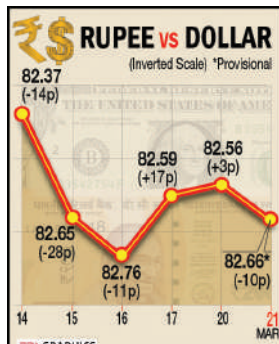


New Delhi, Mar 21:

India has exploited 29 per cent of its hydropower potential against over 80 per cent and 70 per cent developed by the US and European Union respectively, Parliament was informed on Tuesday. As per the Reassessment Study carried out by the Central Electricity Authority (CEA) during 1978-1987, the assessed hydropower potential in the country is about 1,45,320 MW (for projects with capacity above 25 MW), Power Minister R K Singh said in a written reply to Rajya Sabha on Tuesday. Singh said that 42,104.6 MW (29

per cent) out of 1,45,320 MW has been developed and 15,023.5 MW (10.3 per cent) is under construction. As per reports of the International Hydropower Association (IHA), the US has developed more than 80 per cent of its hydropower potential and the EU (European Union) has developed more than 70 per cent of its hydropower potential, he told the House. The main challenges in the development of hydroelectric potential in the country are remote location, unpredictable geology, natural calamities, environment and forest issues, Rehabilitation and Resettlement (R&R) issues, law & order issues and inter-state issues, he stated. In a separate reply, Singh told the House that as on March 14, 2023, the total coal stock at Thermal Power Plants in the country is 33.3 MT (million tonnes) which is only 49 per cent of the Normative Stock Requirement.

Rupee falls 10 paise to 82.66 against US dollar



Mumbai, Mar 21:

The rupee depreciated by 10 paise to 82.66 against the US dollar on Tuesday amid a rise in crude oil prices and unabated foreign fund outflows from the domestic equity market.

Positive sentiments in the equity markets across the globe failed to address the concerns of investors who are awaiting the interest rate decision by the US Federal Reserve due on Wednesday. At the inter-bank foreign exchange, the domestic unit opened strong at 82.54 against the dollar. During the day, it went as high as 82.53 and hit the lowest level of 82.70.

Airtel rolls out family plans starting Rs 599 to increase postpaid user base

New Delhi, Mar 21:

Bharti Airtel has rolled out various family plans offering monthly data in the range of 105-320 GB as it looks to attract prepaid users to switch to postpaid connections. The new family plans uploaded on the company website are in the range of Rs 599 to Rs 1,499 per month, while Black family plans, that bundles DTH and fixed broadband service, are in the range of Rs 799 to Rs 2,299 per month. A company official told PTI that the new plans are aimed at attracting prepaid customers to switch to postpaid whereby family members will be able to optimally use the data limit, calls, SMS etc bundled in a plan. Out of the total mobile subscriber base of 332 million, the company had 5.4 per cent postpaid users on its network in the December 2022 quarter.

The postpaid customer base of Bharti Airtel grew by about 8 per cent on a year-on-year basis to 18.9 million as of December 31, 2022. These new family

plans allow bundling 2-5 mobile phone connections under one plan. Airtel has bundled Amazon Prime subscription for six months and Disney+Hotstar for 1 year while it is offering Netflix in the higher price plans. "Generally prepaid users within the family are unable to consume the entire data.

The bundling of OTT services will help them optimise their expenses," the official said. In the Black Family Plans, Airtel has bundled DTH service in the entry-level plan starting at Rs 799 per month, broadband connection with 2 mobile postpaid connections for Rs 998 and under the Rs 2,299 plan, the company has bundled 4 postpaid connections with DTH and broadband service. The official said while the plans will make efficient use of the services, the company expects to gain in terms of average revenue per user (ARPU) from family plan subscribers. Bharti Airtel ARPU, a key growth matrix, was at Rs 193 in December 2022 quarter.

No plans to sell Bisleri now, says Ramesh Chauhan

New Delhi, Mar 21:

Veteran industrialist Ramesh Chauhan said he has no plans to sell his packaged water business Bisleri International and is not in talks with any parties for the same, three days after Tata Consumer Products Ltd called off their negotiations. Chauhan had been in negotiations with the Tata group's FMCG arm Tata Consumer Products Ltd (TCPL) for nearly four months but the deal did not go through. When asked as to whether he has any plans to sell Bisleri now, Chauhan told PTI "We have no plans." However, when asked



about media report suggesting that his daughter Jayanti Chauhan is ready to lead the company, the 82-year-old pioneer of the Indian packaged water business declined to comment. Earlier in November last year, Chauhan had said he was in discussions with several players, including TCPL, to sell out his

Bisleri business. On being asked about the reasons for the sale of Bisleri's business, the octogenarian business leader had said someone had to handle it and look into it. His daughter Jayanti is not interested in handling the business, Chauhan had added. Later in a media statement, Bisleri International Spokesperson had also said: "We are currently in discussion and cannot disclose further."

However, last week resting the speculations about a possible acquisition, TCPL, in a regulatory update, said it has not entered into any agreements over the acquisition of Bisleri.

"In this regard, the company wishes to update that it has now ceased negotiations with Bisleri with regard to a potential transaction and to confirm that the company has not entered into any definitive agreement or binding commitment on this matter," TCPL had said. Bisleri International operates in the bottled water segment with its flagship brand Bisleri and spring water Vedica. It is also present in fizzy drinks with brands - Spyci, Limonata, Fonzo and PinaColada.

Three decades ago, Chauhan sold their soft drinks business to the US beverage major The Coca-Cola Company.

Unlike global economy, India would not slow down: RBI article

Mumbai, Mar 21:

Unlike the global economy, India would not slow down and maintain the pace of expansion achieved in 2022-23, an RBI article said on Tuesday. "We remain optimistic about India, whatever the odds," said the article on the state of the economy published in the March edition of the Reserve Bank bulletin. The NSO's end-February data release indicates that the Indian economy is intrinsically better positioned than many parts of the world to head into a challenging year ahead, mainly because of its demonstrated resilience and its reliance on domestic drivers, it said. Even as global growth is set to slow down or even enter a recession in 2023 as global financial markets waver, India has emerged from the pandemic years stronger than initially thought, with a steady gathering of momentum since the second quarter of the current financial year, it said.

Classifieds

आवश्यकता

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Kangana Ranaut posts throwback pic from college days

Bollywood actress Kangana Ranaut went down memory lane as she shared a couple of throwback pictures from her college days and even shared an anecdote about her designing an outfit.

Kangana took to her Instagram and shared throwback pictures from her college days.

She wrote: "This was my first day in the Chandigarh DAV hostel and my principal, Ms Sachdeva ma'am noticed me because of my dress, she called me and asked where are you from? I shyly said Himachal se, she asked 'yeh dress kahan se li?' I said 'maine design ki and village tailor ne banayi' she smiled and hugged me tight and said 'you will become a movie star one day'."

Kangana added: "After I got into films ma'am honoured me with the pride of



DAV. I know many people who are happy for me but my principal ma'am is most proud of me...Principal ma'am has visited me in Mumbai many times and always kissed my forehead and told me about the blue dress story with love and glitter in her eyes, some teachers are so

good... she is such a blessing." She concluded: "I love her. Dr Sachdeva was also awarded as the best principal from the President of India... she has got many awards and honours, ma'am has retired now. We were so fortunate to have her...Someday I want to teach

acting and filmmaking and be like ma'am."

On the work front, Kangana has just wrapped up shooting for 'Chandramukhi 2'. She also has 'Emergency', 'Tejas', 'Manikarnika Returns: The Legend of Didda' and 'The Incarnation: Sita' lined up.

Keerthy gifts 10-gram gold coins to all 130 members of 'Dasara' unit

Keerthy Suresh, who plays the female lead in the upcoming Nani-starrer 'Dasara', gifted 130 gold coins of 10 grams each to each unit member on the last day of shooting for the film. At current prices, her gesture should have cost her anywhere between Rs 70 lakh and Rs 75 lakh.

"Keerthy was quite emotional on the last day of the shoot," a source in the 'Dasara' unit said. "She wanted to give away something to the people who made her give her best for the film."

Keerthy Suresh plays a character named 'Vennela' in the movie. The Telugu-language pan-India movie is a period action adventure drama written and directed by debutant Srikanth Odela, a protege of Sukumar. It stars Nani and Keerthy Suresh in the lead roles.

Set in the backdrop of Singareni coal mines near Godavari Khani, Telangana, the film is set for theatrical release on March 30.



Fourth edition of Iconic Gold Awards 2023, a grand success!

The fourth edition of CBTF Presents Iconic Gold Awards 2023 (in association with Ankibai Ghemandiram Gowani Trust) which was held on 18th March, 2023 at hotel Sahara Star, is back with a bang and the celebration was ten times more joyous, rewarding and entertaining on all fronts!

The IGA 2023 was a grand success with the best of the best in attendance. As usual, the coveted award found its way into the hands of the most deserving talent from the film, television and OTT industry. The awards night saw the presence of several celebrities including Anupam Kher, Dr. Jayantilal Gada, producer Depak Mukut, Pallavi Joshi, Ankita Lokhande with husband Vicky Jain, Richa Chadha, Rupali Ganguly with her family, Tina Dutta, Pratik Sehajpal, Shiv Thakare, Abhishek Agarwal (producer of The Kashmir Files), Nikhil Siddhartha who were welcomed by the CEO of Iconic Gold Awards, Piyush Jaiswal. The highlight of the award ceremony this year includes special performances by singers Udit Narayan and Laqshay Kapoor. Popular Dancer Ritu Gupta also performed on a spiritual group performance. The IGA 2023 saw many popular faces from the television and entertainment industry walking away with the prestigious Iconic Gold trophies flaunting their fashionable best on the red carpet including singer Laqshay Kapoor, Sikandar Kher, Karan Tacker, Nikita Dutta, Rajiv Adatia, Mukesh Chhabra, Warda Nadiadwala, Udit Narayan, Palak Muchhal, Priyanka Choudhary, Gauahar Khan, Anees Bazmee, Karan Kundra, Karan Tacker, Vineet Kumar Singh, Sanjana Sanghi, Hina Khan, Dheeraj Dhoopar and Anjali Arora Manish Sharma, Nidarshana Gowani, Ameer Merchant amongst others.

Kamyra Panjabi: I am thrilled to essay character of a werewolf for first time



Popular film and TV actress Kamyra Panjabi, who joined the cast of the fantasy drama 'Tere Ishq Mein Ghayal', talked about playing an interesting character of a werewolf, 'Nandini' for the first time in the show. She said: "I am thrilled to essay the character of Nandini, a werewolf, for the first time. The fantasy genre is extremely exciting for me as an actor, and I am looking forward to sinking my teeth into this role. The show has received an incredible response from the audience, and I hope to contribute to its continued success."

Kamyra has done a number of TV shows like 'Piya Ka Ghar', 'Maryada: Lekin Kab Tak?', 'Kyun Hota Hai Pyarr?', 'Banoo Main Teri Dulhann', reality shows such as 'Bigg Boss 7' and movies like 'Kaho Naa... Pyaar Hai', 'Koi... Mil Gaya' among others.

Ajay Devgn gives 'full autonomy' to actors on sets: Lokesh Mittal

Actor Lokesh Mittal, who recently received the audience's appreciation for his work in the streaming series 'Farzi', will be next seen playing a cop in the upcoming film 'Bhola', directed by Bollywood superstar Ajay Devgn.

He shared that Ajay is very clear in his mind as a director, and gives space to his actors to explore their characters.

The actor, who has earlier worked with Ajay in the latter's last directorial 'Runway 34', told IANS: "Bhola is the 4th directorial venture by Ajay Devgn sir. And this is not the first time I have worked with Ajay Ji. Earlier, I got to work with him in his 3rd directorial 'Runway 34' in a scene which brought the introduction of Bachchan Sir's character in the movie and this was the scene due to which Ajay Devgn films decided to cast me



in 'Bhola.' Describing Ajay's style as a filmmaker, Lokesh said: "As a director, he is really wonderful. He doesn't impose anything on the actor; rather he allows the actor to completely do their own things."

&TV artists greet on 'Chaitra Navratri'

The nine-day Chaitra Navratri, also known as Vasant Navratri, is observed in the month of Chaitra, dedicated to worshipping the nine avatars of Maa Durga. People observe fast and worship the Goddess during these days. Talking about embarking on a journey of self-reflection, worship and fasting, &TV artists share how the festival is celebrated with great fervour and enthusiasm. These include Preity Sahay (Kamini) from Doo Sri Maa, Himani Shivpuri (Katori Amma) from Happu ki Ultan Paltan, and Rohitashv Gour (Manmohan Tiwari) from Bhabhi Ghar Par Hai. Preity Sahay, essaying Kamini, says, "I am an ardent believer in Goddess Durga. Every day I fold my hands in front of her and pray for the well-being of my people. During Chaitra Navratri, I fast for nine days. It is one of the most divine feelings. I learned about this festival from my grandmother, and since then, I have been following its rituals religiously. From a very young age, I started fasting and praying, which has become a part of my every yearly ritual. During those auspicious days, I consume kuttu atta, singhara atta, fresh fruit, milk, and dry fruits."



MasterChef India's 'Journey to Finale' will see top 6 home cooks prepare a delicious Biryani

This week, in the 'Finale Ki Journey' of Sony Entertainment Television and SonyLIV's 'MasterChef India,' the Top 6 home cooks will be tasked with creating a lip smacking 'Biryani', followed by an interesting 'Drinks' challenge. Impressing the judges - Chefs Ranveer Brar, Garima Arora and Vikas Khanna, the competition gets intense as the home cooks are now one step closer to winning the Chef's golden coat and the coveted trophy of 'MasterChef India.'

Starting the challenge, home cook Suvarna Bagul would get mutton as her ingredient for the

biryani which impresses Chef Ranveer Brar who compliments her by saying, "Yeh biryani mein puri plate kha sakta hoon." After the spice heavy biryani, the second challenge would have the home cooks make curd-based smoothies and home cook Nayanjyoti's brilliant basil-infused strawberry smoothie wows the Judges' taste-buds.

Sharing his love for Biryani and talking about the challenges, Chef Ranveer Brar said, "Cooking biryani takes time as it requires the juices of the meat to perfectly blend with the rice. Before the home cooks began making the



biryani, the one thing I asked them to keep in mind are the 3 T's - Temperature, Technique

and Trust. Suvarna's biryani was comforting, it reminded me of home. She also discussed with us how every other Sunday, she makes Biryani for her family and friends, and they have a get-together. That feeling of coming together and enjoying food was present in Suvarna ji's dish! Not only that but I was impressed by Nayanjyoti's presence of mind and inventive thinking while making the smoothie."

Tune into MasterChef India to witness the 'Finale Ki Journey', every Monday to Friday at 9 pm only on Sony Entertainment Television and SonyLIV.

CROSSWORD

594



ACROSS

- Fury
- Recipe measures (abbr.)
- Granny Smith, e.g.
- Pub orders
- Stop
- Besech
- Coin factory
- Territory
- Tranquility
- Long-lasting plant
- Corroded

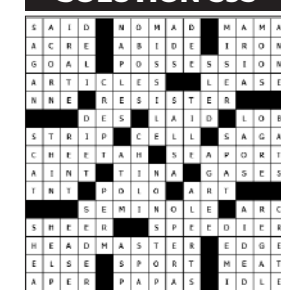
DOWN

- Express scorn
- Trials
- Prepare potatoes
- Occupied (2 wds.)
- Mountain gap
- Wall socket
- Hole in
- Mont Blanc, e.g.
- Clothes cabinet
- President before JFK
- Pod inhabitant
- Rest

- Cranny's kin
- Cast members
- Sit for a portrait
- Appraised
- Check accounts
- Revolutionary ___ Allen
- Open to ideas
- Dazzling
- The ___ Office
- Horse strap
- Scorch
- Pickle seasoning
- Epochs
- Discontinued
- Shade trees
- Forfeit

- Quick look
- Mama's husband
- Actor ___ Baldwin
- Argument
- Besides
- Speak imperfectly
- Set up
- Impartial
- Juice fruit
- Chump
- Wear down
- Satan
- San ___ Padres
- Climbing vines
- Anxious
- Alleviate
- Identical sibling
- Back
- Peaceful
- Building extensions

SOLUTION 593



Amelia Kerr powers MI to four wicket win over RCB in WPL

Navi Mumbai, Mar 21 (PTI):

Mumbai Indians on Tuesday reclaimed the top spot in the points table with a four-wicket victory against Royal Challengers Bangalore in the Women's Premier League, riding on Amelia Kerr's allround heroics.

Chasing a modest 126 to win here at the DY Patil Stadium, Mumbai Indians stuttered post a fiery start and also failed to knock off the target in 11.3 overs a condition that would have helped them improve net run rate over Delhi Capitals. Mumbai Indians eventually finished at 129 for 6 in 16.3 overs. RCB, however, signed off from the competition with their sixth loss in eight league matches.

All-rounder Kerr was at top of her game with figures of 40-22-3 and an unbeaten 31 from 27 balls (4x4s) to take Mumbai Indians over the line.

Kerr added 47 runs for the fifth wicket with Pooja Vastrakar (19) to revive Mumbai Indians who were rocked twice in quick succession.

Sobhana Asha halted



Mumbai Indians' bowler Amelia Kerr celebrates with teammates after the wicket of Royal Challengers Bangalore's batter Smriti Mandhana during the Women's Premier League (WPL) cricket match between Mumbai Indians and Royal Challengers Bangalore, at DY Patil Stadium in Navi Mumbai, Tuesday, March 21.

Nat Sciver-Brunnt's charge by dismissing her for 13, while captain Harmanpreet Kaur (2) fell for her first single-digit score in the competition. Kanika Ahuja claimed two wickets in one over to finish as the pick among the bowlers for RCB. At the start, the opening pair of Hayley Matthews (24 from 17 balls, 2x4s, 1x6s) and Yastika Bhatia (30 off

26 balls, 6x4s) laid the foundation with a 53-run stand.

While the team finishing at the top will get a direct entry into Sunday's final, the second and third-placed teams will battle in the eliminator on Friday to fill up the second slot of the summit clash.

Earlier, Kerr snapped three wickets as Mumbai Indians produced a disci-

plined effort to restrict RCB to 125 for nine. Kerr (3/22) validated MI captain Harmanpreet Kaur's decision to bowl first, taking full advantage of a spin-friendly track, while Matthews (4-0-18-0) and Saika Ishaque (1/30) were also on the money. Both Kerr and Ishaque joined Sophie Ecclestone of the UP Warriorz for most wickets (13) in WPL.

Nikhat and two others move to quarters

World Boxing Championship

New Delhi, Mar 21 (PTI):

A "fatigued" Nikhat Zareen continued her winning run to enter the quarterfinals along with two other pugilists at the Women's World Championships here on Tuesday.

Nikhat saw off Mexico's Patricia Alvarez Herrera 5-0 to notch her third win of the tournament. Commonwealth Games champion Nitu Ghanghas (48kg) won her bout with a first round against Sumaiya Qosimova of Tajikistan, while last year's bronze medallist Manisha Moun (57kg) got the better of Nur Elif Turhan of Turkey in the third round.

Shashi Chopra (63kg), however bowed out of the tournament after going down 0-4 to Mai Kito of Japan. It was the second RSC win in as many bouts for Nitu in the tournament.

Nikhat took a few seconds to decipher her opponents game plan before attacking. She used her nimble feet to duck away from Herrera's counter attacks.

Both the boxers have moved down from the 52kg weight division. Well aware of the Mexican's aggressive style of play, Nikhat used her speed to land accurate



India's Nikhat Zareen being declared winner after her 48kg-50kg (Light Flyweight) category Round of 16 match against Mexico's Fatima Patricia Herrera Alvarez at the 2023 IBA Women's Boxing World Championships, in New Delhi, Tuesday, March 21.

jabs and hooks. Herrera, whom she had beaten in the last edition, tried her best to shift the momentum in her favour but Nikhat's relentless attack proved too strong.

Nikhat, who has already played three bouts, including one against the top seed, and is still three bouts away from the gold, said she is feeling fatigued.

"I am happy that I have defeated the person that has got seeding number one," the unseeded Nikhat, who

had several cuts on her lip, said after her bout.

"I still have some fatigue from my last round as it was against the top seed. It was tough and her punches landed pretty well so my neck was a little tight and my body a little slow compared to my last bout. But I am happy that I won unanimously this time.

"In my boxing career, this is the first competition that I'll play six bouts because I didn't get a seeding, but I am not focussing on that."

Earlier, in the opening session of the day, Nitu registered her second RSC win in as many bouts in the tournament.

Both Nitu and Qosimova tried to figure out each other's game, but then the Indian connected four straight jabs which forced the referee to give the opponent her first standing count. Nitu continued her onslaught as she cornered the Tajikistan pugilist and pummeled her with straight jabs.

Sen slumps to world no 25 in BWF rankings

New Delhi, Mar 21 (PTI):

Commonwealth Games champion Lakshya Sen slipped six places to move out of the world top 20 in the latest men's singles rankings issued by BWF on Tuesday.

Following his second round exit from the All England Championship, Sen slumped to the 25th spot.

The 21-year-old, who had reached a career-best world no. 6 in November last year, hasn't been in the best of form, having made early exits from Malaysia Open, India Open and German Open.

Last year, Sen had a rampaging run in the European circuit early in the season, winning the India Open and reaching the finals at Germany and All England.

HS Prannoy continued to remain steady at number ninth spot, while Kidambi Srikanth regained his top 20 spot after



climbing two positions.

In women's singles, PV Sindhu stayed at the ninth spot, while Saina Nehwal, who had skipped the All England Championships, slipped five places to 32nd spot.

Men's pairing of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty continued at the sixth spot, while women's combination of Treesa Jolly and Gayatri Gopichand lost a rung to be at the 18th position, despite a semifinal finish last week.

Losing good players dented our composition: GG mentor Mithali Raj

Mumbai, Mar 21 (PTI):

Losing key players at the start of the Women's Premier League disturbed Gujarat Giants' team composition and "shuffling the deck wasn't easy", team mentor Mithali Raj and head coach Rachel Haynes said after the side's elimination.

Having suffered a calf injury on the opening day of the inaugural tournament, Australia opener and designated captain Beth Mooney missed the remainder of the WPL, dealing a big blow to her side's prospects.

Even as the others stepped up, Gujarat Giants did miss a player of Mooney's calibre, through-

out. "Honestly, we did put up a good team, but the results were not in our favour and the season didn't go our way. We lost key players early on, and it dented our composition. But despite this hiccup, the team stepped up and showed



their grit and passion to win," Mithali said in a press release issued by the Adani-owned franchise.

Gujarat Giants were eliminated after losing their last match against UP Warriorz on Monday.

Talking about her debut stint as a head coach, Haynes said, "This was certainly, an exciting and enriching experience for me as head coach for such a wonderful team. "Undoubtedly, we had our tough moments, but the team put up a riveting performance and showed a lot of character during every match. We all are taking with us many positives and pivotal life-lessons from this inaugural session."

Alcaraz at No. 1; Nadal out of top 10, 1st time in 18 years

Indian Wells, Mar 21 (AP):

Carlos Alcaraz returned to No. 1 in the ATP rankings on Monday, replacing Novak Djokovic, and Rafael Nadal dropped out of the top 10 for the first time in 18 years.

Alcaraz rose one spot, swapping places with Djokovic, a day after ending Daniil Medvedev's 19-match winning streak by beating him in straight sets in the final at Indian Wells, California. Alcaraz, a 19-year-old from Spain who first ascended to No. 1 by winning the U.S. Open in September, didn't drop a set in the hard-court tournament. Djokovic has spent more weeks at No. 1 than any man or woman in tennis history. He did not play in Indian Wells because he is not allowed to enter the United States as a foreign citizen who is not vaccinated against COVID-19. He also will miss the Miami Open that begins this week; Alcaraz is the defending champion there. Nadal has



been sidelined since January by an injured hip flexor and he slipped four spots to No. 13 on Monday, ending a stay in the top 10 that began in April 2005. It is the longest such run in the ATP; Jimmy Connors is next on the list with about 15 years.

TOPS approves Bajrang, Vinesh's request to train in Kyrgyzstan and Poland



New Delhi, Mar 21 (PTI):

The Sports Ministry's Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS) has approved star wrestlers Bajrang Punia and Vinesh Phogat's request for training stints in Kyrgyzstan and Poland respectively.

While Bajrang requested to train in Cholpon-Ata, Kyrgyzstan for 16 days, Vinesh wanted to train at the Olympic Preparation Centre in Spala, Poland for 11 days. The financial assistance will cover athletes' air tickets, camp ex-

penses including the cost of training, boarding, and lodging, and miscellaneous costs such as airport transfer, insurance and internal travel, out of pocket allowance among other expenses, a press release stated. TOPS will also cover expenses for Vinesh's sparring partner-Sangeeta Phogat and physiotherapist Ashwini Jeevan Patil and Bajrang's coach Sujeet Maan, physiotherapist Anand Kumar, and strength and conditioning expert Kaazi Kiron Mustafa Hasan.

Indian top-order burns midnight oil to tackle 'Mitchell The Menace'

Chennai, Mar 21 (PTI):

The prima donnas of Indian batting will have to put their best foot forward while tackling the lethal in-dippers from Mitchell Starc when they face Australia in the series-deciding third ODI here on Wednesday.

If Starc is giving sleepless nights to the batters, the other 'Mitchell' -- Mitchell Marsh -- has sent the Indian bowlers on a leather hunt by hitting nearly a dozen sixes (11) across two games. Tackling 'Mitchell The Menace' will be topmost on the Indian team's agenda.

The series is locked at 1-1 and the starry quartet of Rohit Sharma, Virat Kohli, Shubman Gill and Suryakumar Yadav will have to bat out of their skins to stop the left-arm pacer, who is gearing up to once again bring the ball back viciously into the right-handers while taking a few away. A sea change on the technical aspect, as well mental make-up, will be the need of the hour, and Starc has exposed their frailties pretty badly.



Bowling attack

The Indian bowling attack needs to take its workload management seriously but, truth be told, the bowlers haven't had much work to do as they have bowled a total of 47 overs (36 and 11) across the two games. That is not even half of the 100 allocated overs. Mohammed Shami and Mohammed Siraj wouldn't mind making first use of the Chepauk surface if Rohit happens to win the toss. The key question is if Shardul Thakur, or Jaydev Unadkat for his left-arm variation, will be used as third specialist seamer, or both spinners Kuldeep Yadav and Axar Patel will get another game alongside Ravindra Jadeja.

The white ball games in India are mostly played on flat decks, where one can get away by hitting through the line, where one doesn't need too much

of feet movement. A batter can plonk the front-foot and hit deliveries across the line with a fair degree of success.

But Starc, blessed with

better skill sets, changed the questionnaire with deliveries that would either straighten in the off-middle line or cut back sharply towards leg-middle after a fair amount of deviation in the air.

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'Status quo maintained with China on LAC in Ladakh'

Jammu, Mar 21 (PTI): Northern Army Commander Lt Gen Upendra Dwivedi on Tuesday said status quo is maintained with China on the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in Ladakh and talks are going on at different levels, while the situation is under control in Jammu and Kashmir where efforts are on to stop terror incidents completely.

