



Rahul gets bail in defamation case from sessions court

Surat, Apr 03 (PTI):

Hearing on conviction stay on Apr 13

A sessions court in Gujarat's Surat city on Monday granted bail to Congress leader Rahul Gandhi after he filed an appeal against his conviction in a criminal defamation case over his 2019 "Modi surname" remark in which he has been sentenced to two years in jail, a lawyer said. The court of Additional Sessions Judge R P Mogera said it will hear his plea for suspension of conviction on April 13

after issuing a notice to complainant Purnesh Modi, a Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) MLA and former Gujarat cabinet minister. The sessions court asked the respondent (Purnesh Modi) to file his reply by April 10. "We had filed an application for Rahul Gandhi's bail and suspension of sentence along with his appeal against conviction



Congress leader Rahul Gandhi waves at supporters as he leaves Surat District Court after filing an appeal challenging his conviction in a defamation case, in Surat, Monday.

'This is a fight against 'Mitrkaal' to save democracy'

Surat (Guj): Soon after a Surat court granted bail to Rahul Gandhi in a 2019 defamation case, the Congress leader on Monday said this is a fight against "Mitrkaal" to save democracy and truth is his weapon in this struggle. Minutes after the hearing on Monday, Gandhi said in a tweet in Hindi, "This is a fight against 'Mitrkaal' to save democracy. In this struggle, truth is my weapon, and truth is my support!" Gandhi has been taking the 'Mitrkaal' jibe at the central government, accusing it of working to benefit its "crony capitalist friends".

by a lower court. The (sessions) court heard the matter and granted him bail. The court kept the matter for hearing on the stay of his conviction for April 13," a member of his legal team told reporters. Rahul

Gandhi, who arrived in Surat earlier in the day, will not be required to appear in the court during the hearing of the case, he said.

Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra and other party leaders were present in the courtroom when the matter came up for hearing at around 3 pm.

Rahul Gandhi reached the sessions court premises in a luxury bus along with Priyanka Gandhi Vadra and other senior leaders.



Bhubaneswar AIIMS introduces millets for patients, students

Bhubaneswar, Apr 03 (PTI):

AIIMS, Bhubaneswar has introduced millets in the diets of patients admitted in it and students to provide healthy and nutritious food to the students and indoor patients. The initiative was introduced on the occasion of 'Utkal Dibasa' (Odisha Day) and G20 Jan Bhagidari (people's participation) campaign, said the institute's executive director Ashutosh Biswas said. "We are really enthusiastic to introduce millets in the diet of our patients and students. We believe that it will provide patients the essential fibres they need to recover quickly. We are committed to provide the best care to

our patients and this is one of the many steps we are taking in that direction," Biswas said. The students will get rich nutrients and minerals from millets, an ancient food which is locally available, and will take care of their weight problems and immunity, he added. AIIMS Bhubaneswar has planned a series of programmes for the month in line with Prime Minister's call for 'Jan Bhagidari', a strong element in the country's G20 presidency, the institute's registrar B B Mishra said. A meeting was organised at the institute to create awareness about the health benefits of millets and spread the message to the public.

CBI officers should act against corrupt, however powerful, without hesitation: PM

New Delhi, Apr 03 (PTI):



Prime Minister Narendra Modi addresses during the inauguration of diamond jubilee celebrations of Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), in New Delhi, Monday.

There is today no dearth of political will to act against corruption and officers should take action against the corrupt, however powerful, without any hesitation, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Monday. Addressing a gathering at the diamond jubilee celebrations of the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), the prime minister said the agency has developed as a brand of "truth and justice" over the last 60 years. Terming corruption the biggest roadblock to democracy and justice, he said the agency's key responsibility is to free India from it. Stressing that the CBI should not be distract-

ed by those trying to tarnish its image, Modi said a developed India is not pos-

sible without professional and efficient institutions and this puts a huge responsibility on the agency. The CBI's chief responsibility, he said, is to rid the country of corruption. "Corruption is not an ordinary crime, it snatches the rights of the poor, it begets many other crimes, corruption is the biggest obstacle in the path of justice and democracy," he said. He asked the CBI to devise ways to fast-track its investigations against the corrupt because a languishing probe gives a sense of safety to the corrupt while innocent people keep suffering. Those who benefitted from corruption for decades have created an ecosystem that attacks probe agencies. But the

agencies should not be deterred by stories about the power of the corrupt and their ecosystem to tarnish them, Modi said. "These people will keep distracting you, but you have to focus on your work. No corrupt person should be spared. There should be no laxity in our efforts. This is the wish of the country, this is the wish of the people of the country. The country, law and constitution are with you," the prime minister said. "Today there is no dearth of political will to take action against corruption in the country: You should not hesitate to take action (against the corrupt), however powerful..." he told the gathering of CBI officers and personnel.

'No proposal for one-time relaxation in eligibility criteria for JEE-Main'

New Delhi, Apr 03 (PTI):

The Union Education Ministry on Monday ruled out considering any proposal for a one-time relaxation in eligibility criteria for engineering entrance exam JEE-Main this year. The ministry has been receiving representations from a few students who claimed to have faced difficulties in the JEE (Main) 2022 exams, Union Minister of State for Education Subhas Sarkar informed Lok Sabha in a written response. "After due verification, the affected candidates were allowed to appear in re-examinations held on June 29, 2022 (Shift-2) and June 30, 2022 (Shift-1) for

Session-1 and on July 30, 2022 (Shift-1) for Session-2. Moreover, the candidates who have passed the Class 12/ equivalent examination in 2021, 2022, or appearing in 2023 can appear in JEE (Main) - 2023 examination. "For the school leaving batch of 2020, the JEE (Main) examination was conducted two times in 2020, four times in 2021 and two times in 2022 giving them sufficient opportunities to take the JEE(Main) examination," said Sarkar. "Accordingly, there is no proposal under consideration for one-time relaxation in eligibility criteria of JEE (Main) 2023," the minister added.







Lakshya Antyodaya Welfare for all

Financial inclusion
More than **₹61,200 crore** deposited in the accounts of over **1 crore 66 lakh** beneficiaries in Chhattisgarh.

Medical inclusion
Free treatment up to **₹5 lakhs** per family under Ayushman Bharat Scheme.
1.68 crore Ayushman cards issued and treatment worth **₹3,666 crore** carried in the state.

Electricity to all in Chhattisgarh
More than **7 lakh** connections under **Saubhagya Yojana**, electricity to every household in Chhattisgarh.

Food grains provided during the Pandemic
During COVID-19 pandemic, more than **2 crore** poor people in Chhattisgarh got **free ration** under **Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana**.

Social inclusion
Housing for all, clean water for all, electricity for all, toilets for all - Almost all schemes of Government of India are moving towards total coverage of beneficiaries.

Today, the policy of the country is - service to every poor, priority to every deprived. When a Government is concerned about the welfare of the poor, exploited, deprived, dalits and tribals, it works hard and it delivers results.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi



Mahavir Janma Kalyanak celebrations get underway

Central Chronicle News



Bhilai, Apr 03: Mangal Abhishek and Shanti Dhara Puja of Lord Mahavir Swami was performed by hundreds of devotees in Shri Triveni Jain Teerth Sector 6 Parshwanath Temple on the occasion of Lord Mahavir Swami Janma Kalyanak Mahotsava. Hundreds of devotees of Shri Parasnath Digambar Mahasabha and Jain Milan performed Mangal Abhishek.

Thereafter, a grand shobha yatra was taken out in which statues of Lord Mahavir were placed in two decorated palanquins. The devotees hoisted the auspicious flag with the slogan of "non-violence supreme religion" and "live and let live".

Hundreds of devotees participated in the grand procession of Lord Mahavir Swami. The procession reached Mohanlal Bakliwal Bhawan in Sector 6B Market via Gurudwara Road from Shri Triveni Jain Tirtha. The devotees in the

Bakliwal Bhavan offered prayers to Lord Mahavir with great religious fervour

Pradeep Jain Bakliwal, said that devotees offered Shrifal to Shriji while performing Mangal Aarti. Mangal Abhishek Shantidhara was performed by Gyanchand

Bakliwal, Dr Anshul Jain, Nishant Jain, Devendra Jain, Arvind Jain, Jai Prakash Jain, Pankaj Jain, Ashish Chhabra, Somesh Bakliwal, Varun Jain, Prashant Jain, Mukesh Jain, Praveen Chhabra, Pradeep Jain Bakliwal, Jinendra Jain, Ashok Nigotia, Arun Bakliwal,

Simpi Jain, Rakesh Kasliwal, Surendra Ajmera, Prashant Jain, Sanjay Chatur, Sanjeev Kasliwal, Vinod Jain, Sunil Kasliwal, Vinod Vinayak, Munmun Jain, Chinku Bakliwal, Sanjeev Jain, Anil Jain, Santosh Jain, Goldie Chhabra and others.

03 Nursing Homes face action for violating norms

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Apr 03: A team of the Health Department constituted under the Nursing Home Act conducted surprise checks at private nursing homes and took action against three nursing homes for violating norms. The team conducted a surprise inspection of Supela Nursing Home located in Indira Nagar Kohka Road Supela.

During the inspection, it was found that the institution is allowed to operate 08 beds under the license issued under the Nursing Home Act. But even after the expiry of the license, the institution was found to be operating without li-

cense renewal, which is a violation of the provisions of the Nursing Home Act Rules 2010-2013. The team imposed a fine of Rs 20000 on the Supela Nursing Home. The second inspection was conducted at Sinha Hospital located in Supela Chowk Bhilai.

The institution is allowed to operate 10 beds through a license which was valid till 17 May 2019. But even after the expiry of the license granted by the Nursing Home Act, the institution was found operating without renewal of license. As it is violation of the provisions of Nursing Home Act Rules 2010 and 2013, the team imposed a fine of Rs 20,000. The team

also inspected Mahima Hospital located in Kadambari Nagar Bhilai. The hospital institution is allowed to operate 20 beds from the license having validity from 19 April 2018 to 18 April 2023. But the institution was found operating 57 beds without any prior permission, which is a violation of the provisions of Nursing Home Act Rules 2010 and 2013. As mentioned in the Act, "Whoever violates the provision made in relation to the license under any rules made as mentioned in the Nursing Home Act 2013, will be punishable with a fine of Rs 20,000". Accordingly, the team imposed a fine of Rs 20000 on Mahima Hospital.

Teacher's training conducted at KPS Durg



Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Apr 03: Krishna Public School, Durg organised a workshop for kindergarten teachers on the topic 'Jolly Phonics'. The focus of the workshop was to bring about a revolutionary change in the way English alphabet are introduced to the kindergarten students. The workshop on Jolly Phonics was conducted by certified Jolly Phonics trainer Shainaz Jussa for the teachers

of the Pre-Primary wing from all the branches of Krishna Public School and other schools. Phonics is the basic reading instruction that teaches children the relationships between letters and sounds. Phonics teaches children to use these relationships to speak and write words. Phonics awareness begins in Kindergarten and concludes with more complex activities. The Workshop focused upon the use of correct phonics,

blending and segmentation of letters. It emphasised that use of facial expressions and hand movements are an important part of Phonic Learning.

The teachers were enlightened about the topic. Several enriching activities were conducted during the session. Different sounds of different letters were explained by the Resource Person in an easy and effective way. It proved to be an enriching workshop for the teachers.

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Apr 03: SAIL-Bhilai Steel Plant concluded the previous financial year 2022-23 with excellent performance. With the commencement of the new financial year, the BSP fraternity has geared up for superlative performance in 2023-24 too. Anirban Dasgupta, Director I/c (BSP) visited the Plant along with other senior officials and congratulated the Plant fraternity for their excellent performance and motivated them to perform even better in the forthcoming financial year.

During the visit, Anirban Dasgupta,

Director I/c (BSP), Anjani Kumar, ED (Works), S Mukhopadhyay ED (Projects) with additional charge of ED (P&A), AK Chakravorty, ED (MM), Dr AK Panda, ED (F & A), Samir Swarup, CGM I/c (Mines and Rowghat), Dr M Ravindranath, CMO (Medical and Health Services), and other senior officials were present to greet the employees.

Under the leadership of Anirban Dasgupta, Director I/c (BSP), the Sr officials met the workers



and officers of various departments and congratulated them for their excellent performance and apprised them of the future goals.

The visit commenced at

in the afternoon and continued till late evening. During this visit, the team under the leadership of Director-in-charge visited URM, RSM, RTS & RPDB, MWRM, Merchant Mill,

BRM, T&D, Cost Control, RMD, Quality, SMS-3, P&BS, Environment Management, PEM, Blast Furnace & SGP, COCCD, SP-2&3, RMP-2&3, OHP, SMS-2, RED-1 & 2, Plate Mill, Water Management Department, EMD, Safety & Fire Services, Contract Cell, PPC, MRD, Electrical, Utilities, I & A, all Engineering Shops, Plant Garage & Mechanical Organization, Finance & Accounts, C & IT, Personnel & Administration, Materials Management, EDD and INCOS, Mines, HRD Centre, Projects, Town Services Department and Medical and Health Services department.

अहिंसा परमो धर्मः



आज इस पावन दिवस पर भगवान महावीर स्वामी द्वारा बताए गए सत्य, अहिंसा, करुणा, प्रेम, संयम और मनुष्यता के मूल्यों को अपनाएं। उनके उपदेशों को अपने जीवन में आत्मसात कर मानवतावादी और कल्याणकारी समाज के निर्माण का संकल्प लें।

भगवान महावीर जयंती

पर सभी प्रदेशवासियों को हार्दिक शुभकामनाएं



भूपेश बघेल
मुख्यमंत्री, छत्तीसगढ़

Failing to find anything, ED handed over inquiry to EOW: CM

In money laundering case against two officers; no disclosures made by ED in 50 raids conducted so far

CM questions why no inquiry initiated in Chit Fund or NAN scam till date?



government has written for inquiry into Chit Fund scam and Nan (CSC) scam, no action has been taken till date and he questioned as to when the inquiry will take place?

CM Baghel questioned as to when inquiry will be initiated against that the very name of CM Sir and CM Madam mentioned in the diary in NAN scam. Similarly the persons who were involved in the Chit Fund scam and those who have distributed certificates by holding 'Rojgar

Raipur, Apr 03: Based upon letter by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) to hold EoW probe against the two officers of the state government, it has been started. CM Baghel during talks with media persons informed that the government has received a letter for EOW probe against our two officers has been started. But the letter which the state

CM's jibe at BJP MLAs' meeting with PM

Raipur: Taking a dig at the meeting of all the BJP MLAs of Chhattisgarh with Prime Minister Modi Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel said that the BJP leaders did not care about Chhattisgarh in the last four and a half years, but they are going to Delhi seeing elections round the corner.

Why are BJP MLAs visiting Delhi?.. To stop paddy procurement to 20 quintal per acre, To stop the socio-economic survey or to keep the reservation issue pending, To discuss about the interests of Chhattisgarh', Baghel said while talking to the media at Raipur airport before leaving for Surat.

Mela' also are not facing any inquiry. CM further said that more than 50 raids have been done in last one month and now ED should disclose as to what they have found? It is the country's biggest law that ED is taking action and what it has found should be disclosed. When they failed

to find anything, the case was handed over to the state government! If at all something wrong would have been found, then they would not have handed it over to the state government, but still the state government has issued orders for inquiry into the case, CM added.

CM extends greeting on Mahavir Jayanti

Raipur, Apr 03: Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel has extended greetings and best wishes to the people of the state on the birth anniversary of Mahavir Swami, the 24th Tirthankar of Jainism which falls on April 4. He said that Mahavir Swami gave the message of truth, non-violence, love, and compassion to society. Mahavir Swami emphasized on 'internal purity' along with 'external cleanliness'. Mahavir Swami described non-violence as the paramount principle for all religions and taught people to 'live and let live'. Mahavir ji principles and teachings are ever relevant. Everyone can have a happy society by following the path shown by Mahavir Swami ji and serving the poor.

ED working under BJP's 'Operation Lotus': Congress

Raipur, Apr 03: Congress has launched a campaign over ED raids in more than 50 locations of Congress leaders and businessmen in Chhattisgarh within a month. Pradesh Congress Committee on Monday made a scathing attack on the central government and ED. Instead of being investigative agency the ED is now acting as political rival of the Congress and B team of BJP, the PCC office bearers alleged while talking to the media at Rajiv Bhavan here on Monday.

The Congress leaders further alleged that ED was illegally harassing the Congress leaders and working under 'Operation Lotus' in Chhattisgarh. The way ED is working seems to be the action of BJP, Chhattisgarh Mineral Development Corporation Chairman Girish Devangan said. 'ED is carrying out raids in coal



scam case but I am not personally involved in coal business', he said. He alleged that attempt was made to sabotage National Congress Session.

Congress welcomes investigation against all kinds of corruption, but till date ED is not able to tell what corruption has been exposed from the house of Congress leaders, he said, adding that Prime Minister Modi and the central government are trying to suppress the Congress. According to him the ED is now becoming a laughing stock in entire Chhattisgarh.

Raipur Municipal Corporation Mayor Aijaz Dhebar said that malicious action was being taken against political people. 'My whole house has been ransacked. ED officials do not have answers to questions. We are Congress workers. We are with Bhupesh Baghel, that's why raids are being conducted', he said. Congress leader Sunny Agrawal said that BJP was being afraid in Chhattisgarh. 'I have nothing to do with coal, but still I am being harassed by ED. ED's full form has now become Election Duty', he said.

