



BRIEF



A commuter uses a plastic sheet to cover himself during rain in Noida, Thursday.

CBI arrests

New Delhi: The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) on Thursday arrested a neurosurgeon of Safdarjung Hospital here and his four accomplices for allegedly forcing patients into buying surgical equipment from a particular store at exorbitant prices for early dates of their surgery. The agency raided several locations in Delhi and Uttar Pradesh and busted the nefarious nexus, officials said, adding that Manish Rawat, the neurosurgeon, was arrested in the early hours of Thursday.

Convicted

New Delhi: A Delhi court has convicted two persons for rioting and arson in Khajuri Khas in February 2020, saying the prosecution had proved the charges against them beyond any reasonable doubt. The court convicted Mithan Singh and Jony Kumar, who were part of a riotous mob that set ablaze the shop of the complainant Aamir Hussain on February 25 that year.

Holy dip

Ayodhya: About 25 lakh people took a dip in river Saryu in Ayodhya on Thursday and visited temples in the city to mark the Ram Navami festivities, administrative officials said. They said lakhs of devotees thronged the temple town on the occasion of Chaitra Ram Navami amid tight security arrangements by the administration.

Robbery

Thane: A jeweller was robbed of Rs 2.08 crore worth of gold and cash in Maharashtra's Raigad district, a police official said on Thursday. The incident took place on March 28 when the victim was travelling from Hyderabad to Mumbai and his bus halted at a food court along the expressway, he said.

Spl train

Kolkata: Eastern India's first Bharat Gaurav special tourist train will embark on a journey from Kolkata on May 20 touring five Jyotirlingas, a senior railway official said here on Thursday. Eastern Railway General Manager Arun Arora said that IRCTC is offering 700 seats for the journey in a new LHB rake.

Fake scribe

New Delhi: A 52-year-old man posing as a journalist was arrested along with his son for allegedly trying to extort Rs 50,000 from a businessman and later beating him up for reporting the matter to police, police said on Thursday.

Weather
High 36 Low 23

BLACK THURSDAY

12 killed during Ram Navami puja in temple

■ As roof of well collapses

Bhopal/Indore, Mar 30 (PTI):

Twelve persons died after the roof of a bawdi (well) collapsed during a havan, a fire ritual, on the occasion of Ram Navami at a temple in Madhya Pradesh's Indore city on Thursday, Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan said.

Earlier, Indore Collector Illaiyaraja T had given the death toll as 12. Ten women and a man died in the accident, state home minister Narottam Mishra told reporters in Bhopal. It is feared that a few kids are also missing and a search is on to trace them by pumping out the bawdi's water, Mishra said. Chouhan told reporters in the state capital that 11 persons have died in



Rescue operations underway after roof of a stepwell collapsed at Beleshwar Mahadev Jhulelal temple, in Indore, Madhya Pradesh on Thursday.

the bawdi collapse tragedy at the Beleshwar Mahadev Jhulelal temple in Indore's Patel Nagar. The CM said he has ordered a probe into the incident. According to Chouhan, 19 persons were rescued and taken to the hospital but one of them succumbed to his injuries.

The chief minister has also announced financial assistance of Rs 5 lakh each to

the kin of the deceased and Rs 50,000 for every injured person. Expressing anguish soon after the accident, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had tweeted, "Extremely pained by the mishap in Indore. Spoke to CM Shivraj Chouhan Ji and took an update on the situation. The state government is spearheading rescue and relief work at a quick pace.

My prayers with all those affected and their families."

The temple was constructed by laying a slab over the bawdi in a covered campus, home minister Mishra said. A probe has been ordered into the matter, particularly to find out how the temple was allowed to be constructed over a bawdi, Mishra said.

Nearly 30-35 devotees fell into the well after the accident at the temple, said Indore Police Commissioner Makrand Deoskar citing eyewitness accounts. Earlier, a witness had put the number at nearly 25.

An eyewitness said that during the religious programme, there was a huge crowd of devotees on the roof of the bawdi in the temple. As the structure could not bear the load of so many people, it caved in, he said.

Fire erupts in temple, no loss of life



Flames rise after a fire broke out at a temple during Ram Navmi celebrations, in West Godavari, Thursday.

Duvva (AP), Mar 30 (PTI):

A fire broke out at a temple in Andhra Pradesh's West Godavari district on Thursday at the end of Sri Rama Navami festivities, an official said.

Nobody was injured as the devotees had already gone out of the Venugopala Swamy temple premises on a procession as part of the festival in Duvva village in Tanukula mandal. "It was a short-circuit and there

was no loss of life or injury," confirmed West Godavari district Superintendent of Police (SP) U Ravi Prakash.

The fire erupted at noon after the completion of puja (rituals) and when the procession was already on its way into the village. According to police, the organisers had erected a tent made out of palmyra leaves in which electric lighting was given. The scorching summer heat would have caused the fire, police

said. Except for the tent getting gutted, no other loss was observed. Police and fire officials reached the spot on time and brought the fire under control, SP Ravi Prakash said. As this was a fire accident, the police department did not file any case but the fire department would register one, the official added. Meanwhile, a video of the incident has gone viral, in which the flames and smoke can be seen billowing out of the thatched tent.

CRPF trooper injured while trying to defuse IED

Raipur, Mar 30 (PTI):

A Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) jawan was injured on Thursday while trying to defuse an improvised explosive device (IED) in Chhattisgarh's Bijapur district, a police official said.

The incident occurred at around 11:30 am in Nelasnar police station limits when a team of CRPF's 165th battalion was out on an area domination-cum-search operation, the official said. "The patrolling team

detected an IED placed beneath the ground near a culvert between Nelasnar and Pandemurga villages. When constable Ravi Kumar, a member of the Bomb Disposal Squad (BDS) of the CRPF 165th battalion, was trying to defuse the bomb, it exploded, leaving him injured," he said.

Kumar, whose is out of danger, was first shifted to a local hospital and is being airlifted to Raipur for advanced medical treatment, the official said.

TRACTOR-TROLLEY OVERTURNS Three women killed, 20 injured

Balodabazar, Mar 30:

Three women were killed and 20 others injured when the tractor-trolley in which they were travelling overturned in Balodabazar district, police said.

The accident took place on late Wednesday night near Thakurdiya village, said Kailash Chandra Das, Station House Officer (SHO), Kasold police station.

The victims were returning to Khainda village in the district after attending a wedding at Turturiya village, he said.



The injured undergoing treatment.

While two women died on the spot, another succumbed to injuries at a nearby hospital, the official said. The deceased were identified as Radha Manikpuri (50), her sister Kachra Manikpuri (55) and Bhuribai Manikpuri

About the mishap...

The accident took place on late Wednesday night near Thakurdiya village. The victims were returning to Khainda village in the district after attending a wedding at Turturiya village. While two women died on the spot, another succumbed to injuries at a nearby hospital.

(58). The injured were admitted to hospitals in Balodabazar and neighbouring Raipur districts, SHO Das said.

PM makes surprise visit to new Parl building

New Delhi, Mar 30 (PTI):

Prime Minister Narendra Modi made a surprise visit to the new parliament building here on Thursday evening and inspected various works as well as interacted with construction workers, sources said.

The prime minister spent more than an hour inside the building.

Accompanied by Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla, Modi had a look at the facilities coming up at both Houses of Parliament, the sources said. He also interacted with the construction



workers, they said. The new building, which was earlier expected to be completed by November last year, is likely to be inaugurated soon. In December 2020, Prime Minister Modi had laid the foundation stone of the new parliament building which will have modern facilities.

DEVOTION AND FAITH



Devotees participate in a procession on the occasion of Ram Navmi, at Jagdalpur in Bastar district, Thursday.

Tripura BJP MLA caught watching porn in assembly

■ Oppn demands action

Agartala, Mar 30 (PTI):

BJP MLA Jadab Lal Nath was allegedly caught watching pornography on his mobile phone in the Tripura assembly, prompting the opposition on Thursday to demand strong action against him. The incident happened when proceedings were underway in the assembly on the last day of the Budget session on Wednesday, and a video clip of it went viral on social media. Nath, the MLA of Bagbassa constituency in North Tripura district, claimed obscene videos started appearing on his phone as he received a

call. "I know well that using mobile phones is prohibited in the House. As repeated calls were coming, I picked up a call, and then obscene videos started appearing on my phone. Anyways, I then closed it," he told PTI. He said he has spoken to state BJP president Rajib Bhattacharya on the matter who told him to "wait". The Congress said it was a shameful incident, and Nath should be punished for it. "This incident has tarnished the image of all MLAs. This man should be appropriately punished. Use of mobile phones is completely prohibited in the assembly, how could he watch pornography?" state Congress president Birajit Sinha said.

22-year-old man held for raping minor

Rajnandgaon, Mar 30:

A 22-year-old man has been arrested for allegedly raping a 6-year-old girl at her village in Khairagarh-Chhuikhadan-Gandai district, an official said on Thursday. The alleged crime was committed on Wednesday in the Gandai police station area, the official said. According to the complaint, the accused lured the child with chocolates and took her to a secluded place where he allegedly sexually assaulted her, the official said. After the girl's mother learnt about the incident, she lodged a police complaint, leading to the arrest of the accused from a forest near the village, the official said.

MALEGAON BLAST

SC junks Lt Col Prasad Purohit's plea

■ For discharge from case

New Delhi, Mar 30 (PTI):

The Supreme Court has junked a plea filed by Lieutenant Colonel Prasad Purohit seeking discharge in the 2008 Malegaon blast case. Purohit had moved the top court challenging the January 2 order of the Bombay High Court rejecting his appeal.

Purohit and six others, including BJP MP Pragya Singh Thakur, are facing trial in the case. All the accused are currently out on bail. A bench of Justices Hrishikesh Roy and Manoj Misra refused to interfere

with the high court order. "The challenge here is to the order of the High Court whereby it was observed that sanction is not needed under Section 197(2) of the CrPC for the prosecution of the petitioner as his impugned conduct does not pertain to any of his official duties." Having noted the basis of the impugned judgment, we see no reason to interfere with the same and accordingly, the Special Leave Petition is not entertained," the bench said. The top court, however, clarified that the trial court should not be influenced by observations in the high court's order. "The observation made in the impugned

order for the purpose of examining the issue of sanction should not prejudice either the prosecution or the defence, in the proceedings before the trial court, the bench said.

In July 2021, Purohit had told the Bombay High Court that he was "an unsung" hero of the Indian Army, who had suffered much during nearly nine years he spent in prison as an undertrial before being released on bail.

The top court in 2018 had turned Purohit's plea seeking a court-monitored probe by a Special Investigation Team (SIT) into his alleged abduction, illegal detention and brutal torture in the 2008 Malegaon blast case.

10 cops injured as mob hurls stones, bottles

■ Groups clash near Ram temple in Aurangabad

Aurangabad, Mar 30 (PTI):

At least 12 persons, including 10 policemen, were injured after a mob of around 500 people went berserk and hurled stones and petrol-filled bottles when the cops tried to control the situation following a clash between two groups near a Ram temple in Maharashtra's Aurangabad city, officials said on Thursday.

The incident, in which 13 vehicles were torched by the miscreants, occurred during the intervening night of Wednesday and Thursday

Stones pelted at Ram Navami procession

Vadodara, Mar 30 (PTI):

Stones were hurled at a Ram Navami procession in Fatehpura area of Gujarat's Vadodara city on Thursday, police said. While some vehicles got damaged, no one was injured in the incident and the procession passed along its planned route under police protection, said Deputy Commissioner of Police, Yashpal Jaganiya. Jaganiya and other senior police officials rushed to the spot upon learning about the incident. A local Bajrang Dal leader alleged that despite knowing



Police personnel deployed after incidents of stone pelting on a 'Ram Navmi' procession, in Vadodara, Thursday.

that such an incident had taken place in the past, police were nowhere to be seen

when the procession, taken out every year along the same route, came under attack.

in the city's Kiradpura locality that houses the famous Ram temple, they said. Ram Navami is being celebrated on Thursday.

Will not tolerate land mafias and encroachers: OA-BSP

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Mar 30: Some people made an attempt to construct a dome shed illegally on the land reserved for an electrical sub-station in Sector-09 hospital premises. It needs to be mentioned here that the proposed sub-station is to be constructed in the hospital premises to handle electrical emergencies in the hospital.

Some people had started construction work without any permission. The Enforcement Department team of Bhilai Steel Plant had served a notice to stop the work. The notice board installed on the land by BSP was uprooted and thrown away by some anti-social elements.

It could be recollected here that the Town Services Department of



BSP is continuously running a massive campaign against illegal constructions and encroachments being made at various places in the township. Due to the action being taken against illegal constructions, the officers and employees of the Town Services Department are being misbehaved and abused by some local contractors and local leaders.

OA-BSP has strongly condemned such behaviour and has expressed strong objection. For the past few times, many illegal constructions have been made in Bhilai city, which are technically very unsafe and of bad quality, which is a potential danger for the residents of Bhilai. The people of Bhilai are very serious over the attempts to grab the open land of

Bhilai city with illegal and unplanned construction of low quality which are being made without permission.

The citizens will give a befitting reply at the appropriate time. OA BSP has praised the efforts being made by the Town Services Department to remove illegal encroachments. They have congratulated the officers and employees of the enforce-

ment department.

OA President Narendra Kumar Banchore said that the people of Bhilai will no longer tolerate illegal constructions and encroachments. Strictest steps should be taken by Bhilai management against such people.

Banchore said that the government and administration should give full cooperation in getting the Bhilai city freed from ille-

gal encroachments and save its identity as a beautiful and well organized city.

Banchore said that OA-BSP has pledged for a clean, beautiful and safe Bhilai. The Association will take necessary steps in this regard. He expressed hope that the people of Bhilai would extend full cooperation in removing illegal encroachments.

Value Added Course on Yoga & Meditation organised in Bhilai Maitri College

Central Chronicle News



Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Mar 30: Bhilai Maitri College, Risali conducted 15 days Value added course on "Yoga and Meditation". A few minutes of yoga during the day can be a great way to get rid of stress that accumulates daily in both the body and mind. Yoga Posture, pranayama and meditation are effective techniques to release stress. This value added course started on "International Women's Day". NS Patel,

Durg District Incharge Patanjali, trained students on first day of this course. From second day the training/workshop continued by Dr Neeraj Choubey, Assistant Professor, Bhilai Maitri College Risali. On last day feedback was collected from the students. Presidents (MECA), Rajam Sudhakaran, Directors Dr Sajitha Thambi, S Sajeev, S Sajan, Principal Dr Surekha Vinod Patil appreciated the staff and students for conducting fruitful course.

BSP signs 2-year MoU with IOCL for Sulphur procurement

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Mar 30: A long-term Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed on March 29, 2023, between the Material Management Department of SAIL-Bhilai Steel Plant and Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL) for the supply of Sulphur for the Sulphuric Acid Plant.

Earlier, Sulphur was imported through MMTC which was transported from Visakhapatnam Port to Bhilai Steel Plant by rail. However, under the Atmanirbhar Bharat initiative and Make in India policy of the Government of India, BSP has now entered into an agreement with the Public Sector petroleum company, IOCL



for the next two years, which may be extended up to one more year. The said agreement was executed to procure 20,000 tonnes of Sulphur. This step would not only save a considerable amount of foreign exchange but would also prove to be an important step towards making India self-reliant. At present Bhilai Steel

Plant transports Sulphur from IOCL's Panipat and Mathura Refineries through road transport. Approximately 800 tonne of Sulphur is consumed monthly in the DCDA Acid Plant of Bhilai Steel Plant. On behalf of Bhilai Steel Plant, the MoU was signed by Tapan Kumar, CGM (Materials Management) while SP

Kachhwaha, Divisional Head (Raipur) signed on behalf of Indian Oil Corporation. Tapan Kumar, CGM (Materials Management), Umesh Kango, GM In-charge (Purchase - Ref. & Raw Material), Sushant Halder, GM (CO CCD) and Rajesh Kumar Sharma, GM (Finance & Accounts) played a vital role in drafting and preparation of the said MoU.

Other representative officers from Indian Oil Corporation Limited, Shashank Sharma, Manager and Nishant Arora, Assistant Manager were also present, along with Rahul Arora, GM (Purchase-Ref.) and Sanjay Singh, DGM (Purchase - Raw Material) from Bhilai Steel Plant.

