

BRIEF



Bollywood actor Sonakshi Sinha during the trailer launch of her upcoming Amazon Prime video series 'Dahaad', in Mumbai, Wednesday.

Exempted

New Delhi: India's external intelligence agency RAW is an exempted organisation under the Right to Information Act and unless the information sought by an RTI applicant relates to human rights or corruption issues, it is not liable to be disclosed, the Delhi High Court has said. The court's order came on a petition by an RTI applicant for disclosure of information on the residences of a former RAW chief during a certain period.

Reserve

Prayagraj: The Allahabad High Court on Wednesday reserved its order on a petition seeking transfer of Sri Krishna Janmabhoomi-Shahi Idgah case from a Mathura court to itself. The Hindu petitioners in this case have claimed right over the land on which the mosque is built adjacent to the Krishna temple. They have requested that the original trial must be conducted by the high court itself.

Shot at

Kolkata: Two unidentified miscreants on Wednesday shot at a man in Budge Budge in West Bengal's South 24 Parganas district, a police officer said. The man was injured on his head but is now "out of danger" and is undergoing treatment at the SSKM Hospital in Kolkata, the officer said. "The man was returning home after appearing as a witness in a case in Alipore court in the city. He took a train to Budge Budge and then was riding his motorcycle from there to his home."

Merge

Shillong: Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad K Sangma on Wednesday said that ruling alliance partner People's Democratic Front (PDF) will merge with his National People's Party (NPP) on May 6. The PDF has two MLAs in the Meghalaya Assembly and the merger will increase the NPP's strength to 28 in the 60-member House.

Watery grave

Puri: A father-son duo from West Bengal drowned while bathing in the sea in Odisha's Puri on Wednesday, police said. The deceased tourists have been identified as 50-year-old Ranjan Das and his 16-year-old son Reshuv Das, Puri Superintendent of Police Kanwar Vishal Singh said, adding they hailed from West Bengal's Howrah district.

Weather
High 29 Low 22

MARKET
NIFTY 18,089.85
SENSEX 61,193.30

BULLION
GOLD 60,857
SILVER 75,497

SC ON SAME SEX MARRIAGE

'We go by Constitution'

New Delhi, May 03 (PTI)



We don't go by either "popular morality or segmental morality" but what the Constitution mandates, the Supreme Court observed on Wednesday when an argument was advanced before it that young same-sex couples across the country wanted to get married.

A five-judge constitution bench headed by Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud was hearing arguments on a batch of pleas seeking legal validation for same-sex marriage. During the arguments on the seventh-day of hearing, senior advocate Saurabh Kirpal, who is appearing for the petitioners, said they have spoken to gay people at various seminars and 99 per cent of them came up and said the only thing they want is to get married.

Senior advocate Menaka Guruswamy, who is also representing the petitioners' side, said she has spoken at different events and found that young gay couples wanted to get married. "I don't say this as an elite lawyer. I say this having met these young people. Do not let them experience what we have experienced," she told the bench, which also comprised justices S K Kaul, S R Bhat, Hima Kohli and P S Narasimha. Responding to

Govt offers same-sex couples panel, but no marriage

The Centre told the Supreme Court on Wednesday it will constitute a committee headed by the cabinet secretary to examine administrative steps that could be taken for addressing "genuine humane concerns" of same-sex couples without going into the issue of legalising their marriage. The Centre's submission came pursuant to the apex court asking it on April 27 whether social welfare benefits like opening joint bank accounts, nominating life partner in provident funds, gratuity and pension schemes can be granted to same-sex couples without going into the issue of legal sanction to their marriage. Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the central government, told a five-judge constitution bench headed by Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud there were discussions at the previous hearing about some genuine humane concerns of such couples and whether something can be done to address those administratively. "I have taken instructions and government is positive. What we have decided is, of course subject to your lordships' approval, that this would need coordination between more than one ministries. So, therefore, a committee headed by no less than the cabinet secretary will be constituted," Mehta told the bench, which also comprised justices S K Kaul, S R Bhat, Hima Kohli and P S Narasimha.

her, the CJI observed, "Dr Guruswamy, there is a problem with this line of argument. I will tell you why. We understand the feelings out of which this argument comes. At the constitutional level, there

is a serious problem." Justice Chandrachud said if, as a constitutional court, the SC goes by what young gay couples feel, then it will be subjected to volumes of data on what other people feel.

Putin escapes assassination bid!

Moscow, May 03:

Describing the overnight 'drone attacks' on the Kremlin residence of Russian President Vladimir Putin, by Ukraine, a "terrorist attack," Russia has said it has the "right to retaliate" in a manner, place and time of its choosing. Russia Today quoted statement of President of

Russia alleged that there were attempts by Ukraine to assassinate President Putin, saying it was a "terrorist attack" while claiming it shot down drones over the residence of Putin. Russian President Vladimir Putin did not get injured in the overnight drone attacks on Kremlin and Russia considers the drone attacks, an attempt on President's life, President's press service announced on Wednesday, Russia Today reported.

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MATTER OF CONCERN

18 cows slaughtered after unidentified men raid 'gaushala'

Twice in 24 hours

Etah (UP), May 03 (PTI)

Unidentified people broke open a cow shelter here twice in 24 hours, slaughtered 18 animals and took away their meat, police said on Wednesday. Nine more animals from the same cow shelter in Lakhmipur village here are missing and police suspect that they too might have been killed.

After the second raid around 1.30 am Wednesday, the group of 15 to 20 men who were taking the carcasses away in a pickup van also beat up three villagers who were then admitted to a hospital, Circle officer (City) Vikrant Trivedi said. Remains of the slaughtered animals were found near the cow shed in Lakhmipur and also in nearby Pawas village, both under the same police station area, he said.

According to locals, almost 12 hours before the incident in Lakhmipur village, cattle remains were found near a farm in Pawas village of the same police station area and it is sus-

pected that those also belonged to Lakhmipur's cow shelter. Vipin Kumar, the son of Pawas village head Priyanka Kumari, told reporters that Lakhmipur cow shelter had 83 cattle till Monday which came down to 56 by Wednesday. While 12 animals were slaughtered early on Wednesday, six were found in Pawas village and the rest are missing, he said.

Kumar said no employee stays at the cow shelter at night and the gate was locked from outside. Additional Superintendent of Police Dhananjay Kushwaha said it was a serious matter and the case was being investigated.

Activists of multiple right-wing organisations, including Vishwa Hindu Parishad and Bajrang Dal protested against the incidents. State President of Vishwa Gau Raksha Sangh Netrapal Singh held the district administration and the head of the regional cow shelter responsible for the incidents. He warned of holding prolonged demonstrations if the perpetrators of the incidents are not arrested soon.

HORRIFYING TRUTH

Video shows man being driven on top of SUV after accident

New Delhi, May 03 (PTI)

A disturbing video of a man being driven atop a black SUV for half-a-kilometre after his scooter was hit by the four-wheeler on Kasturba Gandhi Marg in New Delhi emerged on social media on Wednesday. Police said the man flung into the air after the accident and landed on the SUV. The video, shot by an eyewitness, showed the injured man lying on the roof of the SUV as its driver continued to drive the vehicle for at least 500 metres. The eyewitness shot the purported video while riding his two-wheeler. He followed the vehicle for some distance and

tried to alert the SUV driver about the man on the roof of his car, but the driver did not stop. Police said the SUV driver later dropped the man on the road and drove off. A senior police official said the accident took place on Saturday night when the SUV allegedly crashed into the two-wheeler Deepanshu Verma (30) and his cousin Mukul Verma (20) were riding. Due to the impact of the collision, Deepanshu flung into the air and landed on the car while Mukul fell on the road. Both the victims were taken to a nearby hospital where Deepanshu was declared brought dead, while Mukul was admitted for treatment, the officer said.

HOLY DIP



Devotees take holy dip in the Ganga river during 'Ganga Pushkaralu', in Varanasi, Wednesday.

'Punish Cong's abuse culture, chant Jai Bajrangbali'

Bengaluru, May 03 (PTI):

Prime Minister Narendra Modi chanted Jai Bajrang Bali' during all the three public meetings he addressed in poll-bound Karnataka on Wednesday, in what is seen as a counter to the Congress, which has promised to ban right-wing outfit Bajrang Dal in its election manifesto.

Along with Bharat Mata Ki Jai' in praise of 'Mother India', Modi also made a point at the beginning as well as at the end of his speech to raise Jai Bajrang Bali' in Mulki in Dakshina Kannada district, Ankola in Uttara Kannada district and Bailhongal in Belagavi district. The Congress in its manifesto for May 10 assembly election in Karnataka said it was committed to take firm



PM Narendra Modi during a public meeting in support of BJP candidates ahead of Assembly polls, in Ankola, Wednesday.

and decisive action against individuals and organisations spreading hatred amongst communities on grounds of caste and religion. The Congress said, "We believe that law and

Attempt to polarise election to avoid corruption issue: Cong

Hitting back, the Congress alleged that Prime Minister Modi and his party are refusing to speak about the "scam-ridden" BJP government in Karnataka and are "merely looking for lame-duck excuses to polarise the election". The party defended its stand against the Bajrang Dal, saying the Constitution prescribes action against any individual and organisation spreading hatred or enmity. Congress leader Randeep Surjewala said that the Constitution and law "are clear - any individual or organisation spreading hatred or enmity must be proceeded against in accordance with law". "The duty to follow Raj darma is of the prime minister and chief minister but they refuse to do so," he tweeted.

Constitution is sacrosanct and cannot be violated by individuals and organisations like Bajrang Dal, PFI or others promoting enmity or hatred, whether among majority or minority communities. We will take decisive action as per law including imposing a ban on such organisations". Prime Minister Narendra Modi during his

public meeting at Hospet in Vijayanagara district on Tuesday too had come down heavily on the Congress promise of banning Bajrang Dal saying, "The Congress in its manifesto has decided to lock up Lord Hanuman. Initially, they locked up Prabhu Shri Ram (Lord Ram). And now they want to lock up people who say Jai Bajrang Bali."

CBI makes highest cash seizure of Rs 38 crore

From WAPCOS ex-CMD premises

New Delhi, May 03 (PTI)

The CBI has arrested former chairman and managing director of WAPCOS Rajinder Kumar Gupta and his son Gaurav after it recovered more than Rs 38.38 crore cash from their premises making it the biggest seizure of cash by the agency in its history, officials said Wednesday. WAPCOS, previously known as Water and Power Consultancy Services (India) Limited, is a central public sector enterprise wholly owned by the government and is under the administrative control of the Ministry of Jal Shakti. The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) began its searches Tuesday after booking Gupta, his wife Reema Singal, son Gaurav Singal, and

daughter-in-law Komal Singal, for allegedly amassing illicit wealth to the tune of Rs 7.91 crore during Gupta's tenure as CMD from April 1, 2011 to March 31, 2019, the officials said. After getting information about illicit wealth allegedly accumulated by Gupta, the agency conducted a check for the 2011-2019 period during which it found that the former CMD had amassed assets worth Rs 7.91 crore which were disproportionate to known sources of income by over 131 per cent during the period. Following the FIR, the CBI teams fanned across 19 locations in Delhi, Gurugram, Chandigarh, Sonapat, and Ghaziabad in a coordinated search operation leading to detection of the staggering sum bundled across properties of Gupta and family members for which no satisfactory explanation was provided, the officials said.

U'khand minister beats man

Rishikesh, May 03 (PTI)

Police on Wednesday lodged cross FIRs after Uttarakhand minister Premchand Aggarwal was caught on camera dealing a flurry of blows on a man following an argument. Aggarwal, his PRO Kaushal Bijlwan and security man Pankaj Rana were booked under sections 147 (rioting), 323 (voluntarily causing hurt) and 504 (insulting someone intentionally to provoke) of the Indian Penal Code, Station House Officer of Rishikesh Kotwali police station K R Pandey said. Surendra Singh Negi, the man allegedly assaulted by the minister, and his companion Dharamveer Prajapati were also booked under sections 392 (robbery), 332 (voluntarily causing hurt to public servant), 353 (assaulting or using criminal force to deter public servant), 504 (insulting someone intentionally to provoke them) and 506 (issuing threat to cause death or grievous hurt) of the IPC, police said.

Women wrestlers move SC for permission to file affidavit

In sealed cover

New Delhi, May 03 (PTI)

The seven women wrestlers, who have levelled allegations of sexual harassment against Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) chief Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh, on Wednesday moved the Supreme Court seeking permission to file an affidavit in sealed cover.

On April 28, Delhi Police had filed two FIRs against Singh on the allegations of the wrestlers, hours after Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for Delhi Police, had told the apex court that a case will be reg-

istered on Friday. On Wednesday, the counsel representing the women wrestlers mentioned the matter before a bench comprising Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud and Justice P S Narasimha and said he was seeking permission to file the affidavit in sealed cover before the court, which is slated to hear the matter on Thursday. He said they don't have any problem in supplying the copy of the affidavit to the solicitor general but it should not go in public domain.

The bench permitted the counsel to bring the sealed cover affidavit on Thursday with advance copy to

Mehta. Mehta told the bench that investigation is going on in the case and the petitioners' can share these materials with the investigation officer.

When Mehta asked if he can share the material with the investigation officer, the bench said, "alright". The country's top wrestlers have been on a sit-in at Jantar Mantar in Delhi demanding action against Singh.

On April 26, Delhi Police had told the top court that some kind of preliminary probe was needed before it can proceed with the registration of an FIR over the sexual harassment allegations.

SC refuses to entertain pleas against movie 'The Kerala Story'

New Delhi, May 03 (PTI)

The Supreme Court on Wednesday refused to entertain petitions against the controversial Hindi film, "The Kerala Story", including the one filed by 'Jamiat Ulama-I-Hind', against its release over apprehensions that it may cause hatred and enmity in society, and asked the petitioners to approach the appropriate high court. The film on alleged radicalisation and conversion of young Hindu women to Islam in Kerala, before inducting them into terrorist outfit Islamic State (IS), is scheduled for release on May 5.

PROTECTION FROM RAIN



People cover themselves with a plastic sheet during rain at Jantar Mantar, in New Delhi, Wednesday.

Bangladeshi immigrants nabbed for thefts

Annual prize distribution programme organised

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, May 03: Police arrested two Bangladeshi immigrants in connection with thefts in Smriti Nagar area. A Bangladeshi passport was recovered from one of the accused while the second accused was an illegal immigrant. The accused had made an Aadhaar card with fake documents also. Apart from Durg, they had committed thefts in Bilaspur, Kharagpur, Bhuvaneshwar, Sambalpur, Gondia, Mumbai and other places. One of the accused had earlier tried to illegally immigrate into Europe and was imprisoned in Libya. Other members of the gang returned to Bangladesh after committing the crime.

While addressing media persons here at the Police Control Room on Wednesday, SP Dr Abhishek Pallava informed that one Saurabh Jain, resident of Smriti Nagar, lodged an FIR at Chowki Smriti Nagar re-



garding theft of cash as well as gold and silver jewelry from his locked house. Taking the matter into serious cognizance, a joint team of ACCU, Supela Police Station and Smriti Nagar Chowki worked under the guidance of ASP (City) Sanjay Dhruv, CSP (Bhilai Nagar) Nikhil Rakhecha, DSP (Cyber) Prabhat Kumar and DSP (Crime) Rajeev Sharma.

The team maintained vigil on the suspects and efforts were made to find out the accused by interro-

gating the habitual criminals. Network of informers was activated and CCTV footage was examined. During technical analysis, it was found that the gang involved in the theft was from Bangladesh. Their current location was traced in the Narendrapur Police Station Area of West Bengal.

A special team was dispatched to West Bengal. The team found that the suspects were staying in a rented house for the last 15 days in the Kali Bazar

area. With the help of local police, Durg Police conducted a raid and managed to arrest two accused. During interrogation, they confessed to committing thefts with their accomplices Rukan, Nishad and Sanjeet. He further disclosed that Rukan has escaped to Bangladesh with stolen cash of about Rs 35 lakh. Police recovered vital evidence and items used in the thefts.

An Aadhaar card, Rs 29,500 Indian currency notes, which were in circulation at the time of de-

monetisation, was also recovered from them.

The accused are identified as Mohd Hasmat Khalifa (22) son of Motleb Khalifa a resident of Hosaipur Police Station, Rajoor District, Madaripur Bangladesh. He was staying in India as Sujain Shaikh (22) son of Motleb Sheikh r/o Kalibazar Daspada, PS Narendrapur, District Baruipur West Bengal. The second accused is Altaf Hussain (35) son of Sakeen Haladar a resident of Dakshin Vidyanandi Police Station, Rajoor District, Madaripur Bangladesh, presently residing at Kalibazar Daspada, Police Station Narendrapur, District Baruipur, West Bengal.

Inspector Arjun Patel, ASI Rajesh Pandey, Head Constable Chandrashekhar Soni, Chandrashekhar Banjeer, Constables Rinku Soni, Amit Dubey, Pankaj Chaturvedi, SI Baldu Chandrakar, Constables Sanjeev, Jaynarayan and Gopal Lama played a vital role in arresting the accused.



Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, May 03: Department of Management Studies, St Thomas College, Bhilai organised annual prize distribution programme and closing ceremony for the session 2022-23. The chief guest of this programme was Administrator of the college Rev Fr Dr Joshi Varghese.

Principal of the college Dr MG Roymon, IQAC Coordinator Dr Debjani Mukherjee, Head of Dept of Management Studies Dr

Susan R Abraham, Assistant Professor Mahendra Ikhar and Priyanka Ganjir were also present on this occasion. First of all, Head of Dept of Management Studies, Dr Susan R Abraham said that every year management department felicitates the students for their outstanding performance and academic excellence.

During the programme along with the prizes for activity classes, best group discussion, best presentation, best theme, certificates of Unborn

Archons and Certificate Programme were also awarded by the guests. Award for best group was given to group 6.

Aryan Vishwakarma of BBA second year was felicitated by the award of Outstanding Performer and Dhairyra Gulwani of BBA Third Year was felicitated by the award of Student of the Year for the session 2022-23. The organization and vote of thanks of the programme was done by student council of department of management studies.

Durg University VC takes online meeting of Principals regarding NEP-2020

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, May 03: Taking seriously each and every point mentioned in the National Education Policy 2020, the colleges should make new courses and other necessary arrangements in the interest of the students, stated Dr Aruna Palta, Vice Chancellor of Hemchand Yadav University (Durg University). Dr Palta was taking an online meeting of Principals of leading colleges and of all private colleges of all the districts under the university in the context of the National Education Policy 2020 on Wednesday.

Dr Palta said that the college should start new courses or make amendments in the existing courses according to the

local needs and needs of the students. The Vice-Chancellor also urged the Principals to send a proposal to the Higher Education Department, Government of Chhattisgarh seeking permission for new courses.

Earlier, at the beginning of the meeting, Dr Prashant Srivastava, Dean, Student Welfare, while presenting the outline of the National Education Policy, said that 18 key points have been included in it such as student-centric education, digital learning, mutual relationship between educational institutions and industries, academic research and globalization and Indian tradition of knowledge are prominent. Every college should focus on these points and try for

new courses in future. University's DCDC Dr Prita Lal also expressed his views.

Vice-Chancellor Dr Palta urged the colleges to conduct new courses focused on Yoga, ancient Indian history, Sanskrit, environment protection, dance, painting, singing etc and to give practical education to the students. More than 75 Principals present in the meeting solved their curiosity by asking many questions. In this online meeting, the registrar of the university Bhupendra Kuldeep, Assistant Registrar, Dr Sumit Agarwal, Additional Director, Higher Education, Dr Sushil Chandra Tiwari, Principals of all leading colleges and private colleges were present.

Ten new SAGES to be constructed from DMF

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, May 03: A meeting of the District Mineral Trust was held on Wednesday. Collector Pushpendra Kumar Meena chaired the meeting. Rs 60 crore was allocated for education, health, environment control, sustainable livelihood, physical infrastructure and other development works. In the field of education, the proposals for construction of 10 new Atmanand schools, renovation of colleges, arrangements for assembly of students in primary schools and availability of infrastructure and equipment in schools were approved. In the field of health, funds were sanctioned for the renovation and maintenance of the district hospital. Funds were sanctioned for con-



ducting various activities for self-employment in urban and rural bodies for sustainable livelihood. Apart from this, approval was given for Rs 45 lakh for infrastructure development works in Durg Lok Sabha constituency, Rs 35 lakh per assembly for development works in all assembly constituencies of the district, and Rs 10 lakh per member for development works in the area of all the members.