BJP MLAs to leave for Delhi today to meet PM

Raipur, Apr 03: BJP MLAs from Chhattisgarh will leave for Delhi on Tuesday on the invitation of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The BJP Legislature Party will meet Modi to discuss the politics of Chhattisgarh on April 5. The BJP MLAs have got appointment to meet the Prime Minister from the PMO office.

Chhattisgarh. It has been learnt that BJP MLAs will complain that several central schemes such as PM Awaas Yojana have not been properly implemented in Chhattisgarh. They are also likely to inform the PM about the burning issues of Chhattisgarh.

Political scenario of Chhattisgarh will also be discussed. They will also invite the Prime Minister to Chhattisgarh. It has been learnt that Prime Minister Modi may come to Raipur or Bastar.

Take prompt action in all crime cases: IG

Directs to put a check on drugs and serious crime against women on priority basis



Raipur, Apr 03: IG Raipur Range Ajay Kumar Yadav and SSP Prashant Agrawal convened a meeting of all gazetted police officers and TIs of Thanas of Raipur district at Civil Lines-C-4 building here on Monday. During the meeting IG directed all to sort out all the pending crimes, complaints in police sta-

tions at the earliest. In the meeting IG AK Yadav directed the police personnel to put a check on increasing crimes against women and arrest in such crimes against women at the earliest. Apart from this taking special interest in disputing property cases, he asked to nab the accused by investigating into the

matter. He asked the TIs to probe into the serious cases personally and take all possible action in Cyber Crime cases and provide relief to the victim.

Further the IG directed to take prompt action in cases related to drugs, illicit sale of liquor, gambling, 'satta', and others and put a check on it. SSP directed the TIs to sort out pending cases in their respective thanas and find out solution into the cases of missing person and other crimes. Apart from this he laid emphasis on policing and keep a close

eye on all the anti-social elements, check on history-sheeters and the old criminals and take action against those who are active in such crime.

Both IG and SSP directed the police personnel to increase presence of police jawans and force in more than crowded areas in city during evening hours and make the Patrolling and Dial 112 more effective in its working. For the next VIP duty and in cases of dharna and demonstration the police officers and TIs were asked to sort out in proper and peaceful manner.

Women take to streets against liquor shop

Allege molestation by drunkards

Raipur, Apr 03: Women staged protest against liquor shop near Kathadh located in Bhatagaon area of Raipur. Miscreants molest and loot when they are drunk, protestors said. Protestors also scuffled with the women police force. They demanded action by handing over a memorandum to the Tikrapara police.

Women residing nearby

reached in front of liquor shop on Monday afternoon. They alleged that criminal incidents were on rise due to liquor shop in the area.

According to them liquor shop caused inconvenience to the people living nearby. Drunkards often misbehave with the school children passing through the road near the shop, they said. They demanded the administration to force closure of the liquor shop and shift it elsewhere so as to bring relief to the nearby residents.

Action on CSC Centers over complaints from manual workers

Raipur, Apr 03: The application process for the registration of construction workers and for schemes run for the welfare of other workers under the Labour Department of Chhattisgarh Building and Other Construction Workers Welfare Board has been provisioned by the CSC. The Secretary of the Chhattisgarh Building and Other Construction Workers Welfare Board has said that manual workers had been complaining of being troubled by some CSC centers about the registration of workers and the application process of schemes run for the welfare of the workers. The manual workers were also not receiving any benefits from the schemes. C.S.C. centers located in various places in the state that are observing negligence in registering manual workers and accepting applications for Labour Department's works.

The Secretary of the Chhattisgarh Building and Other Construction Workers Welfare Board has said that 15 CSC centers in Raipur, 12 in Balodabazar, 9 in Gariyaband, 1 in Dhamtari, 1 in Mahasamund, 5 in Bilaspur, 3 in Korba, 12 in Janjgir-Champa, 9 in Raigarh, 2 in Bastar, 3 in Kondagaon, 1 in Sukma, 1 in Narayanpur, 6 in Sarguja, 10 in Surajpur, 4 in Balrampur, 6 in Koriya, 1

in Jashpur, 11 in Durg, 32 in Rajnandgaon, 12 in Balod, 19 in

Bemetara, and 5 in Kawardha

working under the Labour Department

महावीर जयंती, वैशाखी पर्व एवं डॉ. भीमराव शबडेकर जयंती
की प्रदेश की समस्त जनता को बधाई एवं हार्दिक शुभकामनाएं

मा. वृजमोहन अग्रवाल जी
विद्यार्थक, रायपुर दखिन विमान सभा एवं पूर्व कैबिनेट मंत्री (उ.प्र. खासत)

दिनांक: रायपुर स्वामि एवं प्रो.विकास समिति

भगवान महावीर जन्मकल्याणक की समस्त शहरवासियों को बधाई एवं शुभकामनाएँ...

भगवान महावीर का दिव्य रक्षक... जियो और जीनो दो.

राजेश गूणत
पूर्व कैबिनेट मंत्री, प्रवक्ता भाजपा (छ.प्र.)

सांखला ब्रदर्स परिवार की ओर से महावीर जयंती की हार्दिक शुभकामनाएं

पचरीपारा, दुर्ग (छ.ग.)

गणो अरिहंताणं गणो सिद्धाणं गणो आयरियाणं गणो उवज्जायाणं गणो लोएसव्वसाहूणं एसो पंच-गणो-यारो, पावप्पणा-सणो मंगलाणं न सब्बेसिं, पडमं होइं मंगलं

महावीर जयंती की हार्दिक शुभकामनाएँ...

पायल जैन
अध्यक्ष
छत्तीसगढ़ संघ और कामर्स एंड इंडस्ट्रीज टुर्न मंडिला इकाई
स्वच्छता आंदोलन के अग्रणी और पारितोषिक विभागाध्यक्ष, दुर्ग
रामदेव भवन संगघ दुर्ग, जिला संघाध्यक्ष
सभापति संघाध्यक्ष, दुर्ग

Chronicle APPOINTMENT

VIDYAPEETH COLLEGE (DAU PARMANAND AGRAWAL MEMORIAL)
(An Organization of Trust Shri Laxmi Narayan Maharaj Killa Mandir) Affiliated to Hemchandra Yadav University, Durg, C.G.

Appointment of Teaching Staff under University Statute 28.

Sr. No.	Name of the Post	No. of Post	Qualification
A.	Principal/HOD (B.Ed.)	01	(i) Postgraduate degree in Arts/ Science/ Social Science/ Humanities/ Commerce with minimum 55% marks (or an equivalent grade in a point-scale wherever the grading system is followed); and (ii) M.Ed. with minimum 55% marks (or an equivalent grade in a point-scale wherever the grading system is followed); and (iii) Ph.D. in Education or in any pedagogic subject offered in the institution; and (iv) Eight years of teaching experience in a Secondary Teacher Education Institution. Desirable: Diploma/Degree in Educational Administration/Leadership.
B.	Assistant Professor (B.Ed.) Perspectives in Education/ Foundation Courses	02	(i) Postgraduate degree in Social Sciences with minimum 55% marks (or an equivalent grade in a point-scale wherever the grading system is followed); and (ii) M.Ed. degree from a recognized university with minimum 55% marks (or an equivalent grade in a point-scale wherever the grading system is followed); or (iii) Postgraduate (M.A.) degree in Education with minimum 55% marks (or an equivalent grade in a point-scale wherever the grading system is followed); and (iv) B.Ed./B.El.Ed. degree with minimum 55% marks (or an equivalent grade in a point-scale wherever the grading system is followed) Note: Besides fulfilling the above qualification the candidate shall have cleared the National Eligibility Test (NET) conducted by University Grants Commission. Provided candidates, who are, or have been awarded Ph.D. degree in Education in accordance with the University Grant Commission (Minimum Standard and Procedure for Award of Ph.D. degree) Regulation 2009, shall be exempted from the requirement of the clearing of NET for appointment as Assistant Professor or equivalent position in University or College or Institutions
C.	Assistant Professor (B.Ed.) Curriculum & Pedagogic Courses		
i.	Physical Science	01	(i) Postgraduate degree in Science/ Humanities/ Mathematics/ Social Science/ Language/ Commerce with minimum 55% marks (or an equivalent grade in a point-scale wherever the grading system is followed); and (ii) M.Ed. degree with minimum 55% marks (or an equivalent grade in a point-scale wherever the grading system is followed);
ii.	Maths	01	(i) Postgraduate degree in Science/ Humanities/ Mathematics/ Social Science/ Language/ Commerce with minimum 55% marks (or an equivalent grade in a point-scale wherever the grading system is followed); and (ii) M.Ed. degree with minimum 55% marks (or an equivalent grade in a point-scale wherever the grading system is followed);
iii.	Biological Science	01	Note: Besides fulfilling the above qualification the candidate shall have cleared the National Eligibility Test (NET) conducted by University Grants Commission. Provided candidates, who are, or have been awarded Ph.D. degree in Education in accordance with the University Grant Commission (Minimum Standard and Procedure for Award of Ph.D. degree) Regulation 2009, shall be exempted from the requirement of the clearing of NET for appointment as Assistant Professor or equivalent position in University or College or Institutions
iv.	Social Science	01	(i) Postgraduate degree in Science/ Humanities/ Mathematics/ Social Science/ Language/ Commerce with minimum 55% marks (or an equivalent grade in a point-scale wherever the grading system is followed); and (ii) M.Ed. degree with minimum 55% marks (or an equivalent grade in a point-scale wherever the grading system is followed);
D.	Specialized Courses		
i.	Physical Education	01	(i) Master of Physical Education (M.P.Ed.) with minimum 55% marks (Training/Qualification in Yoga Education shall be desirable)
ii.	Visual Arts	01	(i) Postgraduate degree in Fine Arts (MFA) with minimum 55% marks
iii.	Performing Arts	01	(i) Postgraduate degree in Music/Dance/Theatre Arts (MFA) with minimum 55% marks
Non-Teaching Staff			
Sr. No.	Name of the Post	No. of Post	Qualification
1.	Librarian	01	B.Lib with 55% marks
Sr. No.	Name of the Post	No. of Post	Qualification
1.	Office Assistant cum Computer Operator/ Assistant Grade-III (LDC)	01	1. (10+2) passed from recognized Board OR Passed old Higher Secondary Examination and 1st year pass of any Graduation Course from recognized university. 2. One year Diploma/Certificate in Data Entry Operator/Programming from recognized Institute/University. 3. A Speed of 5000 key Depression per hour in Computer Hindi Typing. (Typing speed test will be taken on computer).
2.	Technical Assistant/ Technical Staff	01	UG in relevant subject with 2nd division marks.

Note:- 1. Pay Scale as per UGC/NCTE & C.G. State Govt. Norms and their amendments from time to time.
2. Qualification fulfill as per UGC/NCTE/AICTE Norms and their amendments from time to time.
3. Interested Candidates may send their application along with the resume, supporting documents & two passport size photographs in hand/registered post within 21 days to Director, Vidyapeeth College, Malviya Nagar, Durg, C.G. 491001. Mobile: 9630926287

Significant number of cases resolved

● In 2nd state-level Lok Adalat

Bilaspur, Apr 03: The event was organized in accordance with the instructions given by Justice Goutam Bhaduri, Judge of the Chhattisgarh High Court and Executive Chairman of the Chhattisgarh State Legal Services Authority, Bilaspur. The main objective of this Jail Lok Adalat was to reduce the overcrowding in Chhattisgarh's jails by releasing under trial prisoners who have been detained for minor crimes and have confessed to their wrongdoing. The sitting also aimed to reduce the number of pending cases in courts. Chhattisgarh



High Court had instructed for a special sitting of CJM/Judicial Magistrate Adalat to be held in the jail premises for this Lok Adalat. The cases of pending in Executive Magistrate's Court were also included in the sitting in addition to the cases pending in the District Court.

The state level large Lok Adalat comprised of

a total of 65 benches, which resolved 348 cases presented before them. It is important to note that the country's first state level large Jail Lok Adalat was held on 15th October 2022. Additionally, Chhattisgarh High Court has directed that Jail Lok Adalats of CJM/Judicial Magistrate be held every working Saturday in jails.

VMC to conduct NAT test on Apr 9

Raipur, Apr 03: Vidyamandir Classes (VMC), a hub for JEE (Main & Advanced), NEET preparation, is gearing to conduct its flagship test for Admission & Scholarships, National Admission Tests (NAT) on the 9th April 2023 through both offline and online modes in order to reward and encourage good students worldwide and elevating them towards academic growth.

This Test will give a significant boost to the preparation of JEE and NEET aspirants with Mentorship, Free Doubt Resolution, Motivational sessions from Founders & Top Faculty, and Free mock tests and practice school / board exams for current class final exams.

Students currently in Classes V, VI, VII, VIII, IX, X, & XI have the chance to take this test as a way to enroll in one of the many programs offered at

Vidyamandir Classes, giving them a head start, access to scientifically designed Free Practice Tests, Mock Board Tests, a wide variety of E-study Material for the current class, and the chance to receive scholarships of up to 100%. Extra 10% concession will be provided on Tuition Fee to Girl students and to the children of school teachers.

Students in grades V, VI, VII, and VIII will benefit from the National Admission Test's Early Start advantage and help develop strong fundamentals that will give them an edge on other competitive tests like the IIT-JEE (Main & Advanced), NEET, NTSE, INSPIRE -KVPY, and Olympiads. Students will be prepared for scholastic and competitive assessments with early exposure to competitive exams, top-notch staff, and an all-encompassing teaching technique.

Bastar bandh given ultimatum if Raoghat-Jagdalpur rail line does not start soon

Jagdalpur, Apr 03: In the meeting organized after one year of the Bastar Rail Movement, the speakers involved in the issue of Raoghat-Jagdalpur rail line expressed their views. In the Rail Budget, the information about getting the budget for Raoghat-Jagdalpur was also discussed. On which everyone said that the rail budget of Raoghat-Jagdalpur is proving to be on papers. The Raoghat-Jagdalpur budget file is gathering dust. Due to the neglect of Bastar, anger is increasing among the people of Bastar. The speakers expressed anger over the apathy of public representatives.

It was decided in the meeting that a memorandum would be given to the Raipur DRM demanding the earliest possible start of the



Rawghat-Jagdalpur passenger rail line. Even after this, if the work of Rawghat-Jagdalpur rail line does not start, then the rail movement will be carried forward by closing Bastar.

Santosh Jain, Manish Sharma, Dashrath Kashyap, Sampat Jha, Vimal Bothra, Chandesh Chandak, Shiv Chandak, Uma Jha, Rupesh Jha, Rajendra Singh, Rajkumar Dandwani,

Shankarlal Gupta, Rohit Singh Base, Purushottam Noyal, Hemant Kashyap participated in the meeting. Yogendra Kaushik, Suresh Yadav, Kaushal Nagvanshi, TK Sharma, Subhash Rai, Vipin Jobanputra, Jyoti Garg, Ghazia Anjum, Hema Gurwara including members of Bastar Chamber of Commerce included various social union organizations.

Separate Corona ward prepared in the Medical College



Jagdalpur, Apr 03: As per the guidelines issued by the Union Health Ministry regarding Corona in Bastar division, a separate ward has been prepared in the Medical College, starting preparations as a precautionary measure. According to the information received from the management, of Medical College, Jagdalpur, a 35-

bedded corona ward has been prepared. Six times more beds have been kept in reserve in times of emergency this time. That is, in any emergency, 35 beds can be converted into 200 beds. To identify the new variant of Corona, the samples of patients whose samples are suspected are sent to Bhuneshwar or Raipur for genome sequencing.

Sometimes samples have to be sent to Pune as well.

The good thing is that so far no information has been received about the presence of corona and other viruses in Bastar.

Medical College Jagdalpur Superintendent Dr. Anoot Sahu told that an alert has been issued according to the guidelines of the Government of India.

This time a 35-bed Covid ward has been made. Apart from this, complete stock of medicines has been kept in addition to oxygen, ventilator, oxygen support as well as intensive care as well as complete treatment. Presently there is not a single corona patient in Medical College Jagdalpur.

Govt not sincere in providing UA: Chandel

Central Chronicle News

Raipur, Apr 03: Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on Saturday claimed that the state government is not sincere over providing unemployment allowance (UA) to the youth.

In a statement issued here, the Leader of Opposition in Chhattisgarh Legislative Assembly Narayan Chandel said that the state government has framed rules in such a way that majority of the unemployed youth would not be able to meet up the criteria for the Scheme. Chandel claimed that the Congress had announced to provide unemployment allowance or employment to 10 lakh youth before the last Legislative Assembly polls in the election mani-

festu whereas budgetary provision of just Rs 250 crore has been made which would be finished within one month if all the 10 lakh people are given the unemployment allowance. BJP leader said that the ruling Congress government appears to be cheating the youth on unemployment allowance issue just like it has betrayed over the waiver of the loan to the Women Self Help Groups, 50% waiver of Property Tax apart from Liquor prohibition across Chhattisgarh. Chandel further questioned the delay in implementing the Unemployment Allowance to the youth and added that anguish among youth would teach lesson to the Congress in the next government.