The General Officer Commanding-in-Chief (GoC) of Udhampur-based Northern Command was addressing a mega 'Veterans Sampark' rally which was attended by over 800 veterans and veer naris at a unit of Jammu and Kashmir Rifles at Digiana here. "The status quo is maintained with China on LAC. Talks are going on at different levels



Lt Gen Upendra Dwivedi

and all our formations are at a high level of operation preparedness," Lt Gen Dwivedi, who took over the charge of the Army commander of the Northern Command and the Colonel of the Regiment of Jammu and Kashmir Rifles and Ladakh Scouts on February 1 last year, said.

The Indian Army and the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) have been locked in a standoff in multiple areas along the LAC in eastern Ladakh since May 2020.

Lt Gen Dwivedi also talked about continuity of the ceasefire on the Line of Control (LoC) with

Pakistan but said there have been some infiltration attempts which have been successfully foiled by the Indian Army.

"The situation in the hinterland is largely under control. Our counter-insurgency/counter terrorism grid is fully working with civil administration and efforts are on to stop terror incidents completely," he said. Maj Gen (retd) Govardhan Singh Jamwal, Director, Sainik Welfare Department, J and K, Brigadier (retd) Gurmeet Singh Shan; Commander, 92 Infantry Brigade, Brig S K Goswami; and Commandant, JAK Rifles regimental center, Brig Rajesh Sharma also attended the rally, which was jointly organized by 7 JAK Rifles and 26 Infantry Division.

FLOWERS FOR SALE



Vendors display flowers for sale on the eve of Ugadi festival, at a wholesale market in Bengaluru, Tuesday.

Man gets death sentence for raping stepdaughter, making her pregnant

Kheda, Mar 21 (PTI): A court in Gujarat's Kheda district on Tuesday awarded the death sentence to a 28-year-old man for repeatedly raping his stepdaughter and impregnating her. Special POC SO judge PP Purohit at Nadiad city also ordered the man to pay Rs 2 lakh to the survivor as compensation. An FIR was registered against the man in March last year under the Indian Penal Code (IPC) as well as the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act. As per the prosecution, the accused repeatedly raped the girl, who was then aged 11 years and 8 months, for over five months and threatened her not to talk

about the sexual assault. The crime came to light only after the girl became pregnant.

Public Prosecutor Gopal Thakor said the prosecution produced 12 witnesses and 44 documents, as evidence, before the court to establish the crime. Considering the seriousness of the crime, the court sentenced the man to death to set an example in society and curb such crimes, Thakor said. The court awarded him the death sentence under section 376 (A)(B) of the IPC (for raping a girl under 12 years of age) and sections 5 (J)(2) (making child pregnant) and 5 (L) (committing rape more than once) of POCSO Act, he said.

On 'Navroz', hundreds let leeches suck their blood

In hope of getting rid of long-time ailments

Srinagar, Mar 21 (PTI):

Every year on this day, hundreds of patients make a beeline outside leech therapy centres here in the hope of getting rid of their long-time ailments.

They undergo a procedure wherein leeches are released on a person's body and the tiny predatory worms piercing his or her skin with their teeth and inserting anticoagulants through their saliva, thus thinning the patient's blood.

The leech therapists, usually medical practitioners from Unani system, claim that this procedure is very helpful in treating many ailments ranging from fatty liver to hypertension to blood clot-



A man receives 'leech therapy' at a makeshift clinic on 'Navroz', which marks the beginning of spring, in Srinagar, Tuesday.

ting, which often causes strokes.

Dr Hakeem Naseer Ahmad, a Unani practitioner, told PTI that leech therapy is used in case of infarction, or when there is altered or impaired blood circulation.

"The leech acts as a wonder medicine. What is basically the mechanism of leech therapy? Our aim is not sucking out the blood but to inject the enzymes found in saliva of the leech into the bloodstream. These improve the

micro-circulation of blood and we achieve our pharmacological actions," he said.

Ahmad, who has been holding leech therapy camps for the past 24 years, said he has found that the therapy is useful in treating both hypertension (high blood pressure) as well as hypotension (low blood pressure).

"We have seen that in hypertension cases, the blood pressure becomes normal within 15 minutes of leech therapy. In hypotension cases, we again found that the blood pressure was coming to normal levels," he said.

Ahmad said the enzymes in the leech help in dissolving clots in the bloodstream, allowing for the free flow of blood.

Man from Chh'garh lynched on suspicion of being thief

In Gujarat village

Kheda, Mar 21 (PTI):

A man hailing from Chhattisgarh was beaten to death on suspicion of being a thief in a village in Gujarat's Kheda district, police said on Tuesday.

The victim Ramkeshwar Kherwar was lynched by a group of people in Vansol village on the intervening night of Sunday and Monday, Deputy Superintendent of Police V R Bajpai said.

Kherwar, who sustained injuries to his head and a fracture on his right hand, was rushed to the Ahmedabad civil hospital in an ambulance, but was declared dead, he said.

"Villagers nabbed the man suspecting him of being a thief and beat him to death. No arrests have been made in the case so far. But some suspects are being questioned," Bajpai said.

An FIR was registered against unidentified persons under sections pertaining to murder, rioting, unlawful assembly, among others of the Indian Penal Code, at Mehmedabad police station on Tuesday, he said.

According to the police, the victim, who was in his mid to late 30s, hailed from Wadrafnagar in Balrampur district of Chhattisgarh and worked as a labourer.

HEAVY SNOWFALL



Snow-covered buildings following heavy snowfall at Kedarnath in Rudraprayag district, Tuesday.

'BJP is just a tenant, not owner of democracy'

New Delhi, Mar 21 (PTI): The Congress on Tuesday said the ruling BJP is just a tenant and not the owner of democracy and asserted that holding the government to account does not amount to criticising the nation.

Congress spokesperson and chief of the party's media and publicity department Pawan Khhera also said that the BJP was resorting to "theatrics" and "drama" to divert the country's attention from the Adani issue.

Taking a barb at the BJP, he said the party will be seen as "Jai Chands" in history and claimed its ideological forefathers were known apologisers of the British, after the BJP attacked Rahul Gandhi as "Mir Jafar". "Rahul Gandhi is demanding answers from the prime minister on the deeds of his

friend and a worried BJP is trying to enact new dramas to divert attention from the Adani issue," Khhera told reporters.

He termed these actions of the government as theatrics. Noting that Amit Shah and the "Shehanshah" know that Gandhi will not apologise, but I personally feel sad that BJP spokespersons come without preparation and bother you in the morning.

"It is sad that those who apologised to the British and those who remained loyal to London and who took pension from the British Viceroy are giving sermons on Patriotism to us. "Criticising the works of the government do not amount to criticising the country. The government is for the country and not vice versa, and the BJP

should understand this," Khhera said. He said democracy will only be strengthened if discussions on the state of democracy continue and democracy will be weakened if such discussions stop. "We want discussions." "I have a suggestion to Shah and Shehanshah that you are just tenants of democracy and not landlords, who are the people. I urge you to remain tenants and not try and become landlords.

"We request the prime minister, the home minister and the entire cabinet to start thinking about democracy and not about their friend," he also said.

Questioning why the government was running away from instituting a JPC probe into the Adani issue, he said even the name of Adani spoken by

Congress leaders are expunged from parliamentary records. "We want to know why a JPC is not being instituted.

"You want to become Jai Chand of democracy, then do not say why they will be called Jai Chands. We urge you to think about the country and not your friend," Khhera said, adding these are people whose ideological forefathers have been historically known to be the apologisers of the British and today they are giving us lectures on patriotism. It is an irony.

The Congress and other opposition parties have been demanding a JPC into the Adani issue while the BJP is demanding an apology from Gandhi for his "democracy under threat" remarks made in London.

Water for Life: Navigating the Global Crisis Together



Dr. Manas Ranjan Senapati

Covering more than 71% of the Earth's surface, water is undoubtedly the most precious natural resource that exists on our planet. Water is one of the natural resources and it plays a very important role in our life. A person needs 15 kg of air, 1.5 kg of water and 0.75 kg of food per day to survive. We get all these

from nature. We cannot imagine our life without the presence of water. So we say, "Water is life". As the population is increasing, we are facing the problem of scarcity of various natural resources because we are not managing them properly.

Our global water system is in crisis. According to the United Nations, safe water and sanitation is a human right, but billions of people will not have access to these essentials for life in the future. For us humans, water is not only a vital need for our bodies, but it is also a resource that we benefit from every day. At home, we use it for cooking, cleaning, washing and flushing. Water is also used for power generation, manufacturing of goods. Pollution, over-exploitation

and climate change continue to undermine water quality and availability. About 3.6 billion people struggle to get enough water to meet their needs for at least one month each year, according to the World Meteorological Organization. We see neighbor-to-neighbor, state-to-state and nation-to-nation wars over water. We have 18 percent of the world's population, but only 4 percent of our water resources, making us one of the most stressed countries in the world. According to a recent report by the government's Policy Commission, a large number of Indians are facing extreme water crisis. Several major cities in India have experienced water shortages in recent years, with Chennai being

the most prominent in 2019. Natural calamities like droughts and floods are caused by excessive use of water and wastage of water. We use about 10-15 liters of water to wash our cars i.e., 105 liters a week, 3150 liters a month and 37,800 liters a year. Some countries of the world like Brazil, China, USA, Jordan, South Africa, Libya etc. are also facing water shortage. World Water Day is an international observance and an opportunity to learn more about water-related issues. World Water Day began in 1992 at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development where an international observance for water was recommended. The United Nations General Assembly designated 22 March 1993 as the

first World Water Day. Since then it has been held every year. World Water Day 2023 is about accelerating change to address water and sanitation crises. And because water affects us all, we all need to take action. This means you and your family, school and community can make a difference in your life by changing the way you use, use and manage water. About 159 million people collect their drinking water from surface water such as ponds and rivers. Today, 1.8 billion people are at risk of contracting cholera, typhoid and polio from contaminated drinking water sources. Water has become a key issue in the fight to eradicate extreme poverty, with the Sustainable Development Goals, launched in 2015, including

a goal to ensure safe water for all by 2030. The purpose of celebrating this World Water Day is to remind that we should follow guidelines to save water for ourselves and our future. The United Nations and its member states celebrate this day by promoting and implementing the UN Recommendations for the Conservation of Water Resources. Various organizations promote ways to conserve water, treat wastewater, and protect aquatic habitats. The main purpose of World Water Day is to solve the problem of lack of clean water in the world. Otherwise we will face third world war for water. (Dr. Manas Ranjan Senapati, Dean Science, BPUT, Professor of Chemistry, Trident Academy of Technology.)

Delhi hosts Int'l Happiness Film fest

New Delhi, Mar 21 (PTI): Coinciding with International Day of Happiness on Monday, a festival of extremely short films themed on happiness was held here with a special category for seniors.

Fourteen films in the categories of poetry, painting, dance and animation (all of maximum three minutes), besides music videos were screened at the LOGI HQ International Happiness Film Festival & Exhibition 2023.

Founder and festival director Manisha Gupta said she founded LOGI-HQ, a happiness start-up, in 2011 with an aim to help people during the Covid pandemic and achieve a higher form of

happiness through creativity. She then conceived the idea of the happiness festival to lift people from the distressing times. Last year, the festival was held in an online format.

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BRIEF



A worker drinks water in front of Vidhana Soudha, a day before World Water Day, in Bengaluru, Tuesday.

Suspended

New Delhi: Delhi Assembly Speaker Ram Niwas Goel suspended BJP legislator Vijender Gupta on Tuesday for a year till the next Budget session for allegedly obstructing the proceedings of the House. Earlier in the day, Gupta had proposed a breach of privilege motion against Finance Minister Kailash Gahlot and Environment Minister Gopal Rai for leaking Delhi budget details on social media.

Revenue

New Delhi: The Centre has earned Rs 10.25 crore revenue by scrap disposal in February, an official statement issued on Tuesday said. In its monthly report on the secretariat reforms for February, the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG) said 1,05,514 files were weeded out and 3,56,533 public grievances against different government departments were disposed.

Passes away

Mumbai: Mahatma Gandhi's granddaughter Usha Gokani passed away in Mumbai on Tuesday. Gokani, aged 89 years, was ailing for the last five years and was bedridden for last two years, Mani Bhavan executive secretary Meghshyam Aijaonkar told PTI.

Rescued

New Delhi: A three-day-old baby was found abandoned in a dump yard in outer Delhi's Nangloi on Tuesday, the Delhi Commission for Women said. The DCW received information on its 181 Women Helpline from a person about the child. The DCW immediately informed the Delhi Police, helped in recovering the child and got the child hospitalised.

Recovered

Prayagraj: Uttar Pradesh Police recovered an undisclosed amount of cash and about a dozen illegal weapons from a demolished office of mafia-turned-politician Atiq Ahmed in Chakia area here on Tuesday, officials said.

Interim stay

Kochi: The Kerala High Court on Tuesday granted an interim stay on the order that set aside the election of CPI(M) MLA A Raja from Devikulam Assembly seat in Idukki district. Justice P Somarajan granted an interim stay on the operation of the order for ten days or till an appeal is filed before the Supreme Court, whichever occurs first.

Weather: High 28 Low 19. MARKET: NIFTY 17,107.50, SENSEX 58,074.68. BULLION: GOLD 58,869, SILVER 68,575.

Four arrested for helping Amritpal escape

Chandigarh, Mar 21 (PTI):

Four people have been arrested for helping radical preacher Amritpal Singh escape, the Punjab Police said on Tuesday.

They helped him to escape in a car, and during their questioning, it came to the fore that he went to a gurdwara in Nangal Ambian village in Jalandhar, police said.

"There he changed his clothes, and wore a shirt and pant, and escaped along with three others on two bikes," Punjab Inspector General of Police (Headquarters) Sukhchain Singh Gill said while addressing reporters here.

The Khalistan sympathiser managed to escape after changing his vehicle on Saturday when police had launched a crackdown against him and his outfit 'Waris Punjab De'.

Manpreet Singh alias Manna, Gurdeep Singh alias Deepa, Harpreet Singh alias Happy and Gurbhej Singh alias Bheja have been apprehended for helping Amritpal Singh escape, Gill said. The car has been seized, he said, adding that a .315 bore rifle, some swords and a walkie-talkie set were found in it. Police also released four pictures of Amritpal Singh in different attire and appealed to people to help tracing him. The IG further said efforts are on to nab the radical preacher. Chief Minister



Associates of 'Waris Punjab De' founder Amritpal Singh being taken to Dibrugarh Central Jail amid tight security, in Dibrugarh, Tuesday.

'NSA order against Amritpal issued on Sat'

An order to detain radical preacher Amritpal Singh under the stringent National Security Act was issued by the Amritsar district magistrate on Saturday, said a police officer's affidavit which also described how the Waris Punjab De chief gave the cops the slip. The affidavit which was filed in the Punjab and Haryana High Court was in response to a habeas corpus petition filed by petitioner Imaan Singh Khara, seeking the "release" of Amritpal from the alleged custody of police. During the hearing of the petition on Tuesday, the state government said that Amritpal was neither detained nor arrested by police. The Punjab Police on Saturday had launched a major crackdown against Amritpal and members of his outfit Waris Punjab De. According to the affidavit of Senior Superintendent of Police (Amritsar Rural), Satinder Singh, a non-bailable warrant was also issued against the Khalistan sympathiser on Monday. Amritpal was acting in a manner prejudicial to the security of the state and maintenance of public order, said the affidavit, adding that the petitioner had levelled vague, false, misleading and frivolous allegations. It said Amritpal, resident of Jallapur Khera village in Amritsar, has been professing radical ideology and raised the demand of secession of Punjab from India.

Bhagwant Mann is monitoring the situation and taking regular feedback from police officers, Gill said.

Police on Saturday had launched a major crackdown against radical preacher Amritpal Singh and members of his outfit 'Waris Punjab De'.

The elusive preacher himself, however, gave the police a slip and escaped their dragnet when his cavalcade was intercepted in Jalandhar district.

'Restore Red Notice against Choksi'

New Delhi, Mar 21 (PTI):

The CBI has asked an Interpol body to restore the Red Notice against fugitive diamantaire Mehul Choksi, saying its decision to drop his name from the list was based on mere "imaginary conjunctures and unproven surmises" and had serious shortcomings, overreach of mandate and mistakes.

Red Notice is the highest level of alert by the 195-member

International Police cooperation organisation Interpol to locate and provisionally arrest a fugitive pending extradition, surrender, or similar legal action. In a statement on Tuesday, the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) said the Commission for Control of Interpol's Files (CCF) removed Choksi's name from the Red Notice list in November 2022. The removal of the notice means Choksi can freely travel out of Antigua and Barbuda where he is holed up after

fleeing from India in 2018. The statement was issued by the CBI a day after the media reported the CCF decision that came as a setback to Indian investigating agencies and triggered a huge political uproar. Based on repeated appeals from Choksi, who is wanted in the Rs 13,000 crore bank fraud in Punjab National Bank, the CCF removed his name from the Red Notice list in November 2022, it said.

The statement said the CBI has taken up with CCF the serious shortcomings,

procedural violations, overreach of mandate and mistakes committed by CCF in the manner of reaching this unfounded and perfunctory decision. Based on new information and serious errors in the decision, the CBI is taking steps for the decision of CCF to be revised, the agency said.

"The CBI continues to exercise available remedial and appellate options within INTERPOL for rectification of this faulty decision and for restoration of Red Notice."

HC OBSERVATION

'Sexual assault case complainants entitled to fair trial'

Accused need to be protected from mala fide trial

New Delhi, Mar 21 (PTI):

While complainants of sexual assault cases are entitled to fair trial, the responsibility of the criminal justice system towards protecting rights of the accused cannot be ignored, according to the Delhi High Court which upheld an order discharging a man for allegedly raping a woman for 12 years.

The high court said in cases of rape and sexual violence, conceptualisation of definition of sexual consent is of utmost importance and the issue of "consent" merits close scrutiny for analysis of

sexual assault offences. "The courts have to ensure that the right of fair trial to the complainant and rights of the accused of being protected from mala fide trial are taken care of in the court's crucial endeavour to ensure equality before law," Justice Swarana Kanta Sharma said in the order.

The high court's verdict came while upholding a trial court's June 2018 order discharging the man under Sections 376 (punishment for sexual assault) and 506 (punishment for criminal intimidation) of the Indian Penal Code. While the woman alleged she was repeatedly raped by the man from 2005 to 2017, the FIR was lodged by her in 2017 at Sarai Rohilla Police Station here.

NIA files charge sheet against 12 people

In terror-gangster nexus case

New Delhi, Mar 21 (PTI):

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Tuesday filed its first charge sheet against 12 people, found to have links with pro-Khalistan outfits and Pakistan-based conspirators, in one of the three terror-gangster nexus cases being probed by the agency.

The agency is investigating 10 more people for their alleged role in the terror conspiracy, including plans to eliminate certain leaders, singers and businessmen to terrorise people, extort money from them and create a sensation, a spokesperson of the

federal agency said. The official said the investigation has revealed links of the charge-sheeted accused with the proscribed Khalistan Tiger Force and its operative Arshdeep Singh Gill alias Arsh Dala, a listed "Individual Terrorist".

Besides being in contact with Pakistan-based conspirators, the accused were in touch with pro-Khalistan elements based in Canada and other countries, the spokesman said.

The charge sheet, filed in a court here, was against Gill, Gaurav Patyal, Sukhpreet Buddha, Kaushal Choudhary, Amit Dagar, Naveen Bali, Chhotu Bhat, Asif Khan, Jajja Takhatmal, Tillu Taggajuria, Bhupi Rana and Sandeep Bandar.

CHILDREN PERFORM



Children perform during the 148th foundation day function of Arya Samaj, in New Delhi, Tuesday.

'Irresponsible Oppn wilfully stalling Parl'

New Delhi, Mar 21 (PTI):

The BJP on Tuesday accused the Opposition of wilfully stalling Parliament with its "irresponsible" comments and "unfounded" allegations to mislead the country amid global recognition of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership.

With the all-party meetings called by Rajya Sabha Chairperson Jagdeep Dhankhar and Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla producing no breakthrough to end the deadlock in Parliament, Union ministers Piyush Goyal and Pralhad Joshi accused opposition parties of repeatedly "insulting" Dhankhar.

The Congress hit back at the BJP, noting that Goyal, who is the Leader of the House in Rajya Sabha, got the ruling party MPs to prevent Leader of Opposition in the House Kharage from speaking twice even after the Chairman had permitted him. "Silencing of LoP is also an issue quite apart from the JPC on Adani," Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh said on Twitter. He added, "How can the Oppn demand for a JPC into the PM-linked Adani scam be linked to the BJP's demand for an apology from Rahul Gandhi on totally baseless accusations. The JPC is on a real, documented scam. The apology demand is a hoax being raised to divert attention from the Adani scam."

Congress hits back

The Congress hit back at the BJP, noting that Goyal, who is the Leader of the House in Rajya Sabha, got the ruling party MPs to prevent Leader of Opposition in the House Kharage from speaking twice even after the Chairman had permitted him. "Silencing of LoP is also an issue quite apart from the JPC on Adani," Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh said on Twitter. He added, "How can the Oppn demand for a JPC into the PM-linked Adani scam be linked to the BJP's demand for an apology from Rahul Gandhi on totally baseless accusations. The JPC is on a real, documented scam. The apology demand is a hoax being raised to divert attention from the Adani scam."

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into the PM-linked Adani scam be linked to the BJP's demand for an apology from Rahul Gandhi on totally baseless accusations. The JPC is on a real, documented scam. The apology demand is a hoax being raised to divert attention from the Adani scam."

The Rajya Sabha chairperson personally called up several opposition leaders, including Mallikarjun Kharge of the Congress, to attend the meeting but they refused, Joshi said.

After almost the entire opposition except for regional parties like the TDP, YSR Congress and the BJD skipped the first meeting before the noon, Dhankhar called another meeting in afternoon.

Though some parties like the TMC and DMK attended the second meeting after the Chairperson's personal intervention, other opposition parties still kept away. This is a "great disrespect" to the Chair, Parliamentary Affairs Minister Joshi said.

LIFE MISSION CASE

ED gets custody of businessman Santhosh Eappen



Kochi, Mar 21 (PTI):

A special court here on Tuesday granted the Enforcement Directorate (ED) the custody of Kochi-based businessman Santhosh Eappen, arrested by the central agency in connection with alleged financial irregularities in implementing a flagship housing project of the Kerala government. Eappen, managing director of Unitac Builders, was arrested by the agency after his interrogation at ED office here on Monday. The Special Court (for Prevention of Money Laundering Act) granted the agency custody till March 23. Eappen is the first ac-

cused in the case of the alleged violation of the Foreign Contribution (Regulations) Act in the Life Mission housing project.

The ED had earlier arrested M Sivasankar, former Principal Secretary of Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan, in connection with the case. The court today extended the judicial custody of Sivasankar till April 4.

Meanwhile, the interrogation of U V Jose - former CEO of Life Mission project - in connection with the case is underway at the ED office here. Earlier, the CBI had investigated the case. The CBI had in 2020 filed an FIR in a Kochi court under Section 120B (Punishment of criminal conspiracy) of the Indian Penal Code and Section 35 of FCRA on a complaint by then Wadakkanchery MLA and Congress leader Anil Akkara, listing Eappen as the first accused and the company Sane Ventures as the second accused.

PARL PANEL RECOMMENDATION

'Allot 1% of total Union Budget to MEA'

Make cadre review at the earliest

New Delhi, Mar 21 (PTI):

The Ministry of External Affairs should strengthen manpower in its embassies abroad and set up missions in all UN member states in line with India's expanding global stakes and considering the profound changes in the foreign policy domain, a parliamentary panel report said on Tuesday.

In the report, the committee on external affairs also recommended an allocation of at least one per cent of the overall annual budget of the government to the min-

istry in view of its challenging mandate to make India an influential nation in the world.

The panel said the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) remains one of the least funded central ministries as its revised budget hover around just 0.4 per cent of the total budgetary allocation of the government from 2020-21.

The report of the committee headed by PP Chaudhary was tabled in Lok Sabha on Tuesday.

"Keeping in view the magnitude and extent of India's diplomatic outreach and foreign policy objectives, the committee continues to feel that an allocation

of at least one per cent out of the overall budget of the government of India to the ministry is reasonable and achievable," it said.

The committee desired that the ministry strive to enhance its financial resources in line with its global diplomatic responsibilities. At the same time, it said an increase in allocation without the capacity to utilise the amount would be meaningless.

The committee urged the MEA to work out a roadmap for enhancing its capacities and capabilities, whether it is in the form of structural change or a complete revamp of its organisational structure.

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Flex Scam: FIR lodged against erstwhile DMC Commissioner

Bhilai, Mar 21:

On Tuesday, Padmanabhpur Police Station lodged an FIR against government officials including erstwhile Commissioner of Durg Municipal Corporation over an alleged flex scam. On the court's order, Police lodged FIR against the then DMC Commissioner Sunil Agrahari (presently posted as Deputy Commissioner, Rajnandgaon Municipal Corporation), then Revenue Inspectors Chandrakant Sharma and Pawan Nayak and Anil Singh (Partner, Singh Constructions, Sector 4, Bhilai) under sections 420, 468, 471, 120-B/34 of IPC. Aam Admi Party leader Meharban Singh had filed a court petition in this regard. Meharban Singh had come to know about the financial irregularities through the documents he obtained through RTI.

On August 27, 2019, erstwhile DMC Speaker Rajkumar Narayani had made a complaint to the DMC Commissioner regarding corruption in purchase of flex hoardings. Thereafter on August 29, former Corporator Vincent D'Souza had submitted a complaint letter at the office of District Collector. On the instructions of the District Collector, DMC Commissioner Sunil Agrahari and Revenue Inspector Chandrakant Sharma had given orders and purchased the banned PVC Flex for DMC that too at a rate almost Rs 40 per square feet higher than the prevailing market rates.

On the instructions of the District Collector, DMC Commissioner Indarjeet Burman conducted a probe and submitted a report on November 23, 2020. He had sent a copy of this report to the SP of Durg District for lodging an FIR. The probe report

found that there was a scam of about Rs 8.65 lakh. Quotations of two firms, who were never included in flex printing / works, were found in the official files. The directors of these two firms confirmed that they had never submitted such quotations and the same were forged. In this situation, the work order was issued for the third party i.e. Anil Singh. Prior to the payments, there was an audit objection in all the files but payment was made citing it to be essential work.

Petitioner Meharban Singh had alleged that the Police and the Urban Administration Department did not take any action under the political pressure. Court conducted hearings on this matter and directed the Durg Police to lodge an FIR. In compliance with the court's order, an FIR has been lodged at Padmanabhpur Police Station.

BSP hands over hand-pumps after excavation of tube-wells

In Model Steel villages & peripheral villages



Bhilai, Mar 21: SAIL-Bhilai Steel Plant's Corporate Social Responsibility Department has completed the work of installation of hand-pumps for tubewells dug earlier in some peripheral villages including Model Steel Villages with the objective of making drinking water easily available to the villagers. The tube-wells had been dug earlier by Bhilai Steel Plant in villages Doomardih, Ghughsidih, Machandur, and Borigarika. The hand-pumps were installed later. The tube well and hand-pump installations were handed over to respective village heads on March 20, 2023. Under this initiative, two handpumps were installed for tubewells dug earlier at two different locations in village Doomardih. One tubewell with hand pump was in-

stalled at one location in village Ghughsidih. Two hand pumps were installed for two tubewells at two different locations in village Machandur and two tubewells with hand pumps were installed at two locations in village Borigarika. The total expenditure incurred for the above-mentioned tubewells and pumps installation is approximately Rs 5.62 lakhs. Villagers including Sarpanch expressed their gratitude for the work carried out by Bhilai Steel Plant. Village heads, including village Sarpanch, Panch, Villagers and Assistant Managers of CSR Department, Vivek Mishra, Ashutosh Soni, Assistant Manager from Town Services Department, KK Verma were present at the handing over ceremonies in the villages.