Collector said that the Durg is known as Shikshadhani. There are many colleges and schools which gave brilliant stu-

dents who brought laurels for the district and the state in the country and the world. In such a situation, it is our priority to further improve the quality of the educational institutions of the district. Accordingly, funds were approved for the construction of 10 Swami Atmanand schools, playgrounds and equipment, paver blocks, boundary walls, computer labs and digital classrooms in the schools. There are 42 Atmanand schools operating in the district, out of which 28 are operating in English medium and 14 in

Hindi medium. Along with this, Rs 5 crore was approved for infrastructure development and modernization of all major colleges of the district. For the expansion of health services, funds were sanctioned for upgradation of the district hospital Durg, purchase of equipment and payment of honorarium to medical officers and employees.

For the purpose of promoting self-employment and innovation, funds were approved for construction of vending zones in all urban bodies, construction of paint units

and establishment of mushroom units in rural and urban areas for sustainable livelihood.

Along with this, approval was given for construction of Wonder Land by the Forest Department in Nandni for pollution control, remand home for juvenile offenders, CCTV in special buildings and premises. Funds were approved for connection, pipeline for drinking water in IIT Bhilai campus, electricity generation from cow dung, infrastructure development in Lok Sabha and assembly constituencies and other public welfare schemes. MP Vijay Baghel, MLA (Durg City) Arun Vora, Member Secretary Ashwani Dewangan (CEO District Panchayat), ex-officio members; public representatives and citizens attended the meeting.

India will become Vishwa Guru with 'Vocal for Local': Vijay Baghel

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, May 03: 100th episode Prime Minister's Mann Ki Baat was screened live at ICAI Bhavan in Civic Center. The gathering was jointly organised under the joint aegis of ICAI Bhilai Branch, Jankalyan Prachar Prasara Abhiyan Chhattisgarh; Salute Tiranga Organization, Chhattisgarh Swadesh Manav Adhikar Sangathan as well as BJP supporters. People collectively listened to the PM's Mann Ki Baat at this venue.

Convenor Manoj Thakre said that Mann Ki Baat is a very popular program which has created a new thought and vision among the masses over the issues of climate change, cleanliness campaign, education and much more. It is a unique



event in the history of India after independence as the 100th episode was broadcasted live at the United Nations office also.

At the outset, the programme began with lighting the lamps and offering prayers to Goddess Saraswati. Lok Sabha member Vijay Baghel was the chief guest while BJP General Secretary Yogendra Singh presided over. Special guests were BSF Assistant

Commandant Manish Sinha, Brahmakumari Asha Behen, President (women wing) of Chamber of Commerce Payal Jain, Press Club President Bhavna Pandey, BJP leader Sanjay Dani, Ritesh Tiwari, Bhanu Ji Rao, Jyoti Purang (Secretary of Arya Samaj Higher Secondary School), Phanindra Bose, Chhotu Chawla, Dr Laxprad, Dr Ranu, Rajnikant Pandey, Arun Savarkar, Baluram

Verma, Ravi Soni, Arun Sharma, Jyoti Sharma, Ashok Jain and others were present.

MP Vijay Baghel said that the Prime Minister gave momentum to many dimensions of development and progress in the last nine years. A glimpse of the overall development of the country is visible in his words. The schemes and programmes including Swachh Bharat Mission, housing for the poor,

Ujjwala Gas, etc have proved to be historic events. Progress in the space sector, removal of Article 356 from Kashmir, Shri Ram Mandir, etc were possible due to the efforts of the Prime Minister. Today, in the Mann Ki Baat, the Prime Minister called upon the youth of the country to connect with body, mind and wealth to make the country vishwa guru.

On this occasion, BJP District General Secretary Yogendra Singh, Brahmakumari Asha Didi, BSF Assistant Commandant Manish Sinha, BJP leader Sanjay Dani, Payal Jain and Bhavna Pandey also addressed the gathering. 42 personnel of BSF also attended the programme. Neeta Chaurasia conducted the programme while Manoj Thakre proposed the vote of thanks.

Employees of RSM feted with Pali Shiromani & Karma Shiromani Awards

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, May 03: SAIL-Bhilai Steel Plant, gives away 'Pali Shiromani' and 'Karm Shiromani' Awards under the Shiromani Award Scheme for outstanding and commendable work. As part of this, Hemant Kumar Chandrakar, Senior Manager of the Rail & Structural Mill, was honoured with 'Pali Shiromani Award', while Kartar Dahia, Master Technician, and Praveen Kumar Deshmukh, OCT, were honoured with the 'Karm Shiromani Award'.

General Managers NK Khare, HR Meghwal, Sunil Sorte, Atul Dubey, Malik, S Chattopadhyay along with other senior officials and employees of the department were present on the occasion. Employees who



won awards were honoured by Tirthankar Dastidar, Chief General Manager (RSM and RTS) with a Memento and Certificate and letter of appreciation.

Coupon of sweets was presented for the spouses of the award-winning employees as a form of encouragement. The awarded employees expressed their views, stating that such awards boost their morale and inspire them to work even better. 'Karm Shiromani'

and 'Pali Shiromani' Awards are given for exemplary work within the department that involves innovation, effective use of resources, and achieving organizational objectives, while following Safety guidelines.

The Programme was coordinated by Jasbir Singh, Additional Labour Welfare Officer. Rajesh Babu and Bhuvan Sahu also contributed in organising the program.

MOU signed to provide medical facilities to Contract Workers at Hirri Mines

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, May 03: Management of SAIL-Bhilai Steel Plant at Hirri Mines and RB Institute of Medical Sciences, Bilaspur signed an MOU to provide medical facilities to the contractual workers and their entitled family members. The MOU was signed at a programme in Hirri mines on April 29, 2023 in presence of Samir Swaroop, Chief General Manager (Mines and Rowghat), Anupam Bisht, General Manager (Mines), SK Soni, General Manager (Personnel-Non-Works and Mines) and

Somnath Kumar Singh, Deputy General Manager and Mines Manager (Hirri Mines). The hospital management was represented by Director, Dr RP Mishra. Representatives of all the three unions of Hirri Mines, HSEU (CITU), SKMS (AITUC), and KMS (BMS), as well as contractors and contractual workers were present at the occasion.

It is noteworthy that ESI is not applicable in the mining area, which deprives contract workers and their family members from medical facilities. Taking note of this, the management of SAIL-BSP

has initiated a plan through which contract workers and their family members will receive free OPD facility in RB Institute of Medical Sciences, Bilaspur, from May 01, 2023.

At the beginning of the program, SK Soni, General Manager (Personnel-Non-Works and Mines) gave detailed information about the agreement and addressed the concerns and questions of contractors and union representatives.



This system will start on International Labour's Day. RP Mishra, Director of RB Institute of Medical Sciences Bilaspur, congratulated all the contract workers and praised the

Bhilai Steel Plant and Hirri Mines management for this arrangement. He assured that RB management will fully cooperate in the implementation of this plan.

management will continue to work for the welfare of the contract workers, he said. On this occasion, Milind Sahare, Asst General Manager, Hemant Bhuaray, Additional Labour Welfare Officer, Mantosh Sen, President of CITU, Partha Chattarji, Deputy President of CITU, Ashok Patle, President of SKMS, Pawan Kumar Verma, President of KMS, Pratyus kant Trivedi, Secretary of KMS, Prithvi Sahgal, Executive President of KMS, Sandeep Sahni, Crushing Plant Contractor Representative, Paswan

Satkaratar, Contractor's Representative, Contract workers Ramesh Sahu, Suresh Joshi, Kaliram, Shishupal, Narayan Rajak, Ashok Sahu, Kuleshwar Sahu, Naresh Sahu, Kushal, Akram, Rauf Khan, Hari Singh, Shiva, Sevak Ram, Anil, and others were present. The program was conducted by SK Nayak, Asst Manager (Personnel-Hirri Mines). Somnath Kumar Singh, Deputy General Manager and Mines Manager (Hirri Mines) expressed gratitude to the management for this historic agreement and thanked all those present.

Kotavar, Patels, Home Guards are important wing of admn: CM

Honorarium of Rs 1.56 cr released to SGSS

Raipur, May 03:

The 'Kotavars', Home Guard jawans and Gram Patel and Presidents and members of Swalambi Gauthan Sanchalan Samiti (SGSS) put forth their views before Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel and expressed gratitude to him. The felicitated him with a huge garland and all said that Baghel is one such CM who understood their difficulties and gave a wonderful gift by increasing their honorarium. The President and members of Gauthan Sanchalan Samiti expressed happiness on start of honorarium in the programme and presented a painting made out of cow-dung paint to CM and putting 'Khumari' on his head. CM in this programme transferred an amount of Rs 1.56 cr to Presidents-Members of Swalambi Gauthan

Sanchalan Samiti (SGSS) and Rs 9.80 cr under Godhan Nyay Yojana, with Rs 3.80 cr for collection of cow-dung and Rs 6 cr for Gauthan Samiti and SGHS. He said that efforts be made to ensure that cow-dung is regularly purchased in the village and out of total collection 50% of it should be purchased and this will make the cattle ranchers prosperous and sufficient cow-dung will be available to make cow-dung paint and electricity from it. The Gauthans from where there is purchase of 5 quintal of cow-dung, there the industrialist will get facility to establish power plant from cow-dung, CM added.

CM said that today we all are getting familiar with the important wing of state government viz. Patel, 'Kotavar', 'Home Guard' and Presidents, members of SGSM. He said that



smooth conduct of the administration is simply unimaginable without them. Now a big role of Gauthan Samiti has come forward in the new form and which is playing important role in developing rural economy. He said that Kotavar, Patel are eyes and ears of the government. To maintain peace in the villages, they extend support to the police and administration

and act as bridge between the admn and government.

CM Baghel said that when the Congress government was formed in the state, at that time he realised that the cost of agriculture equipments is rising and crop coverage is reducing. The villages are also facing problem of uncontrolled grazing of cattle in the villages. It was here they visualised about

'Gauthan', so that the cattle do no enter into each other's farm in the village and they can be utilised. For this he selected land in the village itself, which is non-controversial and then started making 'Gauthans' in the Panchayats. Today more than 10000 'Gauthans' have been formed and out of which 5000 have become independent and from these 'Gauthans' cow-dung purchase has started. Vermi-compost is also being made and other activities like cow-dung paint and others is being worked upon, CM added.

Revenue Minister Jainsingh Agrawal said that the honorarium of Home Guard jawans has been hiked from Rs 6300 to Rs 6420 per month and that of 'Kotavar', Patel as well. From administration de-centralisation point of view the state government has taken important

decision. Today there are total 33 districts, 112 sub-divisions and 233 tehsils in the state and we are surging ahead towards strengthening of administration. Apart from this the government schemes are also being speedily implemented. Agriculture Minister Ravindra Choubey said that to honour 98% population of Chhattisgarh, we all observed 'Bore-Basi Diwas' on May 1 and gave respect to "Kotavar" and Patels and gave instructions to include Patels in the village Samiti as well. In this programme, MLA Satyanarayan Sharma, Kuldeep Juneja, Mayor Aejaz Dhebar, Chairman CMDC Girish Dewangan, Chairman RDA Susubhash Dhupad, ex-MP Nand Kumar Sai, advisor to CM- Pradeep Sharma and many other public representatives were present.

Cong against 'Santan Dharm' and its saviour: Sao

Raipur, May 03: BJP State President Arun Sao strongly objected to CM's statement saying that 'he would set right the Bajrang Dal' and added that 'Kalnemi' too left to set Lord Shri Hanuman right, but what happened to him is known to all. Sao said that Bajrang Dal will remain 'Chiranjivi' like Lord Shri Hanuman.

In a statement made to the press, BJP State President said that the Chhattisgarh state where SIMI activists are arrested and news about mafia 'Guddu Muslim' being hidden and the state wherein preparations are going on to allot land to 'Davate-Islami', in that state instead of putting check on all such criminal activities, the threatening of

putting right 'Bajrang Dal' is highly unfortunate for democratic system in the state. Sao charged that CM Baghel is playing dangerous game of appeasement and is conspiring to throw the state into blind lanes communal hatred. Sao questioned as to whether it is crime to recite 'Hanuman Chalisa' or to take out Julus on 'Ramnavami'? Is it crime to protest against forceful conversion of Hindus? Sao further said as to how much of any transactions worth crores have taken place by Bajrang Dal and which fund has been sent to terrorist, that a need for ban has arisen. Sao said that there is no need to set right 'Bajrangis', rather the Lord Shri Hanuman will set everything right.

DGP Juneja took meeting of CRPF and top officials

Strategy made against Naxalites**Raipur, May 03:** State Director General of Police Ashok Juneja and senior CRPF officers reached Sukma on Wednesday after the IED blast in Dantewada. A strategic discussion was held with the local officials working on the Naxal front. He talked about intensifying the fight against Naxalites. Juneja also reviewed the ongoing anti-Naxal campaign and development works in the district. It is notable that a high-level meeting was held at the DIG CRPF office near the police line. The officers discussed the ongoing anti-Naxal operation in the district with SP Sunil Sharma, ASP Kiran Chavan and DSP working on the Naxal front, CRPF Commandant and other officials. Along with this, an important strategy was made

against the Naxalites in the coming days. The officers who arrived after the Dantewada blast inquired about the ongoing operation and other activities against Naxalites in the district. They also discussed about the problems coming at the local level.

DGP Ashok Juneja, ADG CRPF Vitul Kumar, IG CRPF Saket Singh, ADG Vivekanand Sinha reached the police line by helicopter at 4.30 pm on Wednesday afternoon. IG Sundarraj P, DIG KL Dhruv, DIG Kamlochan Kashyap, DIG RN Das were present on the occasion. Officials said that the operation against the Naxalites

should be intensified in the coming days. Along with security, advice was given to speed up the development work and to take the local people into confidence. It is notable that DGP Juneja has also taken the responsibility of DGP Naxal Operation and Intelligence for a long time in the past. In such a situation, the strategy made in the meeting is being considered important. It may be noted that a week ago, Naxalites attacked DRG jawans by blasting IED in Dantewada, in which 10 jawans were killed and one civilian lost his life. Since then the police have started operations against the Naxalites.

Nalwa Special Steel Limited, New Delhi signs agreement with State Govt

Nalwa Special Steel Limited will set up a plant to manufacture square rectangular pipes in Raigarh**Raipur, May 03:**

Nalwa Special Steel Limited on Wednesday signed an MoU with the Chhattisgarh government to set up a plant for manufacturing square and rectangular pipes in Tehsil Tamnar district, Raigarh with an investment of about Rs 450 crore. In this

a production target of 6,00,000 ton per annum has been set. The MoU signed with the Government of Chhattisgarh for setting



up new plants was signed by Mr. Bhuvanesh Yadav, Secretary, Commerce and Industry, and Mr. Pradeep Tandon, on behalf of the company. Pradeep Tandon informed that the establishment and operation of the plant will provide new employment opportunities to the youth of the region and this industry will become a partner in the development of the region. Nalwa Special Steel is a subsidiary of Jindal Group.

BJP's only policy is to create differences and rule: CM

Raipur, May 03: Speaking about Karnataka VS polls, CM Bhupesh Baghel said that election are due in Karnataka and when will BJP speak about the people of Karnataka, as they only speak about Hindu-Muslim, Hindu-Christians. They only want to create fight and differences among the societies, CM said, adding that their only policy is 'create differences and rule'.

CM was speaking media persons about Karnataka polls. Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel in his comments about ban to be imposed in Karnataka on Bajrang Dal as mentioned in their manifesto said



that if the need arises, then ban can be imposed in Chhattisgarh as well. At present ban has been imposed in Karnataka as per the conditions and problems prevailing there. It is notable here that Congress in its election manifesto has decided to impose ban on Bajrang Dal in Karnataka if vote to power. On this there is protest by Hindu organization against Congress all

over the country. On associating Bajrang Dal with Lord Shri Hanuman by PM Narendra Modi, CM Bhupesh Baghel said that the thing which belongs to Pakistan, PM makes it that of India. Here ban is to be imposed on Bajrang Dal and not on Lord Shri Hanuman, CM added. CM Baghel charged that Bajrang Dal workers are indulging in 'Gondism' in the name of Bajrang Bali and it is not appropriate. In Chhattisgarh also Bajrang Dal also tried to create problems and to which the government correct it on time. If the need arises, then ban can be imposed against them in Chhattisgarh as well, CM added.

It's impossible for a human to progress without a scientific thought process: CM

Raipur, May 03: A person cannot progress without a scientific thought process, new discoveries from time to time have brought society to its present state. In today's era, every person should have a scientific outlook. Pt. Jawahar Lal Nehru Ji was the first to opine on this. He started a campaign to promote a scientific outlook in India after the nation's independence. Pt. Nehru Ji believed that if public representatives and scientists worked together in coordination, then it would easily solve every problem in the country. The Chief Minister of Chhattisgarh, Bhupesh Baghel, said so to the young



scientists during the inaugural ceremony of the 2-day-long 18th Chhattisgarh Young Scientist Congress 2023 organised at Raipur's DDU Auditorium.

The Chief Minister said that we have worked towards applying this view of Nehru Ji in Chhattisgarh. We have taken steps to raise scientific awareness in citizens, and have

included scientific innovations in our schemes and programs in all fields. While addressing the young scientists, the Chief Minister said that many of you hail from rural backgrounds. You understand the challenges and needs of villages quite well. He said that the amalgamation of their talent with the traditional experiences of the villagers can start a new era in

the nation. We can recreate the era that Mahatma Gandhi used to dream of. We can realise the dream of rural India and Gram Swaraj.

The Chief Minister also said that we have to accelerate research to regulate climate change or find alternatives to adjust to the change. If we don't use the resources properly, they get misused, which should be avoided. He added that finding solutions to current problems on the basis of old research will not help new research emerge in society. Therefore, young scientists should think of new ways of research.

Safety related modernisation work for double line and yard remodelling

Some trains to be cancelled, partially cancelled, diverted and rescheduled

Raipur, May 03: In view of safety related modernisation work near Raipur Railway Station in South East Central Railway jurisdiction, trains which will not come to Raipur station will be given temporary stoppage at Urkura station. The passengers can avail bus facility between Raipur and Urkura station. Raipur Division has activated help line no 138 and 0771-2252500 for the convenience of passengers during this period.

Junagarh Road on 10.05.2023.

G. 18242 Ambikapur-Durg Express will remain cancelled between Uslapur and Durg from May 03-08.

H. 18241 Durg-Ambikapur Express will remain cancelled between Durg and Uslapur from May 04-09.

I. 13288 Rajendranagar-Durg South Bihar Express originating from Rajendranagar will terminate at Bilaspur station.

J. 13287 Durg-Rajendranagar South Bihar Express will originate from Bilaspur and remain cancelled between Durg and Bilaspur.

K. 12535 Lucknow-Raipur Graib Rath leaving Lucknow on May 08 will terminate at Uslapur station.

Rescheduling of Trains:

A. 18530 Visakhapatnam-Durg Express from Visakhapatnam on 04.05.2023 & 06.05.2023 will leave at 1855hrs instead of 1655hrs.

B. 22974 Puri-Gandhidham Express from Puri on 06.05.2023 will leave at 1515hrs instead of 1115hrs.

C. 18530 VSKP-Durg Express from VSKP on 08.05.2023, D. 18529 Durg-VSKP Express from Durg on 09.05.2023, E. 08275 Raipur-Junagarh Road Passenger Spl from Raipur on 09.05.2023, F. 08276 Junagarh Road-Raipur Road Passenger Spl from

A. 08528 Visakhapatnam-Raipur Passenger Special from VSKP on 04.05.2023 & 09.05.2023 will run up to Mahasamund and will remain cancelled from Mahasamund to Raipur.

B. 08527 Raipur-Visakhapatnam Passenger Special from Raipur on 05.05.2023 & 10.05.2023 will originate from Mahasamund and will remain cancelled between Mahasamund & Raipur.

C. 18425 Puri-Durg Express from Puri on 08.05.2023 & 09.05.2023 will run up to Mahasamund and will remain cancelled from Mahasamund to Durg.

D. 18426 Durg-Puri Express from Durg on 09.05.2023 & 10.05.2023 will originate from Mahasamund and will remain cancelled between Durg & Mahasamund.

Train to Skip Raipur Station & will run on Diverted Route:

01. 22866 Puri-LTT Mumbai Express from Puri on 09.05.2023 will run via Urkura a€ Sarona Cabin bypassing Raipur.