GEMS celebrates 'Shala Pravesh Utsav'



Raipur, Apr 03: "It was a feeling like a king and queen as we entered the school premises on Monday morning as flower petals were showered on us along with tilak applied on our forehead by none other than our own teachers," shared a section of students when they were asked to share about their feelings on the first day of new academic session. Shri Gujrati English Medium School with open arms welcomed the students and thereafter a formal assembly was conducted in presence of school committee members inside Gyanoday Bhavan to

mark the beginning of new academic session. Shri Gujrati Shikshan Sangh president Narayan Bhai Patel, secretary duo Tulsi Bhai Patel, Ashok Bhai Patel, co-secretary Vithal Bhai Patel, other committee members, administrator V K Mishra, school principal Dr Shailesh Sharma, vice principal S V Chandrasekhar and academic coordinator Bhaskar Sharma gave their gracious presence on the dais when the school assembly was conducted by the faculty members. At the onset guests lit the ceremonial lamp and prayed to Goddess Saraswati

while the choir group of teachers presented the melodious Saraswati Vandana prepared under the watchful eyes of music teacher V S Jha and Rupendra Shrivastav. Further the teachers presented Chhattisgarh state song, conducted pledge, asked G K questions to the students and students giving correct reply were awarded at the hands of president of Shri Gujrati Shikshan Sangh. Likewise thought of the day in English and Hindi and motivational speech by faculty member Divya stole the show. Principal Dr Sharma showered his blessings and through moral stories made the students understand what they should practice to succeed in their goal. President of GSS also showered his blessings. At the end choir group presented national song and national anthem. Senior faculty member Mrs Reema Rao conducted the proceedings.

BMJKMS Raipur President pays courtesy call on CM



Raipur, Apr 03: Bhagwan Mahavir Janma Mahotsav Samiti (BMJKMS), Raipur President Shri Manoj Kothari paid a courtesy call on Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel at his residence office here on Friday evening. He invited the Chief Minister to attend the main function of Lord Mahavir's 2622 Janma Kalyanak Mahotsav, which is being organized on April 4 at

Dadabari in Raipur, as the chief guest. This festival is ongoing from March 15. Chief Minister thanked him for the invitation.

Kothari explained that Dadabari in Raipur is the only place in India where Kalyanak Mahotsav, the celebration of Lord Mahavir's birth, is celebrated for 21 days every year. Vijayji Kankaria, President of Rishabh Dev Mandir Trust Raipur, was also present on the occasion.

BJP leaders stage dharna, cause chakka-jam on NH

● In protest against payment not made to labourers for last one year for Tendupatta collection



Bijapur, Apr 03: Tendupatta BJP opened a front for the second time regarding the payment of the beneficiaries and after the meeting in the BJP office reached to surround the DFO office where there was a lot of tension between the officers and the leaders and the beneficiaries, being dissatisfied with the response of the DFO, former minister Mahesh Gagda along with the National workers protested fiercely by jamming the highway. After the administration's time, the leaders left the highway.

It may be noted that tribal villagers living on the banks of Indravati river of Bhairamgarh block have not been paid crores of rupees for the last one year, including Tendupatta plucking and vehicle transportation. For which BJP

leader Mahesh Gagda is constantly demanding payment. In the same vein, ten days ago, BJP workers blocked the National Highway (NH) in Nelsnar and demanded payment, during which DFO Ashok Patel gave assurance regarding payment in ten days. Due to non-payment on time, former Forest Minister Gagda reached to gherao the DFO office after the meeting with the beneficiaries and workers, where an atmosphere of tension was created due to the officer's evasive answer. After which the dis-satisfied BJP workers became furious with the DFO's answer and the city and they blocked the National Highway in between and started raising slogans while sitting

on dharna. The leaders did not get up even after being explained by the police.

Seeing the workers getting agitated, the SDM and the Tehsildar reached, and listened to the leaders and gave twenty days time to make the payment. After this, the BJP workers called off their dharna. During this District President Srinivas Mudaliar, Satendra Thakur, Gopal Singh Pawar, Lavkumar Rayudu, Urmila Tokal, Nadkishore Rana, Fulchand Gagda, Ghasiram Nag, Baldev Urs, Chaman Thakur, Chinnaram Telam, Sandeep Telam, Sunil Telam, Neeta Shah, Ranjana, Maya Jhari , Pooja Podi, Puspaha Sinha etc were present.

Central govt suppressing voice of Opposition: Langde

Kondagaon, Apr 03: In the context of Jai Bharat Satyagraha, a block level press conference was organized at the old rest house of the district headquarters. While addressing the journalists of the district headquarters, the spokesman appointed by the district committee, Vijay Langde, said that in the largest democratic country, during BJP's rule it is become a crime to raise voice of common men. The Modi-led government at the Centre has reached the peak of dictatorship. He said that the present central government does not provide freedom to speak in the parliament and the mike is turned off when the opposition members are questioned, which has never happened in the



parliamentary history till date. But it is happening in the Modi government. Demonstrating the extremist nature of the BJP MPs in majority, the Parliament does not allow any action to be taken. He said that we respect the judicial process, but the opposition's work is to show mirror to the government and its work. But the way the Modi government is carrying out the proceedings on one of its members of parliament is not appropriate. Finally what MP Rahul

Gandhi has asked something wrong that this government is solely working to target him. The government at the Center is suppressing the voice of the opposition, he alleged

During the press conference, Congress District President Zumuk Dewan MLA Budhram Netam, City President Tarun Golchha, Senior Congressman Amit Gupta Block Congress Committee President Bharat Devangan were present.

Amity University Chhattisgarh launches 'Radio Amity'

Raipur, Apr 03: Amity School of Communication, Amity University Chhattisgarh launched 'Radio Amity Raipur' and re-launched the e-newsletter 'AUC News'. The inaugural session commenced with lamp lighting by the

chief guest along with Saraswati Vandana. Dr. K.N. Kishore, Head of Institution, Amity School of Communication delivered the welcome address.

Sangya Tandon, Director, Arpa



Radio, Bilaspur was the chief guest of the event. She said, 'Radio programme announcers and producers should be very serious about content presentation'. Radio and all forms of audio mediums are again emerging as the powerful medium of communication. Shortage of time in our daily life is a boost for radio, she added in her address to the students. Ms. Tandon in her interactive session with the mass media students explain the nuances of Radio Programme production. She also cleared the doubts of students on vari-

ous programme formats that are interview, talk, documentary/features, magazine, drama, discussion, bridge and jingles.

In his presidential address Prof. (Dr.) Piyush Kant Pandey, Vice Chancellor, Amity University Chhattisgarh, Raipur said, 'Radio Amity Raipur' and 'AUC News' is a wonderful platform for the students, faculty members and staff to showcase their talent, events and activity. It is only you and you who can discipline yourself, no one else can force you to be disciplined. Self-discipline is paramount for

a mass media student to excel in the ocean of media, he added. Amity University Chhattisgarh's web/internet radio 'Radio Amity Raipur' launch and e-newsletter 'AUC News' was re-released by Ms. Tandon in presence of the Vice-Chancellor Prof. (Dr.) Piyush Kant Pandey, Dy. Pro Vice-Chancellor, Registrar, Deans, Directors and Hol's of various schools/institutes. Faculty members, staff and students of the university were present on the occasion. Ms. Dristi Harjani a student of B.A. J&MC proposed the vote of thanks.

Women's awareness camp organized in Bemetara

State govt is making every possible effort to make women self-reliant

Information about the schemes run by the Women and Child Development Department given in the camp

Bemetara, Apr 03: District level women's awareness camp was organized by the Integrated Child Development Project Bemetara under the guidance of Collector Padum Singh Elma at the Town Hall located at District Headquarters Bemetara. The programme was presided over

by Municipality President Shakuntala Mangat Sahu. Local MLA Bemetara Ashish Chhabra was present as the chief guest of the programme. Apart from this, District Programme Officer BD Patel, Programme District and Women Child Development Officer Ramakant Chandrakar, Councilor Manoj Sharma, Neetu Kothari, Sajni Yadav, Lukesh Verma, Pappu Saheb and officers and employees of Women and Child Development Department were present in the program. Addressing the women in the programme, MLA Chhabra said that the purpose of organizing the awareness camp is to make women aware of their legal rights, provisions, against various social malpractices and

motivate them to take advantage of the schemes by informing them about various schemes. For the progress of women, it is necessary to strengthen education and economic condition, for this the state government is making every possible effort in the field of advancing, empowering and making women self-reliant. For this, loans should be made available to provide employment to women.

Women are getting employment through various activities conducted in Gouthan, making vermicompost, paint as well as making greens and vegetables in Gouthan, women are being made self-reliant.

Will raise the standard of living, through RIPA, livelihood oriented activities are

being promoted by providing employment to rural women.

In the programme, information was given about the schemes run by the Women and Child Development Department such as 'Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana', 'Noni Yojana', Child Reference Scheme, Chief Minister Suposhan Yojana etc. The work done by the workers and assistants was praised by the chief guests and their enthusiasm was increased. 13 special performance by A.B. workers were rewarded along with mementos were given to all the guests present. Lectures were given by all the guests present in the program to make women aware in social, economic and political fields and wished them a bright future.

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Chronicle

BRIEF



People stroll under umbrellas during rains in Shimla, Monday.

Arrested

Jhansi: Two army men have been arrested for allegedly raping two women inside a coach at a railway station yard here, police said on Monday. Naik Sandeep Tiwari of Siwan and Hawaldar Suresh Rawat of Rishikesh were arrested on Sunday. Superintendent of Police (Railway) Mohammad Mushtaq said. Another accused Ravindra from Punjab is absconding, he said.

Sweep

Aizawl: Mizoram's main opposition party the Zoram People's Movement (ZPM) on Monday swept the Lunglei Municipal Council (LMC) polls by winning all 11 seats. This is the first local body poll in which the ZPM won majority after it was formed in 2017. The party has 6 members in the 40-member Mizoram assembly.

Cremated

Phagwara: Senior BJP leader and former Punjab minister Chaudhary Swarna Ram was cremated with full state honours here on Monday. Swarna Ram, 83, breathed his last on April 1. His elder son Mohan Lal Banga, also a former MLA, lit the pyre.

Threaten

Bhopal: Senior Congress leader and Rajya Sabha MP Digvijaya Singh on Monday threatened to sue Bharatiya Janata Party's Madhya Pradesh in charge P Muralidhar Rao for defamation for allegedly claiming the former was a "friend" of extremists and neighbouring Pakistan. Singh during the day tweeted on the issue along with the image of a news report that claimed Rao made such a remark.

Suicide

Jaipur: A woman allegedly committed suicide by hanging herself along with her two-year-old son in Rajasthan's Karauli district on Monday, police said. Sharda Jatav (30), a resident of Jat Nagla village, allegedly committed suicide along with her toddler over some domestic dispute, Circle Officer (Hindaun) Kishori Lal said.

Stabbed

Cuttack: A 22-year-old man was allegedly stabbed to death during a cricket match in Odisha's Cuttack district when he tried to rescue the umpire who was attacked over a no-ball decision, police said on Monday. A cricket match was underway in Mahisananda village in Choudwar police station area on Sunday, they said.

Ex-mining officer fined Rs 60,000

● For delaying cases inordinately

Faridabad (Hry), Apr 03 (PTI)

The Haryana Right to Service Commission has imposed a penalty of Rs 60,000 on a former mining officer of Faridabad in Haryana for delaying cases inordinately, an official said on Monday.

The secretary of the commission informed that in a few cases, the delay in the delivery of a mineral dealer's licence, a notified service under the Haryana Right to Service Act, 2014, was evident according to the observations recorded in the

monthly performance reports of the mines and geology department for February and March, 2022.

Taking cognisance of the matter, the commission called for an inquiry and issued a suo-motu (on its own) notice to the director of the department to share the status reports on these cases.

The official said a mineral dealer's licence should be delivered to the applicant within 45 working days. However, in certain cases, the applications were found pending for more than a year.

He further said three such cases were found pending with Balram

Singh, who was the mining officer, Faridabad till February, for more than a year despite show-cause notices issued to him.

The inquiry revealed that the lapse on Singh's part was highly inordinate. The allegations were ratified by the director of the mines and geology department as well.

The secretary said considering all the facts, the commission decided to impose a penalty of Rs 60,000 (Rs 20,000 each in the three cases) on Singh.

The commission has also expressed its extreme displeasure at the supervisory role being played by the mines and geology department headquarters.

'Restore railway fare concession for senior citizens'

New Delhi, Apr 03 (PTI)

KEJRIWAL TO PM

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal has urged Prime Minister Narendra Modi to restore the railway fare concession for senior citizens, saying no society and country can progress without the blessings of its elderly. In a letter to the prime minister, he said the Centre has a budget of Rs 45 lakh crore and would incur a cost of Rs 1600 crore, which was just a "drop in the ocean", if it extends the concession to senior citizens. It was "unfortunate" to terminate the rail ticket concession scheme for the elderly and monetary constraints cannot be the reason for it, he said and cited his government spending Rs 50 crore in the annual budget on a scheme for free pilgrimage. "Please do not stop the concession given to the elderly in the railways. Crores of elderly people are

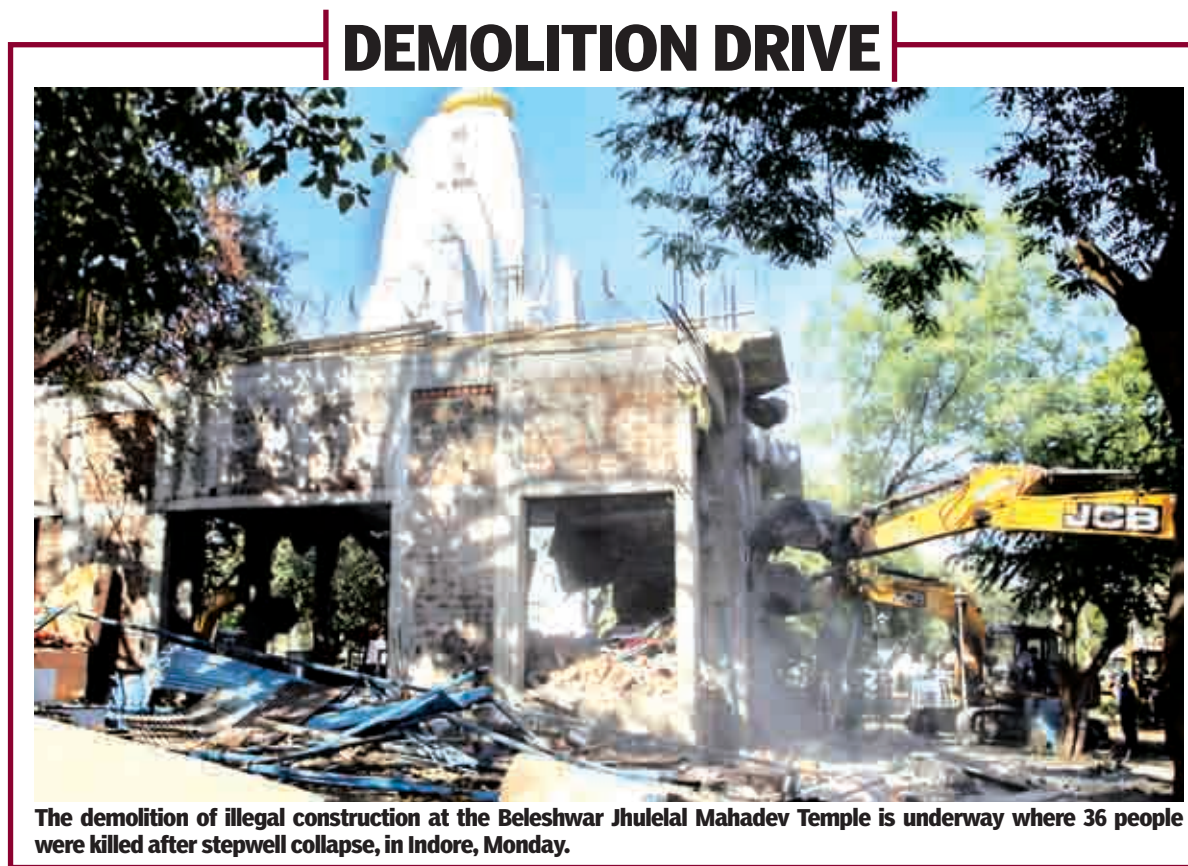
benefiting from this concession," Kejriwal, who sent the letter on Saturday, tweeted. By stopping the facility, a message was being given to senior citizens that the government did not care for them which was against the culture of the country, he said, adding that no person, society or country can progress without the blessings of the elderly.

Delhi was seeing progress in all areas due to the blessings of the elderly for whom free pilgrimage of religious places has been arranged by his government, he said.

"Please restore the concession to the elderly in the railways, crores of elderly people were benefiting from this scheme: Our progress is possible only with the blessings of our elders, but we often become arrogant

that whatever we have achieved in life is the result of our hard work alone,"

Kejriwal wrote to the prime minister, appealing him for restoration of 50 per cent rebate to elderly in railway fare. The Centre had in 2020 discontinued the concessions granted to senior citizens to discourage the movement of the public to arrest the spread of COVID-19. Kejriwal also said that the reason cited by the central government to stop the scheme was its financial implications and added that in reality, this does not make any sense. "Monetary constraints cannot be the reason for stopping this concession. This is about intentions. By paying Rs 50 crore for the Mukhyamantri Teerth Yatra scheme from its annual state budget of Rs 70,000 crore, the Delhi



The demolition of illegal construction at the Beleshwar Jhulelal Mahadev Temple is underway where 36 people were killed after stepwell collapse, in Indore, Monday.

