



BRIEF



A woman devotee being assisted by her granddaughter as she lays on the ground as a ritual to reach to the bank of River Ganga to celebrate the Chhath Puja festival, in Kolkata, Sunday.

Tribute

Ahmedabad: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday paid homage to 19th century Hindu Sant Jalaram Bapa on his birth anniversary and said he spread the fragrance of humanity through his social services. Jalaram Bapa was born at Virpur in Gujarat's Rajkot district in 1799. He started many social services which are still continued by a temple set up in his memory at Virpur.

UFO

Imphal: Normal flight services at Manipur's Imphal International Airport were affected on Sunday afternoon over sighting of an unidentified flying object (UFO), officials said. Two flights were diverted and three others delayed. Services normalised after around three hours.

Pest attack

Guwahati: More than 28,000 hectare of paddy across 15 districts of Assam have been damaged by a specific kind of caterpillar, Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said on Sunday. The Agriculture Department has supplied necessary pesticides and sprayers to contain the spread of the rice ear-cutting caterpillar or mythimna separata, the Chief Minister's Office (CMO) said in a post on X.

Re-polling

Bhopal: The Election Commission of India (ECI) has ordered re-polling on November 21 at a booth in the Ater assembly constituency in Madhya Pradesh's Bhand district, according to an official release. Voting will be held at booth number 3 under polling centre number 71 at Kishupura between 7 am and 6 pm, it said, adding that indelible ink will be applied on the middle finger of voters.

Mishap

Mehsana: At least 25 girls in the age group of 10 to 15 years received burn injuries on Saturday after helium balloons they were holding as part of a religious event exploded due to sparks from firecrackers outside a temple at a village in Mehnsana district of Gujarat, police said.

Watery grave

Chandrapur: Three members of a family drowned on Sunday at the confluence of Wardha and Irari rivers in Chandrapur in Maharashtra, a police official said. The Poda family from Nandgaon village here had come to immerse the ashes of some kin, when three members, identified as Govind Poda, Ganesh Poda and Chetan Poda, slipped and drowned in the afternoon, he said.

Weather
High 31 Low 19

Awesome Australia Head's magnificent 137 leads Australia to sixth World Cup

Ahmedabad, Nov 19 (PTI): India's dreams of winning a third World Cup title lay in tatters after an inexplicable meltdown saw them crash to a six-wicket defeat against an indefatigable Australia here on Sunday, plunging the cricket-obsessed country into deep mourning. Australia thus won a record-extending sixth World Cup title, stretching their dominance in the tournament that started way back in 1975.

Put in to bat, India ended up with a below-par 240 despite contributions from Rohit Sharma (47 off 31 balls), Virat Kohli (54 off 63) and K L Rahul (66 off 107). Just like his performance in the WTC final against India in June, Travis Head made a match-winning 137 off 120 balls as Australia chased down the target in 43 overs. Indian hopes were raised when Australia lost three wickets for 47 but a 192-run partnership between Head and Marnus Labuschagne (58 not out) shut the door on the opposition. Australia's brilliant bowling and fielding also went



Australia's batter Travis Head celebrates after scoring a century.

a long way in their emphatic win. The dew in the evening also made batting easier on a slow and dry surface.

Ahead of the high-stakes final, Pat Cummins had expressed his desire to silence the crowd, and he certainly delivered. In a pivotal moment of the match, he delivered a delivery that bounced unexpectedly, leading to Virat Kohli's dismissal for 54 runs as he attempted to play a ball towards an empty cover area. A hushed silence fell over the 132,000-strong crowd at Narendra Modi Stadium, a moment etched in cricketing history. India, who were the only unbeaten side going into the final after 10 wins on the trot, fell flat in the final hurdle. Their last world title came way back in 2011 and their last ICC trophy was the Champions Trophy triumph in 2013. India's defeats in the ICC events over the past decade include the loss in 2014 World T20 final, 2016 World T20 semifinal, 2017 Champions Trophy final, 2019 ODI World Cup semifinal, 2022 T20 World Cup semifinal and back-to-back runners-up finish in the 2021 and 2023 World Test Championship cycle.

Brief scores
India: 240 all out in 50 overs (KL Rahul 66, Virat Kohli 54; Mitchell Starc 3/55).
Australia: 241/4 in 43 overs (Travis Head 137, Marnus Labuschagne 58 not out; Jasprit Bumrah 2/43).

Indira Gandhi Peace Prize to Covid warriors

New Delhi, Nov 19 (PTI): The Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament and Development, 2022, was Sunday awarded jointly to the Indian Medical Association and the Trained Nurses Association of India as representatives of the Covid warriors in the country. Former Vice President M Hamid Ansari presented the award to Sharad Kumar Agarwal, the president of the

Indian Medical Association, and Roy K George, the president of the Trained Nurses Association of India.

Addressing the award ceremony, the Chairperson of Indira Gandhi Memorial Trust, Sonia Gandhi, said the award was for every doctor, nurse, paramedic and worker for their selfless service, unflinching dedication and perseverance in the face of adversity.

'Will retire from politics, if proved taken money'

Bengaluru, Nov 19 (PTI):

With JD(S) state president H D Kumaraswamy repeatedly attacking him and his son Yathindra, a former Congress MLA, accusing them of a "cash for transfer" racket, Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Sunday said he will retire from politics, if proved that he has taken money, even in a single transfer case of government officials.



CM Siddaramaiah

He alleged such cash for transfer happened during Kumaraswamy's tenure. "I have told you not to ask about it (Kumaraswamy's allegations). Haven't I re-

sponded to it already? Let him tweet (post on X) a number of times. He is speaking about what they did during his tenure (as CM)," Siddaramaiah said in response to a question about Kumaraswamy's attacks. Speaking to reporters here, the chief minister said, "He (Kumaraswamy) is speaking about the money they (Kumaraswamy and JDS

In single case of transfer

leaders) took for transfers. They took money during his tenure. In our tenure, we have not taken any money I have already said - I will retire from politics, if it's proved that I have taken money in even a single case of transfer."

"Let him tweet a hundred times, I don't want to reply," he added. Kumaraswamy had recently sought to link a phone conversation between Yathindra and Siddaramaiah, which was widely circulated on social media, to allege a cash for postings/transfer scam, a charge which has been

rightly rejected by the chief minister and his son.

Continuing his attack, Kumaraswamy has even alleged that an official, whose name was mentioned in a phone conversation between the CM and his son, had figured in the transfer list of police inspectors released recently. Further accusing Yathindra of acting like a "Super Chief Minister", the JD(S) leader had even sought the resignation of Siddaramaiah over a video clip. The former chief minister today too, in a series of posts on 'X', on the issue, accused Siddaramaiah of outsourcing his Varuna constituency in Mysuru district to his son Yathindra.

'RTI appeals, complaints disposal rate crosses 90% in current fiscal'

New Delhi, Nov 19 (PTI):

The disposal rate of appeals and complaints filed under the RTI Act has crossed 90 per cent so far this fiscal, Chief Information Commissioner (CIC) Heeralal Samariya said on Sunday.

Samariya, who was sworn in as the CIC on November 6, said this during a meeting with Union Minister of State for Personnel Jitendra Singh.

During an hour-long meeting, Samariya informed the minister that the disposal rate of the Right to Information (RTI) appeals and complaints has, for the first time,



Heeralal Samariya

crossed 90 per cent in the current financial year, according to a personnel ministry statement. Singh lauded the Central Information Commission for achieving "consistent decline" in

pendency with corresponding rise in disposal of the RTI appeals.

According to the CIC data available as on November 9, 11,499 RTI appeals and complaints were disposed of, while 12,695 were received, marking a disposal rate of 90.5 per cent, the statement said.

In 2022-23, 19,018 appeals were registered, while in 2021-22, 19,604 appeals were filed as against 19,183 in 2020-21.

As many as 29,210 RTI appeals were disposed of in 2022-23, 28,793 in 2021-22 and 17,017 in 2020-21, it said, adding that the figures include the backlog of pending RTI appeals which were also disposed

of during the respective years. The minister applauded the office of Chief Information Commission for being the first government body to use artificial intelligence (AI) for study, analysis and pattern of RTIs and "also checking credentials of RTI applicants", the statement said. The CIC also apprised the minister of the hybrid mode, i.e., physical-cum-video conferencing introduced in his office for hearing and disposal of RTI appeals.

Singh told the CIC to urge the State Information Commissions to also introduce the hybrid mode latest by the end of this year.

Rescue operation challenging: Gadkari

Every possible method being tried for speedy evacuation

Uttarkashi (Uttarakhand), Nov 19 (PTI): Whatever is required to save the 41 trapped workers will be done and keeping the morale of workers and their family members high should be everyone's collective responsibility, Union minister Nitin Gadkari said on Sunday as he reviewed the rescue operation at the partially collapsed Silkyara tunnel.

The minister for road transport and highways, who was accompanied by Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami, said the rescue operation is challenging as the soil strata in the



Himalayan region is not uniform.

It is soft at some places and hard at other places which makes any mechanical operation difficult, he said.

Horizontal drilling with the American auger is the quickest method in the given circumstances to reach the trapped workers, Gadkari said.

"American auger was working alright when it was drilling through soft soil. It faced some problems after it encountered some hard obstacle that led to the machine applying greater pressure and creating vibrations following which it was stopped for safety reasons," he said at a press conference in Silkyara.

"We are working on six options simultaneously. The PMO is also closely monitoring the operation. Our biggest priority is to save all those who are trapped and as soon as possible. Whatever is needed will be done," he said.

TRIBUTES TO SETTING SUN



Devotees offer prayers during the 'Chhath Puja' celebrations on the banks of the Brahmaputra river in Guwahati, Sunday.

Chhath celebrated with great fervour across Bihar

Patna, Nov 19 (PTI): Lakhs of men and women across Bihar paid tributes to the setting sun on Sunday as part of Chhath, the state's most popular festival which has now gained fame far and wide.

Chhath devotees, those who observe a grueling 36-hour fast, stood in waist-deep water, some choosing deep vessels atop roofs but many others walking long distances to reach ghats of rivers, lakes or ponds.

Many men carried wicker baskets on their heads, heavy with items used in the ritual worship while the more adventurous ones chose to cover the distance prostrating on their bare chests (dandvat). All

roads seemed to lead to the Ganga in the state capital where devotees and their family members burst into loud chants of "Har Har Gange" when Chief Minister Nitish Kumar went past on a steamer, waving at the citizens while on his annual vigil.

The chief minister made it a point, before embarking on his steamer tour, to offer worship to the "Astaachalgami Surya", as the setting sun is known in local parlance, at his official residence where devotees from among his close family members were observing the austerities.

Kumar, who has during his long tenure been on good terms with Raj Bhavan, had

taken along Governor Rajendra Arlekar, who took over in February this year and got a chance to experience firsthand the fervour of the festival to worship the Sun.

No untoward incident was reported from any of the 100 ghats along the Ganga in Patna district where 5,000 security personnel helped the devotees complete their puja safely before all of them returned home hoping that "Chhathi maiya" would fulfil their wishes, which for many this year included India's victory in the World Cup.

"We rushed to the ghat after watching the first 10 overs on TV. We are getting updates on our mobile phones.

31 'very sick' babies evacuated from hosp

Khan Younis, Nov 19 (AP): Thirty-one premature babies were safely transferred from Gaza's main hospital to another in the south on Sunday, and will be moved to Egypt, health officials said, as scores of other critically wounded patients remained stranded there days after Israeli forces entered the compound.

The fate of the newborns at Shifa Hospital had captured global attention after the release of images showing doctors trying to keep them warm. A power blackout had shut down incubators and other equipment, and food, water and medical supplies ran out as Israeli forces battled Palestinian militants outside the hospital.

'Vital role of private sector in boosting IAF's capability'

Bengaluru, Nov 19 (PTI): Private industries will play a very important role not only in enhancing Indian Air Force capabilities but also in increasing the productivity and production ability of defence public sector units, Air Chief Marshal Vivek Ram Chaudhari said on Sunday. Responding to a question during a session at the Synergia Conclave 2023, he said the private industry also needs to ensure that they match up with the production capability to ensure that the rollout of fighters that the Air Force orders takes place on time. He said there is definitely a huge role for the private industry to enhance IAF's capability by helping the lead



Vivek Ram Chaudhari

integrators roll out aircraft. "Without doubt, the private industry will play a very important role, not only in enhancing our capability but also in enhancing the productivity or the production capability of the defence PSUs," the IAF chief said.

Netanyahu should be shot dead: Cong MP sparks row

Kasaragod (Kerala), Nov 19 (PTI): Senior Congress leader Rajmohan Unnithan has come under criticism over his remarks that Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is a "war criminal" and should be shot dead without trial for allegedly murdering Palestinians in the Gaza strip.

Condemning the Kasaragod MP's remarks, the state BJP unit termed it "deplorable". At a recent Palestine solidarity event organised by the United Muslim Jama'ath, a collective of mosques in and around Kasaragod town, Unnithan said another



Rajmohan Unnithan

Nuremberg trial was the need of the hour.

In a video which has gone viral, Unnithan said: "The Nuremberg trial was held after the Second World War, and the war criminals were shot dead without trial. Another Nuremberg trial is the

need of the hour. Because Benjamin Netanyahu is standing in front of the world as a war criminal. It is time to shoot down Benjamin Netanyahu -- who has violated the Geneva convention -- without trial, such is the amount of murders he has committed."

BJP state president K Surendran on Saturday echoed "terrorist propaganda" and sought immediate legal action.

In a post on 'X', Surendran said, "Outraged by @INCIndia MP Rajmohan Unnithan's reckless and inflammatory speech at the Palestine Rally.

'Avoid objectionable activities in Metro'

New Delhi, Nov 19 (PTI): With a string of controversial videos made in Delhi Metro trains and premises going viral in the last several months, DMRC chief Vikas Kumar has appealed to people to refrain from engaging in "objectionable" activities and said steps were being taken to curb such incidents. In an interview with PTI, Kumar also said squads do "surprise checks" from time to time and the Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) is "trying its best" to check these activities. Seeking fame, some metro riders in the past have often resorted to gyrating on some popular numbers inside train coaches or at platforms,



DMRC chief Vikas Kumar

while someone else filmed it. In other cases, videos have emerged on social media platforms such as Instagram where young couples have been filmed getting intimate in a train.

Chhath Puja: Obeisance paid to setting Sun



Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Nov 19: On Sunday, Chhath Puja was celebrated with religious fervour across the city. The devotees offered obeisance to the setting sun. The women observing fast reached the ponds with their

family members and stood in the water to offer Arghya to the Surya Devta.

Suryodaya Arghya will be offered on November 20. After offering Arghya to the rising sun, the devotees would break the 36-hour long fast marking the

culmination of Chhath Puja.

Chhath Puja is celebrated in Steel City with great fervour and enthusiasm. The people of Jharkhand, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, who have settled in Bhilai celebrate this festival with great devotion.

People of other regions and religions have also started celebrating Chhath Puja in which Surya Devta (Sun God) and Chhatthi Maiyya are worshipped.

On Friday, the four-day festival of Chhath Puja began with the ritual of Nahay Khay. The women

devotees observed fast for the entire day and consumed just one salty meal.

Right from the early morning hours, they were engaged in cleaning their houses and thereafter they had a holy bath to begin the fast. On the day, the devo-

tees did their last minute shopping for the festival.

The ritual of Kharna was conducted on Nov 18. The formal beginning of Chhath Puja took place with 'Kharna', a ritual in which Kheer is cooked and distributed among relatives and neighbours.

The markets were flooded with Chhath Puja shoppers. Women were seen buying cosmetic items, new clothes and bangles for the festival. They also purchased the items required for the puja. Many women were also seen getting mehndi applied.

The festival of Surya Shasthi Vrat lasts for four days in which the entire family (sons, grandchildren, relatives) are involved. This is the only festival in the country in which the rising sun is celebrated along with the setting sun.

Indira Gandhi remembered on birth anniversary

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Nov 19: Former minister of Chhattisgarh state Badruddin Qureshi celebrated the birth anniversary of former Prime Minister Late Indira Gandhi at 32 Bungalows.

After garlanding the oil portrait of Indira Gandhi Qureshi said that Martyr Indira Gandhi nationalized the country's banks to make the poor, helpless and vulnerable people financially independent and provided loans from nationalized banks to the common poor families for doing business without any guarantee. Kings and Maharajas used



to get privy purse from the government, it was abolished, the benefits of which the poor are still getting, this was the gift of Indira Gandhi.

Indira Gandhi was the Prime Minister of the country from 1967 to 1977 and till 1980. She struggled for the independence of the country and even went to jail.

She sacrificed her life to maintain the unity and integrity of the country but did not allow the country to be divided. Samaylal Sahu, Subhadra Singh, Satpal Singh, Robin Singh, Akil, Deepak, Joga Rao, Jamil Ahmed, Farooq, Baldev Singh, Najmu Nisha and other Congressmen were present in the program.

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Nov 19: An employee of Bhilai Steel Plant was killed in a road accident which occurred near Khursipar Gate late evening on Saturday. The victim was moving towards the workplace from his residence in Balaji Nagar, Khursipar when he was run over by a truck between Khursipar Triangle and Level Crossing.

The kin are demanding compassionate appointment and other compensation. A case has been lodged at Khursipar Police Station against the truck driver. According to information, the deceased was R Koteswar Rao (50) a resi-

dent of Balaji Nagar, Khursipar. He worked as a Staff Attendant in the General Establishment Department of Bhilai Steel Plant.

Around 21:30 hrs, he left home for duty. Near Khursipar gate, he was crushed to death by a speeding truck. On information, a police team reached the spot and the body was sent to the Supela Hospital. Relatives directly reached the hospital after which the body was kept in the mortuary.

According to information, Koteswar Rao has two sons and both of them reside in other cities in connection with work. On Sunday morning, relatives



reached Khursipar Police Station and lodged a complaint against the truck driver. They are demanding proper compensation as well as compassionate appointment for one of the

dependents of the deceased.

They argued that the mishap occurred on the way to the workplace and hence the bereaved family is eligible to get the benefit of compassionate appointment. The kin announced that if they are disappointed of compassionate appointment, they will resort to agitation.

On the other hand, the employees of Bhilai Steel Plant are accusing the Traffic Police and the BSP management for the road mishaps. The employees stated that both the author-

ities have failed to regulate and control the movement of heavy vehicles on the township roads. The potholes and worn out roads also create a dangerous situation.

Further, the mishap occurred during the No-Entry timings at Khursipar Gate. The traffic police, CISF and BSP's concerned department failed to put a check on the entry of heavy vehicles during this period.

The road between Level Crossing to Khursipar Triangle is about 40 feet wide but the roadside vendors reduce the road width considerably. Chances of traffic jams and accidents are always there on this road.

Heavy vehicles restricted on Service Lane at Supela from today

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Nov 19: The service road from Raipur to Durg Road between Hotel Amit International to Chandra Maurya Square will be restricted for heavy vehicles / buses from November 20 evening. It is consequent to the work of widening and re-carpeting of service road beneath the flyover.

This task is likely to be completed within a week. The commuters have been advised to use the flyovers and other roads to avoid inconvenience. The construction work will continue round the clock.

From November 20 night, the work of tar road construction and road widening will be started in the Service Road from Raipur to Durg between



Hotel Amit International to Chandra Maurya Square. This entire patch of road is located beneath the Chandra Maurya flyover. During the construction work, the traffic police imposed restrictions on the movement of heavy vehicles and buses on this route.

To avert any possible mishaps, the heavy vehi-



cles will be completely restricted on this route. The construction agency has said that it will take one

week to complete this work. Drivers moving from Raipur to Durg will have to use the over

bridge. Those who want to move towards Bhilai Township should use the Power House under bridge route.

Similarly, to reach the highway from the Bhilai Township, commuters will have to use the Power House Under Bridge and Chandra Maurya under bridge route. Two wheeler and four wheeler drivers will be diverted towards Chandra Maurya Talkies using the road in front of Hotel Amit.

At the construction site, the Deputy Superintendent of Police (Traffic) gave instructions to the construction company to use safety equipment, deploy security guards to divert vehicles, maintain proper lighting at night and also appealed to the common citizens to be careful while driving.

Search operations intensified to trap absconding prisoner

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Nov 19: Durg Police intensified the search operations to trap the absconding prisoner, who had escaped from the District Hospital late evening on Wednesday. Police are collecting technical inputs to chase and trace the absconder.

After escaping from custody in Raipur, this notorious offender had broken the jail for the second time in Durg. The accused is murder and loot has now dared to give an open challenge to Chhattisgarh Police. Top Cops claimed that the accused would be behind the bars very soon.