02. 12994 Puri-Gandhidham Express from Puri on 08.05.2023 will run via Sambalpur-Jharsuguda Road-Bilaspur-Urkuraa€ Sarona Cabin bypassing Raipur.

03. 20823 Puri-Ajmer Express from Puri on 08.05.2023 will run via Sambalpur-Jharsuguda Road-Bilaspur-

Urkuraa€ Sarona Cabin bypassing Raipur.

04. 22828 Surat-Puri Express from Surat on 09.05.2023 will run via Urkuraa€ Sarona Cabin bypassing Raipur and via Bilaspur-Jharsuguda Road.

05. 20917 Indore-Puri Express from Indore on 09.05.2023 will run via Urkuraa€ Sarona Cabin bypassing Raipur.

06. 12844 Ahmedabad-Puri Express from Ahmedabad on 08.05.2023 will run via Urkuraa€ Sarona Cabin bypassing Raipur and via Bilaspur-Jharsuguda Road.

07. 22848 Mumbai CSTM-VSKP Express from CSMT on 08.05.2023 will run via Urkuraa€ Sarona Cabin bypassing Raipur and via Bilaspur-Jharsuguda Road.

08. 18517 Korba-VSKP Express from Korba on 09.05.2023 will run via Jharsuguda Road-Sambalpur-Titlagarh route bypassing Champa-Titlagarh route.

09. 12807 VSKP-Nizamuddin Samata Express from VSKP on 09.05.2023 will run via Vijayawada-Balharshah - Nagpur route bypassing VSKP-Titlagarh-Raipur-Nagpur route.

10. 17481 Bilaspur-Tirupati Express from Bilaspur on 09.05.2023 will run via Jharsuguda Road-Sambalpur-Titlagarh route bypassing Raipur-Titlagarh route.

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AN INFORMED CONSUMER IS AN ALERT CONSUMER

Transport Department installs automatic challan system in toll plazas

- Now crossing the toll plazas without proper fitness status and tax pass would cost dearly
- E-detection system started in all the National Highways of the state
- Arrangements made to take action on the vehicles running without required documents
- Drivers should have documents of their vehicles up-to-date while driving on highway

tion system has been established in all the national highways of the state, so that the unfit vehicles and the vehicles with unpaid taxes will be automatically challaned when they pass through the toll.

As per the vision of Chief Minister Mr. Bhupesh Baghel, transport facilities are being developed in the state under the competent guidance of Transport Minister Mr. Mohammad Akbar. In view of the rising number of deaths in road accidents, Chief Minister had directed the officials concerned to take preventive measures to reduce road accidents in the state.

One of the main reasons behind the road accidents is the unfit heavy vehicles running recklessly on highways. So to prevent road accidents caused by unfit vehicles, e-detection systems have been installed in the national highways on the initiative of the Transport Department in the state. Through this system, unfit



vehicles will be automatically detected and challan will be issued.

According to the information received, Transport Department has developed an e-detection portal in collaboration with NIC Orissa to detect such vehicles plying on National Highways in Chhattisgarh.

The objective of the e-Detection portal is to collect data of the vehicles passing through various toll plazas on National Highways. In the first phase, toll gates on NH have been linked with the e-detection portal. Later data will be collected from

mining and industrial areas, with the help of ANPR cameras.

The information of the vehicles will be collected from the data received through FASTag, and photographs will be taken as the vehicles pass through the toll gate. The vehicles without legally required valid documents will be automatically challaned by the e-Detection portal.

The challan will be sent to the vehicle owner's mobile via SMS and until the challan is paid by the vehicle owner, all the works related to that vehicle will be re-

stricted in all RTOs.

Transport Secretary S. Prakash has appealed to the vehicle owners to get all the necessary documents of the vehicle up-to-date before taking the vehicle on the road.

Transport Commissioner Dipanshu Kabra has also requested the vehicle owners to do the needful in order to avoid penalty of fitness, tax, insurance and PUC.

Prashant Kumar Nayak, Senior Technical Director, NIC Odisha, Srinivasa Rao, Senior Technical Director, NIC Chhattisgarh and Scientist Amit Dewangan have played an important role in development of this Chhattisgarh's e-detection portal.

Following the recommendation of the Supreme Court Committee on Road Safety (SCCORs), the government has taken a policy decision to implement e-detection. Recently, the Secretary of the Supreme Court Committee, Sanjay

Mittal, had visited some districts and reviewed the corrective measures initiated to reduce road accidents in the state. He had given instructions to curb the vehicles running without fitness and insurance.

It is to be known that to drive a vehicle on the road, it is mandatory to have valid documents like tax pass, registration certificate, fitness certificate, permit (if transport vehicle), insurance and pollution control certificate (PUC) for all vehicles and Driving license is mandatory for all vehicle drivers. Personal vehicles do not require fitness and permits.

As per the sample data collected from toll gates on National Highways, it is observed that many vehicles are plying without valid documents. Unfit heavy goods vehicles without tax pass were also spotted. These vehicles are the major cause of road accidents and also create problems in insurance claims.

MLA lays stone for JJM work in Bunagaon

Central Chronicle News

Kondagaon, May 03: MLA Kondagaon Mohan Markam performed Bhoomipuja for the works

of Eklra Gram Nal Jal Yojana (EGNJY) under Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) in village panchayat Bunagaon under V i k a s k a n d Kondagaon. On this occasion, he encouraged the villagers to complete the work as soon as possible by cooperating in the Jal Jeevan Mission and told about the benefits of drinking water availability and use of clean water in the homes.

MLA discussed with the local people's representatives and got information about the problems of the village. To provide tap connection for door-to-door drinking water supply under JJM it is expected to cost Rs 1.62 cr in

Bunagaon. Under this pure drinking water will be provided to 271 families in Bunagaon. For this a door-to-door tap connection will be provided with



an overhead water tank of 65000 liters in the village.

On this occasion, MLA Budhram Netam, Tehsildar Vijay Mishra, Sarpanch Panchami Kaushik, People's Representative Jhumukal Dewan along with Village Panch and a large number of villagers were present.

Central Chronicle News

Raipur, May 03: Chhattisgarh Government is now preparing to crack down on vehicles running without fitness, tax and necessary documents. E-detect-

Kaiser Haq takes charge as Secretary State Election Commission

Central Chronicle News

Raipur, May 03: Mohammad Kaiser Abdul Haq took over as Secretary in the State Election Commission today. The 2007 batch IAS officer Haq was earlier posted as Secretary in Panchayat and Rural Development Department.

Haq also had a courtesy call on State Election Commissioner Thakur Ram Singh. He inspected the meeting arrangements, training room, meeting hall and record room. Deputy Secretary Deepak



Agrawal gave information about the establishment of the Commission, division of work to Secretary Haq. Under Secretary Alok Srivastava, other officers and employees of the State Election Commission were also present.

Radio collar for Tiger, for the first time in Ch'garh

- Population of tigers to increase in Achanakmar
- Radio collar has been installed for monitoring the movement of tigress

Central Chronicle News

Raipur, May 03: Forest and Climate Change Department is consistently working for the conservation of forests and wildlife in the state. In the same sequence, the tigress, who was rescued from Surajpur forest division on 28 March 2023, was released in a suitable habitat of Achanakmar Tiger

Reserve on 29 April 2023, under the established standard operating procedure of the National Tiger Conservation Authority.

It is noteworthy that as per the vision of Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel, and under the supervision of Forest Minister Mohammad Akbar, dedicated efforts are being made to increase the population of tigers in Achanakmar Tiger Reserve. The rescued tigress was released in Achanakmar Tiger Reserve under the guidance of Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (Wildlife) Sudhir Kumar Agrawal. Providing information



in the context, Principal Forests (Wildlife) Mr. Sudhir Kumar Agrawal

said that two tigresses and one tiger are being brought from the tiger reserves of the adjacent states of Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra to Achanakmar Tiger Reserve in Chhattisgarh.

Amidst this process, the release of rescued tigress from Surajpur Forest Division in Achanakmar Tiger Reserve is a happy coincidence. As per the standard operating procedure, a team of wildlife doctors had put on a radio collar on the tigress on April 28 and after that the tigress was successfully released into a proper habitat.

After being released in the natural habitat, a suit-

able monitoring system has been established to trace the movement of the female tigress for the next one month. Field staff have been specially trained for this task in Panna Tiger Reserve.

A team of two research scholars and wildlife doctors from the Wildlife Institute of India have also been specially deployed. The department held discussions with the localities and took them into confidence, before the release of the tigress in the natural habitat. The department is hopeful that the release of tigress would lead to increase in the population of tigers in Achanakmar.

Bore-Basi Tihar celebrated in honour of workers: Jain

- Prog organized at Zero Waste Center

Central Chronicle News

Jagdalpur, May 03: On the occasion of International Labour Day, Bore-Basi Tihar was organized at Zero Waste Center located at Bodhghat in Jagdalpur city. In Tihar,

Parliamentary Secretary Rekhchand Jain, Vice President of Indravati Basin Development Authority Rajeev Sharma, Mayor Safira Sahu, President of Municipality Kavita Sahu, Corporators, CEO District Panchayat Prakash Survey, Director of Kanger Valley National Park Dhammasheel Ganveer, Addl. Collector Haresh Mandavi, Addl. SP Nivedita Pal and other dis-



tribut level officers, members of the Shramik Women's Self Help Group working in the center honoured the labourers of the state by eating bore-basi.

The chief guest of the programme, Parliamentary Secretary Rekhchand Jain said that the Chief Minister, while honouring the laborers on International Labour Day, has made a name on the world stage by adding bore-basi, which is a part

of Chhattisgarhi culture. The government has associated Chhattisgarh's ancient tradition of 'Bore Basi' to honour the workers. All the companions associated with labour always have been consuming Bore Basi. Many researches were done on sacks, it has all kinds of nutrients as well as a better means of protection from heat.

Vice-Chairman of Indravati Basin



Development Authority Sharma said that on the occasion of Labour Day, our culture and tradition is being revived in the state on the initiative of the Chief Minister. Congratulations to all for celebrating Bore Basi Tihar to protect the respect and rights of workers and labourers.

Mayor Safira Sahu said that the Chief Minister has done the work of re-awakening the cultural

heritage of Chhattisgarh which was getting extinct. Bore Baasi Tihar is being celebrated in this center in honour of the male and female workers in the center and the cleanliness didis who help in cleaning the city.

Speaker JMC Kavita Sahu also addressed the programme congratulating all on occasion of Bore Basi Tihar organized in honour of the workers. In-charge Collector and

District Panchayat CEO Prakash Survey said that this festival is being organized since last year in honour of labourers. At the international level, rules, organizations have been formed to protect the interests of workers.

New India is being built with the cooperation of the workers. The state government has given the form of Bore Basi Tihar by adding Chhattisgarhi culture to honor the workers. In the programme, the guests also distributed hand gloves to the sanitation didis and all the present guests and sanitation didis consumed bore-basi.

Mayor distributed bore-basi to the cleanliness sisters. In the program, Mayor Safira Sahu honoured the labourers of the women group members working in Zero Waste Center.

School children showing talent in summer camp



Central Chronicle News

Kondagaon, May 03: Like last year in Kondagaon district, this year also summer camp is being organized for school children in the schools of the district. During the summer camp, school students are enthusiastically participating in creative activities such as painting, dancing, making soft toys, embroidery-weaving etc.

About 1200 children are participating in the said summer camp organized in Swami Atmanand Govt English Medium Schools

(SAGEMS) of different blocks of the district. Positive efforts are being made through summer camps to orient the school children of the district in the direction of moral punishment, environmental education, social awareness under Samagra Shiksha.

In this summer camp school children are getting training in painting, dancing, music, drawing, paintings etc. At present, in the said summer camp organized till May 20. Free training in creative activities and works is being given to these school children by active artists and teachers.

Villagers getting health facility under MHBCS

- In remote forest area of the district

Central Chronicle News

Kondagaon, May 03: Mukhyamantri Haat-

Bazar Clinic Scheme' (MHBCS) is proving to be a boon for the remote areas of the district where health facilities were not accessible till date. Today, people from remote rural areas are getting health

benefits by joining the health scheme. MHBCS vehicle reaches weekly Haat-Bazars in the remote areas of the district and facilitates health check-up and treatment facilities by setting up health camps there. In these haat-bazars, villagers come from far and wide to buy their necessities and get free health benefits along with the shopping. This scheme is providing better health facilities to people in remote areas of the district. Mukhyamantri Haat-



Bazar Clinic provides free check-up and medicines to the people by setting up camps on the weekly Haat-Bazar days in remote areas of the district.

Along with this, health check-up, medical consultation and treatment facilities are provided to children of Haat-School Ashram-Hostels and target children and mothers of Anganwadi Centers.

Along with this, health check-up, medical consultation and treatment facilities are provided to children of Haat-School Ashram-Hostels and target children and mothers of Anganwadi Centers.

Ward residents listened to Modi's 'Maan-ki-Baat'

Central Chronicle News

Jagdalpur, May 03: Veer Savarkar, Bhagat Singh and BJP workers of Civil Line Ward listened to the telecast of 100 episodes of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 'Mann Ki Baat' programme at the booths. After the programme, the beneficiaries benefited from Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana were also felicitated.

Mass listening of 'Mann Ki Baat' programme was organized at booth numbers 144, 146, 152, 151, 148, 150 of Veer Savarkar, Bhagat Singh, Civil Line. In all booths, BJP workers listened to 'Mann Ki Baat' along with the residents of the ward.

Booth's guest Narendra Panigrahi said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi



talks directly to crores of countrymen through 'Mann Ki Baat' programme and also gives the message of being dedicated towards the country while informing them about the works of the Central Government.

Every citizen, including BJP workers, should try to get the maximum benefit of the schemes of the central government, especial-

ly how economically weak families can join the main stream of development.

Rekha Digraskar, Surekha Sahu, Hemkumari Vishal, Gori Pratibha, Panchobai Patel, Jhunu Bisoi, Rasmita Basoi, Hina Khatum, Sarita Yadav, Gulapi Sahu, Nilavati Sahu, Urmila Sahu, Pooja Sahu, Raju Yadav, beneficiaries of Pradhan Mantri

Awas Yojana were honoured.

During this programme, the guests of 'Mann Ki Baat' program Narendra Panigrahi, Vipin Malviya, former corporator Rana Ghosh, councillor Reena Ghosh, Booth President Gajendra Sahu, Rakesh Bisoi, Mani Vikram, Secretary Hemant Tiwari, Vinayak Behra were prominently present in the booth.

Prominent workers of the ward including Chief Sunita Yadav, Samaj Pramukh Sameer Giri, BLO2, Puja Sahu, WhatsApp group Meena Sahu, members Hina Khatum, Urmila Sahu, Anju Bakshi, Gulabi Sahu, Purvi Sawant, Padmani Giri, Gema Sahu, Varisht Dashari were present.

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Chronicle

Encounter between police and Naxalites in forest of Mainpur

Central Chronicle News

Mainpur, May 05: A fierce encounter between naxalites and police took place on Tuesday around 9 am inside Udanti sanctuary of Mainpur, the ultra-naxalite affected area of Gariaband district. Long firing took place between police and naxalites and Amalu Netam was killed and the police recovered 303 rifles and a large quantity of explosives and Maoist material from the spot.

areas of Mainpur development block, Karajhar, Sahebina Kchhar, Gourgaon area were continuously receiving information about the movement of Naxalites for the last few days.

The Inspector General of Police, Raipur Range, Sheikh Arif Hussain and Senior Superintendent of Police, Tukaram Kamble had also inspected the outpost and police station of the area in the past due to it being a Naxalite affected area of Gariaband district, as well as prepared a special strategy to curb Naxalite activities. After preparing a special action plan for patrolling and area domination in Naxalite sensitive areas, the team was sent along with the joint party of Cobra E-30



and CRPF and under the Jungle Jugaad police station area of Udanti Sanctuary, about 38 km from Mainpur.

The armed Maoists, who were continuously ambushed from the east in the forest near the hill near Karajhar Nagesh, started firing indiscriminately on

the police force from different directions. Seeing the increasing pressure and being surrounded, the Naxalites fled under the cover of the forest hill road. After the encounter, the body of a male Maoist in uniform was found by the police party after searching the scene of the

incident along with a No. 303 rifle and materials used by Naxalites.

It may be noted that on April 27, there was an encounter between Naxalites and police personnel in Odisha border of the same Sahebina Kchhar area, in which the Naxalites ran away seeing the police.

Naxal eradication campaign will continue: SP

Senior Superintendent of Police of Gariaband district, Amit Tukaram Kamble while discussing with the journalists said that similar Naxal eradication campaign will continue in future. He said that the Naxalites started firing indiscriminately, in response to which the police team took charge and retaliated in which Naxalites deputy commander Nandlal alias Amlu Netam was killed and the police got a big success.

He told that Sahebina Kchhar, Karajhar, Nagesh being remote forest areas, there were reports of Naxalites coming and going here and after the death of the deputy Naxalite commander today, surely the spirits of Naxalites will be shattered.

DEO seeks clarification from BEO Kasdol

On pending pension cases

Central Chronicle News

Katgi, May 03: On the basis of the complaint made by Nandlal Dewangan, District President of Chhattisgarh State United Teachers Association (CSUTA), regarding non-release of pension to 9 retired teachers within the time limit, the DEO has sought clarification from BEO Kasdol Radhelal Jaiswal.

A letter has been received through the complaint letter Collector Balodabazar, in which a complaint has been made mentioning that the pension case of 09 to 10 teachers has not been resolved till date that the pension case has been deliberately kept on hold by the Block Education Officer.

As per information on last April 19, the District Education Officer, through his letter num-

ber Pension/ Pending/ 2023/ 2110, Balodabazar dated 19/04/2023, in relation to the settlement of pending pension to all the Block Education Officers of the district, Director Public Education, Indravati Bhavan Nava, guidelines were issued in 8 points regarding action in the pension case in one month, but all the BEOs did not issue pension to the retired employees for many months, which is being regarded as a violation of the order of the DEO.

What officer says

Based on the complaint received regarding pension, clarification has been issued to BEO Kasdol, and the answer has been sought within 3 days, if the answer is not satisfactory, correspondence will be sent to the higher office for action. CS Dhruv, District Education Officer, Balodabazar.

Leopard cub found in Ganiyari forest

Central Chronicle News

Fingshwar, May 03: A Leopard cub was found in Ganiyari forest region here and it has caused panic among the residents. As per information, employment guarantee work is going on these days in Ganiyari Gram Panchayat of Fingshwar forest range, just 5 km away from the city.

The cub, very young was found near a pond, and the villagers immediately informed the Forest Department, Fingshwar, about the finding of the leopard cub, through the employment assistant and the sarpanch, as a result of which the Forest Department officials



immediately reached the spot and the leopard cub is kept under their safe custody. SDO Forest Uday Singh Thakur told that as soon as the information was received, the Forest

Department team reached there and under the leadership of Dr. Rakesh Verma from Jungle Safari, inspected the health of the leopard cub. The cub apparently 25

days old, and therefore it is estimated that his mother should also be somewhere around and because he also looks less than 1 month old, if its mother does not come till tomorrow morning, the cub will be shifted on a jungle safari for security reasons, said Suyash Dewan, Forest Officer.

DMO Forest Divisional Officer Mani Vasugan also reached Ganiyari in the afternoon after getting information about finding a leopard cub in the forest and gave appropriate instructions to the officials of the forest department regarding the safety of the cubs and the possibility of its mother being around them.

Legal awareness camp organised for labourers



By DLSA on Int'l Labour Day

Central Chronicle News

Mungeli, May 03: As per instructions by the President District Legal Service Authority (DLSA) District Judge Arvind Kumar Sinha and under guidance of DLSA Secretary Mayank Soni and under leadership of DLSA Defence Council Tikam Chandrakar and in the presence of Dy. Legal and Defence Council Suresh Khusaro, Asst. Legal & Defence Council Swatantra

Tiwari that a legal awareness camp was organised on occasion of International Labour Day at district headquarters and here the labourers working were given information about law & legal aids. The labourers were asked to re-

main aware of their rights. In this Legal Awareness camp, the DLSA's para-legal volunteers viz. Shubham Sharma, Umendra Sahu, Umesh Kashyap, Rupali Dubey and Anil Kumar were present.

NCC cadets clear 'A' certificate exam



Central Chronicle News

Arang, May 02: The result of the NCC 'A' certificate exam of Govt HS

School, Tamasiwani was cent percent. NCC officer of School- Baldau Singh Thakur informed that all the NCC cadets of School

have passed the NCC-A certificate with 'A' grade i.e 90% and above marks and brought laurels to the School.

