



BRIEF



Indian Army personnel rescue flood-affected people at an area inundated with floodwaters, in Thoothukudi district, Wednesday.

Electrocuted

Kota (RJ): A 32-year-old labourer got electrocuted to death on Wednesday in a Kota village when a crane he was working with came in contact with an overhead high-tension wire, police said. The incident happened in Dhakadhedi village of the district when Ismail Ali was engaged in some sewer work and holding one end of a heavy iron plate being lifted by the crane, police said.

Ban

Mumbai: The Mumbai police have banned the flying of drones, remote-controlled micro light aircraft, paragliders, para motors, hand gliders and hot air balloons over the city for 30 days, an official said on Wednesday. The prohibitory order, which will be in force from December 20, 2023, to January 18, 2024, was issued under section 144 of the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC), the police said.

Shivering cold

Jaipur: Shivering cold conditions continued in parts of Rajasthan where Fatehpur in Sikar was recorded as the coldest place with a minimum temperature of 1.3 degree Celsius followed by Sikar district headquarter which recorded a night temperature of 3 degrees Celsius. Churu recorded 3.5 degrees and Piloni (Jhunjhunu) recorded 4.6 degrees, Sangaria in Hanumangarh recorded a minimum of 5.2 degrees while the night temperature was 5 degrees in Alwar, 5.7 in Karauli, 6.9 in Bhilwara, 7.3 in Jaisalmer and 8 degrees in Chittorgarh.

Parl nod

New Delhi: Parliament on Wednesday passed a bill to raise the age cap of president and members of the GST Appellate Tribunals to 70 years and 67 years, respectively. Raja Sabha returned the Central Goods and Services Tax (Second Amendment) Bill, 2023 to Lok Sabha without any changes, thus completing the Parliamentary procedure for the bill. Lok Sabha had cleared the bill on Tuesday.

Arrested

Thane: The police in Maharashtra's Thane city have arrested a Nigerian man after recovering cocaine worth Rs 12.4 lakh from him, an official said on Wednesday. According to senior inspector Vikas Ghodke of crime unit V, Wagle Estate, the police acted on inputs and intercepted Okori Emmanuel Bright near Anand Nagar check naka on Tuesday evening.

Weather
High 25 Low 11

MARKET
NIFTY 21,150.15
SENSEX 70,506.31

BULLION
GOLD 62,510
SILVER 75,531

REVIEW MEET ON COVID

'Need to be alert but no need to panic'

New Delhi, Dec 20 (PTI):

Amid an uptick in COVID-19 cases in the country, Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya Wednesday reviewed the preparedness of health facilities and stressed on being alert against emerging strains of coronavirus.

Chairing the high-level review meeting with states, he reiterated that Covid was not over yet and requested the states to monitor emerging COVID-19 cases, symptoms and case severity to plan appropriate public health response.

He assured the states of all support from the Centre and stressed the need for collective efforts between the Centre and the states to deal with the emerging situation in the spirit of the "whole-of-government" approach. "We need to be on the alert but there is no need to panic," the Union health minister said.

Underlining the challenge posed by the rise in Covid cases in some countries such as China, Brazil,



Mansukh Mandaviya

Germany and the United States, Mandaviya noted the importance of being prepared and remaining alert against new and emerging strains of COVID-19, especially ahead of the upcoming festivities.

He directed officials to strengthen the surveillance system for whole genome sequencing of positive case samples to track the variants through the Indian SARS-CoV-2 Genomics Consortium (INSACOG) network and ensure timely detection of newer variants.

This would facilitate in taking appropriate public health measures in a time-

LAND-FOR-JOBS

ED summons Tejashwi, Lalu Yadav for questioning

In money laundering case

New Delhi, Dec 20 (PTI):

The Enforcement Directorate has summoned Bihar deputy chief minister Tejashwi Yadav and his father and RJD chief Lalu Prasad for questioning in the railways land-for-jobs money laundering case probe, official sources said on Wednesday.

While Tejashwi (34), has been asked to appear before the federal probe agency at its office in Delhi on December 22, Prasad (75), has been asked to appear next week on December 27

to record their statements under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA).

The ED has once questioned Tejashwi for about eight hours in this case on April 11 but this is the first time it has summoned Prasad for joining the probe. The summons comes following the questioning of an alleged "close associate" of the Lalu Prasad family, Amit Katyal. He was arrested by the ED in November.