Government does not become poor. "The central government recently cited in Lok Sabha that it was spending Rs 1600 crore on the railway concession for senior citizens. The budget presented by the Central Government this year was of Rs 45 lakh crore. This cost of the railway concession is just a drop in the ocean," he said.

Saving such a small amount of money by inconveniencing crores of the elderly will not be beneficial to the country, Kejriwal said. "By saving Rs 1600 crore annually in such a manner, the central government will not become rich. Nor will it become poor by spending this amount on our elderly citizens," he said. A parliamentary standing committee recently recommended the resumption of the fare concession to senior citizens by the railways.

Doctors remove iron rod from teenager's anus

Berhampur (Odisha), Apr 03 (PTI)

A team of doctors at the state-run MKCG Medical College and Hospital here successfully removed an iron rod which was stuck inside the anus of a 17-year-old boy of Kandhamal district.

The rod had pierced the anus of the boy after he fell from an asbestos roof of a building at Subarnagiri village on Saturday.

About 60cm of the 150cm-long rod, with a radius of around 3cm, penetrated the anus of the teenager identified as Shakti Pataguru, causing injuries to his rectum and sigmoid colon, said a doctor, who operated upon him.

The team of doctors, comprising five surgeons,

took around five hours to remove the rod by conducting a critical operation on the patient, said Siba Prasad Das, head of the department of General Surgery.

It was a critical operation to remove the iron rod without causing any harm to other parts of the patient's body, associate professor at the institute, I Gopal, who led the team of surgeons, said.

The rod had caused a fracture of the pelvic bone and entered into the retroperitoneal space of the boy, Dr Gopal said.

"The patient is in good condition. He will remain in hospital for some days for treatment and observation", he said.

The incident took place when the teenager was allegedly removing dam-

aged asbestos of a school building.

The rod, which was held by another labourer inside a room, pierced the anus of the boy when he fell after the roof collapsed.

He was immediately rushed to the sub divisional hospital, Baliguda and later referred to the medical college and hospital here.

Meanwhile Rabintra Kumar Mishra, a human rights activist, appealed to the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) to take stringent action against the executing agency and contractor who allegedly engaged the teenager in hazardous work. He also urged the commission to direct the authorities concerned for providing monetary compensation to the victim.

Court appointed panel on rice eating elephant visits affected areas

Idukki (Kerala), Apr 03 (PTI)

A high court appointed expert committee, tasked with deciding the fate — captivity or relocation — of rice eating tusker 'Arikkomban', on Monday visited the affected areas of this high range district and interacted with the residents.

A senior forest official said the five-member panel arrived in the district and interacted with the locals.

The panel's visit comes in the wake of widespread protests in several gram panchayats, including Santhapara and Chinnakanal, bordering the famous hill station of Munnar.

Protesters had on several occasions contended that decisions regarding whether to capture and keep the elephant in cap-

tivity were being taken by people sitting in air conditioned offices without finding out the situation on the ground.

The Kerala High Court on March 29 had constituted the five-member committee to take a decision by April 5 on whether to capture the wild bull elephant and turn it into a captive tusker or relocate it to interior areas of the forest.

The court had expressed its reservations regarding capture and captivity of Arikkomban — a moniker earned due to his habit of breaking into homes and sanitation shops for consuming rice — in view of the various instances of cruelty to captive elephants in Kerala and also the deplorable conditions in which they are held captive in various locations across the State.

HP govt plans to set up doppler radar stations

● In Kinnaur, Lahaul-Spiti

Shimla, Apr 03 (PTI)

The Himachal Pradesh government is planning to set up two doppler radar stations in Kinnaur and Lahaul-Spiti districts to enhance weather monitoring capabilities, a spokesperson said here on Monday.

This step will enhance the alert system to predict future weather trends, and alert meteorologists about upcoming precipitation, storms or severe weather, which will help to adopt the safety measures much in advance, a statement issued here said. Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu said that the matter regarding the need of set-

ting up these stations in the state has been raised with the Union government.

He said that the state government is committed to leveraging cutting-edge technology for the benefit of the people.

The Doppler Radar Technology will enable the meteorologists to accurately forecast the arrival of precipitation with location, intensity and severity of the bad weather and to highlight whether there's a high or low probability of danger to life and property, the statement said.

The frequent occurrence of heavy rains, thunderstorms and hailstorms in Himachal, makes it even more pertinent to have these radar stations, it said.

DCW begins probe into sexual harassment incidents

● At college fests

New Delhi, Apr 03 (PTI)

The Delhi Commission for Women (DCW) on Monday said it has launched an inquiry into repeated incidents of inappropriate behaviour towards women during college festivals, days after

Indraprastha College for Women students alleged sexual harassment during a fest.

The women's panel has issued summonses to Delhi Police and Delhi University (DU) officials, asking them to appear before it on April 6.

College to inquire into the specific case of harassment," the commission said.

Students at DU's Indraprastha College for Women alleged that some men scaled the walls of the college during a fest on March 28 and "harassed several students".

Similar incidents have also been reported in some DU colleges in the past. In 2020, some people forced their way into Gargi College premises during a fest and molested the girl students, the DCW noted.

Again, in 2022, some male students forced their way into Miranda College and harassed the girl students. These incidents are happening repeatedly in DU colleges and raise serious concerns regarding the safety of girl students, espe-

cially during college fests, it said.

Taking action in the matter, the DCW chief has issued summonses to the registrar of Delhi University and Joint Commissioner of Police, Special Police Unit for Women and Children (SPUWAC), seeking an action taken report in the matter, it added.

The DCW asked DU to provide inquiry reports on incidents that took place in Gargi College, Miranda House and Indraprastha College along with details of action taken by the university against college administrations for any security lapse.

It also asked DU and Delhi Police why they have not been able to prevent such incidents. They have also been asked to provide details

of any orders/guidelines/standing orders issued by them after the incident to avoid a repeat of such incidents in future.

The DCW asked Delhi Police to provide details of the action taken against its officials for security lapses that occurred in colleges.

The commission has asked DU and Delhi Police officials to appear before it along with requisite information on April 6.

Following the incident at Indraprastha College, the police registered an FIR under sections 337 (causing hurt by act endangering life or personal safety of others) and 188 (disobedience to an order lawfully promulgated by a public servant) of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) and arrested seven people.

Nitish has lost his will to govern Bihar: BJP

New Delhi, Apr 03 (PTI)

The BJP on Monday slammed Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar for communal violence in the state, saying he seems to have lost his will to govern and should "stop dreaming about becoming prime minister and instead take care of the state".

While former Union minister Ravi Shankar Prasad questioned Kumar's willingness to handle the situation, former Bihar deputy CM and MP Sushil Kumar Modi hit out at the state's ruling alliance leaders for blaming the BJP and right wing organisations for violence wondering as to why the government has then not then exposed such a conspiracy.

"If it is a BJP conspiracy, then why did you not expose it? Lakhs of people

who participated in Ram Navami processions across the state are not BJP members but belong to the Hindu society. They can be from any party. For the first time in his over 17 years tenure as CM, Nitish Kumar has been unable to control such a situation even after so many days," Modi said.

Prasad said no incident was reported last year as adequate security deployment was made. Why strict measures were not taken this year, he asked.

Both leaders said violence was reported from places which are "known sensitive areas" but still preventing measures were not taken.

"Innocent people have been killed. It seems Nitish Kumar has lost his will to govern. Nitish ji stop dreaming about becoming prime minister and instead take care of

the state," Prasad told PTI. RJD MLA and spokesperson Bhai Virendra alleged that the BJP wants riots to take place for political benefits. He claimed that the BJP vitiated atmosphere due to its leader and Home Minister Amit Shah's visit to the state on Saturday and Sunday.

Shah addressed a rally on Sunday and hit out at the ruling RJD-JD(U)-Congress alliance for the violence.

On Sunday, at a joint press conference, the state's chief secretary and the DGP had asserted that the communal disturbances, which were triggered during Ram Navami festivities, were brought "fully under control" and more than 100 people were arrested from the two riot-hit towns of Sasaram and Bihar Sharif.

Borissov appears winner of Bulgaria's parliamentary election

Sofia (Bulgaria), Apr 03 (AP)

The centre-right GERB party of ex-premier Boyko Borissov appeared to be the winner of Bulgaria's parliamentary election, the country's central electoral commission said on Monday, with 99 per cent of the ballots counted.

Results showed the GERB party receiving 26.6 per cent of the vote, nearly 2 per cent more than the pro-Western reformist bloc led by the We Continue the Change party.

Four other parties also appear to have gained seats in the 240-seat chamber, according to the latest results.

Riding a wave of pro-Russian sentiment that many in this former communist nation share, the ultra-nationalist Vazrazhdane party,

which opposes any actions against Putin's Russia, boosted support to come in third with 14.2 per cent of the vote.

The ethnic Turkish Movement for Rights and Freedoms came in fourth with 13.4 per cent, followed by the Socialist party and the There is Such People party, led by a popular TV entertainer, with 9 per cent and 4.1 per cent respectively.

It could take days before the final official results are announced. If confirmed, Borissov will be handed a mandate to form his fourth government.

But it seems Borissov will face an uphill struggle to cobble together a governing coalition in a fragmented parliament.

Political analysts predicted that the results, which do not differ significantly from the previ-

ous four elections held within the last two years, will be followed by difficult coalition talks. They don't rule out another election.

Ruzha Smilova, program director at the Centre for Liberal Strategies in Sofia, said that although the two leading political groups share the same strategic foreign policy goals, their visions of the country's future as part of the Western alliance diverge.

"GERB's vision is that the country can do as much as it has shown so far, namely, to remain the most poor and corrupt EU country clinging to the past, to Bulgaria's well-trodden paths as the weakest EU member state and the most hesitant partner in NATO," Smilova told the Associated Press.

"On the other side, is a

Bulgaria that integrates more quickly into the EU and offers a perspective to its citizens to faster catch up with European average income and standard of living."

Smilova said the situation gets more complicated as these two positions are challenged by a "euroscepticism" - equally represented within the Bulgarian population - that nudges the country away from its Euro-Atlantic orientation and more toward the east.

"One of the effects of the long rule of President Rumen Radev's caretaker cabinets has been the hesitant position on such important issues as the EU and NATO, and the support for Ukraine in the war that the aggressor Russia has launched against them," Smilova said. (AP)

EXPLOSION AFTERMATH



Municipal workers clean an area near the site of an explosion at the "Street Bar" cafe in St. Petersburg, Russia, Monday

Finland turns to the right as country prepares to enter NATO

Helsinki, Apr 03 (AP)

Finnish voters have given a boost to conservative parties in a weekend election, depriving left-wing Prime Minister Sanna Marin of another term as the country prepares to make its historic entry into NATO in the coming days.

Marin won popularity for her Cabinet's handling of the COVID-19 pandemic and for her European Union nation's strong support for Ukraine following Russia's full-scale invasion last year.

But Sunday's election was largely fought over economic issues, with voters in the nation of 5.5 million people shifting their allegiances significantly to parties on the political right as they seek solutions to rising state debt, inflation and other economic problems.

The bloated debt will pose a challenge for the new government, particularly since NATO membership will require Finland to increase its defense spending.

Finland could finally join NATO this week after Turkey ratified its membership last week, lifting the last hurdle to membership for the Nordic nation that shares a long border with Russia.

The centre-right National Coalition Party, or NCP, won 20.8 per cent of the vote, which is more than any other party and puts it in a position to try to form a government. The right-wing populist party The Finns won 20.1 per cent and Marin's Social Democrats 19.9 per cent.

Juhana Aunessuoma, a professor of political history at the University of Helsinki, noted that about one-third of the votes went to left-wing parties and two thirds to parties on the right.

It was "a big swing from left to right", he said in an interview on Monday with The Associated Press.

Marin's defeat is the latest setback for the left amid a larger shift to conservative and nationalist parties across Europe in recent times. Sweden ousted its left-wing govern-

ment in a rightward shift last year, followed by an election in Italy that resulted in the first far-right-led government since the end of World War II.

Meanwhile Spain's left-wing government is under pressure, with the right-wing Popular Party and far-right Vox party ahead as the country heads to a vote in December.

The winning party in Finland traditionally kicks off government formation talks, and National Coalition led by Petteri Orpo a 53-year-old former finance minister is expected to start negotiations next week with the goal of putting together a Cabinet enjoying a majority in the 200-seat parliament, the Eduskunta.

Orpo told the AP late Sunday that he intends to negotiate with all parties in order "to find the best possible majority government for Finland".

If Orpo, the most likely candidate to be the next prime minister, ends up choosing the Social Democrats as a coalition partner, that could mean

Marin could theoretically get a post albeit not the prime minister's job in the next government.

Still, for now, a coalition with other conservatives appears to be the most likely outcome.

Finnish media touted the The Finns, which ran on an anti-immigration and anti-EU agenda, as the biggest winner of the election. The populists scored the best result of their history under the leadership of Riiikka Purra, who took over the party only in 2021.

Orpo has said his party is open to cooperation with The Finns as the two parties largely share views on developing Finland's economy though have differences in climate policies and EU issues.

The biggest losers of the election were small and mid-size parties, particularly the Green League and the Left-Alliance both members of Marin's outgoing coalition Cabinet which were left in the shadow of the big three.

Aunessuoma noted that Marin's coalition partners, who shifted to the

left during their years of alliance with the Social Democrats, lost votes.

While Russia's invasion of Ukraine prompted Finland to seek NATO membership in May 2022, neither the historic decision to abandon the nation's nonalignment policy nor the war emerged as major campaign issues, given broad consensus in society and among the parties.

The National Coalition Party, which has advocated NATO membership for two decades, will need to make firm commitments on military spending to meet a NATO target of 2 per cent of a member nation's GDP being spent on defense.

"This is something that they will do. But it won't be easy, given that the government will actually be facing severe cuts in public spending," said Aunessuoma. Increasing spending on defence while facing pressure to cut welfare spending will be a balancing act for the new government, he said.

'Chinese spy balloon gathered information from sensitive US military sites'

Washington, Apr 03 (PTI)

A Chinese spy balloon that flew across the US was able to gather intelligence from several sensitive American military sites and transmit it back to Beijing in real-time, despite the Biden administration's efforts to block it, a media report said on Monday.

A suspected Chinese spy balloon said to be the size of three buses, was spotted over the airspace of the United States in late January.

China was able to control the balloon so it could make multiple passes over some of the sites (at times flying figure-eight formations) and transmit the information it collected back to Beijing in real time, NBC News reported, quoting three unnamed officials.

The intelligence China collected was mostly

from electronic signals, which can be picked up from weapons systems or include communications from base personnel, rather than images, the officials were quoted as saying in the report.

The three officials said China could have gathered much more intelligence from sensitive sites if not for the Biden administration's efforts to move around potential targets and obscure the balloon's ability to pick up their electronic signals by stopping them from broadcasting signals, the report said.

The balloon first entered US airspace from Alaska on January 28, according to the Biden administration.

Over the next four days, it was flying over the Malmstrom Air Force Base in Montana, where the US has some of its nuclear assets.

The development fur-

ther strained the already tense bilateral ties between the US and China, with the US Secretary of State Antony Blinken abruptly postponing his key visit to Beijing in February this year.

The US National Security Council has referred NBC News to the Defence Department for comment.

In its response, Beijing maintained that the balloon was a Chinese "civilian airship" which had deviated from its planned route.

"The airship is from China. It is a civilian airship used for research, mainly meteorological purposes," the spokesperson of the Chinese foreign ministry said in a statement posted on the Chinese foreign ministry's website.

On February 4, the US shot down the balloon off the coast of South Carolina.

WARM WELCOME



In this photo provided by the Saudi Royal Palace, Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, right, welcomes Abdel-Fattah el-Siss upon his arrival in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, late Sunday.

Indian-origin data analyst killed after struck by bus

● At Boston airport

New York, Apr 03 (PTI)

A 47-year-old Indian-American data analyst was killed on the spot after being struck by a bus at Boston's international airport where he had gone to pick up a friend, according to a media report.

Vishwachand Kolla, originally from Andhra Pradesh, was an employee of Takeda Pharmaceutical Company.

He was at the Logan International Airport, Boston to pick up a visiting musician from the airport travelling to Boston when the incident took

place on March 28, US media report said.

Massachusetts State Police said Kolla was at the lower level of Terminal B to pick up a friend around 5 p.m. when he was struck by a bus.

"Kolla was standing on the driver's side of his Acura SUV while, simultaneously, the Dartmouth Transportation motor coach was travelling on the roadway. The investigation indicates that the middle of the bus made contact with Kolla and dragged him along the driver's side of his SUV," State Police spokesman Dave Procopio said in a statement. An off-duty nurse rushed to help Kolla

but he died at the scene, the report added.

Troopers interviewed the bus driver, a 54-year-old woman, and inspected the bus. She has not been charged at this point in the investigation, the report said. The passengers were quickly rushed off the bus and their luggage was moved to another part of the airport. In a statement, Dartmouth Coach said, "Our deepest sympathies are with everyone impacted by this evening's incident at Logan Airport. We're working in conjunction with the Massachusetts State Police and Massport to gather further information."