Absconding murder accused caught during night patrolling

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Mar 30: Police arrested a suspect during the routine night patrolling in Mohan Nagar area of Durg. Later, Police verified his identity and came to know that he was an absconding accused of a murder case registered in Dondi Lohara. The accused has been handed over to the concerned police station for further action.

Inspector Vipin Rangari (SHO, Mohan Nagar Police Station) informed that they are conducting intensive patrol during the night for crime prevention and control. Police found roaming unnecessarily during the night are intercepted and interrogated. The suspects are brought to the police station and are released only after verification.



One such suspect was intercepted by cops during patrolling at night. When questioned, he was unable to give a satisfactory reply. On suspicion, he was brought to the Police Station. Police shared his pics on messaging platforms with their counterparts of different police stations of neighbouring districts.

Soon they came to know that he was an absconding accused of murder. During interrogation, the accused

confessed his crime. Later, he was handed over to Dondi Lohara police station. The accused was on the run for the past 10 to 12 days.

The accused is identified as Mahesh Kumar Urvasha (31) a resident of Balod District. According to information, the accused was wanted in connection to a woman's murder in village Kotera of Dondi Lohara Block. On March 15, 25-year-old Neha Sinha was strangled to death at her

home.

Mahesh was the prime suspect as police had confirmed reports about his presence at the crime scene that day. Neha's husband Domendra Sinha is driver while Mahesh worked as his helper. On March 15, Domendra had gone to Raipur.

That day, Mahesh did not accompany him and had stayed at the village only. On the way, Domendra had received a mobile call from his wife. His wife Neha had informed him that Mahesh had come to their home in a drunken state and was misbehaving with her. Domendra spoke to Mahesh on mobile phone and had asked him to move away. When Domendra returned home, he found that his wife Neha was lying dead at home.

Ruffian stabs girlfriend to death after breakup

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Mar 30: A ruffian attacked two minor girls with a knife during the Jawara Kalash immersion procession at Shitala Mandir in Indira Nagar on Thursday. The elder sister succumbed to injuries while the younger sister has been admitted to the hospital in a critical condition. Police have arrested the assailant. The incident was the outcome of a love affair.

According to information, the accused Mahesh Yadav son of Sujan Yadav is a resident of Indira Nagar, Supela. He was arrested a few months ago in connection with a theft case and was sent to jail. After being released, he came to know that his girl-



friend has broken up with him and is dating some other guy. When he spoke to her, the girl stated that she no longer wants to talk to him.

Mahesh had called her to meet for the last time during the Jawara Immersion programme. When the girl reached there with her younger sister, the accused attacked them with a knife.

He stabbed her ex-girlfriend to death and inflicted fatal injuries to her younger sister.

The accused was heavily drunk while committing the crime. He escaped from the spot and was hiding on the roof of a nearby government school. Police team launched a search operation and the accused was arrested within an hour.

Central Mechanical Organisation felicitates contractual workers of BSP

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Mar 30: A Felicitation Programme was organised by Central Mechanical Organisation under the leadership of Sanjay Kumar Gajbhiye, CGM (Mechanical), for promoting safety culture in Bhilai Steel Plant. The Award ceremony was held at the M&U Conference Hall on March 29, 2023.

The contractual workers of Central Mechanical who have been selected as winners were awarded for their contribution towards safety & work culture. The workers were awarded on the basis of assessment criteria laid down by the Safety Engineering Department of BSP. The winners were declared



under three categories, namely 'Sarvottam', 'Anmol' and 'Dakshya' for the 1st, 2nd and 3rd ranks respectively.

Gifts worth Rupees 3,000/- were awarded to the winners of Sarvottam Category, 2,000/- to the Anmol and Rs.1000/- to the winners in the Dakshya Category. Overall 46 awards

were distributed to the respective winners in the programme, for the year 2022 including 8 awards each in Sarvottam and Anmol category and 30 in Dakshya Category. All the winners were given away gifts equal to the prize money.

Their achievements were read out by the respective HoDs in the programme.



The programme was chaired by Sanjay Kumar Gajbhiye, CGM (Mechanical). Among the other dignitaries present were, Dr AR Sontake, GM (SED), Sanjay Gandhi, GM In-charge (CHM & CRM), Dr JP Pandey, GM In-charge (Mech. Services), BD Babu, GM (Plant Garage), Santosh George,

GM (Plant Garage), JM Palaiya, GM In-charge (EDD), Bansu Tudu, GM (EDD), Nabarshi Roy GM (RVC), BN Jha GM (CED), HoDs of other sections and prize winners were also present at the ceremony. A presentation was given by K Neeladhar Senior Manager (TA to CGM-Mech).

PCC wins U-14 Invitational Cricket Tournament

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Mar 30: The Under-14 Invitational Cricket Tournament was organised under the joint auspices of Bhilai Cricket Association (BCA) and KPS Nehru Nagar at BSP Cricket Ground Sector 10. The final match was played between Naidu Cricket Academy and Padmanabhpur Cricket Club (PCC).

Padmanabhpur Cricket Club won the final match by 56 runs. Naidu Cricket Academy won the toss and decided to field first. Taking the bat first, Padmanabhpur Cricket Club (PCC) scored 111 runs on the loss of 7 wickets. Jesai Aditya scored 28 runs, Aditya Singh Nivare scored 25 runs and Ayansh Sagar scored 10 runs. Bowling for Naidu Cricket Academy Prateek



Gandharva and Aman Sahune took two wickets each, Dhanraj Singh, Saransh Tandon and Chandra Yadav took one wicket each. Chasing the score of 11 runs, Naidu Cricket Academy was all out for 55 runs. Prateek Gandharva scored 13 runs, Chandransh Yadav scored 9 runs. Bowling for PCC Soham Singh, Om Pandey and Samyak Mishra took two wickets each, Ayush Dutta took one wicket while three players were

run out. The umpires of the final match were Mohammad Dawood Ansari and Mohammad Imran Khan, the scorer was Vinod Devghare. Ramesh Sahu was the coach for PCC team and Naidu Cricket Academy coach was Gajanan Naidu. Jesai Aditya was declared Man of the Match.

Selectors Paramjit Singh and Amit Srivastava match coordinators. Best Batsman in the tournament was Yash

Raj Singh of KPS, Best Bowler was awarded to Dhanraj Singh of Naidu Cricket Academy, Best Wicket Keeper award went to Sachin Kumar of KPS. The title of Best Emerging Player was given to Ayansh Sagar of Padmanabhpur Cricket Club (PCC). Chief guest of the final match and prize distribution ceremony was Pramod Shankar Sharma (Vice President Chhattisgarh State Cricket Association) who handed over the trophy to the winning and runner-up teams. Yogesh Shah, Secretary of Bhilai Cricket Association, presided over the prize distribution ceremony. Mohd Taslim, Jitendra Kumar, Someshwar Rao, Vijesh Kumar, Pradeep Kumar, Shome Sudhir Joshi, parents of the players and the sports loving public were present.

Vibrant Rural Folk Art Festival organised in Janjgiri

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Mar 30: The Corporate Social Responsibility Department of SAIL- Bhilai Steel Plant organized a Rural Folk Art Festival on March 28, 2023 in Model Steel Village, Janjgiri. The folk festival is a step to patronise the talent of budding local artists, and provide them a platform. Through this event, awareness was also created among the villagers about folk arts.

Five art groups gave riveting performances in the rural folk festival. These included performance by Hamar Durg, Chhattisgarhi folk cultural program, various folk presentations by Shivkant Tiwari group, and Pandwani performance in Kapalik style rendered by

Maa Saraswati Pandwani Samiti and Tomin Nishad & group from Kokdi. Various folk songs and dances were presented by Chhattisgarh Lokvidha folk dance group, Katras. Jai Shri Krishna Gokuldham Ahir Raut Nacha, Raut Nacha was presented by the Ghumka group. An interesting performance of Lorik Chanda drama was staged by Gautam Choubey, from Deurgaon. The villagers of Janjgiri and nearby villages enjoyed the folk festival. Lorik Chanda drama was staged by Gautam Choubey, from Deurgaon.

Dr Rajeev Pal, Chief Medical Officer (Medical Department) was the chief guest of the program. In his address, Dr Pal lauded the festival and assured the management's cooperation

for further initiatives of rural development of CSR.

The chief guest of the festival felicitated the participant artists with bouquets, shawl, coconut and mementoes. The artists were provided with an honorarium amount as a token of appreciation. On this occasion, the participants were also welcomed by Sivarajan, General Manager (CSR), Sushil Kumar Kamde, Senior Manager (CSR). The cooperation of Budhelal, Ashutosh Soni, Anjani Dwivedi along with village head Sarpanch Rekha Chaturvedi was praiseworthy. The festival was conducted by President's Award recipient, Rajni Rajak, who is an employee in the CSR Department of Bhilai Steel Plant.

OBITUARY

RN Singh



Bhilai: Former Chief Education Officer of BSP - RN Singh left for heavenly abode at the age of 82 years. Funeral procession was taken out from his residence in Ramnagar and last rites of the mortal remains were performed at sRamnagar Muktidham. He was the father of Om Prakash Singh, Ram P Rakesh Singh, Geeta Singh and Reeta Singh. Kshatriya Kalyan Sabha mourned his death.

Why 95% of the ED cases are against a group only: Singh Deo

No political party is bereft of 'corruption'

Surguja, Mar 30:

The Health Minister TS Singh Deo on his arrival in Surguja on occasion of Ramnavami raised questions on purely one-sided action by the ED. TS Singh Deo said that every time the issue of 'corruption' is raised, but this is not limited to a party or a group or an individual in particular. We see such cases daily, but when it comes to presenting evidence or fact, we are helpless.

Singh Deo said that if any constitutional agency is conducting investigation, then it is found that it



is taking more of actions against a group in particular. He categorically said that no political party is bereft of 'corruption', than why 95% of the action is against the persons associated with a particular po-

litical party only, he questioned.

Singh Deo said that there are many things in the world which comes under the purview of 'corruption', but it is difficult to find its proof. He questioned as to whether there are no talks about No. 1 or No. 2 money?

Therefore it is being said that ED is purely being used for political benefits and if action is taken against the government functional in different states, irrespective of the party, then all things will be clear in black & white, he added.



CM Bhupesh Baghel addressing at the inauguration of 'Shri Hanuman Chalisa Mahapath' at Indoor Stadium here on Thursday.

Lord Shri Hanuman symbolizes devotion, knowledge, power: CM

Attends Hanuman Chalisa Mahapath prog at Indoor Stadium



Raipur, Mar 30:

Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel took part in the 'Shri Hanuman Chalisa Paath' jointly organised by Shri Hanuman Mahapath Samiti and 'Jeevan Prabandhan Samooh' at Balbir Singh Juneja Indoor Stadium here on Thursday. On this occasion CM recited 'Hanuman Chalisa Paath' along with all the Hanuman devotees present. In this programme CM gave patient listening to lecture by Pt. Vijayshankar Mehta on the subject 'In the run for success- don't break family'. Speaking on the occasion CM Baghel said that today is Ramnavami and this day is very much

auspicious. He said that Lord Shri Hanuman is symbol of devotion, knowledge and power and there no bigger 'yogi', 'Bhakt' knowledgeable and powerful than him. Baghel said that the character like Lord Shri Hanuman may not be found in any other 'Ved', 'Puran' or 'Granth'. CM on this occasion extended greetings to all on occasion of Ramnavami and to the Samiti for organising Hanuman Chalisa Paath and expressed gratitude towards Pt. Vijay Shankar Mehta for reciting 'Hanuman Chalisa'.

On this occasion LS MP Raipur Sunil Soni, MLA Brijmohan Agrawal, Chairman Rajya Gou Sewa Aayog Ramsundar Das, Shadani Darbar Seer Mahant Shri Yudhisthir Lal, Speaker RMC Pramod Dubey, Chairman Ch'garh Yoga Aayog- Gyanesh Sharma, senior journalist Himanshu Dwivedi, Shri Vijay Agrawal, Yogesh Agrawal, Mukesh Shah and Mohan Pawan from Shri Hanuman Mahapath Samiti and other members were present.

V-C releases books on Ch'garhi vocabulary and culture



Central Chronicle News

Raipur, Mar 30: Pt Ravishanker Shukla University (PRSU) Raipur Vice Chancellor Dr Keshari Lal Verma has released the 2 books written by Dr Hitesh Kumar.

First book written jointly by Dr Hitesh Kumar and Shanker Lal Kunjam is a utility book on Chhattisgarh culture whereas the second

book is a study on Chhattisgarhi Agriculture Vocabulary which has been jointly written by Dr Hitesh Kumar with Khemlal Chandel.

Through the above books, the writer wants to create awareness among people about the Chhattisgarh vocabulary which would establish a new milestone in the field of Chhattisgarh Linguistics.

Congress keeps on dividing nation on Religious Ground: BJP

● MLA Brijmohan Agrawal alleges corruption in Ram Van Gaman Path development

Central Chronicle News

Raipur, Mar 30: Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) MLA Brijmohan Agrawal on Thursday said that the Congress always tries to divide people on the basis of Religion whereas the Lord Rama is of everyone and dividing means to divide the nation.

Agrawal made the above statement while responding to the statement given by Cabinet Minister Amarjeet Bhagat. Agrawal further stated that the Congress would never get the blessings of Lord Rama as it is involved in corruption in the development of Mata

Kaushalya Temple and Shree Ram Van Gaman Path across Chhattisgarh. He also condemned the move of erstwhile Congress government which had even challenged the existence of Lord Rama in Supreme Court over Ramsetu construction. Brijmohan claimed that the Kaushalya Dham was identified during the BJP tenure and had even started the development whereas the Congress government is falsely taking claim to gain political mileage. BJP MLA further alleged that while the state government spends Rs 6 crore on development but pays Rs 12 crore to the Event Management Company for vested interest and added that the Congress would never get blessings of Lord Rama and even connected the recent Enforcement Directorate (ED) to be an outcome of the curse due to corruption.

Speech Competition on Millets & Healthy Life held



Raipur, Mar 30: National Institute of Technology Raipur organized a speech competition on Millets & Healthy Life. The aim of this event was to spread awareness about the International Year of Millets. This event was successfully conducted under the supervision of Dr. Govardhan Bhatt, Faculty In-charge, National Service Scheme (NSS). Dr. PY Dhekne, Registrar, NIT Raipur and Dr Nitin Jain, Dean (SW) graced the event with their presence. Dr. Debashish Mishra, Associate professor, Dept. of Mathematics and Dr. Meena Murmu, Assistant Professor, Dept. of Civil Engineering were

the judges of this competition. All the students participated enthusiastically in this speech competition and made everyone aware of Millets and their qualities. Some talked about its protein-rich and gluten-free nature, while some called Millets as Panchamrit. At the end of the program, the names of the winners were announced, in which Lakhna Sharma, Dept. Metallurgy and materials got the first prize, Surbhi Singh, MCA got the second prize. Attractive prizes were also given to the winners. The event concluded with the award distribution ceremony by the guests.

Since 1924



Relieves

Cold, Headache, Body Pain, Sprain

AYURVEDIC PROPRIETARY MEDICINE HEADROSA BALM, 15gms. ₹ 19/- 30gms. ₹ 33/- 45gms. ₹ 45/- 75gms. ₹ 75/- 100gms. ₹ 100/-

HEADROSA BALM

Mfd. by: Vallabh Vijay & Sons Mumbai - 40 CUSTOMER CARE NO: 97256-08007



Building India's youth power with passion, enterprise and innovation

MUDRA Yojana – a trust-bridge between Government of India and entrepreneurs of Chhattisgarh

About **60 lakh** entrepreneurs of Chhattisgarh got loan of more than **₹26,000 crore** under the **MUDRA Yojana**, empowering the entrepreneurs.

Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana – from going unbanked to being banked

More than **1 crore 66 lakh** beneficiaries in Chhattisgarh received benefits directly in their **Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Bank accounts** during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme – Government's support to entrepreneurs in distress

Loans without guarantee of more than **₹6000 crore** given to the enterprises of Chhattisgarh during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Strong support to small vendors during the pandemic

Under **Pradhan Mantri SVANidhi Yojana**, loans without guarantee of more than **₹79 crore** to the street vendors of Chhattisgarh to sustain their livelihood.