The alleged scam pertains to the period when Prasad was the railway minister in the UPA-1 government. It is alleged that from 2004 to 2009, several people were appointed to

'ICMR working on genome sequencing'

The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) is working on genome sequencing of the new JN.1 variant of SARS-CoV-2, Union Health Ministry officials said on Wednesday. Twenty-one cases of COVID-19 sub-variant JN.1 have been detected across the country till now, NITI Aayog member (health) Dr V K Paul said on Wednesday. He said the scientific community in India was closely investigating the new variant as he emphasised on the need for states to ramp up testing and strengthen their surveillance mechanism. According to official sources, 19 cases of COVID-19 sub-variant JN.1 have been traced in Goa and one each in Kerala and Maharashtra. Over the past two weeks, 16 deaths related to COVID-19 were recorded with the victims having serious comorbidities.

'21 cases of JN.1 sub-variant found in 3 states'

As many as 21 cases of COVID-19 sub-variant JN.1 have been detected across the country till now, NITI Aayog member (Health) Dr V K Paul said on Wednesday but asserted that there was no need to panic. He said that the scientific community in India was closely investigating the new variant as he emphasised on the need for states to ramp up testing and strengthen their surveillance systems. Paul highlighted that about 91 to 92 per cent of those infected are opting for home-based treatment.

ly manner, the minister noted. At the meeting, states and UTs were requested to ramp up testing and refer a large number of Covid positive samples and that of pneumonia-like illnesses to INSACOG Genome Sequencing

Laboratories (IGSLs) daily to track new variants, if any. Mandaviya urged all states to remain alert, increase surveillance and ensure adequate stock of medicines, oxygen cylinders and concentrators, ventilators and vaccines.

LS passes 3 criminal law bills by voice vote

To replace IPC, CrPC, Evidence Act

New Delhi, Dec 20 (PTI):

Lok Sabha on Wednesday passed three key bills that seek to overhaul the criminal justice system, with Union Home Minister Amit Shah asserting that the focus is on delivering speedy justice rather than handing down punishment.

Replying to the debate, Shah said the three bills - Bharatiya Nyaya (Second) Sanhita, Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha (Second) Sanhita and the Bharatiya Sakshya (Second) Bill - also have a clear definition of terrorism and scrap sedition as a crime while introducing a new section titled "offences against the State".

He told officials to undertake mock drills every three months at both the central and state levels to assess the functionality of PSA plants, oxygen concentrators, cylinders and ventilators, and encourage the sharing of best practices.

The Union health minister asked states to raise awareness among people on respiratory hygiene and ensure the dissemination of factually correct information and counter fake news to mitigate any panic.

He urged the states to share information on cases, tests and positivity in real time on the Covid portal to enable timely monitoring and prompt public health measures.

Union Health Secretary Sudhansh Pant briefed Mandaviya about the COVID-19 situation both domestically and globally.

The meeting was informed that while active Covid cases in India were significantly low compared to the global scenario, there has been a steep rise in active cases.

Focus on speedy justice'

Shah said the first duty of the state is justice. "Judiciary, Executive and Legislature are the three pillars of democracy. The makers of our Constitution divided the work among these three to give strong administration to the country. Today, for the first time, these three together will give the country a justice-centric criminal system and not a punishment-centric one," he said.

Members of the Congress, DMK, TMC and other opposition parties were not present during the debate after 97 of their colleagues were suspended from Lok Sabha for "unruly" behaviour in the House.

While many opposition parties have been critical of the bills that seek to replace the IPC, CrPC and



Govt to move SC again to get funds

From Sahara Group and repay investors

New Delhi, Dec 20 (PTI):

The government will approach the Supreme Court again to get more funds from the Sahara Group, as three crore investors have sought a refund of Rs 80,000 crore stuck with the company's cooperative societies.

The cooperation ministry has launched a portal for investors where they can make an application to get their money stuck with societies, Minister of State for Cooperation in

Raja Sabha B L Verma said while replying to a supplementary question.

Verma said three crore investors have registered on the portal seeking their money to the tune of Rs 80,000 crore back. "We have started process to refund money back to investors in 45 days. We have got Rs 5,000 crore... we will go to the apex court again for getting more fund (from Sahara Group) to pay back all investors. Every paisa of investors of Sahara Group will be paid back," Verma told the House, adding that many investors have got their money back.