It needs to be recollected here that a notorious offender imprisoned for



murder and loot escaped from the hospital late at night on Wednesday. The under trial prisoner Anupam Jha was admitted to the District Hospital on November 14. Around 21:30 hrs on Wednesday, he asked the Jail Guards to take him to the toilet. Jail Guards Geeta Khunte and Raju Lal Verma accompanied him to the toilet outside the ward. At the toilet, two masked men overpow-

ered the Jail Guards after which the accused Anupam Jha escaped with them. It needs to be mentioned here that the under trial prisoner is Anupam Jha alias Abhishek Jha a resident of Baikunthpur, District - Vaishali (Bihar). He is accused in a case registered at Amleshwar Police Station under section 302, 394, 397, 449, 34 of IPC and Section 25, 27 of Arms Act.

Anupam Jha alias Abhishek Jha had targeted a jewellery shop - Samridhi Jewellers (Amleshwar) with his accomplices Saurabh Kumar Singh, Abhay Kumar Bharti and Alok Kumar Yadav. They murdered the shop owner to loot the jewellery.

SAIL-BSP dispatches first rake of 260 Metre long rail panels from FBWP at Sabarmati

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Nov 19: In a significant achievement, SAIL-Bhilai Steel Plant has dispatched the first 260-meter panel rake from the Flash Butt Welding Plant (FBWP) at Sabarmati. This was done in response to the increased demand from Indian Railways for 260 Metre long welded rail panels. In doing so, long rail panel supplies from Universal Rail Mill (URM) and Rail and Structural Mill (RSM) of Bhilai Steel Plant will be augmented.

Recognizing the imperative to meet the increased demand of Indian Railways, SAIL proposed utilizing the flash butt welding plant facility of Indian Railways at Sabarmati, Ahmedabad, for welding 13/26 Metre rails into 260 M long rail



panels. The input rails are being supplied from Rail and Structural Mill of BSP. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed with Indian Railways on December 26, 2022, and thereafter SAIL-BSP took over the Sabarmati welding plant of Western Railways. The Plant was in commission-

ing stage and after overcoming many challenges, commercial production commenced from FBWP-Sabarmati on October 18, 2023 and the first 260 M rail panels were dispatched on November 06, 2023. Multiple teams from BSP and RDCIS-Ranchi were deployed to help in the commissioning of the

Plant, standardization of welding parameters and starting of the FBWP Sabarmati Plant. Hemant Pathak, CGM-OHP, Pankaj Puri, CGM-Corporate Office, Rajat Mukherjee, GM-URM, Prashant Lakhe, GM-RSM, KV Shankar, GM-RCL, Sanjeev Kumar, GM-RDCIS, Sai Natesh, GM (CMO) and

Kumar Saurabh, Manager-RCL played a pivotal role in stabilizing the FBWP Sabarmati, initiating commercial production and dispatching the first rake from FBWP-Sabarmati. SAIL's Central Marketing Organisation (CMO) also played an important role in stabilisation of the Plant.

Congratulating the teams involved in this landmark achievement, Anirban Dasgupta, Director I/c Bhilai Steel Plant and Anjan Kumar, ED-Works (BSP), commended the efforts made and congratulated the BSP team deputed to Sabarmati, motivating them to maintain the same spirit to achieve the rated capacity of the plant.

Anish Sengupta, CGM (URM) who is the nodal officer of the FBWP

Sabarmati project from SAIL, congratulated the BSP and Sabarmati Railways teams, emphasizing that this feat was made possible by close cooperation and team work of all concerned.

He also expressed gratitude to Indian Railways for providing SAIL the opportunity to operate the Sabarmati plant for the manufacturing of 260 M welded panels. The Sabarmati facility is expected to produce one lakh tonnes of 260 M welded panels annually.

This achievement is not only a testament to SAIL-BSP's commitment to excellence but also signifies a leap forward in the nation's rail manufacturing capabilities. It also demonstrates the close collaboration between SAIL and Indian Railways.

Miscreants vandalise five cars in Old Bhilai



Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Nov 19: Some unidentified miscreants vandalised five cars parked at a Repair Garage in Old Bhilai on the intervening night of Sunday. The ruffians shattered all the glasses of the cars. An FIR has been lodged at Old Bhilai Police Station against the unknown accused.

Police received a complaint in the wee hours of Sunday that some unknown ruffians vandalised five cars at a repair shop. On information, a police team reached Fakira Garage, located on National Highway at Bajrangpara Ward. The un-

known ruffians shattered the glasses of three SUVs, one Maruti 800 car and a Tata Magic vehicle. According to the Garage Owner, loss of above 60000 rupees occurred in the incident.

Some rag pickers have reportedly seen the accused and witnessed the incident. According to them, some people reached Fakira Garage in an auto-rickshaw around 05:00 hrs and escaped after vandalising the vehicles. Police are examining the CCTV footage of nearby places and investigations are on.

CM watches India-Australia' match live at Indoor Stadium



● Large number of crowd, specially general public was also present

Raipur, Nov 19: The Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel had made special arrangements to watch the historic World Cup finals between the India and Australian team in city's Indoor Stadium. CM Baghel along with other Congress Ministers, leaders and party workers had come to watch the match in the Stadium on large screen LED and during this entry to the stadium

for general public was also made free of cost. Hundreds of people reached city's Balbir Singh Juneja's Indoor Stadium in the afternoon and along with him the PCC State in-charge Kumari Selja, Dy. CM Tamradhwaj Sahu, Mayor Aijaz Dhebar, Speaker RMC Pramod Dubey, MLA Kuldeep Juneja, Vikas Upadhyay and others were also present. It was altogether a different atmosphere in the stadium today, as many were found dressed in the Indian team dress and many had got their faces coloured with Indian flag and symbols

of cricket. There was lot of enthusiasm among the audience present to watch the finals and

Target of 241 is good target: CM

Raipur: 'CM Baghel in his comments about the India's score said that target of 241 is good and I am hopeful that the Indian bowlers will make good bowling and ensure India's victory'.

many were found carrying flags in their hand



and were optimistic about the match. CM Baghel had also posted in his X handle saying 'chak de India'. In the stadium, many large screens were installed so as to make it convenient to all to watch the match with ease.

Meanwhile in other

hotels and PVRs and other public places also large LED screens were installed and hotels have made many arrangements for its customers with variety of cuisines and large cut-out of players so as to make the entire atmosphere pro-World Cup.

'KANYADAAN'



The social organization 'Sewa Path' organized free of cost mass marriage programme of 'Kanyadaan' of 9 girls on the same dais at Agrasen Dhaam on VIP Road and during this as per wishes of bride and bride-groom, novel 'barat' of nine girls was taken out.

Fire breaks out in Janta Tent House godown

● Goods worth lakhs gutted in fire

Bilaspur, Nov 19: Fire broke out in the Janta Tent House godown in Bilaspur on Sunday morning and the fire-brigade team was present to douse the fire and gained controlled after lots of efforts. It is suspected that the fire broke out likely due to short-circuit. There are reports that loss to the tune of around Rs 25 lakh has taken place and the case is that of Sarkanda Thana.

As per information in this regard, there is godown of Janta Tent House behind the Apollo Hospital in Bilaspur. The Director of Janta Tent had stored all the materials like shed, water proof tents clothes, mattresses, chairs, furniture and other items in it. It was during wee hours of Sunday morning at around 4:00 am that smoke started emitting from the godown and people present nearby immediately informed it to the police. The police reached the site along with the fire-brigade and

by this time the fire has assumed proportions. The police informed that fire brigade of Home Guards in the city and by the time the fire-brigade could reach the site, the fire had spread all over the place and seemed like out of control. All the materials stored in the godown was found burning like dry-wood. By this time a huge crowd had gathered near the site and the fire-brigades were called one after another and total three rounds were held to gain control on fire in about 2 hours.

Evaluation of copies begins with supplementary examinations in RSU

● 35 thousand students appearing for the examination

Raipur, Nov 19: Amid ongoing supplementary examinations of Pt. Ravi Shankar Shukla University the evaluation of answer sheets has also been started in a bid to ensure timely release of exam results. Supplementary examinations began on 27th October. About 35 thousand students of BA, B.Com, B.Sc, BCA and other courses are appearing in the supplementary examinations. RSU supplementary exams were usually held in August-September and the

results were released in October. But this time due to the new rules related to eligibility, the examinations started with a delay of two months. The examinations will continue till 27th November. Regarding the result, the officers say that there has been a delay in the supplementary examinations. According to officials the evaluation has started so that there is no delay in the result. Results may start coming out from the last week of November. This time the supplementary examinations of state universities of the state including RSU are being conducted under the new rules. Usually, students who fail in one subject

in the annual examination gets supplementary. But this time students who have failed in two subjects are also appearing in the supplementary exams. This arrangement has been made only for this year. The dates of supplementary examinations have been changed due to elections. The supplementary examination which was to be held on 17th will now be held on 25th November. Similarly, the examination of 7th November will be held on 23rd November. The exam for 16th November will be held on 24th November and the exam for 18th November will be held on 28th November.

Woman asleep in house robbed of necklace

Raipur, Nov 19: A thief cut off the necklace from the neck of a sleeping woman and stole it in Saraswati Nagar police station area. According to the police, Bharti Patre, resident of Satnamipara, Kota, Saraswati Nagar, has filed a complaint against an unidentified thief for cutting necklace from her neck and taking it away. The woman told the police that since she was in deep sleep, she was not aware of the theft. After waking up in the morning, she got information that the necklace had been cut from her neck and taken away.

Women vote more than men in 50 assembly constituencies

● Chhattisgarh Assembly Election 2023

Central Chronicle News

Raipur, Nov 19: The total number of female voters who exercised their franchise in the Chhattisgarh Assembly Elections 2023 is more than the total number of male voters who exercised their franchise. In 50 out of 90 assembly constituencies of Chhattisgarh, women have voted more than men.

From the observation of the voting data in the two phases of Chhattisgarh

Assembly Elections 2023 held on 7th and 17th November, it is clear that the participation and awareness of women in exercising their franchise is no less than that of men. In 50 out of 90 assembly constituencies of Chhattisgarh, the number of women exercising their franchise is more than the number of men exercising their franchise. According to the information received from the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer the number of female voters who came to the polling stations and cast their vote is more than the number of male voters who cast their

vote in polling centres of Bharatpur-Sonhat, Pratappur, Ramanujan, Samri, Lundra, Sambikapur, Sitapur, Jashpur, Kunkuri, Pathalgaon, Lailunga, Sarangarh, Kharsia, Dharamjaigarh, Rampur, Palitanakhar, Jaijapur, Marwahi, Saraipali, Basna, Khallari, Mahasamund, Bilaigarh, Rajim, Bindranwagarh, Sihawa, Dondilohara, Gunderdehi, Sanjari-Balod, Dhamtari, Durg City, Pandariya, Kawardha, Khairagarh, Dongargarh, Raipura, Dongargaon, Mohlamapur,

Bhanupratappur, Kanker, Keshkal, Kondagaon, Narayanpur, Bastar, Jagdalpur, Chitrakot, Dantewada, Bijapur and Konta assembly constituencies. In the two phases of voting in Chhattisgarh, a total of 1 crore 55 lakh 61 thousand 460 voters exercised their franchise, which includes 77 lakh 48 thousand 612 male voters and 78 lakh 12 thousand 631 female voters. Thus, the total number of female voters who exercised their franchise in the Assembly Elections 2023 is also more than the total number of male voters who cast their vote.

Avoid travelling with inflammable and explosive items: Rly admn to passengers



Special awareness and investigation campaign underway
Team of railway officials, employees checks more than 100 trains passing through SECR in last 3 days

Raipur, Nov 19: A special fire safety campaign is being run in all the major railway stations of South East Central Railway along with the entire Indian Railways and in the trains passing through South East Central Railway. Under this campaign, the Commerce Department and the Railway Protection Force are taking immediate action against any type of explosives and inflammable items like LPG cylinders, kerosene stoves etc. being carried in the passenger coaches including the pantry cars of the trains. Surveillance is also being maintained



provided information about the importance of fire safety while traveling in trains and passengers are being made aware not to travel with inflammable and explosive items during the journey. Apart from this, people are also being urged through announcement system to avoid carrying prohibited items in the train. All the ticket checking employees have been directed to check the availability of fire extinguishers and prohibited items in the trains while on duty. Under this awareness and intensive checking campaign, till November 16, the Railway Protection Force took action against the accused under the Railway Act in a total of 74 cases. This includes cases of passengers traveling in passenger trains carrying kerosene, petrol, diesel and firecrackers as well as cases of gas cylinders being found during checking of pantry cars. Safety of the passengers is paramount in Railways. Fire incidents in trains are one of the



most serious disasters to human life and railway property, hence the Fire Safety Awareness Campaign underlines the commitment to create a safe traveling environment. Its main objective is to make passengers aware of the importance of fire safety while traveling in trains and to reduce the risk of fire incidents by running awareness campaigns. Passengers should not travel with any kind of inflammable/explosive (gas cylinder, kerosene, petrol, diesel, firecrackers) goods etc. in passenger trains as this can lead to a major accident. Besides, such a mistake can also result in loss of life and property of people. Carrying inflammable/explosive items in station, platform or passenger trains during train journey is prohibited under Section 164 Railway Act. It is a punishable offense under the Indian Penal Code, and if caught doing so, there is a provision of imprisonment up to three years and fine.



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Work of linking Gudhiyari with Expressway at snail's pace



Passer-bys are facing lots of problems due to construction work near the station
On completion of construction work, people can directly reach station through under-bridge

Raipur, Nov 19: The work that of linking the Gudhiyari Railway under-bridge near the main railway station with the capi-



tal city's Expressway is going as snail's pace. It is by demolishing part of the Expressway, the work that of joining the road with the under-bridge has been started. But due to the festive season, the work that of joining the Gudhiyari under-bridge near the Railway Station with the Expressway at present is lying closed. It is after demolition work on Expressway near Faffadhih area, the area has been closed for the traffic and due to which the denizens of the area are facing lots

of problems. According to officials from the railway department all efforts are being made to complete the work of linking the Gudhiyari Railway under-bridge with the Expressway, so that the people of the area are relieved of the problems being faced. The pace of development that of linking Gudhiyari Under-bridge with the Expressway has reduced a bit compared to what it was going on earlier. Can reach directly to Platform No. 7. On completion of the linking of Gudhiyari under-bridge with the Expressway, the people from Gudhiyari under-bridge can directly reach platform No. 7 at Gudhiyari end. At present since the under-bridge is not linked with the Expressway near Gudhiyari, the people coming from Gudhiyari side are facing lots of problems and seeing this the Railway administration has decided to link the same.

Tusker elephant wrecks havoc Villagers spend night in terror

Balod, Nov 19: Tusker elephant is creating havoc in Gurur forest area of the district. Last night, tusker elephant entered many villages and damaged crops. Villagers in the area had to spend the night in terror. Meanwhile, the Forest Department team has appealed to the villagers to stay in their homes. The forest department has alerted villages like Jagtra, Sohra, Bichhibahra, Khairdigi, Dhanapuri, Odenadih, Dokla over movement of the tusker elephant and has appealed not to go to the forest. The elephant is present in the forest of Wild Bheja village.

Showcase notices to 4 Congmen from Kurud for anti-party activities

Dhamtari, Nov 19: Complaints of anti-party activities are being received from many places in the Assembly Elections-2023. In such a situation, showcase notices have now been issued to 4 Congressmen from Kurud Assembly constituency. The Pradesh Congress Committee has sought a reply within 24 hours. Showcase notices have been issued to former candidate Laxmikanta Sahu, Nagar Panchayat President Tapan Chandrakar, District President Sharda Sahu, District Congress Committee Vice President Bharat Nahar. All four are accused of being involved in anti-party activities against the party's official candidate after which PCC General Secretary Malkit Singh Gaidu has issued notices.

'Chhath Vrat' offer 'Sandhya Arghya' to setting Sun



Devotees perform rituals of 'Chhath Puja' festival, at Mahadeoghat, Sunday.

On the third day of Chhath Puja

Raipur, Nov 19: Thousands of Chhath Vratists offered Sandhya Arghya to setting Sun on the third day of Chhath Puja at over 50 Ghats including Mahadev Ghat of Kharun river, on the occasion of third day of Chhath Puja, on Sunday evening. Usha Arghya will be offered on Monday morning. Bhandara programme will be organised at Mahadev Ghat on November 20, on Monday morning.

Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel, former Chief Minister Dr Raman Singh, former Minister and MLA Brijmohan Agrawal,

Lok Sabha Member Sunil Soni, Parliamentary Secretary Vikas Upadhyay, Chairman of District Cooperative Bank Raipur and Congress leader Pankaj Sharma, Mayor Ajaz Dhebar, Congress leader RP Singh and other public representatives participated in Chhath Puja programme at Mahadev Ghat.

Chhath Mahaparva Aayojan Samiti (CMAS), Mahadev Ghat, Raipur Rajesh Kumar Singh and the members of the committee welcomed all the guests on the occasion.

Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel, former Chief Minister Dr Raman Singh and others addressed the programme.

President of Chhath Mahaparva Aayojan Samiti (CMAS), Mahadev Ghat, Raipur Rajesh Kumar Singh informed that thousands of people gathered at Mahadev Ghat, along Kharun River and they participated in Chhath Puja programme on Sunday evening.

Musician and lyricist Venkatesh Agrawal was honoured by the committee on the occasion. Raipur South MLA Brijmohan Agrawal honoured Venkatesh Agrawal with memento.

After Sandhya Arghya, Maha-arti ritual was performed at Mahadev Ghat. A mesmerizing cultural programme was held at Mahadev Ghat on Sunday evening. Musician and



MLA Brijmohan Agrawal honouring lyricist Venkatesh Agrawal with memento.

lyricist Venkatesh Agrawal Band's live concert was held at Mahadev Ghat.

Renowned Bhojpuri singer and Sur Sangram winner Alok Kumar, Chhattisgarhi folk singer Dilip Shadangi and Bhojpuri singer Hema Pandey and her two sisters Kareena Pandey and Sovita Pandey will enthralled Raipurians through their exciting performances at Mahadev Ghat. Dancers Sonali and Tarun Chopra of international acclaimed dance Group Dharohar Kala Sangam Sanstha Prayagraj also performed 'Nriya Natika' and enthralled the audience.

In Raipur city, Chhath Vratists offered 'Sandhya Arghya' to setting Sun at over 50 places including Mahadev Ghat, Vyas Talab, Chhuhiya Talab, Urla Talab, Jhanj Lake Naya Raipur and others.

All arrangements were made for Chhath Puja at Mahadev Ghat. Lighting, changing rooms for Chhath Vratists, parking and other arrangements were made at the Mahadev Ghat, he added.

Members of the CMAS Ravindra Singh, Sunil Singh, Kanhaiya Singh, Ramkumar Singh, Parmanand Singh, Shashi Singh, Satyendra Singh Gautam, Kanhaiya Singh, Satya Prakash Singh, Ram Vilas Singh, Jayant Singh, Brijesh Singh, Amarjeet Singh, Santosh Singh, Jaiprakash Singh, Mukul Srivastava, Chandrashekar Singh, Saroj Singh, Ajay Sharma, Sanjay Singh, Shashi Singh, Anil Singh, Pankaj Choudhary and other members imparted their valuable services to make the Chhath Puja successful at Mahadev Ghat.

DESERTED LOOKS



The streets in the capital city were deserted looks since afternoon due to the World Cup finals between India and Australia on Sunday.

Hira Corporate Cricket tourney 2023-24 - Season-14 after Dec 15

Raipur, Nov 19: Hira Group Sports and Cultural Association is commencing its Season-14 SURESH AGRAWAL MEMORIAL CORPORATE CRICKET TOURNAMENT between Corporate bodies after Dec 15, 2023 at Hira Group Sports Ground, Opposite Ram Vatika, Near Urja Park, VIP Road, Raipur. The Tournament will be playing limited overs with Tennis Ball in the format of 24 teams. This Tournament has expanded a massive success with keen participation by various corporate houses since 13 years. Like every year, the Tourny will be played on knockout basis, for which, all 24 teams have been divided into 4 groups. Total number of about 65 matches will be played to decide the winner and runner-up of the tournament. There will be 12 overs match for league round, pre-quarter & quarter final matches witness 15 overs and the semi-final & final will be of 20 overs match. Number of trophies and cash awards are for the winner and runners ups, semifinalists and best players in each category as well as for the Man of the Tournament. Cash prize has now been increased to Rs 2.00 Lac & 1.00 Lac will be awarded to the winner team & runners up respectively. Interested Corporate teams who are willing to participate in this tournament can contact 0771- 4082762 / 4082706 or hira.corporate@gmail.com / corporate@hiragroup.com.

Meanwhile there are many teachers who have not got the relief even after joining the School as per the Court's order. Being in remote areas, there was amendment in the school's posting to around 2,723 teachers. In this there were talks about the cash dealings.

After this the government had cancelled all the amendment orders and relieved the teachers and asked them to join the school allotted during counselling. Many of the teachers joined, but others once again filed another petition in the Court.