Jewish school principal in Australia guilty of sexual abuse

Melbourne (Australia),

Apr 03 (AP) The former principal of a Jewish girls school in Australia was found guilty on Monday of sexually abusing two students, ending a nine-year legal battle that strained relations between the Australian and Israeli governments while antagonising Australia's Jewish community.

Malka Leifer, 56, a Tel Aviv-born mother of eight, was convicted on 18 counts, including rape, and acquitted of nine other charges, including five that related to the eldest student, Nicole Meyer.

The three former students Meyer, Dassi Erlich and Elly Sapper are all sisters.

Trial judge Mark Gamble had issued a gag order preventing media reporting during the trial that Leifer had fought against her extradition to Australia following her return to Israel in 2008 as allegations against her first emerged.

The legal battle she waged in Jerusalem courts since 2014 ended in 2021 when she boarded a flight toward Melbourne at Ben Gurion Airport, her ankles and wrists shackled.

The news of Leifer's extradition was welcomed in

Australia by lawmakers and Jewish community leaders.

Leifer sat with her head tilted, watching the jury, and did not react as the verdicts were read. The two former students she was convicted of abusing, Erlich and Sapper, were in court for the verdicts. Leifer had earlier pleaded not guilty to all 27 counts.

The Associated Press does not usually identify victims and alleged victims of sexual abuse, but the sisters have chosen to identify themselves in the media.

Prosecutors claimed Leifer abused the students between 2003 and 2007 at the Adass Israel School, an ultra-

Orthodox school in Melbourne where she was head of religion and later principal, as well as at her Melbourne home and at rural school camps.

Prosecutor Justin Lewis told jurors that Leifer tended to have a sexual interest in girls when they were teenage students at the school and when those same girls were student teachers. Lewis said Leifer engaged in sexual activities with them and took advantage of their vulnerability, ignorance in sexual matters, and her own position of authority.

Defence lawyer Ian Hill argued the lengthy delay be-

tween the alleged offenses and the trial, which began in February, was a disadvantage to the defense and to jurors. He attacked the credibility of the sisters, including accusing one of telling "blatant lies" in her evidence.

The sisters had an isolated upbringing in the ultra-Orthodox Jewish community and received no sexual education, the court heard. They were around 12, 14 and 16 when Leifer arrived at the school from Israel in 2001.

Lewis said the sisters had provided explicit evidence that they did not understand the sexual nature of what Leifer did to them.

कार्यालय नगर पालिक निगम, भिलाई (छ.ग.)

निविदा सूचना

क्रमांक/लो.क.वि./जोन-1/2023/1980/01 भिलाई, दिनांक 31/03/23

एकीकृत पंचायत समिती अंतर्गत सखम श्रेणी में पंचायत डेकरास से विभागीय निर्माण कार्य हेतु ऑफलाइन (Online) निविदा आमंत्रित की जाती है:-

क्र.	कार्य का विवरण	अंदाजित लागत (रुपये सहस्र में)	आवेदन दिनांक	निविदा जमा करने की अंतिम तिथि
1	वाह-02 आनंद नगर में नाली निर्माण कार्य।	9.98	11.04.2023	19.04.2023
2	वाह-11 गांधी कॉलोनी एवं मूकम खदान में सी.सी. रोड का संभरण कार्य।	9.97	11.04.2023	19.04.2023
3	वाह-04 नेहरु नगर पूर्व सड़क 12 एवं 13 में सी.सी. रोड निर्माण कार्य।	9.99	11.04.2023	19.04.2023
4	वाह-17 हाईवेपर लाईन में सी.सी. रोड का संभरण कार्य।	9.84	11.04.2023	19.04.2023
5	वाह-08 कृष्णा नगर स्वयं चौक के पीछे एवं विर्मागिरा किराना स्टोर के सामने सी.सी. रोड का संभरण कार्य।	9.95	11.04.2023	19.04.2023

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जोन आयुक्त
जोन-01
नगर पालिक निगम, भिलाई

Chhattisgarh State Industrial Development Corporation Limited
(A Government of Chhattisgarh Undertaking)
(ISO 9001 : 2015 Certified)

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NOTICE INVITING TENDER
(Through e-Procurement Portal Only)

NIT No. 01/CSIDC/E.E./Division-III/2022-23 Raipur, Dated 03/04/2023

Chhattisgarh State Industrial Development Corporation Ltd., Raipur (CSIDC), a Government of Chhattisgarh Undertaking constituted under the Companies Act, engaged in Industrial Infrastructure Development & Other Related Activities in the State invites online tender for the following works:-

Name of work	Registered Contractor in CGPWD or in appropriate class in other dept.	Probable Amount of Contract (PAC) (INR Lacs)	Last Date for Submission of Tender
Infrastructure development works including Road, Drainage, Culverts, Water Supply System & Street Light for Proposed Food Park/Industrial area at Shyamtarai, Tehsil & District-Dhamtari (C.G.)	Class-B & Above	463.66	24/04/2023

The tender document containing detailed terms & conditions, scope of works and other details can be downloaded from the web portal (website) <https://eproc.cgstate.gov.in> from 03/04/2023 Time 17:01 and shall be submitted online only. Amendment in tender, if any, will only be uploaded on the website and shall not be published in any newspaper.

NOTE: The interested tenderers for online submission of tender may contact CG e-Proc Helpdesk, Operated by Mjunction Services Limited, they may reach Helpdesk using 18004199140 (from 9AM to 11 PM) (therein press 2 for CG e-Proc) or you can email them at Helpdesk.eproc@cgswan.gov.in.

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Karnataka's Election Battle

Polls Will Test Congress and BJP's Strength Ahead of 2024

As Karnataka gears up for assembly elections next month, political parties across India are keeping a close eye on the state. The results of this southern state's election, along with several others later this year, will provide valuable insights into the Congress and BJP's chances in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections. For the Congress, which has been starved of electoral success for a long time, a win in Karnataka could provide a much-needed boost to its national presence. On the other hand, a BJP victory would validate its policies at home and abroad and ensure their continuation. Although the Congress has historically been strong in Karnataka, internal factionalism has often hindered its performance. However, ahead of this election, key leaders like Siddaramaiah and Shiva Kumar have put their chief ministerial ambitions aside to present a united front. While local issues have been at the forefront of the Congress campaign, Rahul Gandhi's recent ouster from the Lok Sabha following a court order has become a rallying cry for the party. Interestingly, no ruling party in Karnataka has won with a majority in the past four decades, with only one exception in 1985 when the Janata Party led by Ramakrishna Hegde secured a clear majority. In 2008 and 2018, the BJP came close to a majority, but it was the support of independents and the resignation of JDS and Congress legislators that saw them through. This time around, the BJP is looking to expand its support base and make inroads into new territory, particularly the old Mysore region where the Congress and JDS have been long-standing rivals. Success here could be crucial in securing a majority for the BJP. To achieve this, the BJP is targeting the Lingayats and looking to widen its social alliance by reworking reservation quotas to attract new voters from Dalits, Vokkaligas, and other backward classes. Despite not having a clear chief ministerial candidate, the BJP is confident of victory and has been focusing on the achievements of the NDA government at the national level. However, the party must also ensure that it retains the allegiance of northern and coastal Karnataka voters. Meanwhile, the JDS is yet to make a strong pitch for power, instead positioning itself as a key player in the event of a hung assembly. The outcome of the Karnataka elections will undoubtedly have implications for national politics. A Congress win could embolden the party and provide a much-needed boost to its national presence, while a BJP victory would validate its policies and increase its chances of securing a majority in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections. However, as with any election, there are no guarantees, and the outcome of the Karnataka polls remains uncertain. Regardless, it will be a crucial test of the Congress and BJP's strengths and weaknesses ahead of the 2024 Lok Sabha elections.

India's Export Expansion Policy

India's New Foreign Trade Policy Aims for Global Expansion

India's foreign trade policy for 2022-23 has set a positive outlook, predicting a significant increase in the value of exports to \$760-770 billion, up from \$676 billion in the previous fiscal year. However, with a continuing slump in global demand, the policy's goals will be put to the test. The new policy also aims for a quantum leap to \$2 trillion in exports by 2030. The policy's dynamic approach includes a one-time amnesty for default in export obligation and the elimination of a five-year end date. This will enable the policy to be revised as required, ensuring a proactive approach towards reducing the compliance burden on exporters and simplifying regulations. One significant aspect of the new policy is the extension of benefits to e-commerce exports. Predictions show that these exports will reach \$200-300 billion by 2030, up from the current \$5 billion annually. To facilitate this growth, the value limit for exports through courier services is being doubled to Rs 10 lakh per consignment. Another notable feature of the policy is the plan to make the rupee a global currency. India intends to offer it as an alternative for trade to countries facing a shortage of dollars. The internationalisation of trade in rupees is a bold and pragmatic step forward for India, with potential benefits for both Indian businesses and foreign trade partners. The policy also recognizes the importance of boosting domestic manufacturing, strengthening the export base, and encouraging ease of doing business. Real-time policy review is an innovative feature of the new policy that allows proactive participation of the industry in decision-making. This will enable the industry to reduce the compliance burden on exporters or simplify regulations. The previous foreign trade policy, unveiled in 2015, had aimed for an export target of \$900 billion by 2020, which was repeatedly extended due to the volatile global economic and geopolitical situation. The pandemic contributed to the shortfall in meeting this target. To bridge the gap, a massive trade outreach involving Indian missions abroad is in the works. The new foreign trade policy is an ambitious step forward for India. The policy recognizes the need to adopt a multi-pronged approach towards boosting the economy, strengthening domestic manufacturing, and encouraging ease of doing business. The extension of benefits to e-commerce exports and the plan to make the rupee a global currency are bold steps that show India's commitment to expanding its global trade. However, the global economic situation remains uncertain, and the policy's goals will be put to the test.

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.

TICKET ASPIRANTS

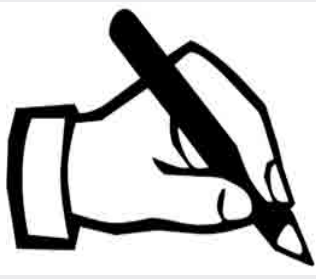


Supporters of Yogesh Babu, a ticket contender, raise slogans demanding the assembly ticket for him in front of KPCC office, in Bengaluru, Monday.

Stray Dogs: A Lethal Threat to Public Safety



PRIYANKA SAURABH



Stray dogs in India have become a major concern, with over 300 people - mostly children from poor and rural families - losing their lives to dog attacks in the past five years. These incidents have been widely covered by the media, but society has remained largely indifferent. Stray dogs are also a threat to wildlife in rural areas, as per a 2017 study. Despite acknowledgement of the issue by various governmental and non-governmental organizations, the problem persists. Unless immediate measures are taken, the menace of stray dogs in India will continue to grow, posing a threat to public safety and wildlife alike.

Dogs have a unique companionship relationship with humans throughout evolution. This poses a moral dilemma because humans are responsible for their welfare, but dogs' evolution is linked to wolves and their instincts. This may be an unsolvable conundrum for India, but most of the world has not recognized the rights of stray animals. If such animals are kept on a leash and registered, their keepers are bound to take care of them. If not, the state is bound to kill them as a last resort in the interest of public health. Stray dogs are protected under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act of 1960 and the regulations enacted under section 38 of the Act, particularly the Animal Birth Control (Dog) Rules of 2001. It is illegal for any person, RWA, or property management to remove or relocate dogs. Only 15% of all stray dogs have been vaccinated. India's stray popula-

tion is huge, and adoption is slow and limited because many people only want foreign-breed dogs. The Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act and the Animal Birth Control (Dogs) Rules of 2001 (being updated) aim to limit the population of stray animals, but they do little to improve public safety. The proposed draft rules, or the Animal Birth Control Rules of 2022, put forward only procedural changes in sterilization and vaccination, allow only "terminally ill and mortally injured" dogs to be killed, and require resident welfare associations to register their cases in their localities. It is considered responsible for feeding stray animals. The PCA and ABC regulations acknowledge that uncontrolled stray dogs must be stopped, although this does not account for the magnitude of the problem, as there is approximately one stray animal

for every 100 Indians. At about 21,000, more than a third of all rabies deaths occur in India. For the last five years, more than 300 people, mostly children from poor and rural families, have been killed by dogs. A 2017 study showed that stray dogs in rural areas can also devastate wildlife. More than 80 species, of which more than 30 are on the endangered list, were targeted by dogs in wilderness areas. Dogs that are out alone can cause accidents when they run across the road, injuring themselves and other people.

Stray dogs enjoy opening garbage bags, and they can cause littering and spread litter around the environment and roads. Stray dogs will scavenge neighborhoods for food and may break open garbage cans and damage gardens. People who feed stray dogs can be made responsible for their vaccinations and bear the cost if someone is attacked by the animal. Each Resident Welfare Association should form a "Guard and Dog Partnership" in consultation with the Police Dog Squad, so that the dogs can be trained and yet be friendly to the residents of the colony. Municipal corporations, residents' welfare associations, and local dog groups should take care of the vaccination and sterilization of animals. Sick and aggressive animals should be put to death. The only long-term solution is to enforce stricter pet ownership laws, prohibit people everywhere from carelessly feeding dogs, and establish facilities for domestic dogs.

More staff and funds are desperately needed. Apart from sterilization, attention should also be paid to adoption. And we must find some compassion in helping to resolve this crisis humanely. As long as dogs are homeless on the streets, the idea of a rabies-free India with harmonious coexistence between people and dogs will be a utopian dream. Leaving dogs homeless is bad for dogs, bad for

people, and bad for wildlife. India lacks infrastructure and mechanisms to ensure that the vulnerable (the poor and their children) have access to treatment. As such, it is a fantasy to expect the number of dogs to decrease with sterilization and vaccination.

As long as dogs are homeless on the streets, the idea of a rabies-free India with harmonious coexistence between people and dogs would be a utopian dream. Leaving dogs homeless is bad for dogs, bad for people, and bad for wildlife. India lacks infrastructure and mechanisms to ensure that the vulnerable (the poor and their children) have access to treatment. As such, it is a fantasy to expect the number of dogs to decrease with sterilization and vaccination. India has committed to eliminating rabies by 2030, but until the threat from stray dogs is first recognized as a public health menace, India's poorest people will sacrifice their lives in safe public places at the sacrifice of dull sloganeering. They will continue to be deprived of rights.

The issue of stray dogs in India is a complex problem that requires a multi-faceted solution. While laws and regulations are in place to protect the welfare of stray animals, they do not necessarily address the issue of public safety. The proposed draft rules offer only procedural changes, and more needs to be done to improve infrastructure and access to treatment for those affected by dog attacks. Stricter pet ownership laws and facilities for domestic dogs, along with a focus on adoption, can provide a long-term solution. Ultimately, it is crucial to recognize the issue of stray dogs as a public health menace and work towards a harmonious coexistence between people and animals in India.

(Writer is a Research Scholar in Political Science, Poetess, Independent Journalist and columnist.)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Sedition Law reforms needed

The Lahore High Court's decision to annul Section 124A of the sedition law is a step towards progress. In India, however, the sedition law is still in abeyance, which is a matter of concern. The sedition law was enacted during British colonial rule in 1860 and is now being used for political purposes. This law is a violation of the right to freedom of expression, which is granted to every citizen by the Constitution of Pakistan. The sedition law is a tool to suppress dissent and has been used against citizens who criticize the rulers. It is high time that India also takes a cue from Pakistan and rethinks the sedition law. The law should be reformed so that it cannot be used to curb the freedom of speech and expression of citizens.

Yash Pal Raihan, Jalandhar

Direct selling requires sway

So far, only eight states have formed committees in the country to monitor direct selling, as efforts to strengthen the regulatory framework to weed out entities operating fraudulent schemes and protect the interests of direct sellers and their businesses continuity. This will help protect the direct selling industry in the respective states and provide policy clarity for the industry. Rules and Regulations are required for direct selling companies to own, hold, licence a trademark/service mark for the goods or services in remaining states of the country. Furthermore, it requires direct selling companies to upload all important details such as balance sheets and FSSAI licenses, as well as appoint Grievance Redressal officers to resolve consumer complaints.

Vijaykumar H K, Raichur, Karnataka

Remembering Salim Durani

The passing of Salim Durani, the legendary Indian cricketer, has left a void in the hearts of cricket fans. Durani's swashbuckling style of play and his unique ability to predict his shots made him a beloved figure in the cricket world. His contribution to Indian cricket cannot be measured in numbers alone, as he was a true icon of the game. Durani's promise to dismiss two West Indian legends, Gary Sobers and Clive Lloyd, in a test match in 1971 is a moment etched in cricketing history. India scored a memorable win in that test. His ability to fulfill that promise with ease made him a hero in the eyes of Indian cricket fans. Looking like a film hero, he got the chance to act opposite the famous Parveen Babi, in the film Charitra in 1973. Even though Durani scored just one century, his stature as a domestic giant made him one of the cricketing icons of the country. The all-rounder scored 8,545 runs in 170 first-class games and also took a mind boggling 484 wickets with his left-arm spin. He was the first cricketer to win an Arjuna award besides also being awarded the C.K. Nayudu Lifetime Achievement Award by the BCCI in 2011. Durani's legacy will continue to inspire generations of cricketers, and his contributions to the game will never be forgotten. May his soul rest in peace.