Railways plans to have safety fencing along tracks

For high-speed Vande Bharat trains

New Delhi, Dec 20 (PTI):

The railways will have safety fencing at vulnerable locations for Vande Bharat trains to run at a speed between 110 kmph and 130 kmph and all along the tracks for a speed above 130 kmph, Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnav told the Lok Sabha on Wednesday. In a written response to a question from BJP MP Ghanshyam Singh Lodhi, the minister said, "Safety is accorded the highest priority by Indian Railways." Lodhi

wanted to know "the manner in which the safety of railway tracks is being ensured in view of the high speed of Vande Bharat trains."

"Railways is having a set system of inspection, maintenance and repair of track," Vaishnav said, providing a list of steps such as modern track structure, patrolling of railway tracks, ultrasonic flaw detection testing of rails to detect flaws and mechanisation of track maintenance among others. "Safety fencing has been stipulated at vulnerable locations for speed above 110 kmph to 130 kmph and all along the track for speed above 130 kmph, as a minimum

standard," he said. Lodhi also asked if the railway tracks on which Vande Bharat trains run are reportedly being obstructed by anti-social elements. "During the year 2023 (up to November), four incidents of obstruction by putting foreign elements on railway tracks by anti-social elements on route of Vande Bharat trains were reported and action against the arrested persons in these cases have been taken as per law," Vaishnav said, adding that the Railway Protection Force (RPF) in coordination with GRP/district police and civil administration takes several initiatives to ensure safe train operations.

ISRO bags Icelandic prize

New Delhi, Dec 20 (PTI):

ISRO has been awarded the 2023 Leif Erikson Lunar Prize by the Exploration Museum in Iceland's Husavik for its successful Chandrayaan-3 mission. The award celebrates the first soft-landing of a spacecraft near the lunar south pole and "ISRO's indomitable spirit in advancing lunar exploration and contributing to understanding celestial mysteries," the Embassy of India in Reykjavik said in a post on X. Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) Chairman S Somanath sent a "thank you" video message on the occasion and the prize was received on behalf of the space agency by Ambassador B Shyam.

NAGAR KIRTAN



Sikh devotees during a 'Nagar Kirtan' procession ahead of the martyrdom day of the sons of Guru Gobind Singh, 'Sahibzade', in Amritsar, Wednesday.

English author Neelum Gaur receives Sahitya Akademi Awards

New Delhi, Dec 20 (PTI):

English writer Neelum Saran Gaur and Hindi novelist Sanjeev are among the 24 recipients of Sahitya Akademi Awards 2023, the organisation announced on Wednesday.

The awards, recommended by jury members in 24 Indian languages, were approved by the executive board of the Sahitya Akademi that met on Wednesday under the chairmanship of its president. Madhav Kaushik, the academy of letters said in a state-

ment. The list includes nine books of poetry, six novels, five of short stories, three essays and one literary study.

Sanjeev for his novel "Mujhe Pehchaano" and Gaur for her book "Requiem in Raga Janki" have been selected for the prestigious award, it said. Sadiqua Nawab Saheer will receive the award for her book "Rajdev Ki Amrai" in Urdu, while Swarnjit Savi has been selected for his book of poetry "Mann Di Chip" in Punjabi.

New Delhi, Dec 20 (PTI):

The controversy over a TMC MP mimicking Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar took political centrestage on Wednesday with the issue playing out both inside and outside Parliament and President Droupadi Murmu joining Prime Minister Narendra Modi in expressing dismay.

As Dhankhar, also the Raja Sabha chairperson, said in the House that he would not tolerate any insult to Parliament or the constitutional post of vice president, TMC MP Kalyan Banerjee said he did not in-



TMC's Kalyan Banerjee mimics Raja Sabha Chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar while staging a protest along with other suspended MPs during the Winter session of Parliament, in New Delhi.

Prez expresses dismay

"Elected representatives must be free to express themselves, but their expression should be within the norms of dignity and courtesy. That has been the Parliamentary tradition we are proud of, and the People of India expect them to uphold it," Murmu said.

tend to hurt anyone with his act in the Parliament complex on Tuesday.