Got positive feedback from all candidates: Selja

Claims that Cong will form govt this time as well

Raipur, Nov 19: In the meeting held at Rajiv Bhavan on Saturday, PCC Chief Kumari Selja held talks with the party's candidates and after the meeting she claimed that Congress would once again form the government in the state. She said that she got very enthusiastic and positive feedback from the party's candidates. Speaking to media persons Kumari Selja said that the party leaders and party workers have contested the Assembly polls remaining united and in positive manner. The party



got good response of people and the report being received by the party is as per the party's expectations and hopes, she added. PCC Chief said that talks were held with the party's candidates on all aspects and all have said that they contested the polls in strong manner. The talks with the party's candidate would continue now. In other seats also the

party has got good response. After discussions many new information would come to fore. Despite all this the party is in position to say that Congress is going to form the government with good majority.

Even during polling the initial trend which came forward are in party's favour and are positive. The people of the state have exuded confidence on Congress party and its promises, as the party has fulfilled majority of its promises made in the last elections as well. On formation of the government the promises made this year too will be fulfilled with due honesty, she added.

Teachers asked to join in Schools allotted

Prior to the cancellation of amendment order and one during the Counselling

Central Chronicle News

Raipur, Nov 19: The High Court by sorting out the petition after the cancellation of Promotion Amendment Order had issued instructions and the affected teachers have been asked to join the School prior to the amendments i.e. allotted at the time of counselling.

After joining they will have to submit an application and then it will be sorted out by the Committee appointed by the Government.

High Court has in-

No salary on Diwali

After the cancellation of the amendment, the teachers were relieved and in this more than 700 teachers have filed a petition in the High Court. It was failing to join in the school prior to the cancellation order of Court, they

could not get the salary. Even during Diwali, the teachers were deprived of their salary, as the Court has directed to sort out all the salary and other complaints only after joining the school allotted during counselling.

In this regard the

Education Department has sought clearance from the Advocate General's office.

As per information in this regard from sources the Advocate General's office has sent the reply and according to which teachers affected from the cancellation of amendment order had to join

No relief to teachers till date

Meanwhile there are many teachers who have not got the relief even after joining the School as per the Court's order. Being in remote areas, there was amendment in the school's posting to around 2,723 teachers. In this there were talks about the cash dealings.

the earlier school i.e. the school allotted at the time of counselling. It is after joining the school the teachers will get their first salary, but then they can also submit an application before the Committee formed by the government.

The Court has asked

to sort out the complaints within 45 days. It is learnt that the teachers along with their application will have to produce the documents for change in the schools allotted like (Medical) and others. The applications will be sorted out based upon the pros and cons.

BALCO's Child Development Initiatives Shape a Brighter Tomorrow



Balco Nagar, Nov 19: As the nation celebrated Children's Day on November 14, it was an opportunity to shine a spotlight on Bharat Aluminium Company Limited (BALCO)'s transformative initiatives to nurture holistic environments for children in rural Chhattisgarh. Recognizing that the early years of childhood lay the foundation for a child's future, the company is actively contributing to the all-round development of the youngest members of its communities through initiatives aimed at creating a healthier, safer, and better future for them.

Nutrition is the cornerstone of a child's overall health and well-being, playing a pivotal role in shaping their physical and cognitive development. BALCO has been creating awareness around the importance of nutrition with several mother and child health care interventions under its Project Arogya, which encompasses myriad health initiatives. The company is not only creating greater awareness of the importance of breastfeeding in

reducing malnutrition among children but is also training mothers through sessions on care giving and preparing nutritious recipes using the supplementary provisions available under the government's Take Home Ration (THR) program. The sessions also include Q&A sessions and audio-visual showcases on nutrition-related information and have led to improved health for over 270 children in FY23.

Ms. Savitri refers to her experience as a 'miracle', as she shares the story of her 19-month-old son Shreshth, whose health stabilized through BALCO's interventions. She says, "Turning to expensive packaged supplements for Shreshth's nutrition was straining our finances. I fretted over his constant health issues. But BALCO's training sessions emerged as a blessing! Today, Shreshth weighs a sturdy 9 kgs, with the regular nutritional recipes I make using the rations from the Take-Home Rations program." Moreover, to ensure the



well-being of adolescent girls, BALCO is promoting menstrual health and hygiene in rural communities. Demystifying menstrual myths and taboos and encouraging sustainable hygiene practices, the company under its Project Nayi Kiran has sensitized over 48,000 people through awareness sessions in Chhattisgarh state. Harshita from Azad Nagar village, 16 years old, says "Menstruation is a normal process of life, and we're embracing this natural part of our lives with confidence. We are now more comfortable discussing it at home and with peers." BALCO's impact also extends into the realm of improving children's education. Preschool education is important for the developmental journey of a child as it paves the way for lifelong learning, cognitive development, and essential social skills. Hence, BALCO actively supports 58 Nand Ghars, which are modern Anganwadi centers supported by Vedanta that proactively work towards women and child development, imparting a best-in-class learning experience through interactive models

such as BALA (Building as Learning Aid) paintings and digital learning. Through its Nand Ghars, BALCO has enhanced the attendance levels, learning abilities, and school readiness for over 4000 children in Chhattisgarh state in FY23.

High school education is no different; it acts as a critical juncture bridging foundational knowledge and future pursuits. BALCO through its Project Connect focuses on improving the learning environment in government schools for students in 9th-12th standards by working on improving their grades through classroom learning, preparing teachers on pedagogical training, and offering career counseling services to students through its experienced employee volunteers. From conducting regular and remedial classes on SEMA (Science, English, Mathematics, and Accountancy) subjects to counseling dropout students to resume learning, the project ensures an enhanced educational environment, benefiting over 1200 students through direct intervention in three government schools near its operational vicinity, currently.

Appreciating BALCO's efforts in nurturing a supportive environment for education in communities, Rini Dubey, Principal of Government Higher Secondary School, Godhi, expresses, "BALCO's initiatives provide invaluable learning and preparation opportunities for

our students, ensuring they are well-equipped for upcoming exams. The addition of career counseling support is a commendable initiative, guiding them in making informed decisions about their academic and career paths."

BALCO's efforts emphasize the importance of a holistic learning approach, through a diverse array of skill-building and personality development activities. It organizes annual summer camps for children within its communities, offering an eclectic mix of activities such as music, singing, Zumba, pottery, and painting. Additionally, the company contributes to personality development through English-speaking classes and specialized training sessions. It also proactively engages in plantation activities at schools and spreads information within nearby schools on essential knowledge such as protection against fire incidents and obeying traffic rules. The company also frequently distributes sports kits in communities, helping in still a love for sports and physical fitness among the children.

BALCO's steadfast dedication to deploying comprehensive child development initiatives is a testament to its commitment to nurturing a better tomorrow. By empowering young lives with knowledge, skills, and a supportive environment, BALCO is building resilient, capable individuals poised to make a positive contribution to society.

Tikeshwari rewarded with Rs 50,000 for outstanding performance



Management committee's support and recognition highlight school's commitment to sports excellence

Raipur, Nov 19: In a remarkable show of support for their star athlete, Shri Gujarati Higher Secondary School's management committee presented an incentive of Rs 50,000 to sports teacher Tikeshwari Sahu. This gesture of appreciation comes as Tikeshwari gears up to represent India in the prestigious East Asia Muay Thai Championship scheduled from November 22 to 26, 2023, in Hong Kong, China. Tikeshwari Sahu, the sole player selected to represent India in this international competition,

has made her institution and school immensely proud. The Secretaries of Shri Gujarati Shikshan Sangh, Tulsidas Patel and Ashok D Patel, along with Vice President Vithaldas Patel, expressed their hearty congratulations to Tikeshwari Sahu, who serves as an Assistant Teacher in Sports.

Shri Gujarati Higher Secondary School's Principal, Anis Memon, who also holds the position of General Secretary in the State Muay Thai Association, commended the management committee's commendable and exemplary initiative.

He emphasized that such incentives not only motivate the students but also encourage a positive attitude towards sports among both players and parents.

During the celebration, Tulsidas Patel, the organization's Secretary, extended best wishes to Tikeshwari Sahu for her outstanding performance. He assured her of continued support and encouragement from the Management Committee.

The event was attended by various dignitaries, including Anis Memon, the School Principal and State Muay Thai Association General Secretary, Dr. Shailesh Sharma, Principal of the English Medium School, Praveen Ganodwale, First Assistant at the School, Yogita Tank, Head of the Primary Department, as well as Senior Teachers Kamlesh Ruparelia and Jaymala Parekh, and Institution Administrator VK Mishra.

'Caged parrot ECI a sham, is favouring BJP'

Mumbai, Nov 19 (PTI):

Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Sanjay Raut on Sunday said the Election Commission of India had become a caged parrot and was "practising double standards in favour of the Bharatiya Janata Party". In his weekly column 'Rokthok' in Shiv Sena (UBT) mouthpiece 'Saamana', Raut also accused the BJP of resorting to religious propaganda to "bribe" voters after losing ground in five states where Assembly polls are being held (in November).

Latching on to Union Home Minister Amit Shah's statement in Madhya Pradesh last week promising people of government-organised tours to the Ram Temple in Ayodhya if the BJP retains power, Raut said this was clearly campaigning on religious lines.

If such a statement had been made by a Congress leader, then the ECI, like the Enforcement Directorate, would have



Sanjay Raut

been at the doorstep with a "warrant", the Shiv Sena (UBT) Rajya Sabha MP alleged. Garnering votes by "bribing" the electorate is shocking and the ECI has shut its eyes, which is detrimental to democracy, Raut asserted.

The idol consecration of the Ram Temple in Ayodhya is scheduled for January 22. "(Former chief election commissioner) T N Seshan, during his tenure, showed the poll body did not even have to roar, it just had to wiggle its tail and it would instill fear in all political parties. The Election Commission has become a

sham," Raut said. "Whatever has happened (during poll campaigning in five states, namely Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh, Telangana and Mizoram) has proved the Election Commission has become a caged parrot," Raut alleged.

When Shiv Sena founder late Bal Thackeray sought votes for party candidate Ramesh Prabhu on the issue of Hindutva in the 1987 Vile Parle bypoll, his voting rights were revoked for six years, Raut pointed out. Sena MLAs Suryakant Mahadik, Ramakant Mayekar and Prabhu, who won the bypoll, were disqualified.

"They (BJP) managed the Election Commission and other constitutional bodies and fought the Hindutva battle," Raut alleged. On Thursday, the Uddhav Thackeray-led Shiv Sena (UBT) wrote to ECI over Shah's Ram Temple tour promise and sarcastically asked if the poll body had relaxed the model code of conduct.

Govt supplies multivitamins, antidepressants, dry fruits to 41 workers

Trapped in Uttarkashi tunnel

New Delhi, Nov 19 (PTI):

The government is sending multivitamins, antidepressants and dry fruits to 41 workers trapped for the past seven days in an under-construction tunnel that collapsed in the Uttarkashi district of Uttarakhand, Road, Transport and Highways Secretary Anurag Jain said on Sunday.

"Fortunately, there is light inside because the electricity is on. There is a pipeline, and thus water is available. There is a 4-inch pipe, which was used for compression. Through that, we are send-

ing food from day 1," he said. Jain, in a video brief update on the Uttarkashi tunnel collapse rescue operation, further said there is water and electricity in two km portion inside the tunnel, which is the finished part of the 4.531-kilometre two lane bi-directional tunnel at Silkyara in Uttarkashi.

"We are sending multivitamins, antidepressants and dry fruits to workers who have been trapped inside the under-construction tunnel at Silkyara in Uttarkashi," he said.

The Silkyara tunnel, about 30 km from the district headquarters of Uttarkashi and a seven-hour drive from the

Uttarakhand capital Dehradun, is part of the ambitious Char Dham all-weather road project of the central government. The tunnel is being constructed under the National Highways and Infrastructure Development Corporation Limited (NHIDCL).

The tunnel collapsed around 5.30 am last Sunday. The rescue operation was suspended on Friday afternoon when a US-made auger machine deployed to drill and push in pipes through the rubble to prepare an escape passage for the workers developed a snag that exacerbated the anxiety. By the time drilling was halted, the auger ma-

chine had drilled up to 24 metres through the rubble, spread over a 60-metre area inside the tunnel. The Union government also held a high-level meeting on Saturday where five options to rescue the workers were discussed with different agencies assigned with specific alternatives to work on. NHIDCL MD Mahmood Ahmed has been made in charge of coordination with all the central agencies and has been stationed in Silkyara. ONGC, RVNL, Satluj Jal Vikas Nigam Ltd, BRO and state PWD, besides NHIDCL, will be the agencies carrying out different responsibilities to establish early access to the trapped workers.

CHHATH RITUALS



Bilaspur: Devotees perform rituals of 'Chhath Puja' festival, at Arpa river, Sunday.

Prez on three-day tour of Odisha, AP from today

New Delhi, Nov 19 (PTI):

President Droupadi Murmu will visit Odisha and Andhra Pradesh from November 20-22 to attend a host of programmes, according to a statement issued on Sunday by the Rashtrapati Bhavan. The president will attend the inaugural session of the 36th Annual Conference and Literary Festival of All India Santali Writers' Association at Baripada on Monday.

"On the same day, she will also inaugurate an Eklavya Model Residential School at Kuliana," it said. President Murmu was born in a Santali tribal family at Uparbeda village under Mayurbhanj in Odisha. On November 21, President Murmu will inaugurate a skill training centre at Pahadpur village, the statement said.

Subsequently, she will visit Badampahar railway station from where she will flag off three new trains (Badampahar Tatanagar MEMU, Badampahar-Rourkela Weekly Express

and Badampahar-Shalimar Weekly Express), inaugurate new Rairangpur postal division, release a commemorative cover of Rairangpur postal division and lay the foundation stone for redevelopment of Badampahar railway station, it said.

President Murmu will travel from Badampahar to Rairangpur in the Badampahar-Shalimar express. She had served as an honorary teacher at Sri Aurobindo Integral Education Centre, Rairangpur from 1994 to 1997. In 2000, Murmu was elected from the Rairangpur constituency as a Member of the Legislative Assembly of Odisha and continued to hold the post till 2009, serving two terms.

The president will also attend the 15th annual convocation of Veer Surendra Sai University of Technology, Burla on Tuesday evening. On November 22, Murmu will launch the National Education Campaign-New Education for New India, organised by Brahma Kumaris at Sambalpur, the statement said.

Maha Guv felicitates winners of the National Round of Inter-School Quiz

Mumbai, Nov 19:

Maharashtra Governor Ramesh Bais witnessed the final rounds of the Inter-School Indian Naval Quiz 'G-20 ThinQ National' organized by the Indian Navy in association with the 'Navy Welfare and Wellness Association' at Gateway of India in Mumbai on Sat (Nov 18).

The Governor felicitated the winners of the National round, students of the DAV Public School Gurugram on the occasion. The winners of the National round will be participating in the G-20 International Round to



be held at India Gate in New Delhi on Nov 22.

Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral R. Hari Kumar, President of the

Navy Welfare and Wellness Association Smt. Kala Hari Kumar, FOC-in-C, Western Naval Command Vice Admiral

Dinesh Kumar Tripathi, senior Naval Officers and their families, students and teachers were present.

COMBATING POLLUTION



An anti-smog gun sprays water droplets to curb the air pollution at India Gate, in New Delhi, Sunday.

Nearly half of Berhampur ITI students became certified energy-literates

Berhampur (Odisha), Nov 19 (PTI):

The government-run Industrial Training Institute (ITI) in Odisha's Berhampur on Sunday claimed it has become the first ITI in the country where nearly half of its students became certified energy literates.

This means the students are now well aware of energy conservation, use of renewable energy and curbing of carbon footprints, which are caused by global warming, ITI Berhampur Principal Rajat Panigrahy said.

Out of 3300 students of the institute, around 1600 of them have become certified energy literates, he said. The certificates were given to the ITI students who cleared an examination conducted by the Energy Swaraj Foundation, a not-for-profit organisation, formed with the aim to establish energy independence across the world.

"Energy Swaraj Foundation is grateful for your contribution to global sustainability and your support in the Energy Swaraj Movement," read

the certificate. Panigrahy said this is an initiative to help the students protect the environment and campus sustainability.

"Other students were also appearing for the online exams to become energy literate. Our aim is for all the students of the institute to become energy literate," the principal added.

Energy Swaraj Foundation was founded by Chetan Singh Solanki, a solar scientist and professor at IIT Bombay, who is known as the Solar Man of India.

Goa minister resigns, Cong turncoat to be sworn in

Panaji, Nov 19 (PTI):

Goa Public Works Department Minister Niles Cabral resigned from the Pramod Sawant-led cabinet on Sunday to make way for the induction of MLA Aleixo Sequeira. Sequeira was among the eight MLAs who switched over from the opposition Congress to the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in the coastal state last year.

In his resignation letter sent to the chief minister, Cabral said he was stepping down to allow the party to fulfil its "commitments previously made." Chief

Minister Sawant told PTI that Cabral has stepped down and his resignation has been sent to Governor P S Sreedharan Pillai for acceptance. It was the party's decision to ask Cabral to step down to make way for another MLA in the cabinet, the senior BJP leader said.

Legislator Aleixo Sequeira would be inducted into the cabinet at 7 pm on Sunday, the CM said. Cabral, the 51-year-old BJP legislator from Curchohem assembly constituency, was holding charge of the PWD, law and judiciary and other departments in the Sawant-led cabinet.

100-yr-old ARRI developing high-yielding aromatic Joha

Titabar (Assam), Nov 19 (PTI):

A rice research institute here celebrating its centenary year is working towards developing a high-yielding premium quality version of Assam's famed aromatic Joha to add to its avant garde collection that includes among others a diabetic-friendly purple rice variety.

The Assam Rice Research Institute (ARRI), about 20 km away from Jorhat, began as a rice experimental station in 1923 to cater to the issues faced by farmers from the Brahmaputra valley of the state.

The institute, which has played a key role in increasing production and productivity of rice in the state since its inception, came under the administrative control of Assam Agricultural University (AAU) in 1969 as Rice Research Station. On

January 27 this year, the station was re-designated as Assam Agricultural University-Assam Rice Research Institute (AAU-ARRI). AAU-ARRI chief scientist Sanjay Kumar Chetia said the institute is now focused on need-based agriculture.

"That is the reason ARRI now does market survey, invites stakeholders like farmers, retailers, wholesalers, millers and companies for information on what aspect it should focus its research. For instance, ARRI is now focusing its research on development of climate-smart cultivars such as drought tolerant, biotic and abiotic stress toler-

ant, anaerobic germination tolerant cultivars for direct-seeded rice," Chetia told PTI. "The research also focuses on development of bio-fortified rice varieties rich in zinc and iron content. Research work has also been undertaken to develop high-yielding premium quality aromatic Joha rice and high yielding red rice varieties," he said. In 2022, ARRI developed and popularised a high-yielding purple rice variety Labanya.

"There are many nutritional qualities that make Labanya diabetic friendly. It has a lower GI (<55), high dietary fibre, higher

antioxidant content (68 g/ml), and higher phenolic compound (61 g/ml). To add to these, this variety has high head rice recovery and is easy to cook," Chetia said. He, however, added that diabetic-friendly rice varieties are not that popular among the farmers because of poor yield.

On other varieties, he said though there is great demand for the aromatic Joha rice in Assam, it is not able to reach the markets in other parts of the country as desired. "This is mostly because the production of Joha rice is lower than normal rice which could only meet the demands of the domestic market.

Also, the farmers are not aware of the market of Joha in the country and profitability of this class of rice," Chetia, who is behind the development of several rice varieties, said.