Bidyut Kumar Chatterjee, Faridabad

Advancing Eye Health: India's efforts in the prevention of blindness



Dr. Krishna Kumar Vepakomma

India has a significant population of visually impaired individuals, with approximately 12 million people experiencing visual impairment. According to the latest national survey on blindness and visual impairment in India, corneal

issues are the second most common cause of blindness in the country. The Indian government has launched various initiatives to provide opportunities for the visually impaired and educate the population on eye health. To address the issue of blindness and visual impairment, the government has established institutions that offer education, training, and job opportunities for the visually impaired.

Financial assistance is also provided for eye surgeries, and spectacles are distributed for free. Eye check-up camps are organized to promote awareness about eye health. The government's focus on research and development in the field of eye care has led to the establishment of the National Institute of Ophthalmology (NIO). The government's efforts to address blindness and visual impairment are not limited to these initia-

tives. The Prevention of Blindness Week campaign is organized annually from April 1 to April 7 to raise awareness towards visually impaired individuals. This campaign has been instrumental in spreading knowledge related to eye health and preventing blindness in India.

Despite these initiatives, the burden of blindness in India remains significant. Advanced technology has opened up new avenues for preventing blindness and visual impairment. AI-based systems, gene therapy, and minimally invasive surgical techniques offer new hope for patients with eye diseases and can help reduce the burden of blindness worldwide.

The government's focus on research and development in the field of eye care holds promise for the prevention and treatment of visual impairment in the future. Continued investment in research

and development is crucial to unlocking the full potential of these technologies and ensuring that more people can enjoy the gift of sight. The National Programme for Control of Blindness and Visual Impairment (NPCB&VI) is one of the government's key initiatives to address blindness and visual impairment. It focuses on providing free and comprehensive eye care services to the rural population, urban slums, and school-going children. The program also emphasizes the importance of early detection and timely intervention.

In addition to NPCB&VI, the government has also launched the National Program for Control of Diabetic Retinopathy (NPCDR). Diabetic retinopathy is a leading cause of blindness in India, and this program aims to prevent and control diabetic retinopathy through early detection, timely interven-

tion, and effective management. The government's initiatives to prevent blindness and visual impairment are commendable. The government's focus on research and development in the field of eye care holds promise for the prevention and treatment of visual impairment in the future. The use of advanced technology like AI-based systems, gene therapy, and minimally invasive surgical techniques offers new hope for patients with eye diseases.

Continued investment in research and development is crucial to unlocking the full potential of these technologies and ensuring that more people can enjoy the gift of sight. It is essential to spread knowledge related to eye health and promote awareness about the Prevention of Blindness Week campaign to prevent blindness and visual impairment in India.

BRIEF

Limestone mine



New Delhi: State-owned NMDC surrendered the lease for Arki limestone mine in Himachal Pradesh as the project faced various challenges including logistics, Parliament was informed on Monday. NMDC had obtained a lease to mine limestone deposits at Arki in Solan district of Himachal Pradesh on April 23, 1991, Minister of State (MoS) for Steel Faggan Singh Kulaste said in a reply to Rajya Sabha. "(However) due to several issues including logistics, the project became unviable. The Arki limestone mining lease has been surrendered by NMDC Ltd on 12.8.2021," he told the Upper House.

Appointment

Mumbai: The Reserve Bank of India on Monday appointed Neeraj Nigam as executive director (ED) who will look after four departments, including that of consumer education and protection. Prior to being promoted as ED, he was heading the Bhopal regional office of the RBI as director. Nigam has, over a span of more than three decades, served in Regulation and Supervision, human resource management, premises, currency management, bank accounts and other areas in the Reserve Bank, in its central office as well as regional offices.

Investigation



New Delhi: Enforcement Directorate is investigating several cases related to cryptocurrency/virtual digital currency frauds wherein a few crypto exchanges have also been found involved in money laundering, Parliament was informed on Monday. In a written reply in the Lok Sabha, Minister of State for Finance Pankaj Chaudhary said the virtual digital assets have the potential for criminal misuse.

Farmers payment



Mathura (UP): Uttar Pradesh Cane Development and Sugar Mills' Minister Laxmi Narayan Chaudhary on Sunday said the state government is gradually inching towards ensuring the payment of sugarcane farmers by sugar mills within a week. "At present, sugarcane farmers are getting their payment within 10 days in 105 sugar mills of the state.

RBI's MPC meet starts amid expectations of yet another rate hike

Mumbai, Apr 03:

The RBI's rate-setting panel on Monday started its three-day meeting amid expectations that the central bank may go for 25 basis points hike in benchmark interest rate, probably the last in the current monetary tightening cycle that began in May 2022. Reserve Bank Governor Shaktikanta Das-headed Monetary Policy Committee during its three-day meeting (April 3, 5 and 6) will take into account various domestic and global factors before coming out with the first bi-monthly monetary policy for fiscal 2023-24. The decision of the six-member rate setting panel will be announced by the Governor on Thursday. The central bank has already increased repo rate by a total of 250 basis points since May in a bid to contain inflation, though it has continued to

remain above the RBI's comfort zone of 6 per cent most of the time. The two key factors which the committee is expected to deliberate intensely while firming up the next monetary policy are elevated retail inflation and the recent action taken by central banks of developed nations especially the US Federal Reserve, the European Central Bank and Bank of England. Having remained below six per cent for two months (November and December 2022), the retail inflation breached the RBI's comfort zone in January, warranting action by the central bank. The Consumer Price Index (CPI)-based inflation was 6.52 per cent in January and 6.44 per cent in February. Experts are of the view that the central bank will raise the key policy rate (repo) by 25 basis points on Thursday, and it would probably be the last

in the current monetary policy tightening cycle that began in May. The RBI has so far raised repo rate six times including the off-cycle surprise increase of 40 basis points in May 2022. The RBI has been tasked to ensure that retail inflation remains at 4 per cent with a margin of +/- 2 per cent. However, it failed to keep inflation rate below six per cent for three consecutive quarters beginning January 2022. The MPC consists of three RBI officials and three external members appointed by the central government. The external members are Shashanka Bhide (Honorary Senior Advisor, National Council of Applied Economic Research, Delhi); Ashima Goyal (Emeritus Professor, Indira Gandhi Institute of Development Research, Mumbai); and Jayanth R Varma (Professor, Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad).

IDBI Bank launches e-Bank Guarantee (e-BG) facility in partnership with NeSL

Mumbai, Apr 03: IDBI Bank has launched e-Bank Guarantee (e-BG) facility in partnership with National e-Governance Services Ltd (NeSL) that replaces paper based BG issuance process with e-stamping and e-signatures. With this the Bank has achieved another milestone in its endeavor to offer digital and user friendly services to its customers. IDBI Bank sees this as a transformational change in the business ecosystem where bank guarantees are used in high volumes as the new initiative brings higher transparency and reduces

turnaround time from days to minutes. e-BG can be processed with e-stamping and e-signatures and delivered instantly to the beneficiary all in a matter of few minutes. With secured transmission and enhanced transparency, beneficiaries are saved of efforts and time in verification of physical BGs. Commenting on the services, Rakesh Sharma, MD & CEO, IDBI Bank said, "Delivering safer and faster banking services to our customers through digital offerings has always been the principle key driver for major digital initiatives of the Bank.

India's manufacturing PMI hits 3-month high in Mar amid demand resilience

New Delhi, Apr 03:

Manufacturing activities in India touched a three-month high in March boosted by faster expansions in new orders and output amid demand resilience and easing of cost pressures, according to a monthly survey. The seasonally adjusted S&P Global India Manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) rose from 55.3 in February to 56.4 in March, signalling the strongest improvement in operating conditions in 2023 so far. The March PMI data pointed to an improvement in overall operating conditions for the 21st straight month. In PMI parlance, a print above 50 means expansion



while a score below 50 indicates contraction. "Underlying demand for Indian goods remained strong in March, underscored by the quickest upturn in factory orders for three months. Hence, production continued to expand at a robust clip and firms stepped up their stock building efforts," said Pollyanna De Lima,

Economics Associate Director at S&P Global Market Intelligence. According to the survey, input cost inflation retreated to its second-lowest mark in two-and-a-half years in March as pressure on supply chains subsided and the availability of raw materials improved. Subsequently, goods producers concentrated on re-

Jio Fiber introduces new broadband back-up plan

Mumbai, Apr 03: Jio announced a new home broadband "Back-up Plan". This backup broadband connection enables uninterrupted streaming of upcoming Tata IPL tournament besides other content including live sports. Users get a choice to upgrade the speed (from 10 Mbps to 30 / 100 Mbps) as and when they need, with 1 / 2 / 7 day options, at the click of a button. This plan will help homes with unreliable broadband connection, by providing a 24*7 reliable, always-on backup connectivity.

This plan will also act as a catalyst for the unconnected homes, enabling uninterrupted experiences across learning, work, entertainment and much more. Commenting on this launch, Jio Spokesperson said, "As India's largest home broadband service provider, we at Jio understand the customer's need to remain connected round the clock with dependable broadband connectivity at home.

Cost of 651 essential medicines down 7 pc from April as govt caps ceiling prices

New Delhi, Apr 03:

Cost of 651 essential medicines has come down by an average of 6.73 per cent from April with the government capping ceiling prices of a majority of the scheduled drugs, NPPA said on Monday. In a tweet, the national drug price regulator said the government has been able to fix the ceiling prices of 651 medicines so far out of the total 870 scheduled drugs listed under National List of Essential Medicines (NLEM). The health ministry had amended NLEM in September 2022 and it now has a total of 870 drugs. The National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) noted that with the capping of ceiling prices, the cost of 651 essential drugs on an average had already come down by 16.62 per cent. "Due to this, the price of 651 essential drugs, which was to go up by 12.12 per cent,



has actually come down by 6.73 per cent from April 1," NPPA said. Consumers will benefit from this decline in prices despite a 12.12 per cent annual hike in prices of drugs based on WPI, it added. Annual hikes in prices of drugs listed in NLEM are based on WPI. In a statement dated March 25, NPPA had stated that the annual

change in Wholesale Price Index (WPI) was 12.12 per cent for 2022. NPPA fixes the ceiling price of essential medicines of Schedule I under the Drugs (Prices Control) Order (DPCO) 2013. The calculation for essential drugs is based on the simple average of all the medicines in a particular therapeutic segment with sales of more than 1 per cent.

LIMITED EDITION



Former Indian cricketer Sachin Tendulkar during the launch of Tanishq Celeste X Sachin Tendulkar limited edition, in Mumbai.

Shortage of electronic components likely to impact production in FY24: Maruti Suzuki

New Delhi, Apr 03: The country's largest car maker Maruti Suzuki India on Monday said its production volume could be hit in the current fiscal with the supply situation of electronic components remaining unpredictable. The auto major said the shortage of electronic components had some impact on the production of vehicles in the last financial year as well. "As the supply situation of electronic components continues to be unpredictable, it might have some impact on the production volume in FY 2023-24 as well," Maruti Suzuki India said in a regulatory filing. The carmaker produced a record 19.22 lakh units in 2022-23. It,

however, fell short of its target of taking the overall production to 20 lakh units in the last fiscal. In March this year, the company's total production, including passenger vehicles and light commercial vehicles, stood at 1,54,148 units, down 6 per cent from 1,63,392 units. Production of total passenger vehicles declined to 1,50,820 last month, as compared with 1,59,211 units in March 2022. Production of mini and compact segment cars dropped to 1,08,001 units last month from 1,09,676 units in March 2022. The company stated that production of utility vehicles declined to 29,440 units last month as compared with 36,249 units in March 2022.

NMDC exceeds 41 MnT for second consecutive fiscal records

Best-ever Q4 and March month Production

Hyderabad, Apr 03:

India's largest iron ore producer, NMDC crosses 41 MnT for the second fiscal in a row. Producing 14.29 MnT in the fourth quarter and 5.6 MnT in the March month of FY23, the State Miner logged its best ever Q4 and March month production in company history.

In FY23, NMDC produced 41.22 million tonnes and sold 38.25 million tonnes of iron ore despite the highest ever rainfall of 622 cm in Bailadila region since NMDC's inception. In the fourth quarter of this fiscal, the company reported 14.29 MnT production which is the highest for any quarter since



inception. NMDC achieved this production milestone despite the monsoon offset by using vision enhance technology to mitigate foggy weather, specialized mine liners to avoid jams and water ab-

sorbent polymers to reduce the moisture content in the ores. Rallying to increase its production capacity, the mining major has also enhanced its evacuation capacity in FY23.

Commenting on the strong performance, Amitava Mukherjee (CMD, Additional Charge) said, "Surpassing 41 MnT of iron ore production despite unprecedented torrential rain encapsulates NMDC's strength, resilience, and an unwavering commitment to ensure mineral security. Fueled by the best ever Q4 production in FY23, NMDC is entering FY24 with the right momentum."

AAFT University hosts exclusive Masterclass with Shreyas Talpade

Mumbai, Apr 03:

AAFT University, a leader in professional education, proudly welcomes renowned Bollywood actor Shreyas Talpade for an exclusive masterclass, designed to inspire students and other attendees. Entitled 'Behind the Scenes: Exploring the Film Industry with Shreyas Talpade,' the interactive session took place on April 1, 2023, 3 pm at the University Campus. A critically acclaimed force in Hindi and Marathi cinema, Shreyas Talpade has contributed to outstanding films both in Hindi and Marathi. The Mumbai-born actor, director, and producer boasts a number of accolades, including the 'Zee Cine

Award for Best Actor' for Iqbal, and the 'Stardust Breakthrough Performance Award' for Om Shanti Om. Committed to providing skill-based learning opportunities, AAFT University has curated numerous sessions with industry experts and renowned celebrities. These events offer students unique insights and networking prospects. Shreyas Talpade, a beloved icon, will certainly inspire those aspiring to join the film industry. Akshay Marwah, Co-Founder of AAFT University, expressed his enthusiasm: "We are thrilled to welcome a self-made star like Shreyas Talpade, who embodies humility, raw talent, and dedication.

Sensex, Nifty rise for third straight session

Mumbai, Apr 03:

Equity benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty closed in the green for the third consecutive session on Monday, boosted by buying in auto, banking and capital goods counters despite a rise in crude oil prices fuelling concerns about inflation. With overall positive investor sentiment in the domestic market, the 30-share BSE Sensex rose 114.92 points or 0.19 per cent to close at 59,106.44 points with 22 of its components ending in the green and eight closing in the red. The broader 50-share NSE Nifty climbed 38.30 points or 0.22 per cent to close at 17,398.05 points. As many as 32 Nifty shares closed with gains while 18 stocks declined. While gains in auto, capital



goods and banking and financials shares supported the uptrend, selling in IT, FMCG and metal shares restricted the gains in the key indices.

"Investors were of the view that the easing price pressure would provide the central bank with leeway to pause the rate hike. However, the surprise production cut by OPEC+ has fuelled concerns about inflationary pressure, which may prompt central banks

to remain hawkish," Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services, said. During the intra-day trade, Sensex moved in a range of 58,793.08 points to 59,204.82 points. In the last three trading sessions, Sensex has surged 1,492 points or 2.51 per cent while Nifty has climbed 446 points or 2.9 per cent.

Among the Sensex shares, Maruti Suzuki rose the most, gaining 2.52 per cent after the company posted its highest ever sales at 19,66,164 units for the last fiscal.

Other gainers include Bajaj Finance (1.74 per cent), Bharti Airtel (1.56 per cent), NTPC (1.4 per cent), Bajaj Finserv (1.26 per cent), HCL Tech (1.12 per cent) and IndusInd Bank (1.03 per cent).

Amazon offers up to 70% off on home and kitchen products

Mumbai, Apr 03:

Brighten up your home this summer season and make it comfortable with 'Home Shopping Spree' powered by Prestige on Amazon.in. Customers can avail a host of exciting deals and offers with up to 70% off on must-haves this summer season including home & kitchen appliances ranging from water bottles & lunch boxes, deep freezers & coolers, Fans & coolers, Inverters, bedsheets, curtain lines, water dispensers & much more from 6th to 9th April 2023. During the 'Home Shopping Spree' on Amazon.in, customers can avail 10% instant bank discount on HDFC Bank credit card. Customers with prime membership get up

to 250 off on minimum transaction of Rs 1000 with additional benefits like coupons, combo offers, Buy more & save more offers, exciting deals and exchange offers. Along with this, customers get to save on some of the top brands such as Prestige, Havells, Bajaj, Aquallean, Luminous, Blue Star, Rockwell, Urban Terrain and much more. Get ready for the summer season with Amazon.in's specially curated stores where customers can avail exciting discounts of up to 80% off on Home and Kitchen clearance store. Also, this is the time to revamp your home with additional benefit of 'buy more and save more with extra 10% off on Home and Kitchen appliances.



Tamil superstar Thalapathi Vijay, who has been staying away from Instagram, unlike most other stars, has finally joined it. Vijay made his debut with a cheery "Hello Nanba and Nanbis".

The Instagram account has been clocking followers since within an hour of Vijay joining the social media platform. Vijay, who is shooting for Lokesh 'Vikram' Kanakaraj's movie, 'Leo', sports a salt-and-pepper look in his Instagram photo.

With the actor opening his own Insta account, the publicity of the movie will definitely gain at once from the heft his popularity brings with it.