Our youth power is our greatest strength. Our youth is excelling in different sectors and contributing to national progress. Youth power is empowering the future of our nation.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi



Get the most out of the Masters Trainers training session: Abidi



Raipur, Mar 30:

In order to ensure effective governance and management of Panchayati Raj Institutions in the Scheduled Areas of Chhattisgarh, a two-day training related to capacity development of representatives of selected tribal communities of these institutions was organized at Tribal Research and Training Institute (TRI),

Nava Raipur, Atal Nagar. A total of 54 master trainers nominated from the districts participated on the first day of the training session. While addressing the inaugural session, Commissioner cum Director TRI Mrs. Shammi Abidi briefly explained the objective of the training programme. She urged the master trainers from the districts to take full advantage of

this training session and clear all their doubts from the various subject experts coming during the training session, so that they do not face any kind of confusion while giving training to the panchayat representatives at the district level. Under the aegis of Tribal Research and Training Institute, with the aim of ensuring effective administration and management of

Panchayati Raj Institutions in scheduled areas of Chhattisgarh, training program related to capacity development of tribal community representatives of these institutions, training at TRI on March 28-29, 2023 was organised. Here, after getting training, selected master trainers from the districts will go to their respective districts and train the representatives of the tribal community, so that correct information can be given at the field level about the various schemes being run by the government for this class. It is noteworthy that the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) is providing technical support to this program.

Distinguished alumni Naveen Jindal conferred Lifetime Achievement Award

By the University of Texas (Dallas) for his accomplishments in industry, politics and education

Raipur, Mar 30:

Chairman of Jindal Steel & Power Naveen Jindal has been honoured with Lifetime Achievement Award by the University of Texas (Dallas) for his accomplishments in industry, politics, and education. An Alumni of UT Dallas 1992 batch, Mr Jindal received the award in a ceremony held by the University on the 25th of March 2023. Mr Naveen Jindal is the second person receiving the prestigious Lifetime Achievement Award from the University of Texas, Dallas after Nobel Laureate Aziz Sancar.

As a student at UT Dallas, Mr Jindal served as both Student Government Vice President and President



and earned the Student Leader of the Year Award. He was recognized with the University's

Distinguished Alumni award in 2010.

As a student at UT Dallas, Mr Jindal served

as both Student Government Vice President and President and earned the Student Leader of the Year Award. He was recognized with the University's Distinguished Alumni award in 2010.

To celebrate the enormous success of their most distinguished alumni, the University of Texas at Dallas honoured him by rechristening their School of Management as the Naveen Jindal School of Management in 2011.

This award is the highest honour that UT Dallas bestows on alumni, to recognize a graduate whose extraordinary contributions have bettered society, transformed UT Dallas, and inspired others to reach new heights of excellence.

BALCO Celebrates 'Happiness Week'

To Boost Employee Engagement and Well-being*

Balconagar, (Korba), Mar 30: Bharat Aluminium Company (BALCO), India's iconic aluminium producer, organized a week-long celebration of International Day of Happiness to boost employee engagement, and increase happiness and well-being of its employees. Throughout the Happiness Week, the company conducted various activities aimed at boosting employee morale and creating a holistic work environment, aimed at infusing them with renewed vigor and enthusiasm.

During this week, the company distributed 'Happiness at BALCO' cards for employees to share their reasons for happiness, which the company could further aug-



ment, and exchanging 'You make me happy' cards with fellow colleagues and friends to showcase their gratitude. The company also encouraged employees to create vision boards for their happiness, and organized team outings and lunches where happiness sessions, stand up comedy and other fun activities were conducted for team bond-

ing. More than 2,000 employees participated in the initiatives. Speaking about the celebration of happiness week at BALCO, Mr. Rajesh Kumar, CEO and Director, BALCO, says, "BALCO has always been a front runner in providing an empowering environment for growth and development of its workforce. We strive to enable our employees to test the

limits of their potential, while ensuring a safe, encouraging and happy workplace. Our approach to nurturing industry leading people practices approach has at its core a strong commitment to care and the belief that our people are our greatest assets. The celebration of Happiness Week goes to show our commitment to a happy & healthy work cul-

ture." Recently, BALCO was also conferred with the prestigious 'Happiest Workplace Award 2022' by Happy+, a prominent consulting firm instilling the Happiness quotient into organizational cultures, in association with Business World. The award was presented in recognition of the company's close focus on employee well-being and happiness in its quest for sustainable business growth. With this, BALCO has emerged amongst the top 30 Indian companies creating the most conducive workplaces for its employees. In the past, BALCO has also been recognized with awards such as Arogya World Healthy Workplace Award - 2022 and Great Place to Work in 2023.

RIT established Center of Excellence



Raipur, Mar 30: Raipur Institute of Technology, the first Engineering college of Chhattisgarh state to be accredited Grade A+ by NAAC has established Center of Excellence in association with UltraTech Cement Ltd on March 28, 2023. Ultratech is the largest manufacturer of grey cement, Ready Mix Concrete (RMC) and white cement in India. RIT, the oldest private Engineering

In association with Ultratech Cement

college is renowned for nurturing talent and creating industry-ready professionals.

The Centre of Excellence at Raipur Institute of Technology aims to work towards their mission of involving students & faculty in innovative research projects

linked with industry. While creating awareness among students of Civil Engineering, Mechanical Engineering and Chemical Engineering branch regarding new techniques, arranging Industrial visits, seminars and guest lectures from Industry professionals. This will prove beneficial for students to learn about existing and emerging global industry trends.

Fragrant rice variety Nagri Dubraj gets GI tag

Farmers to get the privilege of commercialization

Raipur, Mar 30:

"Nagri Dubraj" rice, popularly known as Basmati in the state, has been granted Geographical Indication rights (GI tag) by the Intellectual Property Rights Authority of the Government of India. Nagri Dubraj producer, women self-help group "Maa Durga Swyam Sahayata Group" of village Bagrumnala, Nagri district Dhamtari, working under the guidance of Indira Gandhi Agricultural University, was given GI tag for Nagri Dubraj. After getting GI tag, the demand for its export will increase at the international and nation-



al level, due to which the farmers of the city will get the privilege of commercializing this rice. Significantly, GI tag is a type of intellectual property right, in which the quality and importance of any product is determined by the geographi-

cal environment of that particular place. In this, the place of origin of that product is recognized. Dr. Girish Chandel, Vice-Chancellor of Indira Gandhi Agricultural University, has congratulated the Farmer Producer Group for get-

ting GI tag. He said that after the efforts of Indira Gandhi Agricultural University, in the year 2019, after "Jiraphool" rice of Surguja district, now Dubraj rice has got GI tag, which is a big achievement. Nagri Dubraj rice, also known as Basmati, is the traditional, fragrant rice variety of the state, which is in great demand outside the state as well. Shringi Rishi Ashram area of Sihawa is considered to be the origin place of Nagri Dubraj. According to religious beliefs, Shringi Rishi Ashram is related to the Putreshti Yagya organized by King Dashrath to get children and the birth of Lord Rama. In various research papers, the place of origin of Dubraj rice has been told only to Sihawa city.

Teachers trained to ensure children's safety

From natural calamities

Kondagaon, Mar 30:

Under the joint initiative of the State Disaster Management Authority, Disaster Management Department, and Department of Education, teachers in Kondagaon have been trained to protect and ensure the safety of children in schools from natural disasters. The training programme aims to equip teachers with the knowledge and skills to recognize disaster risks and reduce their negative impact on students. One teacher from each primary, secondary, high school, and higher secondary school has been selected as a focal teacher to oversee the safety of the children in their respec-



tive schools. The training covered various topics such as earthquake, fire, cyclone, lightning, heat wave, cold wave, environmental climate change, drinking water sanitation and nutrition, scorpion bite prevention, dengue malaria, drowning incident, water accident, road accident, road accident, POCSSO Act,

Child Rights Act, child marriage, child abuse and child molestation.

The programme aims to develop a culture of disaster management in children by incorporating safety programmes into the regular education process. Teachers from 73 'Sankuls' under development were divided into four phases for training at BRC

Bhawan and Girls' Higher Secondary School of Kondagaon, Development Block and the second phase of training was also imparted. The initiative highlights the government's commitment to the safety and well-being of children, and it is hoped that it will ensure a safer learning environment for all students.

Farmers should come forward for multipurpose crop linseed: Dr. Singh

One day farmer's seminar-cum-training on linseed concludes

Raipur, Mar 30:

Agriculture Production Commissioner of Chhattisgarh, Dr. Kamalpreet Singh has said that in view of utility, importance, low cost and high profits of linseed crop, Chhattisgarh government is promoting its production in the state and motivating farmers to cultivate linseed. He said that linseed is a multipurpose crop, from which oil, cloth and many other products can be manufactured. Agriculture Production Commissioner said that this crop is capable of tolerating adverse weather



and gives good yield even in less water and less resources. Dr. Singh called upon the farmers to come forward for the cultivation of linseed. He urged the agricultural scientists to develop high yielding dual purpose innovative varieties of linseed. Agriculture Production Commissioner was addressing the one-day state level farmers' seminar organized under the All India Integrated Linseed Research Project at Indira

Gandhi Agricultural University here. Dr. Girish Chandel, Vice Chancellor of Indira Gandhi Agricultural University, presided over the function. This seminar was organised in collaboration with Krishi Vigyan Kendra Raipur, Kondagaon, Mainpat and Bemetara. Agricultural Production Commissioner Dr. Singh said that due to the usefulness and properties of linseed, its use has increased

in the last few years. Linseed oil is used extensively in the paint and varnish industry due to it being marked as an inedible oil by the Government of India. Due to the abundance of omega-3 fatty acids in it, nowadays it is also being used for the prevention of heart diseases. On this occasion, Vice Chancellor of Indira Gandhi Agricultural University Dr. Girish Chandel said that linseed oil has been used in

Chhattisgarh for a long time and the farmers here have been growing linseed crop prominently. He said that about 10 percent of the country's total linseed production and area is in Chhattisgarh. He said that Chhattisgarh is supplying 40 percent of the requirement of linseed seeds across the country. Various publications published under the Linseed project were also released on this occasion. On this occasion, the Registrar of the University Mr. G.K. Nirmam, Director Extension Services, Dr. Ajay Kumar Verma, Dean, Agriculture College, Raipur, Dr. G.K. Das, Dean of Agricultural Engineering Dr. Vinay Pandey, heads of various departments, agricultural scientists and a large number of farmers were present.

Ten year old absconding accused nabbed

Kondagaon, Mar 30: The Kondagaon Police have succeeded in arresting the permanent warrant who was absconding for last ten years in a murder case. On the orders of Superintendent of Police Divyang Patel, under the guidance of Additional SP Sobraj Agarwal, a special operation was conducted to arrest the permanent warrant of the district. According to the information received, on 6-7.06.2013 Gagra Kashyap, R/o Pohmar, S/o Kande Kashyap along with Santuram S/o Sonuram, aged 22 years, R/o Pohumar killed Dhaluram, S/o Late Lakhmooram (45 yrs), R/o Pohmar, using a sharp weapon. On this a case under section 302, 34



IPC was filed in Thana Madarpal. But the accused in this murder case was absconding for last 10 years. Due to which a standing warrant was obtained for the accused from the Chief Judicial Magistrate Kondagaon Court and the warrant of arrest was prepared. As per tip from an informer about the hiding of the accused/permanent warrant in Village Karkerkot, Police Station Marandum, District Bastar, the probable place of hiding of the

accused was cordoned off and the accused was taken into custody and taken to Police Station Madarpal. He was sent to Jail by order of the Court. The role of police station in-charge police inspector Raman Usendi, assistant sub-inspector Mohan Yadav, head constable Ghadwaram Mandavi, constables Deepak Nag, Ghansuram Yadav and assistant constable Govardhan Kashyap is commendable throughout the proceedings.

BRIEF



RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat with Baba Ramdev and Acharya Balkrishna during the 'Sanyas Deeksha Mahotsav', at Har Ki Pauri ghat in Haridwar, Thursday.

Accident

Kolkata: Two army jawans died in an accident during a training exercise in West Bengal's North 24 Parganas district, an official of the Eastern Command said on Thursday. The accident took place on Wednesday during an 'assault river crossing' exercise, during which a rope snapped and three jawans fell into the water at Sarobar Lake, a notified training area in Barrackpore, he said.

Drown

Raisen: Two minor brothers drowned in a well at a village in Raisen district of Madhya Pradesh on Thursday, a police official said. The victims had gone out for grazing their goats at a farm in their native Bhanvargarh village and entered the well to take bath when the incident occurred, sub divisional officer of police (SDOP) Sunil Barkade said.

Arrested

Vellore: Six persons who forced a woman to remove her hijab and videographed it when she was visiting the historic Vellore Fort here earlier this week were arrested by the North Police here on Thursday, a senior police official said.

Honorary doctorate

Mumbai: Veteran lyricist-screenwriter Javed Akhtar will be felicitated with an honorary doctorate by SOAS University of London, according to a press release, Akhtar will receive a Doctor of Literature (DLit) (honoris causa) in recognition of his significant contribution as a poet, lyricist, screenwriter and activist to Indian cinema.

Oppn meet

New Delhi: DMK president and Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M K Stalin has called a meeting of opposition parties in Chennai on Monday to discuss issues relating to social justice in the country. Leaders of around 20 parties, including the Congress, are slated to attend the meeting either in person or virtually, opposition leaders said.

Verdict

Palakkad: A special court in Kerala on Thursday said it will on April 4 pronounce its verdict in the case of killing of a tribal man in Palakkad district of the state for allegedly stealing food articles in 2018. Madhu, a tribal from Attappady, was killed after he was caught, tied and thrashed by a group of local people alleging theft on February 22, 2018.

Raj becoming 'model state': CM

Jaipur, Mar 30 (PTI):

Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot said on Thursday that his government's public welfare schemes have brought a positive change in the lives of lakhs of people and Rajasthan is now becoming a "model state" in the country.

Gehlot was addressing a programme organized to honour the beneficiaries of various schemes of the state government on the occasion of Rajasthan Day. According to officials, a large number of beneficiaries attended this programme online and offline.

Referring to various schemes of his government, including the Chiranjeevi Health Insurance, Chief Minister Gehlot said, "I am extremely satisfied that the benefits of the schemes brought by the govern-



Ashok Gehlot

ment have reached lakhs of people and these programmes have brought about positive changes in their lives."

"Today, Rajasthan is becoming a model state and is among the fastest growing states in the country. Rajasthan is discussed in the country for having the best roads, best medical care, maximum number of universities and the most progressive Rajasthan," he said. The chief minister said his vision for

Rajasthan is that by 2030, every family in the state becomes prosperous by taking advantage of these schemes.

"We are working to improve the governance and it is our endeavour that more and more people can get the benefits of the schemes," Gehlot said.

After the programme, he also interacted with reporters and said the implementation of these schemes is now the priority of the state government.

"Implementation of the schemes is our top priority," he said.

State Congress president Govind Singh Dotasara along with many ministers and MLAs were present in the programme. Earlier, Rajasthan Chief Secretary Usha Sharma informed about the welfare schemes of the state government.

'No need to panic for spurt in Covid cases'



Saurabh Bharadwaj

New Delhi, Mar 30 (PTI): Delhi Health Minister Saurabh Bharadwaj held a meeting with experts on Thursday to assess the Covid situation in the national capital and said there was no need to panic because of a spurt in cases. The meet came a day after Delhi's COVID-19 cases climbed to 300 for the first

time since August 31 last year, while the positivity rate rose to 13.89 per cent, according to the data shared by the health department. Two Covid-related deaths were also reported, it said. Addressing a press conference, Bharadwaj said they were getting some indicators about the spike in Covid cases but they are fully prepared. "Last night, Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal called me to discuss about the Covid situation and he asked me to convene an emergency meeting on Thursday. In the meeting today, epidemiologist, genome sequencing expert, special secretary (health) were present and we analysed the situation closely," he said.

'Build women market in all districts'

Shillong, Mar 30 (PTI):

Impressed with Manipur's all-women's market at Ima, Congress MP Vincent H Pala has written to Prime Minister Narendra Modi asking him to consider setting up similar markets which encourage retail entrepreneurship among members of the fairer sex, in all districts of Meghalaya. The Ima market or the Khwairamband Keithel is a market in the heart of Imphal city in Manipur run entirely by women with no male vendors allowed to function there. "I have written to Prime Minister requesting him to set up women-led markets in every district in Meghalaya. This will boost not just the earning

SHILLONG MP TO MODI



Vincent H Pala

of women but will also lead to improved dignity, livelihoods, and better management of the family," Pala told PTI today. "Women-owned business enterprises are playing a prominent role in society by generating employment opportunities in the country, bringing demographic

VARSITY CONVOCATION



Union Home Minister Amit Shah being felicitated during the convocation of the Gurukul Kangri University, in Haridwar, Thursday.