JOHA RICE

POONAWALLA HOUSING FINANCE		POONAWALLA HOUSING FINANCE LIMITED	
Alpha Chhatra, Apni Pehchan		(FORMERLY, MAGMA HOUSING FINANCE LIMITED)	
		REGISTERED OFFICE: 602, 6th FLOOR, ZERO ONE IT PARK, SR. NO. 79/1, GHORPADI, MUNDHWA ROAD, PUNE - 411036	
DEMAND NOTICE (UNDER SECTION 13(2) OF THE SARFAESI ACT, 2002)			
You the below mentioned Borrowers/ Co-borrowers /Guarantors have availed Home loans/Loans against Property facility (ies) by mortgaging your Immovable property/ies from Magma Housing Finance Ltd "MHFL" now renamed as Poonawalla Housing Finance Ltd "PHFL". You defaulted in repayment and therefore, your loan/s was classified as Non-Performing Assets. A Demand Notice under Section 13(2) of Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Asset and Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002 for the recovery of the outstanding dues sent on last known addresses however the same have returned un-served. Hence the contents of which are being published herewith as per Section 13(2) of the Act read with Rule 3(1) of The Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 as and by way of Alternate Service upon you.			
Details of the Borrowers, Co-borrowers, Guarantors, Securities, Outstanding Dues, Demand Notice sent under Section 13(2) and Amount claimed there under are given as under			
Sr. No.	Name of the Borrower, Co-Borrower, Guarantor and Loan Amount	Details of the Secured Asset	Demand Notice Date
1.	HARJEET SINGH THAKUR, GAYATREE SEN Loan Amount: Rs.1452000/- Loan No: HF/0023/H/21/100042	All That Piece And Parcel Of Abadi Part Of Kh No 884/2 Plot No 13 Ph No 02 Mouza Belodi Rnm Durg Teh And Dist Durg Cg Abadi Part Of Kh No 884/2 Plot No 13 Ph No 02 Mouza Belodi Rnm Durg Teh And Dist Durg Cg Adm:-900.Sq.Ft. Near Rinku Kirana Pin Code-491001 Bounded By:- East:- House Of Parkar Ji, West:- House Of Jait Ram Sahu, North:- Land Of Jait Ram, South:- Main Road.	06/11/2023
2.	MOHAMMAD AFZAL SIDDIQUI, NAJIMA KHAN Loan Amount: Rs.1500000/- Loan No: HF/0024/H/20/100093	All That Piece And Parcel Of Plot No. 339/1part, Mauja-Torwa, Khasra No. 837/Spart, P.H.No.-22, R.N.M.-Bilaspur, Tehsil-Bilaspur, Block-Belha, Mc Bilaspur, Ward No. 38 Hemu Nagar Ward, Dist- Bilaspur Cg Adm:-4200.Sq.Ft. Lord Shiva Shrine Pin Code-495001 Bounded By:- East:- 15 Ft Road, West:- Others Land, North:- 10 Ft Cc Passage H, South:- House Of Sarita Rao.	06/11/2023
3.	KAMILA PANDEY, ASHISH PANDEY Loan Amount: Rs.5750000/- Loan No: HF/0106/H/16/100006	All That Piece And Parcel Of Survey No 2001/12 P.H.No- 15 Village Kedarpur R.I. Circle Ambikapur Tehsil Ambikapur Dist - Surguja Adm.0.009 Hect. City Of Ambikapur, Saheli Gali Shiv Mandir, Chhattisgarh-497001 East By:- Road, West By:-House Of Rekha Singh, North By:- Road, South By:- House Of Shambhu Ram Jamke.	06/11/2023
You the Borrower/s and Co-Borrower/s/Guarantors are therefore called upon to make payment of the above-mentioned demanded amount with further interest as mentioned hereinabove in full within 60 Days of this Notice failing which the undersigned shall be constrained to take action under the act to enforce the above mentioned security/ies. Please Note that as per Section 13(13) of The Said Act, You are in the meanwhile, restrained from transferring the above-referred securities by way of sale, lease or otherwise without our consent.			
Place: Chattisgarh Date: 20.11.2023			
FOR POONAWALLA HOUSING FINANCE LTD (Formerly Known as Magma Housing Finance Ltd) Authorised Officer			

MCB districts achieve record turnout



Manendragarh, Nov 18:

In a remarkable display of democratic fervour and inclusivity, the MCB District has set a new standard for electoral participation in the 2023 assembly elections, with a significant increase in voter turnout compared to previous elections.

The elections witnessed an impressive surge in participation, especially in areas with historically low turnout. Persons with physical disabilities demonstrated remarkable

zeal and enthusiasm at Disabled polling booths. Women, too, turned out in large numbers, showcasing their enthusiasm at polling booths managed by women polling team members.

District Election Officer Narendra Dugga played a pivotal role in ensuring the success of the elections. He personally inspected all polling booths, including the Adarsh and Sangwari polling booths, alongside members of the SVEEP team. His presence and motivation uplifted

the spirits of the polling team members engaged in their duties.

To boost the morale of the polling team members and raise voter awareness, the district welcomed them with flower bouquets and garlands at Sangwari Polling Booths, Disabled Polling Booths, and other polling stations as they arrived at their respective posts. Dugga extended his best wishes to them, encouraging them to conduct fair and peaceful polling.

MCB District featured a total of 388 polling booths,



with 1552 polling staff and 48 sector officers overseeing 82 polling routes. Twelve Executive Magistrates were deployed to ensure fair and peaceful polling. Logistics support included 135 vehicles and 125 Micro observers, while webcasting covered 194 polling booths.

Over 1700 recruits from CRPF, BSF, RPF, SSB, ITBP, District police force, and Home Guards were deployed at all polling stations to maintain law and order. Volunteers from NSS and Scouts & Guides

assisted voters across all polling booths.

Despite being a newly formed district, District Election Officer Narendra Dugga and his dedicated team meticulously prepared for the elections, engaging over 2000 employees in various polling tasks. Upon the successful completion of the polls, Dugga expressed his appreciation through re-sounding applause and flower garlands, acknowledging their invaluable contributions to democracy's triumph.

Anand Bal Mela delights all at CG Public School

● Students showcase talents and culinary skills at annual event

Dongargaon, Nov 19: Anand Bal Mela, a joyful celebration, unfolded as part of the annual program on November 18th at the local C.G Public Higher Secondary School. This spirited event saw a substantial turnout of students, along with enthusiastic parents who came to cheer on their children.

The festivities began with the inauguration of the Children's Fair within the school premises, graced by Chief Guest Kamal Sahu (Kariatola), chaired by Sandeep Sharma. Special guest Santoshi Lenjhare, along with teachers Saba Mam and Chandni Sharma, led the ceremony by garlanding an oil painting of Maa Saraswati and Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru, followed by the singing of the national anthem. Parents also added to the vibrant atmosphere with their presence. The event featured a delightful



array of culinary delights prepared by the students. The offerings included a wide range of dishes such as Bhel, Gupchup, Popcorn, Cold Drink, Pani Sachet, Pappi Chat, Chat, Samosa, Kachori, Curd Kachori, Mixture, Sweet, Sandwich, Chocolate Sandwich, Dhokla, Pastry, Frooti, Maza, Custard, Juice, Maggi, Pasta, Finger Chips, Special Kheer, Cup Cake, Momos, Shevpuri, Nadda Kabab, Chanacharpatti, Rasgulla, Idli, and Sabudana Bada. Various stalls also offered delectable items like Chow Mein, Banana Chips, Chinese Pakora, Pulao, Soya Chilli, Cutlet, Fruit Custard, and Bread Pakora.

Adding an artistic touch to

the festivities, a Rangoli competition was organized. Chandrakiran and Payal from class-7th English medium secured first place, while Vaishali Nishad and Toshali Sahu from class-8th English medium claimed second place. Tanusha and Kashish from class-8th Hindi medium earned third place in the competition.

The successful execution of Anand Bal Mela was made possible through the dedicated efforts of the school's teachers, who played a crucial role in ensuring its success. Ejaz Ali Hashmi, the Head of the organization, congratulated all participating students and wished them continued success.

Four-day 'Gaukatha' to be held till Nov 22



Pandaria, Nov 19: On occasion of 'Gopashtami' in Keshav Goushala in Gram Rohara, 'Havan-Pujan' and four-day 'Gaukatha' was started. Omprakash Thakur and Taponish Pt. Shriram Sharam, Acharya's kripapatra Shishya' is delivering the discourse. Thakur said that it is with wishes of 'Gau Mata' that everything is possible and it is without

Mata's good wishes that nothing gets executed. The prayers start with prayers to 'Gaumata' and the first revolutionary movement too was started with care of 'Gaumata' and it was banning use of cow's skin for leather and other 'kartus' that the revolution began. He said that Jamuna Lal Bajaj by rendering services to 'Gaumata' has got bundle of blessings. Organiser

● On occasion of 'Gopashtami' in Keshav Gaushala

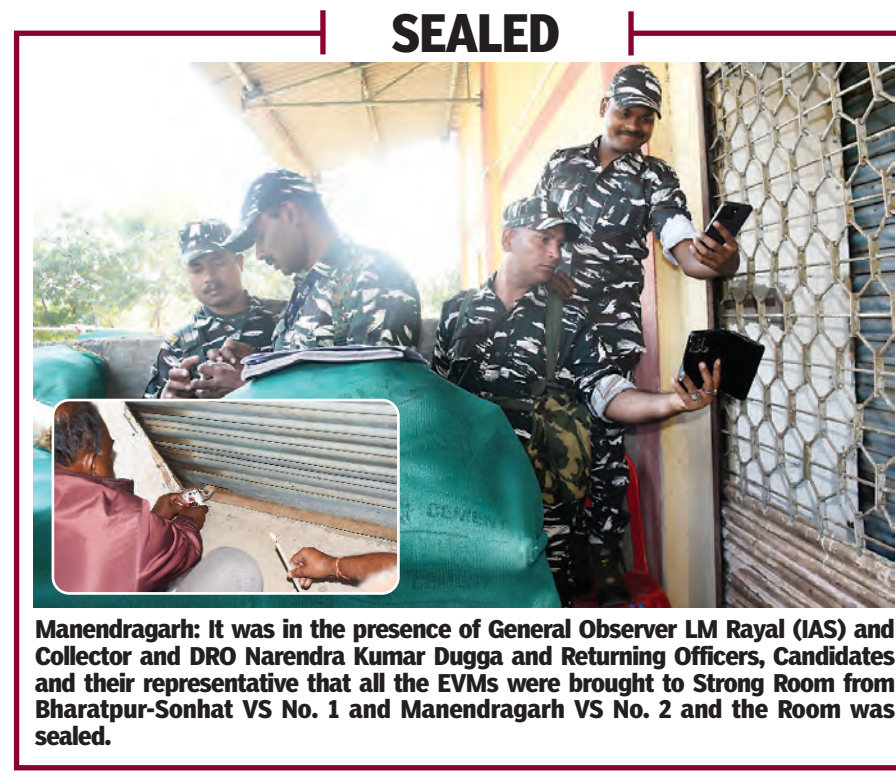
of 'Gau-Katha', Viseshar Patel informed that the 'Gaukatha' which started on Sunday, will continue till Nov 22. The musical 'Gaukatha' will start daily at 2:30 pm and continue till 5:30 pm. The 'Bhajan-Sangeet' will be held from 12:00 noon to 2:30 pm. In the same way daily from 9:00 am to 12:00 noon 'Havan Pujan' will be held and in the same way prayers to 'Gaumata' and Lord Shri Krishna will be held from 6:00 pm daily. 'Bhajan', 'Bhav Nritya' and 'Jhanki' will be presented daily from 8:00 pm to 11:00 pm.

Lady medical officer hangs herself

Gariaband, Nov 19: A lady medical officer posted at Chhura Hospital hanged herself in her rented house. The incident took place in the area falling under jurisdiction of Chhura police station. After getting information about the incident, the police started investigation into the incident. Doctor Seema Alone, aged 38, posted as Medical Officer in Chhura Hospital, committed suicide by hanging herself on Saturday evening. The doctor had taken a rented house next to government residence, where her parents lived. She lived with her husband Dr. Bharat Bhushan Arya in a government residence. On Saturday evening, when her husband was in his private clinic, mother had gone for an evening walk

and the father had gone to the market to buy vegetables the lady doctor hanged herself by making a noose with her dupatta in the rented house. On returning from the evening walk, the mother saw her daughter hanging. She immediately informed this to her son-in-law, who immediately removed the body and tried to treat it.

After this she was also admitted to the government hospital, but by then she was out of breath. Chhura police station in-charge Praveen Bharti said that after 'Panchnama', the body was sent to Gariaband for post mortem. The situation will become clear after the report comes. At present the route has been established and is under consideration.



Manendragarh: It was in the presence of General Observer LM Rayal (IAS) and Collector and DRO Narendra Kumar Dugga and Returning Officers, Candidates and their representative that all the EVMs were brought to Strong Room from Bharatpur-Sonhat VS No. 1 and Manendragarh VS No. 2 and the Room was sealed.

Candidates take a breath of relief after voting frenzy

● Public welcomes return of normalcy post-election hustle

Mungeli, Nov 19: With the fervour of the assembly elections now behind them, candidates in Mungeli are shifting their focus to the upcoming vote count, bringing some respite after a whirlwind of campaigning that disrupted their daily routines. Among the casualties of the intense campaigning, sleep emerged as the most affected aspect of the candidates' well-being. As the assembly elections concluded on Friday, not only did candidates but also the general public breathed a sigh of relief, bidding farewell to the relentless

election campaigns, banners, badges, pamphlets, and the constant visits by campaign workers. The majority of passenger vehicles had been commandeered for election purposes, inconveniencing travellers during the past month. However, as passenger buses resumed their regular service, the once-deserted bus stand sprung back to life after four days of silence. In the Mungeli Assembly, ten candidates are vying for victory, and their campaign teams had been tirelessly engaged day and night in promoting their respective causes. Government employees and teachers, who played significant roles in election-related activities,



faceted disruptions to their regular duties, including their studies. Following the conclusion of voting, candidates from various parties, including BJP's Punnull Mohle, Congress's Sanjit Banerjee, and Chhattisgarh Janata Congress's Sarita Bhardwaj, along with their supporters, finally enjoyed a sound night's sleep. They assessed the day's events, sought information about internal dynamics, and speculated on potential voting outcomes.

While the election campaign saw hopes of witnessing film actors and star campaigners go unfulfilled, the presence of the Prime Minister compensated for the absence.

Huge amount of explosive material recovered from two trucks



Balrampur, Nov 19: A large quantity of explosive materials has been seized from two trucks during vehicle checking in the area falling under jurisdiction of Balangi Police Station. The value of the seized explosive material and two trucks is said to be around Rs 83 lakh. According to the information, during vehicle checking, Balangi police seized 63 tons of explosive material, Optimax Prilled Ammonium Nitrate, from two trucks. Besides, two trucks engaged in transportation work were also seized. It is being told that this action has been taken for violation of transport conditions. Police have also arrested two accused of transporting explosive material.

SKS members offer prayers to Sahastrabahu Arjun Jaynati



Kurud, Nov 19:

The members and office bearers of Sinha Kalar Samaj (SKS) Kurud celebrated the jayanti of 'Mahabali Sahastrabahu Arjun at Sinha Bhavan here with religious fervour and gaiety on Sunday. On this occasion the members of the Samaj including men and women offered prayers to Lord Sahastrabahu and distributed 'prasad' after the oblations.

On this occasion President of Sinha Samaj Ramkumar Sinha, Treasurer Nand Kumar Sinha, Kartik Ram Sinha, TR Sina, Prabhu Ram Sinha, Dinesh Sinha, Mulchand Sinha, Yogendra Sinha, Jitendra Sinha, Manoj Sinha, Pankaj Sinha, Bhoomika Sinha, Kaushalya, Sumitra, Ahilya, Rukmani, Tulsisinha, Dibyani Sinha, Chuneswari Sinha and others were present.

Women's team Udaan defeated Team Fighter in a thrilling match

● In friendly cricket match under Vigilance Awareness Week 2023 at SECL Hq's

Korba, Nov 17:

The men's team Fighter was led by CMD Dr. Prem Sagar Mishra, while the women's team Udaan was led by the first lady of SECL family Poonam Mishra. A very exciting cricket match was played on the occasion of concluding Vigilance Awareness Week 2023 in the early hours of Nov 15 at SECL Indira Vihar Sports Ground. In this, the men's team was led by CMD Dr. Prem Sagar Mishra, while the women's team was led by the first lady of SECL family Poonam Mishra.

Sangeeta Kapri, Sujata Khamari along with members and women officers and employees were there. At the same time, other players of the men's team Fighter, Director Finance G. Srinivasan, Director Technical Operations cum Planning-Project, Chief Vigilance Officer Jayant Kumar Khamari, various heads of departments.

At the beginning of the match, men's team Ladakh won the toss and decided to bowl first, while women's team Udaan, while batting, scored 101 runs in limited 15 overs. SECL Director Technical Operations cum Planning-Project S.N.Kapri, who was part of the men's team Fighter, displayed excellent fielding and was also awarded the Best Fielder award at the end of the match. Team Ladakh's start was



very good and their batsmen started batting vigorously as soon as they came to the crease. However, due to falling wickets and injuries to players, the middle order faltered and ultimately struggled to achieve the winning target. The match reached a very exciting stage in the last over when men's team Ladakh needed 12 runs to win in 6 balls and the team was all out for 97 runs and women's team Udaan registered the victory.

For the excellent performance in the match, Sujata Khamari, Vice President of Women's Team Udaan, Shradva Mahila Mandal was given the title of Best Baller, while Prerna Bhatnagar was given the title of Man of the Match and Asha Rai was given the title of Best Batsman. In her address on this occasion, the first lady of SECL family, Mrs. Poonam Mishra said that we thank the entire team of Vigilance Department that they have organized this game in a very family atmosphere, which will

help Team SECL to be united and organized. In his address, CMD Dr. Prem Sagar Mishra praised the spirit of all the players of women's team Udaan and said that their strategy was very efficient due to which they achieved victory, he congratulated all the attendees. On this occasion, the officers and employees who participated in various events were also honored by the Vigilance Department team by giving mementos. During the match, Harish Yadav Manager (Personnel-Welfare) played the role of commentator, Ankit Savarkar Manager (Systems) and Subhashish Jha Manager (CMC) played the role of umpire, Nirmal Bhowmik Clerk (Systems) played the role of scorer. At the end of the match, M.

Chingappa Manager (Personnel-Vigilance) thanked the attendees. Nandini Ahiwara Photo:- India BIZZ ACHIEVERS AWARD 2023 was organized in Mumbai in which nominees from different states were honored with certificates. Last time she won the title of Best Makeup Artist from Chhattisgarh in Delhi Anamika Sahu of Chhattisgarh (the operator of the glamor beauty parlor living in Ahiwara Vidhansabha located in Durg district) won the award and certificate of Best Makeup Artist Marvel of the Year 2023 by playing a very good role in Mumbai this time. Famous film actress Ameesha Patel, who came to encourage the nominees, was felicitated and given an award and certificate.

Retired man from Bengaluru runs only Indian restaurant in Uzbekistan's Samarkand

S a m a r k a n d (Uzbekistan), Nov 19 (PTI): Mohamad Naushad, a retired man from Bengaluru had plans to travel the world after completing his tenure in the steel industry. He landed as a tourist in Samarkand a year ago and his quest for his morning masala tea and paratha prompted him to settle here and open the only Indian restaurant in the second-largest city of Uzbekistan.

Called "The Indian Kitchen", the restaurant came as a respite to Indian students who are studying medicine here and used to miss Indian food. The locals here also fancy the wide-ranging menu from lip dosas to chicken biryani.

"I had no plans to work post-retirement and had no experience of working at a restaurant let alone running one. When I came here as a tourist, I headed out to have my usual breakfast of masala tea and paratha.

"I have travelled to so many countries and have always found some or the other place where Indian food is available. I was surprised to find out that there is not a single eatery or restaurant which serves Indian meals," 61-year-old Naushad told PTI.

"A week more and the vibrant culture and simplicity of people here, prompted me to give it a shot and now Samarkand is my permanent home,"

he added.

According to Naushad, the restaurant receives around 350-400 visitors per day and there are catering orders for weddings and events where having Indian cuisine as an option is a hit here.

His day starts with going to the "bazaar" with his staff to buy groceries as he prefers everything to be cooked afresh at the restaurant.

"There are over 3,000 Indian students in Samarkand and they tell me often that they used to miss Indian meals. The shahi paneer and naan and the rotis used to be a rare sight here. I expected the Indians to love the restaurant but the response I have received

from Uzbeks is phenomenal," he said.

Behind the lip-smacking dishes available at the restaurant is Ashok Kalidasa, a chef who hails from Madras. He earlier used to live in Uzbekistan's Tashkent and is now settled in Samarkand.

"We enquire from each customer about the kind of spices they like us to use, whether they want it less spicy or tangy because Uzbek food is very different. The effort to customise the popular Indian dishes to their taste is what attracts the local crowd here. Indian students come here because they get their home food and the meals are not expensive," he said.

MILITARY OPERATION



Israeli soldiers are seen during a military operation in the Balata refugee camp, West Bank, Sunday, Nov. 19.

Hundreds of Indian-Americans in California's Silicon Valley celebrate Chhath Puja

San Francisco, Nov 19 (PTI):

Keeping their family tradition of generations alive, hundreds of Indian-American techies along with their friends and families gathered at a lakefront in the US city of Fremont to worship the Sun God as part of the Hindu festival of Chhath Puja.



Indian devotees perform rituals of 'Chhath Puja' at Fremont, in California, USA.

The four-day Chhath Puja began on November 17. During the festival, devotees fast and gather on the banks of rivers and ponds to offer prayers to the Sun God.

Hundreds of Indian-Americans joined the celebrations in Fremont, California.

"We are celebrating Chhath puja here. We started this back in 2011

and at that time only a couple of people participated. Afterwards, people started joining slowly and after 2014, it actually started to grow. Now you can see it. Around 1,200 people joined us last year," Rakesh Singh, a resident said.

This year, the organis-

ers in Fremont offered free tickets for entry to the lakefront for the Chhath Puja celebrations.

According to the organisers, the free tickets were grabbed within hours of the system being opened up, with a large number of people on the waiting list.

"We thought how will our children know how Chhath is actually celebrated? It is quite normal to celebrate at home (in India). I took my wife and daughter to the lakefront as I live just nearby. I called my friends, Ajay and Rakesh to inform them that I am celebrating Chhath and they also joined," Sunil, another resident said.