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee backed her party colleague, and the Congress slammed what it termed the government's 'des-

'Will swallow insult to me but will never tolerate insult to House, VP post'

Raja Sabha Chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar Wednesday said he will not tolerate any insult to Parliament and the post of vice president which he holds and expressed deep anguish over a TMC MP mimicking him in the Parliament complex and a Congress leader video-graphing the act. In the Raja Sabha, the chairman said the acts of mimicking him and its videography have caused an "insult" to the honour of the post of the vice president, the farmers and his own community.

perate attempt" to divert attention from the unprecedented suspension of over 140 MPs by raising the matter. The political row broke out after Kalyan Banerjee derisively mimicked Dhankhar during the opposition's protest on the stairs of

Parliament on Tuesday against the suspension of MPs, drawing strong condemnation from the ruling BJP. Congress leader Rahul Gandhi was seen making a video of the performance by Banerjee.

Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra conducted in rural areas



Bhilai, Dec 20:

Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra is being conducted in different places in the three development blocks of the district. The Janpad Panchayats of Durg, Patan and Dhamdha are organising camps in their respective areas. A camp organized under the Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra was held in village Selud of Patan development block. Through the camp, people received benefits of various schemes of the Central Government. Sarveshwar Manjhi, Director, Government of India, inspected the camp. During the inspection, Manjhi took information about the schemes at the stalls set up by various departments and assured that the problem would be resolved soon. Additional Chief Executive Officer of NRLM, Shweta Yadav said that under RAFC, a

grant of Rs 15000 is given to the groups. Similarly, in CIP Community Investment, Rs 6000 per group is given to the group to run their livelihood. Under the Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana conducted by the Food Department, LPG connections were given to seven beneficiaries in the camp. Food Department officials said that earlier connections were distributed to 5 to 10 beneficiaries. Under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana, Meena Thakur, a resident of Selud, was given the benefit of housing. She said that through the scheme she got a house and was also given employment for 90 days. The executive officer said that under MGNREGA, job cards were given to 1150 laborers out of the 4000 population of Selud and the remaining job cards are in the process. A beneficiary of Pradhan Mantri

Ujjwala Yojana, Saroj Sahu of Selud village said that earlier she used to cook food in the chulha and had to breathe smoke while cooking. She got a gas connection through the scheme and now she will get a lot of relief. District Panchayat Chief Executive Officer Ashwini Dewangan, Sub-Divisional Officer (Patan) Vipul Gupta and Chief Executive Officer Janpad Panchayat Mukesh Kothari along with officials of other departments were also present in the camp. The awareness chariot of Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra is visiting the Gram Panchayats. ODF Plus letters were distributed to 07 ODF villages of Durg, 5 villages of Dhamdha and 05 villages of Patan. Information is being given to the villagers regarding the schemes run by the Central Government. In this se-

quence, the awareness chariot reached the ODF Plus Model Gram Panchayat Jewra. Dilip Verma (Kisan Morcha Vice President), Gulab Sahu (former General Secretary Jewra Mandal), Preeti Vaishnav (Janpad Member), Devi Dhruv (Senior Internal Accounts and Taxation Officer) presented ODF Plus letter and honoured the Sarpanch and Secretary of the Gram Panchayat. On being declared a plus, a congratulatory letter was given as a mark of respect. Under the campaign, Meri Kahani Meri Zubaani activity is being organized to get information about the benefits to the villagers from the schemes run at the village level. While thanking the Prime Minister Narendra Modi after getting the benefit of toilet under Swachh Bharat Mission (Rural), Lakshmi Gupta said that earlier due to

lack of toilets in her house, she had to defecate in the open in the morning and night. There remained a fear of snakes, scorpions, etc. They felt very ashamed when defecating in the open. Now, after the construction of toilet in the house, she is not facing such problems. Chief Guest of the program in village Bhansuli (K) of District Panchayat Patan was Vice President Janpad Panchayat (Durg) Ashok Sahu, Chairman, Janpad Panchayat Patan Dinesh Sahu, Sarpanch Gram Panchayat Bhansuli (K) Tulsi Gendla Dahiya, Secretary Deenbandhu Yadav, Deputy Sarpanch Kamalnarayan Sahu and villagers were present. During the Sankalp Yatra, information about all the schemes of the Central Government was given by the head of the department. In this sequence, under Swachh Bharat

Mission (Rural), the congratulatory letter to ODF Plus Model Village was given by the Chief Guest. Information was given about collecting garbage in the segregation shed and earning income by selling it. Vikas Bharat Sankalp Yatra reached village Kesra in the second half of the day. Bhagwat Sinha, Sarpanch Gram Panchayat Kesra, Narendra Kumar Sahu, Deputy Sarpanch, Bihari Lal Sahu, Secretary, Chatur Sinha, Rajaram Sinha, Nohar Sahu, Narad Sen and others were present. During the Sankalp Yatra, information was given about the schemes of the Central Government and the Sarpanch of Gram Panchayat Kesra was given a congratulatory letter for being an ODF Plus Model Village. The villagers administered the pledge of Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra.