Thakur informed that the candidates clearing NCC 'A' certificate gets 3 bonus marks on recruitment into any government jobs in the near future. On this achievement of the NCC Cadets, Principal Leela Tolani, NCC Officer Baldau Singh Thakur, Ashutosh Tiwari, Daman Sahu, Ashok Chandrakar, Harishchandra Sahu, Sarpanch Deepika Hemlal

Jangde, Dy. Sarpanch Chahulas Sahu, Indra Gopal Nirmalkar, Bablu Vaishnav, Santosh Sahu, lecture Roshini Dhiwar, Anjana Awade, Sonali Sahu, Rachana Budhwani and entire school staff extended greetings to all the cadets.

Sambalpur Division holds seminar



Central Chronicle News

On 'Mind Management' & 'Harmonious Relationship'

club, Rail Nagar, Sambalpur on 02nd May 2023.

On this occasion, Vineet Singh, Divisional Railway Manager, Sambalpur, joined as chief guest and Sitaram Meena, Retd, IAS and Sister Vidhatri, Engineer, Speaker & Spiritual counsellor of Brahma Kumaris, Sambalpur joined as speaker. Chief Guest Singh said that such seminars will provide an opportunity to

the participants to learn mind management. Speaker BK. Sitaram Meena and Sister Vidhatri enlightened the participants present about the various techniques of mind management and tips to support harmony in relationships.

On this occasion Mrs Anjani Singh, President East Coast Railway Women's Welfare Organisation, Sambalpur, Anand Singh, Addl Divisional Railway Manager, Sambalpur, members of ECoRWWO and all officers participated in the seminar. Jusuf Kabir Ansari, Sr. Divisional Officer, Sambalpur co-ordinated the programme.

Sports player should play with sportsman spirit: Dewangan

Central Chronicle News

Arang, May 03: The cricket fever is in peak in rural areas these days and in line with the IPL cricket tourney, another IPL Cricket competition was organised in Gram Lingadih. In this a large number of villagers and urban players formed their teams and took part. In the finals between Lingadih and Arang, Lingadih won the match.



platforms is indeed appreciable. In any sports tournament, the players should enjoy playing it with sportsman spirit. During this Rinku Chandrakar, representative Janpad member, Jitendra Chandrakar Sarpanch, Garm Chatera; Gopal

Chandrakar, Lalit Didhi, Sarpanch Gram Lingadih; Ramcharan Sahu (Captain); Chabiram Sahu Vice-Captain; Raju Dhruv, Nitesh Sahu, Pawan Omkar, Virendra, Doman, Aswant, Horilal and others were present.

NAME CHANGE

It is informed to the general public that I REKHA DAS W/o NIRMAL DAS Resident of 301, Ward No. 13, Indira Colony, Gihwra, Gihwra, Raipur, Kosrangi (C.G.) Pin - 493225, have changed my old name REKHA DAS W/o NIRMAL DAS, so in future I should be recognized by my new name that is REKHA RANI DAS W/o NIRMAL DAS in all Government and other documents.

REKHA RANI DAS
301, Ward No. 13, Indira Colony, Gihwra, Gihwra, Raipur, Kosrangi (C.G.) Pin - 493225

DEMAND NOTICE

Under Section 13(2) of the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with Rule 3 (1) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.

Sr. No.	Name of the Borrower(s)/ Co-Borrower(s)/ Guarantor(s) / Loan Account No./ Branch	Total Outstanding Dues (Rs.)	NPA Date Sec. 13(2) Notice Date FCL Date	Description of secured asset (immovable property)
1	Rupa Dhruv/ Mannu Dhruv /Dinesh Kumar Dhruv / Legal Heir of Late. Chhotelal Dhruv / RPRR19003514/Raipur.	Rs.1827614/- (Rupees Eighteen Lakh Twenty Seven Thousand Six Hundred Fourteen Only)	08-01-2023 19-04-2023 29-04-2023	In the rights, piece and parcel of immovable property bearing Mauza- Pandritarai, Plot Area 504 Sq. Ft., Guru Govind Singh Ward No.- 34, Khata No 754, Diversified Kharsa No.- 341 and 430/19, PH No.- 109/39/47, R.N.M.- Raipur, Tahsil and District- Raipur. Raipur-492001, Chattisgarh Boundaries:- East: House of Verma, West: House of Yadav, North: House of Verma, South: 15 feet Road
2	Sadhana Singh Rajput (Legal Heir of L.T. Chandraprakash Singh Thakur)/ Fanendra Rajput (Legal Heir of L.T. Chandraprakash Singh Thakur)/ Abhishek Rajput (Legal Heir of L.T. Chandraprakash Singh Thakur)/ Legal Heir of L.T. Chandraprakash Singh Thakur/ RPRDU21095452/ Raipur	Rs.2041391/- (Rupees Twenty Lakh Fourty One Thousand Three Hundred Ninety One Only)	10-08-2022 19-04-2023 29-04-2023	In the rights, piece and parcel of immovable property bearing Kharsa No. 827/2, Admeasuring 0.11 Hectar, PH. No. 10, Mauja-Birjhapur, RNM - Dhamdha, Tehsil - Dhamdha, Durg - 491001, Chattisgarh Boundaries- East- Sellers Remaining Land, West- Land of Rajaram, North- Road, South- Land of Shirnam Sahu

NOTICE

Publication of possession information of Telibandha branch by our office in Raipur and Central Chronicle dated 28.04.2023 has been published by the Borrower- Smt. Mrs. Poonam Choubey husband Mr. Arun Choubey and Mr. Arun Choubey father Mr. Rajendra Prasad Choubey should be read. The Possession Notice of Hari Bhoomi and Central Chronicle Devendra Nagar branch was published on 30.04.2023, in which the Demand Notice dated 02.02.2022 in Devendra Nagar branch to the Borrower- Mr. Ramashray Prasad Sinha S/o. Mr. Ramji Prasad Sinha & Mr. Dinesh Sinha S/o. Mr. Ramashray Prasad Sinha & Mrs. Poonam Sinha W/o. Mr. Ramashray Prasad Sinha (Guarantor) and the Borrower- M/S Sinha Furniture & Sofa House Proprietor Mr. Ramashray Prasad Sinha Demand letter dated 02.02.2022 has been published by mistake, which should be rectified and read as Demand Notice dated 02.02.2023.

Sr. No.	Loan Agreement No./Name of the Borrower(s)/ Co-Borrower(s)/ Co-Applicant Name/ Guarantor Name	Demand Notice Date and Amount	Description of secured asset(s) (Immovable Property/ies)
1	LXDUR00417-180066651 / Lachhmi Bai Verma / Uttam Lal Verma	08-Mar-23/Rs.398763/- (Rupees Three Lac Ninety Eight Thousand Seven Hundred Thirty Three)	Plot No-13, Kh.No.-1617/2, Ph.No.04, Vill-Ghurmika, Tah & Dist-Rajnandgaon (Cg), Near Veterinary Hospital, Durg, Chhattisgarh 491441

Place : Chhattisgarh Date : 04.05.2023

DEMAND NOTICE

Under Section 13(2) of the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with Rule 3 (1) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.

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Place : Chhattisgarh Date : 04.05.2023

BRIEF



SAD President Sukhbir Singh Badal reacts as he immerses ashes of his father and former Punjab chief minister Parkash Singh Badal in Sutlej river, at Kiratpur Sahib in Rupnagar district, Wednesday.

IT searches

Kolkata: Sleuths of the Income Tax department on Wednesday conducted searches at multiple premises, including the residence, linked to West Bengal BJP MLA Krishna Kalyani who after being elected to the assembly announced his allegiance to TMC, an I-T official said.

Penalised

Noida: More than 200 people have been penalised for creating nuisance after consuming liquor in public places across Noida and Greater Noida, police said on Wednesday. The action came during a surprise inspection across all police station areas of the twin-cities in the Gautam Buddha Nagar Police Commissionerate on Tuesday evening, they said.

Mishap

Ranchi: At least four people were killed and 30 others injured after a vehicle on its way to a wedding ceremony overturned in Jharkhand's Gumla district, police said on Wednesday. The accident occurred late on Tuesday night in Dumri area when the pickup van with several wedding guests on board fell on its side after the driver lost control over the vehicle, Gumla Superintendent of Police Ehtesham Waquarib said.

Raid

New Delhi: The Delhi Police began conducting raids at more than 20 locations in the Delhi-National Capital Region on Wednesday morning in search of associates of gangster Kapil Sangwan alias Nandu, officials said.

Arrested

Ballia: A 24-year-old man has been arrested for allegedly abducting and raping a 15-year-old girl in this Uttar Pradesh district, police said on Wednesday. The minor had been kidnapped by the accused, Amarjit Pathak, on Thursday night, they said, adding that her brother lodged a missing complaint on Saturday.

Exposed

New Delhi: The BJP said on Wednesday that the Aam Aadmi Party is getting "exposed" by the day as it asked the party to come clean on Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's alleged involvement in the corruption case involving the city's excise policy.

CEC thanks 103-year-old voter

For using home voting facility

New Delhi, May 03 (PTI):

Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar has spoken to a 103-year-old voter in Karnataka's Belagavi district over the phone to thank him for exercising his franchise using the home voting facility, officials said. Mahadeva Mahalinga Mali recently cast his vote from home at Chikkodi in Belagavi for the Karnataka assembly elections. Voting for the assembly polls in Karnataka will be held on May 10. Home voting takes place before the actual election date in full secrecy in pres-

ence of poll officials and representatives of political parties. Following the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Election Commission has allowed home voting facility to voters who are 80 years and above, and those suffering from the infection or are under quarantine.

CEC Kumar telephoned the centenarian voter on Tuesday to thank him for voting in the state polls.

According to the officials, Kumar told Mahadeva that elderly voters like him are an inspiration for young and urban voters to participate in the festival of democra-

cy. Mahadeva, they said, thanked the CEC for the facility of voting from home.

He also recalled that in the previous elections, he had gone to the polling station in a wheelchair to cast his vote.

Earlier, during the Himachal Pradesh elections last year, the CEC had visited Kalpa and Kinnaur to pay his condolences to the family of Shyam Saran Negi, independent India's first voter who had participated in each and every election and also voted in the state polls using the home voting facility before his demise.

Cong manifesto for K'taka polls triggers war of words

In MP

Bhopal, May 03 (PTI):

The promise to ban the Bajrang Dal by the Congress in its manifesto for the Karnataka Assembly polls has triggered a war of words in Madhya Pradesh, with the state home minister questioning the "Hanuman bhakti" (devotion to Hanuman) of Kamal Nath, the Congress state chief.

In a letter to Nath on Wednesday, Home Minister Narottam Mishra said, "The Congress may go to any extent for the politics of appeasement." In his counter, Nath said that even the Supreme Court is saying

that action should be taken against those spreading hatred.

The Congress, in its election manifesto for the May 10 Karnataka polls, said it will take decisive action as per law including imposing a ban on organisations like Bajrang Dal and PFI and alleged that they were promoting enmity among communities.

Bajrang Dal is a right-wing Hindu outfit and has often courted controversies over vigilante action. Bajrang is another name for Lord Hanuman and the outfit's insignia carries the picture of the deity. "I have written a letter to Kamal Nath.

Agartala, May 03 (PTI):

The first ever international flight service from the airport here to Bangladesh's Chittagong is set to begin next month, Tripura Transport Minister Sushanta Chowdhury said.

Low-cost carrier SpiceJet will introduce its flight service from Maharaja Bir Bikram Airport here to Chittagong by the first week of June as necessary clearances for immigration and customs are expected to be approved by this time, he said during a press conference on Tuesday.

The development came days after Chief Minister



Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar with Assam Governor Gulab Chand Kataria presents a degree to a student during the 21st convocation ceremony of Dibrugarh University, in Dibrugarh, Assam, Wednesday.

'First Int'l flight service from Agartala next month'



Sushanta Chowdhury

Manik Saha met Civil Aviation Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia in Delhi and requested him to boost the air connectivity in the northeastern state.

"In a letter written to the chief minister, Scindia ji on Tuesday informed the steps taken by his min-

istry for boosting air connectivity in Tripura," Chowdhury said, adding, "the central minister also stated that Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS) was asked to resurvey the security arrangement for flight service from MBB airport at night".

Around 143 CISF personnel are additionally required to introduce night flight service from the airport here, he said.

On the demand for introducing direct flights from Agartala to Mumbai and Hyderabad routes, Chowdhury said, "The union minister made it clear that the ministry can't ask any airline to introduce flight service on particular sectors".

Court awards Rs 1.19 cr compensation to family

Of man killed in road accident

Thane, May 03 (PTI):

The Motor Accident Claims Tribunal (MACT) here has awarded a compensation of Rs 1.19 crore to the Mumbai-based family of a 33-year-old man killed in a road accident in 2019. MACT member M M Walimohammed, in the order passed on April 25, directed Gulnar Plastics Pvt Ltd at Silvassa, the owner of the offending vehicle, and its insurer Tata AIG General Insurance Company Ltd, to jointly and severally make the payment of Rs 1,19,64,400 to the claimants within two months along with an interest of seven per cent per annum from the date of filing of the claim. If

they fail, they will have to pay the interest at eight per cent per annum till the realisation of the compensation amount, as per a copy of the order made available on Wednesday.

The claimants in the petition were deceased Shailesh Mishra's wife, minor daughter and parents. Their counsel S L Mane told the MACT that Mishra worked as a manager with a garments company and earned Rs 60,000 salary per month.

The claimants submitted that on June 17, 2019, Mishra was travelling in a car from Kandivali to Andheri on the Western Express Highway in Mumbai.

Wounded tiger Shettar still has photos of Modi & Shah in office

Hubbali (KTK), May 03 (PTI):

Former Karnataka Chief Minister Jagadish Shettar — contesting on a Congress ticket hoping to reclaim his lost self-respect — still has photos of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah hanging on a wall in his home-office and says it is not good to remove them.

The photos adorn the wall although he is hurt the BJP chose not to pick him for the May 10 assembly elections. Having represented Hubli-Dharwad Central since 1994 on a BJP ticket, Shettar, however claimed the saffron party had no "address" earlier there and that he built it since then, making it a "Shettar vs Congress" battle ever since. After severing his decades-old ties



Jagadish Shettar

with the saffron party, Shettar now in his last leg of political career puts a Congress flag on his car and sets out for campaigning along with the party workers. Trying to put the past aside, Shettar is meeting supporters and party workers at his home-office sitting in his regular sofa with two photos of Modi and Shah still hung on the

'Won't remove them'

Trying to put the past aside, Shettar is meeting supporters and party workers at his home-office sitting in his regular sofa with two photos of Modi and Shah still hung on the wall behind. In an interview while being seated on the same chair, Shettar asked, "what is so surprising about it," when queried why he has not removed the photos after exiting BJP. He said: "Immediately after shifting from one party to another, removing photos of earlier leaders is not a good thing. I cannot do that."

In an interview to PTI while being seated on the same chair, Shettar asked, "what is so surprising about it," when queried why he has not removed the photos after exiting BJP. He said: "Immediately after shifting from one party to another, removing photos of earlier leaders is not a good thing. I cannot do that."

In the past, Shettar and his wife have said several times they have respect for Modi and Shah. Stating this would be his last assembly election, the six-time MLA said, "this election is a fight for my self-respect, not for political aspirations. As my self-respect was damaged, I joined the Congress for my own peace without putting condi-

tions," he added. BJP should have given an honourable exit for him by fielding him from here for the last time. "It did not happen due to General Secretary (Organisation) B L Santhosh who pushed for a ticket for his close associate and did all this drama," he claimed. Shettar further said the poll ticket was denied also because there was apprehension he may claim number one position among Lingayats after former chief minister B S Yediyurappa.

Asked if he was facing difficulty in convincing voters as a Congress candidate now, he admitted facing some "embarrassment" in the beginning. Gradually, voters are realising when told he was denied a BJP ticket without any reason.

Transition from Coal to Renewable Energy Requires Strong Skilling Ecosystem



Prof. Sunil Goyal

Coal Miners Day in India is celebrated every year on May 4 to mark the contribution and sacrifices of coal miners. This day is dedicated to the workers who gave up their lives on the job, to honour their accomplishments and remember the hardships and tragedies that these individuals have to bear with all their lives.

With a population of more than 1.4 billion, India is the third-largest energy-consuming country in the world. It is also the third-largest emitter of greenhouse gases in the world, after China and the US. In 2016, India had ratified the Paris Agreement a year after it pledged its commitment through in-

dependently set Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC). India pledged a reduction in the emission intensity of its GDP by 33-35%. The NDCs also targeted to increase the share of the non-fossil fuel-based energy resources to contribute 40% of India's installed electric power capacity by 2030. Additionally, in the light of the recent 26th session of the Conference of the Parties (COP26) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) held in Glasgow, United Kingdom (COP26), India has re-announced its commitment to mitigating climate change impacts and announced 2070 as its net-zero target year. To achieve this target, updated short term targets such as 500 GW renewable energy installed capacity by 2030, non-fossil-based sources contributing 50% of India's energy needs by 2030 and reducing the carbon emissions by 45% by 2030, will collaboratively drive India's efforts to-

wards green economy initiatives.

Currently, India's power sector is one of the most diversified one in the world, with a mix of conventional resources like coal, lignite, natural gas, oil, hydro, and viable non-conventional resources like solar, nuclear, wind and biomass. However, thermal power generation by coal accounts for approximately 62% of the total generation capacity and with increasing energy demands, the dependence on coal is only expected to increase in the coming years.

Thus, India must deal with the environmental externalities linked to the production and use of coal — its ecosystem is affected by mining, CO2 emissions associated with coal use and impact on the environment at different stages of production. However, India has a dual challenge ahead of it — reducing its greenhouse gas emissions and doing while being least discomfiting to the population associated

with the thermal sector. Indian energy policies are propelling a transition from conventional to clean fuel-based energy generation. The Government of India aims to target 500GW of Renewable Energy (RE) capacity by 2030, including a short-term goal of 175 GW of installed RE capacity by 2022. This is one of the most ambitious renewable energy programs anywhere in the world. Interventions by the government like low taxes and subsidies providing cost competitiveness vis-à-vis thermal power generation and stringent environmental policies to reduce greenhouse emissions are further accelerating this transition.

As energy efficiency is receiving more attention, India's traditional thermal power plants and old coal mines are becoming a cause of concern. Coal India Limited, which accounts for the country's 80% coal output, has recently closed a staggering number of loss-making

mines: 80 out of 350 mines. These units are mainly concentrated in five states— West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, and Maharashtra. Further, the retirement of old and non-profitable coal-based units totalling 25,252 MW is expected for the period 2022-30.

The transition of the rapidly rising share of renewable energy and the long shrinking coal industry will bring economic and financial stress to people involved in the coal value chain. Coal mines create over 7.25 lakh direct jobs and many more indirect jobs.

With the retirement of old coal plants and shutting down of mines (especially the underground mines), over 1.1 lakh persons are at immediate risk of loss of livelihood in the five key states listed above. Most of them are blue-collar workers with poor levels of education and a low transferable skill set. Apart from direct workers, the entire economy of

mining districts revolves around coal-related activities and communities have relied on it for generations.

This introduces the concept of just transition, to address the economic vulnerabilities due to the potential loss of livelihood of the coal mine workers, which necessitates the regions that are undergoing energy transition are also paying enough impetus on facilitating economic diversification and livelihood promotion for the miners in the alternate industries. The just transition to be actualized needs to package interventions and programs that will enable the affected miners to gain new skills and resources to diversify themselves out of the coal mining industry.

Strong skilling ecosystem for the group population of this mono-industry of coal mining, dependent on coal for livelihood in one way or another, is needed to fuel transition from coal to renewable en-

Mumbai police bust ring of cybercriminals

12th pass mastermind made more than Rs 5 cr a day

Mumbai, May 03 (PTI):

Mumbai police have exposed a ring of cybercriminals that stole money from people from across the country by posing as police personnel and arrested its kingpin, who has studied till Class 12 and used to do transactions of more than Rs 5 crore a day in his accounts, an official said on Wednesday.

Mastermind Shrinivas Rao Dadi (49), who has sound technical knowledge despite limited education, was taken into custody by a team of Bangur Nagar police station from a plush hotel in Hyderabad, the official said.

Besides Dadi, police also arrested four more members of his gang, including two from neighbouring Thane and as many from Kolkata, he said.