K' taka HC disqualifies JDS MLA for electoral malpractice

Suspends order for one month to allow appeal

Bengaluru, Mar 30 (PTI): JD(S) MLA from Tumakuru Rural constituency in Karnataka D C Gowrishankar Swamy was disqualified by the High Court of Karnataka on Thursday in a case relating to alleged electoral malpractice.

The Court, however, kept the disqualification in suspension for one month, allowing Swamy to file an appeal in the Supreme Court. A single-judge bench of the high court was delivering its verdict on a petition filed by defeated BJP candidate B Suresh Gowda, which alleged electoral malpractice

by Swamy for distributing fake insurance bonds to voters during the 2018 Karnataka Assembly election. The disqualification, under Section 101 of the Representation of the People Act, comes five years after the original complaint by Gowda.

Justice S Sunil Dutt Yadav, who had reserved the judgment after completion of arguments on February 17, dictated the orders on Thursday from the Kalaburagi bench of the Karnataka High Court. The advocate for Swamy, Hemant Raj, sought the suspension of the order as per Section 116(B) of the Act to allow him to file an appeal before the Supreme Court, as elections to the Karnataka Assembly had already been announced.

WOMAN EMPOWERMENT



An Assamese woman busy in weaves traditional 'gamosa' ahead of Rongali Bihu festival, Guwahati, Thursday.

'Centralised board to recruit college teachers in Assam'

Guwahati, Mar 30 (PTI):

The Assam government on Thursday informed the Assembly that a centralised recruitment board will be formed to appoint teachers in colleges, which has been asked not to conduct any new hiring process on their own.

Replying to a query by AIUDF MLA Ashraf Hussain, Education Minister Ranaj Pegu said his department is facing almost 2,500 court cases and most of them are related to recruitment in schools and colleges.

"That is why we have not been able to make new recruitments in colleges since 2017. We have now decided not to go for any new recruitment based on



Ranaj Pegu

academic records (by colleges). This system leads to controversies and court cases," he added.

The government has now decided to recruit teachers in colleges and universities on the basis of a selection test, Pegu said.

"We have decided to set up a centralised recruitment board and a college

teacher will be posted in his or her choice of college after clearing the selection test," he added.

The education minister said that at times one candidate applies to more than one college but the applicant can join only one, even after getting selected in all of them. Other colleges are then forced to restart the recruitment process from scratch.

He said that the colleges that have already advertised seeking teachers will be allowed to complete the process this time.

"We have asked to hold the processes to those colleges who have not advertised their posts. We will soon start the centralised system," Pegu said.

Former bureaucrats condemn Rijiju's remarks

New Delhi, Mar 30 (PTI):

Former civil servants in an open letter on Thursday criticised Law Minister Kiren Rijiju for several of his comments which, they said, constituted a concerted attack by the government on the collegium system of appointments and on judicial independence. The open letter, signed by 90 former bureaucrats, argued that preserving the independence of the judiciary is non-negotiable, and any sign of executive overreach cannot be accepted in a democracy. "We write to you today in response to comments you made on various occasions and very recently at the India Today Conclave on

On judiciary

March 18, 2023. Your statements that day are the latest in what is emerging as a concerted attack by the government on the collegium system of appointments, the Supreme Court of India and, ultimately, on judicial independence. We unequivocally condemn this onslaught," the letter said. In the appointment of judges to the High Courts and Supreme Court it appears that it is the government that is stonewalling appointments, it said.

"Names forwarded by the collegium are left pending for years, only to be finally returned without approval. Candidates with

distinguished careers marked by their commitment to due process and to constitutional norms are turned down by the government," said the letter, written by the former civil servants under the banner of Constitutional Conduct Group. Rather than engage constructively with the Supreme Court and collegium, high offices of the executive such as yours, and that of the Vice President, have responded with venomous barbs, it said.

The government's continued refusal to accept some candidates can only give rise to the suspicion that the underlying intention is to create a pliant judiciary, the letter said.

Mamata sits overnight in 'dharna' against Centre

Kolkata, Mar 30 (PTI):

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee sat overnight in front of Dalit icon Dr B R Ambedkar's statue on Red Road in the heart of the metropolis, surrounded by a cohort of TMC leaders and workers under television camera arclights.

Banerjee, who is staging a two-day sit-in to protest alleged discrimination by the Centre against the state, had Wednesday in a change of stance urged all political parties in the country to unitedly fight the BJP in next year's Lok Sabha election.

This is a departure from an earlier decision to remain equidistant from both the Congress and the right-wing party ruling India's federal polity.

Raises political temperature

The Trinamool Congress supremo was accompanied by several party leaders, including Firdah Hakim and Aroop Biswas at the protest site.

Banerjee's 30-hour demonstration is likely to end around 7 pm on Thursday.

Security measures in and around the venue were tightened keeping in mind the presence of high-profile leaders, a senior officer of Kolkata Police said.

Banerjee started the sit-in from Wednesday noon, protesting against the Centre's "stoppage" of funds to the state for MGN-REGA and other schemes of the housing and public



West Bengal CM Mamata Banerjee speaks during the second day of the party's sit-in demonstration near BR Ambedkar statue at Red Road against Union government's alleged discriminatory attitude against the state, in Kolkata.

works departments. Stating that the 2024 Parliamentary polls will be a fight between the citizens of the country and the BJP, Banerjee had

Wednesday asserted that people across religions must unite to defeat the saffron party and save the poor of the country.

She described the BJP as 'Dushasana' and 'Duryodhana' the two antagonists from the epic Mahabharata.

"I urge every political party in India to unite to oust this Dushasana' BJP government. This Duryodhana' BJP should be removed from power to save the country's common man as well as Indian democracy," Banerjee said.

Kolkata has been witnessing a flurry of political activity ahead of the panchayat elections slated for this summer, which has now received a green signal from the Calcutta High Court.

Taiwan's president speaks to her island's safety on US stop

Washington, Mar 30 (AP):

Taiwan's president addressed members of New York's Taiwanese community in a US stopover on her way to Central America as she seeks to rally allies of the self-ruled island amid tensions with China.

Pro-China demonstrators waving the Chinese flag rallied against President Tsai Ing-wen's events in New York. One protester held a sign whose slogan declared the Taiwanese leader a "big traitor of China."

In a speech Wednesday night to fellow Taiwanese in New York, Tsai thanked the United States for its security assistance and urged Taiwanese unity. "The safer Taiwan is,



the safer the world will be," she said, and pledged Taiwan would work with its democratic partners to remain on the path of democracy.

Tsai arrived in New York on Wednesday and was expected to spend Thursday in closed events in the city. Taiwan is carefully calibrating Tsai's

stops in the United States and forgoing official meetings with senior US leaders in Washington in an effort to limit the scale of China's response.

On Thursday, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning restated China's furious objections to any interactions between Tsai and US

officials. "China firmly opposes any form of official interaction between the US and Taiwan," Mao told reporters at a daily briefing in Beijing. "China will continue to closely follow the situation and resolutely safeguard our sovereignty and territorial integrity."

A senior Chinese diplomat in Washington, embassy charge d'affaires Xu Xueyuan, pointed to an expected meeting between Tsai and House Speaker Kevin McCarthy, likely next week. The meeting would have significant repercussions overall and a "serious, serious, serious" impact on US-China relations, she said in a virtual session with reporters on Wednesday.

Russia arrests Wall Street Journal reporter on spying charge

Moscow, Mar 30 (AP):

Russia's top security agency has arrested an American reporter for the Wall Street Journal on espionage charges, the first time a U.S. correspondent was put behind bars on spying accusations since the Cold War.

The Federal Security Service said Thursday that Evan Gershkovich was detained in the Ural Mountains city of Yekaterinburg while allegedly trying to obtain classified information. The Wall Street Journal said in a statement that it is deeply concerned for Gershkovich's safety.

The arrest comes amid rising tensions between Moscow and Washington over the fighting in Ukraine. Gershkovich is the first American reporter to be arrested on es-



spionage charges in Russia since September 1986, when Nicholas Daniloff, a Moscow correspondent for U.S. News and World Report, was arrested by the KGB. He was released without charges 20 days later in a swap for an employee of the Soviet Union's United Nations mission who was arrested by the FBI. The FSB, which is the top successor agency to the Soviet-era

KGB, alleged that Gershkovich "was acting on the U.S. orders to collect information about the activities of one of the enterprises of the Russian military industrial complex that constitutes a state secret." The agency didn't say when the arrest took place. Gershkovich could face up to 20 years in prison if convicted of espionage. Gershkovich covers Russia, Ukraine and other ex-Soviet nations as a correspondent in the Wall Street Journal's Moscow bureau. The FSB noted that he had accreditation from the Russian Foreign Ministry to work as a journalist, but Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said Gershkovich was using his journalistic credentials as a cover for "activities that have nothing to do with journalism."

3 more arrested in Australia for Khalistan clashes

Melbourne, Mar 30 (PTI):

Australian police have arrested three more people in connection with two incidents of brawl that broke out between Khalistan activists and pro-India demonstrators here in late January, police said on Thursday.

The alleged incidents happened during the so-called 'Punjab independence referendum' where two fights broke out between the two groups which injured several people on January 29, Victoria Police said in a statement.

Apparently, flag poles were used by several men as weapons which caused physical injuries to multiple victims, the statement said. The US-based Sikhs for Justice, the group spearheading the non-binding referendum, is a banned organisation in India. The three arrested include a 23-year-old man

ENERGY SECURITY DISCUSSION



Britain's Prime Minister Rishi Sunak, centre and Grant Shapps, Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero, left, look on, during a visit to the UK Atomic Energy Authority, Culham Science Centre, for a discussion on energy security and net zero, in Abingdon, England, Thursday March 30.

TikTok propaganda labels fall flat in 'huge win' for Russia

Washington, Mar 30 (AP):

A year ago, following Russia's invasion of Ukraine, TikTok started labelling accounts operated by Russian state propaganda agencies as a way to tell users they were being exposed to Kremlin disinformation.

An analysis a year later shows the policy has been applied inconsistently. It ignores dozens of accounts with millions of followers. Even when used, labels have little impact on Russia's ability to exploit TikTok's powerful algorithms as part of its effort to shape public opinion about the war.

Researchers at the Alliance for Securing Democracy, a bipartisan, transatlantic nonprofit operated by the German Marshall Fund that studies authoritarian disinformation, identified nearly 80 TikTok accounts operated by Russian state outlets like RT or Sputnik, or by individuals linked to them, including RT's editor-in-chief.

More than a third of the accounts were unlabelled, despite a labelling policy announced by TikTok a

year ago. The labels, which appear in bold immediately below an account's name, read "Russia state-controlled media." Clicking on the label brings up more information, including a description that "the government has control over the account's editorial content."

The accounts have spread pro-Russian propaganda about the invasion of Ukraine as well as false and misleading claims about the US and the international coalition that stands against Russia's war. "US to hold biggest satanic gathering in history," claims one of the videos on Sputnik.Brasil, a Russian media account currently unlabelled on TikTok. Other videos posted by the account blame the US for the war in Ukraine, claim the US will

start a nuclear war, and suggest the US is working to make Brazil invade Iran. RT Mexico, one of the most popular unlabelled accounts, has posted multiple videos playing up tension between the US and Mexico over immigration and drugs.

"This is a huge win for Russian propaganda that they're able to reach such large audiences on TikTok," said Joe Bodnar, a research analyst at Alliance for Securing Democracy. "TikTok is not taking it as seriously as other platforms."

That charge comes as the video sharing platform, owned by Chinese company ByteDance, faces questions in Washington about its ties to the government as well as concerns about privacy, surveillance and harmful content.

China calls on SCO countries to resolve disputes through cooperation

Crackdown on separatism, terrorism

Beijing, Mar 30 (PTI): China has called on SCO member states to bridge their differences through dialogue, resolutely tackle the forces of terrorism and jointly create a sound security environment for the economic recovery and social stability of all countries.

Chinese State Councillor and Minister of Public Security Wang Xiaohong, who took part in Security Council Secretaries of the SCO Member States held in New Delhi on Wednesday via video link, said joint efforts are needed to foster a new regional security structure that is balanced, effective and sustainable.

National Security Advisor

Ajit Doval presided over the meeting. The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) comprises China, India, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Pakistan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. India holds the presidency of the grouping for this year.

Wang said it is important that member countries of the SCO bridge their differences through dialogue and resolve disputes through cooperation, the state-run Xinhua news agency reported.

He asked the member states to resolutely contain and tackle the forces of terrorism, separatism and extremism, and strengthen cooperation to combat transnational crime like telecom and internet fraud, online gambling, and drug trafficking.

Bajwa claims his predecessor sought 3-year extension

Islamabad, Mar 30 (PTI):

Pakistan's ex-army chief Gen (ret'd.) Qamar Javed Bajwa has said that his predecessor tried to exploit a political row triggered by a news report against then-premier Nawaz Sharif to seek another three-year extension for himself, a media report said on Thursday.

According to the report, General (ret'd.) Raheel Sharif as Pakistan's Chief of Army Staff from 2013 to 2016 was keen to get an extension like his predecessor Ashfaq Parvaiz Kayani and successor Bajwa.

Towards the end of his career, a story was published in the Dawn news-



paper, claiming that the government, in a meeting with the army top brass, asked them to act against militants or the country would have to face international isolation. The story created a furore in the media and anger in the armed forces as it alleged that there was a link between the militant groups

and the military. Then opposition leader Imran Khan demanded action against the government.

According to an Urdu article based on the interview of Bajwa with journalist Shahid Maitla and published on Wednesday by the news website Pakistan24.tv, Bajwa rejected the impression that the Dawn leaks' posed any threat to national security.

"In fact, there was nothing in the Dawn leaks," Maitla quoted the former army chief as saying in response to a question, the report said. "But wherever I would meet them, junior officers would ask me about [the issue]."

NMDC APOLLO CENTRAL HOSPITAL (Managed by Apollo Hospitals Enterprise Ltd., Hyderabad) Dist. - Dantewada, Bachel - 494 553 (Chhattisgarh) Ph: 07857-230050, email- nmdccapoll@gmail.com

Employment Notification No. 03/2023 Dated: 28.03.2023. Cancellation of Walk-In-Interview for the post of Matron (Sr. Staff Nurse-I)

NMDC Apollo Central Hospital, Bachel vide Employment Notification No.02/2023 dated 13.03.2023 had issued a notification for conducting "Walk-In-Interview" for the post of Matron (Sr. Staff Nurse-I) along with other Medical and Paramedical posts to be conducted on 1st April, 2023 at NMDC Office, GEC, Boriyakala, Shejbahar, Raipur (C.G.) and on 5th April, 2023 at Hotel Centre Point, Ramdaspath, Nagpur (Maharashtra). The "Walk-In-Interview" for the post of Matron (Sr. Staff Nurse-I) is hereby cancelled.

कार्यालय अधीक्षण अभियंता, लोक निर्माण विभाग, सेतु निर्माण मण्डल, रायगढ़

ई-प्रोक्यूरमेंट निविदा सूचना प्रथम आमंत्रण Main portal : https://eproc.cgstate.gov.in

Table with 5 columns: S.No, निविदा क्र. एवं दिनांक, सिस्टम निविदा क्रमांक, कार्य का नाम, कार्य की अनु. लागत (रुपये लाखों में), निविदा कबन लौट करने की अंतिम तिथि. Rows include projects like 'जिला कोरबा के अंतर्गत विभिन्न आर.ओ.बी./आर.यू.बी. के कार्य'.