Siksha Kala va Sahitya Akadami organises get together

Bhilai, Mar 21: Shiksha Kala va Sahitya Akadami, Durg organised a get together at Sector 4 on Sunday. Convenor Dr Shivnarayan Dewangan "Aas" informed that they organised a joint get-together for New Year, Women's Day and Holi.

MP Vijay Baghel graced the function as chief guest while District Panchayat President Shalini Rivendra Yadav presided over. Atul Nagle (State Convenor, Prabhuddha Parishad Chhattisgarh), Acharya Dr Mahesh Chandra Sharma (Educationist), Parasram Sahu (President Medal Awardee Teacher), Jageshwari Meshram (Chhattisgarhi film actress), Bhavana Pandey (President, New Press Club of Bhilai Nagar), Ramadhar Sharma (litterateur and social worker), Kharari Ram Dewangan (Numismatist), Pramod Jain (President Saksham Jan Foundation), Kaushalendra Patel (State President), Bodhiram Sahu (Treasurer) and Mahetar Lal Dewangan (Secretary) were present as special guests. At the outset, prayers were offered to Goddess



Saraswati. Dr Shivnarayan Dewangan "Aas" (founder and coordinator Shiksha) delivered the welcome address. Kaushalendra Patel administered the oath to the office bearers of State Women's Cell and Durg District. The newly appointed office bearers of Women's Cell are Neeta Tripathi, Jyoti Gajpal, Pratibha Tripathi, Pritichand Mallika, Sarojini Sahu and Durg District office bearers are Horilal Chaturvedi, Sangeeta Chandrakar, PV Sanjana, Ishwari Dewangan, Preeti Tiwari, Pramod Kumar Kurre, Shivkumar Nirmalkar, Prakash Chandra Chelak and Hema Chandravanshi. Thereafter, the annual calendar of Shiksha was released by chief guest Vijay Baghel. Special guest

Jageshwari Meshram and Dr Mahesh Chandra Sharma appreciated the organisation. Chief Guest Vijay Baghel said that Shiksha is doing very good work under the leadership of coordinator Shivnarayan Dewangan. The organisation is enhancing the talent of teachers. Shalini Yadav said that every program of education is praiseworthy. In the cultural program, drama and dance was presented by the school students. An exhibition of old and new coins was also organized by Kharari Ram Dewangan. Certificates of all the programs and felicitation letters were given to the members. The program was conducted by Sanjay Kumar Maithil and Dr Shivnarayan Dewangan "Aas" Convenor proposed the vote of thanks.

BSP employees felicitated with Pali Shiromani and Karm Shiromani Award



Bhilai, Mar 21: Employees belonging to Power zone of Bhilai Steel Plant were awarded with the 'Pali Shiromani' and 'Karm

Shiromani Puraskar' for their exemplary work performance under the 'Shiromani Puraskar Yojana' of Bhilai Steel Plant.

Pali Shiromani Award winners include Shivam Verma, Manager PBS and Karm Shiromani Award winners Manoj Kumar Jagdale, Master

OCT, PEM, Tribhuwan Lal Sahu, Operator Cum Technician, PBS, Awadhesh Kumar Yadav, Operator Cum Technician, PBS, were

felicitated for their exemplary work. The function was presided over by Rajeev Pandey, CGM (Power Facility). HK Sahu, GM I/c (PBS & PEM), PS Khobragade, GM (PEM), Sanjay Nikhar, GM (PBS), Abhay Kumar, GM (PBS), P Krishan Mohan, GM (PBS) and other officers of Power Zone who presented the award winners with a certificate of merit, memento and appreciation letter for the spouse of the employee. The programme was conducted by Personnel Office of P&E Zone.

Sanjit Dhar secures 11th All India rank in GATE



Bhilai, Mar 21: Sanjit Dhar, a meritorious student from Bhilai has secured All India 11th rank in the Metallurgy branch in Graduate Aptitude Test in Engineering (GATE), 2023. He is currently working as Executive Engineer in Indian Oil Corporation Ltd (IOCL). Sanjit has been a hardworking student throughout his academic life. He completed his Senior Secondary Education from Delhi Public School Bhilai, with 95.4 percent in Class XII following which he completed his B Tech in Metallurgy from National Institute of technology (NIT), Raipur, securing silver medal. Sanjit Dhar's father Sujit Dhar is working as a Section Officer in the Project Department of Bhilai Steel Plant and his mother Tandra Dhar is a Lecturer of Biology in Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya, Durg.

Incident investigation team of Safety Senate felicitated

Bhilai, Mar 21: M/s Swasya Solutions has been appointed as consultant to strengthen safety systems at work place by SAIL-Bhilai Steel Plant management. The consultant has framed an effective safety management system which is strictly being followed and implemented to curtail the hazards and build safety culture within the work place.

As part of the Safety Senate headed by Director In-Charge, Bhilai Steel Plant, Anirban Dasgupta, an I2CFT (Incident Investigation) team, one of the six verticals in the system has been constituted under the chairmanship of Dr Ashok Kr Panda, (Executive Director-F&A) which ensures that all incidents and near-miss cases get reported and root causes of the incident are determined through scientific investigation and the key factors are identified to derive the corrective measures which eliminates recurrence. Ever since the constitution of the I2CFT, all serious and fatal potential incidents and near miss

cases have been investigated to identify the gaps in the system and all corrective actions were recommended and implemented within a time frame. To recognize the efforts put-up by the I2CFT team, 'BEST CFT' award was presented by Director I/c Anirban Dasgupta during National Safety Day celebrations at Kala Mandir on March 07. A felicitation program was arranged on March 16, 2023 in the Conference Hall of ED (F&A) chaired by Dr AK Panda as leader of I2CFT. Panda congratulated all the cluster members of the I2CFT team for their dedicated efforts and further urged all members to work collectively for achieving the desired goal of ZERO accident/incident inside the plant. Cluster members who were present on the occasion included Anup K Datta, CGM (SPs), SK Gajbhiye CGM (Mech), Anish Sengupta, CGM (URM), S Tokdar, CGM(BF), I Sengupta, GM I/c (RMD), BK Mahapatra (CFO), NK Dhete, GM(Converter), B Madhu Pillai, GM (Inst) & AP Pansari, AGM (F&A).

Safety Week inaugurated in Raw Materials Department

Bhilai, Mar 21:

SAIL-Bhilai Steel Plant's Raw Materials Department is celebrating Safety Week. The inaugural ceremony was held on Monday, March 20, 2023. As part of this Safety Week, various competitions and safety related lectures shall be organised on various topics, namely gas safety, unsafe work conditions and situations, near miss cases, accident



analysis etc. The chief guest of the inaugural function was Praveer Kumar Sarkar, Chief General Manager

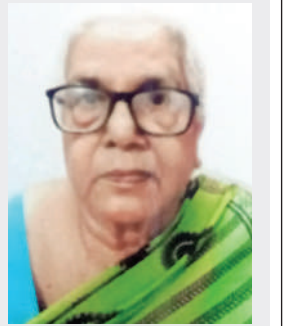
in-Charge (Services). Among the other dignitaries present were Dr Rajeshwar Ram, Joint Deputy Director

(Occupational Health Services), SK Mahto, General Manager, (Safety Engineering Department), Indrajeet Sengupta, HOD,

Raw Material Department and Ranjan Bharti, General Manager (Raw Material Department). Other the members of the department also participated in the inaugural event. Addressing the inaugural session, Dr Rajeshwar Ram, shared insightful ideas and information on Occupational Safety & Health and First Aid. The Safety Week will conclude on, March 25, 2023.

Obituary

Champa Devi Pandey



Bhilai: Champa Devi Pandey, wife of Late Madhav Dutt Pandey left for heavenly abode at the age of 83 years on March 20. Funeral procession will be taken out from her residence situated at Qr 7/B, Street 28, Sector 7 on March 22 around 11:00 hrs and last rites of the mortal remains will be performed at Ramnagar Muktdham. She was the mother of BSP employee Rajesh Pandey.

HC grants relief to Chopra Auto Center

Orders BSP to unseal and unlock IOCL Fuel Station

Bhilai, Mar 21:

The High Court of Chhattisgarh had provided relief to the proprietor of Chopra Auto Centre (IOCL Petrol Pump), which was sealed by the Enforcement Department of Bhilai Steel Plant on March 15, 2023 following the order of Estate Court over the pending land lease renewal. During the hearing, counsel for the Indian Oil Corporation submitted that by April 05, 2023, the Indian Oil Corporation would be in a position to take a decision as regards the demand raised by the Steel Authority of India. The Court also considered the fact that the dealership outlet is the source of livelihood and the bread and butter of the petitioner, and directed the Bhilai Steel Plant to unseal and unseal the petrol pump premises immediately till April 05, 2023 subject to further instructions of the

High Court in the writ petition filed by proprietor of Chopra Auto Centre. Steel Authority of India Limited was also directed to seek instructions as regards the charging of GST on the premium amount and also as regards the rate of 18% interest claimed for the pending lease renewal premium.

It needs to be mentioned here that Bhilai Steel Plant had given a land on lease to Chopra Auto Centre (IOCL Dealer) and the lease was first executed on June 10, 1981 and the lease was to expire on March 20, 2013. Immediately after the lease period expired, the Steel Authority of India had made an offer and proposal to the Indian Oil Corporation for renewal of the lease, if they so desired, with an increase in the lease rent and in addition premium amount and other service charges by 25%. The revised lease rent and premium amount pro-



posed by the Steel Authority of India was not acceptable to the Indian Oil Corporation and there has been a series of correspondences and litigations that germinated from the same. In due course of time, vide order dated June 06, 2013, the Steel Authority of India terminated the lease. IOCL went into litigation and the matter has reached the stage of First Appeal before the High Court. Meanwhile,

there was another proceeding drawn under Public Premises (Eviction of Unauthorised Occupants) Act, 1971. An order was passed under this Act on September 22, 2017 which again went into litigation and presently a writ petition is pending consideration before this Court. Subsequently, a series of further correspondences were made between the Steel Authority of India

and the Indian Oil Corporation and negotiations were conducted in respect of lease rent that has been proposed by the Steel Authority of India. The Indian Oil Corporation also had written a correspondence with the Steel Authority of India permitting them to grant time initially up till March 31, 2023 and thereafter until April 30, 2023 for taking an appropriate decision on the revised proposal given by

the Steel Authority of India. A decision in this front is yet to be taken by the Indian Oil Corporation. Later on March 15, 2023, the Officers of Steel Authority of India locked and sealed the Chopra Auto Centre on the order passed by the Estate Public Officer under the Public Premises (Eviction of Unauthorised Occupants) Act, 1971. The counsel for the petitioner (Chopra Auto Centre) submitted that a huge amount of fuel is still lying in the tanks of the petitioner dealership outlet. Further there are other petroleum products and other perishable articles stocked in the said premises. According to the petitioner, since the matter is in negotiation between the Steel Authority of India and Indian Oil Corporation, the petitioner's source of livelihood and his bread and butter

should not be snatched away abruptly at least till a decision is taken by the Indian Oil Corporation within a period of fortnight's time, till then they should be permitted to continue to operate the same. Counsel for the Indian Oil Corporation submitted that by April 05, 2023, the Indian Oil Corporation would be in a position to take a decision as regards the demand raised by the Steel Authority of India. Considering the petition, the High Court opined that lease renewal matter is still under consideration at the higher level of management of Indian Oil Corporation and a decision shall be taken within a fortnight's time. Accordingly, The High Court will take up the matter on April 05, 2023. Meanwhile, relief was given to the petitioner by directing the BSP to unseal and unseal the fuel station.

Mayor presents RMC budget of Rs 1600 cr

Raipur to get 24 hours water**Flyover to be built on Phool Chowk on public consent**

Raipur, Mar 21: Mayor Aijaz Dhebar today made 32 big promises in the estimated budget of Raipur Municipal Corporation for 2023-24. In his budget speech, he said that the Municipal Corporation will issue a bond of 200 crores in the interest of the general public. The scope of 'Pauni Pasari' and Vending Zone will be expanded for the benefit of small businessmen.

Raipur city will be given tanker free water for 24 hours. Coverage of Mohalla clinics will be increased. Urban Women's Livelihood Center will start. Urban Cartage and Service Industries Park will be set up in the cities on the lines of RIPA. The remaining part of the road from Phool Chowk to Azad Chowk will be widened and a flyover will be constructed on this road with the consent of the local people. Dog shelter will be opened. Mahadev Ghat bridge will be beautified. All drains in the city will be covered. Chaupal will be constructed for the elderly.

Mayor Dhebar started his budget speech after handing over a copy of the budget to the Speaker Pramod Dubey in the general body of the Municipal Corporation. Raipur's development journey has a glorious history, he said. Reading out the lines "The one who has a different vision to see the world, he has the right skill to touch the heights" the Mayor said that this fourth budget of his tenure is of 1600 crore.

While reciting a verse from Gita, he said that he will neither get tired nor stop. The budget is neither of the Congress nor of the BJP, rather it belongs to the people of the entire Raipur city, he said.

"We are moving forward with many big works, one of which is the widening of the main road of the capital Raipur from Azad Chowk to Phool Chowk", he said, adding that state government announced 10 crore for this work. He said that flyover from



Mayor Aijaz Dhebar (right) presenting the budget to Speaker Pramod Dubey (left) in the general body of the Raipur Municipal Corporation.

Phool Chowk will be built on the consent of people of the area.

Important 32 points of the budget

- Bonds worth Rs 200 crore will be issued for the Raipur Municipal Corporation to generate additional sources of income and for financial management and resources for various income generating projects. The proceeds of the bonds will be used for various income generating projects and the proceeds from these projects will be used to repay the bonds.
- 'Nagar Van Yojana' will be implemented to develop green cover and biodiversity in Raipur Municipal Corporation area. Under this, it has been envisaged to allow urban forest development within 10 kilometers of the urban body's



A group of people protesting with placards demanding better services and infrastructure.

- limits.
- The target of purification of Kharun river will be included in the action plan for the next two years. Ensuring smooth operation of all STPs, purification of water of 17 drains mixed with waste flowing from Raipur city and reaching the river will be implemented effectively. 'Pauni Pasari' and vending zone area will be expanded and small businessmen will be helped for easy business.
- Self-help groups will be linked with livelihood-oriented programs and will be motivated for overall self-reliance by organizing training programs for the manufacture of Gaudhan products such as paint, putty, cow-wood, cow urine distillation, phenyl, decorative items.
- Effective programs will be conducted to connect

- every house with cleanliness and cleanliness of Raipur. The entire system of waste segregation and its disposal will be strengthened from every household.
- Apart from "AMRUT MISSION" scheme, the 24x7 water supply scheme will be completed in a targeted period, as well as a tanker-free system will be ensured.
- Health and medical facilities will be expanded in the entire Municipal Corporation area.
- The coverage of Mohalla Clinic and Chief Minister Urban Slum Health Scheme will be increased so that health services can be easily accessible to every household.
- Study, teaching and infrastructural development, intellectual, educational, sports and cultural activities will be promoted in government schools under mu-

- nicipal corporation area.
- Playgrounds, ponds and gardens of Raipur will be given a new look in the next two years.
- Efforts will be made for comfortable roads, lighting on all roads and arrangements will be made at the ground level to develop Raipur as best city in cleanliness.
- Various programs will be organized to connect the youth with activities related to traditional sports, art, culture, literature etc. of Chhattisgarh.
- Urban Women's Livelihood Center will 1000 seats will be started.
- BPO will be started in Municipal Corporation Raipur with state-of-the-art software and hardware facilities for employment of youth. A provision of 10 crore has been made for this work.
- Urban Cartage and

Service Industries Park will be set up in the cities on the lines of RIPA. A provision of Rs 2 crore has been made for this work.

- An amount of Rs 5 crore will be provided for modern toilets and lighting and CCTV cameras for continuous monitoring in each ward of Raipur Municipal Corporation.
- Free facilities for BP and blood sugar test will be provided through Smart Health Kiosks. A provision of Rs 3 crore is being made for the establishment of 50 kiosks in Raipur Municipal Corporation area at the rate of Rs 6 lakh per kiosk.
- Provision of Rs 18 crore for the drainage system and flood control in the waterlogged areas of Raipur city and Rs 20 crore for the preparation of the G-20 summit
- The remaining part of Phool Chowk to Azad Chowk road will be widened and a flyover will be constructed with the consent of the local people Provision of Rs 7 crore for e-rickshaws/e-carts in proportion to the population, strengthening the system of garbage collection and environmental protection
- Dog shelter will be constructed by identifying the place under Raipur Municipal Corporation area. For this work, a

provision of Rs 48 lakh 50 thousand has been made in the first phase.

- Women's committee will be formed under special protection for women workers working in Municipal Corporation.
- Shelter homes will be constructed for destitute old people in all zones through NGOs.
- Provision of Rs 1 crore for beautification of Mahadev Ghat bridge, vertical garden and other works.
- All the big ponds of the cities will be treated biologically.
- Sports equipment, slide, swing, and other necessary arrangements will be made for the children in all the gardens of the city. A provision of 2.00 crore has been made for the garden.
- Provision of 4 crore 62 lakh 97 thousand for underground cabling work from Lakhe Nagar Chowk to Amapara Chowk. Lighting, drinking water, toilets, underground cabling, CCTV cameras and other necessary arrangements will be made in all the markets of the city.
- All drains in the city will be covered.
- Construction of 'Chouपाल' in 70 wards for the elderly people.
- Appu Ghar will be constructed for the educational development, sports and entertainment of children from 1 to 10 years.

Eight killed in lightning strikes, hailstorm amid untimely

Raipur, Mar 21: At least eight persons were killed in lightning strikes and a hailstorm, as unseasonal showers lashed several parts of Chhattisgarh in the last couple of days, state Revenue Minister Jaisingh Agrawal told the Assembly on Tuesday.

Damage to crops was reported in different districts and the compensation will be distributed to farmers after assessment, he said. The issue of losses suffered by farmers in several parts of the state due to the untimely spell and hailstorm was raised by opposition BJP MLAs and a discussion was sought by moving an adjournment motion notice.

Speaking in the zero hour, BJP legislator Shivratna Sharma said vegetables, wheat, and gram crops were damaged in several places,

but the state government is yet to survey the losses.

Backing Sharma, BJP MLAs Ajay Chandrakar and Dharamlal Kaushik said farmers were bearing the brunt of poor policies of the state government and they should be provided compensation immediately for the losses caused to crops. They demanded a discussion on the adjournment motion notice.

Deputy Speaker Santram Netam, however, rejected their notice and assured them that the issue will be taken up for discussion in any form later. Subsequently, Agrawal said his department has received reports of crop losses and a directive has been given to collectors to assess the crop damage in all districts including Raipur, Durg, Bemetara and Kabirdham.

"The state witnessed 13.7 mm rainfall on March 19 and 6.2 mm on March 20. As per the information received, seven people died in lightning strikes and one due to a hailstorm. Besides, the rainfall-related incidents have also claimed the lives of 36 animals and partially damaged 209 houses," the minister said. He said crops in about 385.216 hectares were damaged due to untimely rainfall and hailstorm.

There is a provision to provide compensation for losses due to natural calamities within 15 days, the minister added. Leader of Opposition Narayan Chandel said revenue officials should immediately disburse a compensation of Rs 4 lakh to the families of each of the eight persons killed in natural calamities.

'Cashless system in all govt hospitals from June 1'

• Demands for grant of Rs 5122 crore 8 lakh 71 thousand passed for the departments of Singhdeo

Raipur, Mar 21: Demands for grants of Rs 5122 crore 8 lakh 71 thousand for the departments of TS Singhdeo (Minister for Public Health and Family Welfare, Medical Education, Commercial Tax and 20-point Programme Implementation) were passed unanimously in Chhattisgarh Assembly today.

The total amount includes Rs 3207 crore 70 lakh 90 thousand for Public Health and Family Welfare Department, Rs 1574 crore 48 lakh 3 thousand for expenditure relat-

ed to Medical Education Department, Rs 335 crore 76 lakh 63 thousand for expenditure related to Commercial Tax Department and Rs 24 crore 13 lakh 15 thousand for the expenditure related to the program implementation department.

Responding to the discussion on the department's grant demands, Singhdeo told the House that the cashless system would start in all government hospitals of the state from June 1. Patients will not have to pay even a single rupee for treatment, examination and medicines. OPD, IPD, medicines and all kinds of diagnostic services will be made available free of cost to the people of the state. Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel has given his approval on this, he informed.

BJP stages walkout over irregularities in Eklavya School goods purchase

• Minister informs Assembly that DE against two underway

Raipur, Mar 21: Principal opposition Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on Tuesday grilled the Minister for School Education Dr Prem Sai Singh Tekam over irregularities reported in the procurement of various materials for Eklavya Schools in Rajnandgaon and Mohala-Manpur Districts.

Raising the issue during Question Hour, the BJP Legislator Dr Krishnamurthy Bandhi sought the details about the funds sanctioned for the purchase of various goods for the Eklavya School. In his reply, the Minister for School and Tribal Welfare Dr Tekam



accepted that irregularities were unearthed in the procurement as rules for purchase of goods were not followed in the process. He further informed that Department Enquiry was conducted on receiving complaints and subsequently action would be taken against two persons on the issue. He said that one of the accused Principal Narendra Maria died recently and hence no action could be taken now whereas two others including Principal Sangeeta Robbins and

Assistant Commissioner Chabilal Chandravanshi were reported found prime facie responsibility for violation of rules in the procurement process and added that DE against both of them is underway.

BJP Legislator Shivratna Sharma raised demand for FIR against the two involved in the irregularities. However, the Minister said that the action against them would be taken only on the basis of the investigation report against them.

BJP members kept on raising slogans against state government and reiterated their demand for a FIR against the accused officials. Unsatisfied with the reply from the Minister, the BJP members staged walkout from the proceedings to register protest.

CM virtually launches 'Mukhyamantri Vriksh Sampada Yojana'

District-level programme held in Sarona, Raipur, attended by the Collector

Tissue culture teak plants planted on a 5-acre land

Raipur, Mar 21: On the occasion of International Day of Forests, Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel on Tuesday virtually launched the "Mukhyamantri Vriksh Sampada Yojana". Several representatives, including Raipur Collector Dr. Sarveshwar Bhure and DFO V. Kumar, participated in the district-level programme held in Sarona, Raipur, and planted saplings of tissue culture teak plants on the land of Dr. Mandharia, a beneficiary of the scheme.

There is great enthusiasm among the beneficiaries of this scheme, including small farmers in rural areas as well as those who own land in urban areas. At today's district-level programme, a total of 1,250 plants of tissue culture teak were planted on 5 acres of land owned by Dr. Nalini Mandharia in



Sarona. The beneficiary couple participated in the programme along with their family and also spoke to Chief Minister Baghel through video conferencing, expressing their gratitude for starting this ambitious scheme.

Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel congratulated and extended his best wishes to all the citizens on the launch of this ambitious scheme. He said that the forests and biodiversity of Chhattisgarh are our identities. Our government is constantly working in the direction of protecting our environment and forests. He added that it is necessary to make efforts to involve a larger number of people from the plains in this scheme. He encouraged forest department officials to inform all beneficiaries of the scheme at the grassroots level, so that as many people as possible can benefit from it. Forest Minister Mohammad Akbar, while

addressing the programme, said that the state of Chhattisgarh is abundant in trees. Along with this, the state government aims to implement the scheme on 1.80 lakh acres over the next 5 years. The citizens of the state will benefit from this scheme.

While speaking to the Chief Minister, Dr. Mandharia, said that people belonging to all sections of society will benefit from this scheme without any discrimination. This scheme will not only bring significant economic benefits to the people but will also prove to be beneficial for environmental protection. He said that now the availability of plants whose wood is used for construction work or medicinal plants will not be limited to forests, but will also reach the fields of farmers and landowners and this scheme will reduce pressure on forests. Dr. Mandharia also ex-

pressed his gratitude to Chief Minister Shri Baghel for starting this visionary and environmentally beneficial scheme. He also stated that this scheme is also beneficial for forest produce production and forest dwellers.

Raipur Collector Dr. Sarveshwar Bhure has appealed to the residents of the district to take maximum advantage of this scheme. He said that this is a better scheme to overcome the shortage of forest area in the district. He explained that under this scheme, 100 per cent grant will be given for tree plantations on area up to 5 acres, and 50 per cent grant will be given for tree plantations on more than 5 acres. DFO Shri V. Kumar provided information on various plants that are included under the scheme. He also explained about intercropping and planting medicinal plants and told about the benefits of the scheme.

Two days National Seminar organised in SRSU

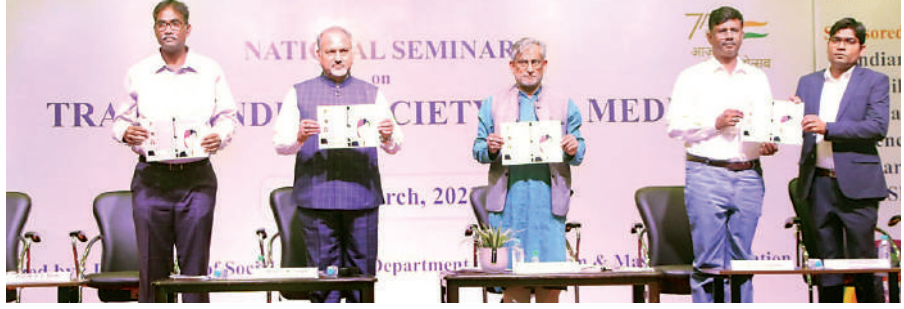
• On 'Transgender, Society and Media'

Raipur, Mar 21: In a two-day national seminar on "Transgender, Society and Media", in collaboration with the Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR), New Delhi, was organized by the Dept of Social Work and Journalism & Mass Communication at Shri Rawatpura Sarkar University (SRSU), Raipur.

In this seminar more than 150 delegations were registered and fifteen resource person share their experiences in three panel presentation session and nine technical sessions along with it 80 papers were presented by research scholar came from various universities across the state.

By appreciating the organizers of the seminar, the Vice Chancellor of the University, Prof. S.K. Singh shares his views to organize the national seminar with an objective to create the academic forum where the people related to different discipline share their experience and knowledge based on transgender society.

Inaugural Chief Guest Dr. Sadanand Shahi, the Vice Chancellor of Shri Shankracharya Professional University, Bilai asserted that the transgender playing an important role from Epic Era to Modern Era. There are many such examples in which this



community has played an active role. But even today there is an inherent cruelty towards this community in our mind. A contempt against this community remains inside us, it is expressed every day. The society has to avoid this prejudice only then an excluded community will be able to join the mainstream. Prof. Shahi said that the transgender community is known for art, music and dance. The spirit of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam should also be shown towards the transgender community. There should be a sense of equality in the use of words with them. Transgender Dhananjay Chauhan, head of Saksham Prakriti Welfare Society, Punjab, an organization working for the transgender community, said that all genders of the society should be considered equal. It is not right to divide the society into first, second and third gender. Minor bullying towards transgender should be banned in the society. Chhattisgarh Mitwa Sankalp Samiti's chief transgen-

der Vidya Rajput said that today transgender is struggling to be called a human being apart from bread, cloth and house as well as we should not be seen only as a gender but as a human being. And Transgender Rabina Bariha said that the media inadvertently gives a bad name to the community. This confuses the society further. Transgender should also get a chance to move forward and get acceptance in the family.