Chhath Puja is one of the most auspicious festivals in Bihar, Jharkhand and Eastern Uttar Pradesh.

The festival is dedicated to Sun God, which people believe sustains life on the earth. The puja is also performed to seek blessings from the Sun God to live a long, healthy, prosperous life.

Driven out of Pakistan, Afghans to lose their homes, and businesses yet again

Karachi, Nov 19 (PTI):

Haji Mubarak Shinwari had come to Pakistan in 1982 with his five sons and two brothers. He worked assiduously to build a healthy network of businesses including cloth, fabrics, transport, and giving loans and now owns numerous properties at Al-Asif Square on the outskirts of Karachi.

"We have lived here without documents for all these years and set up our businesses with the help of locals," Shinwari said. He is not alone.

Barely a few kilometres north of downtown Karachi is the Al-Asif Square, which is known for its huge Afghan pop-



Afghan refugees living in Pakistan prepare to leave the country.

ulation. Close by are two big settlements of Afghan labourers and small business owners.

A visit to Al-Asif Square and these settle-

ments gives an impression of being in mini Kabul with Afghan people milling around many of their shops and different restaurants offering

Afghan delicacies.

Tens and thousands of Afghans, mainly those who came to Pakistan as refugees since the Soviet invasion in 1978, have done business and work in all major cities of Pakistan for decades with Karachi in Sindh province and Quetta in the Balochistan province being their main centres.

Sadiq Ullah Kakar, legal adviser for the Afghan consulate in Karachi, explained that the majority of the Afghan refugees in Pakistan belong to the lower middle class. "So, they do not possess any qualifications or even a tertiary level education," he said.

Punjab-born Irish man eyes Guinness record for double 'Earth Walk'

London, Nov 19 (PTI):

A 73-year-old man, born in Punjab and based in Ireland for nearly 50 years, is making a second go at a Guinness World Record for what he describes as his double Earth Walk, totalling over 80,000 kilometres and equivalent to double the circumference of the Earth.

Vinod Bajaj submitted his application for the "greatest cumulative distance walked solo on foot" last week, having beaten his own walking record by completing the second Earth Walk in 1,114 days, 382 fewer days than the first walk completed in September 2020.

"My wife June was not very happy about my long walks everyday as she felt I was doing too much and worried that it could be

counter-productive to my health," shares Bajaj, from his home city of Limerick in Ireland.

"She warned me not to do the second Earth Walk and here I have just completed it. I will continue to walk but reduce the distance and duration because walking has become my daily enjoyable routine," he said.

Bajaj began his journey in August 2016 with a humble goal of losing some weight and getting fitter. As he shed the kilograms, his enthusiasm for walking only multiplied and led him to chart out varying routes, including through indoor malls to overcome weather constraints.

"During the first three months of my walking seven days a week, I lost 8 kg by having a deficit of

700 calories per day. Over the next six months I lost a further 12 kg. The loss of weight was almost entirely due to walking and I did not have to change much of my eating habits," recalls Bajaj.

The retired engineer and business consultant grew up in Chennai and moved to Scotland in 1975 for a Master's in Management from Glasgow before work took him to the Republic of Ireland, where he has been living with his family at Castletroy, a suburb of Limerick, for 39 years.

His application with the Guinness World Record is currently under process as they assess if his walk covering twice the equivalent of the Earth's circumference in 104.8 million steps over 2,637 days makes the cut.

Republicans sweep 3 major state offices in Louisiana election

Baton Rouge, Nov 19 (AP):

Louisiana's gubernatorial election was decided in October when Jeff Landry, a Republican backed by former President Trump, won outright and avoided a runoff. Saturday's election completes the shaping of Louisiana's executive branch, where most incumbents didn't seek re-election and opened the door for new leadership in some of the most powerful positions.

Despite a low early voting turnout, the election caught the eye of Trump, who on Thursday endorsed the Republican candidates in each of the three statewide races.

The three Republicans "are outstanding in every way and have my complete and total endorsement," Trump said in a statement issued by the Louisiana Republican Party.

Liz Murrill was elected as attorney general, Nancy Landry as secretary of state and John Fleming as treasurer. The results also mean Louisiana will have its first female attorney general and first woman elected as secretary of state.

Republicans swept three runoff races for powerful statewide offices in Louisiana attorney general, secretary of state and treasurer Saturday night.

The GOP success, in a state that has had a Democrat in the governor's office for the past eight years, means that come January, Republicans will control the five most powerful positions in Louisiana's executive branch. In addition, the GOP holds majorities in both the House and Senate.

Liz Murrill was elected as attorney general, Nancy Landry as secretary of state and John Fleming as treasurer. The results also mean Louisiana will have its first female attorney general and first woman elected as secretary of state.

Vivek Ramaswamy says his Hindu faith gives him freedom

Washington, Nov 19 (PTI):

Indian-American Republican presidential aspirant Vivek Ramaswamy has said that his Hindu faith gives him freedom and has inspired him to launch his bid for the White House.

He also said that if elected, he would promote values that are not exclusive to one religion and make faith, family, hard work, patriotism "cool" again in the US.

Ramaswamy's remarks came during The Family Leader Forum event organised on Saturday.

During the event, the 38-year-old tech entrepreneur opened up to the Christian audience about his Hindu faith and spoke about how it has instilled values in him that are similar to Christianity.



"My faith is what gives me my freedom...my faith is what led me to this presidential campaign actually," he said.

"I am a Hindu. I believe that God is true. God has sent us here for a purpose. It is our duty to realise the purpose of God. It is our moral duty. The core of our religion is that God resides in all of us," he said.

"Those are God's instru-

ments that work through us in different ways, but we are still equal because God resides in each of us. That's the core of my faith".

Ramaswamy, who launched his 2024 presidential bid in February, said that it is because of his upbringing that he has developed a respect for family, marriage and parents.

DUBAI AIR SHOW 2023



Indian Air Force and other personnel at the Dubai Air Show 2023, United Arab Emirates.

5-year-old boy fatally stabs twin brother in California

Scotts Valley (US), Nov 19 (AP): A five-year-old California boy fatally stabbed his twin brother, authorities said. The twins were fighting Wednesday when one brother grabbed a small kitchen knife and stabbed his sibling in unincorporated Scotts Valley, according to the Santa Cruz County Sheriff's Office. The boy died at the hospital. "We are heartbroken for the family of these two young children and share in their grief," the sheriff's office wrote in a Facebook post on Thursday. Authorities said they do not plan to file criminal charges in the death. "California law dictates that age, criminal intent, and knowledge of wrongfulness are factors needed to charge a child with a crime," the Facebook post stated.

Pak accountability court acquits former PM Shehbaz Sharif, others in corruption case

Lahore, Nov 19 (PTI):

three-time former prime minister Nawaz Sharif.

National Accountability Bureau (NAB) Prosecutor Waris Ali Janjua submitted a report on the interpretation of a recent order by the Supreme Court wherein the trial courts had been restrained from announcing final orders till a decision on appeals against a judgment on the amendments in the law.

"The stay order of the apex court does not apply to acquittal applications in hand as the trial court heard them on merits and the defunct amendments in the law had nothing to do with the

proceedings," he told the court.

After going through the NAB's report, the judge allowed the applications of the accused persons and acquitted them in the reference. The judge observed: "There is no probability of the conviction in the case."

Since the ouster of former premier Imran Khan in April 2022, the Sharif brothers Nawaz Sharif and Shehbaz Sharif and other members of the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) party have been getting relief from courts in one corruption case or another.

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Maximizing Economic Gains

Through the Supply Chain Pact

The signing of the Supply Chain Resilience Agreement by India and 13 other member countries of the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF) marks a significant step in fostering multilateral cooperation in an era of geopolitical rivalries and tensions. This pact carries the potential to enhance the resilience, robustness, and integration of IPEF supply chains, thereby contributing to the economic development and progress of the entire region. The IPEF comprises a diverse group of nations, including India's Quad partners (the US, Australia, and Japan), South Korea, New Zealand, Fiji, and ASEAN members Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam. Collectively, these countries account for approximately 40 percent of the world's GDP, establishing IPEF as a formidable economic bloc. Notably, several of these nations are also participants in the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), a China-led trade initiative from which India withdrew four years ago. Launched in May 2022, the IPEF is widely regarded as a US-led response to RCEP, considered the world's largest trade agreement. The disruptions experienced by global supply chains during the Covid-19 pandemic exposed the vulnerabilities of the global economy. Ongoing conflicts like the Russia-Ukraine war and the Israel-Hamas confrontation have further exacerbated these challenges. Additionally, manufacturers and suppliers face increasing financial risks due to climate change-induced natural disasters. In light of these realities, the IPEF's foremost mission is to ensure uninterrupted trade engagement among its member nations. For New Delhi, the signing of the Supply Chain Resilience Agreement offers a unique opportunity to position itself as an attractive investment destination and a major player in the global export market. To achieve this, India must address several critical challenges. First and foremost, it must improve the ease of doing business within its borders. Streamlining bureaucratic processes and making the regulatory system more transparent are essential steps in this direction. Furthermore, India must prioritize sustainable economic growth to attract long-term investments. The success of the IPEF hinges on its ability to seamlessly integrate the economies of its member nations. It must strive to avoid becoming overly dependent on any single country, particularly the United States. The IPEF's foundation, built on four pillars - trade, supply chains, clean economy, and fair economy - offers a comprehensive framework for achieving this goal. The Supply Chain Resilience Agreement is not just a document; it is a commitment to the economic well-being of the Indo-Pacific region. It acknowledges the interconnectedness of our economies and the importance of cooperation in ensuring their resilience. As we move forward, it is imperative that all member countries of the IPEF work collaboratively to realize the full potential of this pact.

Global Emissions

A Wake-Up Call for Stronger Climate Action

A new UN report has delivered a stark warning: global greenhouse gas emissions are on track to decrease by a mere 2 percent below 2019 levels by 2030. This falls drastically short of the necessary 43 percent reduction needed to avert the most devastating consequences of climate change. In the words of UN Climate Change Executive Secretary Simon Stiell, governments around the world are taking nothing more than 'baby steps' in the fight against the looming climate crisis. This sobering report arrives just days before the commencement of the 28th UN Climate Change Conference (COP28) in Dubai, a critical gathering where the responsibility falls squarely on member countries, particularly those in the Western world, to step up and make substantial, time-bound commitments to climate action. Reflecting on last year's COP27, it's evident that wealthy nations made strides by agreeing to establish a fund aimed at compensating developing countries for the 'loss and damage' resulting from climate-induced extreme weather events. Yet, as COP28 approaches, significant uncertainties linger. Who will oversee the administration of this fund? Which countries will contribute, and to what extent? Who will be granted access, and who will be excluded? The credibility of the climate finance pledge made by developed nations in 2009—to mobilize \$100 billion annually to support developing countries—stands in doubt. Year after year, contributions have fallen short of this target, even though \$100 billion is widely acknowledged as a mere fraction of what is required to enable the developing world to meet its climate goals as outlined in the Paris Agreement. In a remarkable irony, Western nations, which have been the most vocal in urging the world to transition away from fossil fuels, appear hesitant to take the lead in reducing their own emissions. These historically high polluters bear a unique responsibility to provide assistance to nations most susceptible to the ravages of climate change-induced disasters, including heatwaves, wildfires, floods, tropical storms, and hurricanes—events that are growing in scale, frequency, and ferocity. COP28, therefore, stands as a crucial moment for countries like India and others to hold the Western world accountable for the environmental crisis we face today. As we approach COP28, it is imperative to recognize that the window of opportunity for meaningful climate action is rapidly closing. The UN report's revelation of inadequate emissions reductions is not just a cause for concern—it is a call to action. The scientific consensus on climate change is unequivocal, and the consequences of inaction are catastrophic. To chart a different course, countries must seize the moment in Dubai. Developed nations must not only reaffirm their commitment to climate finance but also substantially increase their contributions. They must lead by example, demonstrating their dedication to reducing emissions and transitioning to clean energy sources. Moreover, they must provide tangible support to developing nations, helping them adapt to the climate challenges that are already affecting their populations and economies. COP28 is not merely a diplomatic gathering; it is a test of our collective resolve to address the existential threat of climate change. The outcome will determine the trajectory of our planet's future. It is incumbent upon all nations, particularly the wealthiest and most influential, to rise to the occasion and take the decisive actions necessary to safeguard our planet for future generations. The urgency of this moment cannot be overstated. We must act boldly, decisively, and with unwavering commitment to protect the environment and secure a sustainable future. Our leaders must recognize that the time for 'baby steps' has long passed, and the world expects them to take giant leaps toward a more sustainable and equitable future.

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.

GRANULES GREEN KANHA RUN



Elderly women participate in a Zumba session during the Granules Green Kanha Run, in Guwahati, Sunday, Nov. 19.

Relevance of Surya Puja and Chhath Vrat



ER. PRABHAT KISHORE



The Holy Purans deal with several types of stories related to Suryopasana (worship of Sun). The Sun is called the soul of the world in the Vedas. In the Vedic period, the Sun was considered to be the creator of the entire universe. The meaning of Surya is - all inspiring. In "Rigved", the world's oldest scripture, there is a detailed description of the worship of the Sun for the salvation of sins. Like fire, He is considered to be the sustainer and direct deity of the world. There are 14 hymns available in this Holy book about the Sun. In the 49th hymn, Suryadev has been invoked to wish for wealth. According to the 50th hymn, "Rising this day, O rich in friends, ascending to the loftier heaven, Surya remove my heart's disease, take me this my yellow hue." In Yajurveda, by saying "Chaksho Suryo Jayat", the Sun is considered to be God's eye. In the Chhandogya Upanishad, the Sun is described as Pranavand the benefit of getting a son has been told on his meditation. The Koshitiki Brahman describes the worship of the Sun by offering water and sandalwood with Ardhya. Along with this, there is also a mention of Sun worship in various other literatures. The famous "Surya Shatakam" was composed by Mayur, the court poet of the sixth century ruler Harshavardhan. Historically, the tradition of Surya worship was prevalent even in the Nav-prastar era i.e. 8000-9000 BC. This inspiration of worship came from India to West Asia, Egypt, Greece and Rome. The Sun is a beacon of radiant energy, without which the creation is impossible to imagine. In the scriptures, the Sun is

given credit for removing poison. Curing of mental diseases, leprosy, blindness has also been discussed in the Upanishads and Sanskrit literature by praising the Sun. The source of Surya's powers is his wives Usha and Pratyusha. In fact, Chhath Mahaparva is the combined worship of these two powers along with the Sun. We bow jointly to our adored God and Goddess by paying obeisance to the last ray of the Sun (Pratyusha) in the evening and the first ray of the sun (Usha) in the morning. The worship of mother power holds its own important place in the core of Indian culture. The value of maternal power can be seen in all the traditions of Shaivism, Vaishnav and Buddhist. Archaeological evidence of the worship of "Matri Shakti" dates back to the early period of the development of civilization. The ritual of worship of Matrivedi related to Sun may have started in the Kushan period (1st century AD) or even earlier. In the excavation, a number of soup-shaped paved clay watercourses have been found during the Kushan period. The idol of Matrivedi and Deeya (lamps) were also used in this. From the Gupta period to the Pal Period, the adjustment of the two powers of the Sun, Usha and Pratyusha, is found in the sculptures. The Surya chariot with four horses was conceived in early AD; but from the Gupta period, the idol of Surya with seven horses was made. The statue depicts a crown on the head of the Sun, a lotus flower in both hands, a coil in the ear, armor in the chest and foot-to-knee high boots. Two female on either side, male figures, chariots at-

tached to seven or four horses and the charioteer Arun are also shown. The female figures are the two wives of the Sun (Shakti) - Usha and Pratyusha (Prabha and Chhaya). Pingal (Fire) and Dand (in place of Skand) are in standing on right and left side respectively. Pingal holds a pen and an inkpot in his hand and Dand is equipped with a pendulum. In iconography, Indian artists clearly incorporated into sculpture all those traditions that had been in vogue for centuries. Every year the adoration of Sun is performed on the Shastitithi (sixth day) of Shukla Paksha in the month of Kartik and Chaitra - and is popularly known as "Chhath". What is the similarity between Sun and Chhath? Why Surya Puja is called Chhath Puja? There are many stories in this regard in Vedas, Purans, Upanishads, Mahabharat and other scriptures. These stories are related to the Gods of different times. Due to lack of uniformity between them, it is difficult to come to the conclusion that which story is fictional and which is true. The form of Lord Surya has emerged from the word "Om" of Brahma. The folk festival is a mirror of the cultural heritage of every state; be it Ganapati Puja in Maharashtra, Bihu in Assam, Onam in Kerala, Pongal in Tamil Nadu or Lohri in Punjab. Similarly, one of the folk festivals of Magadh (now Bihar and surrounding regions) is "Chhath" in which purity, faith and reverence are at their culmination. It is performed as an essential responsibility of the public life of the State. This is the reason that now Chhath has been taken out of the purview of the festival and is called Mahaparv. In this great festival, Lord Surya is worshipped for world peace, family happiness and prosperity. The ChhathParv has become world-wide; and apart from Indian subcontinent, now this festival is also held in countries like Mauritius, Fiji, Guyana, Surinam, America, Trinidad and Indonesia. The oral and moral characters of the Gita are visible in this Mahaparva and in this sense, this Mahaparva has become a symbol of culture by taking the form of personal faith and reverence.

Known by names like Surya Shashti, Pratihara Shashti, Dala Shashti and Chhath Vrat, this great festival has a tradition of worshipping both the Astachalgami Surya (the setting sun) as well as Udiyaman Surya (the rising sun) respectively on the sixth and seventh day of the Shukla Paksh of Kartik and Chaitra month. It ignores the saying that everyone bows to the rising sun. So, the first inspiration from Chhath festival is that even if there is a shadow of sorrow on one's internalization or externalization, then one should continue with it. This tradition of Surya worship is a cultural heritage of thousands of years. Chhath Vrat is a four-day long festival, which are considered very spiritual. Purity, cleanliness and following the Vidhi-Vidhans (rules) are the first condition of this festival. There is a general opinion that if the wishes are fulfilled by this festival, then any mistake has to face the consequences too. Therefore, as much as the devotees have faith in this festival, there is also the fear that no mistake may be made. This Vrat begins with a Nahay-Khai, in which devotees take bath in the rivers or other water bodies. Then pumpkin curry and rice (may be accompanied by other dishes) made from rock salt is eaten. On the second day, i.e. on Kharna (Lohanda), pure ghee linen bread along with kheer (prepared with sugarcane juice or jiggery) are offered as Prasad. The third day is the Sandhya Ardhya to the setting Sun. The second ParvanArdhya is offered to the rising sun on the last or fourth day. Vratists standing in water, soups laden with Puja items kept nearby and crowds of devotees to help the fasts - together makes the atmosphere devotional. Among the many fasts observed in the Sanatan Dharma, Chhath is the only such fast in which we worship the deity (Sun) whom we see every day directly and who is the promulgator of life on this earth. This most eco-friendly festival promotes casteless society and is the symbol of equality, fraternity, unity, and integrity.

(The Author is a technocrat and educationist)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Tyre of distress

Tyres and brakes are two of the key pollutants as stated by a recent research conducted by Imperial college London. These two equipments account for almost half of the global particle pollution. The report also added that the tyre ingredients too have adverse impacts on wildlife and food chain. Even with the adoption of Electric vehicles this problems can hardly be mitigated rather increase due to extra weights of battery leading to faster erosion of tyres and brakes. Thus we need to develop an alternative low emission tyre with reshaped wheel technology especially in India where majority of the surface transport is dependent on tyre.

Arka Goswami, Durgapur.

Delhi Schools: Prioritizing Safety

The reopening of Delhi schools on November 20 is a positive step towards normalcy, but safety must be paramount. Clear and comprehensive guidelines are essential, considering the ongoing COVID-19 situation. Strict enforcement of protocols like ventilation, sanitation, masks, and vaccinations within schools is crucial. Contingency plans for potential virus resurgences are needed to prevent education disruptions. Addressing the mental health of students adjusting to physical classrooms after remote learning is equally vital. Adequate support systems within schools are essential for a smooth transition.

Maimul Safui, Howrah

Cautious Diplomacy

The cautious diplomacy of Xi Jinping and Joe Biden, prioritizing their interests, is noteworthy. The global community, including India, seeks peaceful coexistence amidst inevitable competition between these superpowers. It's crucial to recognize their consistency in stance. This meeting encourages India to engage diplomatically with China, safeguarding its interests for South Asia's stability and peace.

MK Nair, Raipur

Canadian Immigration

Immigrating to Canada remains a popular choice, primarily due to its advantageous proximity to the United States. Unlike India, Canada appears more receptive to demographic shifts. Although current relations between the two nations are strained, there's optimism that this phase will be temporary. Once the Khalistani issue is resolved, normalcy should return. The growing Indian community in Canada reflects the limited opportunities in India, prompting many young individuals to seek brighter horizons abroad.