Vijay, who was interacting with his fans through Twitter, took a break for some time, so his entry into Instagram is considered a new avenue for him to post photos and promote his movies.

Vijay has 7.8 million followers on Facebook and 4.4 million on Twitter. 'Leo', incidentally, has Bollywood star Sanjay Dutt, Trisha, who'll soon be seen in 'Ponniyin Selvan-2', Priya Anand, Sandy, Goutam Vasudev Menon, Arjun and Malayalam actor Mathew Thomas in major roles, apart from Vijay.

Tamil superstar Thalapathi Vijay finally opens an Instagram account

Are wedding bells ringing for Badshah and Isha Rikhi?

Rapper Badshah, whose real name is Aditya Prateek Singh Sisodia, is said to await his wedding with his longtime girlfriend and Punjabi actress Isha Rikhi whom he met at a party of a common friend.

As per the media reports, the couple is planning a gurdwara wedding in north India this month which will be attended by close family members and friends.

However, neither Badshah nor Rikhi has commented anything about their wedding plans. Badshah was rumoured to be dating her since last year after they met at a party and shared similar interests.

Badshah was married to Jasmine Masih in 2012 and in 2017, the two became parents to their daughter Jessemie Grace Masih Singh. However, they separated in 2020.



Ayushi shares her special moments of Iftari from the sets



Star Bharat has drawn the attention of fans not just for its marvellous content but also for the on- and off-screen displays of teamwork, love, and togetherness. The 'Ajooni' crew at Star Bharat prepares for Iftar during this month of Ramadan as they come together for Iftari with great excitement, pomp, unity, and togetherness. Ayushi Khurana from Star Bharat's show 'Ajooni' shares her special moments of Iftar from the sets and shares her experiences.

She overwhelmingly says, "Festivals are my favourite time of year because we celebrate with so much love and togetherness, where our

entire Ajooni team prepared for Iftar, and this is my first ever Iftar on sets where we began with prayers for positivity and wellness and then broke Iftar by eating dates, fruits, and then delicious meals. This is very special to me because we rarely get to eat together, but on special occasions we do. My co-star Shoib Ibrahim observes his roza and concludes his fast in the evening and contributes to the Iftari meal for the entire cast and crew.

She further adds, "I also have a special memory of celebrating Ramadan, where I went on Roza with one of my companions for a single day, adhering to all the traditions and customs

with due respect and it was a surreal feeling. I thus enjoy celebrating festivals since they allow us to participate in a variety of activities and experiences."

The current narrative of Ajooni has the audience enthralled as Shoaib Ibrahim aka 'Rajveer'dons' creates a new persona after 'Ajooni' to save the Bagga family. The show is set to see major drama as the drama of the new Bagga family has emerged. Will 'Rajveer' and 'Ajooni' overcome this situation and save their family?

Stay tuned to witness the upcoming drama, every Monday to Friday at 8:30 p.m. only on Star Bharat.

Rishi Singh wins 'Indian Idol - Season 13'

The 13th season of Sony Entertainment Television's prestigious singing reality show, 'Indian Idol' has been an exceptional one! From the auditions to reaching the finale, the Top 6 finalists - Rishi Singh, Bidipta Chakraborty, Chirag Kotwal, Sonakshi Kar, Shivam Singh and Debosmita Roy have left no stone unturned to mesmerize audiences. Under the mentorship of Judges Himesh Reshammiya, Neha Kakkar, and Vishal Dadlani, these finalists have honed their skills on the show and given it their all during the 'The Dream Finale' that was aired on 2nd April. But it was Rishi Singh from Ayodhya who won the heart of India with his phenomenal singing talent and lifted the coveted Indian Idol 13 trophy as this season's winner. Rishi Singh was awarded with a cheque of INR



25 lakhs from Sony Entertainment Television and commemorating his arduous journey, Maruti Suzuki India Ltd., who is the Co-presenting Sponsor on the show also presented the brand new 'Hot and Techy Brezza' to the winner as the 'Dream Prize'. From the Top 6 finalists, Debosmita Roy and Chirag Kotwal were declared as the first and second runners-up respectively and were bestowed with a trophy and a cheque of INR 5 lakhs each. The third and fourth runners-up, Bidipta Chakraborty and Shivam Singh were given a cheque of INR 3 Lakhs each. All the 6 finalists also received a cheque of INR 1 Lakh from Elois Hair Removal Cream, followed by gift hampers from Colgate, Denver Deodorants and Patanjali Kesh Kanti respectively.

Sonali Bendre: I made sure I never let go of any opportunities that came my way

Bollywood actress Sonali Bendre has shared her learning experience and how she became successful in the industry. The actress said she tried to grab all the opportunities that came to her as she never wanted to miss any chance of becoming successful.

Sonali said: "You must be stupid if you do not see the possibilities that come your way. So I made sure I never let go of any opportunities that came my way and learned everything from that, and that is how I am here today."

She made her acting debut with the movie 'Aag' which was released in 1994. However, she got major success with the 1996 film 'Diljale' opposite Ajay Devgn.

Sonali also acted in several successful movies such as 'Duplicate', 'Major Saab', 'Zakhm', 'Sarfarosh', among others.

The actress appeared on 'The Kapil Sharma Show' as a celebrity guest and shared her success story. During the show, Kapil also played a video of Divya Dutta in which she shared a memory with Sonali. In the video, the 'Delhi-6' actress said: "When I was doing an acting course with Sonali, the shooting for the film 'Andaz Apna Apna' was happening close to our college. We used to climb the wall to view the shooting in the nearby bungalow. When I invited Sonali to join me, she refused to watch them from a distance and mentioned that she would work with them one day." 'The Kapil Sharma Show' airs on Sony Entertainment Television.



Aayush Sharma wishes son Ahil on his B'day with an endearing note

Doting dad Aayush Sharma has time and again served parenting goals on social media with adorable moments with his son Ahil and daughter Ayat. Offering yet another instance of the same, Aayush wished his son Ahil with a series of pictures and a loving note. The actor penned a short message for his son saying, "Happy Birthday to The Light of Sharma house, who is Papa's Best Friend, Mumma's @arpitakhansharma Obsession and Ayat's one and all only 'Baba! May this year be filled with more football, food and holidays. And if you manage to find some time in the middle then, please go to school." From family vacations to quality time with kids at home, Aayush Sharma has often melted the Internet with love-filled posts depicting the bond between him and



his children. Striking the perfect balance between professional and personal life, Aayush ensures to make time for family amidst his busy schedule of shoots and promotions. Recently, Aayush Sharma took a short vacation with family after wrapping the Azerbaijan schedule of his upcoming film AS04. Gearing for an interesting line up, Aayush Sharma has been treating the audience with regular glimpses into the shoot of his action entertainer, scheduled to release this year.

'On screen foes but off-screen friends'



While shooting a television show, actors often end up becoming friends in real and reel life. However, playing stark nemesis on screen and being good friends off screen is a balance that is

delicate and not found very often. Sayantani Ghosh and Abhishek Nigam who play SimSim and Ali on Sony SAB's Alibaba - Ek Andaaz: Chapter 2 are two such actors who have grown to

share a special bond. While their characters are mostly locking horns, their friendship is pure love. Opening up about their bond, Sayantani Ghosh said, "Abhishek and I hit

it off well. He was seamless when he transitioned into the role of Ali and it was a delight to watch. Whenever we're shooting on set together, the energy is extremely fun. Being his senior colleague Abhishek looks up to me, at times he comes to me for advice on the show and we have some lovely conversations around it. If you follow us on social media, you will see that we love posting stories and making reels together. Abhishek has really grown as an artist and I am incredibly proud of his journey."

Watch Alibaba Ek Andaaz Andekha: Chapter 2 every Monday to Friday 7 PM only on Sony SAB.?

CROSSWORD

607



ACROSS

- "Schindler's ____"
- Loan
- Ignited again
- Fascinated by
- Japan's continent
- Wear down
- Views
- Seven days
- Motor court
- Printing machine
- Immense

DOWN

- Speech problems
- Inactive
- Navigate
- 50-50 chance (hyph.)
- Legal rule
- Opposite of WNW
- Sister's daughter
- South (state)
- Contribution
- God of love
- Plenty
- Concept
- Tattle
- Fret
- Decreases
- Feline sound
- Sale acknowledgment
- One (Sp.)
- Frolic

SOLUTION 606



- Small vegetable
- Lose hope
- Puts into service
- Malice
- Nuzzles
- Forefather
- Act toward
- Take off
- Dress for Caesar
- Fidgety
- Artist's prop
- Happily ____ after
- Broker's advice
- Insensitive
- Coral ridge
- Birch or spruce

- Albany's canal
- Facts
- Slipped
- Window section
- Intentions
- de toilette
- Sharp knock
- Accurate
- Loafer ornaments
- Transmitted
- Mob scene participant
- Most tender
- Treasure
- Passover feast
- U.S. symbol
- Fashion
- Guinness of "Star Wars"
- Advance upon
- House (Sp.)
- Nights before holidays
- Goodness!
- Dog's sound

Problems aplenty for Delhi ahead of Titans clash

New Delhi, Apr 03 (PTI):

Delhi Capitals' Indian pace unit will have to punch above its weight against a formidable Gujarat Titans unit, which will start as overwhelming favourites in its first away match of the season, here on Tuesday.

The defending champions have all their bases covered despite Kane Williamson being ruled out of the tournament after a serious knee injury. The hosts, on the other hand, are looking like an outfit that is bereft of a Plan B as it became apparent in their 50-run thrashing at the hands of Lucknow Super Giants.

The primary worry is the composition of Indian pace attack, which mildly put is below par when Anrich Nortje isn't there to spearhead the attack.

Chetan Sakariya and Mukesh Kumar are sincere cricketers but both lack the pace and variation required to trouble



international quality batters consistently.

They could well be lambs for slaughter against a Shubman Gill, who is in rampaging form or skipper Hardik Pandya, who would feast on friendly medium pacers day in and day out.

Khaleel Ahmed had a decent first game but his fielding has been an issue for years and those who have seen him at fielding sessions now know that

he drops more aerial catches than he takes. The drop of Kyle Mayers had the most damaging effect in opening game for Delhi.

Hence, Nortje and his South African compatriot Lungi Ngidi, who both are still on national duty, are required at earliest.

They will arrive only after the completion of Tuesday's game and Director of Cricket Sourav Ganguly and head

coach Ricky Ponting will have to rejig the combination a bit.

May be drop Sakariya and get Mustafizur Rahman, an experienced international campaigner in the bowling unit. In that case, Rilee Rossouw will have to sit out.

In the batting department, skipper David Warner would like to see the Indian youngsters like Prithvi Shaw and Sarfaraz Khan handle raw pace better than they did while encountering Mark Wood. Both looked uncomfortable and short of ideas as one didn't have his bat come down in time while the other just managed to avoid a head injury while getting into a tangle, playing the ramp shot.

Against DC, Mohammed Shami and Pandya will pose a different challenge. With Alzarri Joseph, Yash Dayal and ever consistent Rashid Khan for company, it will be a challenge for DC batters.

Medvedev beats Sinner in straight sets for Miami Open title

Miami Gardens, Apr 03 (AP):

Daniil Medvedev won his fourth ATP title of the year, beating Jannik Sinner 7-5, 6-3 in the Miami Open to move to 6-0 in their career matchup.

Medvedev is now the most sizzling player on the men's tour, winning 24 of his last 25 matches after the 1-hour, 34-minute triumph. His only loss has come against top-ranked Carlos Alcaraz in the Indian Wells final.

He's made five straight Finals and he compared this run to 2019 when he advanced to the championship round in six straight events.

"It's kind of the same," Medvedev said. "It's the best start to a season I've ever had. It's been amazing amount of (ATP points) won. I'm super happy."

Sinner ran out of magic, with his three-hour win late Friday night over Alcaraz in the semifinals when he had mild cramping in the second set taking a toll on the 21-year-old Italian. Sinner was visited



Daniil Medvedev, of Russia, celebrates after beating Jannik Sinner, of Italy, 7-5, 6-3, during the men's singles finals of the Miami Open tennis tournament.

by an ATP trainer midway through the first set Sunday. During the changeover at 4-3, Sinner received a packet of salt that he dumped into a water bottle to drink.

"Woke up this morning not at my best a little bit sick," Sinner said during the post-match ceremony, acknowledging that the crowd was behind him. "Thanks for the support. You gave me a lot of energy. Unfortunately, I could-

n't play at my best." In the post-match press conference, Sinner said he didn't "wake up in the best possible way" but didn't specify the illness. "We tried to go out on the court, trying to give it a try," Sinner said. "Unfortunately today wasn't my day but I don't want to take nothing away from Daniil. He was serving incredible. He was very brave with the way he played. He's one of the best players in the world."

Sinner said he the trainer's salt didn't make a huge difference. "It helped me a little bit but not enough," Sinner said. "When you wake up like this, there's not magical things."

Serving 5-6 in the first set, Sinner didn't have any dazzle left and played a ragged game as Medvedev broke him to close out the first set. At 15-30, Sinner shanked a backhand that went long, then fired a forehand bullet into the top of the net to end the one-hour first set. Sinner said he may have had "a little bit" of a mental letdown off the Alcaraz win but noted he was also facing an opponent he had never beaten.

"I was very looking forward to it and prepared for a lot," Sinner said. "It was a very good win. But I was focused on Daniil because I've never won." While Medvedev has won titles this year in Rotterdam, Doha and Dubai, this is the Russian's first title on American soil since the 2021 U.S. Open, when he derailed Novak Djokovic's bid for a Grand Slam.

'It's getting frustrating'

Bengaluru, Apr 03 (PTI):

Mumbai Indians bowling coach Shane Bond has conceded that the former champions' inability to win their opening game season after season in the IPL is "frustrating".

The five-time champions lost their 11th consecutive season opener, going down to Royal Challengers Bangalore by eight wickets on Sunday.

The last time MI won their opening game was way back in 2012, when they defeated Chennai Super Kings.

"This is my ninth season and we haven't won our opening game. So it's getting frustrating. At the end of the day, it's a tough competition. It's always better to have more wins than losses. It's a tough way to start," Bond said at the post-match press conference.

Bond lauded pacer Mohammed Siraj, who bowled a stellar opening spell, giving away just five runs while snaring Ishan Kishan's wicket.

"Siraj was too good for us today. First three overs from Siraj, he didn't give away any width. He used



his bouncers beautifully. He gave us nothing to hit, forced us to play some shots and got wickets from it. "We were 29 for 1 in the powerplay on a good wicket, small ground. We have a long batting order, we tried to up the ante and got to 170. That opening spell was brilliant," Bond said.

MI batters failed to get going barring Tilak Verma, who scored an unbeaten 84 off 46 balls that helped MI post a respectable 171 for 7.

"Tilak played brilliantly, but he didn't get much help. I think 170 on a really small ground was not a good total. I think 190 could have been a par total," said Bond.

RCB pacer Reece Topley dislocates shoulder during IPL clash against MI

Bengaluru, Apr 03 (PTI)

Royal Challengers Bangalore suffered another injury blow as their pacer Reece Topley dislocated his right shoulder while fielding during their Indian Premier League match against Mumbai Indians here. RCB head coach Mike Hesson said Englishman Topley's injury status will be known after the results of the scans come in.

"Unfortunately his knee dug into the ground and he landed on his shoulder and dislocated it. It was lucky enough (for us) that the doctors were able to pop it back in," Hesson told RCB's YouTube channel after the team's win on Sunday. "He is off to have a scan at the moment. We hope that the initial reports come back nicely and Reece can join us. (But) if not then we will have to see what happens, but hopefully he is alright." Topley, if sidelined for a longer duration, will join the likes of right-handed batter Rajat Patidar and fast bowler Josh Hazlewood on the bench.

'Very impressed with Natarajan'

Hyderabad, Apr 03 (PTI):

Sunrisers Hyderabad head coach Brian Lara was "very impressed" by injury-prone pacer T Natarajan, whose performance was one of the few positives to have come out of the heavy loss against Rajasthan Royals in the IPL. The Royals won the game by 72 runs. Natarajan, whose career has been hampered by injuries, bounced back strongly after conceding 17 runs in his first over. He ended with figures of 23 for two in three overs.

"First of all injury wise, he is back and he has the experience. How he came after the first over was very impressive. "The bowlers did well in the last eight overs. At one point it looked that we would have chasing 225 plus but they (Royals) struggled to get over 200. There were some positives. The guys can improve from here," said Lara on Sunday. He also defended their decision to bowl first. "We played a lot of practice sessions alongside the actual pitch. Those



were a little bit bouncy and had a bit of pace on them. When we looked at the track for today we felt it was a good track and it was the first game of the tournament. "We thought let's see if we can, with bowling being our strong suit during the camps, if we can put the opposition under pressure." He gave due credit to opposition spinners Yuzvendra Chahal and R Ashwin. "Obviously, with a little bit of rough marks and with the class of Yuzvendra Chahal and Ravichandran Ashwin We did not bowl as well as we should have in the opening overs and the guys put their hands up and said we got to improve in that area."