Dadi pretended to run a real estate business and used to communicate only through the Telegram app. Police have so far frozen 40 bank accounts used by Dadi and recovered cash of Rs 1.5 crore from him, the official said.

Explaining the modus operandi of the cyber fraudsters, the official said that Dadi and his accomplices would call people, mostly women, posing as police officers and tell them that cops have found drugs or weapons in a courier sent by them, he said.

Transition from Coal to Renewable Energy Requires Strong Skilling Ecosystem

ergy in India. For this transition to happen smoothly from conventional to clean fuel-based energy generation, it will be imperative to protect the interests of coal mine workers through a holistic approach. There is a need to formulate a Skill Action Plan to address their economic vulnerabilities and have a reskilling framework designed to ensure their rehabilitation so as to obtain gainful employment elsewhere. Entrepreneurship development and promoting MSMEs will be the key factors in reviving and diversifying the economy of coal-dependent industry towns.

(Author is an Eminent Social Scientist, Columnist, and presently posted as Dean and Chairman - Board of Studies at Dr. B. R. Ambedkar University of Social Sciences, Dr. Ambedkar Nagar (MHOW), Madhya Pradesh. Views are personal. Email gasspub@gmail.com)

Teenage boy kills 8 children, guard at school in Belgrade

Belgrade, May 03 (AP):

A teenage boy opened fire at a school in Serbia's capital Wednesday, killing eight children and a school guard, police said. Six more children and a teacher were injured and hospitalised.

Police identified the shooter by his initials, K.K., and said he had opened fire with his father's gun. He was arrested in the school yard, police said. A statement identified him as a student at the school in central Belgrade who was born in 2009.

Police said they received a call about the shooting at the Vladislav Ribnikar primary school around 8:40 a.m. Primary schools in



Police block streets around the Vladislav Ribnikar school in Belgrade, Serbia, Wednesday, May 3. A teenage boy opened fire early Wednesday in a school in central Belgrade, killing 8 children and a guard.

Serbia have eight grades, starting with first grade.

"I was able to hear the shooting. It was non-stop," a student who was in a sports class downstairs when the gunfire erupted. "I didn't know what was happening. We were receiving some messages on the phone."

Unlike in the United States, mass shootings in Serbia and in the wider Balkan region are extremely rare; none were reported at schools in recent years. In the last mass shooting, a Balkan war veteran in 2013 killed 13 people in a central Serbian village.

Experts, however, have repeatedly warned of the number of weapons left over in the country after the wars of the 1990s. They also note that decades-long instability stemming from the conflicts as well as the ongoing economic hardship could trigger such outbursts.

Local media footage from the scene showed commotion outside the school as police removed the suspect, whose head was covered as officers led him to a car parked in the street.

The student who heard the shooting, who was identified only by her initials, E.M., because of her age, described the suspect as a "quiet guy" who "looked nice."

India emerging as favourable destination to conduct global clinical trials

Washington, May 03 (PTI):

India has the potential to increase global clinical trials in the country by five times in the coming years, a report has said, with experts highlighting the significant opportunities for biopharma companies to leverage India's rich diversity and robust healthcare infrastructure to develop innovative treatments. The joint report by the USA India Chamber of Commerce & PwC India titled, "Clinical Trial opportunities in India" which will be released at the virtual edition of the 17th annual BioPharma & Healthcare Summit 2023 to be held on Wednesday in Boston also indicates that through several key drivers, India is emerging as a favourable destination to conduct clinical trials. According to the report, the private sector is a well-suited channel for the top biopharma to conduct more efficient clinical trials with easier and faster access to investigators and patients. According to the report, India has the poten-

tial to increase global clinical trials in the country by five times in the coming years.

Indian states with high disease prevalence (e.g., cancer) also have the most number of tier-1 cities, with advanced medical infrastructure and availability of investigators. Targeting these states can provide biopharma companies with faster access to patients, sites, and investigators. The total number of investigators has increased by twice between 2015 and 2020, with the majority of the increase occurring in the internal medicine and oncology specialisations.

However, the growth in the number of investigators is largely restricted to tier-1 and 2 cities, the report said. While the top 20 pharma activity for the major therapy classes in India has remained largely constant in the last decade, growth opportunities exist across key diseases (e.g., pain, epilepsy, cervical cancer) and orphan diseases (thalassemia, Duchenne Muscular

Dystrophy), it said. India has an overall clinical trial participation of three per cent but contributes upwards of 15 per cent to the global burden of most high prevalent diseases (e.g., respiratory infections, cardiovascular, diabetes, cervical cancer), representing an untapped potential for top pharma, the report said.

Top biopharma companies should align their strategy towards tier-1 cities (e.g., Mumbai, Delhi, Bengaluru, Chennai) where the higher bed capacity, number of doctors, and presence of tertiary care multi-city hospitals can support enablement efforts of running faster and more efficient clinical trials, it said.

"This year, with India on track to become the world's most populous country, our responsibility to ensure its people benefit from the innovations that improve human health has never been greater," said Andrew Plump, President of R&D, Takeda and Chair, USAIC BioPharma & Healthcare Summit.

India does not adhere to IPCA protocols, says US report

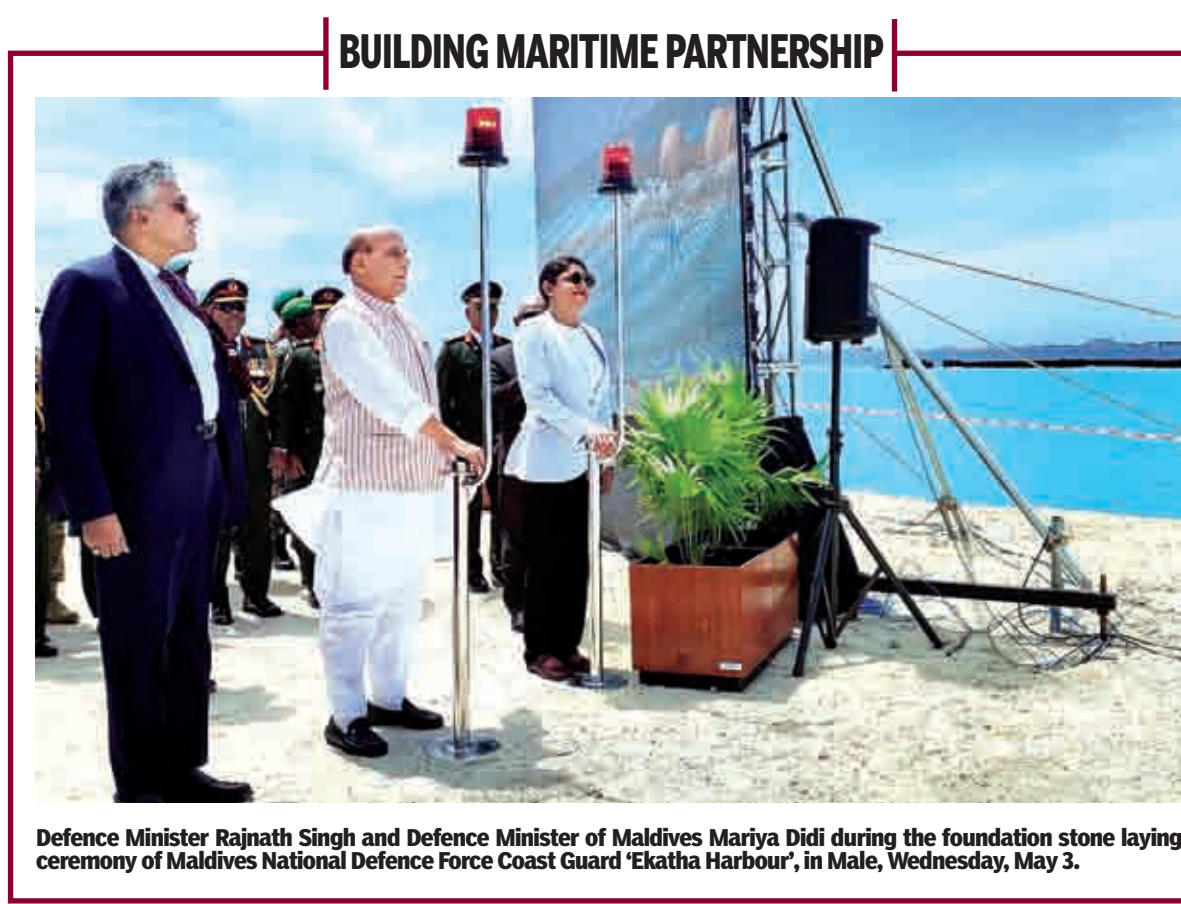
Washington, May 03 (PTI):

India is among the 14 countries that do not adhere to any protocols concerning international parental child abduction (IPCA), according to a United States report.

The Department of State's 2023 annual report on IPCA that was submitted to the US Congress on Tuesday was referring to a pattern of non-compliance.

"India does not adhere to any protocols with respect to international parental child abduction. In 2022, India continued to demonstrate a pattern of non-compliance. Specifically, the competent authorities in India persistently failed to work with the Department of State to resolve abduction cases," it said.

"As a result of this failure, 65 per cent of requests for the return of abducted children remained unresolved for more than 12 months," the report added. The Hague Convention on



Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and Defence Minister of Maldives Mariya Didi during the foundation stone laying ceremony of Maldives National Defence Force Coast Guard 'Ekatha Harbour', in Male, Wednesday, May 3.

Pak govt, PTI agree to hold same-day elections across country

Islamabad, May 03 (PTI):

Pakistan's coalition government and former prime minister Imran Khan's party made "big progress" after they agreed to hold general elections in the entire country on the same day but still differed on the date of the polls.

The decision was taken in overnight parleys to end a deadlock over the timing of provincial and federal elections, an issue that has rocked the country's politics for months.

The talks were being held in the backdrop of the controversy with Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) seeking early polls - particularly in Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa where assemblies were dissolved in January - and the government maintaining that provincial and federal elections across the country be held on the same

● Date yet to be decided

rowed down on the date... but we have yet to reach an agreement," he said, adding that both sides would consult their leadership on the matter.

He termed the consensus on holding one-day elections in the country as "big progress".

The minister said both sides have shown flexibility and if they continue to work towards a resolution with sincerity, "the third stage (finalisation of the election date), which will be the final stage, will also be successful".

However, he added, a consensus was yet to be reached on the date of the elections. "We have nar-

rowed down on the date... but we have yet to reach an agreement," he said, adding that both sides would consult their leadership on the matter.

He termed the consensus on holding one-day elections in the country as "big progress".

SOUTH EAST CENTRAL RAILWAY CANCELLATION

(1) Tender Notice No. Dy.CE- G S U - R - T - 05 - 23 - 24, Dt. 07.04.2023
Tenders issued vide tender notice above is hereby cancelled due to administrative reasons.
Dy. Chief Engineer
Gati Shakti Unit, Raipur

PR/RGSU/AP/32
South East Central Railway @secrail

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT, DURG CIRCLE DURG (C.G.)

Durg, Dated: 25.04.2023

e-Procurement Tender Notice (1st Call)

Online tenders in form "A" percentage rate basis are invited on behalf of Governor of Chhattisgarh dated 15-05-2023.

NIT No. / System No.	Name of work	P.A.C. (Rs. In lacs.)
23/132455	Providing and Fixing of Gantry Sign Board, Road Marking and other Road Appurtenances under sub. Dn. no.1 Durg (Khopil-Dhaurabhata 7.70km, Risama-Matwan 1.90km, Joratarai-Moreed 1.65km, Hanoda-Dhanora 2.00km)	86.82
24/132458	Providing and Fixing of Gantry Sign Board, Road Marking and other Road Appurtenances under sub. Dn. no.1 Durg	73.61
25/132465	Construction of Bhamtola to Telibandha Road Length 1.45 Km. at Dist-Rajnandgaon	131.18
26/132467	Construction of Kabirdham Main Road to Near Rice Mill Pusera Road i/c Culverts Length 1.60 Km. at Dist-Kabirdham	156.20
27/132470	Construction of Gram Panchayat Paneka to Bypass (NH) Road Length 1.60 Km. i/c Culverts Dist-Rajnandgaon.	189.47

Note:-
1- NIT No 23 & 24 are under Public Works Department Durg Division Durg, NIT No 25 & 27 are under Public Works Department Rajnandgaon Division Rajnandgaon, NIT No 26 are under Public Works Department Kawandha Division Kawandha.
2- General Conditions, detailed NIT, Tender documents & other information of the above construction work downloaded from the Eprocurement web portal or departmental website <http://proc.cgstate.gov.in>
3- NIT No. & Name of the Work should be essentially mentioned on the envelope through the Registered Post/Speed Post in this office.

Superintending Engineer
P.W.D., Durg Circle Durg (C.G.)
Tel. 0788-2210876

POSSESSION NOTICE

(As per Appendix IV read with rule 8(1) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002)

Whereas, The undersigned being the Authorised Officer of the Bank of Baroda under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(2) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a Demand Notice to the following borrowers / guarantors calling upon the Borrowers to repay the amount mentioned in the respective notices within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.

The under mentioned Borrower / Guarantor having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrowers/Guarantors and the Public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him under sub-section (4) of section 13 of the Act read with Rule 8 and under section 14 of the Act of the Security Interest Enforcement Rules, 2002.

S. No.	Branch Name/Ph.No.	Name of Borrower / Guarantor	Description of Property	Demand Notice Date, Amount & Symbolic / Physical Possession Date
01	Rasmada Branch Durg 9752410595	M/s A.V.S. ENTERPRISES PROP. MR. AKHIL NAYYAR S/O MR. AVINASH NAYYAR Infront of Sukla Bhawan, Kelabari, Durg, Dist.- Durg (C.G.)	All that part and parcel of the property consisting Lease Hold Industrial Plot No 49, Zone A, total area 804 Sq Mtr, Bora Industrial growth Center Village Rasmada Dist Durg Pincode-491001. Bounded: On the North by Plot No. 48, On the South by: Plot No. 50, On the East by: Cross Street No. 01, On the West by Plot No. 24.	21.01.2023 Rs. 43,02,254.59 + interest + other charges 28.04.2023 Symbolic

The Borrowers / Guarantors / Mortgagees in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the above mentioned property and any dealings with the property/ies will be subject to the charge of Bank of Baroda for above mentioned amount interest and other charges thereon.

The Borrower's attention is invited to provision of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.

Date: 04.05.2023, Place: Bhillai, Chhattisgarh
Authorised Officer, Bank of Baroda

AFFIDAVIT

I Sushila Devi, age-36, W/o Rajesh Yadav, R/o Village Kewlara, Post Pachpedi, District Bilaspur, (C.G.) 495551, address- Mana Camp, Raipur Tehsil and District Raipur, do hereby make the following statements:

1. That in my Aadhar Card bearing No. 2735-6202-4363, my name is registered as Sushila Devi.
2. That after my marriage in all my government documents and others my name got registered as Sushila Kure.
3. That I want to get my name changed to Sushila Devi W/o Rajesh Yadav in all the government documents and others.

I am submitting this affidavit in support of the same before concerned authorities.

CERTIFY
I do hereby certify that the statements made above from Sl. No. 1-3 are true to the best of my knowledge and I am signing in full senses before the authorities.

Date: 18/04/2023 DEPONENT

SOUTH EAST CENTRAL RAILWAY E-TENDER NOTICE FOR MISCELLANEOUS WORK

Sri.No. (1) Tender No. SECR-HQ-Engg-BL-23-24-08

Work: Provision of side pathway, Camber/Centre inspection platform for PSC Girder and Jacking beam at various bridges under the jurisdiction of SSE/Bridge/Raipur in Raipur Division. * Tender Value: Rs. 4,39,16,553.57/-, EMD: Rs.3,69,600/-

Sri.No. (2) Tender No. SECR-HQ-Engg-BL-23-24-09

Work: Provision of side pathway, Camber/Centre inspection platform for PSC Girder and Jacking beam at various bridges under the jurisdiction of SSE/Bridge/Bilaspur in Bilaspur Division. * Tender Value: Rs. 4,69,97,225.21/-, EMD: Rs. 3,85,000/-
Bidding start Date: 15.05.2023. Tender closing date Time: 16:30 Hrs on 29.05.2023

For further details for the above work, please contract office of the DY.CE/Bridge/BSP or website www.reps.gov.in.
Dy. CE/Bridge
CPR/1040 S.E.C. Railway, Bilaspur
South East Central Railway @secrail

कार्यालय नगर पालिक निगम विलासपुर (छ.ग.) ई-प्रोक्वोरमेंट संघोचित निविदा सूचना

क्र. 02/न.पा.नि./स्थापना शाखा/2023-24 दिनांक 01/05/2023
नगर पालिक निगम विलासपुर के विभिन्न विभाग अंतर्गत कर्मचारी उपलब्ध करवाये जाना हेतु ऑनलाइन निविदा जारी किया गया था, अपरिहार कारणां से ऑनलाइन निविदा जमा करने की तिथि 15/05/2023 के स्थान पर 24/05/2023 पड़ा जावे।
स्थापना
न.पा.नि., विलासपुर (छ.ग.)
Green City, Clean City, Dream City.

NAVAL DIPLOMACY



Chief of Naval Staff Admiral R Hari Kumar meets Singapore's Chief of Navy Sean Wat, in Singapore.

US defence contractors want deeper cooperation with Taiwan

Taipei, May 03 (AP):

A delegation of United States defence contractors and a former senior leader of the U.S. Marine Corps pledged the beginning of deeper cooperation with Taiwan on Wednesday.

Taiwan has faced increasing pressure from China in the years since Tsai Ing-wen was elected president. China, which claims the island as its territory, has poached Taiwan's diplomatic allies and sent military planes and ships toward the island on a near-daily basis. It also held large-scale drills modeling a blockade and simulated strikes on important targets on the island twice within the past year. Speaking at a public forum in Taiwan's capital Taipei, retired Lt.

Gen. Steven Rudder said the U.S. wants to be part of the defense capabilities of Taiwan and improve the supply chain resilience of the island. He also emphasized how critical the island's position is for security. "For the Asia-Pacific, I would offer there's not another more important area in the world to maintain peace," Rudder said Wednesday morning at the Taiwan-U.S. Defense Industry Forum. "So (when) you hear a free and open Indo-Pacific, this is a small part of ensuring that shared vision remains intact."

"We want to be part of the self-defense capabilities of Taiwan," he said.

Rudder, who was in charge of Marines operations in the Pacific, said the visit was within the

U.S.' multiple agreements with China and laws related to Taiwan, such as the Taiwan Relations Act, which requires Washington to ensure Taiwan can defend itself. The legislation was enacted decades ago when the U.S. administration first recognized China and broke off official diplomatic relations with Taipei.

The event was co-hosted by a trade group from the U.S. and another from Taiwan as the public-facing portion of the defense contractors' visit.

Although it's unclear whether the groups will sign specific deals, local media reported that the United States was looking at cooperation in production of certain products. Part of that cooperation would be ensuring both

sides can work together to use the weapons systems Taiwan bought alongside the island's existing self-produced defense capabilities. Washington is Taipei's largest unofficial partner and the supplier of a vast majority of Taiwan's defense purchases. "I'll say it very simply: The endgame is joint interoperability," Rudder said. A group of about 20 activists protested outside. "American warmongers are a scourge on Taiwan," read one of the banners.

"They sell all sorts of outdated ammunition to Taiwan and make tens of billions of U.S. dollars from Taiwan every year," said David T. Chien, vice-chair of the Blue Sky Action Alliance, which supports unification with China.