Shivkumar Mishra, Raipur

Low inflation Fuelling the Development



Satish Singh

According to the Ministry of Statistics and Program Implementation, Consumer Price Index (CPI) based inflation stood at 4.87 percent in the month of October, while retail inflation stood at 6.77 percent in the month of October 2022. In the month of September this year, retail inflation was at the level of 5.02 percent, while in the month of August it was at the level of 6.83 percent and in the month of July it was at the highest level of 15 months at 7.44 percent. This is the third consecutive month after July, when retail inflation has declined. At the same time, this is the second consecutive month when retail inflation is less than 6 percent, the maximum tolerance limit set for inflation by the Reserve Bank of India.

Analysis shows that there has been a slight decline in the prices of food items in the month of October. The food inflation rates this month was 6.61 percent, whereas in the month of September it was 6.62 percent, while in the month of October 2022 it was 7.01 percent. Retail inflation in rural areas stood at 4.62 percent in October 2023, while food inflation stood at 6.71 percent. Thus, both retail inflation and food inflation in rural areas remained high in the month of October. There has been a rise in the prices of pulses in the month of October. This month the inflation rate of pulses reached the level of 18.79 percent, whereas in the month of September it was 16.38 percent. At the same time, the inflation rate of grains and products made from them was 10.65 percent in the month of October, which was 10.95 percent in the month of September. The price of eggs has also reached a high level of 9.30 percent. The inflation rate of fruits stood at 9.34 percent in the month of October. However, there has been a significant decline in the price of spices, and it has come down to the level of 2.76 percent in the month of October, which was 23.06 percent in the month of September. The price of vegetables has also come down to the level of 2.70 percent in the month of October, which was 3.39 percent in the month of September. The reduction in retail inflation will provide direct relief to the common people and businessmen. This will make it easier for the Reserve Bank of India to cut the repo rate, which will reduce the loan

rate and will also accelerate economic activities. With the help of monetary review, the Reserve Bank continuously tries to increase the pace of development of the country. Along with retail inflation, Wholesale Price Index (WPI) has also decreased in the month of October. This month it has been below minus 0.52 percent, whereas in October 2022 it was 8.67 percent. This is the seventh consecutive month since April this year, when wholesale inflation has been below zero. Wholesale inflation was minus 0.26 percent in the month of September. Retail inflation being below the tolerance level and wholesale inflation being below zero means that inflation is under control. This is also confirmed by the stability of the rupee over the past months and the fuel cost remaining almost unchanged. However, due to fluctuating prices of vegetables and other food items, there will be minor fluctuations in the inflation level. However, due to favourable weather conditions, there is little possibility of much fluctuation. According to the Index of Industrial Production (IIP) data released by the National Statistical Office (NSO) on November 10, India's industrial production stood at 5.8 percent in the month of September, which was 3.3 percent in September 2022. There has been significant growth in the manufacturing and mining sectors compared to last year. However, there has been a decline on monthly basis, as it was 10.3 percent in the month of August. Due to continuous festivals from October to December, it is

expected that the demand for various products will increase, which will improve the IIP figures on monthly basis also. Due to softening of inflation, the Central Bank had kept the repo rate unchanged at 6.50 percent in the monetary review held in October, so that economic activities could accelerate. Keeping the repo rate unchanged on one hand provided relief to borrowers and on the other hand economic activities also gained momentum. The Reserve Bank mainly tries to fight inflation by increasing the repo rate. When the repo rate is high, banks get loans from the Reserve Bank at expensive rates, due to which banks also give loans to customers at expensive rates. By doing this, the liquidity of currency in the economy reduces and due to lack of money in people's pockets, the demand for goods decreases and due to high prices of goods, their sales decrease, which leads to decline in inflation. Similarly, when there is a slowdown in the economy, efforts are made to increase the liquidity of currency in the market to accelerate the developmental works and for this also the repo rate is cut, so that the banks can get loans from the Reserve Bank at cheaper rates. After getting the loan at affordable rate, the bank should also give loan to the customers at a cheaper rate. Right now, the aim of the Reserve Bank is to strike a balance between growth and inflation, so that the common man and businessmen do not face problems and the pace of development also remains fast. India's gross domestic product (GDP) rate was 7.2 percent in the financial year 2022-23, while it is estimated to be 6.5 percent in the current financial year. However, there are speculations that the projected GDP rate will also be the highest among the major economies of the world. There has been some decline in the GDP growth rate due to Corona pandemic, geopolitical crisis, inflation, slowdown in the global economy, etc., but it may see a rise in the coming months, because now the Indian economy has recovered from the negative effects of the Corona pandemic. Due to which the bottlenecks in the supply chain have been eliminated and economic activities have gained impetus. Not only this, in recent months the foreign exchange has increased so much that the import needs can be met for 11 months. On November 15, Hon'ble Union Finance Minister Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman, while addressing the "Indo Pacific Regional Dialogue", said that India will become the world's third largest economy by 2027, surpassing Japan and Germany. According to the International Monetary Fund (IMF), in 2027, India will become the third largest economy in the world and India's GDP will cross the level of 5000 US dollars. Not only this, but India can also become a developed country by 2047. Inflation has a negative impact on the GDP growth rate. Inflation had remained at a high level for the past years, but now inflation is declining. Therefore, it is being speculated that India's growth rate will accelerate further in the coming months and the economy will gradually become stronger.

BRIEF

Macrotech

New Delhi: Macrotech Developers will invest about Rs 800 crore to construct two housing projects in Bengaluru where it has entered to expand business amid strong demand, its MD & CEO Abhishek Lodha said. Macrotech Developers, which markets its properties under Lodha brand, has a significant presence in Mumbai Metropolitan Region (MMR) and Pune. In June last year, the company had announced its entry in the Bengaluru market by forming a joint venture to develop its first housing project. Later, it added one more housing project in the IT city.

BoB plans to raise up to Rs 15,000 cr via bonds

New Delhi: State-owned Bank of Baroda (BoB) on Saturday said it proposes to raise up to Rs 15,000 crore via bonds to fund business growth. The capital raising committee of the bank in its meeting held on Saturday has approved the issuance of Rs 2,000 crore Tier II/sub debt bond with the green-shoe option to raise another Rs 3,000 crore totalling Rs 5,000 crore (10 years with call option at the end of 5 years), BoB said in a regulatory filing. The bank has further decided to issue Infrastructure Bonds amounting to Rs 2,000 crore with a green-shoe option to raise an additional Rs 8,000 crore totaling the issue size of Rs 10,000 crore (tenure up to 7 years), it said.

Tata Power

New Delhi: Tata Power on Saturday said it has received the first set of Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS) from TATA AutoComp for its energy storage park. These BESS will be deployed at a 120 MW energy storage park in Chhattisgarh, Tata Power said in a statement. Tata AutoComp, a leading auto components maker, also inaugurated its manufacturing facility for BESS.

Avadh Sugar

Kolkata: Avadh Sugar & Energy Ltd, a K K Birla group company, has reported a net profit of Rs 29 crore for the quarter ended September as against a loss of Rs 16 crore in the corresponding period a year ago. Total income of the Kolkata-headquartered company during the quarter stood at Rs 799 crore, compared to Rs 594 crore in the year-earlier period.

Dabur

New Delhi: Leading FMCG and ayurvedic products maker Dabur is planning to set up a new factory in South India in less than a year's time, as its business scales in the region, according to company's CEO Mohit Malhotra. Dabur, which now gets 20 per cent of its domestic sales from South India with its business there doubling in the last 5-6 years, is identifying gaps and usages to launch products customised to the markets, he told PTI in an interview.

Women accorded top priority under PM Mudra Yojana scheme: Sitharaman

Rameswaram, TN, Nov 19 (PTI): Union Finance and Corporate Affairs Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Sunday said women entrepreneurs are accorded first priority under the Centre's flagship Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana scheme which offers financial assistance to beneficiaries.

Distributing sanction letters to beneficiaries under the PM SVANidhi Se Samridhhi programme which offers loans to street vendors, here, she said officials of the municipalities should identify the uncovered street vendors and help them avail benefits of this scheme.

SVANidhi Se Samridhhi is an additional component of the PMSVANidhi scheme to facilitate access to eight central government schemes to eligible PM SVANidhi beneficiaries and their family members for their holistic development and socio-economic upliftment.



Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman addresses during an outreach programme, in Rameswaram, Sunday, Nov. 19.

Recalling the launch of Jan Dhan-Aadhaar-Mobile Trinity, Sitharaman said through the JAM Trinity, AADHAR card was provided to a beneficiary after which he or she can open a bank account and directly receive the financial aid from the Centre has been transferred to the accounts of a beneficiary thereby avoiding 'middlemen'. The

Union Minister referred to former PM and late Rajiv Gandhi's comment that if the Centre gives away Rs 100 to a beneficiary, he receives only Rs 15 and the remaining Rs 85 goes to middlemen and others'.

"He (Rajiv Gandhi) himself has mentioned this and after assuming office in 2014, in order to ensure that a beneficiary directly receives the financial as-

sistance given to him by the Centre, Prime Minister Narendra Modi advised us to use technology so that the beneficiary is able to know whatever amount he has received directly, thereby middlemen can be avoided," she said.

"The opening of bank accounts to serve the beneficiary was conducted like a mass movement to attain full coverage of the scheme across the country" she added.

On the Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana scheme, Sitharaman said it was introduced to provide loans through banks particularly to empower women entrepreneurs.

"One important aspect of the scheme is that women who are running small businesses or interested in starting a business, can approach the bank and start their venture by receiving the loans from PM Mudra Yojana scheme.

Himalaya introduces new range of kids toothpaste

Mumbai, Nov 19:

Himalaya Wellness Company, India's leading wellness brand, has announced its entry into the kids' toothpaste market with the launch of Himalaya KIDS toothpaste with three exciting new flavors: Orange, Cool Mint, and Bubble Gum - to cater to the taste preferences of kids.

With this new line of toothpaste, the company, which has a solid presence in the personal care market, is committed to offering parents the best of nature's care that is gentle, effective, and safe for dental care of their kids. Himalaya KIDS toothpaste with natural cavity protection utilizes time-tested natural ingredients and

avoids the use of harsh chemicals, with no added sugar, no artificial flavors and Preservatives, making it a safer and healthier oral solution for kids. The fluoride-free toothpaste is designed specifically to meet the needs of kids' oral hygiene.

Himalaya KIDS toothpaste is an ideal choice for parents looking for a safe and reliable oral care product for their children. Children's teeth possess thinner enamel, rendering them highly susceptible to bacterial damage, ultimately leading to cavities and tooth decay. Untreated dental problems in kids can cause pain, discomfort, and infection, and can also affect their ability to eat, sleep, and speak properly.

Conditions not ripe to make INR a hard currency: GTRI

New Delhi, Nov 19 (PTI):

India should become a middle-income country and then push to make INR (rupee) a hard currency, and till then, it must promote the settlement of global trade in the local currency, think tank GTRI said on Sunday.

Global Trade Research Initiative (GTRI) said that transforming a currency into a hard currency is a complex process that hinges on several pivotal factors.

Firstly, economic stability is paramount; a country must exhibit low and stable inflation, consistent growth, and a balanced trade environment. This stability underpins confidence among international investors and trading partners, it added.

Equally crucial is the

implementation of strong fiscal and monetary policies by the government and central bank, including effective national debt management and sensible interest rate policies, it said, adding aspiring for reserve currency status is a significant aspect.

This status is typically achieved when a currency is widely used and trusted, and reciprocally, it gains trust because of its widespread use.

Political stability also plays a critical role, as it reassures external entities of the nation's economic consistency, the think tank said. Hard currencies are widely accepted around the world for international transactions and are considered a reliable and stable store of value. The presence of a currency as a hard currency reflects

perceived stability, reliability, and economic strength of its issuing country.

The US Dollar is the most dominant hard currency, often considered the world's primary reserve currency. It is used in a significant majority of international transactions and as a benchmark currency for most commodities.

"The process requires significant systemic changes, which could, potentially, destabilise India's economy. Therefore, it might be more prudent for India to wait until its economy grows further and reaches a middle-income status before aspiring to make the INR a hard currency.

"In the meantime, India should work to make local currency settlements more robust.

Khadim showcases festive range of products

Mumbai, Nov 19:

Khadim India, the home grown second largest retail footwear brand launches Diwali campaign, 'Dil Mein Diwali Pairon Mein Khadim' to celebrate the joyous festival in this market. The campaign highlights the festive collection of the brand designed for the entire family to celebrate the festival of lights.

Furthermore to add on to the festivity the brand is also offering attractive offers for its consumers to enjoy. The campaign reassures its users that their beloved footwear brand is a one stop destination for fashion footwear and accessories for all. The brand has launched its festive range of footwear

under the primary brand Khadim and its sub brands British Walkers, Lazard, Turk, Sharon, Cleo, Softtouch, PRO, Bonito & Adriana. Also have introduced in store offers for consumers on purchase of Rs.1000 & above. The campaign 'Dil Mein Diwali Pairon Mein Khadim' is specifically curated for this market. The festive range launched is best in quality available in right budget that will complement any festive attire. Consumers can take their pick from across the range for the entire family.

The campaign has been brought to life through a number of elements Print Campaign, Movie Theatre Ads, OOH, In-Store communication and digital promotions.

Gandhar Oil Refinery initial public offering on Nov 22

Mumbai, Nov 19:

Gandhar Oil Refinery (India) Limited (the "Company") proposes to open its initial public offering ("Offer") on Wednesday, November 22, 2023. Bid/ Offer Closing Date will be Friday, November 24, 2023. Anchor Investor Bid/ Offer Period is one Working Day prior to Bid/Offer Opening Date, that is, Tuesday, November 21, 2023.

The Price Band of the Offer has been fixed from ₹160 per Equity Share to ₹169 per Equity Share. Bids can be made for a minimum of 14,872 Equity Shares and in multiples of 88 Equity Shares thereafter.

The initial public offering comprises a Fresh Issue aggregating up to ₹3,020 million and an Offer for Sale of up to 11,756,910 Equity Shares by the Selling Shareholders (as defined below) comprising of up to 2,250,000 Equity Shares by. Ramesh Babul Parekh



(L-R) Samir Ramesh Parekh (Vice Chairperson and Joint Managing Director, Gandhar Oil Refinery (India) Limited), Ramesh Babul Parekh (Chairperson and Managing Director, Gandhar Oil Refinery (India) Limited) and Aslesh Ramesh Parekh (Joint Managing Director, Gandhar Oil Refinery (India) Limited) addressing the gathering at the press conference in connection to their Initial Public Offer.

(the "Promoter Selling Shareholder"), up to 2,250,000 Equity Shares by Mr. Kailash Parekh, up to 2,250,000 Equity Shares by Gulab Parekh (Kailash Parekh and Ms. Gulab

Parekh are together referred to as the "Promoter Group Selling Shareholders"). Up to 3,000,000 Equity Shares by Green Desert Real Estate Brokers, up to 1,000,000 Equity

Shares by Denver Bldg Mat & Décor TR LLC, up to 1,000,000 Equity Shares by Fleet Line Shipping Services LLC, up to 1,970 equity shares by Sunit Menon, up to 1,970 equity shares by Mr. Vijendra Sumatil Patani, up to 1,970 equity shares by Vinay Prabhakar Ulpe, and up to 1,000 equity shares by Mayur Bhupendral Desai. (Green Desert Real Estate Brokers, Denver Bldg Mat & Décor TR LLC, Fleet Line Shipping Services LLC, Sunit Menon, Vijendra Sumatil Patani, Vinay Prabhakar Ulpe and Mayur Bhupendral Desai, collectively referred to as the "Other Selling Shareholders") (the Promoter Selling Shareholder, Promoter Group Selling Shareholders and Other Selling Shareholders, collectively referred to as the "Selling Shareholders" and such Equity Shares offered by the Selling Shareholders, the "Offered Shares").

Mercedes, Audi see record sales in festive season this year

New Delhi, Nov 19 (PTI):

Luxury carmakers Mercedes and Audi have dispatched record units this festive season as the demand for high-end cars continues to grow in the country.

Driven by brisk sales throughout the year, the luxury car industry in India is hopeful of achieving its best-ever performance this year.

In an interaction with PTI, Mercedes-Benz India Managing Director Santosh Iyer said the festive season this year from Onam to Diwali has been better than last years', owing to multiple new launches, an attractive portfolio and also strong customer sentiment. "We have seen record deliver-

ies during Dussehra, Dhanteras and Diwali reflecting customer enthusiasm," he noted.

Iyer said that the automaker continues to have a positive industry outlook, expecting record sales this year. It however expects supply chain-related disruptions to continue to pose challenges, affecting the production and availability of SUVs, especially the GLC.

"We continue to have a positive industry outlook, expecting record sales this year. However, we forecast supply chain-related disruptions to continue in the coming months as well."

Audi India Head Balbir Singh Dhillon said the company has witnessed an 88 per cent growth with

5,530 units retailed in January-September 2023.

"We have been operating with one of our highest-order banks in recent times. This festive period marked bigger celebrations for Audi India as we witnessed our highest-ever festive season sales in the last seven years," he added.

Growth was on the back of sustained demand for our best-sellers including the A4, Q3, Q3 Sportback, Q5 and S5 Sportback, Dhillon said.

"Delhi and Mumbai continued to lead the demand for our products in the festive season. We also continue to witness good demand from Hyderabad, Kolkata, Chennai, Bengaluru, and Ahmedabad," he added.

Mcap of 7 of top 10 firms swells Rs 1.50 lakh cr

● TCS, Infosys biggest gainers

New Delhi, Nov 19 (PTI):

The combined market valuation of seven of the top 10 valued firms climbed Rs 1,50,679.28 crore last week, with IT majors Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) and Infosys emerging as the biggest gainers, amid an overall optimistic trend in equities. Last week, the BSE benchmark jumped 890.05 points or 1.37 per cent.

Reliance Industries, TCS, HDFC Bank, Infosys, Hindustan Unilever, ITC and Bharti Airtel were the gainers while ICICI Bank, State Bank of India and Bajaj Finance faced ero-

sion from their market valuation.

The valuation of TCS jumped Rs 62,148.99 crore to Rs 12,81,637.63 crore, emerging as the biggest gainer from the top 10 pack.

The market capitalisation (mcap) of Infosys rallied Rs 28,616.98 crore to Rs 5,96,681.75 crore.

The mcap of Reliance Industries climbed Rs 28,111.41 crore to Rs 15,93,893.03 crore and that of HDFC Bank surged Rs 11,136.61 crore to reach Rs 11,42,215.81 crore.

The market valuation of Hindustan Unilever soared Rs 10,032.75 crore to Rs 5,94,317.36 crore and that of Bharti Airtel advanced Rs 6,828.74 crore to Rs 5,32,585.63 crore.

Maruti gets nod from shareholders to fully acquire Suzuki Motor Gujarat

New Delhi, Nov 19 (PTI):

Maruti Suzuki India on Saturday said its shareholders have approved the proposal to issue shares on a preferential basis to Suzuki Motor Corporation (SMC) as consideration for a related party transaction for the acquisition of 100 per cent stake in Suzuki Motor Gujarat.

The company had sought approval from its shareholders through a postal ballot on two special resolutions for the purpose of fully acquiring Suzuki Motor Gujarat (SMG) last month.

Resolutions as set out in the postal ballot pertaining to approval of related party transaction, and create, offer, issue and allot



equity shares on a preferential basis for consideration other than cash have been approved by the members of the company with requisite majority, Maruti Suzuki India said in a regulatory filing.

The first special resolution of related party transaction was approved with 98.21 per cent in favour and 1.79 per cent against.

The second special resolution to create, offer, and allot equity shares on a preferential basis other than cash consideration to SMC received 98.91 per cent votes in favour and 1.09 per cent against, it added. Last month, the company's board approved the acquisition of SMG for a total purchase consideration of Rs 12,841.1 crore.

SAIL working on plans to expand capacity by 15 MT in phase 1: Chairman Amarendu Prakash

New Delhi, Nov 19 (PTI):

State-owned steel maker SAIL has started working on plans to expand its installed capacity by 15 million tonnes (MT) in the first phase, the company's Chairman Amarendu Prakash said.

Its current installed steel-making capacity is about 20 million tonnes per annum (MTPA), Prakash said.

"It has been kicked off. In the first phase, we are expanding it to 35 MT. So, phase 1 is of 15 MT," the chairman said in a reply to a question on SAIL's expansion plans.

On the timeline and investment amount involved in the expansion plan, he said the company is active-



SAIL Chairman Amarendu Prakash

ly working on detailed project reports (DPRs) and sharing any number will be a difficult task at present.

When asked about the funding model, Prakash said SAIL will use its own funds and also seek market support to fund the expansion. "It (the funding) will be a mix of both internal accruals and market.

Local residents demand additional polling stations

Long queues mar voting experience in three villages

Central Chronicle News

Rajim, Nov 19: Frustrations were high as voters in Chaubebandha, Beltukri, and Semhartara faced significant challenges during the assembly election. Long queues, extended wait times, and inconvenient commutes to polling stations have prompted residents to demand the establishment of additional polling stations to streamline the voting process.