SPSB Inter-Steel Plant Chess Tournament to be inaugurated today

Bhilai, Dec 20: SAIL-Bhilai Steel Plant is going to organise a 3-day Inter-Steel Plants Sports Board (SPSB) Chess Tournament from December 21 to December 23, 2023. The tournament will be held at Multipurpose Hall, Bhilai Niwas. Chief guest, Pawan Kumar, ED (P&A), shall inaugurate the tournament in the presence of special guest Dr Chinmoy Samajdar, Chief of

Corporate Affairs (SAIL Corporate Office, New Delhi). A total of 8 teams from various steel plants along with the Chess team from Bhilai Steel Plant, shall compete in this tournament as per the rules and regulations laid down by the Chess Federation of India. Other participating teams include DSP, IISCO, ISP, SSP, RINL, RSP, and TATA Steel Plant.

SSP conducts foot patrol in Hudco

Bhilai, Dec 20:

SSP Ram Gopal Garg conducted foot patrol late evening on Tuesday. He inspected the security arrangements and police presence in the city around midnight. He visited Newai Police Station and checked the force engaged in night patrolling. He gave instructions to take strict action against anti-social elements and suspicious people roaming at night. On Tuesday late evening, Senior Superintendent of Police (Durg) Ram Gopal Garg took stock of the security arrangements and law and order situations in the city. Garg walked almost two kilometres in the HUDCO sector. He moved across HUDCO market and took stock of the security arrangements. He checked the officers/employees engaged in patrolling and the police personnel on duty. He gave necessary guidelines to them. He instructed the cops to take strict



action against anti-social elements and suspicious people roaming at night. Cops were asked to strictly interrogate those people roaming at night without any reason. Later, Senior Superintendent of Police (Durg) visited the Newai Police Station area. He interacted with the officers and employees present on night duty. SSP asked about the personnel on beat duty and sought information about the situations in their respective areas. SSP instructed the cops to perform duty vigilantly.

Poster exhibition at Nehru Art Gallery from today

Bhilai, Dec 20:

SAIL-Bhilai Steel Plant's Public Relations Department, in association with the Steel Melting Shop -02 (SMS-II), is jointly organising a two-day Poster Exhibition at Nehru Art Gallery, Indira Place (Civic Center), on December 21 and 22, 2023. The selected posters from the Poster Competition held during the Safety Awareness Week 2023 at SMS-II, shall be exhibited on this occasion. Dr Ashok Kumar Panda, ED (F & A) shall inaugurate the two-day exhibition, while Dr Chinmoy Samajdar, Chief of Corporate Affairs (SAIL Corporate Office, New Delhi) shall be present as the Special Guest in the Inaugural Ceremony of the exhibi-

tion on the evening of December 21, 2023. The poster exhibition at Nehru Art Gallery is in consonance with the Safety Awareness Week initiative by Bhilai Steel Plant. Various competitions and programmes based on safety were held during Safety Awareness Week at SMS-II, from December 13 to December 19, 2023, including Industrial Safety Quiz, Slogan, Poster, Poem competition, etc. The posters selected at such competitions shall be featured at the exhibition on this occasion and are aimed at motivating people to adhere to safety standards in all spheres of life. This two-day poster exhibition will be open to the public every day, from 17:00 hrs to 20:30 hrs.