In the Inaugural function, books were also unveiled by the Chief Guest, namely "Transgender, Society and Media", "A discourse on Transgender: Society & Media Worldwide based on the transgender community. Valedictory Chief Guest Prof. Baldev Bhai Sharma, the Vice Chancellor of Kushbhau Thakre Patrakrita Avam Jansanchar Vishwavidyalaya, Raipur (C.G) asserted that, it is an act of great courage to candle the neglected section of the society. The aim of the university is not only to pro-

vide education but to awaken the social vision of the business of education in the mind of the student and to conduct research on it.

Along with it he said that, those who have suffered a lot for the recognition in the society over the years, they should get acceptance in our society, should get respect in the society. All knowledge and learning is focused on respect. When it comes to humanity, all the differences go away, whether it is big or small, big or small, caste system. The Pro Chancellor of the University appreciates the concept of the organizing committee and conveners Dr. Manish Verma, Dr. Santosh Kumar, Dr. Naresh Gautam for National Seminar based on the Transgender Society and Media. And the Registrar of the University Dr. C. Rameshkumar congratulates to Organizing Secretary Dr. Sunita Sonwani, Ms. Manish Bose and all cooperative staff members of the University.

Executive Committee meeting of SDRF held



Raipur, Mar 21: The meeting of the State Executive Committee constituted for the operation of the State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF) was held on Monday through video conference at Mantralaya Mahanadi Bhawan under the chairmanship of Chief Secretary Mr. Amitabh Jain. In the meeting, topics were discussed in detail includes State Disaster Mitigation Fund (SDMF), financial grant assistance under revenue book circular, rescue and preparation in the context of summer

season, financial grant assistance to dependents of persons who died due to Novel Corona Virus Covid-19. In the meeting, Secretary, Revenue Department, Mr. NN Ekka, Secretary, Health Department, Mr. R. Prasanna, Secretary, Chief Minister's Secretariat, Mr. Ankit Anand, Secretary, School Education Department, Dr. S. Bharathidasan, Secretary, Home and Forest Department, Mr. S. Basavaraju and other officials of the Revenue

Department were present. The Chief Secretary inquired about the action plan of the Disaster Response Fund.

Officials of the Department of Revenue and Disaster Management said that under the Revenue Book Circular 6-4, in the financial year 2022-23, for providing immediate grant-in-aid to the beneficiaries affected by the natural calamity and for the expenditure incurred in arranging food etc. in the Quarantine Center in the district. An approval allocation of Rs 61 crore 73 lakh 77 thousand has been issued to the collectors from the Revenue Disaster Response Fund. An amount of Rs 4 crore 76 lakh 50 thousand has been released to the districts of the state to provide grant-in-aid to the dependents of the persons who died due to Novel Corona virus Covid-19.



Wheelchair and tricycles distributed to 'Divyangjans'

Meritorious students receive financial assistance

Kanker, Mar 21: Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel reached the Karap village in Kanker district today and provided assistive equipments including wheelchairs, tricycles and hearing aids to 12 Divyangs. During the distribution drive, the children beneficiaries of Chirayu Yojana thanked Chief Minister Mr. Baghel by presenting him with roses. The Chief Minister also wished for the healthy life and bright future of the children. It is noteworthy

that, 4 children have been cured of congenital heart disease and 01 child has been cured of cataract under the Chirayu Yojna. On this occasion, Chief Minister Baghel also distributed cheques to 13 beneficiaries of the 'Medhavi Chaatra Shiksha Protsahan Yojna, 'mukhyamantri Nirman Shramik Mrityu and divyang sahayta yojna, Minimata Mahtari Jatan Yojana and Mukyamantri Noni Sashaktikaran Sahayta Yojna.

60th meeting of DOLC concludes in Raipur Division

Central Chronicle News

Raipur, Mar 21: The 60th meeting of the Divisional Official Language Implementation Committee, Raipur was organized on March 20 under the chairmanship of Divisional Railway Manager Sanjeev Kumar. According to the standard agenda issued by the Railway Board, in this meeting, progress of the official language in the division during the quarter October - December 2022 was reviewed.

First of all, Additional Chief Official Language Officer and Additional Divisional Railway Manager (Operation) Lokesh Vishnoi said in his welcome speech that since our division is located in 'K' region, we have more responsibility and therefore we have to work continuously towards the implementa-



tion of official language Hindi. With mutual co-operation and coordination, the use and spread of the official language has to be increased, he added. Divisional Railway Manager Sanjeev Kumar said in his presidential speech that there has been a lot of increase in official language works in our division as compared to earlier, but still many works have to be done so that target compliance of all the items of

the annual program can be ensured. He directed all the officers present that during their regular inspection, they must inspect at least one item related to official language and mention it in their inspection report. Various branch officers and their representatives were present in this meeting. Official Language Officer Nikesh Kumar Pandey conducted the meeting. The meeting was declared closed with a vote of thanks.

IBITF hosted annual Fintech stakeholder conclave



Raipur, Mar 21: IIT Bhilai Innovation and Technology Foundation (IBITF) hosted its annual Fintech Stakeholder Conclave in a private hotel here on March 15, 2023. The event brought together a diverse group of stakeholders from various industries, including healthcare, agriculture, the environment, renewable energy, banking, etc., to identify innovative fintech-based solutions to some of the most pressing challenges facing these industries. These problems outlined specific challenges encountered by each sector and allowed innovators and fintech startups to showcase their solutions. Some prominent organi-



zations that participated in the conclave included the National Payments Council of India, the National Informatics Centre, the Indian Institute of Management, Raipur, Chhattisgarh State Renewable Energy Development Agency (CREDA), Bhilai Steel Plant, SAIL, the All India Institute of Medical Sciences, Raipur, Avishkaran BioNEST Bio Incubator, the National Institute of Pharmaceutical Education and Research (NIPER), Hyderabad, I-Venture, Indian School of Business, Hyderabad, among others. The conclave featured presentations and discussions on a wide range of problems in the fintech

domain, which could be solved through blockchain technology, the Internet of Things (IoT), Artificial Intelligence (AI), Machine Learning (ML), and e-Payment Systems. Speaking on the occasion, Prof. Rajiv Prakash, Director of IIT Bhilai said, "Educational institutes in India are renowned for their fundamental research, but applying such research to real-world problem solving needs an entrepreneurial mindset that we must instill. The vision behind this initiative is to ensure that the benefits are not confined only to industry stakeholders. Rather, it should make IIT Bhilai approachable so that even small retailers or farmers

can present their problems and seek help developing innovative and impactful solutions that could benefit society." Dr. PrasahntAgnihotri, CEO of IBITF spoke about how the problem statements presented by diverse industries provided a roadmap for IBITF, widening its applicability, to identify opportunities not only within the financial industry but in other sectors that could be addressed through fintech-based solutions. Prof. Ram Kumar Kakani, Director IIM Raipur, addressed the participants in his keynote speech and suggested that IBITF, in achieving the intended objectives, should ensure maintaining innovation within a regulatory framework that protects consumers and maintains market stability. He added that we must embrace innovation, but we must do so responsibly and sustainably, ensuring that fintech solutions do not compromise the safety and security of the financial system. The IBITF Fintech Stakeholder Conclave also included a networking event, allowing attendees to connect with fellow stakeholders and explore potential collaboration opportunities.

HNLU-HNMCC to be held on March 15-17, 2024

Raipur, Mar 21: In the valedictory ceremony of the prestigious event of HNLU, Hidayatullah Memorial National Moot Court Competition (HNMCC), Prof. VC Vivekanandan, Vice Chancellor of HNLU announced "the HNMCC makes a big leap for conducting International Moot named hereafter as Hidayatullah International Moot Court Competition (HIMCC) which will be held on March 15-17 of 2024 at HNLU campus with a substantial budget where we expect world teams to participate." He further remarked, "This evolution is based on the consistent organization capacity of the HNLU Student-Faculty teams of the past HNMCC events and also will be the first global moot event for any law school in the country where the preparations will start from

April 2023". The XIIIth edition of the CCI - HNMCC'23, the 3-day flagship event of HNLU, successfully concluded on 19th March 2023. The moot court competition witnessed participation from 38 law schools comprising of 114 students judged by 60 invited judges. After a fiercely competitive conclusion of the semi-finals, the two exceptional teams that made it to the grand finale of this prestigious event were the National Law University, Odisha & University of Petroleum and Energy Studies. Following an intense final, the winners for this year's HNMCC were the University of Petroleum and Energy Studies represented by Yashaswini Parashar, Anshika Agarwal and Utsav Vats, whereas Maharashtra National Law University, Nagpur, represented by Anika Sharma,

Ghanishtha Mishra and Sharwari Motghares bagged the Best Memorial Award. The Best Speaker Award went to Vinayak Sanjay Buckshee, Damodaran Sanjivayya National Law University, while Ayush Morande, Maharashtra Law University, Mumbai, claimed the Best Researcher Award. Justice Goutam Bhaduri, Acting Chief Justice of the High Court of Chhattisgarh, and Chancellor, HNLU participated as the Chief Guest and remarked that all are winners while participating and no losers. He went on to urge student of Six Qualities to imbibe to succeed in life and emphasized 'Respect for Teachers' as a crucial one. He extensively quoted Swami Vivekananda and underlined concentration, hard work and self esteem as fundamental qualities to suc-

ceed in profession and life. The final round was presided over by a special bench of five judges, comprising Prof. Dr. A. David Ambrose, former Professor and Head of the Department of Legal Studies, University of Madras, Prof. (Dr.) Ranbir Singh, Pro-Chancellor IILM University & Member Executive Council and General Council, HNLU, Adv. R. Muralidharan, Patent and Trademark Attorney, Manu Associates, Mr. Ved Prakash Mishra, Advisor (Law) & Head of the Legal Division, Competition Commission of India, and Mr. Bharat Budholia, a Partner at AZB and Partners, which is the official sponsor as well for the event. The event was executed flawlessly by Dr Anindya Tiwari, faculty & Organising Secretary with his team of faculty and students

Woman Maoist killed in an encounter



Bijapur, Mar 21: An encounter between police and Maoists took place on Tuesday morning at around 6:30 am in the forests between Korcholi and Todka under Gangalur police station area of district Bijapur. Security forces action on



the intelligence of the presence of Maoists PLGA Company No. 2 Commander Vella and Gangalur Area Committee Secretary Dinesh and others. A woman Maoist in uniform was killed in the encounter and a 12-Bore rifle, cartridges, Maoist

uniform, backpack, Maoist literature and other daily use material recovered from the spot by the police. **Joint operation of DRG, STF and CRPF 85 Bn.** On Monday it was as per the intelligence of the presence of PLGA Company No. 2 Commander Vella and Gangalur Area Committee Secretary Dinesh and others in the forests of Korcholi and Todka, a joint party of DRG, STF and CRPF 85 was sent for an

anti-Maoist operation. During the operation, security forces were successful in killing one woman Maoist in uniform s in the forests of Korcholi and Todka at around 6:30 am on Tuesday. During the search on the spot, one no. 12-bore rifle, cartridges, 'Pitthu bag', uniform, Maoist literature and other Naxal materials were recovered. More Maoists are likely to have got injured in the encounter, police says.

Jindal Steel gets India's first BIS licence

● To manufacture Fire Resistant Steel

Raigarh, Mar 21: Jindal Steel & Power (JSP) has received BIS certification to manufacture India's First Fire Resistant Steel Structures at its Rail Mill & Special Profile Mill in Raigarh, Chhattisgarh. The Hot Rolled Structural Steel, manufactured as per IS 15103, can be used for high-temperature or fire-prone areas and can withstand temperatures up to 600 degrees Celsius for a maximum duration of 3 hours. Fire protection has been a challenge in the design of steel structures. The availability of Fire Resistant Steel will result



in more efficient designs of structures. The new BIS 15103 grade will be used to manufacture steel structures for infrastructure projects such as industrial structures, refineries, bridges, metro projects, and steel & power plants as well as in hospitals, and commercial and residential buildings.

Bimlendra Jha, Managing Director of Jindal Steel & Power, said in a statement, "The license provided to Jindal Steel & Power to produce Fire Resistant Steel will be a game-changer in strengthening India's infrastructure & its safety standards. Fire Resistant Steel will provide much-

needed assurance to the end users for fire safety, building a safer AtmaNirbhar Bharat". A felicitation ceremony for the BIS certifications was held during the World Consumer Rights Day celebration at Vanijya Bhawan, New Delhi in which the license was formally granted to Jindal Steel & Power. It is noteworthy that JSP is an industrial powerhouse with a dominant presence in the steel, mining and infrastructure sectors. With an investment of 12 billion USD across the globe, the Company is continuously scaling its capacity utilization and efficiencies to capture opportunities for building a self-reliant India.

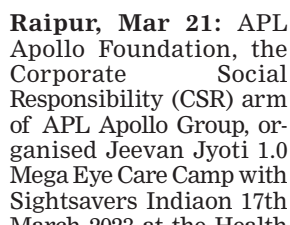
GEMS holds Graduation Ceremony



Raipur, Mar 21: It was the day for Tini Tots who after a hard fought year successfully sailed to next class. The results of Pre-Primary sections (Nursery, PPI and PP 2) were announced along with Class I and II at the Gyanodaya Bhawan of Shri Gujrati English Medium School. In presence of President of Shri Gujrati Shikshan Sangh Naryan Bhai Patel, Secretary duo Tulsi Bhai Patel and Ashok Bhai Patel and co-secretary Vithal Das Patel results were announced by the teachers Mrs Anupama Dubey and Mrs Priyanka. Principal Dr Shailesh Sharma blessed the children in his ever charming speech while president and co-secretary also addressed the parents. After completing the formality of lighting the cere-

monial lamp and worshipping Goddess Sarsawati, results were announced. In Nursery section Parth Dhutra stood first with 95.60%, Dhaanvi Rathod second with 95.20% and Aashi Thawait third with 94.80%. In PP-I Mohammad Adam Khan stot first, Khyati Janghel second and Vansh Patel third. In PP-II Avni Kumari was first, Tanishq Saini second and Kanish Soni third. In Class I Sarthi Yadav stood first with 98.25%, Krishna Parpani second with 96.5% and Hanshika Sachdev third with 96%. In Class II Jyotsna Kashyap was first, S Sai Akshit second and Likhita Patel bagged third position. All the position holders were congratulated by the school committee members.

APL Apollo Foundation conducts Mega Eye Camp



Raipur, Mar 21: APL Apollo Foundation, the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) arm of APL Apollo Group, organised Jeevan Jyoti 1.0 Mega Eye Care Camp with Sightsavers India on 17th March 2023 at the Health and Wellness Center Kesda, VikaskhandSimga, Zila Baloda Bazar - Bhatapara. Eye Health is global health and development issue across various nations, as it is associated with quality of life and survival expectancy among the middle-aged and elderly population. Today, 2.2 billion people or 1/3rd population globally is affected with vision impairment and blindness. Eye Health also makes an essential contribution to the 2030 Agenda for United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), and APL Apollo Foundation, in collaboration with

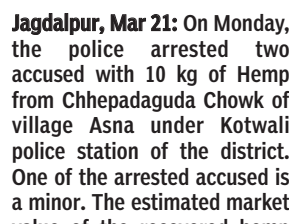


Sightsavers India, is honoured to play its part in achieving the SDG target of ensuring healthy lives and promoting well-being for all. According to Ms Kiran Dhruw, Sarpanch, Kesda Village, District Baloda Bazar - Bhatapara "Millions in India go blind due to lack of awareness and availability of basic infrastructure. While blindness is not fatal, it is still a major contributor to poverty as he/she becomes most vulnerable to losing opportunities." Ramdulari Kashyap, Sarpanch, Ringni Village, District Baloda Bazar - Bhatapara said, "My message to the people of this community is to get their

eyes tested at least once a year. Keeping eye health and overall well-being in mind, I congratulate the efforts of APL Apollo Building and APL Apollo Foundation on organising this Mega Eye Camp in collaboration with Sightsavers India." Mr Anil Mittal, CEO, APL Apollo Building Products Private Limited, said - "Preventing blindness increases access to education, employment and prosperity and enables a greater participation in all spheres of life. Access to eye care services thus becomes extremely important especially in the rural areas where opportunities and facilities

are limited. APL Apollo Building Products and APL Apollo Foundation organised this Mega Eye Camp-Jeevan Jyoti 1.0 at Simga block to provide eye care access to the people residing in Kesda, Ringni and Newdha villages. APL Apollo Foundation will channelise its efforts to ensure that optimum health-care services are made available to people who need it the most." Mr RN Mohanty, CEO of Sightsavers India, said, "Eye care is the most neglected while being the most critical aspect of our lives. A lot of eye-health-related challenges can be addressed through early detection. I am glad that APL Apollo Foundation is conducting a Mega Eye Camp to ensure access to eye care services and chart a path that helps us continue working towards our mission to ensure no person goes blind needlessly".

Two accused nabbed with 10 kg 'Ganja'



Jagdalpur, Mar 21: On Monday, the police arrested two accused with 10 kg of Hemp from Chhepadaguda Chowk of village Asna under Kotwali police station of the district. One of the arrested accused is a minor. The estimated market value of the recovered hemp has been estimated at Rs 50,000. The police have also seized the bike and mobile from the possession of the accused. After the proceedings, the minor has been sent to a juvenile home, while the other accused was presented in the court and later sent to jail. The police received a tip from informer that bike riders were coming to Jagdalpur from Odisha Road and are carrying Ganja. The police had already deployed in Asan Chowk. The police team stopped two people riding a bike at Asana Chhepadaguda Chowk. During interrogation, the bike rider told his name as Manohar Samrath resident of



Navrangpur Odisha. The other one was a minor. The police recovered 10 kg of Ganja during the search of his bag. The estimated value of the seized ganja has been estimated at Rs 50,000. Ganja smugglers are continuously adopting new tactics for smuggling. Even, they have started fielding minor children for smuggling Ganja. It may be noted that in the past also a minor was caught smuggling ganja. That minor was also sent to a juvenile home. If the police does not take action at the inter-state level in the case of Ganja smuggling, then in the coming times more minors will be involved in smuggling.

Earthen pots to be lit in temple

Of Goddess Mahamaya of Kamalkshetra



Rajim, Mar 21: Special preparations are being made for Navratri this time in the adorable Goddess Maa Mahamaya Temple of Kamalkshetra and new office bearers have been elected by the Management Committee. The phase of painting and cutting receipts is going on with full enthusiasm and Valmiki Dhivar of the temple committee told that till now more than 500 receipts have been cut for Manokamna Jyoti Kalash.

Like every year, this year also more than one thousand Jyoti Kalash will be lit. President of Maa Sheelta Mahamaya

Management Committee, Lileshwar Yadu said that a total of 12 CCTV cameras have been installed in the entire temple premises so that the devotees coming for the Navratri festival do not face any kind of problem and with this, the entire campus will be visible on one screen. He also said that Mother Mahamaya Devi has been considered the adorable goddess of Kamalkshetra, that's why a large number of devotees start arriving from the first day itself and Prasad and Jyoti Kalash for all, a mirror has been placed in the house for darshan.

It may be noted that this year Ghatasthapan and Jyoti Pratipada will be held from 11:36 to 12:24 on Wednesday, March 22. Lalita Panchami will be celebrated on Sunday, 26 March. Ashtami Havan Pujan will be held on 29 March Wednesday at 2:00 pm. After that, Navami Janwara Visarjan will be held from 9:00 am on Thursday, 30 March. Paddhog will be distributed at Maa Mahamaya Temple on Friday, March 31 and at Sheelta Temple on Sunday, April 2.

Maa Mahamaya Temple is very ancient

The temple is very ancient, and according to elders, the direction of the temple was changed according to the opinion of the scholars and along with worshipping during the day, Bhuk Prasad is offered and Jyoti Kalash is made popular on both the Navratras of the year. There are many goddess temples in the city; apart from Maa Mahamaya namely Goddess Chandni, Sheelta Goddess Durga and Danteshwari Devi are enshrined here.

World Water Day - 2023

Continuous falling water level alarming in the region

Mungeli, Mar 21:

The source of water level in Mungeli district is continuously falling, due to lack of social concern as well as administrative initiative, as there is no initiative to face the water crisis in the district. In the coming times, the district may have to go through a period of water crisis, and as per rules water harvesting was to be done to protect the water sources, but the unfortunate thing is that even the government offices have not followed the government orders.

To save rain water, a plan was made by the administration, under which water harvesting was to be constructed at all private and government places, so that water labels could be maintained, but due to government apathy, this plan also remained confined to papers only. This scheme of the government could not be implemented even in the government offices, due to which the water level in the district is decreasing every year.

Though municipal officials issue NOC for construction of houses only on the condition of making water harvesting in urban areas, the implementation is not fool proof. The government has made water harvesting system mandatory, and for this, a token amount is deposited, but the engineers

of the municipality do not have time to test how many people have built it, due to which people get houses built, but not the harvesting system.

The officials cannot even take action on them because the municipality does not have any record of making water harvesting system and permission is also not to be given to construct buildings without water harvesting in urban areas. For almost five years, the responsibility of water harvesting along with the building permission was given to the employee of NAPA, but as the relevant information is not available, the officials have not been able to investigate it, it has not been considered proper to call the concerned employee and get the important records rectified.

As per information, 25 years ago, there were more than 30 public and private wells in the city to meet the need of water, but presently many of them have dried completely. The rapid decline in the groundwater level of the district started in the 90s, after the water of the city went below 35 feet, the existence of wells started disappearing. Presently sufficient water is available only after 100 feet. And in most of the places shallow handpumps get closed in summer.

Collector annoyed over late-comers

Manendragarh- Chirmiri-Bharatpur, Mar 21: Collector PS Dhruv conducted surprise inspection in different offices of District Collectorate here on Monday. During the inspection he checked the cleanliness, sitting arrangements. He expressed annoyance over the staff coming late to the office and those found absent while-on-duty in their desks and directed them to ensure strictness. He went to each department in the Collectorate and took information from the officers and employees about the work being done and directed to complete all the official and government's work on priority basis and keep all the documents well-organised and upto-date. He warned that strict action will be taken for any dereliction of duty or carelessness.

BJP workers hear President's message



Nandini-Ahirwara, Mar 21: It was under the guidance of the Ahirwara Mandal President Liman Sahu, general secretary Sudarshan Giri and Sanjay Pande, that BJP party workers heard the message by the President of India Draupadi Murmu in the shop of Dau Anand

Tamrakar. Apart from this meeting of BJP party workers was held in context of strengthening of the booths. During this Ahirwara BJYM Mandal gen. secy. Rahul Chandel, V-P Jitendra Vyas, Lokesh Sendre, Nagar V-P Sahil Khan, Raunak Tamrakar and others were present.

SPS condoles Vidyashankar Shukla



Masturi, Mar 21: First state president of Chhattisgarh Shramjeevi Patrakar Sangh (SPS) senior journalist Vidyashankar Shukla, (Baba Bhaiya) resident of Anupam Nagar passed away on Tuesday, 14th March. He worked in a daily news organization for a

long time. As per the resolution taken by him, the body has been handed over to Medical College Raipur. With the news of Shukla's demise, Chhattisgarh Shramjeevi Patrakar Sangh Masturi unit organized a condolence meeting on Wednesday and paid tribute to Shukla and remembered his tenure. On this occasion, journalists Santosh

Thakur, Om Prakash Pandey, Sunhar Ram Chandel, Basant Agarwal, Krishnapal Dev Khatkar, Nanku Ram Sahu, Suresh Dubey, Uday Singh Thakur, Hari Shankar Pandey, Jagannath Netam, Sanjay Pandey, Durga Prajapati, Krishna Kumar Chandel, Sunil Singh and other journalist colleagues were present.

DPRC responsible for parking, cleaning, maintenance and cottages



At Amritdhara tourist destination

Decision taken in the general body meeting of ZP

Baikunthpur, Mar 21:

Parking of vehicles, cottages, cleanliness arrangements near Amritdhara Tourism Center will now be looked after by the in-charge of DPRC. The General Assembly of the District Panchayat passed the resolution giving consensus on this. District Panchayat President Mrs. Renuka Singh advised to observe for the next three months and to continue after that. The General Assembly meeting under the chairmanship of District Panchayat President Mrs. Renuka Singh was held, the other day. In this meeting, departmental heads discussed the progress of implementation of departmental plans. Information was provided and several important proposals were discussed and decided upon. District Panchayat Vice

President Vedanti Tiwari, Chief Executive Officer of District Panchayat Mrs. Namrata Jain and other elected members participated in the General Assembly meeting. At the beginning of the meeting, the topics of the previous meeting were appraised by the departmental heads and action taken on them was informed to the members. The District Panchayat CEO instructed the department heads to work within the time limit for resolving all the demand problems. District Panchayat member in this meeting Mrs. Phoolmati Singh, Mrs. Usha Singh, Mrs. Chhuni Paikra, Mrs. Sunita Kurre, Mrs. Jyotsna Rajwade, Mrs. Vandana Rajwade, Mr. Drigpal Singh, Mr. Ravishankar Singh and President of District Panchayat Baikunthpur, Mrs. Saubhagyavati Singh, District President of Khadgawan, Mrs. Sonmati Urre, District Panchayat Bharatpur Mrs. Rajkumari Baiga, Sonhat District Panchayat President Mrs. Lali Singh and heads of offices of all departments were present.

Child protection prog held

Nandini-Ahirwara, Mar 21: In Nandini city ward No. 9 (100) unit Anganbadi centre, child protection programme was held and in this CMO Yamini Yadav Supervisor, Meena Verma Nandini Nagar Ahirwara (200) Unit



Mitanin-Seema Chandravanshi, Santoshi and Anganbadi assistant Prama were present. In this a total of 27 children were administered Vitamin 'A' syrup, iron syrup and vaccination to 10 children was done.

'Nutrition fortnight' starts with district-level bike rally



Korba, Mar 21: Nutrition fortnight is being organized in the district from 20 March to 03 April under the nutrition campaign. District Panchayat President Korba Mrs. Shivkala Kanwar inaugurated the Poshan Pakhwada by flagging off the bike rally in the district. Under this, activities will be organized daily till April 3, 2023, according to the theme related to promotion and popularity of Millets, healthy boy and girl competition and competent Anganwadi center

for nutritional welfare. In this activity, people will be made aware about nutrition in all Anganwadi centers, schools, and gram panchayats of the district. Along with this, the activities organized will also be entered in the nutrition tracker app on a daily basis. Competition, exhibition and millets awareness camp will also be organized under Poshan Pakhwada. Tricolor plate made of millets will also be displayed in collaboration with self-help groups. A healthy boy-girl competition will be organized during the Poshan Pakhwada. District Program Officer, Women and Child Development Department, Korba, Mrs. Chakhiyar told that under the Government of India and Chhattisgarh State Women and Child Development Department, the Nutrition Fortnight program is being organized in the state till April 03. Calendar has been issued according to the day of the program to be organized at Anganwadi level under Poshan Pakhwada. During this, efforts will be made to change nutrition related behavior at individual and community level by organizing different activities every day.