Semhartara, a Gram Panchayat with 1100 voters, has been dealing with a particularly difficult situation. In the absence of a local polling station, residents had to walk 2 kilometers to reach the nearest polling station in Koma.

Despite being a Gram Panchayat with its own administrative unit, the lack of a dedicated polling station has led to substantial inconvenience for



voters. Sarpanch Sundar Sahu of Gram Panchayat Semhartara has taken action by submitting an application to the immediate SDM Pooja Bansal, requesting the construction of a polling station within the village.

The challenges faced in Chaubebandha were equally concerning. Voting began at 8:00 am in this village, adjacent to the city, and soon a long queue formed that showed no signs of decreasing. By

2:30 pm, both the men's and women's lines were packed with eager voters.

The situation escalated into a scuffle, prompting police personnel to intervene and restore order. The total number of voters in Chaubebandha is approximately 1206, and electronic voting machines contributed to the voting process taking more time.

The residents insisted on the need for two polling booths to facilitate quicker voting, as many had other

commitments and found it physically challenging to wait in line for extended periods. Some voters even returned home, with a significant number of them being women.

Beltukri, with 2600 voters, encountered similar difficulties. The village has only two polling booths, leading to prolonged voting hours. Voting continued until 8:00 pm, and many voters became tired and opted to sit down while waiting.

Devnath Sahu, Sawat,

Hiccuram Hirwani, Dhaniram, Gajadhar Prasad, BR Hirwani, Premshankar, former Sarpanch Purnanik Ram Sahu, and Kamalnarayan Dewangan of Beltukri stressed the importance of expanding the polling center to accommodate the large number of voters, especially with Lok Sabha elections approaching in the next 5 months.

Be it Assembly elections or Lok Sabha elections, voting takes place from 8:00 am to 9:00 pm, whereas in Gram Panchayat elections the situation is very frightening. It's 10:00 pm by the time voting completed. The residents of these villages are determined to address these issues promptly. Community leaders and concerned residents plan to meet the District Election Officer to discuss these challenges and seek immediate solutions.

Charbatha village reverses election boycott decision

Strong voter turnout highlights community's commitment to democracy

Central Chronicle News

Kurud, Nov 19: The people of Charbatha Gram Panchayat have rescinded their decision to boycott the elections, thanks to the unwavering dedication of the District Election Officer and the determined efforts of polling teams.

Frustration stemming from mining-related grievances and a perceived lack of understanding from the administration led to the initial boycott, but after swift resolution following the Collector's guidance, the village welcomed polling teams. The villagers have actively participated in the democratic process, reaffirming their role in this grand ritual of



democracy. Out of the 1031 eligible voters in Gram Panchayat Charbatha, an impressive 80% exercised their right to vote. Despite the demands of farming and paddy harvesting in every village, the residents exhibited remarkable enthusiasm in the assembly elections. The villages of Kurud assembly, including

Bhaibod, Bharda, Kukkuha, Dahdaha, M a u r i k h u r d , Bhaismundi, Nari, Sirsida, Gudguda, Parkhanda, Gadadih, Umrada, Mandraud, Charra, Mongra, Kokadi, Khaira, and Katalbod, witnessed substantial voter turnout, with women displaying even greater enthusiasm than men.

Fate of candidates sealed in strong room under tight security

Stringent security measures in place at Government Engineering College, Koni

Central Chronicle News

Bilaspur, Nov 19: With unwavering security arrangements, the fate of assembly election candidates has been sealed within a robust strong room. The Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) are now securely stored at the Government Engineering College, Koni, and the room has been meticulously sealed.

Collector Avneesh Sharan and SP Santosh oversaw the sealing process, alongside Election Commission observers, candidates, and political party officials.

A dedicated company of BSF jawans stands guard around the clock to ensure the security of the strong room and its premises. Following the completion of sealing procedures, the entire area was placed



under the vigilant watch of armed BSF personnel.

The strong room will only be opened on December 3rd, the day designated for vote counting.

Multiple layers of security checks have been instituted to access the campus, ensuring a tight perimeter. Political parties and candidates have the option to appoint their represen-

tatives to monitor the strong room, with each representative receiving an official photo pass issued by the returning officer.

However, they will not be allowed to bring laptops or WiFi-enabled devices into the monitoring area. Dozens of CCTV cameras have been strategically installed throughout the

campus to record all activities, guaranteeing comprehensive surveillance.

The security measures in place leave no room for vulnerabilities, ensuring a highly secure environment. Notably, the counting of votes for six assembly constituencies within the district, including Bilaspur, Beltara, Kota, Takhatpur, Masturi, and Bilha, will occur concurrently within the Engineering College campus at Koni.

During the sealing event, Election Commission observers Udayan Mishra, Nayeli Ite, Kumar Prashant, District Panchayat CEO Ajay Agarwal, Additional Collector and Deputy District Election Officer Shiv Kumar Banerjee, and concerned returning officers were present to oversee the proceedings.

Water ATM turning into junk due to officials neglect

Five years on, costly project provides no relief

Central Chronicle News

Khairagarh, Nov 19: In a tale of neglect and unfulfilled promises, a water ATM installed five years ago in Itwari Bazaar and the Government Hospital at the district headquarters of Khairagarh has become nothing more than a decorative relic.

This water ATM, designed to provide pure drinking water to the people, remains non-functional, leaving residents parched and the expensive project in disrepair.

Despite more than half a decade passing since its installation, the water ATM in Itwari market and the government hospital of Khairagarh district headquarters has not dispensed



a drop of water. Surprisingly, the Municipality of Khairagarh has not taken any steps to rectify the situation or maintain the water ATM.

No personnel have been assigned to oversee its operation, and there is no mechanism in place to ensure its water supply. The costly water ATM, originally intended to provide a vital service, is now slowly crumbling into disrepair, becoming a mere showpiece.

The negligence of responsible officers is evident, as the water ATM, constructed under the municipality's supervision, continues to languish unused. With proper operation, this water ATM could have provided a source of pure and cold drinking water to the community. However, it appears that the officials entrusted with its care have shown little interest in its maintenance.

The water ATM project

was initiated to address the need for pure and soft drinking water among the local population, with installations in both the Itwari market and government hospital premises.

Regrettably, since its inauguration, patients and their families at the government hospital have been deprived of access to clean water from this facility. As a result, the water ATM, once envisioned as a lifeline, is now on the brink of becoming a forgotten relic. Local residents, who have long awaited the benefits of this water ATM, are left without answers.

What official says

I have been posted here only two months ago. I have to study the situation more closely before providing a comprehensive response.

-Pranod Shukla, CMO Municipality Khairagarh

Shri Ganesh Ram School hosts colourful painting competition

Central Chronicle News

Arang, Nov 19: Shri Ganesh Ram Higher Secondary School, Gullu, brought colours to creativity on Saturday as they hosted an engaging painting competition, a joint effort by the school management and Pipla Foundation Arang.

Young talents from the school poured their artistic expressions onto canvas, creating a delightful spectacle. The Pipla Foundation Arang team graced the event, praising the initiative and the children's artwork. Chanduram Yadav, the



school's Principal, expressed that the outstanding participants would be feted in a special ceremony jointly organized by the school management and Pipla Foundation Arang. The competition saw enthusiastic participation from

students ranging from class 1st to 12th, with their energy and creativity on full display. The event witnessed a remarkable turnout of school students, teachers, and members of Pipla Foundation, fostering a spirit of art and camaraderie.

Villagers eagerly exercise their right to vote in Birkoni

Vibrant participation marks second phase of assembly elections

Central Chronicle News

Birkoni, Nov 19: The second phase of assembly elections, constituency number 42, witnessed a spirited display of democracy in the villages of Birkoni. Young men and women exercised their franchise, many casting their first priority vote with enthusiasm. The lines of male voters saw a robust turnout from early morning until late in the evening, with women taking an active and substantial part in the electoral process.

Even after completing their daily household chores, women

formed queues to cast their votes, supported by the efforts of dedicated workers and Anganwadi workers who provided guidance and prepared them for voting. Birkoni recorded an impressive 82 percent voter turnout, with four polling booths housed in the Central Government Primary School building.

Additional booth centers were established in the primary schools of Barabaspur, Bargaon, the Anganwadi center in Nayapara, and the primary school in Achhridih. Paudals were set up for voter convenience at the polling station, where queues, especially those of women, began to grow steadily throughout the morning. The large turnout resulted



in some voters waiting for hours to cast their ballots. Police personnel were stationed at all polling stations to maintain order and security. In some instances, voters left their children in the care of others to prioritize voting. Young girls expressed their

determination to vote for a worthy MLA, recognizing the significance of their role in shaping their constituency's future. Voters arrived with identification cards, Aadhaar cards, and a unique voting number, facilitating a seamless voting process. People living outside the area

had also travelled back to their village a day in advance to exercise their voting rights.

The police administration ensured special security arrangements at polling centers, deploying a significant number of officers at crowded locations. Police officers visited polling stations regularly to assess and oversee the arrangements, engaging in discussions with voters and emphasizing the importance of participating in free and fair elections to strengthen democracy. Youth and young girls eagerly embraced their newly acquired right to elect MLAs, demonstrating their commitment to electing capable representatives who will contribute positively to the area's development.

First-time voters bring smiles and enthusiasm to polls



Central Chronicle News

Berla, Nov 19: The spirit of democracy shone brightly in Chhattisgarh's second-phase elections as young citizens cast their first-ever votes. The polling stations in Bemetara Assembly wit-

nessed an outpouring of enthusiasm from these new voters, leaving smiles on their faces.

Names such as Omkar Sahu, Rajat Sen, Kikki Sen, Rahul Sahu, Rukhmani, Neha, Yashoda, Bhumeswari, Navya, Meghu Rana,



Dhan Singh, Narayan Rana, Rakesh Pandey, Bhagwati Sahu, Shail Chandeshwar, Suman Sahu, and Divya Gupta made their debut as voters. The excitement was palpable as Huls Dhurve, Rani Dhurve, Dakwar Dhurve, Bhisham Verma,

Gopal, and others joined them in expressing their civic duty fervour. After casting their first votes, these young citizens congregated at a dedicated selfie zone to commemorate the momentous occasion with joyful selfies.

Colorful children's fair delights kids and parents

Manav Samaj Kalyan and Shikshan Samiti hosts festive event in Bharatiya Public School

Central Chronicle News

Dongargaon, Nov 19: A vibrant children's fair in honour of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru took place on Saturday, November 18, at Bharatiya Public School, operated by Manav Samaj Kalyan and Shikshan Samiti.

The festivities commenced with School Principal Sunil Kumar Pandey cutting the ribbon at the main entrance, officially inaugurating the event. Dignitaries such as Office in-charge Rajendra Kunwar, shift in-charge



Birendra Rajput, Pradhan Pathak P.L. Baya, and Pradhan Pathika Damini Yadu also graced the occasion with their presence.

The fair showcased a variety of talents, with performances that captivated parents and distinguished guests. Anushtha and her partner presented a captivating Saraswati Vandana, while Lovely and her partner enchanted the audience

with a welcome dance song. Medha and her partner added an exciting twist with a dance performance set to Chhattisgarhi Remix music.

After these captivating performances, attendees indulged in a delectable array of snacks, including Gupchup, Bhel, Samosa, Idli, Juice, Pasta, Pastry, Cutlet, Bread Pakora, Chinese Pakora, and more, all prepared by the talented

students. The fair also featured various games and attractions, including a mysterious and thrilling haunted bungalow crafted by higher secondary students.

The successful execution of this event was made possible through the dedicated efforts of the organization's teachers, including Devendra Sahu, Lunkaran Yadav, Renuka Sahu, Anuradha Sonteki, Jamuna Sahu, Jitendra Chandravanshi, Venuka Nirmalkar, Komal Sen, Guruvinder, Kanta Sen, Lakhna Sahu, Rashmi Dewangan, Lakshmi Rajput, Dubilata Thakur, Veena, and with special contributions from Sarita Golchha and Usha Sahu. The event was expertly orchestrated by Principal P.L. Baya.

How Australia managed to dominate mighty Indian batting unit

Ahmedabad, Nov 19 (PTI):

Australia's grizzled veterans brought all their big-game experience to the fore, restricting a hitherto rollicking India to 240 all out in the World Cup final here Sunday.

Their dominance over the hosts had multiple focal points to it, while India made a couple of moments of their own through fifties by Virat Kohli and KL Rahul.

Here's a closer look at important moments in the match.

1. Rohit lives by sword

From the beginning of the tournament, Rohit batted only in one gear, evidenced by his strike-rate of 126. On this day, the Mumbaier made runs at 151. His strategy was clear, blunt the Aussie new ball bowlers and the skipper blasted two sixes off pacer Josh Hazlewood to give early momentum to his side. But Rohit's innings did not bloom into something bigger. His effort to hoist off-spinner Glenn Maxwell over the ring ended when Travis Head took a lovely running-diving catch towards sweeper cover. Australia snapped India's march too for that moment.

2. Australia's fielding

The Antipodeans have always been a very good fielding side, and they raised the bar one notch up in the summit clash. Travis Head took that brilliant running catch to dis-



miss Rohit Sharma and David Warner made more than one diving saves near the ropes to save the boundaries, leaving Indian batters a bit frustrated. It also forced them to change their gung-ho approach that they followed so far in the tournament. Cummins also made some really good field placements. When Kohli and Rahul were batting, the Aussies skipper opened the cover region with a sweeper in place and closed ranks around

the square-leg and mid-on areas. It was a clear ploy to force the Indian batters to take more risks to make quick runs, or contend with those workman-like singles to covers and leg-side.

3. Edgy Gill and Shreyas

This was the first 50-over World Cup final for Shubman Gill and Shreyas Iyer, and they looked a bit nervous. Gill was like a cat on a hot tin roof, and hardly offered a settled moment. His harrowing time at crease ended when a

half-hearted pull off left-arm pacer Mitchell Starc found Adam Zampa at the edge of the circle. Shreyas came to this match riding on back-to-back hundreds against Netherlands and New Zealand. But this noon, his innings lasted just three balls. Cummins caught him rooted inside the crease with a delivery that jagged back just enough at a fair clip.

4. Kohli and Rahul stand tall

They joined forces when India were shaking at 81 for 3, but Kohli and Rahul

sussed up the conditions and pitch very well, knuckled down to make steady 67 runs for the fourth wicket. It was more industrious than eye-popping, but that was what India needed at that moment. In fact, the entire alliance had just one boundary in it, but India recovered to a good extent through them until Kohli (54) chopped one from Pat Cummins onto his stumps. However, Rahul (66) continued to hold the innings together with a composed

5. Captain Cummins and his bowlers

Through the whole of this showpiece Pat Cummins the bowler was conspicuous by his absence. Coming into this match, the pacer's run-rate was above six and has taken 13 wickets from 10 matches. But he would have liked to make a bigger impact, and the New South Welshman chose the finest occasion to make his mark. He got the big wickets of in-form Kohli and Shreyas to keep India in check, also bowled an economic spell. Pacers Mitchell Starc and Josh Hazlewood too helped him taking five wickets among them on a pitch that had very little for their type of bowlers, using umpteen variations.

The spinners — Adam Zampa, Glenn Maxwell and Travis Head — too chipped in choking runoff in the middle period. They hardly allowed Indians to get the boundaries, a vital part of India's batting supremacy in the tournament so far. There were two periods of prolonged boundary drought in hosts' innings, the Rahul-Kohli stand where India managed a lone four, and in the period between 41st and 50th overs, a phase when India managed just two fours through Mohammed Shami and Mohammed Siraj.

Sindhu to train under 'mentor' Padukone in Bengaluru



Hyderabad, Nov 19 (PTI):

Eyeing a third Olympic medal, ace Indian shuttler PV Sindhu will now move her base from Hyderabad to Bengaluru to train under the legendary Prakash Padukone in the build up to the Paris Games.

Sindhu had a week-long stint under Padukone in September and before the Asian Games, she had indicated that she would be training under him.

The 28-year-old, who is nursing a niggle in her left knee, finally revealed the move in a social media post.

"For those wondering and constantly asking me, the cat is finally out of the bag!!," she wrote on 'X', formerly twitter.

"Prakash sir is assuming the role of the mentor in my setup. I started training with him at the

end of August, and it's been uphill ever since," wrote the former world champion.

"He's more than a mentor; he's my guide, my guru, and, above all, a true friend. I wholeheartedly believe he possesses the magic to bring out the absolute best from my game.

"I am so grateful he reached out to me with one call when I was in Japan, and we've built on that connection exceptionally well. Dear sir, I AM PUMPED!! Looking forward to training with you! Let's get to work," wrote Sindhu, who had won a silver at the Rio Olympics under chief coach Pullela Gopichand.

In February, Sindhu had parted ways with Korean coach Park Tae-Sang, who was instrumental in her winning the bronze medal at the Tokyo Olympics.

The shuttler from Hyderabad worked with SAI coach Vidhi Chaudhary for sometime before roping in Malaysia's former All-England Commonwealth Games champion Muhammad Hafiz Hashim as her travelling coach.

Recovering from a sore left knee, Sindhu has opted for a protected rank of No 10 which will be locked in BWF standings until she recovers.

She sustained the injury on her left knee and pulled out during her second-round women's singles match against Thailand's Supanida Katethong at the French Open on October 26.

Djokovic dispatches Alcaraz at ATP Finals to set up title match against Sinner

Turin, Nov 19 (AP):

Top-ranked Novak Djokovic will be bidding for a record-breaking seventh ATP Finals title when he takes on home favorite Jannik Sinner in Sunday's final.

Djokovic took less than 90 minutes to beat Carlos Alcaraz 6-3 6-2 in a semifinal match between the top two ranked players on Saturday night, after Sinner had earlier dispatched Daniil Medvedev 6-3 6-7(4) 6-1.

The 36-year-old Djokovic is currently tied with Roger Federer on six titles at the season-ending tournament for the year's top eight players, while Sinner is the first Italian to reach the final.

However, Sinner recorded his first-ever victory over Djokovic earlier this week and the Serbian will also have to contend again



with a passionate, partisan crowd. "He's been playing fantastic tennis, arguably the best tennis of his life," Djokovic said.

"We played a very close match the other night. The atmosphere was unbelievable, electric really. I don't expect anything less than that, probably even louder than what we had in the group-stage matchup.

"It's the final, I've been in this situation before

many times. I'm really happy with the way I'm feeling, the way I'm playing, so hopefully I can deliver my A' game tomorrow."

Djokovic had plenty of support in Turin on Saturday, with many chanting his name between points.

Alcaraz and Djokovic had played each other four times previously and won two each. Djokovic won

their most recent encounter in the final in Cincinnati in August, while Alcaraz beat the Serb in five sets in the Wimbledon final.

The latest battle between the two never hit those levels of drama, however, as Djokovic clinically took his chances after recovering from having to stave off two break points in the opening game.

"I approached the match with the right attitude, the right mentality, and I knew from the very first point it was going to be greatly intense," Djokovic said.

"He had break points right away, 15-40 in the first game.

"That's Carlos. He always brings out his best in these kinds of matches and starts with a lot of high quality tennis and intensity.

London, Nov 19 (AP):

The Netherlands, Switzerland and Romania all secured places at Euro 2024, and France racked up the biggest-ever win in European Championship qualifying by beating Gibraltar 14-0.

The Netherlands needed a win over Ireland to be sure of qualifying and Wout Weghorst gave his team the lead in the 12th minute on Saturday, blasting a shot into the top-right corner. The goal was awarded despite Weghorst appearing to pull on Ireland defender Nathan Collins' jersey just before he received the ball.

The Netherlands had 18 shots to Ireland's three but couldn't score again. "We can be proud of ourselves and we certainly are now that we're going to the European Championship," Netherlands captain Virgil Van Dijk told Dutch broad-



caster NOS. "With all the problems, injuries we've had, we've still managed it. Now we can start preparing." Switzerland drew 1-1 with Kosovo to make sure of qualifying and continue a run of not missing any major tournament since Euro 2012. But the game continued a troubling Swiss trend to lead leads slip. Switzerland dominated possession but couldn't get through the Kosovo defense until Ruben Vargas headed in a deflected ball in the 47th.

Kosovo's Muhamet Hyseni leveled the score in the 82nd with a shot in off the post. It was Switzerland's fifth draw in six games, and in all of those draws Switzerland conceded at least one goal after the 80th minute. A draw was enough for Switzerland to qualify because Romania won 2-1 against third-place Israel.

Mohammad Yousuf appointed Pakistan junior team head coach

Lahore, Nov 19 (PTI):

On a spree of making new appointments, the Pakistan Cricket Board on Saturday named former captain Mohammad Yousuf as the head coach of the national U-19 team ahead of the Asia Cup and the World Cup early next year. Yousuf's appointment comes a day after PCB elevated the former fast bowler Sohail Tanvir as the head of the junior selection committee.

Among its slew of actions taken in recent days following Pakistan's first-round exit from the World Cup in India, the PCB had also announced the appointment of former pacer Wahab Riaz as the chief selector of the national selection committee.