It's just about staying focused: Kohli

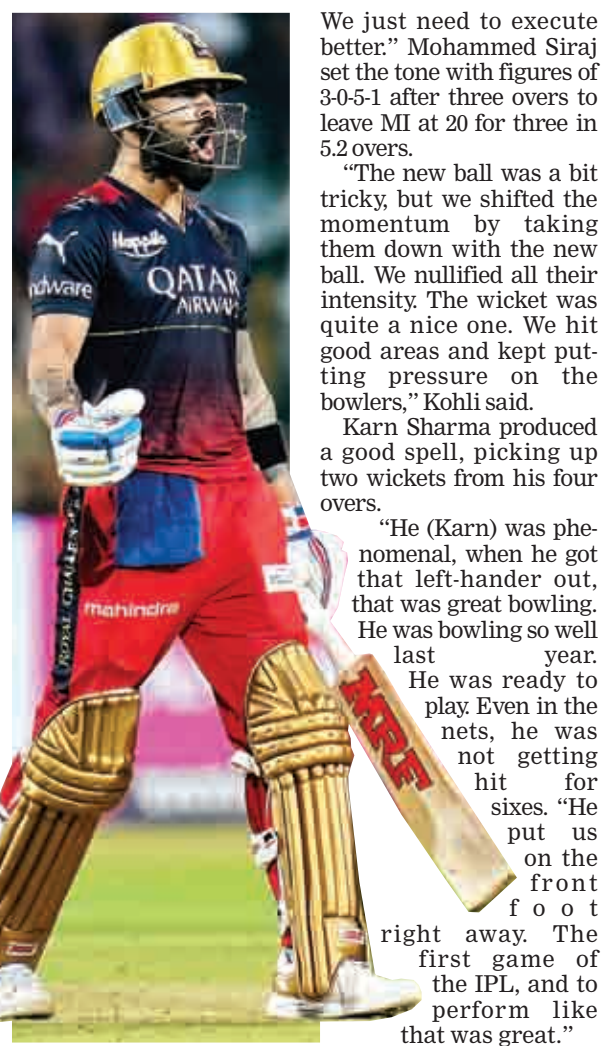
Bengaluru, Apr 03 (PTI):

Ecstatic after their emphatic win over five-time champions Mumbai Indians in their IPL opener, Royal Challengers Bangalore's batting mainstay Virat Kohli on Sunday hoped that the team will keep the focus and execute things properly to maintain the momentum.

Kohli (82 not out off 49 balls) and skipper Faf du Plessis (73 off 43 balls) struck fiery fifties to fire RCB to an eight-wicket win over Mumbai Indians on Sunday.

"Phenomenal win. Homecoming after so many years. Credit to their batters for getting to that score. Tilak (Varma) batted well. We kept backing ourselves. Faf went first, and I joined later. I am very happy with how things went today," said Kohli after the match.

"Apart from Mumbai winning five times and Chennai four times, we have qualified the most number of times, so we do play consistent cricket. It's just about staying focused, and just try to be the best balanced team. We need to play on this momentum."



We just need to execute better." Mohammed Siraj set the tone with figures of 3-0-5-1 after three overs to leave MI at 20 for three in 5.2 overs.

"The new ball was a bit tricky, but we shifted the momentum by taking them down with the new ball. We nullified all their intensity. The wicket was quite a nice one. We hit good areas and kept putting pressure on the bowlers," Kohli said.

Karn Sharma produced a good spell, picking up two wickets from his four overs.

"He (Karn) was phenomenal, when he got that left-hander out, that was great bowling. He was bowling so well last year.

He was ready to play. Even in the nets, he was not getting hit for sixes. "He put us on the front foot right away. The first game of the IPL, and to perform like that was great."

Pay deal delivers big increases for Australian cricketers



Melbourne, Apr 03 (AP): Cricket Australia is set to lift the salary cap for its domestic Twenty20 league by 50% and increase the minimum and average pay for the women's national team by 25% as part of a five-year deal agreed with the player union. The salary cap for each team in the

men's Big Bash League will increase to 3 million Australian dollars (USD2 million) as the sport's Australian administrators try to keep the best local talent and attract high-profile overseas stars in an international market sprinkled with lucrative franchise T20 leagues.

AC Milan routs Napoli 4-0 in Champions League warning

Rome, Apr 03 (AP):

If this was just the antipasto, Napoli should be concerned about what AC Milan will serve up for the main course.

In the first of three matchups between Milan and Napoli this month, the defending Serie A champion routed this season's runaway leader 4-0 on Sunday ahead of two more clashes in the Champions League quarterfinals. Rafael Le o scored twice and Ibrahim Diaz set up one goal and scored another to hand Napoli its heaviest defeat of what otherwise has been an extraordinary season.

"We're happy with the performance but it's just one game," Milan coach Stefano Pioli said. "Tonight's result has nothing to do with the Champions League games, because that's a different competition. That will be a very balanced contest."

Napoli's only other losses in the Italian league this season both came by scores of 1-0, to Lazio in Milan in January and to Inter Milan in January and to Lazio a month ago.

Napoli was also beaten 2-0 by Liverpool in the final match of the Champions League group phase but that loss came after the Partenopei had already clinched a spot in the round of 16.

Odisha to set up Table Tennis academies in Bhubaneswar and Cuttack: Patnaik

Bhubaneswar, Apr 03 (PTI):

Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik announced setting up of Table Tennis academies in Bhubaneswar and Cuttack and TT training centres across the state.

Patnaik said this when a delegation of the International Table Tennis Federation (ITTF) and International Table Tennis Federation founda-

tion met him on Sunday.

The chief minister informed the delegation of the state government's decision to set up Table Tennis academies in Bhubaneswar and Cuttack. Also table tennis training centres will be set up across all the indoor halls in the state. He sought their help in coaches training programmes and hosting international TT events in Odisha.

The delegation included Petra Sorling, President ITTF and ITTF foundation, Leandro Olveh, Director ITTF Foundation, Saurabh Mishra, Programme Manager, ITTF Foundation, Julia Tappendorf, Program Coordinator, ITTF Foundation.

Srling presented to the chief minister the table tennis for development handbook on using table

tennis for social change. Patnaik praised the effort of the ITTF to promote table tennis in the state and country and assured them of all support.

An official statement issued by the CMO said that the delegation expressed their delight and keenness to be in Odisha and work closely with the government and support the state's endeavour to grow the sport of table tennis.

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Parliamentary panel

'Diaspora can be effective tool in furthering India's influence globally'

New Delhi, Apr 03 (PTI):

Indian embassies and consulates should be very proactive in reaching out to Indian students in their respective countries to make them feel that Indian missions are really a 'home away from home', a parliamentary panel said on Monday. In its latest report, the Parliamentary Committee on External Affairs also noted that the profile and geographical distribution of the Indian diaspora presents a great opportunity to promote the country's soft power and cultural diplomacy abroad. The committee recommended that potential of the diaspora community should be harnessed to

serve as an effective tool in furthering India's interest and influence globally.

"The committee also recommends that the ministry should prepare a policy framework in this regard and work out an action plan to implement the same in a time-bound manner," the panel said in the report that was tabled in Lok Sabha.

The report said the ministry told the committee that it is exploring the possibility of creating a facility for compulsory online registration of all emigrants who are proceeding abroad for employment through various airports and check posts in India. The committee desired that "Indian embassies/consulates

should be very proactive in reaching out to our students in their universities/institutes so that they are made to feel that our Missions/Posts are really a 'home away from home'".

Referring to return to the country by Indians from the Gulf region following job losses in view of the Covid pandemic, the panel said a rehabilitation scheme should be initiated to ensure livelihood security for them.

The committee recommended that a comprehensive rehabilitation scheme may be worked out in coordination with other ministries, departments, concerned state governments for those workers who lost their jobs due to the pandemic or other disasters.

"The committee urges the ministry to initiate consultations with all the stakeholders in this regard without delay," the report said. The committee also urged the ministry to take up with China the return of Indian students to that country.

"The committee had also desired MEA to make coordinated efforts with Missions to facilitate the return of Indian students to China for resumption of in person classes for those who desire so," it said. The ministry told the committee that it has been consistently taking up the matter of return of Indian students with the Chinese authorities both in New Delhi and through the Indian embassy in Beijing.

MAHAVIR JAYANTI PROCESSION



A procession outside the shrine of Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti during celebrations of Mahavir Jayanti, in Ajmer, Monday.

7 IITs, 22 NITs without Board of Governors chairperson: Education Ministry

New Delhi, Apr 03 (PTI):

The post of Chairman is lying vacant in seven Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) and 22 National Institutes of Technology (NITs), according to the Ministry of Education.

The post of chairperson in IITs and NITs is an honorary position. The chairpersons preside over the Board of Governors (BoGs) of the respective institutes. The Directors of these institutes are the principal academic and executive officers, according to the Act

and Statutes governing these institutions. The information about the va-

cant positions was shared by Union Minister of Education Dharmendra Pradhan in a written reply to a question in Lok Sabha.

"The charge of the position of Chairperson, BoGs in 7 IITs is assigned to the Chairperson, BoGs of other IITs with due approval of the Visitor of the institute. Similarly, in 22 NITs, the position of Chairperson, BoGs is vacant and as per statutory provisions, the Director of the NIT presides over the BoGs of the Institute, till the new nomination is made," he said.

As far as vacancies in other BoG posts are concerned, 11 IITs have vacancies of members from var-

ious fields. Thirty NITs have vacancies of two BoG council nominees on their boards and 14 NITs have nominations pending from the respective state governments to their boards.

"The vacant positions are to be filled (up) by the respective designated authorities as per provisions under the Act and Statutes governing these Institutions. Filling up of vacancies with suitable eminent person(s) is a continuous process. The nominations to vacant positions, which are within the purview of the Ministry, are already under active consideration," Pradhan said.

New Delhi, Apr 03 (PTI):

Emphasising on a "cashless Haj", the government has made special arrangements to meet the foreign exchange requirements of those going on the annual pilgrimage, including the issuance of a forex card through the State Bank of India (SBI).

The Ministry of Minority Affairs has taken several initiatives to make Haj 2023 more comfortable, convenient and affordable for Indian Muslims, according to an official statement.

Dedicated efforts have also been made to make the process of pilgrim selection objective, transparent, efficient, timely and free from human involvement.

The process of applying for Haj and selection of pilgrims was carried out online and of the 1.84 lakh applicants, 14,935 have been given assured allotment, including 10,621 in the 70-plus category and 4,314 women who will perform the Haj without a "Mehram" (male companion).

This is the largest ever contingent of women proceeding on Haj alone, not accompanied by men, the ministry said in a statement. The applications received over and above the Haj quota have been finalised through an online randomised digital selection (ORDS) process, without any human intervention, it added.

For the first time, the list of selected and wait-

listed applicants was published on the official portal immediately after the selection process in the interest of increased transparency, the statement said.

All 1.4 lakh selected pilgrims have been sent a text message with the information of their selection for Haj 2023. A text message has also been sent to the waitlisted applicants, informing them about their position on the list, the statement said.

The ministry has partnered with the SBI to make special arrangements to provide foreign exchange to the pilgrims.

Unlike previous years, when each pilgrim was given 2,100 Saudi riyals by the Haj Committee of India in lieu of Indian cur-

rency, irrespective of his actual requirements, the Haj Policy 2023 gives the option to the pilgrims to arrange their own foreign currency or take a lesser amount of foreign exchange, according to their requirements.

The government has collaborated with the SBI to ensure the supply of foreign exchange to the pilgrims at the most competitive rates, the statement said.

With more than 22,000 branches across the country, the SBI shall facilitate providing foreign exchange and the mandatory insurance to all the pilgrims to meet their requirements during their stay in Saudi Arabia.

The bank will reach out to the pilgrims through

text messages, the ministry said. The facility of a forex card is also being provided to the pilgrims, eliminating the possibility of theft or loss of physical currency, it added.

In case the card is lost during the pilgrimage, the pilgrim can get his money refunded from the bank.

An official said the government's aim is to support a "cashless Haj" to make it convenient for the pilgrims.

The SBI will also set up stalls at all the embarkation points with dedicated nodal officers of an appropriate level to help the pilgrims collect the foreign exchange in cash or through the forex card and also to provide any guidance and assistance as may be required.

Govt makes special arrangements to meet forex requirements of Haj pilgrims

Planning nuclear attack

Delhi court orders framing of charges against IM's Yasin Bhatkal

New Delhi, Apr 03 (PTI):

A Delhi court has ordered framing of charges against banned terrorist organisation Indian Mujahideen's (IM) co-founder Yasin Bhatkal and several of its operatives in a case of conspiring to wage war against India in 2012, noting that he was planning to plant a nuclear bomb in Surat town.

Additional Sessions Judge Shailender Malik observed that the digital data extracted from the devices seized from Bhatkal showed several video clips of jihadi literature including writings, justifying killing of non-Muslims in the name of jihad.

The court said there was enough evidence to put the accused on trial. In an order on March 31, the court said prima facie the accused, who

were members of the IM, entered into criminal conspiracy to wage war against India. The judge said that the chats by Bhatkal revealed and reflected planning nuclear attack in Surat after evacuating Muslims.

"A chat between accused reflect IM planning for planting nuclear bomb in Surat town and evacuating Muslims from Surat town before executing such terrorist act... on minute analysis of the chat running into many pages would clearly show that Bhatkal was not only involved with other accused for carrying out earlier terrorist activities but also involved in conspiracy of future terrorist activities with the assistance of Maoist in Nepal to collect arms, ammunition etc," the court observed.

Delhi excise scam

Court extends Sisodia's judicial custody till April 17

New Delhi, Apr 03 (PTI):

A special court on Monday extended the judicial custody of former Delhi Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia till April 17 in a corruption case related to the alleged Delhi excise scam.

Special Judge M K Nagpal, who had dismissed Sisodia's bail application on Friday saying he was "prima facie the architect" and played the "most important and vital role" in the alleged scam, extended his custody after he was produced before the court. Sisodia's judicial custody was to expire on Monday.

The judge passed the order on an application by the CBI claiming the investigation was at a crucial stage in the corruption case linked to the "scam".

Sisodia was arrested for alleged corruption in the formulation and implementation of the now-scraped liquor policy for 2021-22.

The court is scheduled to hear on April 5 the arguments on Sisodia's bail application in the money laundering case, also linked to the alleged scam.

President Murmu bats for imparting education in Indian languages

New Delhi, Apr 03 (PTI):

Imparting education in Indian languages will result in world-class knowledge and science, President Droupadi Murmu said on Monday. Speaking at the 36th convocation of the Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), Murmu lauded the progress made by women in several sectors, including education, and noted that 55 per cent of the students who received their degrees, certificates and diplomas were women.

"I am happy to note that there are 55 per cent girl students among those who received their degrees, certificates and diplomas at the university. Girl students account for more



President Droupadi Murmu awards a degree to a student during the 36th convocation of Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), in New Delhi, Monday.

than half of the students who have received gold medals today. "I am happy to see the progress of

women in various sectors, including education," she said. On Monday, 2,79,918 students received their de-

grees, certificates and diplomas. The president said that IGNOU has played a commendable

role in promoting "access to higher education".

"The university has played a significant role in providing opportunities for higher education to students from far-flung areas, rural areas and economically weaker groups. With the help of flexibility in IGNOU's academic programmes, many students have pursued higher studies while managing their work, family and other responsibilities," she said.

"As per the NEP (National Education Policy) - 2020, the country aims to achieve 50 per cent gross enrolment ratio by 2035. IGNOU is contributing immensely to achieving this goal," she added. NEP - 2020 aims to make India a global knowledge superpower, she asserted.

Idols shifted, stepwell covered with debris, encroachments on 10k square feet land removed

Indore, Apr 03 (PTI):

Four days after the Indore temple tragedy that claimed 36 lives, the local administration on Monday morning launched a drive to remove encroachments from the religious complex and moved the idols of deities to another shrine.

The stepwell on which the structure was built was also closed forever by dumping debris into it, an Indore Municipal Corporation official said.

Thirty-six persons were killed on March 30 after the floor of the Beleshwar Mahadev Jhulelal Temple in Patel Nagar, which was built in a public garden by laying a slab to cover a "bawdi" or stepwell, collapsed on Ram Navami, hurling devotees several feet below. On Monday, the encroachments at the temple were removed in the presence of a sizable number of police personnel, with roads leading to the place of worship being barricaded, an official said. "We have removed all illegal constructions in the

public garden in order to ensure the safety of citizens. The bawdi has been filled with debris so that no accident takes place," Indore Municipal Corporation additional commissioner Siddharth Jain told reporters. A new temple that was being built beside the ill-fated one has also been demolished as there was a risk of landslide at the site following the March 30 incident, he said. Action was taken to remove encroachments on 10,000 square feet of land around the Beleshwar Mahadev Jhulelal Temple

complex, another civic official informed. A temple priest present on the spot said prayers were offered to idols according to rituals and they were shifted to Kantafod temple. Meanwhile, activists of some right-wing groups protested the anti-encroachment action at the temple and took out a procession in Sindhi Colony in the vicinity. A local Vishwa Hindu Parishad functionary said the anti-encroachment action was illegal and was being done to hide the failure of the civic body to avert the tragedy.

Laxmikant Patel, who lost his wife, daughter-in-law and two other relatives in the tragedy, also condemned the action. He lives close by and along with his kin have been looking after the temple for years now. After the tragedy last Thursday, an FIR was lodged against Beleshwar Mahadev Jhulelal Temple Trust president Sevaram Galani and secretary Murli Kumar Sabnani under Indian Penal Code Section 304 (culpable homicide not amounting to murder), Juni Indore police station in-charge Neeraj Meda said.

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