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Affordable Healthcare Access

National Medical Device Policy 2023

India's healthcare system is facing multiple challenges, and one of the significant issues is the country's import dependence for medical devices. The recently approved National Medical Device Policy 2023 by the Union Cabinet is a step in the right direction to address this concern. The policy aims to reduce India's reliance on imported medical devices and promote domestic production while ensuring quality control and keeping prices affordable. Currently, India accounts for only 1.5% of the global medical device market, and the government hopes that the new policy will help the sector grow from \$11 billion to \$50 billion. This growth is crucial to improve healthcare access and affordability for all Indians. However, achieving this goal is not without challenges. The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Health and Family Welfare has pointed out the lack of high-end technology and raw materials, which makes manufacturing medical devices domestically more expensive than importing them. The new policy seeks to address these challenges by promoting research and development and establishing Centres of Excellence in academic and research institutions. It also supports the development of a skilled workforce for high-end manufacturing and research, which is crucial for producing future-ready MedTech human resources. The policy also encourages partnerships with foreign academic and industry organizations to develop medical technologies in line with the world market. One of the most critical areas of policy intervention is the creation of a Single Window Clearance System for Licensing of Medical Devices. This will help ease the process of doing research and business while enhancing the role of the Bureau of Indian Standards and designing a coherent pricing regulation. The Production Linked Incentive scheme for medical devices and the medical devices park being set up will play a crucial role in the implementation of the new policy. However, specific challenges need to be addressed to achieve the policy's objectives. The Parliamentary Standing Committee has highlighted the high import dependence of electronic equipment, implants, and surgical instruments. These segments include highly essential and widely used high-end technology devices such as CT Scanners, MRI, Ultrasound, and X-Ray machines, knee and hip implants, dental fixtures, cancer diagnostics, and other sophisticated surgical instruments. The lack of a robust Research and Development infrastructure and trained workforce for manufacturing high-end technology devices is also a concern. The Orthopedic Implants Manufacturing Association has highlighted the adverse impact of reduced import duties on the indigenous manufacturing industry, which is facing tough competition from imported products. The association has also flagged the dependence of the industry on the expensive import of two raw materials of orthopaedic implants- stainless steel and titanium, due to the absence of indigenous manufacturers. To achieve the policy's objectives, it is crucial to address these specific challenges faced by Indian medical device industries. The government should also ensure strict quality control measures to prevent substandard medical devices from reaching the market. While industry bodies have expressed concerns about the criminalization of manufacturing defects, public health should be the topmost concern. The new policy has laid the roadmap for the growth of the medical device sector. However, the larger objective of lowering healthcare costs for all Indians should top the chart of priorities. The policy should ensure that affordable medical devices reach the last mile, where they are needed the most. The National Medical Device Policy 2023 is a step in the right direction towards achieving affordable healthcare for all Indians. The policy addresses the challenges faced by the medical device sector and promotes domestic production while ensuring strict quality control measures. However, specific challenges need to be addressed, and the policy should focus on making medical devices affordable for all Indians. The government should ensure the policy's effective implementation and close monitoring to achieve its objectives.

Ecosystem Restoration

A Key Solution to Biodiversity Loss and Climate Change

Dr. Krishna Kumar Vepakomma

Biodiversity is under threat from several factors, including habitat loss, harvesting, pollution, climate change, and invasive species. This decline in the variety of life on Earth is a significant cause for concern, as human activities have caused a 69% reduction in the populations of mammals, birds, amphibians, fishes, and reptiles worldwide in the last 50 years. Urgent action is needed to combat this loss, and effective conservation strategies such as better land management and protected areas are being developed and implemented. The Montreal-Kunming Agreement, signed by over 190 countries under the UN Convention on Biological Diversity, is a significant achievement for biodiversity preservation. The agreement establishes a Global Biodiversity Framework with a global target of conserving at least 30% of lands, inland waters, and oceans worldwide. It emphasizes the importance of carrying out conservation work in a way that respects the rights and knowledge of Indigenous peoples and local communities and recognizes their leadership. Ecosystem restoration is a process of aiding the recovery of damaged or degraded ecosystems, which has gained popularity as a solution to the biodiversity crisis. Countries worldwide have pledged to restore over 1 billion hectares of nature by 2030, and the United Nations has declared the 2020s the "Decade on Restoration." However, the challenges of ecosystem restoration are significant, and the process is not straightforward. Climate change is one of the biggest obstacles to large-scale ecosystem restoration projects. As the planet continues to heat up, regions are changing rapidly and unpredictably, making it challenging to restore ecosystems to their previous state. The United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration, launched last year, has sparked a rise in restoration efforts. Restoring ecosystems can reduce poverty and inequality, support livelihoods, and improve the health of millions globally. Ecosystem restoration will be the key to success or failure over the coming decades. It takes many forms, depending on the ecosystem and how badly degraded it is. Passive rewilding, which simply means getting out of the way and letting nature do its thing, is at one end of the spectrum. Conservation and restoration of lands and waters, especially of forests, peatlands, seagrass, and mangroves, could help keep global temperatures within safer limits by delivering a significant portion of the emissions reductions needed.

(Professor & Principal (Retd.), Rajeev Nagar, Hyderabad. Views are personal)

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@editorcentralchronicle@gmail.com.

NATURE'S CANVAS



Clouds hover in the sky, in Jammu, Wednesday, May 3.

Government e-Marketplace: What a GeM!



PIYUSH GOYAL



The Government e Marketplace (GeM) crossed a historic milestone at the end of 2022-23: Central and State governments, official agencies, public sector undertakings and cooperatives purchased goods and services worth more than Rs 2 lakh crore (\$24 billion) through more than 50 lakh online transactions in a single financial year - a testimony to Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's commitment to inclusive development, transparency, efficiency and corruption-free governance.

GeM is truly a gem that has replaced the obsolete, Directorate General of Supplies & Disposals (DGS&D). Befittingly, Vanijya Bhawan, the new office building of the Commerce and Industry Ministry, has been built on the land once occupied by DGS&D. At the foundation stone laying ceremony of the building, Prime Minister Shri Modi rightly observed: "Now this more-than-100 years old organization has been closed and it has been replaced by a body based on digital technology -- Government-e-Marketplace. GeM has completely revolutionized the way the government procures the goods required by it."

GeM has grown spectacularly since it was set up in August 2016. The total value of transactions on

the portal almost doubled in 2022-23 to Rs 2.01 lakh crore from Rs 1.07 lakh crore in the previous fiscal. The trail-blazing journey began with business worth Rs 422 crore in 2016-17. The portal was launched to align public procurement of goods and services with the Prime Minister's mission of 'Minimum Government and Maximum Governance' and his strategy of using technology to make government systems honest, effective and accessible to all.

GeM's transparent practices such as competitive bidding have helped government departments and undertakings save about Rs 40,000 crore of taxpayer's money. Such initiatives have helped the Modi government in substantially raising welfare expenditure without compromising on fiscal health.

In many ways, GeM is a significant symbol of how governance has changed after people emphatically voted for Prime Minister Shri Modi-led BJP government. People were fed up with the previous regime that was perpetually embroiled in corruption charges, while for many of its ministers a daily dose of shame and scandal on the front pages of newspapers was a way of life.

In this context, GeM's significance goes far beyond its phenomenal growth in financial terms, which itself would make any e-commerce

major jealous. The new system replaces age-old manual processes that were riddled with inefficiencies and corruption. Government procurement used to be opaque, time-consuming, cumbersome and prone to corruption and cartelization. Only a privileged few could break through huge entry barriers. Buyers had no choice but to purchase sub-standard goods at high, non-negotiable rates from the privileged, often unscrupulous suppliers, while potential sellers had to run from pillar to post, completely at the mercy of the facilitating agency, to get empaneled, and then to get timely payments.

In contrast, there is hardly any human interface in vendor registration, order placement and payment processing through the technology-driven platform. At every step, SMS and e-mail notifications are sent to the buyer, the head of her/his organization, paying authorities and sellers.

The paperless, cashless and faceless GeM gives buyers the freedom to buy goods and services directly from unlimited sellers at competitive rates. This new, competitive system - another game-changer that is based on Prime Minister Shri Modi's Digital India initiative - has transformed public procurement and given MSMEs and small businessmen access to sought-after government orders.

Hard data and insightful third-party analyses testify GeM's success. An independent study conducted by the World Bank and IIM Lucknow estimated an average 10% savings from the median price. The World Bank noted that with the addition of every new bidder, savings increased by 0.55%. A study by Boston Consulting Group (BCG) showed that annual cost savings in 2021-22 were in the range of 8%-

11%. Prime Minister Shri Modi appropriately summed up GeM's objective as "Minimum Price and Maximum Ease, Efficiency and Transparency".

The portal is home to more than 11,500 product categories with over 32 lakh listed products. It has over 280 service categories with more than 2.8 lakh service offerings. GeM is catering to diverse procurement needs of more than 67,000 government buyer organizations, which have together saved about Rs 40,000 crore with the help of GeM which gives equal opportunity to all buyers and sellers.

About 60% of orders by value from states have gone to micro and small enterprises. States have also placed orders worth Rs 1,109 crore on start-ups, demonstrating the ease of access for the relatively underprivileged business people, including those in far-flung areas.

Given the scale and complexities involved in realigning the old, deeply entrenched procurement processes, this is one of the largest change-management exercises globally, and in line with how Prime Minister Shri Modi's government functions - leading the world in vaccination, distribution of free food, adoption of LED bulbs, building renewable energy capacity, and the dramatic growth in digital payments, to name a few.

The portal's transformational success bodes well for the entire economy because the 'gem' is magnifying efficiency and integrity during the Amrit Kaal as India marches to become a developed country by 2047 under the decisive and visionary leadership of Prime Minister Shri Modi.

(Writer is a cabinet minister of the Government of India. Views are personal.)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Employ new technology

A gas leak in the crowded Giaspura neighbourhood of the industrial city of Ludhiana has tragically claimed 11 lives, including those of children, and sent several people to the hospital. The state investigation team not yet determined what the gas was or how it formed, but all indications point to it escaping from a sewer. The modernization of India's economy, as well as the expansion of manufacturing, must be accompanied by more effective regulation. New mechanisms for monitoring and surveillance that utilise cheap and readily available data connections and other technological advances need to be piloted and evaluated. The government cannot long postpone a reckoning when it comes to regulating toxic pollution.

Vijay Kumar H K, Raichur, Karnataka

Curb hate speech

The Supreme Court's recent directive to governments on hate speech is a much-needed move in the right direction. The order to take suo motu action against those who spread hatred, even without any complaint, must be followed in letter and spirit by the state authorities. Immediate action against hate-mongers, regardless of their religion, would serve as a warning to others and help preserve India's secular fabric. Hate speeches during religious events are deeply offensive and must be curbed. The police should be proactive in registering FIRs, making arrests, filing charge sheets, and expediting the trial to eliminate this menace. It is time for the state authorities to take a stand and ensure that hate speech is not tolerated in any form. Let us work together to promote harmony and unity among all communities in India.

Suresh Verma, Korba

Negligent Authorities

The recent gas leak in Ludhiana is a tragic reminder of the urgent need for safety measures to be put in place by local authorities. It is unacceptable that hazardous chemicals continue to be dumped into sewage pipes in densely populated areas, causing toxic gases to form and endangering the lives of citizens. The loss of life resulting from such negligence is devastating and leaves a void in the families of those affected. We cannot continue to let such incidents occur due to the lack of proper safety protocols. It is the responsibility of the authorities to take swift and effective action to prevent future tragedies. Let us demand accountability and action to ensure the safety of our communities.

MK Nair, Raipur

Make driving your confidence not your apprehension



Prerna Boorakoti

Driving is a fundamental skill that everyone should learn, and it is particularly crucial for women in today's world. Women are excelling in all aspects of life, from academics to sports, and are proving that they are capable of achieving anything they set their minds to. Learning how to drive is one such area where women have made remarkable progress, and it is a skill that is essential for their independence and self-sufficiency.

Driving is not just a means of transportation; it is a way to gain freedom and confidence. When women learn to drive, they can go anywhere they want, anytime they want, without having to rely on any-

one else. They can take their children to school, go shopping, attend social events, or travel to other cities or countries independently. Driving gives women a sense of empowerment and control over their lives. Moreover, learning how to drive is becoming increasingly important for women in the workplace. Many jobs require employees to have a valid driver's license and the ability to drive themselves to work or travel for business purposes.

Women who know how to drive have a significant advantage in the job market, as it makes them more independent and flexible. However, driving is not just about getting behind the wheel and hitting the gas pedal. It is also about ensuring safety on the road for oneself and others. Women should learn to drive responsibly and follow traffic rules and regulations. They should also learn defensive driving techniques and take steps to maintain their vehicle's safety and performance.

Guidelines for Safe and Responsible Driving

1. Age and License Requirement: Only women over the age of 18 should drive, and they should possess a valid driver's license. It is illegal for girls under the age

of 18 to drive. If you are learning to drive or taking the wheel for the first time, make sure you have a knowledgeable person with you.

2. Familiarize Yourself with Driving Rules: Before driving on the road, it is important to understand and follow all the rules of driving. Driving without appropriate skills can lead to accidents.
3. Honking: Do not excessively honk your horn while driving, use it only when necessary. Avoid installing loud car horns.
4. Safety Gear: Always wear a seat belt while driving a car, and if you ride a scooter, always wear a helmet to protect yourself.
5. Speed Limit: Drive at a typical speed and avoid driving at high speeds as it can lead to accidents.
6. Overtaking: Avoid overtaking while driving on busy highways or in crowded areas. Keep pedestrians and vehicles in mind while driving. Do not drive for longer than necessary as it can be dangerous.
7. Avoid Distractions: Do not drive while under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Also, avoid using headphones or your phone while

driving as it can endanger your life.

8. Follow Traffic Signals: Follow the rules of the red light while driving.
9. Littering: Do not throw anything out of the moving vehicle while eating or drinking. It pollutes the environment and shows lack of civilization.
10. Entertainment and Maintenance: Refrain from singing loudly or using the car as a form of entertainment while driving. Keep your car clean and get it serviced regularly.
11. Emotional State: Do not drive when angry or agitated. Tie your scarf properly while driving, and avoid carrying handbags in your arms.

Parking Guidelines

Your journey will also become enjoyable if you drive safely on the road, and you will project an image of disciplined civilization. Alongside this, it is likewise important to know about some data connected with leaving the vehicle.

1. Follow the parking rules and always park your vehicle in the designated area. Park your car at a slight distance from other vehicles to avoid any damage.

2. Do not park your car outside any shop or in the middle of the road.
3. You can park your car on your side or in the parking lot. Do not ask an unknown person to park for you.
4. Contact the appropriate officer if you have any trouble parking or have a complaint.

Significant Information

Accidents on the road are increasing day by day due to careless drivers. Every driver is responsible for following all driving and traffic rules to prevent accidents and protect innocent lives. Women can set an example by driving safely and responsibly, and encouraging others to do the same.

Learning to drive can be an empowering experience for women. However, it is essential to drive safely and responsibly on the road. By following these guidelines, women can gain confidence and avoid accidents on the road. Remember, safe driving not only protects you but also those around you. Let us strive to make the roads safer for everyone.

(Author & Researcher, Bureau chief Punjab, Government of India. Email: premarsharma31992@gmail.com. Views are personal)

BRIEF

New role



New Delhi: Confectionary major Mondelez International has elevated its India & Southeast Asia head Deepak Iyer as Executive Vice President and President, Asia Pacific, Middle East and Africa (AMEA). In his new role, effective June 5, Iyer will be responsible for leading the company's USD 6.8 billion AMEA business across more than 70 countries, which includes iconic brands such as Oreo and belVita biscuits, Cadbury Chocolate and Kinoh Do cakes, Mondelez said in a statement.

Industrial destination



Rajpura (Patiala): Punjab chief minister Bhupinder Singh Hooda claimed that the state has emerged as the most preferred industrial destination in the country and is witnessing comprehensive development in every sphere. Addressing a gathering after dedicating a plant of steel coating products here, the chief minister said the plant has been set up at a cost of Rs 247 crore and it will provide employment to 600 youth. This is a zero liquid discharge plant which will neither pollute water nor air, said an official release quoting Mann.

Lifting delay



Chandigarh: Congress leader Bhupinder Singh Hooda blamed the BJP-JJP government for the delay in the lifting of wheat crop and the acute lack of arrangements in mandis. The former Haryana chief minister alleged that lakhs of metric tonnes of wheat in the mandis got wet in the rain due to the negligence of the government.

Judicial process

New Delhi: Civil Aviation Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia said it was unfortunate that the operational bottleneck related to engine supplies has dealt a blow to the airline's financial position. Against the backdrop of the airline filing an application for voluntary insolvency resolution proceedings, the minister said, "It is prudent to wait for the judicial process to run its course".

WTO needs to look at farm subsidy issue with open mind: Sitharaman

Incheon, May 03:

The World Trade Organisation (WTO) should look at the issue of farm subsidies with an open mind as it impacts the food security needs of emerging economies in the backdrop of Covid pandemic and the Russia-Ukraine war, finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman said on Wednesday.

Speaking at the Asian Development Bank (ADB) Governor's seminar on 'Policies to support Asia's rebound', Sitharaman said sooner a solution is found out by the WTO, the better it would be for the world. "Since WTO was founded, there has been a grievance

with respect to the export of agricultural products and generally in trade, the voice of the Global South and emerging markets has not been heard at par with that of the developed countries," she said.

The 'Global South' largely refers to countries in Asia, Africa and South America. Subsidies for agriculture and poor farmers in developing countries were not counted at all and were frozen, she said, adding that in context of Covid and Russia-Ukraine war, food and fertilizer security have become important. "We will all have to talk again (about food and fertilizer security) at the

WTO with an open mind," the minister said. "There is better food security in the developed world compared to developing countries. Trade agreements have come about in a lopsided way, for which solutions have to be found," Sitharaman said.

Under global trade norms, a WTO member country's food subsidy bill should not breach the limit of 10 per cent of the value of production based on the reference price of 1986-88. As part of permanent solution, India has asked for measures like amendments in the formula to calculate the food subsidy cap and inclusion of programmes imple-

mented after 2013 under the ambit of 'Peace Clause'.

As an interim measure, the WTO members at the Bali ministerial meeting in December 2013 had agreed to put in place a mechanism popularly called 'Peace Clause' and committed to negotiating an agreement for a permanent solution. Under Peace Clause, WTO members agreed to refrain from challenging any breach in prescribed ceiling by a developing nation at the dispute settlement forum of the WTO. This clause will stay till a permanent solution is found to the food stockpiling issue.

Govt aims 1 bn tonne coal production in FY24 under Action Plan

New Delhi, May 03:

In a first, the coal ministry has set an ambitious target of 1 billion tonne coal production during 2023-24 under its 'Action Plan' for the sector and a capex target of Rs 21,030 crore for its PSUs. In a statement, the ministry said it has conceptualized the Action Plan for FY24 with the goal of achieving Aatmanirbhar Bharat by enhancing the production, efficiency, sustainability, new technologies etc in the coal sector.

"It is an ambitious, well-crafted roadmap that covers a variety of areas including a total coal production target of 1012 MT for 2023-24," it said. The ministry has already taken various steps to increase the coal production and efficiency like mining developers cum operators (MDO) for the operationalization

of CIL (Coal India) mines/blocks and production in discontinued/abandoned mines on the revenue sharing basis. The ministry has also formulated a strategy to enhance coking coal availability in the country to reduce imports. Coal companies along with the ministry has taken various measures to achieve the objective of supply of quality coal to all consumers.

For undertaking the job of sampling and analysis of coal samples at loading end, third party sampling agencies have been empanelled for both power and non-power coal consumers. "The capex target for FY24 is Rs 21,030 crore with CIL Rs 16,500 crore, NLCIL: Rs 2,880 crore and SCCL: Rs 1,650 crore" The overall projected target of assets monetization plan for FY 2023-24 is Rs 50,118.61 crore, the ministry said.

Goyal says India will achieve target of 20 pc ethanol-blended petrol by 2025

New Delhi, May 03:

Food and Consumer Affairs Minister Piyush Goyal on Tuesday expressed confidence that the country will achieve the target of 20 per cent blending of ethanol with petrol by 2025 and asserted that maize crop will play an important role in implementation of this programme.

Addressing a national seminar on maize to ethanol, Goyal said ethanol is a "sunrise sector" and asked the industry to set up factories for manufacturing of this green fuel which can operate on dual feed stock (sugarcane and food grains). The minister highlighted that the blending of ethanol with petrol has increased to 10 per cent in 2021-22 marketing year from just 1.53 per cent in 2013-14 on the back of ef-



forts made by farmers and industry, aided by favourable government policies. He said the supply of ethanol to oil marketing companies (OMCs) increased to 408 crore litre in 2021-22 from 38 crore litre in 2013-14. Goyal termed the target of 20 per cent blending of ethanol with petrol as "ambitious and bold" but said this can be achieved if all stakeholders work towards it sincerely. "As we have increased the blending to around 10.5 per cent from

Toyota Kirloskar Motor announces prices of Top Grades of New Innova Crysta



Bengaluru, May 03:

Toyota Kirloskar Motor (TKM) announced the prices of top two grades (ZX & VX) of the New Innova Crysta. The vehicle comes with an enhanced front fascia that has been designed keeping in mind the specific preferences for a rugged and robust appearance, thereby meeting the requirements of Indian families, Businessmen and Corporates. The details of the ex-showroom prices ZX (7 S) - Rs 25,43,000, VX (8 S) Rs 23,84,000, VX (7S) Rs 23,79,000, VX FLT (8S) Rs 23,84,000 and VX FLT (7S) Rs 23,79,000.