Public Works Department Office of The Superintending Engineer, Pwd, Raipur Circle No.-1 Raipur. (C.G.) REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP) (2ND Call) No. 09/Raipur/2022-23 Raipur, Dated 29/03/2023

कार्यालय, कार्यपालन अभियंता ग्रामीण यांत्रिकी सेवा, संभाग-गरियाबंद जिला-गरियाबंद (छ.ग.) E-mail - eeresdvgariyaband@gmail.com

कार्यालय मुख्य अभियंता लोक स्वास्थ्य यांत्रिकी विभाग रायपुर परिक्षेत्र रायपुर ई-प्रोक्यूरमेंट निविदा सूचना एकीकृत पंजीयन प्रणाली अंतर्गत सक्षम श्रेणी में पंजीकृत ठेकेदार से प्रयोज 'ए' में प्रतिस्पर्धा दर पर अनुबंध हेतु निम्नलिखित निर्माण कार्य हेतु ऑन लाईन निविदा आमंत्रित की जाती है :-



CENTRAL Chronicle

Established 1974 Volume 48 No. 174

Digital Dilemma

The National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) announced that an interchange fee of up to 1.1% will be levied on merchant Unified Payments Interface (UPI) transactions from April 1. While the move is aimed at providing a revenue stream for UPI service providers, it has raised concerns among consumers and businesses alike. It is important to note that the new interchange fee will only be applicable for merchant transactions made through prepaid payment instruments (PPIs) and not for normal UPI payments, which are bank account-to-bank account-based transactions. The interchange fee ranges from 0.5% to 1.1% for different categories of merchants, with a cap applicable in certain categories. For telecom, education, and utilities/post office, the interchange fee is 0.7%, while for supermarkets, the fee is 0.9% of the transaction value. Insurance, government, mutual funds, and railways attract a 1% charge, fuel transactions attract 0.5%, and agriculture transactions attract 0.7%. The charges will be levied if the transaction is more than Rs. 2,000. The move has been criticized by some, who argue that it will increase the cost of digital transactions and discourage their usage. However, it is important to note that the NPCI has clarified that no charges will be levied on P2P and P2PM transactions, which make up the majority of UPI transactions. Additionally, it is worth noting that the pricing will be reviewed by the NPCI on or before September 30, 2023, which provides an opportunity for stakeholders to provide feedback and for the NPCI to make any necessary adjustments. The introduction of the interchange fee also raises questions about the role of UPI in India's digital economy. While the Finance Ministry has previously stated that UPI is a digital public good and that it was not considering levying any charges on transactions made through it, the NPCI's move suggests that UPI service providers are looking to generate revenue to sustain and expand the service. While the introduction of the interchange fee may lead to some short-term inconvenience for consumers and businesses, it is important to view it in the context of the broader digital payments landscape in India. The country has made significant progress in increasing the adoption of digital payments, and UPI has played a key role in this. However, sustaining and expanding UPI requires investment, and the NPCI's move to introduce an interchange fee is aimed at providing a revenue stream to support the growth of the service. It is also worth noting that the fee will not be borne by customers, but rather by PPI issuers. Overall, while the introduction of the interchange fee may raise some concerns, it is important to view it as part of the ongoing evolution of India's digital payments landscape. By providing a revenue stream to support the growth of UPI, the fee could help ensure that the service continues to play a key role in India's digital economy. At the same time, it is important for stakeholders to provide feedback to the NPCI on the pricing structure to ensure that it is fair and equitable for all parties involved.

Reviving Indigenous Farming Practices

Dr Krishna Kumar Vepakomma

Farming indigenous crops has been a traditional practice in India for centuries. These crops are well-adapted to the local environment and are an important source of nutrition for many communities. They also play a crucial role in preserving the country's rich biodiversity and cultural heritage. However, with the Green Revolution in the 1960s, the government of India promoted the use of high-yield crop varieties to increase food production and reduce poverty. As a result, many farmers shifted from growing indigenous crops to commercial crops, and the traditional knowledge and practices associated with indigenous farming systems were lost. In recent years, there has been growing recognition of the importance of indigenous crops for food security, nutrition, and sustainability. Many organizations, both government and non-governmental, are working to promote and revive indigenous crops in India. One example is the Millet Mission, a government initiative that aims to promote the cultivation and consumption of millets, a group of small-grain cereals that have been grown in India for thousands of years. The mission aims to increase the area under millet cultivation, promote millets as a nutritious and eco-friendly food, and support millet farmers through research and development, training, and marketing. Another example is the revival of the traditional practice of rice-fish farming in Kerala. This practice involves cultivating rice paddies along with fish ponds, creating a symbiotic relationship between the two systems. The fish provide natural pest control and fertilization for the rice, while the rice paddies provide a habitat for the fish. Rice-fish farming is a sustainable and eco-friendly practice that has been practiced in Kerala for centuries. However, it has been largely neglected in recent years due to the promotion of commercial rice varieties. Through government support and community initiatives, rice-fish farming is being revived in Kerala, providing a sustainable livelihood for farmers and preserving a valuable cultural practice. In addition to promoting indigenous crops, there is also a growing interest in traditional farming practices that are more sustainable and environmentally friendly. For example, the System of Rice Intensification (SRI) is a method of rice cultivation that involves planting fewer seeds, using organic fertilizers, and maintaining a high level of soil moisture. SRI has been shown to increase yields and reduce water and fertilizer use compared to conventional rice cultivation methods. Similarly, traditional agroforestry practices involve cultivating crops and trees together in a mutually beneficial relationship, providing multiple benefits such as soil conservation, biodiversity conservation, and climate change mitigation. In conclusion, the promotion and revival of indigenous crops and traditional farming practices are crucial for building a sustainable and resilient food system in India. These practices not only provide nutritious and eco-friendly food, but also preserve the country's cultural and agricultural heritage and promote biodiversity conservation. With continued government support and community initiatives, India can build a food system that is sustainable, resilient, and equitable for all.

Central Chronicle invites articles, write-ups, and comments on a wide range of issues for our editorial page. Submissions should be between 800-900 words in length. In addition, we welcome letters to the editor for this page. While letters may be edited for clarity, we aim to preserve the integrity of the original message, and ask that they be kept to around 50-60 words. Submissions can be sent via email to editor@centralchronicle@gmail.com.

CHAITRA NAVRATRI

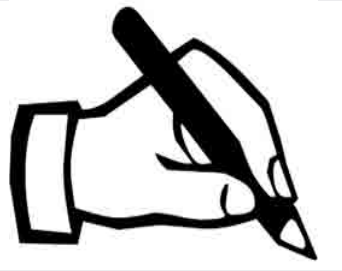


Girls during 'Kanya Pujan' on the occasion of 'Ram Navami' during 'Chaitra Navratri' festival, in Varanasi, Thursday, March 30.

G20: Water Conservation for a more Sustainable Climate



PANKAJ KUMAR



India assumed the G20 Presidency on December 1st, 2022, taking over from Indonesia. The G20 leadership offers the country the opportunity to showcase the "India story" to the world countering multiple contingencies including global warming, food and energy shortage, terrorism, geopolitical conflict, and bridging the digital divide.

As the largest democracy in the world, and the fastest growing economy, India's G20 presidency will play a crucial role in building upon the significant achievements of the previous 17 presidencies. The G20 theme of this year "One Earth, One Family, One Future" perfectly captures India's underlying philosophy of "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam" (the world is one family), which will guide India's G20 leadership.

The first G20 Environment and Climate Sustainability Working Group (ECSWG) meeting concluded with a positive note with all G20 countries expressing support on the themes outlined

by MoEF&CC for India's Presidency. Discussions on restoring degraded land, promoting blue economy along the coastal sustainability, enhancing biodiversity, preventing forest fire and marine littering and strengthening Circular Economy have created the platform for a more insightful deliberation in the second Summit.

Best Practices on Water Resource Management
During its G20 Presidency stint, India is looking forward to an integrated, comprehensive and consensus-driven approach to mitigate the challenges of climate change and water scarcity. Water conservation in fact is an integral part of the Indian identity and cultural history and has become even more relevant in the present day. "Saving" water is not just about conservation, but to ensure the availability of enough clean water at any given time and place to meet our combined needs.

The Ministry of Jal Shakti, Government of India has taken various ini-

tatives for promoting water conservation through Artificial Recharge and Rain Water Harvesting. The Jal Jeevan Mission program aims to connect more than 193 million rural households with functional household tap water connections by 2024. Our ambitious Namami Gange mission has created a paradigm shift in river rejuvenation, pollution abatement, conservation of ecosystems and holistic approach to river basin management. It has recently been recognized as one of the top 10 World restoration flagships to revive the natural world by UN.

India is also implementing the largest dam rehabilitation program in the world, to build climate resilience for critical water storage infrastructure. Further, to ensure long term sustainability of ground water resources through a combination of demand and supply side interventions, the scheme of Atal Bhujal Yojana is being implemented through community led, Gram Panchayat-wise Water Security Plans having convergence with ongoing/new schemes.

With these efforts and many more schemes, India is gradually moving towards the goal of becoming a water secure nation by year 2047. In this scenario, we are eager to host the second G20 Environment and Climate Sustainability Working Group (ECSWG) meeting focusing on water conservation and managing water re-

sources sustainably and equitably.

We look forward to the participation of multiple delegates from G20 countries, along with representatives of international organizations, deliberating on the global best practices and ideas on water resource management. I am confident that discussions on river rejuvenation, focusing on the National Mission for Clean Ganga, Climate Resilient infrastructure, Ground Water Management, Strategies for universal access to sanitation and clean drinking water, through the Swachh Bharat Mission and Jal Jeevan Mission will help participating countries to learn from each other and accelerate achievement of the sustainable development goals.

History and heritage are synonymous to Gujarat. Glorious Gujarat is home to many ancient city ruins, palaces, forts and tomb standing proudly bearing testimonies to the golden era of dynasties. The stepwell of Rani ki Vav and Adalaj Vav demonstrate the ancient water management practices of India's long-standing tradition of conserving water resources. Gujarat with its mix of the old and the new-traditional water wisdom and modern technologies used in creating water infrastructure, will provide a valuable platform for 20 countries to bring out and learn from the best in each.

(Write is Secretary, DoWR, views are personal)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Corruption in Politics

It is disheartening to see the lack of action from political parties when it comes to corruption within their own ranks. The recent ED raids in Raipur, Chhattisgarh are a clear example of this. While government bodies are doing their job, political parties seem to be turning a blind eye to the issue. Peaceful protests against corruption should be encouraged, but it is concerning when certain parties consistently have such problems. Are they above the law and the constitution? By setting a wrong example, such parties are not only jeopardizing their political future but also the faith of the common people in democracy. It's time for action, not just words.

Chandni Shrivastava, Durg, Chhattisgarh

Women's Sports Triumph

The recent achievements of Indian women boxers at the World Championship and the Mumbai Indians at the WPL are commendable and deserve recognition. These accomplishments are particularly significant for women who aspire to pursue careers in sports. While it is true that boxers from several countries did not participate in the championship, and the competition among WPL teams was limited, we should not underestimate the enormous opportunity these events present for women in India. The days are long gone when children were discouraged from playing sports, with parents believing it would lead to a doomed future. It is an exciting time for Indian sportswomen, and they are sure to raise the country's flag in the coming years. As a society, we must recognize and support the efforts of women who break barriers and challenge stereotypes. We must continue to invest in women's sports and create a level playing field for all athletes, regardless of gender.

MKN, Raipur

A Crucial Test for Congress

The upcoming Karnataka assembly elections will be a significant test for the Congress party, especially after Rahul Gandhi's recent disqualification from Lok Sabha. The party's president, Mallikarjun Khadge, hails from Karnataka and has to prove his worth in the polls. Rahul Gandhi's extensive campaigning in the state during his Bharat jodo yatra will also be put to the test. The outcome of the elections will have a direct impact on the 2024 parliamentary elections, and it remains to be seen whether the Congress's promises, such as implementing the old pension scheme and providing monthly payments to women above 18, will resonate with voters. Corruption, Adani factor, and misutilization of ED and CBI are also expected to be hot issues. The Congress party's future, along with Rahul Gandhi's leadership, is at stake in these assembly elections.

Yash pal Ralhan, Jalandhar

Girls ending the monopoly of boys



Rajender Kumar Sharma

Yes.. It is absolutely true that in every field of world and life, girls are winning by performing better than boys. While gender discrimination is seen as a big social evil on the one hand, on the other hand, the daughters of our country have accepted this gender disparity as a challenge and converted it into a wonderful opportunity. Be it the field of sports, education, science and research or any other field,

girls and women are coming forward in all.

In school education, if we look at the 10th and 12th examination results of the country's prestigious education board, CBSE, for the last three years, we will find that every year girls have outplayed boys. The girls removed the sting and disturbance of gender discrimination in such a way that no matter how much the family members make differences in the family, but in public life, we are going to be the first and this is happening.

Year 2019, the pass percentage of girls was 74.29 while that of boys remained the same at 68.51 in class 10th results. In class 12th examinations, the pass percentage of girls was 88.7, in comparison, the pass percentage of boys could reach only 79.4.

In 10th examination of the year 2020, the pass percentage of girls was 93.31 and the pass percentage of boys could not go beyond 90.14, in the same year the pass percentage of girls in 12th exam-

ination was 92.15, in comparison to which boys remained 86.16. In the year 2021 also due to the Corona period, the pass percentage of girls in class 10th results was 99.24 and the pass percentage of boys was 98.89. The pass percentage of girls in class 12th was 99.67 and that of boys was 99.13.

This achievement is when they have to help their parents in daily household chores, do not get additional coaching or tuition etc. for studies after school. On the contrary, boys are exempted from daily household chores, additional coaching and tuition facilities are also made available to them as a priority, thinking that they are boys and will take up household responsibilities in future, whereas the reality is completely different. In future too, girls have been seen taking the responsibility of the family.

The law of the country has also increased the rights of women and girls in many cases so that they can per-

form the responsibilities of their family in a better way like sons. Similarly, who doesn't know the names of Sania Mirza, Mary Kom, Mithali Raj, Saina Nehwal, Geeta Phogat, Sakshi Malik, PV Sindhu, Deepika Kumari in sports. In the field of science, Dr. Soumya Swaminathan (Chief Secretary, World Health Organization), Dr. Priya Abraham (Director, National Institute of Virology, Pune), Tessa Thomas, who is known as Missile Woman of India, Ritu Karidhal, who is known as India's known as Rocket Woman.

Yogita Raghuvanshi (Bhopal, MP) became the country's first truck driver and Surekha Shankar Yadav became the first loco pilot, ending the monopoly of men in these areas as well. As far as sex ratio is concerned in this male dominated society, it is often seen that more women than men are responsible for this discrimination. Among those who wish to have a son from daughter-in-

law, only the women of the house look ahead.

The reason for which is probably the mental suffering she had to suffer due to gender discrimination, she does not want that any girl should have to face this pain after being born as a girl in the house. But they have to change their thinking because now girls are going ahead of boys. In Indian society, sons have been expected to serve their parents in old age, but this fact has also become baseless in today's era because it is often seen that daughters take care of their parents better than sons.

Then why discrimination between boys and girls on the basis of gender? For the progress of the country and the progress of the family, it has become necessary that we should end this gender-based discrimination and cooperate in improving the sex ratio. In Indian culture and religion, women have always been revered whether in the form of wife, daughter, mother or sister.

BRIEF

Appointment



New Delhi: SpiceJet's Chairman & Managing Director Ajay Singh has assumed charge as the President Assocham, replacing Renew Power MD Sumant Sinha after the completion of his tenure. Sanjay Nayar, founder and Chairman of Sorin Investment Fund is the new Senior Vice-President of Assocham, the industry body said in a release on Wednesday. "I am taking over at times which are both exciting and challenging. As an economy, India stands out as a robust economy in the midst of global headwinds."

Karvy incident



Mumbai: Sebi Chairperson Madhabi Puri Buch said the regulator will not allow another Karvy type incident to take place at any cost. "There will not be another Karvy issue in our capital markets... If another Karvy like instance happens, it will be on our dead bodies," Buch told reporters at the Sebi headquarters after a board meeting. The comments came in response to a question that brokerages, especially discount brokers don't make money. She said the data in fact show that they make lots of money.

Wheat procurement



Chandigarh: Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann on Wednesday directed officers to ensure smooth and hassle-free procurement of wheat. He also said that payment to the farmers for their produce must be ensured from the very first day of procurement - April 1. Meanwhile, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has cleared a sum of Rs 29,000 crore towards Cash Credit Limit (CCL) for the procurement of wheat in Punjab for the Rabi Marketing Season.

Credit constraints

Mumbai: Union Minister of State for Finance Bhagwat Karad on Wednesday said small businesses run by women are impacted disproportionately by credit constraints. After inaugurating the first meeting of the G-20 working group on trade and investment, the minister said that women suffer disproportionately. "...women-owned MSMEs (micro, small and medium enterprises) are disproportionately affected by the credit constraints and various other gender-based barriers," an official statement quoted Karad as saying.