CHANGE OF NAME

IT IS INFORMED TO THE GENERAL PUBLIC THAT I NEETU KUKREJA D/O SURESH KUMAR KUKREJA RESIDENT OF WARD NO 17 NEAR VISHAL HEIGHTS GALI NO R-3, MAHAMAYA VIHAR, WARE HOUSE ROAD, BILASPUR (C.G.) 495001 HAVE CHANGED MY OLD NAME I NEETU KUKREJA D/O SURESH KUMAR KUKREJA, SO IN FUTURE I SHOULD BE RECOGNIZED BY MY NEW NAME PRIYAL SANTWANI W/O VIKASH SANTWANI IN ALL GOVERNMENT AND OTHER DOCUMENTS.

PRIYAL SANTWANI

WARD NO 17 NEAR VISHAL HEIGHTS GALI NO R-3, MAHAMAYA VIHAR, WARE HOUSE ROAD, BILASPUR (C.G.) 495001

FEDERAL BANK

YOUR PERFECT BANKING PARTNER

The Federal Bank Ltd., LCRD/Kolkata Division

91A/1 Park Street, 1st Floor, 'Avani Signature' Kolkata 700016.

Phone numbers 033-6815 1676 / 2265 4334, email: koller@federalbank.co.in, Website: www.federalbank.co.in, CIN: L65191KL1931PLC000368

Appendix-IV (Rule 8(1)) POSSESSION NOTICE

Whereas the undersigned being the Authorised Officer of The Federal Bank Ltd. under the Securitisation & Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (hereinafter referred to as Act) and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(12) of the said Act read with rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 (hereinafter referred to as Rules) issued a demand notice dated 31/10/2022 calling upon the borrowers, (1) Satvinder Pal Singh Domic, S/o. Mr. Uttam Singh Domic (2) Ramanjeet Kaur Domic, R/o. Satvinder Pal Singh Domic and (3) Utam Singh Domic S/o Manohar Singh Domic, all residing at Chandel Nagar, M 1 G U/39, Ring Road 2, Bilaspur, Chhattisgarh-495001 to repay, jointly and severally, the amounts mentioned in the notice being (1)Rs.4,06,134.94 (Rupees Four Lakhs Six Thousand One Hundred Thirty Four and Paise Ninety Four Only) in Loan A/c.No.1666600000046 as on 10/10/2022, and, (2)Rs. 29,81,154.97 (Rupees Twenty Nine Lakhs Eighty One Thousand One Hundred Fifty Four and Ninety Seven Paise only) in Loan A/c.No.16665000000170 as on 07/10/2022. Both with Branch Bilaspur of the Bank, within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.

The borrowers having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrowers and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/her under section 13(4) of the said Act read with rule 8 of the said Rules on this 16th day of March in the year 2023. The borrowers' attention is invited to the provisions of section 13 (8) of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets (security properties).

The borrowers in particular and public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of The Federal Bank Ltd. for the amount Rs.31,14,125.97 (Rupees Thirty One Lakhs Fourteen Thousand One Hundred Twenty Five and Ninety Seven Paise only) as on 28/02/2023 in Loan A/c.No. 16665000000170 and interest and cost thereon.

Description of the Immovable Properties

All the piece and parcel of Leasehold landed residential property measuring 1500 Sq.ft. in Plot No.22,23,24,25 out of a total area of 11969 Sq. ft. thereon, situated at Mouza & Village- Juna Bilaspur, PH No 22, Vyapar Vihar Vyavasthik Yojna, Zone -2, Block-Bilha, Tehsil-Bilaspur, Dist-Bilaspur, Chhattisgarh, and bounded on East-Plot of Vendor Shri Anuj Saraf, West-30 feet Road, North-Plot of Smt. Saroj Sonthalia and South-60 feet Road (As per Lease Deed Book No A1, Volume 12643, Serial No 999 Page No 23-27 dtd 21/10/2005 executed by Bilaspur Municipal Corporation, Uttam Singh Domic and Anuj Saraf, registered with SRO, Bilaspur)

Date: 16.03.2023
Place: Kolkata

For The Federal Bank Ltd.
Authorised Officer under SARFAESI Act

MANAPPURAM FINANCE LTD.

CIN:L65191KL1992PLC006623, IV/470A (old) W36/A (New), Manappuram House, Vaipappal, Thrissur, Kerala - 680 367.

GOLD AUCTION NOTICE

The pledges, in specific and the public, in general, are hereby notified that public auction of the gold ornaments pledged in the below accounts is proposed to be conducted at the following branches on 17/04/2023 from 10.00 am onwards. We are auctioning gold ornaments defaulted customers who have failed to make payment of his/her loan amount despite being notified by registered letters. Unauctioned items shall be auctioned on any other days without further notice. Changes in venue or date (if any) will be displayed at auction centre and on website without any further notice.

List of pledges:-

BILASPUR, BUS STAND, BILASPUR, 117040700022354, 2356, 2385, 2388, 2389, 117040730040130, 0180, 0197, 0216, 0276, 0302, LINK ROAD, BILASPUR, 131560700013800, 3802, 3829, 3852, 3856, 3860, 3882, 131560730015821, 5824, 5841, 5847, 5852, 5863, 5865, 5887, 5916, 5917, 5926, 131560780000024, MAHARANA PRATAP CHOWK, 124630700017190, 7191, 7202, 7203, 7204, 7217, 7259, 7277, 7284, 7292, 7302, 7304, 7317, 7319, 7332, 7349, 124630700016325, 6358, 6361, 6362, 6369, 6415, 6461, MANGALA CHOWK, BILASPUR, 122000700020885, 0886, 0891, 0893, 0895, 0917, 0918, 0919, 0941, 0948, 0963, 0992, 0993, 0994, 0997, 1012, 1017, 1048, 1051, 1054, 1072, 1076, 1087, 1089, 1090, 1112, 1113, 1126, 122000730026817, 6820, 6840, 6850, 6865, 6866, 6867, 6905, 6912, 6913, 6918, 6923, 6924, 6934, 6935, 6936, 6937, 6973, 6983, 6994, 7012, 7030, 7068, 7083, 7093, 7095, 7170, 7179, 7191, 7192, 7229, 1220007800000051, SADAR BAZAR, BILASPUR, 129660700014778, 4812, 4813, 4835, 4858, 4879, 4886, 4902, 4925, 4927, 4928, 129660730013649, 3659, 3660, 3661, 3662, 3681, 3696, 3697, 3763, 3782, 3788, SARKANDA, BILASPUR, 121440700020031, 0033, 0041, 0079, 0095, 0098, 0126, 0130, 0141, 0158, 0159, 0161, 0193, 0203, 0212, 0215, 0226, 0232, 121440730024437, 4536, 4544, 4554, 4565, 4569, 4606, VYAPAR VIHAR, 115450700016290, 6298, 6343, 6355, 6359, 6361, 6370, 6397, 6403, 6406, 6432, 6440, 115450730021377, 1400, 1401, 1405, 1453, 1460, 1461, 1462, 1463, 1467, 1473, 1474, 1478, 1480, 1481, 1505, 1563, 1594, JANJIR-CHAMPA, BARPALI CHOWK, JANJIR-CHAMPA, 134380700010610, 134380730017879, 7880, 7882, 7888, KORBA, KOSABADI, 125440700023628, 3637, 3644, 3645, 3650, 3657, 3661, 3664, 3665, 3673, 3680, 3687, 3688, 3689, 3694, 3723, 3748, 3761, 3764, 125440730046437, 6440, 6462, 6468, 6469, 6471, 6516, 6522, 6631, 6657, NIHARIKA TALKIES, 116970700019311, 9316, 9325, 9331, 9341, 9349, 9352, 9388, 9409, 9416, 9434, 116970730037177, 7220, 7228, 7251, 7281, 7284, 7293, 7321, 7385, 7431, 7484, POWER HOUSE ROAD, 114460700015265, 5290, 5298, 5300, 5301, 5302, 5310, 5311, 5313, 5319, 5332, 5335, 5338, 5359, 114460730026347, 6348, 6371, 6388, 6436, 6439, 6444, 6445, 6455, 6468, 6527, 6529, 6537, 6538, 6539, T P NAGAR, 126470700013968, 4006, 4009, 4020, 4021, 4040, 4041, 4043, 4067, 126470730023080, 3172, 3191, 3236, TRANSPORT NAGAR, KORBA, 114450700020930, 0965, 0972, 1015, 1027, 1039, 1095, 114450730035276, 5356, 5404, RAIGARH, JAGATHPUR, CHATTISGARH, 123720700028192, 8204, 8237, 8243, 8247, 8255, 8278, 8297, 8312, 8320, 8331, 8352, 8354, 8398, 8531, 123720730033863, 3870, 3871, 3907, 3953, 3959, 3960, 3961, 4043, 4044, 4050, 4054, 4085, 4086, 4118, KOTRA ROAD, 126070700021708, 0743, 0763, 0767, 0812, 0827, 0833, 0841, 0865, 126070730029720, 126070730030012, 0013, RAMNIVAS TALKIES ROAD, 117520700030876, 0985, 1033, 117520730030121, 0415, 0452, 0514, SURGUJA, AMBEDKAR CHOWK AMBIKAPUR, 131880700017385, 7399, 7410, 7419, 7425, 7426, 7429, 7430, 7447, 7454, 7457, 7459, 7501, 7529, 7595, 131880730024667, 4669, 4674, 4877, 4891, 4992, BRAHMA ROAD, AMBIKAPUR, 131900700010446, 0482, 0484, 0490, 0500, 0502, 0522, 0523, 0532, 0557, 131900730013867, 3889, 3928, 3931, 3948, 3950, 3951, 3953, KHARSIAR ROAD, AMBIKAPUR, 131960700012850, 2851, 2852, 2858, 2870, 2917, 2946, 2948, 2983, 3003, 131960730015843, 5910.

Persons wishing to participate in the above auction shall comply with the following:- Interested Bidders should submit Rs. 10,000/- as EMD (refundable to unsuccessful bidders) by way of Cash on the same day of auction. Bidders should carry valid ID card/PAN card. For more details please contact 9072604049

Authorised Officer
For Manappuram Finance Ltd

NAME CHANGE

It is informed to the general public that I, Bodhran S/o Late Bharat Kathle resident of Village-Pataidih, Thana- Pachpedi, Tehsil- Masturi, District- Bilaspur (C.G.) have changed my old name Bodhran S/o Late Bharat Kathle so in future I should be recognized by my new name Bodhran Kathle S/o Late Bharat Kathle in all government and other documents.

Bodhran Kathle

Village- Pataidih, Thana- Pachpedi, Tehsil- Masturi, District- Bilaspur (C.G.)

CHANGE OF NAME

IT IS INFORMED TO THE GENERAL PUBLIC THAT I POOJA MALGHANI D/O RAJKUMAR MALGHANI RESIDENT OF H.NO. A-8, GALI NO. R-4, HANUMAN MANDIR PARK KE PASS KRANTI NAGAR BILASPUR (C.G.) HAVE CHANGED MY OLD NAME POOJA MALGHANI D/O RAJ KUMAR MALGHANI, SO IN FUTURE I SHOULD BE RECOGNIZED BY MY NEW NAME KRIPA LADHANI W/O SUMIT LADHANI IN ALL GOVERNMENT AND OTHER DOCUMENTS.

KRIPA LADHANI

W/O SUMIT LADHANI, H.NO. A-8, GALI NO. R-4 HANUMAN MANDIR PARK KE PASS KRANTI NAGAR BILASPUR (C.G.)

बैंक ऑफ इंडिया Bank of India BOI

Raigarh Branch : Saheb Ram Sadan, Kotra Road, Raigarh, Ph.-07762-231077, Email : raigarh.raipur@bankofindia.co.in

POSSESSION NOTICE (For Immovable Properties)

Whereas, [Under Rule-8(1) of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002]

The undersigned being the authorized officer of the Bank of India, Raigarh Branch under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a demand notice calling upon the following borrower/s to repay the amount mentioned in the notice being detail as mentioned here under, within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice. 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 possession of the properties described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with rule 8 of the said rules as mentioned below.

The borrower in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of Bank of India, Raigarh Branch for an amount detail given as below.

Borrower/s (Guarantee)	Description of the Properties	Demand Notice (As on the date of notice)	Amount Due
Mrs. Deep Kumari Patel W/o Saroj Kumar Patel	EQM of Property Situated at Ph.No. 38(Old)/58(New), Kh.No. & 57/10, Gram- Bade Attarmuda, R.N.M. Raigarh-1 (Old) / Raigarh - 2 (New), Gram Panchayat - Pandripani, T.B. Tower to Medical College Road inside Lumbsum 1/2 K.M. Tehsil - Raigarh, District - Raigarh C.G. Total Area 2400 Sq. feet in the name of Mrs. Deep Kumari Patel. Boundary : North-Land of Yadram, South - Land of Prachi Vihar Colony, East- Land of Sandip and Milind, West- Road.	Date 03.01.2023 Possession Notice Date 17.03.2023	₹ 23,47,402.76/- (Twenty Three Lacs Forty Seven Thousand Four Hundred Two Rupees and Seventy Six Paise Only) + interest + Other expenses
Borrower:-M/s New Sai Mobile, Proprietor Shri Pawan Yadav S/o Shri Dhanraj Yadav 8, Near Dewangan Dharamsala Thana Para, Champa, Chhattisgarh-495671	1. Hypothecation of Stocks of Mobiles, Mobile Accessories, recharge coupons, laptops etc. 2. All the piece of Land situated at Khasha No 102/1Kha, PH No 2, Mouza Jagdalla, Nagar Palika Parishad Champa, Ward No 21, Gurughasidas Ward, Block Baloda, RNM Champa, District Janjgir, Champa, Chhattisgarh, admeasuring 0.05 Acre/0.020 Hectare/20.6 Sqmtr in the name of Manohar Yadav S/o Shri Dayaram Yadav Maharaes- North-Land of Anand, South-Land of Sharma Bhandari, East-Raasta, West-Land of Dakalu.	Date 03.01.2023 30.06.2019	₹ 6,25,084.37/- + Intt. + Other Charges since 21.06.2019

The steps are being taken for substituted service of notice. The above Borrower(s) and/or their Guarantor(s) (whenever applicable) are hereby called upon to make payment of outstanding amount within 60 days from the date of publication of this notice, failing which further steps will be taken after expiry of 60 days from the date of this notice under sub-section (4) of Section 13 of Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002.

Date : 22.03.2023, Place: Champa

Authorised Officer, Bank of India

BRIEF



BRS MLC K Kavitha arrives at the Enforcement Directorate (ED) office in connection with the Delhi excise policy case, in New Delhi, Tuesday.

Lifer

■ Alwar: A local court on Tuesday awarded life imprisonment to a woman and her paramour for the gruesome murder of her husband, three sons and a nephew. "Additional District and Sessions Judge (No. 2) Renu Srivastava had convicted the woman Sandhya alias Santosh and her paramour Hanuman in the case on Monday and awarded life imprisonment to them today," Additional Public Prosecutor Ashok Sharma said.

Fraud

■ Noida: The Noida Police on Tuesday said they have arrested six people on charges of fraud worth "lakhs of rupees" after a raid at a fake call centre. The centre was being run as a front of a 'Panchkarm Chooran' (herbal powder) company, and the accused sold adulterated product for Rs 3,000 to Rs 6,000 per bottle, police said.

Explosion

■ Bareilly: Two people were injured in an explosion due to technical fault in a machine during a programme here on Monday, officials said. Minister of State for Forests (Independent Charge) Arun Kumar, Commissioner Soumya Agarwal, Municipal Commissioner Nidhi Gupta and District Magistrate Shivakant Dwivedi and other senior officials of the Electricity Department who were attending the programme escaped narrowly, the officials said.

Adjourned

■ New Delhi: Rajya Sabha proceedings were adjourned till 2 pm on Tuesday after MPs from treasury benches created uproar over Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's democracy remarks. Opposition members too were on their feet after Chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar rejected 11 notices under Rule 267 to suspend the scheduled business of the day and take up issues related to the Adani Group of companies.

Fire

■ New Delhi: A fire broke out at a godown in north Delhi's Wazirabad area on Tuesday morning, Delhi Fire Services officials said. So far no injuries or casualty has been reported, they said. A call about a fire was received at 10:45 am and nine fire tenders were rushed to the site, said Atul Garg, Director of Delhi Fire Services.

Demolished

■ Surat: A 30-year-old cooling tower of a power station in Gujarat's Surat city was demolished on Tuesday through a controlled explosion. The 85-metre tall RCC tower with an around 72-metre diameter of the gas-based Utran Power Station was brought down at around 11:10 am.

Heavy unseasonal rains lash Mumbai and satellite cities

Mumbai, Mar 21 (PTD):

Heavy unseasonal rains lashed Mumbai and satellite cities on Tuesday morning, bringing down the temperature by 2.6 degrees Celsius.

Satellite cities like Thane, Mira-Bhayander, and Vasai-Virar too received a spell of heavy showers in the morning.

The India Meteorological Department attributed the westerly wind and moisture incursion from the Arabian Sea as the reason behind the spell.

It is unusual for Mumbai to witness rains in March.

The Colaba observatory recorded a minimum temperature of 20.6 degrees Celsius and Santacruz observatory recorded 21.2 degrees Celsius. The Colaba and Santacruz recorded a departure of 2.6 and 0.3 degree Celsius than the normal.

The Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) said that some parts of Mumbai city and suburbs have recorded up to 20-25 mm of rain between 7 am and 8 am.

In the island city, Central Mumbai areas like Mandvi fire station, Memonwada fire station, Byculla fire station, and BMC headquarters re-

ported 28 mm, 25 mm, 23 mm, and 19 mm rainfall, respectively.

Eastern suburbs like Mulund, Gavanpada, and Bhandup Complex recorded 20 mm and 19 mm rainfall respectively between 6 am and 7 am. In the Western suburbs, Dahisar fire station and Chincholi fire station reported 18 mm and 14 mm rainfall, respectively.

Authorities said public transport services like railways and Brihanmumbai Electric Supply and Transport (BEST) remained unaffected.

The civic body said the BEST bus operations

were normal, and nowhere in the city, bus routes were changed due to rain or waterlogging.

Railway authorities said train services in the city on all three suburban corridors main line, harbour line and western line were running normally.

"Heavy rain was reported in various sections of the Mumbai division, but trains are running smoothly," said Shivaji Sutar, chief public relations officer of Central Railway.

However, commuter associations said trains were late by nearly 15 minutes as the day progressed.

ARYA SAMAJ FOUNDATION DAY



Union Home Minister Amit Shah and Gujarat Governor Acharya Devvrat at the 148th foundation day function of Arya Samaj, in New Delhi, Tuesday.

CONRAD TO ASSEMBLY

'Mukroh part of Meghalaya'

Shillong, Mar 21 (PTD):

Dismissing his Assam counterpart's claim, Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad K Sangma on Tuesday asserted in the assembly that Mukroh village on the disputed interstate border, where a violent clash claimed six lives last year, is a part of the hill state. He said residents of Mukroh are beneficiaries of various schemes of his government.

Sangma's statement comes weeks after Assam CM Himanta Biswa Sarma said in the assembly that Mukroh is a part of his state. "I have clearly stated that Mukroh is very much a part of Meghalaya. Facts and figures indicate that. Other statements may have been



made but our stand is clear," Sangma told the assembly. "Census code states that Mukroh is under the West Jaintia Hills district. Voting during the recent Meghalaya assembly polls took place in Mukroh as well. The village has 1,500 voters, two polling stations and is a part of Mokaia constituency," he said, while

replying to a supplementary question raised by Voice of the People's Party MLA Adelbert Nongrum.

He said Mukroh has a village employment council with over 500 beneficiaries of MGNREGA.

The CM said the village has two fair price shops with over 2,200 beneficiaries and a school and health centre have been built by the Meghalaya government. According to Sangma, other central schemes such as Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojna (Grameen) or PMAYG, Jal Jeevan and Swacch Bharat Mission (SVM) have also been implemented in the village.

Six people five from Mukroh and a forest guard from Assam were killed in a clash that broke

out along the disputed border on November 22 last year after a truck laden with "illegally felled timber" was allegedly intercepted by the forest personnel from the neighbouring state. On the clash, he said lack of communication and coordination between officials of the two states sometimes leads to tension and sporadic violence.

"We have realised that communication and coordination with our counterparts are very important to avoid building up of tension," he said, adding that SOPs have been approved to address the gaps. Sangma said that a probe by an inquiry commission is underway into the November 22 violence.

NIA makes first arrest in NGO terror funding case

Srinagar, Mar 21 (PTD):

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) has arrested a close associate of a human rights activist in connection with its ongoing investigation into an NGO terror funding case here, an official said on Tuesday.

Irfan Mehraj, a resident of Srinagar, was the first accused arrested following comprehensive investigations into the NGO terror funding case registered in October 2020, a spokesperson of the federal agency said.

"Mehraj was a close associate of (human rights activist) Khurram Parvez and was working with his organisation, Jammu and Kashmir Coalition of Civil

Societies (JKCCS)," he said.

The agency alleged that the investigation revealed that the JKCCS was funding terror activities and had also been propagating a secessionist agenda in the Valley under the garb of the protection of human rights.

"Involvement of some Valley-based NGOs, Trusts and Societies in funding of terror-related activities is being probed in this case," the spokesperson said.

The official said some NGOs, both registered as well as unregistered, have been noticed collecting funds domestically and abroad under the cover of doing charity and various welfare activities, includ-

ing public health and education.

"But some of these organisations have developed links with proscribed terrorist organisations, such as Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and Hizbul Mujahideen (HM)," the spokesperson said.

Parvez was arrested in November 2021 by the NIA and chargesheeted on May 13 next year along with six others for alleged anti-national activities including collecting information regarding vital installations and deployment and movement of security forces, procuring official secret documents and passing the same to LeT handlers through encrypted communication channels for monetary consideration.

Mamata to meet Naveen during Odisha trip

Kolkata, Mar 21 (PTD):

After meeting Samajwadi Party leader Akhilesh Yadav during his recent visit to Kolkata, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee is likely to call on her Odisha counterpart Naveen Patnaik during her three-day trip to the neighbouring state, officials said on Tuesday.

The Trinamool Congress supremo, who is scheduled to reach Bhubaneswar on Tuesday afternoon, will go to Puri by road and offer puja at the Shree Jagannath Temple on Wednesday.

Although it's a personal trip of the CM, the fiery leader may hold a meeting with Patnaik before boarding the return flight to the

eastern metropolis on Thursday, they said.

Party insiders said the two non-BJP CMs may hold discussions on strategies for next year's Lok Sabha polls.

"This meeting gains importance as the country is heading for Lok Sabha elections in a year's time. Banerjee is the driving force behind the anti-BJP thrust. The two CMs may hold discussions on strategies for the polls," a senior TMC leader told PTI on condition of anonymity.

Banerjee, however, had skipped a meeting called by Delhi CM and Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) supremo Arvind Kejriwal for forming a third front ahead of the 2024 polls.

NAVRATRI PREPARATIONS



Devotees at the Barah Devi temple ahead of the upcoming Navratri festival, in Kanpur district, Tuesday.

Actor-politician Kirron Kher tests positive

● For COVID-19

Mumbai, Mar 21 (PTD):

Actor-politician Kirron Kher has tested positive for coronavirus. The 70-year-old veteran shared the news in a post on Twitter on Monday evening and urged all those who came in contact with her to get tested.

"I have tested positive for Covid. So anyone who has come in contact with me please get yourself tested," Kher tweeted.

The BJP MP from Chandigarh is best known for appearances

in critically-acclaimed movies such as "Bariwali", "Devdas", "Main Hoon Na", "Veer-Zaara", "Apne" and "Dostana". She is married to veteran actor Anupam Kher.

In 2021, she was diagnosed with multiple myeloma, a type of blood cancer. She bounced back after undergoing treatment.

According to the Union Health Ministry data updated on Tuesday, India logged 699 new cases of coronavirus, while the active cases increased to 6,559. The death toll increased to 5,30,808 with two deaths.

Let's Make Every Drop Count: World Water Day 2023

Har Ghar, Nal se Jal scheme was launched in 2019. The scheme of the Ministry of Jal Shakti aims to provide piped drinking water to every rural household by 2024 and is a component of the government's Jal Jeevan Mission. The scheme is based on a unique model, where water committees (Jal Samiti) of the villagers will decide what they will pay for the water they consume. The tariff they fix will not be the same for everyone in the village. Those with larger households will have to pay more, while poorer households or households with no earning member will be exempted.



Priyanka Saurabh

source of livelihood for many people in rural areas. This can lead to increased productivity and economic growth. The initiative is expected to improve the health and hygiene of rural households by providing safe and clean drinking water, thereby reducing the incidence of waterborne diseases.

Access to piped water supply will save time and effort for rural households, especially women, who have traditionally been responsible for collecting water from distant sources. Increased access to sanitation: The initiative will also increase access to sanitation facilities, as piped water supply can be used for household toilets. The

initiative will reduce dependence on groundwater sources, which will help in conserving groundwater resources and contribute to overall environmental sustainability.

The Nal Se Jal initiative, which aims to supply piped water to every household by 2024, faces several challenges. The biggest challenge in implementing the tap water initiative is the lack of infrastructure in many areas, especially in rural areas. Building a piped water supply system requires significant investment in infrastructure, which includes pipes, pumps, and treatment plants. The initiative requires significant funding to build the necessary infrastructure, and the government may face challenges in securing sufficient funding for the initiative.

The success of the initiative also depends on the political will and administrative capacity to effectively implement the scheme at the local level. Ensuring the quality of water supplies is a significant challenge, as contamination and pollution of water sources can pose health risks and reduce the effectiveness of initiatives.

The success of the initiative also depends on changing the behavior of people in terms of water usage, conservation, and sanitation practices. Some states may have inter-state disputes over sharing of water resources, which may hamper the progress of the initiative.

Climate change may affect the availability of water resources, and hence, the sustainability of the initiative. The mission is based on a community approach to water and includes extensive information, education, and communication as a key component of mission. JIM wants to create a mass movement for water, making it everyone's priority. The fund-sharing pattern between the Center and States is 90:10 for Himalayan and North Eastern States, 50:50 for other States, and 100% for Union Territories.

Even after 70 years of independence, almost 50% of Indian people do not have access to drinking water. Different governments at the central and state level have worked for this, but the reality remains that the people of the country, especially women, have to walk miles to get drink-

ing water. That's why PM Modi announced Jal Jeevan Mission from Red Fort. Jal Jeevan Mission is implemented by the Ministry of Jal Shakti in partnership with the States. It aims to provide adequate drinking water of prescribed quality to every rural household in the country on a regular and long-term basis by 2024.

The central government has allocated Rs 3.6 lakh crore under the PM Jal Jeevan Mission. The PM has also expressed confidence in making India completely open and defecation-free (ODF). The Mission focuses on service delivery and not on infrastructure creation. Prime Minister Modi has credited various states, villages, and local bodies for making a strong campaign towards this. The Nal Se Jal initiative aims to supply piped water to every household in rural India by 2024. The initiative has a socio-economic impact and contributes to the overarching goal of universal access to water and sanitation.