FICCI FRAMES 2023



Bollywood actor Ayushmann Khurrana and Viacom18 CEO Jyoti Deshpande during FICCI Frames 2023 convention, in Mumbai, Wednesday, May 3.

Airfares likely to rise as Go First cancellations reduce capacity: TAAI

New Delhi, May 03:

No-frills carrier Go First filing for insolvency proceedings and cancelling flights is bad for the airline industry as the move will reduce capacity and could push airfares in certain routes, travel agents' grouping TAAI said on Wednesday. Boggled down by an acute financial crunch due to grounding of more than half of its fleet amid P&W engine supply woes, Go First has cancelled flights for three days starting May 3. Besides, the Wadia group-owned airline has filed for voluntary insolvency resolution proceedings under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC). "It is bad for the (airlines) industry... It is such a fragile industry... we lost crores of rupees in Kingfisher Airlines, in Jet Airways

and we have another one going into insolvency (proceedings)," Travel Agents Association of India (TAAI) President Jyoti Mayal told PTI.

The developments at Go First, which has been flying for more than 17 years, also come at a time when the domestic air traffic is on an upward trajectory. Mayal said that right now there is demand for air travel as it is holiday time and "we do expect fares going up in sectors it (Go First) was flying. In the coming weeks, fares are likely to go up." Regarding booked tickets, she said it is the company that has to provide refunds and if it goes into insolvency, the rules are different. "Those are the challenges we are going to be facing".

In a statement, TAAI expressed concern over the sudden cancellation of flights by Go First.

Rupee gains 6 paise to close at 81.81 against US dollar

Mumbai, May 03:



The rupee consolidated in a narrow range and settled for the day higher by 6 paise at 81.81 (provisional) against the US dollar on Wednesday, tracking the weakness of the American currency in the overseas market. Forex traders said significant foreign fund inflows and crude oil prices below USD 75 a barrel also supported the local unit. At the interbank foreign exchange market, the local unit opened at 81.80 against the US currency and finally closed at 81.81 (provisional), registering a gain of 6 paise over its previous close.

During the session, the rupee touched a high of 81.75 and a low of 81.86 against the dollar. On Tuesday, the rupee closed at 81.87 against the US cur-

rency. The dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, fell 0.41 per cent to 101.54.

Global oil benchmark Brent crude futures fell 2.04 per cent to USD 73.78 per barrel. The Indian rupee appreciated on a weak US dollar and sharp decline in crude oil prices. However, weak domestic equities capped sharp gains, said Anuj Choudhary - Research Analyst at Sharekhan by BNP Paribas. "We expect

the rupee to trade with a slight negative bias on risk aversion in global markets amid renewed fears over the banking crisis in the US and worries over global economic recovery. "However, a weak dollar and extended fall in crude oil prices may prevent a sharp fall in rupee," Choudhary said. Sustained FII inflows may also support rupee at lower levels. Investors may remain cautious ahead of the Federal Open Market Committee (FOMC) meeting outcome and ISM services PMI.

"The Fed is expected to hike interest rates by 25 basis points. Traders may also remain cautious ahead of non-farm payrolls data later this week. We expect USDINR spot to trade in between 81.30 to 82.30 in the near-term," Choudhary said.

NMDC records the best ever April month performance in company history

Hyderabad, May 03:

India's largest producer of iron ore NMDC, reported a production of 3.51 MnT and sale of 3.43 MnT in April 2023, recording the best ever performance for any April month in NMDC history.

Iron ore production in April 2023 is 11.42% more than April 2022 and the growth in sales is 9.93% over CPLY. Building on the momentum from the 40 MnT surpassed consecutively in FY22 and FY23, the mining major is on a record-breaking spree as it achieves the highest production and sales for any April month since incep-

tion. Congratulating his team on the spectacular performance, Amitava Mukherjee, CMD (Additional Charge), NMDC said, "Our dedication and consistency is displayed in NMDC's back-to-back grit to outperform itself as seen in April's solid figures. We are continuously adopting new processes and technologies to strengthen our supply-chain and continue to meet the



growing iron ore demands of the nation. We are now aiming at becoming a 100 MTPA mining company by 2030 and are treading confidently on the road map laid for achieving the same.

UCO Bank registers 86% growth in Q4 PAT to Rs 581 crore

Mumbai, May 03:

Public sector lender, UCO Bank registered a strong growth in earnings on a year-on-year basis for the fourth quarter of FY23. The bank's PAT came in at Rs 581.24 crore in Q4FY23, registering a growth of 86.19% compared to Rs 312.18 crore in the same period a year ago. Net interest income (NII) increased by 19.34% to Rs 1,972.11 crore in the quarter as against Rs 1,652.38 crore in Q4 of FY22.

Sequentially, the earnings were a mixed bag. UCO Bank saw a drop of 10.98% in PAT during Q4FY23 as against a profit of Rs 652.97 crore in the December 2022 quarter. On the contrary,



Soma Sankara Prasad - MD & CEO of UCO Bank.

NII surged by 1.03% merely QoQ. In the quarter under review, provisions zoomed to Rs 450.54 crore as against Rs 332.42 crore in Q3FY23 and Rs 465.60 crore in Q4FY22.

Gross non-performing assets (GNPA) plunged

sharply to 4.78% in Q4FY23 versus 7.89% in Q4FY22 and 5.63% in Q3FY23. Net NPA stood at 1.29% as compared to 1.66% in Q3FY23 and 2.70% in Q4FY22.

For the full-year FY23, UCO Bank posted its highest ever net profit of Rs 1,862.34 crore -- rising by a whopping 100.30% from Rs 929.76 crore in FY22. Also, the lender registered the highest ever NII of Rs 7,343.13 crore in FY23, rising by 13.44% as against Rs 6,472.95 crore in FY22, fueled by a healthy growth in loan book and improved yield on advances. Net interest margin (NIM) stood at 2.87% for the fiscal showcasing steady improvement.

As of March 31, 2023, the bank witnessed the

highest-ever level of global deposits of Rs 2,49,337.74 crore in FY23 up by 11.28% YoY. Loan book also stood highest ever at Rs 1,61,629.45 crore up by 24.54% YoY. On BSE, UCO Bank's stock price closed at Rs 30.72 apiece up by 2.06% on Tuesday.

In a meeting held on Tuesday, UCO Bank's board members approved the issuance of up to 200 crore equity shares having a face value of Rs 10 each at an appropriate premium to raise equity capital of Rs 2,000 crore in the financial year FY24. This fundraising will be done through market options such as follow-on public offers, qualified institutional placement, etc. in one or more tranches.

Force IX flagship store launched in Mumbai

Mumbai, May 03:



On the heels of the 'soft launch' of his redefined athleisure-wear label in January 2023, this evening, Bollywood star, Akshay Kumar launched Force IX's flagship boutique in Mumbai's 'Queen of the Suburbs', Bandra. Located in the heart of Linking Road's bustling shopping district, the 1,800 sq. ft. store was officially opened for business by Akshay Kumar and Maniish Mandhana, Co-Founder of Force IX's parent company, 9 AM Ventures Private Limited. The launch event saw a grand fashion show that eventually spilled over onto the street and had onlookers cheering on the milestone for the brand. As a testament to the brand's ethos of inclusivity and the fact that Force IX is for everyone, the fashion show itself featured 'models' of varying ethnic-

ities, religions, sexual orientations, gender identities, as well as the differently abled. Also, walking the ramp and underscoring Force IX's deep commitment to our nation's forces, were retired officers from the Air Force, the Army, the Navy, the Maharashtra State Police

and the Mumbai Police. Force IX's flagship Mumbai store is inspired by the different types of boot camps and training camps used by the nation's forces and is designed in a way whereform meets function, giving the space a distinct identity and character.

India's services sector growth climbs to near 13-year high in April: PMI

New Delhi, May 03:

India's services sector growth accelerated in April, as strong demand conditions resulted in the fastest increase in new business and output in close to 13 years, a monthly survey said on Wednesday. The pick-up in demand occurred in spite of escalating price pressures. The seasonally adjusted S&P Global India Services PMI Business Activity Index rose from 57.8 in March to 62.0 in April, signalling the fastest expansion in output since mid 2010, amid a pick-up in new business growth and favourable market conditions. For the 21st straight month, the headline figure was above the neutral 50 threshold.

Riya breaks her ties with grandfather Dilpreet

Sony SAB's Dil Diyaan Gallaan portrays a family torn apart by a complex web of misunderstood circumstances, emotional turmoil, and deeply ingrained beliefs. In the upcoming episodes, the storyline approaches a particularly poignant chapter in which Riya (Hema Sood) ends her ties with Veer (Paras Arora) and breaks her connection with her grandfather Dilpreet (Pankaj Berry), who she was extremely close to. The episodes promise to be a heart-wrenching exploration of the consequences of family bonds being strained beyond repair. Riya's heartbreak over Dilpreet's unwavering support for Amrita has been simmering for months in Sony SAB's Dil Diyaan Gallaan. She has always felt that Dilpreet has chosen Amrita over her, and this feeling has been proven by the many challenging situations the Brar family has faced in recent times. However, when Dollar kidnaps Amrita and Dilpreet rushes to save Amrita despite her being physically hurt, Riya is heart broken. This final betrayal was too much for Riya to bear, and she decides to cut ties with her grandfather, a decision that has sent shockwaves through the Brar family and promises to change the show's dynamics forever.

Actress Adah Sharma has clarified that her upcoming film 'The Kerala Story' has not portrayed Kerala in a derogatory light. The actress took to Twitter to share her thoughts and also shared a selfie of herself in a pink saree with a gajra in her hair. The film 'The Kerala Story' directed by Sudipto Sen, showcases the story of four women and how they became part of a terror organization after being recruited to the ISIS. Adah Sharma plays the role of Fathima Ba, a Hindu Malayali nurse, who was among the 32,000 women who went missing from Kerala and were then recruited to ISIS after being forced to convert to Islam. The film has faced criticism for portraying itself as a real story and making false claims that thousands of women from Kerala are being converted to Islam and recruited into ISIS. It has also faced allegations of promoting the Sangh Parivar's agenda. Many senior persons in high posts have commented on #TheKeralaStory after watching the 2 minute trailer, to which Adah Sharma responded, "My parents have always asked me to respect my elders so with due respect to all of them I hope they can take 2 hrs out of their busy schedule and watch the movie. I'm sure they will see that we haven't shown Kerala in any derogatory light. Jai hind."

Adah Sharma's upcoming film 'The Kerala Story' does not show Kerala in derogatory light

Aryan Khan's directorial web debut is titled 'Stardom'

Bollywood superstar Shah Rukh Khan's son, Aryan Khan isn't interested in acting but has a knack for writing and direction. Aryan will make his directorial debut with an upcoming show titled 'Stardom'. It will be a streaming show with 6 episodes and will be set against the backdrop of the film industry. The series is currently in its production stage.

It's being produced by Aryan's home production Red Chillies Entertainment owned by his father,



who is fresh off the success of his blockbuster movie 'Pathaan'. A few years back, while talking to chat show host David Letterman, SRK told him that Aryan isn't interested in building a career in acting more so because he has

the towering achievements of his father to match-up to but he harbours dreams of being a director or a producer. Apart from 'Stardom', Aryan Khan recently shot an ad film where he got to direct his father:

Sharman Joshi kick starts the city visit campaign for 'Music School'



Ahead of the theatrical release of the upcoming Haiyaraaja musical film 'Music School' produced and directed by Paparao Biyyala, the makers organised a special screening of the film at Shiv Nadar University in Delhi, attended by the leading actor Sharman Joshi in addition to Paparao Biyyala. A total of over 200 students attended the screening and heaped praises on the Shriya Saran- Sharman Joshi starrer film.

At the special screening, over 200 students across the age groups of 18 to 23 years from different departments including Engineering, Humanities, Natural Sciences and Management interacted with actor Sharman Joshi and director and producer Paparao Biyyala. Resonating with the subject of the film, the students engaged in a conversation with the film team as they showered their love. Music School is a musical narration of the sensitive and prevailing concern of academic pressure subjected to young students by the society, parents and teachers. With eleven songs in the film, three of them have been recreated from The Sound of Music, situationally

woven beautifully in the film to suit the sensibilities of the Indian audience.

Unveiled by South star Vijay Deverakonda, the trailer of Music School was launched in the presence of the cast and crew of the film in Mumbai on Tuesday, 25th April.

Starring Shriya Saran and Sharman Joshi as music and drama teachers respectively, the trailer shows the duo attempting to put together a musical play 'The Sound of Music' with the young artists including Gracey Goswami and Ozu Barua, amongst others. Tracing the struggles of a music and drama teacher to promote performing arts for children amidst the immense academic pressure subjected by the parents, teachers and society, the trailer takes the audience on a musical journey. Producers and distributors are planning several shows before its release on 12th May for schools and colleges including a screening at JNU, Delhi on 8th May. Presented by Yamini Films, Hyderabad, this multi-lingual film is shot in Hindi and Telugu, and dubbed in Tamil. It is releasing on 12th May 2023 by PVR in Hindi - Tamil and Dil Raju in Telugu.

Sara Ali Khan shares BTS pics from 'Murder Mubarak', 'Ae Watan Mere Watan'

Bollywood actress Sara Ali Khan, who is currently busy with the shoot of her upcoming film 'Ae Watan Mere Watan', recently took to Instagram to share a few behind-the-scenes pictures from the sets of her two films 'Murder Mubarak' and 'Ae Watan Mere Watan'.

The actress shared three pictures holding the clapperboards of the films which detail the shot taking process. In the first picture, she is seen donning a white saree holding the clapperboard of 'Ae Watan Mere Watan'. The second picture has her in a casual avatar with the same element of clapperboard in the frame, followed by the third picture which is again from 'Ae Watan Mere Watan'.

In the caption, she thanked the director and expressed her attachment to the character. She wrote, "Live as if you



were to die tomorrow. Learn as if you were to live forever." - Mahatma Gandhi. Thank you Kannan sir for choosing me to portray this powerful character; a true personification of strength, dignity and passion. Some parts stay etched in our souls, and I know I will carry this one with me forever. Jai Bholenath".

Sara Ali Khan will also be seen in Laxman Utekar's next opposite

Vicky Kaushal titled 'Zara Hatke Zara Bachke' and Anurag Basu's 'Metro...In Dino' for which she will soon resume the shoot. On the occasion of Labour Day, Sara wrote, "Grateful for this life. Happy Labour Day". Fans are eagerly waiting for Sara Ali Khan's upcoming films and her posts on social media give them a sneak peek into her life on and off the sets.

Zee Studios releases rib-tickling trailer of 'Godday Godday Chaa!'

Zee Studios is back with another family entertainer for the audiences after massive hits like 'Qismat 2', 'Surkhi Bindi', 'Puaada', 'Saunkan Saunkne' and many more! Zee Studios' upcoming film 'Godday Godday Chaa' in association with V.H Entertainment is all set for a 26th May release this year.

The trailer of the film is being helmed as a laughter riot! Sonam Bajwa crusades the mission to take women of the 'pind' along with the 'baraat'.

The trailer surely tickles the rib! Nirmal Rishi is her fabulous-self while Tania is simply captivating. One can already gauge the heart-warmingly hilarious chemistry between Sonam and Tania who play sisters on the screen. Gurjazz and Gitaj shine in their roles. One can definitely be assured of dollops of entertainment with this one! The trailer features



Sonam, Tania, Gitaj, Gurjazz, Nirmal Rishi in a new avatar. The film takes a dig on the patriarchal rituals prevalent in Punjab back in the day and also reunites Sonam Bajwa and Tania for the second time after the massive success of

'Guddiyani Patole.' The film stars Sonam Bajwa, Tania, Gitaj Bindrakhia and Gurjazz in pivotal roles. 'Godday Godday Chaa' is a full-fledged family entertainer written by 'Qismat' and 'Qismat 2' fame Jagdeep Sidhu.

Kangana on same-sex marriage: It is a matter of the heart

On her recent visit to Haridwar, actress Kangana Ranaut shared that a marriage is between two hearts and if two individuals have bonded, then their sexual preference should not matter.

After the Supreme Court heard pleas for legal sanction for same-sex marriages in India, Kangana was questioned about it.

Kangana said "Jo shaadi hoti hai, woh dil ke rishte hote hai, ye sab hi jante hai. Jab logo ke dil mil gaye hai, baaki kuch logo ki jo preference hai, usme hum kya bol sakte hai (Marriage is a matter of the heart. Everyone knows it. When hearts have met, what can



we say about people's preferences?" Kangana had earlier expressed her views on the ongoing same-sex marriage issue in the Supreme Court on Twitter. She had written: "Whether you are a

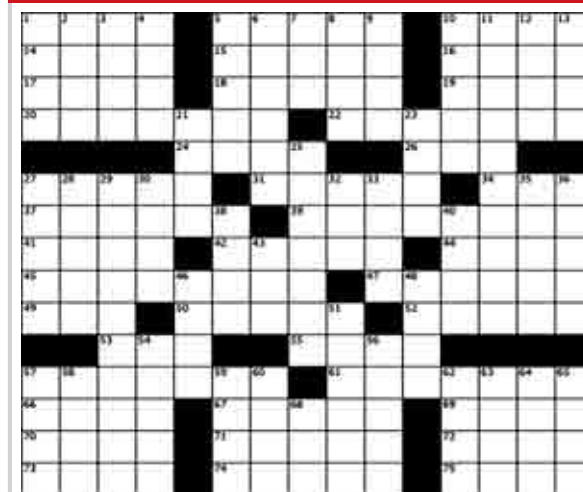
man/woman/ anything else your gender is of no consequence to anyone but you, please understand. In modern world we don't even use words like actresses or female directors we call them

actors and directors. What you do in the world is your identity, not what you do in bed."

She added: "Whatever your sexual preferences are they must remain in your bed only. Don't make them your identity card or medals and flaunt everywhere. Most importantly don't roam around with a knife to cut every throat who don't agree with your gender." "I am again saying your gender is not your identity don't make it that way. I am a woman from rural area life gave me no concession I had to make my own place in the world of actors, film makers, producers and writers."

CROSSWORD

634



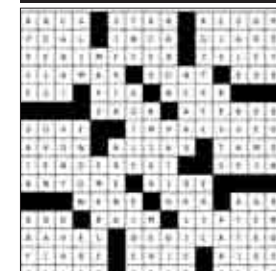
ACROSS

- Rower's needs
- Greek island
- Final
- Joy
- Make merry
- Feel bad
- Paper quantity
- Utopian
- Frosts
- Overshadow

DOWN

- Mythical giant
- A Baldwin brother
- True
- Large truck
- Crunchy
- Use coupons
- First woman
- Sad drop
- Model _____ Macpherson
- Animals' homes
- Satisfactory
- Mets' old stadium
- Midterm, e.g.
- Coconut tree
- "A _____ of Two Cities"
- Motor City
- Remnant
- Florida metropolis
- Agreement to marry

SOLUTION 633



- Wall socket
- Porker
- Send payment
- Looks intently
- Time period
- Mexican snack
- Arch enemy
- Reagan and McDonald
- Has bills
- Hint of a color
- Employ
- Dryer outlet
- Was mistaken
- Discharge
- Martial _____
- Vegetarians' taboos
- Atlas items
- Sly look
- Female deer
- Female voice
- Direct
- Annoying ones
- Competent
- Appraise
- Graceful tree
- Mr. Gershwin et al.
- On top of
- Archer's goal
- Female students
- Bossa _____
- Water container
- Ledger entry
- Father
- Attention-getting sound
- South American capital
- Plumber's problem
- Solidifies
- Gun lobby (abbr.)

SRH top-order under pressure ahead of KKR game

Hyderabad, May 03 (PTI):

Sunrisers Hyderabad will expect more consistency from their top-order when they host Kolkata Knight Riders in an Indian Premier League match here on Thursday.

Both teams are languishing at the bottom of the table and another loss will put a serious dent in their play-off qualification chances.

Getting Abhishek Sharma back to open worked in the previous game for Sunrisers and now they will be hoping their other opener, Mayank Agarwal, to find some fluency.

The batting as a whole has not clicked for Sunrisers and therefore it is not a surprise they find themselves in a desperate situation in the second half of the tournament.



KKR cricketers during a training session.

While Agarwal is striking at an underwhelming 110 at the top, number three Rahul Tripathi is not faring any better either. Skipper Aiden Markram

too needs to lead from the front and Harry Brook, despite scoring a hundred,

has failed in majority of the games.