Free trade pact talks with UK continuing; trade stands on its own legs: Goyal

Mumbai, Mar 30:



Union Minister of Commerce and Industry Piyush Goyal interacts with media on G-20's First Trade and Investment Working Group meeting, in Mumbai, Thursday.

Amid a diplomatic row following protests by secessionist groups near the Indian mission in London, Union commerce minister Piyush Goyal on Thursday said talks on a Free Trade Agreement with the UK are continuing. Talks are "going on very well" with the UK, Goyal said, adding, "trade stands on its own legs". The Union minister, however, made it clear that India will take into consideration a respect for her sovereignty and territorial integrity, and will not tolerate any interference in her Indian affairs.

India's Ministry of External Affairs summoned the senior-most British diplomat in New Delhi on a Sunday evening recently, over reports of some Khalistani elements

pulling down the Indian flag at the Indian high commission in London during a protest. India has also responded by proposing or undertaking several actions, like reducing security at the British mission and constructing a public toilet there. When asked about the impact of the ongoing events on the

trade agreement, Goyal seemed to suggest that negotiations continue. "I can assure you that talks are going on very well with the UK, Canada, with the EU countries, we are also in dialogue with Israel," he told reporters here. Goyal said there is no deadline to have an FTA with the UK, but a former PM of the country has announced an aspiration to conclude before Diwali of 2022.

"...we are back at the negotiating table, both sides are discussing at the official level," he said. Goyal said there is a high interest for FTAs with India shown by many countries, and discussions are on at a "frenzied pace" with many countries, and quipped that he is not left with bandwidth to discuss such agreements. Meanwhile, Goyal also said that talks

are also on with the European Free Trade Association (EFTA), following a request from four ministers of the grouping to meet the Indian commerce and industries minister.

"They have assured me that they will be coming with very attractive proposals in terms of opening up services and a deeper understanding of India's own concerns around our patent laws and the need to protect our domestic industry," Goyal said. On a query on rupee trade with partners, and if the same is being pushed with G-20 countries during the ongoing meetings of the grouping's trade and investment group in the financial capital, Goyal said this subject is more of a bilateral subject which is anchored by the RBI and the Ministry of Finance.

India to unveil new Foreign Trade Policy 2023-28 today

New Delhi, Mar 30:

India will unveil its much-awaited new Foreign Trade Policy 2023-28 on Friday, with a view to boost exports amid slowing global trade. Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal will announce the foreign trade policy, according to the ministry.

The current foreign trade policy (2015-20) is in force till March 31, 2022. The term of the previous five year policy had ended in March 2020. However, it has been extended repeatedly in wake of Covid outbreak and resulting lockdowns. The last extension was given in September 2022 till March 31, 2023. Goyal will announce the foreign trade policy

which is expected to outline the vision statement for taking India's goods and services exports to USD 2 trillion by 2030. The country is likely to end this fiscal year with total exports of USD 760 billion as against USD 676 billion in 2021-22.

India's trade has been hit by supply chain disruptions and slowdown in global trade amidst ongoing Russia-Ukraine war. Sources said the new policy is likely to incorporate WTO-compliant export promotion measures. Speaking at an event in Mumbai, Goyal said that amidst all the economic challenges faced by many countries, India is the bright spot, which almost everybody recognises and respects.

Accelerated implementation of reforms to accelerate India's growth: World Bank

New Delhi, Mar 30:

India's potential growth could benefit from accelerated implementation of an already ambitious reform agenda, the World Bank said in a new report that warns that the global economy faces the prospect of a "lost decade" on account of nearly all drivers of economic progress in recent history fading. The report titled 'Falling Long-Term Growth Prospects: Trends, Expectations, and Policies' said the global economy's 'speed limit' - the maximum rate of long-term growth without causing inflation - is set to decline to its lowest point in three decades by 2030. "In the decade before COVID-19, a global slowdown in productivity - which is es-

sential for income growth and higher wages - was already adding to concerns about long-term economic prospects," the report said. The report further said, adding that investment growth is weakening, global labour force is growing sluggishly, human capital reversals have been triggered by the coronavirus pandemic, and growth in international trade is barely matching GDP growth.

"The result could be a lost decade in the making - not just for some countries or regions as has occurred in the past - but for the whole world. Without a big and broad policy push to rejuvenate it, the global average potential GDP growth rate... is expected to fall to a three-decade

Air India revamps policies for women staff

New Delhi, Mar 30:

Air India will provide 26 weeks of maternity leave to women employees as well as daycare support under its revamped policies. Besides, the airline will give women pilots the choice to opt for quicker turnaround flights till the child reaches the age of one year. The option will be subject to request and availability, according to an internal communication. The revised policies, to be effective from April 1, are part of the carrier's MOMS - Returning Mothers Programme'. MOMS refers to 'Making Our Mothers Soar'. Women employees will get maternity leave for 26 weeks, including for commissioning and adopting mothers, as per the communication. Currently, the maternity leave is for 12 weeks. A commissioning mother refers to one who commissions a surrogate mother to bear a child on her behalf while adopting mother is one who legally adopts a child. Under the programme, a woman employee can avail of nutrition guidance and day care facility on a co-pay model.

Ajay Banga poised to become World Bank chief unopposed

Washington, Mar 30:

Indian-American business leader Ajay Banga is poised to become the next President of the World Bank after the nomination period closed and no country proposed an alternate candidate for the prestigious post. In February, President Joe Biden announced that the US would be nominating Banga to lead the World Bank because he is "well equipped" to lead the global institution at "this critical moment in history." The World Bank on Wednesday closed a month-long window for nominations for its next president, with no alternatives announced to 63-year-old Banga. The former Mastercard Inc. chief, Banga currently serves as Vice Chairman at General Atlantic. The bank's board is expected to announce the next steps in its selection process on Thursday, with a view to confirming a new leader by early May. "Over the next few months, you will see the World Bank undergo an important transition. We expect that Ajay Banga President Biden's nominee will be elected President of the World



Bank," US Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen told lawmakers at a Congressional hearing on Wednesday. "He will be charged with accelerating our progress to evolve the institution to better address 21st century challenges. This evolution will help the Bank deliver on its vital poverty alleviation and development goals," Yellen said. If confirmed, Banga would become the first-ever Indian-American and Sikh-American to head either of the two top international financial institutions: the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. Banga is expected to replace the current World Bank president David Malpass, who will step down in June, nearly a year before his term is scheduled to expire.

Parle Agro introduces 'Smooth Fruit Lassi'

Mumbai, Mar 30:

Parle Agro has launched Smooth Fruit Lassi, yet another pioneering product under their dairy brand, Smooth. The new launch is an everyday indulgence, offering the delicious combination of yummy fruits and goodness of yoghurt in a variety of delightful flavours. Parle Agro has launched a new campaign with national brand ambassador, Varun Dhawan for Smooth Fruit Lassi.

Smooth Fruit Lassi celebrates India's love for beverages, yoghurt and fruits. The culmination of all three favorites resulted in the refreshingly delicious blend of Parle Agro's fruit Lassi that consumers can add to their



daily diet. The rich, creamy and indulgent lassi come in three distinctive variants - 'Guava Chilli' a desi blend of sweet guava with a hint of spicy chilli, 'Banana Rum Flavour' bringing the sweet taste of bananas with a toasty flair, and 'Mixed Berries' a delicious combination of strawberries, blueberries & cranberries.

NEW LAUNCH

Infinix Mobile CEO Aneesh Kapoor with tollwood actress Ridhima Ghosh launches the new smartphone of the company, in Kolkata.

KFC India introduces 'Chicken Feast Week'

Mumbai, Mar 30:

If you've spent the last few days missing your favourite crispy chicken and can't wait to dig in, KFC India has something special just for fans like you - the Chicken Feast Week. This deliciously crispy, limited-time offer is available between 31st March to 9th April only and gives chicken lovers upto 40% savings on their KFC favorites! So now no more (only) dreaming about chicken. Instead, choose from a variety of your most-loved KFC combos with prices starting just at Rs. 149. Fans can enjoy unbelievable deals on a host of menu items and satisfy all chicken cravings with options of crispyHot Wings, Popcorn Chicken Biryani, or Zinger Burgers, paired with fries, dips and Pepsi.

Govt plans to borrow Rs 8.88 lakh cr from market in H1 FY24

New Delhi, Mar 30:

The Centre plans to raise Rs 8.88 lakh crore through market borrowing in the April-September period of 2023-24 to fund the revenue gap to push economic growth, the Finance Ministry said on Wednesday. Out of gross market borrowing of Rs 15.43 lakh crore estimated for FY2023-24, Rs 8.88 lakh crore or 57.5 per cent is planned to be borrowed in the first half (H1), an official statement said. The borrowing is scheduled to be completed in 26 weekly tranches of Rs 31,000-39,000 crore, it said, adding that the borrowing will be spread under 3, 5, 7, 10, 14, 30 and 40-year securities.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman had in the Budget for FY24 reduced the fiscal deficit or the gap between expenditure and revenue to 5.9 per cent of the GDP for FY24 against 6.4 per cent in the current financial year. To finance the fiscal deficit in 2023-24, net market borrowing from dated securities is estimated at Rs 11.8 lakh crore. "The share of borrowing under different maturities will be 3 years (6.31 per cent), 5 years (11.71 per cent), 7 years (10.25 per cent), 10 years (20.50 per cent), 14 years (17.57 per cent), 30 years (16.10 per cent) and 40 years (17.57 per cent)," the statement said. The issuance of Sovereign Green Bonds will be an-

nounced in the second half (H2) of FY 2023-24, it added. The government will continue to carry out switch operations to smoothen the redemption profile. The government will continue to exercise the green-shoe option to retain an additional subscription of up to Rs 2,000 crore against each of the securities indicated in the auction notification, according to the statement. Weekly borrowing through issuance of Treasury Bills in the first quarter (Q1) of FY 2023-24 is expected to be Rs 32,000 crore, with net borrowing of Rs 1.42 lakh crore during the quarter against a net borrowing of Rs 2.40 lakh crore in Q1 of FY2022-23.

India needs \$540 bn investment by 2029 to meet renewable targets: S&P Global Ratings

New Delhi, Mar 30:

India needs USD 540 billion of investment between 2020 and 2029 to meet its ambitious targets for electricity generation from renewable sources, S&P Global Ratings said on Thursday as it saw private-sector-led energy transition entering a new phase. India is targeting to cut its emissions to net zero by 2070. In the transition to that, it is targeting 500 gigawatts (GW) of non-fossil electricity capacity, half of the energy from renewables, a reduction of emissions by one billion tonne and an emissions intensity of the

GDP by 45 per cent by 2030. "Meeting India's renewables target of 500 GW by 2030 requires more than 40 GW of new capacity additions annually (compared to 10-15 GW actual)," it said. In its report 'Asia-Pacific's Different Pathways To Energy Transition', S&P Global Ratings said the addition of renewables capacity in India is outpacing coal, but demand growth and intermittency issues are leading to greater coal usage and new coal plants. "Policies are creating an enabling environment while private sector investments will lead the energy transition," it said, adding invest-

ments of USD 540 billion are required from 2020 to 2029 to meet India's renewables target. Half of these investments will be in renewables and batteries, and another third in strengthening the grid. "Private sector will lead generation capex while public sector utilities will likely lead grid investments," it said. "Domestic long-term bank funding is available against projects and cash flows." There is, however, limited appetite for unsecured holding company funding. India is the world's fourth biggest emitter of carbon dioxide after China, the US and the EU.

But its emissions per capita are much lower than other major world economies. India emitted 1.9 tonnes of CO2 per head of population in 2019, compared to 15.5 tonne for the US and 12.5 tonne for Russia that year. Net zero, or becoming carbon neutral, means not adding to the amount of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. Energy transition refers to the shift from fossil-based systems of energy production and consumption - including oil, natural gas and coal - to renewable energy sources like wind and solar, as well as lithium-ion batteries.

Indian economy likely to grow at 6.5 pc in coming decade: CEA

New Delhi, Mar 30:

The Indian economy is likely to grow at the rate of 6.5 per cent in the coming decade on the back of the turnaround in financial and investment cycle, Chief Economic Advisor (CEA) V Anantha Nageswaran said on Wednesday. Addressing an event here, Nageswaran further said going forward, global exports growth volumes may be somewhat tepid in terms of their growth rates due to the kind of uncertainties the world is facing. "So, I think the restoration of the financial, credit and the investment cycle in the commercial sector and the real estate sector will probably see



us growing on an average of six and a half per cent in the coming decade," he said. The Asia's third-largest economy recorded year-on-year growth of 4.4 per cent in October-December, down from 11.2 per cent a year back and 6.3 per cent in the preceding quarter. The finance ministry's Economic Survey has projected the

economic growth to be 6.5 per cent in the 2023-24 fiscal beginning April 2023, while the RBI has projected India's economic growth to slow down to 6.4 per cent in FY24 from 7 per cent in the current fiscal. Nageswaran attributed the slowdown in India's economic growth just before COVID-19 pandemic to the classic financial cycle distress that India went through. "If you look at data from 2012 onwards, so basically pre-pandemic period itself, we went through a period of classic financial cycle repair; credit cycle repair, which is what brought down a slowdown in the construction sector, and real estate sector," he opined.



Ajay Devgn says Tabu effortlessly takes to the tone of her characters

Bollywood superstar Ajay Devgn, who is currently busy with the run-up to the release of his upcoming directorial 'Bholaa', recently shared his experience of directing Tabu in the film. Both the actors have collaborated on numerous occasions as co-actors or in the capacity of actor-director. Talking about directing Tabu, Ajay said: "She is very spontaneous; that's what I like about her. Apart from that, she takes to the tone so perfectly that you don't need to take it any further as a director. There is an emotional scene between Bholaa and Tabu's character Diana where I think she's done a fabulous job." The director-actor also spoke about the equipment used in 'Bholaa'. He told IMDb during the segment 'On The Scene': "We've created different kinds of cameras in-house to align with the budgets of an Indian film. We designed robotic cameras which moved by themselves to get action shots which are otherwise impossible and too risky for cameramen to shoot." 'Bholaa', directed by Ajay Devgn, stars a powerful lineup of actors like Vineet Kumar, Deepak Dobriyal and Sanjay Mishra. The film is arriving in cinemas on March 30.

Priyanka Chopra Jonas gets trolled after calling 'RRR' Tamil film

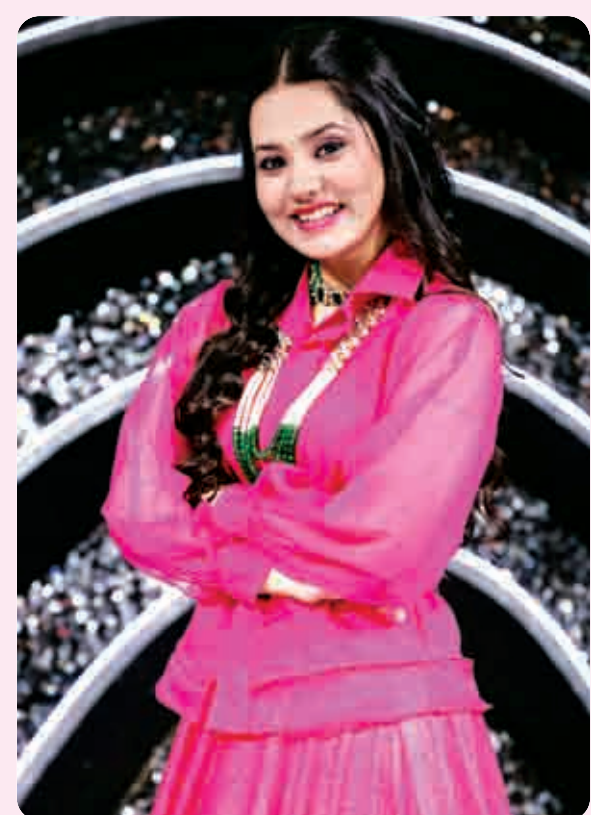
After opening a can of worms in a podcast, Indian actress Priyanka Chopra Jonas got into a sticky situation as she referred to the Telugu film 'RRR' starring NTR Jr and Ram Charan as a Tamil film. Priyanka was in a conversation with Dax Shepard on his podcast titled Armchair Expert. Priyanka made the mistake while correcting Shepard, who tagged 'RRR' as a Bollywood film. This happened when Shepard was comparing Bollywood to be like the 50s of Hollywood when a few stars and big studios controlled everything. To which, Priyanka agreed. She said, "I don't think you are far from it. I think that was what it was... big studios, five actors... big movies will be made by them; but the game is changed so much now. First of all, it's streaming." "It has given access to so many people who are making content." She added that "Bollywood has evolved", to which the host mentioned S.S. Rajamouli's 'RRR',



whose song 'Naatu Naatu' won big at the 95th Oscar Awards. Priyanka corrected him and said: "That's a Tamil movie by the way. It's like big, mega, blockbuster Tamil which does all of those... it's like our Avengers." Social media users took to Twitter to share their opinion on the gaffe. "If it is to be believed then @priyankachopra lacks clarity on Indian cinema. #RRR is a Original #Telugu movie, NOT a #Tamil movie," said one social media user.