Mohammad Hafeez, who had recently resigned as one of the members of the technical committee, has not only been named



the director of cricket (men's team) but is also expected to double up as the coach during the team's upcoming tours of Australia and New Zealand.

Yousuf, who has previously served as batting coach of the Pakistan team and also at the National Cricket Academy in Lahore, is ranked as one of Pakistan's top batters, with 7,530 Test runs and 9,720 in ODIs in a career spanning from 1998 to 2010. With 1,788 runs in 11

Tests at 99.33 (9x100s, 3x50s), Yousuf also holds the record of scoring most runs in a calendar year. He achieved the feat in 2006.

"Having had the privilege of working with the senior men's side, I will bring my coaching experience to the U19 set-up, providing a nurturing environment for the young talents to thrive and make a mark on the international level," Yousuf said in a PCB statement.

Yousuf said he had agreed to become the junior team head coach since it was important to identify young talent and groom and harness them for the senior team.

A reliable source in the PCB also confirmed that former fast bowler Umar Gul would also be named as the new bowling coach of the senior team going to Australia and New Zealand.

Prized possession for Kohli: Tendulkar gifts him iconic No. 10 jersey

Ahmedabad, Nov 19 (PTI):

Star India batter Virat Kohli received a prized memorabilia ahead of the World Cup final against Australia here on Sunday — the iconic No.10 jersey of his idol Sachin Tendulkar.

Tendulkar gifted Kohli his signed jersey worn during his last ODI, the Asia Cup match against Pakistan at Mirpur in 2012. Kohli had broken Tendulkar's record for most one-day centuries during the World Cup semifinal against New Zealand at Mumbai on Wednesday.

"A special occasion & a special pre-match moment. There's CLASS written all over this gesture! The legendary Sachin Tendulkar gifts Virat Kohli his signed jersey from his last ODI," the BCCI wrote on X, with a picture of Kohli holding



Indian player Virat Kohli shows the jersey signed and gifted by cricket legend Sachin Tendulkar from his last ODI during a special pre-match moment before the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup final between India and Australia.

the jersey. Kohli is the first batsman in the history of the game to score 50 ODI centuries, going past Tendulkar who has made 49 tons.

Yashaswini scores upset win at ITF Women's World Tour event

Bengaluru, Nov 19 (PTI):

India's Yashaswini Panwar produced an upset win over Demi Tran of the Netherlands to enter the final round of qualifying in the ITF Women's World Tour event here on Sunday.

The 22-year-old Karnataka player beat third seeded Demi Tran 7-5, 6-2 in the first round of qualifying.

In another upset victory, Vanshita Pathania prevailed over seventh seed Priyanshi Bhandari 6-3, 4-6, 10-8 in a match that lasted a little over two hours.

The rest of the fancied players in the top eight bracket advanced without much problem.

Top seed Sandeepi Singh Rao brushed past Sai Janvi 6-0, 6-1 while second seed Sravya Shivani Chilakalapudi overcame a fighting Priyanka Rodricks 6-1, 7-5.

As many as three matches out of 16 remained unfinished owing to bad light.

Miandad, Akhtar lash out at PCB for forcing Babar to step down from captaincy

Karachi, Nov 19 (PTI):

Former Pakistan stalwarts Javed Miandad and Shoaib Akhtar on Saturday lashed out at the country's cricket board for "forcing" Babar Azam to step down from captaincy and for not showing respect to the players after the World Cup debacle.

Miandad, regarded as one of Pakistan's all-time best batters, also questioned some of the decisions taken by the management committee running the sport in the country, including the appointment of Muhammad Hafeez as team director and Wahab Riaz as chief selector.

"There was no need to remove Babar from the captaincy. They have acted in haste and in the process also shown no respect for a player like Babar," Miandad told PTI in an interview.

Miandad said Babar remained the future of Pakistan cricket and he had been badly treated by the Board.

"Didn't other teams lose in the World Cup or perform badly? Are their captains being treated the way Babar has been treated?" Miandad asked.

He noted that the haphazard decisions taken by the PCB would only harm Pakistan cricket in the long run.

"The board played a big role in disturbing the team during the World Cup with its games on the sidelines and the correct thing would have been to stick with Babar and give him more team as he is our best player," the former great said.

Miandad wondered how the Pakistan dressing room would now be after the appointment of Riaz and Hafeez in their respective posts.



POLL CAMPAIGN

'Raj Cong like cricket team whose batters spent 5 years trying to run out each other'

Jaipur, Nov 19 (PTI):

Amid the World Cup fever in the country, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday said the Rajasthan Congress is like a cricket team whose batters spent five years trying to run out each other.

Addressing a public meeting in Churu district in support of BJP candidate Rajendra Rathore from the Taranagar constituency, Modi exhorted people to vote for the party in the November 25 Rajasthan Assembly polls to ensure rapid development of the state.

In Jhunjhunu, he targeted the Congress by alleging that the party has "developed the tradition of corruption, nepotism and appeasement" which led to a huge loss for the country. The youth in India did not get opportunities because of this, he claimed.

At the public meeting in



Churu, Modi referred to the power tussle between Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot and his former deputy Sachin Pilot saying, "In cricket, a batter comes and scores runs for his team. But there is so much infighting within the Congress that instead of scoring runs, its leaders spent five years trying to run out each other."

His remarks came shortly before the Indian cricket team was to take on Australia in the World Cup final at the Narendra Modi stadium in Ahmedabad.

Modi further said, "When

their team is so bad, what runs will they score and what work will they do for you?"

He said if the BJP is voted to power in Rajasthan, it will throw out all corrupt people and the state will witness rapid development. "The more you stay away from the Congress the more you save Rajasthan, the more your future is assured," Modi told the rally.

"The relationship between good intentions and the Congress is the same as that between light and darkness. What will be the intention of a government that gobbles up money allotted for drinking water," he asked, alluding to the alleged Jal Jeevan Mission scam in Rajasthan.

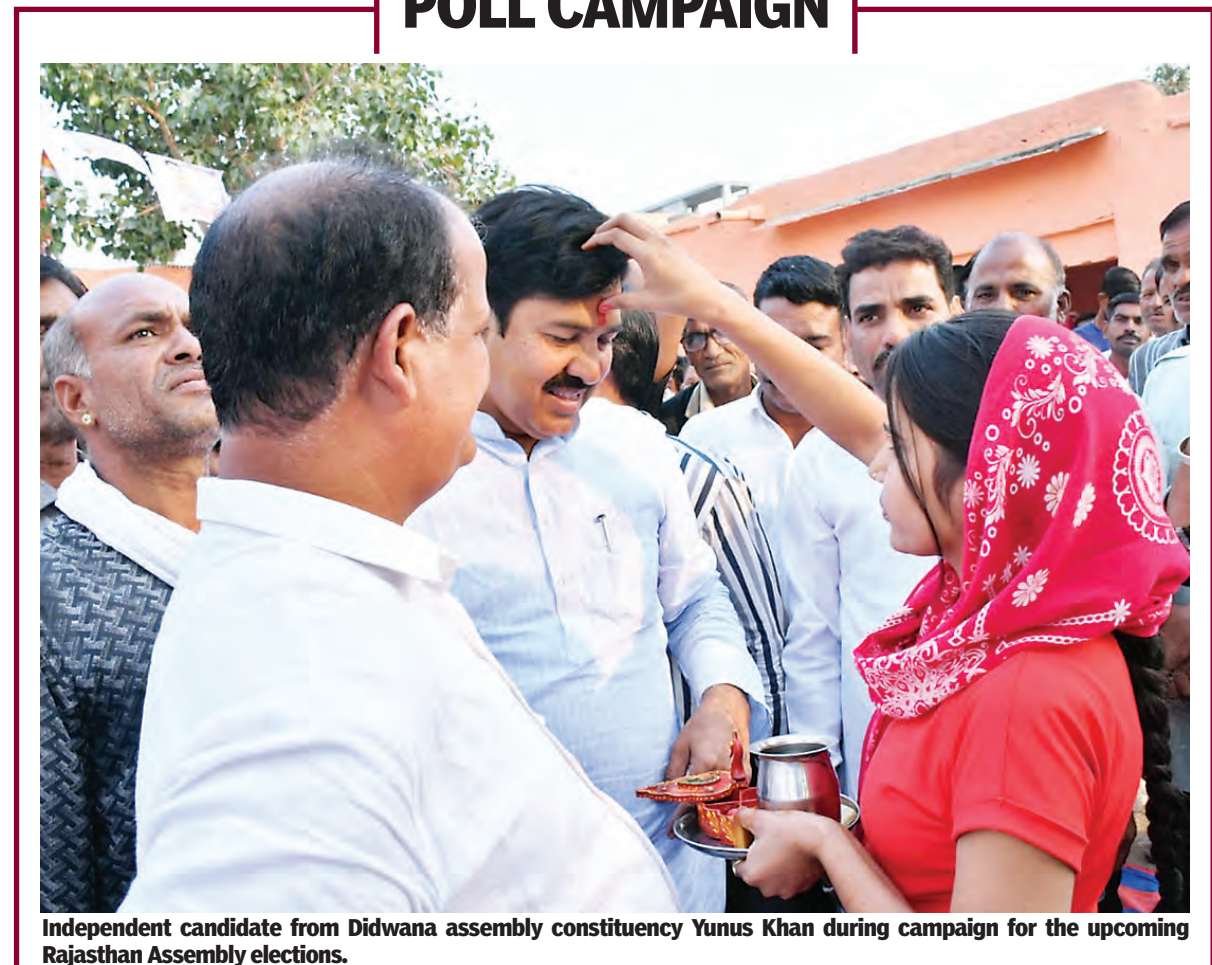
"The Congress and development are each other's enemies and will remain so," he said and alleged that the "Congress" paper leak mafia sold the future of youths for

lakhs of rupees." Modi accused the Congress government of being involved in a fertiliser scam and of looting the farmers.

"In the last five years, the Congress played with the future of youths. There have been raids on coaching centres and the relatives of a minister close to Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot have become officers and your children did not get the chance," he said.

"When the BJP forms government in Rajasthan, paper leaks will be investigated at a fast pace. No matter how big or influential a person is involved, he will not be spared," Modi said.

In Jhunjhunu, Modi said India is now setting new records and achieving new feats in every field. "Take any field, India is doing wonders. There is enthusiasm all around and there is confidence that we will make India a developed country by 2047."



Independent candidate from Didwana assembly constituency Yunus Khan during campaign for the upcoming Rajasthan Assembly elections.

'Indira Gandhi-led Cong govt plagued by starvation deaths, encounters'

Alampur/Kollapur (T'gana), Nov 19 (PTI):

BRS chief K Chandrasekhar Rao on Sunday tore into Congress, alleging that the former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's regime was plagued by starvation deaths, naxal movements and encounters.

Addressing rallies in the state, Rao, also known as KCR, said the Congress leaders should feel ashamed to seek votes as they were not able to provide drinking water during their rule even when the Krishna river was flowing nearby at Kollapur.

The Chief Minister further alleged that the grand old party delayed the formation of Telangana and even tried to split the BRS party (then TRS) besides



purchasing its MLAs.

Taking a swipe at the Congress for invoking late Indira Gandhi, he said, "Congress promises to bring Indiramma Rajyam in Telangana... What happened during Indiramma Rajyam (Indira's rule)? Hunger and only hunger deaths, Naxalite movements, people were shot dead and encounters... this is what happened through-

out Indiramma Rajyam."

Rao recalled that until former Chief Minister NT Rama Rao (undivided Andhra Pradesh) came to power and offered rice at Rs 2 per kg to people, it was only a life of hunger.

"There is no regime worse than that of Indiramma... they have looted and left people in the lurch," the CM said.

Rao asked people to compare the 50 years Congress rule with that of 10 years of BRS government and see for themselves the development that took place under his regime. Raking up the merger issue, he alleged that it was Congress party that merged Telangana and Andhra Pradesh without the consent of people here resulting in sufferings for 50 years.

'30 pc commission BRS govt' should be sent packing'

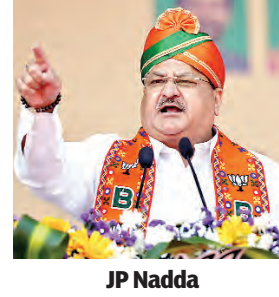
After Nov 30 polls

Hyderabad, Nov. 19 (PTI):

Charging the BRS MLAs with collecting 30 per cent commission in the state government's 'Dalit Bandhu' scheme, BJP national president JP Nadda on Sunday said the K Chandrasekhar Rao-led dispensation in Telangana should be sent packing after the upcoming assembly polls and urged the people to elect the saffron party.

Speaking in a rally at Narayanpet, Nadda also alleged that the Kaleshwaram irrigation project "served as an ATM" for Chief Minister Chandrasekhar Rao and it became a "symbol of corruption".

He said the BJP, after



JP Nadda

coming to power in Telangana, will investigate the alleged corruption in the project and send the culprits to prison.

Accusing Rao of indulging in appeasement politics for the sake of votes, the BJP chief said he has made Urdu as the second official language besides proposing to increase the reservation of a particular community to 12 per cent from the 4 per cent.

77.15% voter turnout in MP assembly polls

1.52 pc higher compared to 2018

Bhopal, Nov 19 (PTI):

Madhya Pradesh assembly polls have recorded a voter turnout of 77.15 per cent, which is 1.52 per cent higher than in 2018, as per the latest data released by the Election Commission of India.

Polling for all the 230 assembly seats in the state was held in a single phase on November 17.

According to the latest provisional poll data for Madhya Pradesh released by the ECI on Saturday night, the state recorded a voter turnout of 77.15 per cent.

Out of the total male voters in MP, 78.21 per cent exercised their franchise, while out of the total eligible females, 76.03 per cent turned up to vote.

Sailana assembly seat in Ratlam district recorded the highest voter turnout at 90.10 per cent, while Jobat seat in Alirajpur district in the state's western region saw the lowest turnout of 54.37 per cent, as per the data.

The voter turnout percentage over the past few elections has been on the rise in the state. It was 67.25 per cent in 2003, 69.78 per cent in 2008, 72.13 per cent in 2013 and 75.63 per cent in 2018.

In 2018, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) received 41.02 per cent votes, the Congress 40.89 per cent, and the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) and other parties got 10.83 per cent votes.

Even after getting more vote share than the Congress, the BJP won 109 seats in 2018 compared to 114 bagged by the grand old party. The remaining

seats went to the BSP (2), Samajwadi Party (1) and independents (4).

The Congress had then formed government with the help of the BSP, SP and independents under the leadership of Kamal Nath.

However, the Kamal Nath led government collapsed in March 2020 after a rebellion by Jyotiraditya Scindia and MLAs loyal to him, paving the way for return of the BJP government headed by Shivraj Singh Chouhan.

In the state elections held on Friday, the fate of 2,533 candidates, including CM Chouhan of the BJP and his predecessor and state Congress chief Kamal Nath, has been sealed in the Electronic Voting Machines.

A total of 64,626 polling stations were set up in the state.

Votes will be counted on December 3.

Priyanka alleges collusion between BJP, BRS and AIMIM

Hyderabad, Nov 19 (PTI):

General Secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra on Sunday alleged that the ruling BRS in Telangana, Asaduddin Owaisi-led AIMIM and the BJP were working together in collusion. Addressing an election rally at Khanapur, she said there was a tacit understanding between BJP and BRS and the latter had even supported the NDA government at the Centre in Parliament.

"BJP and KCR ji are in cahoots. You have to understand this well," she told the gathering.

Owaisi fights polls in different states by field-



ing candidates in a number of seats but why is he fighting from only nine seats (out of the total 119) in Telangana? she asked.

"In Telangana, Owaisi ji supports BRS. At the Centre, in Delhi, BRS supports BJP. There is good collusion among the three. You vote for BJP, it means you are voting for BRS. You vote for MIM, it means you are voting for

BRS," she said.

BJP, BRS and AIMIM are doing 'natu, natu' together, Priyanka Gandhi Vadra said, referring to the Oscar-winning song from SS Rajamouli's film titled 'RRR'.

Hitting out at Prime Minister Narendra Modi, she alleged that he does not talk about the corruption by the BRS government in Kaleshwaram irrigation project, "liquor scam" but sends central agencies like ED, CBI to "houses of Congress leaders" for investigation.

"But, the scams that happened here, from where your money is looted, he neither spoke on investigating them nor he did anything," she said.

Instead of 'Bharat Mata ki Jai', Modi should say 'Adani ji ki Jai': Rahul

Bundi/Dausa, Nov 19 (PTI):

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Sunday accused Narendra Modi of working for billionaire industrialist Gautam Adani and said instead of chanting 'Bharat Mata ki Jai', the prime minister should say "Adani ji ki Jai".

Addressing election rallies in Bundi and Dausa districts, Gandhi alleged that Modi wants to make two 'Hindustans', one for Adani and the other for the poor.

He also targeted Modi for not conducting a caste census in the country and said it will be the first thing that the Congress will get done after it comes to power at the Centre.

Speaking at the rally in Bundi, Gandhi said, "Instead of 'Bharat Mata ki Jai', the prime minister should say 'Adani ji ki Jai' because he works for him."

"Modi says Bharat Mata ki Jai and works 24 hours for Adani," he said.

The poor, farmers and labourers are 'Bharat Mata', the Congress leader said.

He said the prime minister wants to make two 'Hindustans' — one for Adani and the other for the poor.

The Congress has been targeting the Adani Group, accusing it of benefiting from the BJP government, and has been demanding a Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) probe into allegations of "stock price manipulation" and financial irregularities against the Adani Group made by US research firm Hindenburg.

The Adani Group has denied any wrongdoing.

On the caste census, Gandhi asserted Modi will not conduct one, no matter what.

"Rahul Gandhi and the Congress can do it," he said.



"We have ordered a caste census in Rajasthan. As soon as the (Congress) government comes to power in Delhi, our first task will be (to order) a caste census. Your true involvement will begin then. Mother India will be victorious then," he added.

The Congress leader asked whether any big industrialist in the country is an OBC, Dalit or tribal and said he would stop giving speeches if there is one.

If the BJP comes to power in Rajasthan, all public welfare schemes initiated by the Gehlot government will be discontinued, Gandhi said.

In Dausa, Gandhi said Modi used to say in his public addresses that he is an OBC but as soon as he demanded a caste census in Parliament, the prime minister started saying something different.

"The day I said Modi ji, do one thing, tell the world how many OBCs are there in the country, he started giving a new speech. He said there is no caste in the country and only the poor are there," he said.

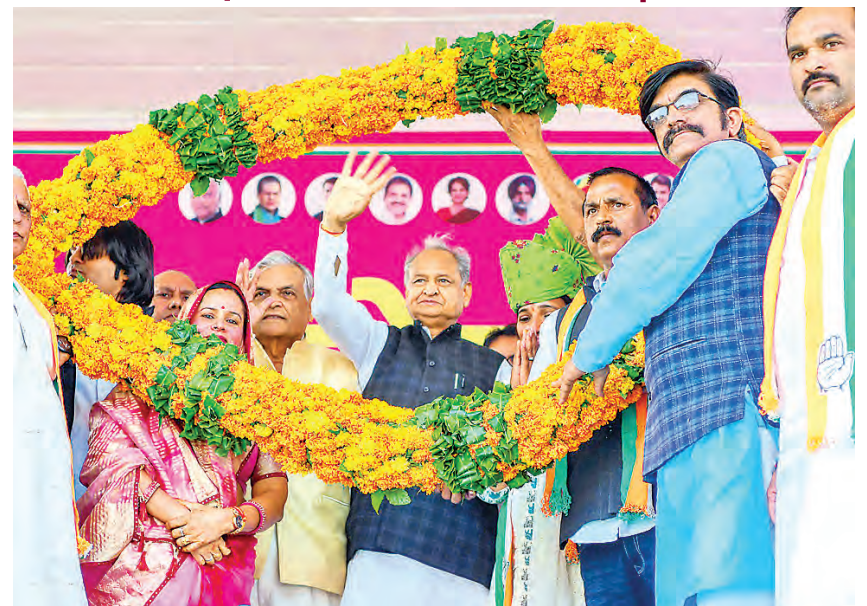
"There is no caste but you are an OBC," Gandhi quipped.

"You bought an airplane worth Rs 12,000

crore, you change clothes thrice a day and travel in a car worth Rs 12 crore. But when the youth, whether OBC, Dalit or Adivasi, say that we have to know our population, you say there is no caste," he said.

Gandhi said he interacted with thousands of youths during his Bharat Jodo Yatra from Kanyakumari to Kashmir and they told him that they want to become IAS officers. He claimed that Modi is running the country with 90 IAS officers and only three of them are OBCs. "Your population is around 50 per cent but representation is only three among 90 officers," he said. Therefore, the caste census is the most important for the country, he added.

PUBLIC MEETING



Rajasthan CM Ashok Gehlot being garlanded during a public meeting ahead of State Assembly elections, at Khetri in Jhunjhunu, Sunday.

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