He is back in the middle order and the management will be hoping that he finds some rhythm.

All-rounder Washington Sundar being ruled out of the IPL due to injury is a big blow to Sunrisers.

Pacer Umran Malik has the worst economy rate among the bowlers and has only taken five wickets in seven games, contributing to the team's woes.

KKR too would be expecting more fluency from their batters as they look to get their campaign back on track after six defeats in nine games.

They have been found wanting in all three departments of the game, something that was mentioned by skipper Nitish Rana after the loss to Gujarat Giants.

"In crucial games and

against top oppositions, you need to do all the basics well in all the three departments of the game," he had said.

Rana has not shown the consistency that is expected of him while N Jagadeesan has struggled at the top. Both Jason Roy and Rahmanullah Gurbaz have shown good form at the top but the management can only play one of them.

The pace bowlers leaking runs has also been hurting KKR. All-rounder Andre Russell and Shardul Thakur have conceded more than 10 runs per over. Harshit Rana did well in his first game and is likely to start again.

The spin trio of Varun Chakaravarty, Sunil Narine and Suyash Sharma has been effective but need support from the fast bowlers.

CSK, LSG split points in rain-marred IPL game

Lucknow, May 03 (PTI):

Ayush Badoni stood tall amidst the ruins with a classy half-century on a poor surface before a sharp downpour forced Lucknow Super Giants and Chennai Super Kings to split points as their IPL match was called off on Wednesday.

This is the first game in the 16th edition of IPL that had to be called off midway due to rain.

Rain stopped play in the 20th over but by then Badoni, who came in at 44 for 5 had put his team in a position of respectability on a very difficult surface. Badoni, smashed two fours and four sixes in his 33-ball-59 and his temperament on a surface conducive for slow bowlers was worth its weight in gold as it didn't seem at one point that LSG

could cross 125-run mark. With 11 points from 10 games, LSG and CSK are placed second and third on points table respectively. LSG (+0.639) have a better net runrate compared to CSK (+0.329).

It was a good toss to win for Mahendra Singh Dhoni and the CSK skipper's decision to bowl first was vindicated by his bowlers on a surface that is certainly not good enough for an absorbing T20 contest.

Most of the balls were gripping off the surface and the batters found it extremely difficult to hit through the line unlike in other surfaces as Moeen Ali 2/13 in 4 overs), Ravindra Jadeja (1/11 in 3 overs) and Maheesh Theekshana (2/37 in 4 overs) kept them under tight leash and also got wickets at regular intervals.

PT Usha meets protesting wrestlers, assures support

New Delhi, May 03 (PTI):

Facing criticism from all quarters for being insensitive towards the protesting wrestlers, IOA President PT Usha on Wednesday met them at the protest site and assured the grapplers of her support, saying she was first an athlete and then an administrator.

Former sprinter Usha had come down heavily on the wrestlers for resuming their protest instead of approaching the Indian Olympic Association (IOA) for their issues.

She had said that the wrestlers should have shown some discipline and that they had tarnished the country's image by hitting the streets, a comment that brought criticism for her and the IOA. Usha left without speaking with the media but Bajrang Punia said she has assured them help. "Initially when she said that, we felt very bad but then she said that her comments were misinterpreted. She said that she is



first an athlete and then an administrator," said Bajrang, the Tokyo Games bronze medallist. "We told her that we want justice. We don't have a fight with the government or opposition or anyone else. We are sitting here for the betterment of wrestling. If this issue is resolved and if the allegations (against WFI president Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh) are proved then there should be legal action," he added.

When asked if Usha had come with a solution from the government or from the IOA, Punia said, "Nothing of that sort". "She only said

that she is with us." Asked if he was satisfied following the meeting with Usha, he said, "If she is giving us assurance, I suppose she should fulfil that assurance. But we clarified to her that until and unless things are not okay and we get justice, of which we are very hopeful, this protest will continue." Asked if any solution had emerged, he said, "If the things she has spoke about... if there is an initiative along those lines, then definitely there will be a solution to this issue. She said she will try to resolve all our problems. If she wants she can do anything."

KL Rahul out of IPL, going to Mumbai for scans

New Delhi, May 03 (PTI):

Lucknow Super Giants skipper KL Rahul in all likelihood will take no further part in the Indian Premier League (IPL) after sustaining a serious thigh injury during team's last game against Royal Challengers Bangalore. The PTI can also confirm that veteran pacer Jaydev Unadkat's shoulder condition is serious and he too is ruled out of the IPL.

It is understood that it will be a race against time for BCCI Sports Science & Medical Team to get the senior batter-keeper Rahul ready for World Test Championship final in London from June 7 to 11. Rahul injured his right thigh while sprinting towards boundary to a Faf du Plessis cover drive off Marcus Stoinis bowling.

"KL is currently with the team in Lucknow but he is leaving the camp on Thursday after watching the game against CSK on Wednesday. His scans will be done in Mumbai at the BCCI designated medical facility. His case as well as Jaydev's case will be handled



by BCCI," a senior BCCI source privy to development told PTI on conditions of anonymity. The source also confirmed that no scans has been done till now. "When someone sustains an injury like this, there is considerable amount of pain and swelling that is there in and around the area. The swelling takes around 24 to 48 hours to heal and only after that can you perform the scan.

India eyeing clean sweep in compound section

Tashkent, May 03 (PTI):

Indian archers kept themselves in line for a clean sweep in compound section, while they also confirmed two medals in the recurve section to continue their dominance in the Asia Cup Stage II World Ranking Tournament, here on Wednesday. Multiple World Cup gold medallist Abhishek Verma set up a gold medal clash with teammate Amit, while Kushal Dalal also remained in hunt for a bronze in the men's compound individual section.

Verma defeated Sregey Khristich of Kazakhstan 148-140, while Amit got past his teammate Dalal 146-144, en route to the final. The compound women archers also followed suit when Raginee Markoo defeated Parneet Kaur 146-141, and Pragati got the better of Adel



Zhexenbinova of Kazakhstan 146-141 to make it an all-Indian individual final. Parneet will take on Adel in the bronze playoff. The compound mixed pair team have already got a bye into the semifinal by virtue of their top-seeding and are one win away from a medal.

In the men's recurve individual section, top-seeded Mrinal Chauhan overcame Alexandr Yermenko of Kazakhstan in the shoot-off to advance into the final.

After an end-to-end battle, Chauhan won 6-5 (25-26, 29-27, 27-27, 30-24, 27-28, 10*-10) in the shoot-off

that was decided by thinnest of margins with the Indian hitting closer to the centre. Chauhan will face Wang Baobin of China in the men's recurve individual final on Friday. Earlier, Chauhan defeated his teammate Indra Chand Swami 7-1 (28-28, 27-26, 28-27, 29-27) in the quarters.

There was, however, disappointment for former Olympian and two-time World Cup individual gold medallist Jayanta Talukdar who he made a quarterfinal exit. On a comeback trail, the 37-year-old lost out to Yermenko Alexandr of Kazakhstan 3-7 (27-27, 27-28, 25-26, 26-25, 27-28) in the last eight. In the recurve women's individual section too India stormed into the final after Sangeeta got the better of Yagn Xiaolei of China 6-4 (27-26, 27-27, 26-28, 28-25, 27-27).

Alcaraz, Tsitsipas advance in Madrid; Medvedev, Rublev lose

Madrid, May 03 (AP):

Carlos Alcaraz made sure he wouldn't be among the top seeds being upset at the Madrid Open, playing well from the start to secure his spot in the quarterfinals with a 6-1 6-2 win over Alexander Zverev.

After both second-seeded Daniil Medvedev and fifth-seeded Andrey Rublev lost their fourth-round matches at the clay-court tournament, Alcaraz cruised past 13th-seeded Zverev to stay on track to defend his title at home.

Fourth-seeded Stefanos Tsitsipas also avoided an



upset, defeating Bernabe Zapata Miralles 6-3 6-1. In the women's draw, second-seeded Aryna Sabalenka reached the last four by rallying past Mayar Sherif in three sets. The match between Alcaraz and Zverev was a rematch of last year's Madrid final, which Alcaraz also comfortably won against the former two-time champion in the Spanish capital.

"For me it's amazing to Spain's Carlos Alcaraz throws a ball after winning his 2023 ATP Tour Madrid Open tennis tournament singles match against Germany's Alexander Zverev.

play the level that I played today," Alcaraz said.

"I feel really good right now and this match gives me a lot of confidence."

Alcaraz didn't concede any break opportunities against Zverev and converted on four of the 10 break chances he had. The 19-year-old Spaniard ended with 21 winners and 12 unforced errors. Zverev had only nine winners and 22 unforced errors. "This is not a normal result, Zverev is a great player and has great shots, it would be more normal to be a tighter match and I was prepared for it," the second-ranked Alcaraz said.

Athlete commission needed in all NSFs: Sharith Kamal on wrestlers' protest

New Delhi, May 03 (PTI):

Table tennis great and vice-chairperson of IOA's Athletes Commission Achanti Sharath Kamal says the ongoing protests by India's wrestlers has underlined the need for an athletes' body in all National Sports Federations (NSFs). Wrestlers including Bajrang Punia, Vinesh Phogat and Sakshi Malik are sitting on a protest in the national capital since April 23, demanding the arrest of WFI chief and BJP MP Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh for alleged sexual harassment of seven wrestlers including a minor.



Messi the latest pawn in proxy rivalry in Middle East

Paris, May 03 (AP):

Lionel Messi was supposed to be training alongside his Paris Saint-Germain teammates on Monday, with his club embroiled in an increasingly fraught French league title race.

Instead, the soccer great was in Saudi Arabia, holding a falcon on his arm, watching a palm-weaving demonstration and looking around the Arabian Horse Museum as part of his commercial contract with the kingdom to promote tourism in the Middle Eastern country. It will prove to be an expensive trip for the recent World



Cup winner. Messi has been suspended by PSG reportedly for two weeks, when he won't get paid or be allowed to train or play with the team. That could yet spark the end of a turbulent and somewhat underwhelming two-season spell at a club where soap opera-style drama, on and off the field, is rarely far away given the presence of other superstars like Kylian Mbapp and Neymar in the squad. It also exposes the tensions now that Qatar and Saudi Arabia gulf neighbors and fierce recent rivals in regional politics have become major influencers in the world of soccer.

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BEANT SINGH ASSASSINATION CASE

SC declines to commute death penalty of Rajoana

New Delhi, May 03 (PTI):

The Supreme Court on Wednesday declined to commute the death penalty of Balwant Singh Rajoana, who was convicted in the 1995 assassination case of then Punjab Chief Minister Beant Singh, to life imprisonment.

The court said the competent authority may deal with Rajoana's mercy plea.

"What we have decided is that the stand of the Ministry of Home Affairs to defer the decision on the mercy petition of the petitioner is also our decision for the reasons given here-

under...

"This actually amounts to declining grant the same (remission) for the present. Therefore, we have directed that the competent authority will again as and when they deem necessary will deal with the mercy petition and take a further decision. The writ petition (of Rajoana) is disposed of accordingly," a bench comprising Justices B R Gavai, Vikram Nath and Sanjay Karol said.

Rajoana has been in jail for the past 26 years.

On March 2, the top court had reserved its verdict on the plea of Rajoana after hearing the submis-

sions of senior advocate Mukul Rohatgi, appearing for the convict, and Additional Solicitor General K M Natraj.

Earlier, the counsel for Rohatgi had said that keeping him on death row while sitting over his mercy plea for such a long period violated his fundamental right.

His plea for mercy has been pending before the government for over a decade.

On October 11 last year, the top court had said that a three-judge bench would be set up to hear the plea of Rajoana.

Rohatgi had said that his client was in jail for 26

years and has a substantive case based on the judgements of the apex court that his rights under Article 21 of the Constitution (the right to protection of life and personal liberty) has been violated.

On September 28 last year, the top court had expressed dissatisfaction over the Centre's failure to take a decision on Rajoana's plea for his death penalty to be commuted to life imprisonment.

Rohatgi had said Rajoana has been in jail since January 1996 and his mercy petition was filed in March 2012.

DMRC FOUNDATION DAY



A man walks past an art installation inspired by Delhi Metro at the Metro Bhawan during DMRC'S 29th Foundation Day event, in New Delhi, Wednesday.

NEW STUDY

'Problem of drug abuse among adolescents likely to explode'

New Delhi, May 03 (PTI):

In next decade

The problem of drug abuse is likely to explode in the next decade, particularly affecting children in the 10-17 age group, as the societal construct undergoes a massive shift, preliminary findings of an ongoing study released on Wednesday stated.

Mental health issues, performance pressure, growing emptiness and changing socio-economic conditions are having a toll on this very impressionable age group the most, making them vulnerable to addictive distractions, the study by independent think tank Think Change Forum has found. The impact of the

increasing drug abuse will be seen in both urban and rural India, the study said.

In view of the alarming growth in the consumption of substances in post-pandemic India, particularly among adolescents and youth, Think Change Forum has initiated a national study based on expert consultations to decode the problem of rising addiction and recommend solutions. The think tank's 'Ideas for an Addiction-Free India' initiative entails drawing learnings from the views of national experts from the fields of policy, psychology, social sciences and medical fra-

ternity among others. The preliminary findings have identified three important trends accelerating the adoption of substance use among adolescents and the youth, and three crucial interventions are needed to immediately decelerate them, it said. Glamourisation of intoxication and addictive substances was the first important trend speeding up substance abuse in India, the study said.

"Today, heroes and heroines in popular media glamourise intoxication. Children and adolescents are exposed to these role models indulging in such acts across different media, including movies and video series.

Guv Bais presents Devarshi Narad Awards

To 10 journalists



Mumbai, May 03: Maharashtra Governor Ramesh Bais presented the 22nd 'Devarshi Narad Patrakarita Puraskars' for the year 2023 to journalists and media personalities from Maharashtra at Raj Bhavan Mumbai on Wed (May 03).

Ten media personalities from the print, electronic, digital and social media were given the awards. Senior journalist from Ratnagiri Pramod Konkar, political satirist from daily Sakal Pravin Tokekar, news

anchor Deepak Palsule, Times of India's Vaibhav Purandare, Nilesh Khare, Jayanti Wagdhare, Anay Joglekar, Anshul Pandey and social media journalists Ninad Patil and Hrishikesh Magar were felicitated on the occasion.

Chairman of Vishwa Samvad Kendra Mumbai Sudhir Joglekar, Trustee Nishith Bhandarkar, Consul General of Israel in Mumbai Kobbi Shoshani and media personalities were present.

'Cyclone likely in Bay of Bengal around May 09'

Bhubaneswar, May 03 (PTI):

A developing weather formation may turn into a summer cyclone in the Bay of Bengal around May 9 though details of its path and intensification have as yet not been assessed, the Indian Meteorological Department said on Wednesday.

IMD Director General Mrutunjay Mohapatra said the department's modelling indicate formation of a cyclonic storm around May 9, but its movement and intensification may be determined after the low pressure area actually forms on May 7.

However, there is no forecast so far regarding landfall over the country's coast. Nevertheless, fishermen have been advised against venturing into the sea from May 7, he said.

Keeping in view the

weather development, the Odisha government has already put collectors of 18 coastal and adjoining districts and officials of 11 departments on the alert, its special relief commissioner Satyabrata Sahu said on Wednesday.

Mohapatra said a cyclonic circulation is forming over southeast Bay of Bengal around May 6 and under its influence, a low pressure area is likely to form over the same region around May 7. The system is likely to concentrate into a depression over southeast Bay of Bengal on May 8.

"There is a good possibility of the circulation intensifying into a cyclonic storm while moving towards the central Bay of Bengal around May 9. The system is being constantly watched and monitored regularly," he said.

Asked about the likely impact on Odisha coast, Mohapatra said no alert has been issued for it or any other place on the east coast.

The information on the cyclone is aimed at updating fishermen, oil explorers or any other commercial operations being carried out in the Bay of Bengal, he said, adding that there was no need for a panic.

However all cyclone prone districts are kept in a state of readiness. Districts and line departments along with the NDRF, ODRAF and others are in readiness for any possible eventuality.

Mohapatra said April, May and June are considered as summer cyclone months, while September, October and November are monsoon cyclone months.

POLL PREPARATIONS



Polling officials leave for their respective polling booths after collecting EVMs and other voting materials ahead of the Uttar Pradesh Municipal elections, in Mathura, Wednesday.

'Millets-based dishes to be served to CAPFs, NDRF personnel'

New Delhi, May 03 (PTI):

The Union Home Ministry on Wednesday said millets-based dishes will be served in the meals of the Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) and National Disaster Response Force (NDRF).

The decision to introduce 30 per cent millets in the meals has been taken as per the directive of Union Home Minister Amit Shah after detailed discussion with all the forces, an official statement said.

Under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, in the International Year of Millets-2023, the Ministry of Home Affairs has taken a momentous decision to introduce millets in the meals of personnel of CAPFs and the

NDRF, it said. Recognising the importance of millets and creating a domestic and global demand along with providing nutritious food to people, the United Nations declared 2023 the International Year of Millets.

Millets are good for health and also beneficial for farmers and environment friendly.

The millets are energy dense, drought resistant, with lower water requirements and can be grown with ease in arid soils, hilly terrain and is less susceptible to pests.

Some of the important benefits of millets are good source of proteins, gluten-free; low in Glycemic Index (GI); and rich in dietary fibre, micronutrients including calcium, iron, phosphorus

etc, and phyto-chemicals, thus boosting the nutritional profile of a soldier's diet. The Home Ministry had asked all the forces to take action for introduction of millets-based menu. The forces have shown an overwhelming response and are eager to introduce millets in meals on regular basis. Millets will also be extensively used in various functions and events of CAPFs and NDRF.

Millets will be made available in Kendriya Police Kalyan Bhandar, grocery shops of the campuses and ration stores by setting up the dedicated counters/corners.

The forces will organise training of cooks in preparing millets-based dishes through reputed institutes in this field.

'CIC halves pendency of cases in last three years'

New Delhi, May 03 (PTI):

The Central Information Commission (CIC) has almost halved the pendency of appeals and complaints with it in the last three years, according to data compiled by the transparency panel.

The panel had 38,116 cases pending before it in 2020-21 which has reduced to 19,233 in 2022-23, officials said referring to tentative figures compiled by the commission on March 31.

The commission handles two kinds of cases - complaints and appeals - filed by RTI applicants against public authorities which deny or delay the furnishing of information.

According to data, the CIC had registered 19,183 cases in 2020-21 and disposed of 17017 cases with a pendency of 38,116 at the

end of the year. Disposal of cases rose to 28,793 in 2021-22 followed by 29,210 in 2022-23 which brought down the number of pending cases to 19,233.

According to the data on the website of the commission on Wednesday, the registry of Chief Information Commissioner Y K Sinha admitted 2,655 cases and disposed of 3,409 cases during 2022-23.

Among the information commissioners, Vanaja N Sarna disposed of 3,843 cases, Suresh Chandra 2,826 cases, Heeralal Samariya 4,069 cases, Saroj Punhani 3,807 cases and Uday Mahurkar 5,523 cases.

The dip in pending cases would translate to lesser time for the cases to come for hearing before the CIC, officials said.

Maha Cabinet nod for scholarships to 75 students

Mumbai, May 03 (PTI):

For research in mangroves and marine biodiversity

The Maharashtra cabinet on Wednesday approved a proposal to provide scholarships to a total of 75 students over a period of three years for carrying out research in mangroves and marine biodiversity in prestigious universities abroad.

A statement from the Chief Minister's Office (CMO) said that as part of this exercise, every year 25 students will be given scholarships by the forest department's Mangrove and Marine Biodiversity Conservation Foundation. These scholarships will be given to students who have taken admissions in educational institutions abroad which are within 150th ranking of Times Higher Education (THE) or Quacquarelli Symonds (QS). The statement said

30 per cent of these scholarships will be given to female students.

Of these 25 students, 15 will be post-graduate and 10 PhD students from the fields of marine science, marine ecology, oceanography, marine biology, marine biotechnology, microbiology, biodiversity subjects.

The minimum age of post-graduate students should not exceed 35, while for the PhD students, it should not be more than 40. Their annual income limit should not be more than Rs 8 lakh, the statement said.

The scheme will cost the government Rs 31.50 crore. Every year, the

Mangrove Foundation will issue advertisements for the scholarship in April or May.

In another decision, the cabinet gave its green signal to implement a solid waste management project on ICT (information and communications technology) in all urban local bodies.

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