'Indian Idol - Season 13' gets its TOP 6 finalists!

Sony Entertainment Television's prestigious singing reality show, 'Indian Idol - Season 13' has finally found its Top 6 finalists, who have impressed the viewers and judges Himesh Reshammiya, Vishal Dadlani week after week with their exceptional performances. Contestants Rishi Singh from Ayodhya, Bidipta Chakraborty, Sonakshi Kar and Debosmita Roy from Kolkata, Chirag Kotwal from Jammu & Kashmir, and Shivam Singh from Vadodra are all set to make the 'mausam musicana' one last time with their melodious voices. One among the Top 6 will take home the coveted title of 'Indian Idol - Season 13' in the Dream Finale along with the all new Techy Brezza, presented by Maruti Suzuki India. The 'Bong Beauty,' Bidipta Chakraborty who has proved that she is born to sing has finally made it to the finale. Elated to join the quest for the trophy, Bidipta shares, "Looking back at my journey in Indian Idol 13, my heart fills up with immense joy and pride. With every episode, I have cherished all those small and big memories which will be a part of my life forever. Standing among the top 6 finalists feels surreal. I wish to give my best performance and win the show." From 'Papa Shivam' to 'Cool Dude,' Shivam Singh has completely transformed himself on the show. He is not only the judges' favourite but also a favourite among the viewers due to his unique



singing style and his quirks. Talking about his excitement about being a part of the Top 6, he shares, "Indian Idol has made me a better singer and performer; and I am grateful for the opportunity. I'm not sure about the trophy, but I'm certain I'll walk away with a wealth of experience, memories, and lessons learned."

Ravi Teja-starrer 'Tiger Nageswara Rao' to release on October 20



For the caption, Anupam wrote: "My Telugu film's #TigerNageswaraRao dearest @RaviTeja_offl is ready to Hunt the Box Office ?? HUNTING WORLDWIDE from OCTOBER 20th 2023! Jai Ho! ????" @DirVamsee @AbhishekOfficial #RenuDesai @NupurSanon @gayab3bh @Jisshusengupta @gvprakash @madhiel @artkolla @SrikanthVissa @MayankOfficial @AAArtsOfficial." Ravi Teja's maiden pan-India film 'Tiger Nageswara Rao' is under the direction of Vamsee. 'Tiger Nageswara Rao' is a biopic of the notorious thief and is set in the 70s in a village named Stuartpuram. Ravi Teja's body language, diction and getup are completely different in the never before seen character for the actor. Nupur Sanon and Gayathri Bharadwaj are roped in to play the leading ladies opposite Ravi Teja in the movie.

Star Ravi Teja's upcoming film 'Tiger Nageswara Rao', which also features actor Anupam Kher, will be releasing on October 20. Anupam took to Twitter, where he shared a poster of the film unveiling the release date.

Actors who captivated audiences with their writing



Actors have always been praised for their captivating performances on screen, bringing characters to life with their incredible acting skills. What many people are not aware of is that some actors have also made a name for themselves as writers, displaying their creativity and talent beyond their acting careers. These multi-talented individuals have showcased their abilities to create compelling stories, intricate characters, and dynamic plots, proving that they are more than just attractive personalities. Whether they are writing



for film, television, or audio series, these actor-turned-writers have demonstrated that their skills and abilities are not limited to their acting roles. **Sukhmani Sadana** Indian actress, has successfully transitioned into a writer. She was also part of the writer's team for the film Rocketry featuring R. Madhavan and Shah Rukh Khan, and her show Udan Patolas on Amazon mini

Honey Irani. He made his directorial, producing, and writing debut with Dil Chahata Hai in 2001. Since then, he has written, directed, produced, and acted in hit films like Don, Rock On, Zindagi Na Milegi Dobaara, Talaash, and Dil Dhadakne Do. Farhan's multifaceted contributions continue to be celebrated in the industry

Mohsin Ali Khan Mohsin Ali Khan is a highly versatile actor, renowned for his roles in popular shows such as Meri Sai and Kaamna on Sony TV, as well as Rudrakaal on Disney+Hotstar. He gained immense recognition as a writer with Pocket FM's audio series, SHIVAM: The Hidden Warrior. Drawing from his vast acting experience, Mohsin possesses a deep understanding of character development and plot progression, which he seamlessly translates into his writing endeavors. Additionally, Mohsin has also showcased his versatility and adaptability as an artist through his work in various advertisements.

Kangana Ranaut says she never succumbed to vanity



Actress Kangana Ranaut, who is busy with the post-production work of her period drama film 'Emergency', took to her social media on Wednesday and shared that although she feels proud about her beauty

and feels good about herself, she has never fallen prey to the idea of vanity which comes quite naturally in the glamorous world of the movies. The actress took to her Twitter and shared a collage of her pictures ahead of her trip. In the pictures, the 'Gangster' actress can be seen wearing an ethnic attire with her curls. She revealed that the selfies in the post are a result of in-traffic boredom. She tweeted, "Aaj airport jaate hue traffic bahut mila toh socha thoda apni khubsurati pe itra leti hoon ... Kamiyaan mujhse bhi honghi shayad, lekin vanity ka shikaar main kabhi nahi rahi (Encountered a lot of traffic while on my way to the airport today. So, I thought why not feel proud about my beauty. I may not be perfect but I never fell prey to vanity)". However, she left her post open-ended as she posed a question in her tweet, "Aab iss umar mein yeh bimari lag jaye toh (But, what if the contagion of vanity gets me)".

High voltage drama in &TV shows!

In &TV shows Doosri Maa, Happu Ki Ultan Paltan and Bhabiji Ghar Par Hai, characters will find themselves in high-voltage drama this week. About &TV's Happu Ki Ultan Paltan track, Katori Amma shares, The Commissioner (Kishore Bhanushali) announces the formation of a special police force comprising of senior citizens in the special position. Gabbar instructs Rajesh (Kamna Pathak) to persuade Happu to become a special police officer. Chamchi (Zaara Warsi) informs Katori Amma (Himani Shivpuri) about it, and she decides to apply for it with the help of Happu. Frustrated, Happu cannot decide who to hire and



asks the Commissioner to cancel the position. Due to rejection, Katori Amma tries to influence the Commissioner by gifting homemade pickles. As a result, she lands up getting hired. On finding this, Rajesh gets enraged and vows not to let Amma perform her duties." Watch Doosri Maa at 8:00 pm, Happu Ki Ultan Paltan at 10:00 pm, and Bhabiji Ghar Par Hai at 10:30 pm, airing every Monday to Friday only on &TV!

CROSSWORD

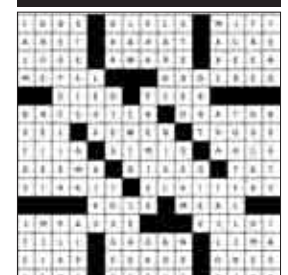
603



- ACROSS**
1. Actress ____ Hayworth
 5. Tatters
 9. Lasso user
 14. Operator
 15. Toledo's waterfront
 16. Elude
 17. Picky
 19. Royal rule
 20. Snaky swimmer
 21. Assisted
 22. Made mistakes
 23. Compass dir.
 24. Close securely
 26. ____ retriever
 31. Modifies
 35. Eyed flirtatiously
 36. Cherished animals
 38. Falling sound
 39. Neptune's domain
 40. Changed
 43. Alias letters

44. Conclusions
 46. Capri or Man
 47. Devourer
 49. Shoplifts
 51. Meetings
 53. Perjurer
 55. Fourth mo.
 56. Gives forth
 59. ____ acid (protein component)
 62. ____-fi
 65. Check accounts
 66. Custodian
 68. Copy exactly
 69. BPOE members
 70. Average skirt
 71. Actress ____ Hayes
 72. Pause
 73. Primates
 77. CIA employee
 78. " ____ Runner"
 79. Chooses
 80. Staggers
 82. Greek philosopher
 83. Keepsake
 84. Masts
 87. Family chart
 91. ____ Kudrow of "Friends"
 92. Tyrant
 95. Soup cracker
 98. Breathable stuff
 99. Hear
 99. Most rational
 99. Marathon runner
 99. Every
 99. Army mascot
 99. False god
 99. Masculine
 99. Irritates
 99. Omit
 99. Give up
 99. Purple flower
 99. Doctors' group (abbr.)
- DOWN**
1. Pretense
 2. Words of comprehension (2 wds.)
 3. Tattle
 4. How ____ you?
 5. Fastened again
 6. Desertlike
 7. Bestow
 8. Future flowers
 9. Peruse again
 10. Partly cover
 11. Couple
 12. Cliff's brink
 13. Tear apart
 18. Montreal's country
 23. Before, to Shakespeare
 25. Relieve
 26. Misplaces

SOLUTION 602



Mentor vs Mentee

Its Dhoni vs Hardik as both teams fret on 'Impact Players'

Ahmedabad, Mar 30 (PTI):

Hardik Pandya's youthful leadership template will meet its match in Mahendra Singh Dhoni's time-tested improvisations as defending champions Gujarat Titans clash with eternal title contenders Chennai Super Kings in the Indian Premier League opener here on Friday. The 2022 was Pandya's first year as an IPL captain and despite his flamboyance on and off the field, he did invoke a certain sense of calm in 'Titans' campaign that had the an identical start to finish tempo, unmatched by any other team.

At 42, playing from IPL to IPL, Dhoni knows the template of IPL success only too well. There have been blips here and there, like last time when they failed to qualify for the play-offs but even with shut eyes, one can vouch that there was no fault in planning but the execution wasn't on expected lines.



edition starts, it will be very different from earlier ones as 12 players per side will take part in the pitched battle at the Motera Stadium with the 'Impact Player' rule coming into play for the first time.

Dhoni, who manoeuvres his resources having put

in a lot of thought into his actions, might well make himself the 'Impact Player' if need be during phases.

That for sure won't happen in the first few games as both teams try to make optimal use of the rule.

For CSK, the presence of Ben Stokes is sure to make the opposition wary but to

Gujarat Titans' delight, the England Test captain perhaps won't bowl at least in the initial phase of the tournament.

That makes him an ideal candidate as 'Impact Player' depending on whether the team bats first or second and accordingly Dhoni can think of

playing three foreigners instead of four.

As far as GT is concerned, there is one strategic decision which has been baffling and that is release of tearaway quick Lockie Ferguson and bringing in Shivam Mavi. However Alazarri Joseph's presence is a bit reassuring in this format. Save Mohammed Shami, the only other pacer of repute is the skipper himself. Yash Dayal had a good first season hasn't been in great form in Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy with only 2 wickets from 6 games but to be fair, he was coming back from injury. Pradeep Sangwan and Mohit Sharma are both experienced campaigners but they are now well past their prime.

The other cause of worry for GT will be keeper's slot. While Wriddhiman Saha was decent as an opener last year, they have a better T20 batter in Kona Bharat this time round, who incidentally bats in the top order in the shortest format.

Sindhu, Srikanth enter quarterfinals of Madrid Spain Masters

Madrid, Mar 30 (PTI):

Indian shuttlers PV Sindhu and Kidambi Srikanth moved to the singles quarterfinals of the Madrid Spain Masters badminton tournament with straight game wins here on Thursday.

Two-time Olympic medallist, Sindhu dispatched Putri Kusuma Wardani of Indonesia 21-16 21-14 in a little over half an hour to enter her first quarterfinal in 2023. World no. 21 Srikanth, on the other hand, pulled off a 21-15 21-12 second round win over compatriot B Sai Praneeth.

Second seed Sindhu has been struggling for form this season since returning to action following a long injury lay off. It is the first time in 2023 that the 27-year-old former world champion has crossed the second round.

Sindhu, who has dropped out of the top 10 for the first time since November 2016, will take on 25-year-old Danish Mia Blichfeldt in the last eight stage of the Super 300 tournament. While World no. 21 Srikanth, seeded fifth, has a tough contest ahead of him as the former world No. 1 is pitted against top seed Kenta Nishimoto of Japan in the quarterfinals. Nishimoto was handed a walkover by France's Arnaud Merkle in their second round contest.

Kiran George and Priyanshu Rajawat crashed out of the men's singles event after suffering second round defeats.

While George went down to Denmark's Magnus Johannesen 17-21 12-



21 in 31 minutes, Rajat was outplayed 15-21 15-21 by eighth seed Toma Junior Popov of France. Later in the day, Aakarshi Kashyap, Ashmita Chaliha Malvika Bansod and Sameer Verma will play their second round matches.

The men's and women's doubles pair of MR Arjun and Dhruv Kapila and Sikki Reddy and Arathi Sara Sunil will also be in action.

IPL TURNS 'SWEET 16'

Dhoni's CSK, Rohit's MI remain premier contenders as Kohli's RCB eye fresh start

New Delhi, Mar 30 (PTI):

The never-ending speculations about Mahendra Singh Dhoni's impending 'last dance', Virat Kohli's endless pursuit of an elusive silverware and Rohit Sharma's customary nonchalance are things that make the IPL starting Friday a heady cocktail of cricket and entertainment. Megastars Dhoni, Kohli and Rohit have been the IPL's driving force in the past 15 seasons, getting the cricket crazy Indian fans hooked on the event for nearly two months every year.

As it enters the 16th season, innovations introduced in the form of potential game changer like the 'Impact Player' rule, DRS on wides and waist-high no balls, and two broadcasting giants locked in an ugly war of 'TV vs Digital' act as ingredients garnishing the mouth-watering dish, which will be devoured by millions for more than 50 days. However, the product will remain the driving force and players the main stakeholders, as the likes of Dhoni, Kohli and Rohit set the narratives for their respective franchises with amazing fan bases.



Royal Challengers Bangalore (RCB) cricketers Faf du Plessis, Virat Kohli and their former team mate AB de Villiers (L) take part in a training session.

spinners.

PUNJAB KINGS

Punjab Kings under Shikhar Dhawan is another team that has never believed in continuity and never got results since their runners-up finish in 2014. They have kept on changing captains, unceremoniously dumping coaches after one bad season, and the team never had any stability. This time they have got Sam Curran in excess of USD 2 million dollars. A good start is key but not getting Liam Livingstone (injury), Kagiso Rabada (national duty) in the first couple of games could upset the team's tempo. Save Arshdeep Singh, the Indian pace unit lacks quality and the PBKS could again be out of the play-off race. The team simply doesn't inspire confidence and the composition indicates lack of proper homework.

LUCKNOW SUPER GIANTS

KL Rahul is having a nightmare 2023 and a good IPL can raise his profile which has been on a downward spiral despite him being a top performer in the league. Rahul's captaincy has been devoid of any tangible improvisation and his style of run gathering is archaic. LSG have a balanced team and in Gautam Gambhir a tactician par excellence, one who could safely be called the non-playing captain. The presence of utility players like Krunal Pandya, Deepak Hooda and Ayush Badoni in the middle-order adds a lot of depth, while Mark Wood's 150 click thunderbolts will be a nightmare for the opposition.

KOLKATA KNIGHT RIDERS

When it comes to remote-control captaincy, there can't be a better example than KKR head coach Chandrakant Pandit, who will have to do all the planning and plotting on behalf of Nitish Rana, who will be leading a side that isn't looking very strong in the absence of regular skipper Shreyas Iyer. In fact, Andre Russell and Sunil Narine's form will dictate how far KKR progress.

DELHI CAPITALS

Ditto for Delhi Capitals, who will find it difficult to have anyone get remotely close to Rishabh Pant's impact, even though David Warner wouldn't mind winning a second IPL trophy.