(Writer is Research Scholar in Political Science, Poetess, freelance journalist, and columnist.)

WSJ: BJP key foreign party for US interests

New York, Mar 21 (PTI):

An opinion piece in the influential Wall Street Journal has described the BJP as the most important foreign political party in the world for America's national interests and the "linchpin" of the US strategy in the Indo-Pacific amidst China's increasing assertiveness in the region.

The BJP may also be the least understood, the opinion piece written by Walter Russell Mead, a leading American academic, commented. He added that the party combines the most striking principles of three major political entities in the world - the Likud Party of Israel, the Communist Party of China and the Muslim Brotherhood of Egypt.

According to the opinion piece published on Monday, the BJP is poorly understood in the West because it grows out of a political and cultural history unfamiliar to most non-Indians.

The BJP's electoral dominance reflects the success of a "once obscure and marginal social movement of national renewal based on efforts by generations of social thinkers and activists to chart a distinctively Hindu path to modernisation", it says.

"Like the Muslim Brotherhood, the BJP rejects many ideas and priorities of Western liberalism even as it embraces key features of modernity. Like the Chinese Communist Party, the BJP hopes to lead a nation with more than a billion people to become a global superpower," Mead writes.

"Like the Likud Party in Israel, the BJP combines a basically pro-market economic stance with populist rhetoric and traditionalist values, even as it channels the anger of those who've felt excluded and despised by a cosmopolitan, Western-focused cultural and political elite," the 70-year-old academic says.

"After an intensive se-

ries of meetings with senior BJP and RSS leaders, as well as some of their critics, I am convinced that Americans and Westerners generally need to engage much more deeply with a complex and powerful movement," Mead says.

From a fringe of mostly marginalised intellectuals and religious enthusiasts, the RSS has become perhaps the most powerful civil-society organisation in the world, he writes.

Mead also highlights the importance of stronger ties between the US and India.

"It's important because the BJP - which came to power in 2014, won a second term in 2019, and is headed for a repeat victory in 2024 - sits securely at the helm of Indian politics at a time when India is emerging both as a leading economic power and, along with Japan, as the linchpin of American strategy in the Indo-Pacific," he writes.

"For the foreseeable fu-

ture, the BJP will be calling the shots in a country without whose help American efforts to balance rising Chinese power are likely to fall short," Mead writes.

The invitation to engage with the BJP and RSS is one that Americans can't afford to reject, Mead says.

"As tensions with China rise, the US needs India as both an economic and political partner. Understanding the ideology and the trajectory of the Hindu nationalist movement is as important for business leaders and investors seeking to engage economically with India as it is for diplomats and policymakers wanting to put the strategic relationship on a stable footing," he writes.

The US, India and several other world powers have been talking about the need to ensure a free, open and thriving Indo-Pacific in the backdrop of China's rising military manoeuvring in the resource-rich region.

XI MEETS PUTIN



Russian President Vladimir Putin and Chinese President Xi Jinping enter a hall for their talks at The Grand Kremlin Palace in the Kremlin in Moscow, Russia, Tuesday, March 21.

Indian students urge UK PM Rishi Sunak to act over English test scandal

London, Mar 21 (PTI):

A group of international students, including many from India, have delivered a petition to British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak urging him to act against the "unjust" revocation of their visas following an English test scandal.

The issue dates back to 2014 when a BBC Panorama investigation showed some cheating had occurred at two of the UK's testing centres for a compulsory language test required for visas.

The UK government responded by a widespread crackdown on such centres, which had the fallout of the revocation of tens of thousands of students' visas linked with those centres.

The Migrant Voice voluntary group has been supporting the students impacted and coordinated the latest petition delivered at 10 Downing Street



on Monday

"This is one of the biggest scandals in contemporary British history. The initial government reaction was unjust and has been allowed to drag on for years," said Nazek Ramadan, director of Migrant Voice.

"It could have been resolved by a simple solution, such as allowing the tests to be retaken. The students came here to get a world-class education and best student experience in the world, but instead their lives have been wrecked. It is time for the government to step in and end this nightmare. All it takes to bring this to an end is leadership," she

said. With no right to stay, work or in a few cases to appeal, most of the accused students returned home.

Those who stayed to clear their names have struggled with homelessness, huge legal fees, stress-induced illnesses and have missed family weddings, births and deaths, the petition appeals.

Parliamentary and watchdog reports over the years have highlighted some flaws in the Home Office evidence used in the case in the past. Although some students won their legal challenges, scores of other students many of them Indian are still in limbo.

Migrant Voice is now underlining the importance of Sunak "addressing the injustice at a time when numbers of students and migrant workers form part of UK-India trade negotiations".

Indian envoy in Canada cancels event due to security concerns

Toronto, Mar 21 (PTI):

An event to be attended by the Indian envoy to Canada in British Columbia province had to be cancelled due to security concerns after a violent protest by Khalistan supporters.

The event had been organised on Sunday at the Taj Park Convention Centre Surrey to welcome the high commissioner of India, Sanjay Kumar Verma's first visit to the west coast.

The event was ultimately cancelled for security reasons, Global News, the news and current affairs division of the Canadian Global Television Network, reported.

High Commissioner Verma was scheduled to attend the event.

Indian-origin journalist Sameer Kaushal, who was at the venue to cover the protest, was also assaulted by protesters.

Kaushal, a journalist

and news director with AM600 Sher E Punjab Radio, said when he arrived at the venue, he found a large protest and said demonstrators would not allow him to access the event.

When he identified himself as a journalist and asked the protesters if he could interview their organisers about their concerns, things quickly went sour; he told Global News on Monday.

"They tried to intimidate the whole crowd. Approximately 50 to 60 youngsters, they came around me, they made a circle, they had covered their faces with clothes, and they were just pushing me and threatening me and abusing me in my mother tongue," he said.

"By the time the RCMP cops saw me and they just took me out from the crowd and said, 'You have to leave this place for your own safety as we cannot give you the security over here.'"

After attack by Khalistan extremists

London, Mar 21 (PTI):

Several Indian diaspora groups have called for a "We Stand By High Commission of India" demonstration outside India House here on Tuesday, as a show of solidarity following vandalism at the premises by Khalistan extremists over the weekend.

Indian High Commissioner to the UK Vikram Doraiswami hosted a diaspora briefing at India House on Monday evening and addressed the concerns of the community leaders following the attack that resulted in broken windows.

An attempted pull down by the extremists of the Indian tricolour that flies at the Indian High Commission was intercepted by an official and has been followed up by an

additional larger Tiranga on the main facade.

"Appreciated their solidarity following the attack on the High Commission on Sunday," the Indian High Commission here tweeted following the diaspora briefing.

The Metropolitan Police said its "enquiries continue" and one person arrested on suspicion of violent disorder has since been bailed to appear in court in mid-June.

Friends of India Society International (FISI) UK, one of the organisations behind Tuesday's solidarity meet, said the Indian diaspora is deeply shocked by the "disgraceful and abominable act" of desecration of the Indian flag by extremist forces.

"We are equally shocked to see the failure of the UK government to take preventive measures to prohibit such shameful incidents that endanger the Indian diplomatic officials," said FISI UK. "In

this particular incident, an Indian High Commission official braved the hooligans and restored the pride of India by taking the flag away from them. The Indian official had to act due to lack of appropriate security present at the premises," it said. The National Indian Students and Alumni Union (NISAU) UK was among several groups to voice their condemnation of the vandalism.

"We call for swift and firm action being taken to bring the perpetrators of this hooliganism to justice. Measures should be urgently put in place to prevent the recurrence of such incidents," it said.

The Indian government has lodged a strong protest and called on the British authorities to ensure adequate security at the Indian High Commission, which has seen a very visible Metropolitan Police presence in the wake of the attack.

Solidarity meet planned at Indian mission in UK

Pak court reserves verdict on ex-PM Imran's exemption plea

Islamabad, Mar 21 (PTI):

An anti-terrorism court (ATC) in Islamabad on Tuesday reserved the decision on ousted premier Imran Khan's plea for an exemption from hearing in a case registered against him under the provisions of terrorism.

Khan's lawyer Sardar Masroof Khan appeared before the court. The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chief's legal team filed a request for exemption from Tuesday's attendance on his behalf.

The lawyer appeared be-



fore the ATC Judge Raja Jawad Abbas and stated that 70-year-old Khan's previous appearance at the judicial complex in Islamabad was available for all to see, adding that he would have been assassinated at the complex.

The lawyer said Khan him-

self wanted to go to the judicial complex, however, the current situation did not permit it.

Intense clashes erupted outside the Islamabad Judicial Complex on Saturday when Khan arrived in Islamabad from Lahore to attend a much-awaited hearing in the Toshakhana case.

During the confrontation between PTI workers and police, over 25 security personnel were injured, prompting Additional District and Sessions Judge Zafar Iqbal to defer the court hearing till March 30.

Afghan Taliban delegation visits Pakistan to discuss TTP issue

Islamabad, Mar 21 (PTI):

An Afghan Taliban delegation, comprising intelligence and security officials, quietly visited Islamabad recently to discuss a way forward towards addressing Pakistan's concerns regarding the banned Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), according to a media report on Tuesday.

Taliban ranks in Kabul also confirmed that a mid-level delegation led by Abdullah Ghazanavi, the head of the General Directorate of Intelligence (GDI), travelled to Islamabad for discussion on the TTP and threats to Pakistan, the Express

Tribune newspaper reported, citing sources.

The visit was a follow-up of last month's trip to Kabul by a high-powered delegation led by Defence Minister Khawaja Asif, which received a briefing on the

steps taken by the Afghan government to deal with the TTP.

The Pakistani delegation, however, deemed those steps unsatisfactory and sought concerted actions. Pakistan also confronted the

Afghan Taliban leadership with proofs about the whereabouts of the TTP leadership.

According to the paper, during its stay in

Islamabad, the Afghan delegation met with the relevant authorities to discuss the security situation and the fate of the TTP and its affiliates.

Sri Lanka to be first country in Asia to come under IMF's governance diagnostic exercise



People arrive for their daily work in the central market area in Colombo, Sri Lanka, Tuesday, March 21. The International Monetary Fund said Monday that its executive board has approved a nearly \$3 billion bailout program for Sri Lanka over four years to help salvage the country's bankrupt economy.

Colombo, Mar 21 (PTI):

Sri Lanka will be the first country in Asia to undergo a governance diagnostic exercise by the IMF which will assess corruption and governance vulnerabilities

in the debt-trapped country, the global lender said on Tuesday. The International Monetary Fund's Executive Board approved on Monday a 48-month extended arrangement under its Extended Fund Facility

(EFF) with an amount of SDR 2.286 billion (about USD 3 billion) to help Sri Lanka overcome its economic crisis. The IMF emphasised the importance of anti-corruption and governance reforms as a central pillar of the EFF-supported programme. "We emphasise the importance of anti-corruption and governance reforms as a central pillar of the EFF-supported programme they are indispensable to ensure the hard-won gains from the reforms benefit the Sri Lankan people," Peter Breuer, the senior IMF official responsible for Sri Lanka, told reporters.

SOUTH EAST CENTRAL RAILWAY
E-TENDER NOTICE FOR MISCELLANEOUS WORK
 Tender Notice No. TRD-R-2022-E-08
 Date: 16.03.2023
 Name of Work : "TRD works in connection to different track renewal works (TTR,TRR,CTR & CRR) over Raipur division. Tender Value: ₹ 76,38,792.60/-, EMD: ₹ 1,56,800/-, Submission of Tender: upto 12.00 hours, on dt. 13.04.2023, Opening of Tender: upto 12.30 hour dt. 13.04.2023.

For further details of tender document, eligibility criteria & the complete details for the above work, please contact office of the Senior Divisional Electrical Engineer (TRD)/SECR Raipur or refer/download tender document which is available on our website www.ireps.gov.in.

Sr. Divl. Elec. Engg. (TRD)
 PR/IR/TRA/AN/245 S.E.C.R., Raipur
 South East Central Railway @seccrail

CHHATTISGARH STATE POWER DISTRIBUTION COMPANY LTD.
 No.02-08/CW/2022-23/Tr.No.-2174/5608 Raipur Dt- 15.03.2023
NOTICE FOR E-TENDER
 Online bids are invited through CSPDCL tendering system (SAP SRM) from Eligible Contractor for following works.

Tender No / Rfx no.	Name of work	Tender amount (excl. GST) (IN Rs)	Completion period	Time & Due date of submission
Tr.No 2174 RFX- 8100030377	Engagement of 05 no. Computer Operator for Olo CE (Project) CSPDCL Raipur through Outsourcing	18,58,200.00	24 Months	12.00 noon 05.04.2023

Note: 1. The registration of contractor will remain open. For details and further notifications keep visiting <http://www.cspdcl.co.in> ->project department->ebidding portal. 2. Bid information must be submitted in the prescribed format only. No deviation shall be permitted.

CHIEF ENGINEER (PROJECT)
 CSDCL: RAIPUR

उत्तीसगढ़ स्टेट पावर ट्रांसमिशन कम्पनी लिमिटेड
 (उत्तीसगढ़ शासन का एक उपक्रम)
 कार्यालय कार्यापालन यंत्री (उपकेंद्र) संभाग-1, गुडियारी रायपुर
 वेबसाइट - www.cspc.co.in मो.नं. 7898987481
 ईमेल - eesstrans.raipur@cspc.co.in
 क्रमांक 10-63/स्था./2395 रायपुर, दिनांक 21/03/2023

//निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना//

● लाईट कॉम्पैरिशन वाहन (रिक्सा) 1.0 से 1.5 टन क्षमता) के अस्थाई अल्पकालीन अनुबंध हेतु ●
 332 के.डी. उपकेंद्र, छ.ग.स्टेट पावर ट्रांसमिशन, सिमगा के लिए वाहन वाहनक सहित 01 नंग लाईट कॉम्पैरिशन वाहन (रिक्सा) 1.0 से 1.5 टन क्षमता) वाहन के अस्थाई अल्पकालीन अनुबंध (तीन वर्ष) हेतु पंजीकृत/उपयुक्त ठेकेदारों से मुहुरबंद निविदाएं आमंत्रित की जाती है।

निविदा प्रपत्र क्रय करने की अंतिम तिथि व समय	निविदा प्रस्तुत करने की अंतिम तिथि व समय	निविदाओं को खोलने की तिथि व समय
दिनांक 10.04.2023 समय 17:00 बजे तक	दिनांक 11.04.2023 समय 15:00 बजे तक	दिनांक 11.04.2023 समय 15:30 बजे तक

उपरोक्त कार्य की निविदा की सामान्य शर्तें, धरोहर राशि, विस्तृत निविदा विज्ञापित व अन्य जानकारी विभागीय वेबसाइट <http://cspc.co.in> से डाउनलोड की जा सकती है।

(इंजी. धनेश कुमार देवांगन)
 कार्यापालन यंत्री (उपकेंद्र) संभाग-1
 छ.ग. स्टेट पावर ट्रांस.क.लिमि., रायपुर

S-36012/1

कार्यालय अधीक्षण अभियंता, लोक निर्माण विभाग, रायपुर मण्डल क्रमांक 2 (छत्तीसगढ़)
ई-प्रोक्युरमेंट निविदा सूचना
 दिनांक 17.03.2023

निम्नांकित कार्य हेतु ऑनलाईन निविदा "डी" श्रेणी एवं अधिक श्रेणी के ठेकेदारों हेतु निविदा आमंत्रित की जाती है।

एन.आई.टी.क्र. / निविदा क्र.	कार्य का नाम	कार्य की अनुमानित लागत (लाख में)	ऑनलाईन निविदा डाउनलोड करने की अंतिम तिथि
1	2	3	3
NIT NO. 356 Tender No. 128265	जिला गरियाबंद के विकासखण्ड मैनपुर अंतर्गत धुरवागुड़ी में हायर सेकेंड्री स्कूल भवन का निर्माण कार्य। (द्वितीय आमंत्रण)	₹. 118.84 लाख	31.03.2023
NIT NO. 357 Tender No. 128267	जिला धमतरी के पदमपुर पहुंच मार्ग लंबाई 1/2 से 3/6 = 2.60 कि.मी. पर बी.टी. रिनीयल का कार्य। (तृतीय आमंत्रण)	₹. 32.99 लाख	27.03.2023

उपरोक्त निर्माण कार्य की निविदा की सामान्य शर्तें, धरोहर राशि, विस्तृत निविदा विज्ञापित व अन्य जानकारी ई-प्रोक्युरमेंट वेब पोर्टल <https://eproc.cgstate.gov.in> अथवा विभागीय वेबसाइट <https://eproc.cgstate.gov.in> से डाउनलोड की जा सकती है। (राशि ₹. 100.00 के नान ज्यूडिशियल स्टाम्प पर निर्धारित प्रपत्र में शपथ-पत्र एवं न्यूनतम राशि ₹. 10.00 के नान ज्यूडिशियल स्टाम्प पर एनेक्चर-3 का शपथ पत्र (डिडिकेपेसीटी उपलब्धता बाबत जानकारी एवं अन्य जानकारी एनआईटी के 2.10 में संलग्न संशोधित प्रपत्रानुसार प्रस्तुत करें।)

निविदा में होने वाले समस्त संशोधन का प्रकाशन केवल उपरोक्त वेबसाइट पर किया जावेगा, पृथक से समाचार पत्रों में प्रकाशन नहीं किया जावेगा।

अधीक्षण अभियंता
 लो.नि.वि., रायपुर मण्डल क्र. 2 (छ.ग.)
 G-99440/3

Credible Chhattisgarh
 विश्वसनीय प्रोक्युरमेंट आपकी थी चाह, हमने बनाई राह



CENTRAL Chronicle

Since 1974 Volume 10 No. 348

AQUATIC GALLERY



A man feeds lemon shark and other fish inside the Aquatic Gallery of Science City in Ahmedabad, Tuesday, March 21.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

A Call for a Balanced Approach

The recent crackdown by the Punjab police against Amritpal Singh, a radical Sikh preacher and Khalistan sympathizer, has raised concerns about public safety and the preservation of peace in the region. As head of Waris Punjab De, Singh has been vocal about his mission to fight for the rights of Punjab and raise social issues. However, his association with Khalistan and his followers' espousal of its cause has caused unrest in the state. While the Punjab government has taken necessary steps to prevent any incitement to violence and urged the public to avoid rumors, there is a need for a well-balanced approach to address the situation. The BJP-Akali Dal alliance was formed to strengthen the social fabric of different religions and societies in Punjab, and the state has a history of deep-rooted relations among its people. As the situation remains fluid, it is crucial to handle it with caution and prevent any disturbance of the hard-earned peace in Punjab.

Yash pal Ralhan,
Jalandhar

What is Rahul's vision?

In his recent speech in London, Rahul Gandhi missed an opportunity to articulate his political vision and philosophy on revamping Indian agriculture, industry, education, and health to provide jobs for millions of Indian youth. Instead, he spent most of his time criticizing Prime Minister Modi's style of functioning. The Congress party lacks a grassroots-level, ideologically cohesive cadre, and its top brass and state-level leaders often disagree on national issues. In a multi-lingual and multi-ethnic country like India, no party can monopolize power for long. While the Congress can be voted out of power, so can the BJP. At present, a weak Congress and a divided opposition do not pose a serious challenge to the ruling party. Rahul Gandhi needs to provide a clear and compelling vision for India's future to win back the confidence of the electorate.

Manoj Kumar, Raipur BJP must introspect

One is amused to see the BJP talk of democracy when its unabashed aim, and that of its mentor, the RSS, is the establishment of a 'Hindu Rashtra'. The BJP government and its leaders are after Rahul Gandhi for saying that democracy in India is under threat. But they are not acceding to his request to allow him to speak in Parliament, which shows that they have got scant regard for democratic principles. Opposition leaders are being hounded by Central agencies, thus curtailing their fundamental right to freedom of expression. An ordinary Indian is a witness to the withering of our democracy.

Beant Singh Bedi, Mohali

DebtLIGHTenment

As global debt markets experience a sharp turnaround in the wake of the recent failures of Silicon Valley Bank (SVB) and Signature Bank, Indian investors are left wondering if the year 2023 could be the much-anticipated comeback year for the country's debt markets. According to analysts at brokerage house and research firm ICICI Direct, the end of the rate hike cycle and significantly increased yields have made debt markets an attractive investment option. "Indian debt markets have become attractive after the continued rise in yields in the last few years. The yields across debt mutual funds have risen and offer excellent investment opportunity," the brokerage said. With expectations of one last rate hike of 25 basis points in April 2023, Indian debt markets could reach their peak investment potential, with higher returns expected during the peak of the rate cycle. Both accrual funds and duration funds offer investment opportunities for investors, with longer-dated products helping to lock in coupons or interest rates and shielding investors from the interest rate cycle. While aggressive investors may consider allocating a higher amount to dynamic mutual funds or long-duration funds, conservative and moderate investors may prefer to invest a higher amount in medium-term funds or corporate bond funds. The longer-dated (20-25 year) government securities offering a return of around 7.6% is also a good long-term fixed-income investment option, offering higher accrual while removing re-investment risk. RBI's rate hike cycle has peaked in India, with the central bank having raised repo rates by 250 bps since May 2022 till February 2023, from 4.0% to 6.5%. With CPI for FY23-24 projected at 5.3%, Repo rate at 6.5% offers a real rate of 1.20%, which falls into RBI's target range of 1%-2%. While global central bankers, particularly the US Federal Reserve, had continued their hawkish stance until recently, yields particularly in the US have fallen significantly in the last few days, with the 2-year yield down by 50 bps from 4.4% to 3.9%, while the 10-year is down by more than 25bps to less than 3.5% from 3.7%. As a result, the US Federal Reserve is now expected to cut rates by 100 bps in the calendar year 2023, after one last probable rate hike of 25 bps in its March 22nd, 2023, policy meeting. The fall in commodity prices, particularly crude oil prices, has also improved the inflation outlook, leading the brokerage to believe that RBI will maintain the status quo on the benchmark repo rate in its upcoming policy meeting and in the foreseeable future. The terminal repo rate is likely to remain at the current rate of 6.5% in the near term. With the end of the rate hike cycle and significantly increased yields, debt markets have become an attractive investment option for Indian investors. As the global debt markets experience a sharp turnaround, Indian investors should consider lump-sum investment opportunities, with both accrual funds and duration funds offering investment opportunities. The longer-dated government securities offering a return of around 7.6% is also a good long-term fixed-income investment option, offering higher accrual while removing re-investment risk. Investors should keep a close eye on the upcoming policy meeting and consider their investment options carefully.

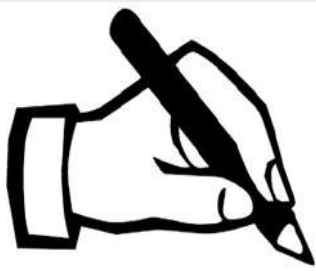
Collegium system not perfect but best available

The controversy over the Collegium system of judges' appointments in India has been an ongoing issue between the government and the judiciary for a long time. The latest statement of Chief Justice of India (CJI) D Y Chandrachud, defending the system, has once again brought this issue to the forefront. The CJI's statement that "Not every system is perfect but this is the best system developed by the judiciary" indicates that the judiciary is not ready to make any changes in the system. The Collegium system of appointments, which was established by the Supreme Court in 1993, has been criticized by many as being opaque, arbitrary, and lacking in accountability. The system gives the power to appoint judges to the higher judiciary, which includes the Chief Justice of India and a few senior judges. The process of appointments is not transparent, and there have been allegations of nepotism and favoritism. However, CJI Chandrachud, speaking at the India Today Conclave, 2023, defended the Collegium system, stating that the system was developed to maintain independence and that it should be insulated from outside influences. He said that the judiciary must be kept independent, and the Collegium system was designed to do just that. While it is true that the independence of the judiciary is a cardinal value, the question that arises is whether the Collegium system is the best way to ensure that independence. There have been several instances where the system has failed to deliver on this value. The fact that the appointments are made by a few judges, without any checks and balances, has led to allegations of favoritism and nepotism. The controversy over the rejection of names for appointment as judges of constitutional courts by the government is a case in point. The reasons cited by the government for rejecting the names recommended by the Collegium have been made public, which has led to a tussle between the government and the judiciary. The CJI, however, defended the Collegium's decision to make the reasons public, stating that the judiciary lacked transparency, and making the reasons public would foster greater confidence in the citizens. The controversy over the rejection of Saurabh Kirpal's name for appointment as a judge of the Delhi High Court because of his sexual orientation also highlights the shortcomings of the Collegium system. The CJI said that the sexual orientation of a candidate had nothing to do with his ability, and the candidate was openly gay, and the Intelligence Bureau's report was already in the public domain. However, the fact that the Collegium had to reiterate its decision to appoint Kirpal after the government rejected his name indicates that the system is not foolproof. The CJI's statement that there is absolutely no pressure from the government on how to decide cases is reassuring. However, the fact remains that there is a large backlog of cases, and the people's faith in the judiciary is at stake. The CJI's acknowledgment of the dearth of infrastructure in the judiciary and the need to modernize it is a step in the right direction. The judiciary needs to be more efficient in reducing the backlog of cases and delivering justice. While the Collegium system of judges' appointments is not perfect, it is the best system available, according to the CJI. However, the system's shortcomings cannot be ignored, and there is a need for more transparency and accountability in the appointments. The independence of the judiciary must be maintained, but it should not be at the cost of accountability. The need of the hour is to modernize the judiciary and make it more efficient in delivering justice.

There is no other alternative to water in the world



DR. SATYAWAN 'SAURABH'



We forget that without water they are all useless. We keep using more water than we need. At least each of us can make proper use of water in our homes and workplaces. Many times it is seen that water is flowing from the taps on the roadside and going to waste, but we pass by and do not bother to close the tap. We should think about these topics and try to save water as far as possible in our daily life. At this time, to save life on the planet earth, the biggest need is to save water; How will water resources be managed to ensure that everyone in the country gets the same amount of water?

As the population and economy grow, so does the water demand. With limited water and competing needs, drinking water management has become challenging. Other difficulties, such as depletion of groundwater and erratic rainfall. These difficulties have put a strain on the rural population, who meet their water needs with traditional knowledge and water wisdom. When it comes to health, people in rural areas need piped water. To maintain the relationship between water and energy, special attention should be paid to increasing water conservation and saving natural water sources as it is also very important for future energy production.

Most of us wonder what a single person can do to save water. With this type of thinking, we waste water every day. In today's world, everyone is in a race to have big bathrooms in their homes, but we forget that they are useless without water. We keep using more water than we need. At least each of us can make proper use of water in our homes and workplaces. Many times

it is seen that water is flowing from the taps on the roadside and going to waste, but we pass by and do not bother to close the tap. We should think about these topics and try to save water as far as possible in our daily life.

If we talk about India, it rains in abundance here, but due to the increase in population, water scarcity is being felt in the country. Due to the increase in population, there is more use of natural resources. Water sources, local ponds, pools, rivers, and reservoirs are getting polluted and their water is decreasing. At present, clean drinking water is not available to the growing population of the country. Apart from this, agriculture in India is also dependent on rain. The success of agriculture in India depends on the availability of water, in which rainwater plays an important role. A good rain means a good crop. There is a great need to save rainwater and it should be ensured that no acidic elements are mixed in it as this will pollute the water and its sources. That's why Jal Jeevan Mission is the foundation of the

National Jal Jeevan Kosh. On 15th August 2019 Honorable Prime Minister of India made a big announcement regarding a government program. The main objective of the Jal Jeevan Mission is to supply 55 liters of water per person per day to every rural household through functional household tap connections by 2024. Rainwater harvesting and water conservation are also the most important aspects of the mission. The focus is on using recycled water and recharging structures, developing waterways, and planting trees. Traditional and other water bodies are being renovated.

This mission will remove the shortage of tap water connections by harnessing the tap connections. This is based on local management of how much water is used and how much is available. The mission will create local infrastructure for things like harvesting water, injecting water directly into the ground, and managing domestic wastewater so it can be reused. By 2024, every person in a rural household will be able to get 55 liters of water per day from a tap connection. The mission helps the community come up with a plan for the water that includes lots of information, education, and communication. An amount of Rs 3 lakh crore was given in this scheme. Everyone in this mission helps to give top priority to the mass movement for water. For the Himalayan and North Eastern States, the fund is divided 90:10 between the Center and the State, 50:50 for the rest of the States, and 100% for the Union Territories.

Under the Jal Jeevan Mission, tap water is provided to every rural household even in SC/ST-dominated villages in Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra, so that "no one is left out." Also, tap water is given top priority in places where water quality is poor, such as desert and drought-prone areas, SC/ST majority villages, Sansad Adarsh Gramin Yojana villages, etc. The water supply system of the village is also in good condition in the scheme of water committees, which systematically operate the system. At least half of these associations have 10 to 15 members, at least half of whom are

women. Other members come from self-help groups, recognized social and health workers, anganwadi teachers, and other places. The committees prepare one-time action plans for the village utilizing all its resources.

There are some problems in the implementation of the National Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Mission, the main one being the lack of reliable drinking water sources. In areas such as water-stressed, drought-prone, and subtropical, groundwater, uneven terrain, and scattered rural settlements have the presence of location-specific contaminants, as well as the involvement of local village communities in managing and operating the village water supply infrastructure. Disability comes in the way. In some states, especially after the Covid-19 pandemic, the delay in issuing matching state shares is also coming in the way of the success of this mission. If we look at the progress made so far in Jal Jeevan Mission, at the time Jal Jeevan Mission was announced, 17.1% of the 18.93 crore rural households had tap water connections. This means that 3.23 crore rural households had tap water connections. So far, 5.38 crore (28%) rural households have been provided with tap water connections under JJM. Therefore, out of 19.22 billion rural households in the country, 8.62 billion (or 44.84 percent) have potable tap water. States like Goa, Telangana, Andaman, Nicobar Islands, and Puducherry have reached 100% of households in rural areas with running water from taps. "Har Ghar Jal" has become everyone's topmost priority. The primary objective of the mission is to save water while wasting as little as possible. At this time, to save life on the planet earth, the biggest need is to save water; This will be done by managing water resources to ensure that everyone in the country gets the same amount of water.

The earth is saved from the water, the sky is from the water! Life is connected with water, everyone has faith!!
(Writer is Research scholar, poet, freelance journalist and columnist, All India Radio and TV panelist.)

Different Strocks

Speed Breakers: A nuisance to the Progress

T.Sreeelal Nair

Policing speed, setting logical limits according to areas, and prescribing punishments for violations is the job of the government. Individuals cannot unilaterally decide to close off roads, build barricades, or cause obstructions. The justifications offered above boil down to one single thing- abdication of moral, ethical, and physical responsibility by the state. This just proves my point that while I understand the need for speed breakers in any city, they can be a big nuisance if placed without any thought. Let me explain what I mean by this. Here in Mathpurena (Raipur),

where I live, they have placed three speed breakers just 100m from the steeped road to the main road and that too on a curve, which is on a mild incline adjusting a pond. In fact, every house from Mathpurena to Davara society heading towards Ramakrishna hospital comprises more than 28 speed breakers. The permission they had from the local Parshad was not in written form. All of this translates to more headache for drivers because apart from the natural deterrents, we now have man-made obstacles to navigate. This can sometimes cause traffic jams and even accidents. While I am all for speed breakers because, sadly, the majority of

Indian drivers have no other way to effectively slow down, if they are placed in such inconvenient locations, they only add to the problem. Speed breakers are not there to brake the speed; they are there to break the car. They are unscientific and unmarked, and nobody knows the proper specifications. Technically, in-between the two humps, the tyre must touch the road, but such scientific speed breakers are non-existent, and your car/bike takes the path of a sign wave, breaking the back of the riders. When I was on my way to the hospital, the twelfth breaker near Davara colony was so high that my child got hurt standing in front of the bike. Well,

that is an unfortunate reality check. Foreign countries are more considerate towards the vehicles driving over them as compared to their Indian counterparts. I agree that some form of speed restricting device is required in India as well, but the commonly encountered one-foot hump with a sharp edge is simply a punishment to drive on. A car breaker is more like it. But coming to the OPs metaphorical use of the speed breaker, I believe it is more of a symptom of society than a cause/reason for our pace of progress. My recent visit to Kerala showed a way to a different country within the Indian union. Some of the best roads I have seen have

been of quality. The larger point I am making is that we are a country doomed to go slow in every sphere. The innocuous speed breaker is the symbol of our collective failure to unclog our society of unnecessary encumbrances. We suffer from an overload of rules, regulations, and laws in every sphere of life in India. Additionally, we see a lot more of people clamouring for even more control and regulations by the government in practically all aspects of life. What we lack is discipline and respect for others. If existing laws are enforced sufficiently, there would be no need for coercive measures like speed breakers.

BRIEF

New CEO



Washington: Starbucks officially has a new CEO. The Seattle coffee giant said on Monday that Laxman Narasimhan has assumed the role of CEO and joined the company's board of directors. Narasimhan succeeds longtime Starbucks leader Howard Schultz, who came out of retirement last spring to serve as interim CEO while the company searched for a new chief executive. Schultz will remain on the company's board. Starbucks announced last September that Narasimhan would become its new CEO. Narasimhan, 55, most recently served as CEO of Reckitt, a UK-based consumer health, hygiene and nutrition company.

Resignation



New Delhi: Tyre maker CEAT Ltd on Monday said its Managing Director and CEO Anand Goenka has resigned to focus on group activities and has been named as its Vice Chairman. The company's board has also approved the appointment of Arnab Banerjee, currently Chief Operating Officer, as its new MD and CEO. Goenka expressed his desire to hand over the charge of the company to a successor with a view to focus on initiatives at the group level. Accordingly, he sought to be relieved of his duties as MD & CEO of the company with effect from close of business hours of March 31, 2023, while continuing as a board member. CEAT Ltd said in a regulatory filing.

Enormous opportunities



New Delhi: The integration of Air India Express and AirAsia India is expected to be complete by the end of next financial year and the merged entity will have "enormous growth opportunities" in the coming years, according to a top executive. Air India, Air India Express, Vistara and AirAsia India, now rebranded as AIX Connect are part of the Tata Group. The merger process of Air India Express and AirAsia India as well as that of Vistara with Air India is underway. Air India Express CEO Aloke Singh said the businesses of the airline and AIX Connect are complementary.

GDP to grow at 7pc; inflation set to moderate: Finmin Report

New Delhi, Mar 21:

Indian economy is expected to grow at 7 per cent in FY23 despite global headwinds while retail inflation would moderate in line with wholesale inflation which fell to a 25-month low in January, the Finance Ministry said on Monday.

Supported by the gains from high services exports, the moderation in oil prices, and the recent fall in import-intensive consumption demand, India's current account deficit is estimated to fall in FY23 and FY24, providing a buffer to the rupee in uncertain times, Monthly Economic Review by the ministry said. This will

provide a much-needed cushion to India's external sector at a time when the Fed is likely to raise rates further and ensure that India's external finances are not a major cause of concern, it said. The jump in net service exports over the previous year is a critical development as India increases its market share in both IT and non-IT services, whose demand has been triggered by the pandemic, it said, adding, imports are also less costly now with the easing of global commodity prices. "With a manageable current account deficit and a growth rate highest among the major economies in FY23, the Indian economy has

shown a new-found resilience in sailing through the turbulence caused by the pandemic and geopolitical stress," it said. Macroeconomic stability is likely to receive a further boost in FY23 as the current account deficit is set to narrow from the year-beginning estimates, it added.

With regard to growth, the report said, real GDP estimates for Q3 of 2022-23 reaffirm the ability of the Indian economy to grow on the strength of its domestic demand even as a rise in global uncertainties slows global output. Indian economy witnessed a growth of 4.4 per cent in the third quarter that ended in December 2022.

Growth momentum gathered in Q3 of 2022-23 is likely to be sustained in Q4, as reflected in the performance of High-Frequency Indicators for January/February 2023, it said.

GST collections have now, in February 2023 crossed the Rs 1.4 lakh crore benchmark for twelve successive months. Noting that falling international commodity prices and government measures have aided in easing inflationary pressures, the report said, inflationary pressures eased in February, with a slight moderation in CPI inflation and WPI inflation softening to a 25-month low.

India has great opportunities, says Clark

New Delhi, Mar 21:

Leading Gulf carrier Emirates Airline's President Sir Tim Clark on Tuesday said opportunities are great in India and that it will bring new products into the market. According to him, it has been a "good story" for Emirates in terms of coming back after the coronavirus pandemic. Emirates, a significant player connecting India and the Gulf, has also been looking for enhanced bilateral rights to operate more flights to India. "Opportunities here (in India) are great," Clark said, adding that the country is really on the move. Like for other markets, new products will be brought into the Indian market, he said. Meanwhile, the airline is set to announce its financial results next month and Clark said, "it has been a good story".

Sensex, Nifty rebound nearly 1 pc on firm global trends, buying in Reliance

Mumbai, Mar 21:

Benchmark Sensex and Nifty rebounded nearly 1 per cent at close on Tuesday amid firm trends in global equities and buying in index major Reliance Industries and banking stocks. The 30-share BSE Sensex climbed 445.73 points or 0.77 per cent to settle at 58,074.68. During the day, it rallied 504.38 points or 0.87 per cent to 58,133.33. The broader NSE Nifty advanced 119.10 points or 0.70 per cent to settle at 17,107.50. Among the Sensex stocks, Reliance Industries climbed the most by 3.11 per cent. Bajaj Finance, Titan, Axis Bank, ICICI Bank, Bajaj Finserv, IndusInd Bank, UltraTech Cement, Larsen & Toubro,



HDFC Bank, HDFC and Kotak Mahindra Bank were among the other major winners. Power Grid, Hindustan Unilever, Tech Mahindra, Tata Consultancy Services, Infosys and Asian Paints were among the biggest laggards. In Asia, Seoul, Hong Kong and Shanghai markets ended higher. European markets were trading in the green during afternoon trade.

Tata Motors hikes commercial vehicle prices by 5pc from Apr 1



Mumbai, Mar 21:

Tata Motors on Tuesday announced increasing the prices of commercial vehicles by up to 5 per cent from April 1. The price increase comes in the wake of the implementation of the more stringent BS-VI phase II emission norms from next month, it said.

The price increase will be applicable across the entire range of commercial vehicles, with the exact amount varying according to the individual model and variant, the company said in a statement.

"Tata Motors will be implementing a price increase of up to 5 per cent on its commercial vehicles, starting from April," the company said. Tata Motors said it is upgrading its entire vehicle portfolio to conform to the stricter emission norms, which are set to come into force from April 1.

NMDC hikes iron ore lump rate by Rs 100/tonne

New Delhi, Mar 21:

State-owned NMDC on Tuesday said it has hiked price of iron ore lumps by Rs 100 to Rs 4,500 per tonne with immediate effect. The country's largest iron ore miner has also increased rate of iron ore fines by Rs 200 to Rs 4,110/tonne, NMDC said in a regulatory filing. The prices are effective from Tuesday and exclude royalty, district mineral fund (DMF), National Mineral Exploration Trust (DMET), cess, forest permit fee and other taxes, the company said. Lump ore or high-grade iron ore contains 65.53 per cent Fe (iron), while fines are inferior grade ore with 64 per cent and less Fe content.

Hyundai drives in new Verna starting at Rs 10.89 lakh

New Delhi, Mar 21:

Hyundai Motor India on Tuesday introduced a new version of its mid-sized sedan Verna in the country priced between Rs 10.89 lakh and Rs 17.37 lakh (ex-showroom), hotting up the competition in the segment. The new Verna competes with the likes of Honda City, Skoda Slavia, Volkswagen Virtus and Maruti Suzuki Ciaz in the domestic market. The 1.5 litre trims of the 6th generation Verna are priced between Rs 10.89 lakh and Rs 16.19 lakh while the 1.5 litre turbo petrol variants, which come with enhanced power, are priced between Rs 14.83 lakh and Rs 17.37 lakh (all prices ex-showroom). As per the company, the model delivers fuel efficiency



Hyundai Motor India Ltd. MD & CEO Unsoo Kim with Chief Operating Officer Tarun Garg at the launch of the new Hyundai Verna, at Aerocity in New Delhi, Tuesday, March 21.

ranging between 18.6 to 20.6 km per litre, depending upon the engine options. Hyundai Motor India MD and CEO Unsoo Kim said Verna has been one of the company's most iconic models globally. He noted

the company has sold 4.65 lakh units of the sedan in the domestic market and also exported around 4.5 lakh units of the model till date. Kim said the new Verna would also be exported. Hyundai had first

launched the Verna brand in India in 2006. The automaker said the new Verna comes with 30 standard safety features including six airbags, 17 Level 2-ADAS features and over 65 connected car features. In an interaction with PTI, Hyundai Motor India Chief Operating Officer Tarun Garg said the company aims to sell close to 40,000 units of the sedan this year, doubling volumes from 2022. The country's second largest carmaker had sold around 19,000 Verna units last year. "We believe that with a product like Verna, we have a winner in hand. It is now larger as compared with the outgoing model, comes with advanced technology like level II ADAS system and other connected features," Garg said.

Govt not in favour of putting caps on airfares: Bansal



New Delhi, Mar 21:

The government is not in favour of interfering in a free market economy by putting caps on airfares, Civil Aviation Secretary Rajiv Bansal said on Tuesday amid concerns over possible predatory pricing of air tickets. The remarks also come against the backdrop of a Parliamentary panel, earlier this month, asking the civil aviation ministry to cap the upper and lower levels of airfares, and ensure that predatory pricing mechanism is not adopted by airlines under the cloak of free market economy. "Fundamentally, putting (fare) caps and interfering in the market economy is

not good and we are not in favour of it. We are not in favour of putting lower or upper caps. I don't think the government should interfere in a free market economy at all..." Bansal said. However, he said "we have taken up with airlines to see that passengers are not unduly charged or inconvenienced because of very high fare buckets, the highest bucket".

According to him, tickets are sold in around 16 fare buckets. "I would feel that the lower fare buckets on any sector are comparable to AC train fares..." In its report tabled in Parliament on March 13, the panel also said a perfect balance has to be maintained between the commercial interest of the private airlines and the interest of passengers. The recommendations have been made by the Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Transport, Tourism and Culture in its report on the ministry's demand for grants for 2023-24.

India exploited 29pc of hydropower potential: Power Minister

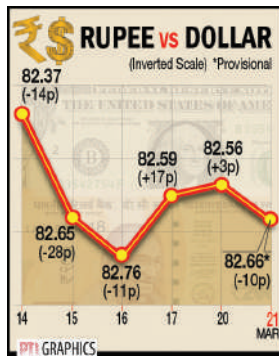


New Delhi, Mar 21:

India has exploited 29 per cent of its hydropower potential against over 80 per cent and 70 per cent developed by the US and European Union respectively, Parliament was informed on Tuesday. As per the Reassessment Study carried out by the Central Electricity Authority (CEA) during 1978-1987, the assessed hydropower potential in the country is about 1,45,320 MW (for projects with capacity above 25 MW), Power Minister R K Singh said in a written reply to Rajya Sabha on Tuesday. Singh said that 42,104.6 MW (29

per cent) out of 1,45,320 MW has been developed and 15,023.5 MW (10.3 per cent) is under construction. As per reports of the International Hydropower Association (IHA), the US has developed more than 80 per cent of its hydropower potential and the EU (European Union) has developed more than 70 per cent of its hydropower potential, he told the House. The main challenges in the development of hydroelectric potential in the country are remote location, unpredictable geology, natural calamities, environment and forest issues, Rehabilitation and Resettlement (R&R) issues, law & order issues and inter-state issues, he stated. In a separate reply, Singh told the House that as on March 14, 2023, the total coal stock at Thermal Power Plants in the country is 33.3 MT (million tonnes) which is only 49 per cent of the Normative Stock Requirement.

Rupee falls 10 paise to 82.66 against US dollar



Mumbai, Mar 21:

The rupee depreciated by 10 paise to 82.66 against the US dollar on Tuesday amid a rise in crude oil prices and unabated foreign fund outflows from the domestic equity market.

Positive sentiments in the equity markets across the globe failed to address the concerns of investors who are awaiting the interest rate decision by the US Federal Reserve due on Wednesday. At the inter-bank foreign exchange, the domestic unit opened strong at 82.54 against the dollar. During the day, it went as high as 82.53 and hit the lowest level of 82.70.

Airtel rolls out family plans starting Rs 599 to increase postpaid user base

New Delhi, Mar 21:

Bharti Airtel has rolled out various family plans offering monthly data in the range of 105-320 GB as it looks to attract prepaid users to switch to postpaid connections. The new family plans uploaded on the company website are in the range of Rs 599 to Rs 1,499 per month, while Black family plans, that bundles DTH and fixed broadband service, are in the range of Rs 799 to Rs 2,299 per month. A company official told PTI that the new plans are aimed at attracting prepaid customers to switch to postpaid whereby family members will be able to optimally use the data limit, calls, SMS etc bundled in a plan. Out of the total mobile subscriber base of 332 million, the company had 5.4 per cent postpaid users on its network in the December 2022 quarter.

The postpaid customer base of Bharti Airtel grew by about 8 per cent on a year-on-year basis to 18.9 million as of December 31, 2022. These new family

plans allow bundling 2-5 mobile phone connections under one plan. Airtel has bundled Amazon Prime subscription for six months and Disney+Hotstar for 1 year while it is offering Netflix in the higher price plans. "Generally prepaid users within the family are unable to consume the entire data.

The bundling of OTT services will help them optimise their expenses," the official said. In the Black Family Plans, Airtel has bundled DTH service in the entry-level plan starting at Rs 799 per month, broadband connection with 2 mobile postpaid connections for Rs 998 and under the Rs 2,299 plan, the company has bundled 4 postpaid connections with DTH and broadband service. The official said while the plans will make efficient use of the services, the company expects to gain in terms of average revenue per user (ARPU) from family plan subscribers. Bharti Airtel ARPU, a key growth matrix, was at Rs 193 in December 2022 quarter.

No plans to sell Bisleri now, says Ramesh Chauhan

New Delhi, Mar 21:

Veteran industrialist Ramesh Chauhan said he has no plans to sell his packaged water business Bisleri International and is not in talks with any parties for the same, three days after Tata Consumer Products Ltd called off their negotiations. Chauhan had been in negotiations with the Tata group's FMCG arm Tata Consumer Products Ltd (TCPL) for nearly four months but the deal did not go through. When asked as to whether he has any plans to sell Bisleri now, Chauhan told PTI "We have no plans." However, when asked



about media report suggesting that his daughter Jayanti Chauhan is ready to lead the company, the 82-year-old pioneer of the Indian packaged water business declined to comment. Earlier in November last year, Chauhan had said he was in discussions with several players, including TCPL, to sell out his

Bisleri business. On being asked about the reasons for the sale of Bisleri's business, the octogenarian business leader had said someone had to handle it and look into it. His daughter Jayanti is not interested in handling the business, Chauhan had added. Later in a media statement, Bisleri International Spokesperson had also said: "We are currently in discussion and cannot disclose further."

However, last week resting the speculations about a possible acquisition, TCPL, in a regulatory update, said it has not entered into any agreements over the acquisition of Bisleri.

"In this regard, the company wishes to update that it has now ceased negotiations with Bisleri with regard to a potential transaction and to confirm that the company has not entered into any definitive agreement or binding commitment on this matter," TCPL had said. Bisleri International operates in the bottled water segment with its flagship brand Bisleri and spring water Vedica. It is also present in fizzy drinks with brands - Spyci, Limonata, Fonzo and PinaColada.

Three decades ago, Chauhan sold their soft drinks business to the US beverage major The Coca-Cola Company.

Unlike global economy, India would not slow down: RBI article

Mumbai, Mar 21:

Unlike the global economy, India would not slow down and maintain the pace of expansion achieved in 2022-23, an RBI article said on Tuesday. "We remain optimistic about India, whatever the odds," said the article on the state of the economy published in the March edition of the Reserve Bank bulletin. The NSO's end-February data release indicates that the Indian economy is intrinsically better positioned than many parts of the world to head into a challenging year ahead, mainly because of its demonstrated resilience and its reliance on domestic drivers, it said. Even as global growth is set to slow down or even enter a recession in 2023 as global financial markets waver, India has emerged from the pandemic years stronger than initially thought, with a steady gathering of momentum since the second quarter of the current financial year, it said.

Classifieds

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Kangana Ranaut posts throwback pic from college days

Bollywood actress Kangana Ranaut went down memory lane as she shared a couple of throwback pictures from her college days and even shared an anecdote about her designing an outfit.

Kangana took to her Instagram and shared throwback pictures from her college days.

She wrote: "This was my first day in the Chandigarh DAV hostel and my principal, Ms Sachdeva ma'am noticed me because of my dress, she called me and asked where are you from? I shyly said Himachal se, she asked 'yeh dress kahan se li?' I said 'maine design ki and village tailor ne banayi' she smiled and hugged me tight and said 'you will become a movie star one day'."

Kangana added: "After I got into films ma'am honoured me with the pride of



DAV. I know many people who are happy for me but my principal ma'am is most proud of me...Principal ma'am has visited me in Mumbai many times and always kissed my forehead and told me about the blue dress story with love and glitter in her eyes, some teachers are so

good... she is such a blessing." She concluded: "I love her. Dr Sachdeva was also awarded as the best principal from the President of India... she has got many awards and honours, ma'am has retired now. We were so fortunate to have her...Someday I want to teach

acting and filmmaking and be like ma'am."

On the work front, Kangana has just wrapped up shooting for 'Chandramukhi 2'. She also has 'Emergency', 'Tejas', 'Manikarnika Returns: The Legend of Didda' and 'The Incarnation: Sita' lined up.

Keerthy gifts 10-gram gold coins to all 130 members of 'Dasara' unit

Keerthy Suresh, who plays the female lead in the upcoming Nani-starrer 'Dasara', gifted 130 gold coins of 10 grams each to each unit member on the last day of shooting for the film. At current prices, her gesture should have cost her anywhere between Rs 70 lakh and Rs 75 lakh.

"Keerthy was quite emotional on the last day of the shoot," a source in the 'Dasara' unit said. "She wanted to give away something to the people who made her give her best for the film."

Keerthy Suresh plays a character named 'Vennela' in the movie. The Telugu-language pan-India movie is a period action adventure drama written and directed by debutant Srikanth Odela, a protegee of Sukumar. It stars Nani and Keerthy Suresh in the lead roles.

Set in the backdrop of Singareni coal mines near Godavari Khani, Telangana, the film is set for theatrical release on March 30.



Fourth edition of Iconic Gold Awards 2023, a grand success!

The fourth edition of CBTF Presents Iconic Gold Awards 2023 (in association with Ankibai Ghambardam Gowani Trust) which was held on 18th March, 2023 at hotel Sahara Star, is back with a bang and the celebration was ten times more joyous, rewarding and entertaining on all fronts!

The IGA 2023 was a grand success with the best of the best in attendance. As usual, the coveted award found its way into the hands of the most deserving talent from the film, television and OTT industry. The awards night saw the presence of several celebrities including Anupam Kher, Dr. Jayantilal Gada, producer Depak Mukut, Pallavi Joshi, Ankita Lokhande with husband Vicky Jain, Richa Chadha, Rupali Ganguly with her family, Tina Dutta, Pratik Sehajpal, Shiv Thakare, Abhishek Agarwal (producer of The Kashmir Files), Nikhil Siddhartha who were welcomed by the CEO of Iconic Gold Awards, Piyush Jaiswal. The highlight of the award ceremony this year includes special performances by singers Udit Narayan and Laqshay Kapoor. Popular Dancer Ritu Gupta also performed on a spiritual group performance. The IGA 2023 saw many popular faces from the television and entertainment industry walking away with the prestigious Iconic Gold trophies flaunting their fashionable best on the red carpet including singer Laqshay Kapoor, Sikandar Kher, Karan Tacker, Nikita Dutta, Rajiv Adatia, Mukesh Chhabra, Warda Nadiadwala, Udit Narayan, Palak Muchhal, Priyanka Choudhary, Gauahar Khan, Anees Bazmee, Karan Kundra, Karan Tacker, Vineet Kumar Singh, Sanjana Sanghi, Hina Khan, Dheeraj Dhoopar and Anjali Arora Manish Sharma, Nidarshana Gowani, Ameer Merchant amongst others.

Kamyra Panjabi: I am thrilled to essay character of a werewolf for first time



Popular film and TV actress Kamyra Panjabi, who joined the cast of the fantasy drama 'Tere Ishq Mein Ghayal', talked about playing an interesting character of a werewolf, 'Nandini' for the first time in the show. She said: "I am thrilled to essay the character of Nandini, a werewolf, for the first time. The fantasy genre is extremely exciting for me as an actor, and I am looking forward to sinking my teeth into this role. The show has received an incredible response from the audience, and I hope to contribute to its continued success."

Kamyra has done a number of TV shows like 'Piya Ka Ghar', 'Maryada: Lekin Kab Tak?', 'Kyun Hota Hai Pyarr?', 'Banoo Main Teri Dulhann', reality shows such as 'Bigg Boss 7' and movies like 'Kaho Naa... Pyaar Hai', 'Koi... Mil Gaya' among others.

Ajay Devgn gives 'full autonomy' to actors on sets: Lokesh Mittal

Actor Lokesh Mittal, who recently received the audience's appreciation for his work in the streaming series 'Farzi', will be next seen playing a cop in the upcoming film 'Bhola', directed by Bollywood superstar Ajay Devgn.

He shared that Ajay is very clear in his mind as a director, and gives space to his actors to explore their characters.

The actor, who has earlier worked with Ajay in the latter's last directorial 'Runway 34', told IANS: "Bhola is the 4th directorial venture by Ajay Devgn sir. And this is not the first time I have worked with Ajay Ji. Earlier, I got to work with him in his 3rd directorial 'Runway 34' in a scene which brought the introduction of Bachchan Sir's character in the movie and this was the scene due to which Ajay Devgn films decided to cast me



in 'Bhola.' Describing Ajay's style as a filmmaker, Lokesh said: "As a director, he is really wonderful. He doesn't impose anything on the actor; rather he allows the actor to completely do their own things."