RAJASTHAN ROYALS

Amid all the chaos in some teams, Rajasthan Royals look the most sorted outfit. The world's most dangerous T20 hitter Jos Buttler, wily wrist spinner Yuzvendra Chahal, and the best cricketing brain, R Ashwin, will look to ensure that the legend of skipper Sanju Samson grows exponentially.

Axar 'rewarded' for hard work with DC vice-captaincy


New Delhi, Mar 30 (PTI):

Axar Patel is excited about his new role as Delhi Capitals vice-captain, terming the responsibility entrusted upon him as a reward for all the hardwork he has put in for the franchise over past few seasons. "In my opinion, if you have gotten this role that means you are growing as a senior player. It's like getting a reward for all that you've done for the team. I'm excited about this role," the lanky all-rounder said in a video posted on DC's twitter handle. "Our team is mostly the same, we have the same players from the last 3-4 years. We know our players well and that will be an important point."

Cirstea beats Sabalenka at Miami

Miami Gardens, Mar 30 (AP):

Sorana Cirstea advanced to her first semifinal of a WTA 1000 event in a decade, beating Australian Open champion Aryna Sabalenka 6-4, 6-4 at the Miami Open.

The 32-year-old Cirstea beat the highest-ranked opponent of her career by knocking off the second-ranked Sabalenka. Cirstea previously defeated No. 4 Caroline Garcia this month at Indian Wells and topped Garcia again in the second round at Miami. "I think I'm a bit speechless," Cirstea said. "I came out knowing that it's going to be a really tough match. Aryna hits so hard, so I knew I had to hold my ground, and I'm very, very happy with my performance today." The 74th-ranked Romanian, who has two career singles titles, will face either Petra Kvitova and Ekaterina Alexandrova in the semifinals. The Kvitova-Alexandrova match had been scheduled for Wednesday night but was postponed to Thursday because of rain; also postponed was the men's match be-



tween top-ranked Carlos Alcaraz and No. 10 Taylor Fritz. Alexandrova advanced on Tuesday when Bianca Andreescu suffered a left ankle injury and left the court in a wheelchair. On Wednesday, the 22-year-old Andreescu tweeted that she tore two ligaments in her ankle and will be out indefinitely. "It's tough to say exactly how long it will take, but let's just say it could've been much worse!! I'm going to take it day by day, and I am optimistic that with the right work, rehab, and preparation, I'll be back on court soon," the 2019 U.S. Open champion said in her social media post.

India draw Japan, Vietnam, Uzbekistan in AFC U-17 Asian Cup

New Delhi, Mar 30 (PTI):

India were on Thursday placed in Group D alongside Japan, Vietnam and Uzbekistan in the AFC U-17 Asian Cup to be held in Thailand from June 15 to July 2. The draw ceremony was held in Bangkok. The top two teams from each group will progress to the knockout stages. The four semifinalists will qualify for the 2023 FIFA U-17 World Cup to be held in Peru. "We are all excited with the group that we got at the draw. We will be facing some quality opponents, and the boys are really looking forward to it. Every footballer at every level wants to play against the best, and Japan are certainly one of the best in Asia," head coach Bibiano Fernandes said in a statement. "Our previous batches have of course played against the teams like Uzbekistan and Vietnam, and we have had some good results against them, so we are very hopeful to reach our goal, which is to be the first Indian team to qualify for the (FIFA U-17) World Cup."

The AFC U-17 Asian Cup will be held across four venues -- Rajamangala Stadium, Bangkok, Thammasat Stadium and BG Stadium, Pathum Thani, and Chonburi Stadium, Chonburi.

ADMISSION Open

Contact for Advertising: 96302 59335

MODEL ENGLISH HR. SEC. SCHOOL

"Education makes future better"

Special Discount on Admission fees before 31st March 50%

Admission Open Nursery to 12th (Biology, Maths, Commerce)

Register Now at www.mesraipur.com

Civil lines, Katora Talab Road, Raipur (C.G.) Contact:- 07771-4000123

ROYAL PUBLIC SCHOOL

Play Group Nursery, Pre Primary, Class I to XII (Science, Commerce, Bio, Arts)

Special Discount on Admission fees before 31st March 50%

Salient Features:

- Extra curricular activities
- Personal attention to each student
- Limited student in each class
- Music, dance, personality development classes
- Conveyance facilities scholarship to all first class students
- Yoga & Meditation
- Well equipped lab, Computer Lab
- A large playground

Mathporena, Chowasaya Colony, Raipur, (C.G.)
 Mo.: 9589085558, 9329621221, Email:- rpsraipur123@gmail.com

ASSURANCE OF SUPERIOR SAFETY

RELIABLE AND STRONG • NEXT GEN FEATURES
 BENCHMARK OF SAFETY • COMFORT & CONVENIENCE

GK Automotive Pvt Ltd
 Opp. Kabir Nagar, Sondongri, Ring Road No.-2, Raipur (C.G.)
 Mo.: 98422 00997

RELIGIOUS PROCESSION



Devotees participate in a procession on the occasion of Ram Navmi, in Ranchi, Thursday.

'Both Cong, BJP trying to cozy up to me'

Bengaluru, Mar 30 (PTI):

JD(S) leader H D Kumaraswamy on Thursday claimed that both the Congress and the BJP were trying to cozy up to his party, as they may need his party's support in the event of a fractured verdict in the May 10 Assembly elections. He indicated that "middlemen" from both national parties had reached out to him.

Addressing a press conference, the former Chief Minister, however, said he was confident that people would bless his party this time to form an independent government in the state, by giving it a clear

majority. "There is concern among both the parties, middlemen come from both parties. Why they come one has to understand. It is because the JD(S) strength is increasing day by day with the blessings of the people," Kumaraswamy said in response to a question on whether leaders of national parties were in touch with him.

"It is their ongoing plan. There is competition among both the parties to try to get close to JD(S) and



H D Kumaraswamy

earn its confidence."

Speaking to reporters here, he said, "There is no question of me sitting quietly with a plan to win 65-70 seats and waiting for either of the national parties to approach me to form a coalition government. I am working hard on the ground to form a government with a clear majority."

Kumaraswamy's statement gains significance with respect to the scenarios that might emerge in case of a hung verdict in

the Assembly polls if no party got a clear majority, as it happened in 2018.

JD(S) had earlier formed governments in coalition with both the BJP and the Congress respectively for 20 months from January 2006 and for 14 months from May 2018, with Kumaraswamy as Chief Minister.

"To a question on whether any middlemen had reached out to him on behalf of the national parties, Kumaraswamy said, "Am I saying for the sake of it...The (local) leaders of national parties speak belittling my party's strength here before the media, then they knock at my door."

Kashmir woman makes world's smallest 'mandala' shikara

Pahalgam (JK), Mar 30 (PTI):

Childhood interest in drawing and painting led Mahira Shah to the world of 'mandala' art and today she holds the world record for making the smallest mandala shikara. Mandala is an ancient

Indian art pattern which involves drawing of circles in intricate designs. The art form was popularised by Indian artist SH Raza, who created several paintings of the mandala art and became world famous for them.

Mahira Shah entered the Indian Books of Records for making the world's smallest shikara in mandala art. The artwork is more or less the size of an A3 sheet. "During my free time, I would try my hand at mandala (art). My hus-

band and father-in-law noticed that I had some talent and they encouraged me to take it up," Shah told PTI from her Pahalgam home.

Born and brought up in Tral township of Pulwama district, Mahira Shah got married to Inamul Haq who hails from Pahalgam. Haq is a proud husband and an unabashed admirer of his wife's work.

"She worked with the intention of breaking the world record or to set a new record. She created several mandala art pieces such as shikara, spinning wheel and kangri (a Kashmiri firepot made of wicker and clay). The India Book of Records accepted her entry and also nominated her for the Gold medal. I am thankful to her for making me feel proud," Haq said.

Mahira's father in law, Mushtaq Ahmad Shah said he encouraged his daughter-in-law to pursue her craft when he noticed her talent. "I treat her like my own daughter. I told her to pursue her interest and we are supporting her," Shah, a teacher by profession, said.

Shah said for their family, Mahira's record was an early Eid gift. "It is as if we celebrated even before the fasting month. We are extremely happy."

Mahira is sad, though, as no one from the administration came to appreciate her effort.

"This is not just my achievement. This achievement belongs to Pahalgam, Tral, the entire Kashmir, and also India for a world record was made," she added.

'Is this justice', ask victims of Jaipur serial blasts after accused acquitted

Jaipur, Mar 30 (PTI):

The acquittal of four men accused in the 2008 Jaipur serial blasts case by the Rajasthan High Court has come as a shock to many, including those who lost their loved ones or got themselves injured in the terror attack and are living with the bad memories. "Is this justice?" asked Rajendra Sahu, whose wife Sushila was in coma for four years due to head injuries suffered in the blast. She passed away in 2012.

"If they did not carry out blasts then who is responsible for killing 71 innocent people? Who is responsible for the deep pain of those who lost their family members or those who are still living that pain even

today? If the four were not guilty then who was the guilty? This is a burning question and everyone needs an answer," Sahu said.

A lower court had given the death penalty to Mohammad Saif, Mohammad Salman, Saifur, Mohammad Sarvar Azmi in December 2019, which they challenged in the high court. On Wednesday, it acquitted them on grounds that the investigating agency (ATS) did a "shoddy investigation" in connecting the chain of evidence.

The blasts had left 71 people dead and wounded 185, when bombs went off one after another at Manak Chawk Khanda, Chandpole Gate, Badi

Chaupad, Chhoti Chaupad, Tripolia Gate, Johri Bazar and Sanganeri Gate.

While an additional government counsel said the state will go to the Supreme Court against the judgment, rights activists have demanded compensation for the accused, who have spent 15 years in jail. The activists have also sought a fresh investigation of the case to ensure justice to those killed and injured in the blasts.

Sahu, the cloth merchant, said if the investigating officer did not conduct a fair probe, or there was a failure, the government should seek answers from him as to who was responsible.

"It is the state's responsi-

bility to get us justice. I am trying to forget what happened to my family in these years. This sounds an ideal thing, but is that really practical? I feel no. It is not possible to forget what happened. I may be doing routine and normal things like it should be done, but what about things that always go in the back of my mind every now and then Why this happened when we did not harm anyone," he said.

Sahu's wife had gone to Hanuman temple in Chandpole, one of the blast sites, to offer prasad. Gajendra Singh Rajawat, who too had gone to pray at the Hanuman temple, said he heard a loud explosion, felt pain and then fainted. He survived the

attack. "I got 22 pellets in my body. The pain I felt then is dwarfed by the pain of acquittal of the accused," he said.

In 2019, the lower court acquitted a fifth accused Shahbaz Hussain. The state government challenged his acquittal in the high court. At the time, the four acquitted now filed an appeal against the death penalty.

On Wednesday, a division bench of justices Pankaj Bhandari and Sameer Jain termed the case "a classic example of institutional failure resulting in botched/flawed/shoddy investigation" and acquitted the four and upheld the lower court verdict for the fifth man.

Sri Lankan High Commissioner meets Maharashtra Governor

Mumbai, Mar 30:

Sri Lanka is discussing the possibility of using the Indian Rupee for economic transactions and hopes that the move will help increase the flow of Indian tourists to Sri Lanka. The country is also considering developing the Ramayana Trail and a separate Sita trail. This was stated by Sri Lanka's high commissioner to India Milinda Moragoda.

The Ambassador was speaking to Maharashtra Governor Ramesh Bais during a courtesy call at Raj Bhavan, Mumbai on Thursday (30 March).

The Ambassador said he is working closely



with India's Foreign and Finance Minister Minister S. Jaishankar and Nirmala Sitharaman,

and added that the island nation is trying to get more investment from India.

The Ambassador said Sri Lanka has at least 40 places associated with Ramayana. He said there are 5 Shiva Temples in Sri Lanka, one of which in Trincomalee is believed to have been established by Ravana.

He told the Governor that there is also a Buddhist temple in Sri Lanka where Vibhishana is worshipped. He said many Sri Lankans believe that Lord Buddha had visited Sri Lanka. The Consul General of Sri Lanka in Mumbai Valsan Vethody was also present.

GARDEN IN FULL BLOOM



A visitor at Asia's largest Tulip Garden, at the foothills of Zabarwan Mountains overlooking Dal Lake in Srinagar, Thursday.

India's borders fully secure: Rajnath

Surgical strikes broken back of terrorists

New Delhi, Mar 30 (PTI):

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Thursday said India's borders are "fully secure" and asserted that surgical strikes conducted by India have broken the back of terrorists.

Addressing a conclave here, he also said that whether it was the "stand-off with China or any ill intentions from Pakistan", Indian armed forces have been giving a "befitting reply".

Singh further said that India has led the world on issues like terrorism and has been successful in garnering support to eliminate the menace.

"Our borders are fully secure. Whether it was the standoff with China

or ill intentions from Pakistan, our armed forces have been giving a befitting reply, whenever required.

"The surgical strikes against terrorism have broken the back of terrorists. A strong and clear message has gone to the world that India has the strength and it can strike (against terrorism) on its own soil, and if need be, on their (foreign) soil as well," he said. This is the result of strong will of the government, the defence minister said.

He emphasised that countries, which use terrorism as a tool, are well aware of the fact that India never harms anyone unnecessarily, nor does it spare anyone who tries to hurt its unity, in-

tegrity and sovereignty. He was speaking at the 'India Rising Conclave' organised by a leading television media network.

"This is a conclave on rising India. And, the idea of rising India has been described differently by different people. Some economists see it as a rising economy of India, while some sociologists describe it as betterment in social living. Some political scientists term the political stability in the country and strengthening of democratic values as rising India," Singh said.

However, some people speaking contrary to this too are also active, and for them, 'democracy seems to be on the wane in India', but such people are

very few and far between, he said.

From secure borders and self-reliance to a strong economy and transformed global image, India is rising as one of the "strongest countries" under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the defence minister said.

He termed the abrogation of Article 370 in Jammu and Kashmir as another example of the strong will of the government, asserting that the Union territory has ushered in a new era of peace and progress due to the decision.

"One can assess this from the fact that Congress party while carrying out its 'Bharat Jodo Yatra' did not face any dif-

ficulty. The Yatra left Kashmir without any issue," he said.

Singh said that the government is carrying forward the vision of former prime minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, under whose leadership nuclear test was conducted in Pokhran in 1998. "Today, we are producing big missiles, tanks, weapons and ammunition on our land. This is also a result of a strong political will," he said.

He also highlighted the government's resolve towards the development of the Northeast region, saying that it has been ensured that the region, full of beauty and natural resources, is well connected with the heart of the country.

Aadyam Theatre returns to capital with modern classic 'Hayavadana'

New Delhi, Mar 30 (PTI):

Following a successful run in Mumbai, Aadyam Theatre - an initiative by Aditya Birla Group - will now make its return to the national capital with its sixth edition showcasing Girish Karnard's modern Indian classic "Hayavadana". The Kannada play, translated into Hindi by BV Karanth, is directed by Padma Shri awardee Neelam Man Singh Chowdhry and produced by Bengaluru-based Bhoomija Trust.

It will be staged here at Kamani Auditorium this weekend. Dealing with notions of "individuality, freedom, gender politics, and feminism at its core", "Hayavadana" aims to reflect on the reality of the day through talent both on and off stage.

Puneet Kumar Mishra,

disturbing the text. According to Aadyam Theatre, the play will strike the right chord with the viewers and entertain them while "punching holes in the conventional stereotypes of the world we live in".

The play is complex and layered, and offers multiple interpretations. I hope the play resonates with the audience in Delhi," said Chowdhry in her statement. Shedding new light on "Hayavadana", Chowdhry has taken the creative liberty to comprehend its ending in her own distinct way without

disturbing the text. According to Aadyam Theatre, the play will strike the right chord with the viewers and entertain them while "punching holes in the conventional stereotypes of the world we live in".

कालड़ा बर्न एवं
लासिक कास्मेटिक सर्जरी सेंटर

- कन्सर
- जांच
- आर्म
- वक्ष स्थल
- शरीर के अन्य हिस्सों का लेजर द्वारा लाइपोसक्शन

(ड. आ. शारदा से ब्रांचियाल प्रमोड)

अर. के. वी. के. ब्लाक, पी. वी. कालोनी एच. एच. एच. नगर, भ्रमरनी रोड, कदमती सोलर पार्क, राजपुर कॉलोन: 98271 43060/8871 003060