&TV artists greet on 'Chaitra Navratri'

The nine-day Chaitra Navratri, also known as Vasant Navratri, is observed in the month of Chaitra, dedicated to worshipping the nine avatars of Maa Durga. People observe fast and worship the Goddess during these days. Talking about embarking on a journey of self-reflection, worship and fasting, &TV artists share how the festival is celebrated with great fervour and enthusiasm. These include Preity Sahay (Kamini) from Doosri Maa, Himani Shivpuri (Katori Amma) from Hattu ki Ultan Paltan, and Rohitashv Gour (Manmohan Tiwari) from Bhabhi Ghar Par Hai. Preity Sahay, essaying Kamini, says, "I am an ardent believer in Goddess Durga. Every day I fold my hands in front of her and pray for the well-being of my people. During Chaitra Navratri, I fast for nine days. It is one of the most divine feelings. I learned about this festival from my grandmother, and since then, I have been following its rituals religiously. From a very young age, I started fasting and praying, which has become a part of my every yearly ritual. During those auspicious days, I consume kuttu atta, singhara atta, fresh fruit, milk, and dry fruits."



MasterChef India's 'Journey to Finale' will see top 6 home cooks prepare a delicious Biryani

This week, in the 'Finale Ki Journey' of Sony Entertainment Television and SonyLIV's 'MasterChef India,' the Top 6 home cooks will be tasked with creating a lip smacking 'Biryani', followed by an interesting 'Drinks' challenge. Impressing the judges - Chefs Ranveer Brar, Garima Arora and Vikas Khanna, the competition gets intense as the home cooks are now one step closer to winning the Chef's golden coat and the coveted trophy of 'MasterChef India.'

Starting the challenge, home cook Suvarna Bagul would get mutton as her ingredient for the

biryani which impresses Chef Ranveer Brar who compliments her by saying, "Yeh biryani mein puri plate kha sakta hoon." After the spice heavy biryani, the second challenge would have the home cooks make curd-based smoothies and home cook Nayanjyoti's brilliant basil-infused strawberry smoothie wows the Judges' taste-buds.

Sharing his love for Biryani and talking about the challenges, Chef Ranveer Brar said, "Cooking biryani takes time as it requires the juices of the meat to perfectly blend with the rice. Before the home cooks began making the



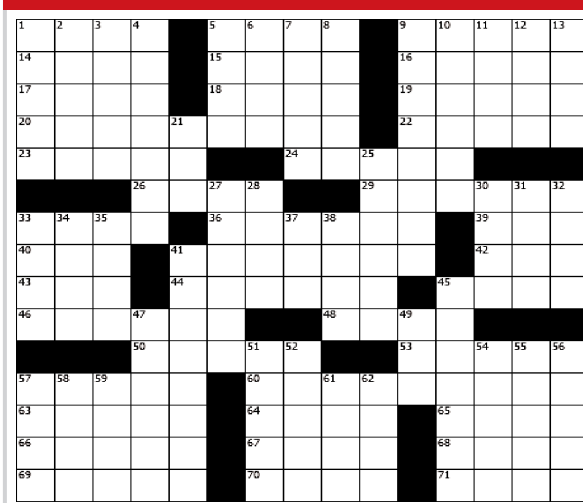
biryani, the one thing I asked them to keep in mind are the 3 T's - Temperature, Technique

and Trust. Suvarna's biryani was comforting, it reminded me of home. She also discussed with us how every other Sunday, she makes Biryani for her family and friends, and they have a get-together. That feeling of coming together and enjoying food was present in Suvarna ji's dish! Not only that but I was impressed by Nayanjyoti's presence of mind and inventive thinking while making the smoothie."

Tune into MasterChef India to witness the 'Finale Ki Journey', every Monday to Friday at 9 pm only on Sony Entertainment Television and SonyLIV.

CROSSWORD

594



ACROSS

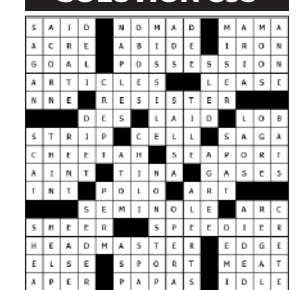
- Fury
- Recipe measures (abbr.)
- Granny Smith, e.g.
- Pub orders
- Stop
- Besech
- Coin factory
- Territory
- Tranquility
- Long-lasting plant
- Corroded
- Express scorn
- Trials
- Prepare potatoes
- Occupied (2 wds.)
- Mountain gap
- Wall socket
- Hole in
- Mont Blanc, e.g.
- Clothes cabinet
- President before JFK
- Pod inhabitant
- Rest

- Cranny's kin
- Cast members
- Sit for a portrait
- Appraised
- Check accounts
- Revolutionary ___ Allen
- Open to ideas
- Dazzling
- The ___ Office
- Horse strap
- Scorch
- Pickle seasoning
- Epochs
- Discontinued
- Shade trees
- Forfeit

DOWN

- Highway exits
- UFO pilot
- Category
- Admires
- Comparison word
- Hindu garb
- Kilt fold
- Not fresh
- Desire for food
- Polite word
- Bog product
- Shoestring
- Adam's home
- Gun org.
- Hi-fi
- Most tender
- Camel's feature
- Extinct bird
- Take apart

SOLUTION 593



Amelia Kerr powers MI to four wicket win over RCB in WPL

Navi Mumbai, Mar 21 (PTI):

Mumbai Indians on Tuesday reclaimed the top spot in the points table with a four-wicket victory against Royal Challengers Bangalore in the Women's Premier League, riding on Amelia Kerr's allround heroics.

Chasing a modest 126 to win here at the DY Patil Stadium, Mumbai Indians stuttered post a fiery start and also failed to knock off the target in 11.3 overs a condition that would have helped them improve net run rate over Delhi Capitals. Mumbai Indians eventually finished at 129 for 6 in 16.3 overs. RCB, however, signed off from the competition with their sixth loss in eight league matches.

All-rounder Kerr was at top of her game with figures of 40-22-3 and an unbeaten 31 from 27 balls (4x4s) to take Mumbai Indians over the line.

Kerr added 47 runs for the fifth wicket with Pooja Vastrakar (19) to revive Mumbai Indians who were rocked twice in quick succession.

Sobhana Asha halted



Mumbai Indians' bowler Amelia Kerr celebrates with teammates after the wicket of Royal Challengers Bangalore's batter Smriti Mandhana during the Women's Premier League (WPL) cricket match between Mumbai Indians and Royal Challengers Bangalore, at DY Patil Stadium in Navi Mumbai, Tuesday, March 21.

Nat Sciver-Brunnt's charge by dismissing her for 13, while captain Harmanpreet Kaur (2) fell for her first single-digit score in the competition. Kanika Ahuja claimed two wickets in one over to finish as the pick among the bowlers for RCB. At the start, the opening pair of Hayley Matthews (24 from 17 balls, 2x4s, 1x6s) and Yastika Bhatia (30 off

26 balls, 6x4s) laid the foundation with a 53-run stand.

While the team finishing at the top will get a direct entry into Sunday's final, the second and third-placed teams will battle in the eliminator on Friday to fill up the second slot of the summit clash.

Earlier, Kerr snapped three wickets as Mumbai Indians produced a disci-

plined effort to restrict RCB to 125 for nine. Kerr (3/22) validated MI captain Harmanpreet Kaur's decision to bowl first, taking full advantage of a spin-friendly track, while Matthews (4-0-18-0) and Saika Ishaque (1/30) were also on the money. Both Kerr and Ishaque joined Sophie Ecclestone of the UP Warriorz for most wickets (13) in WPL.

Nikhat and two others move to quarters

World Boxing Championship

New Delhi, Mar 21 (PTI):

A "fatigued" Nikhat Zareen continued her winning run to enter the quarterfinals along with two other pugilists at the Women's World Championships here on Tuesday.

Nikhat saw off Mexico's Patricia Alvarez Herrera 5-0 to notch her third win of the tournament. Commonwealth Games champion Nitu Ghanghas (48kg) won her bout with a first round against Sumaiya Qosimova of Tajikistan, while last year's bronze medallist Manisha Moun (57kg) got the better of Nur Elif Turhan of Turkey in the third round.

Shashi Chopra (63kg), however bowed out of the tournament after going down 0-4 to Mai Kito of Japan. It was the second RSC win in as many bouts for Nitu in the tournament.

Nikhat took a few seconds to decipher her opponents game plan before attacking. She used her nimble feet to duck away from Herrera's counter attacks.

Both the boxers have moved down from the 52kg weight division. Well aware of the Mexican's aggressive style of play, Nikhat used her speed to land accurate



India's Nikhat Zareen being declared winner after her 48kg-50kg (Light Flyweight) category Round of 16 match against Mexico's Fatima Patricia Herrera Alvarez at the 2023 IBA Women's Boxing World Championships, in New Delhi, Tuesday, March 21.

jabs and hooks. Herrera, whom she had beaten in the last edition, tried her best to shift the momentum in her favour but Nikhat's relentless attack proved too strong.

Nikhat, who has already played three bouts, including one against the top seed, and is still three bouts away from the gold, said she is feeling fatigued.

"I am happy that I have defeated the person that has got seeding number one," the unseeded Nikhat, who

had several cuts on her lip, said after her bout.

"I still have some fatigue from my last round as it was against the top seed. It was tough and her punches landed pretty well so my neck was a little tight and my body a little slow compared to my last bout. But I am happy that I won unanimously this time.

"In my boxing career, this is the first competition that I'll play six bouts because I didn't get a seeding, but I am not focussing on that."

Earlier, in the opening session of the day, Nitu registered her second RSC win in as many bouts in the tournament.

Both Nitu and Qosimova tried to figure out each other's game, but then the Indian connected four straight jabs which forced the referee to give the opponent her first standing count. Nitu continued her onslaught as she cornered the Tajikistan pugilist and pumelled her with straight jabs.

Sen slumps to world no 25 in BWF rankings

New Delhi, Mar 21 (PTI):

Commonwealth Games champion Lakshya Sen slipped six places to move out of the world top 20 in the latest men's singles rankings issued by BWF on Tuesday.

Following his second round exit from the All England Championship, Sen slumped to the 25th spot.

The 21-year-old, who had reached a career-best world no. 6 in November last year, hasn't been in the best of form, having made early exits from Malaysia Open, India Open and German Open.

Last year, Sen had a rampaging run in the European circuit early in the season, winning the India Open and reaching the finals at Germany and All England.

HS Prannoy continued



climbing two positions.

In women's singles, PV Sindhu stayed at the ninth spot, while Saina Nehwal, who had skipped the All England Championships, slipped five places to 32nd spot.

Men's pairing of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty continued at the sixth spot, while women's combination of Treesa Jolly and Gayatri Gopichand lost a rung to be at the 18th position, despite a semifinal finish last week.

Losing good players dented our composition: GG mentor Mithali Raj

Mumbai, Mar 21 (PTI):

Losing key players at the start of the Women's Premier League disturbed Gujarat Giants' team composition and "shuffling the deck wasn't easy", team mentor Mithali Raj and head coach Rachel Haynes said after the side's elimination.

Having suffered a calf injury on the opening day of the inaugural tournament, Australia opener and designated captain Beth Mooney missed the remainder of the WPL, dealing a big blow to her side's prospects.

Even as the others stepped up, Gujarat Giants did miss a player of Mooney's calibre, through-

out. "Honestly, we did put up a good team, but the results were not in our favour and the season didn't go our way. We lost key players early on, and it dented our composition. But despite this hiccup, the team stepped up and showed



their grit and passion to win," Mithali said in a press release issued by the Adani-owned franchise.

Gujarat Giants were eliminated after losing their last match against UP Warriorz on Monday.

Talking about her debut stint as a head coach, Haynes said, "This was certainly, an exciting and enriching experience for me as head coach for such a wonderful team. "Undoubtedly, we had our tough moments, but the team put up a riveting performance and showed a lot of character during every match. We all are taking with us many positives and pivotal life-lessons from this inaugural session."

Alcaraz at No. 1; Nadal out of top 10, 1st time in 18 years

Indian Wells, Mar 21 (AP):

Carlos Alcaraz returned to No. 1 in the ATP rankings on Monday, replacing Novak Djokovic, and Rafael Nadal dropped out of the top 10 for the first time in 18 years.

Alcaraz rose one spot, swapping places with Djokovic, a day after ending Daniil Medvedev's 19-match winning streak by beating him in straight sets in the final at Indian Wells, California. Alcaraz, a 19-year-old from Spain who first ascended to No. 1 by winning the U.S. Open in September, didn't drop a set in the hard-court tournament. Djokovic has spent more weeks at No. 1 than any man or woman in tennis history. He did not play in Indian Wells because he is not allowed to enter the United States as a foreign citizen who is not vaccinated against COVID-19. He also will miss the Miami Open that begins this week; Alcaraz is the defending champion there. Nadal has



been sidelined since January by an injured hip flexor and he slipped four spots to No. 13 on Monday, ending a stay in the top 10 that began in April 2005. It is the longest such run in the ATP; Jimmy Connors is next on the list with about 15 years.

TOPS approves Bajrang, Vinesh's request to train in Kyrgyzstan and Poland



New Delhi, Mar 21 (PTI):

The Sports Ministry's Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS) has approved star wrestlers Bajrang Punia and Vinesh Phogat's request for training stints in Kyrgyzstan and Poland respectively.

While Bajrang requested to train in Cholpon-Ata, Kyrgyzstan for 16 days, Vinesh wanted to train at the Olympic Preparation Centre in Spala, Poland for 11 days. The financial assistance will cover athletes' air tickets, camp ex-

penses including the cost of training, boarding, and lodging, and miscellaneous costs such as airport transfer, insurance and internal travel, out of pocket allowance among other expenses, a press release stated. TOPS will also cover expenses for Vinesh's sparring partner-Sangeeta Phogat and physiotherapist Ashwini Jeevan Patil and Bajrang's coach Sujeet Maan, physiotherapist Anand Kumar, and strength and conditioning expert Kaazi Kiron Mustafa Hasan.

Indian top-order burns midnight oil to tackle 'Mitchell The Menace'

Chennai, Mar 21 (PTI):

The prima donnas of Indian batting will have to put their best foot forward while tackling the lethal in-dippers from Mitchell Starc when they face Australia in the series-deciding third ODI here on Wednesday.

If Starc is giving sleepless nights to the batters, the other 'Mitchell' -- Mitchell Marsh -- has sent the Indian bowlers on a leather hunt by hitting nearly a dozen sixes (11) across two games. Tackling 'Mitchell The Menace' will be topmost on the Indian team's agenda.

The series is locked at 1-1 and the starry quartet of Rohit Sharma, Virat Kohli, Shubman Gill and Suryakumar Yadav will have to bat out of their skins to stop the left-arm pacer, who is gearing up to once again bring the ball back viciously into the right-handers while taking a few away. A sea change on the technical aspect, as well mental make-up, will be the need of the hour, and Starc has exposed their frailties pretty badly.



Bowling attack

The Indian bowling attack needs to take its workload management seriously but, truth be told, the bowlers haven't had much work to do as they have bowled a total of 47 overs (36 and 11) across the two games. That is not even half of the 100 allocated overs. Mohammed Shami and Mohammed Siraj wouldn't mind making first use of the Chepauk surface if Rohit happens to win the toss. The key question is if Shardul Thakur, or Jaydev Unadkat for his left-arm variation, will be used as third specialist seamer, or both spinners Kuldeep Yadav and Axar Patel will get another game alongside Ravindra Jadeja.

The white ball games in India are mostly played on flat decks, where one can get away by hitting through the line, where one doesn't need too much

of feet movement. A batter can plonk the front-foot and hit deliveries across the line with a fair degree of success.

But Starc, blessed with

better skill sets, changed the questionnaire with deliveries that would either straighten in the off-middle line or cut back sharply towards leg-middle after a fair amount of deviation in the air.

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'Status quo maintained with China on LAC in Ladakh'

Jammu, Mar 21 (PTI): Northern Army Commander Lt Gen Upendra Dwivedi on Tuesday said status quo is maintained with China on the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in Ladakh and talks are going on at different levels, while the situation is under control in Jammu and Kashmir where efforts are on to stop terror incidents completely.

The General Officer Commanding-in-Chief (GoC) of Udhampur-based Northern Command was addressing a mega 'Veterans Sampark' rally which was attended by over 800 veterans and veer naris at a unit of Jammu and Kashmir Rifles at Digiana here. "The status quo is maintained with China on LAC. Talks are going on at different levels



Lt Gen Upendra Dwivedi

and all our formations are at a high level of operation preparedness," Lt Gen Dwivedi, who took over the charge of the Army commander of the Northern Command and the Colonel of the Regiment of Jammu and Kashmir Rifles and Ladakh Scouts on February 1 last year, said.

The Indian Army and the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) have been locked in a standoff in multiple areas along the LAC in eastern Ladakh since May 2020.

Lt Gen Dwivedi also talked about continuity of the ceasefire on the Line of Control (LoC) with

Pakistan but said there have been some infiltration attempts which have been successfully foiled by the Indian Army.

"The situation in the hinterland is largely under control. Our counter-insurgency/counter terrorism grid is fully working with civil administration and efforts are on to stop terror incidents completely," he said. Maj Gen (retd) Govardhan Singh Jamwal, Director, Sainik Welfare Department, J and K, Brigadier (retd) Gurmeet Singh Shan; Commander, 92 Infantry Brigade, Brig S K Goswami; and Commandant, JAK Rifles regimental center, Brig Rajesh Sharma also attended the rally, which was jointly organized by 7 JAK Rifles and 26 Infantry Division.

FLOWERS FOR SALE



Vendors display flowers for sale on the eve of Ugadi festival, at a wholesale market in Bengaluru, Tuesday.

Man gets death sentence for raping stepdaughter, making her pregnant

Kheda, Mar 21 (PTI): A court in Gujarat's Kheda district on Tuesday awarded the death sentence to a 28-year-old man for repeatedly raping his stepdaughter and impregnating her. Special POC SO judge PP Purohit at Nadiad city also ordered the man to pay Rs 2 lakh to the survivor as compensation. An FIR was registered against the man in March last year under the Indian Penal Code (IPC) as well as the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act. As per the prosecution, the accused repeatedly raped the girl, who was then aged 11 years and 8 months, for over five months and threatened her not to talk

about the sexual assault. The crime came to light only after the girl became pregnant. Public Prosecutor Gopal Thakor said the prosecution produced 12 witnesses and 44 documents, as evidence, before the court to establish the crime. Considering the evidence and the seriousness of the crime, the court sentenced the man to death to set an example in society and curb such crimes, Thakor said. The court awarded him the death sentence under section 376 (A)(B) of the IPC (for raping a girl under 12 years of age) and sections 5 (J)(2) (making child pregnant) and 5 (L) (committing rape more than once) of POCSO Act, he said.

On 'Navroz', hundreds let leeches suck their blood

In hope of getting rid of long-time ailments

Srinagar, Mar 21 (PTI):

Every year on this day, hundreds of patients make a beeline outside leech therapy centres here in the hope of getting rid of their long-time ailments.

They undergo a procedure wherein leeches are released on a person's body and the tiny predatory worms piercing his or her skin with their teeth and inserting anticoagulants through their saliva, thus thinning the patient's blood.

The leech therapists, usually medical practitioners from Unani system, claim that this procedure is very helpful in treating many ailments ranging from fatty liver to hypertension to blood clot-



A man receives 'leech therapy' at a makeshift clinic on 'Navroz', which marks the beginning of spring, in Srinagar, Tuesday.

ting, which often causes strokes.

Dr Hakeem Naseer Ahmad, a Unani practitioner, told PTI that leech therapy is used in case of infarction, or when there is altered or impaired blood circulation.

"The leech acts as a wonder medicine. What is basically the mechanism of leech therapy? Our aim is not sucking out the blood but to inject the enzymes found in saliva of the leech into the bloodstream. These improve the

micro-circulation of blood and we achieve our pharmacological actions," he said.

Ahmad, who has been holding leech therapy camps for the past 24 years, said he has found that the therapy is useful in treating both hypertension (high blood pressure) as well as hypotension (low blood pressure).

"We have seen that in hypertension cases, the blood pressure becomes normal within 15 minutes of leech therapy. In hypotension cases, we again found that the blood pressure was coming to normal levels," he said.

Ahmad said the enzymes in the leech help in dissolving clots in the bloodstream, allowing for the free flow of blood.

Man from Chh'garh lynched on suspicion of being thief

In Gujarat village

Kheda, Mar 21 (PTI):

A man hailing from Chhattisgarh was beaten to death on suspicion of being a thief in a village in Gujarat's Kheda district, police said on Tuesday.

The victim Ramkeshwar Kherwar was lynched by a group of people in Vansol village on the intervening night of Sunday and Monday, Deputy Superintendent of Police V R Bajpai said.

Kherwar, who sustained injuries to his head and a fracture on his right hand, was rushed to the Ahmedabad civil hospital in an ambulance, but was declared dead, he said.

"Villagers nabbed the man suspecting him of being a thief and beat him to death. No arrests have been made in the case so far. But some suspects are being questioned," Bajpai said.

An FIR was registered against unidentified persons under sections pertaining to murder, rioting, unlawful assembly, among others of the Indian Penal Code, at Mehmedabad police station on Tuesday, he said.

According to the police, the victim, who was in his mid to late 30s, hailed from Wadrafnagar in Balrampur district of Chhattisgarh and worked as a labourer.

HEAVY SNOWFALL



Snow-covered buildings following heavy snowfall at Kedarnath in Rudraprayag district, Tuesday.

'BJP is just a tenant, not owner of democracy'

New Delhi, Mar 21 (PTI): The Congress on Tuesday said the ruling BJP is just a tenant and not the owner of democracy and asserted that holding the government to account does not amount to criticising the nation.

Congress spokesperson and chief of the party's media and publicity department Pawan Khhera also said that the BJP was resorting to "theatrics" and "drama" to divert the country's attention from the Adani issue.

Taking a barb at the BJP, he said the party will be seen as "Jai Chands" in history and claimed its ideological forefathers were known apologisers of the British, after the BJP attacked Rahul Gandhi as "Mir Jafar". "Rahul Gandhi is demanding answers from the prime minister on the deeds of his

friend and a worried BJP is trying to enact new dramas to divert attention from the Adani issue," Khhera told reporters.

He termed these actions of the government as theatrics. Noting that Amit Shah and the "Shehanshah" know that Gandhi will not apologise, but I personally feel sad that BJP spokespersons come without preparation and bother you in the morning.

"It is sad that those who apologised to the British and those who remained loyal to London and who took pension from the British Viceroy are giving sermons on Patriotism to us. "Criticising the works of the government do not amount to criticising the country. The government is for the country and not vice versa, and the BJP

should understand this," Khhera said. He said democracy will only be strengthened if discussions on the state of democracy continue and democracy will be weakened if such discussions stop. "We want discussions." "I have a suggestion to Shah and Shehanshah that you are just tenants of democracy and not landlords, who are the people. I urge you to remain tenants and not try and become landlords.

"We request the prime minister, the home minister and the entire cabinet to start thinking about democracy and not about their friend," he also said.

Questioning why the government was running away from instituting a JPC probe into the Adani issue, he said even the name of Adani spoken by

Congress leaders are expunged from parliamentary records. "We want to know why a JPC is not being instituted.

"You want to become Jai Chand of democracy, then do not say why they will be called Jai Chands. We urge you to think about the country and not your friend," Khhera said, adding these are people whose ideological forefathers have been historically known to be the apologisers of the British and today they are giving us lectures on patriotism. It is an irony.

The Congress and other opposition parties have been demanding a JPC into the Adani issue while the BJP is demanding an apology from Gandhi for his "democracy under threat" remarks made in London.

WORLD WATER DAY-2023

Water for Life: Navigating the Global Crisis Together



Dr. Manas Ranjan Senapati

Covering more than 71% of the Earth's surface, water is undoubtedly the most precious natural resource that exists on our planet. Water is one of the natural resources and it plays a very important role in our life. A person needs 15 kg of air, 1.5 kg of water and 0.75 kg of food per day to survive. We get all these

from nature. We cannot imagine our life without the presence of water. So we say, "Water is life". As the population is increasing, we are facing the problem of scarcity of various natural resources because we are not managing them properly.

Our global water system is in crisis. According to the United Nations, safe water and sanitation is a human right, but billions of people will not have access to these essentials for life in the future. For us humans, water is not only a vital need for our bodies, but it is also a resource that we benefit from every day. At home, we use it for cooking, cleaning, washing and flushing. Water is also used for power generation, manufacturing of goods. Pollution, over-exploitation

and climate change continue to undermine water quality and availability. About 3.6 billion people struggle to get enough water to meet their needs for at least one month each year, according to the World Meteorological Organization. We see neighbor-to-neighbor, state-to-state and nation-to-nation wars over water. We have 18 percent of the world's population, but only 4 percent of our water resources, making us one of the most stressed countries in the world. According to a recent report by the government's Policy Commission, a large number of Indians are facing extreme water crisis. Several major cities in India have experienced water shortages in recent years, with Chennai being

the most prominent in 2019. Natural calamities like droughts and floods are caused by excessive use of water and wastage of water. We use about 10-15 liters of water to wash our cars i.e., 105 liters a week, 3150 liters a month and 37,800 liters a year. Some countries of the world like Brazil, China, USA, Jordan, South Africa, Libya etc. are also facing water shortage. World Water Day is an international observance and an opportunity to learn more about water-related issues. World Water Day began in 1992 at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development where an international observance for water was recommended. The United Nations General Assembly designated 22 March 1993 as the

first World Water Day. Since then it has been held every year. World Water Day 2023 is about accelerating change to address water and sanitation crises. And because water affects us all, we all need to take action. This means you and your family, school and community can make a difference in your life by changing the way you use, use and manage water. About 159 million people collect their drinking water from surface water such as ponds and rivers. Today, 1.8 billion people are at risk of contracting cholera, typhoid and polio from contaminated drinking water sources. Water has become a key issue in the fight to eradicate extreme poverty, with the Sustainable Development Goals, launched in 2015, including

a goal to ensure safe water for all by 2030. The purpose of celebrating this World Water Day is to remind that we should follow guidelines to save water for ourselves and our future. The United Nations and its member states celebrate this day by promoting and implementing the UN Recommendations for the Conservation of Water Resources. Various organizations promote ways to conserve water, treat wastewater, and protect aquatic habitats. The main purpose of World Water Day is to solve the problem of lack of clean water in the world. Otherwise we will face third world war for water. (Dr. Manas Ranjan Senapati, Dean Science, BNUT, Professor of Chemistry, Trident Academy of Technology)

Delhi hosts Int'l Happiness Film fest

New Delhi, Mar 21 (PTI): Coinciding with International Day of Happiness on Monday, a festival of extremely short films themed on happiness was held here with a special category for seniors.

Fourteen films in the categories of poetry, painting, dance and animation (all of maximum three minutes), besides music videos were screened at the LOGI HQ International Happiness Film Festival & Exhibition 2023.

Founder and festival director Manisha Gupta said she founded LOGI-HQ, a happiness start-up, in 2011 with an aim to help people during the Covid pandemic and achieve a higher form of

happiness through creativity. She then conceived the idea of the happiness festival to lift people from the distressing times. Last year, the festival was held in an online format.

कालड़ा बर्न एवं
प्लास्टिक कॉस्मेटिक सर्जरी सेंटर
राजिनोप्लास्टी

नाक को सही (रिशोपिंग) करना

आर.के.सी.के सामने, चौबे कालोनी एवं पंचनदी नाका, फतहली रोड कलकत्ता मॉल के पास, रायपुर
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