Annual Day of Senior Wing organised at MGM Senior Secondary School Sector-06

Bhilai, Dec 20:

The 57th Annual Day celebrations of the Senior Wing commenced in the evening of December 16, 2023 in the school premises of MGM Senior Secondary School, Sector-06. The Chief Guest for the occasion was Pawan Kumar, Executive Director- Personnel and Administration, Bhilai Steel Plant. Special guests for the event were Sunita Kashyap, Under Secretary CBSE, Sudesh Gulia, Under Secretary CBSE and Jyoti, Assistant Secretary CBSE. The other special dignitaries who graced the programme were: Fr Jacob Thomas, Diocesan Secretary; Fr Shaji M Baby, Vice President of the school; Fr Shinu Cherian, Assistant Vicar MGO Cathedral Bhilai; Correspondent KC Mathew; the Church and School Managing Committee; Principal



Incharge Shaji Chacko; Incharges Elizabeth Anita Rajan, Akhil Tiwari, Shaji Mathew, Minu Jacob Thomas, PPW Incharge Geena Shivan. The function was also graced by the illustrious presence of several other invitees, staff, parents and students. The celebrations commenced with the lighting of the lamp to the accompaniment of an invocation followed by a welcome dance. A warm welcome was accorded to the dignitaries and other invitees. Fr Jacob Thomas, Diocesan Secretary presented the message of the Manager Bishop His

Grace Alexious Mar Ousebius, Metropolitan of Culcutta Diocese. The Principal I/c Shaji Chacko welcomed the august gathering. In his Annual Report, the Principal placed forth the notable accomplishments of the school and students. Speaking on this memorable occasion, the Chief Guest in his address expressed his pleasure at being present on the 57th Annual Day Celebrations of the school. He extolled the Principal I/c for his effort in encouraging the students to perform well in various spheres and added that the theme of



the event meant that learning is a continuous process. He spoke that success is the result of persistent effort and sincerity. He concluded by appreciating the hard work put in by the students and teachers of the school. The Cultural extravaganza began with an entrancing foot-tapping number by the tiny-tots from the Pre-Primary wing that brought forth the unity of nation. A fusion dance symbolizing 'West meets East' was recreated by the children. Students from classes VIII & IX presented a colorful rhythmic

dance 'Gratitude to 5 elements of Nature' expressing the spirit of five elements of nature - earth, water, fire, air and space. An English skit performed by 19 students of classes IX and XI titled 'Humanity', recreated the important message of imbuing values at school and aiding people in need. A Hindiskit performed by 11 students of class IX on the topic 'Vidhyarthi jeevan kiuljhan aur sikhne ki chahat' drew perception towards the fact that the desire to learn removes all barriers and challenges in acquiring knowledge. Students

from class XI presented the essence of the theme through a dance drama. A solo song by Ishita Singh of Class XI and a motivational song by Shashwat Pandey of Class XII enraptured the audience. The fusion song and the group songs on the theme 'Nature' were charming interludes. The folk dance by class XI students on 'Vibrant India' allured the audience. The much awaited exuberant Christmas dance signaled the end of the cultural programme and the memorable function came to an end with the National Anthem. The proceedings of the Annual Day were conducted by Daksh-Head Boy, Hanna Zameer-Head Girl, Shreejesh K Nair-Deputy Head Boy, Sandra Sunil-Deputy Head Girl and students of classes XI and XII. They were guided and assisted by Swapna Chacko, PGT (Chemistry) & Uma Kumar, PGT (English).

07-year-old Anjani appointed as child constable

Bhilai, Dec 20: A 07-year-old girl child Anjani has been appointed as Child Constable in Durg Police. Senior Superintendent of Police (Durg) Ram Gopal Garg handed over the appointment letter to her after having a cordial interaction.



for his cordial behaviour and completing the compassionate appointment process. Senior Superintendent of Police had met the family members and consoled them on the sudden demise of late Constable Atul Bhatt. The family was assured of providing all possible support by the Durg Police. As soon as the compassionate appointment order was issued, the family expressed happiness and also expressed gratitude to the Durg Police for completing all the necessary formalities quickly and providing the appointment letter.

Winners of 'Meri Mati-Mera Desh' Essay Competition felicitated

Bhilai, Dec 20: SAIL-Bhilai Steel Plant's Rajbhasha Department organised the Valedictory Ceremony of Nagar Rajbhasha Karyanvayan Samiti (NRKS), Durg-Bhilai level 'Meri Mati-Mera Desh' Essay Competition on December 16, 2023, at HRD Centre. Pankaj Tyagi, GM (P&A & Law- FSNL) was the Chief Guest on this occasion. Senior Officials of the Plant were also present during the Valedictory Function, along with personnel from various member institutions of the Nagar Rajbhasha Karyanvayan Samiti, Durg-Bhilai in large numbers. Winners of the Essay Competition were felicitated by the Dignitary Guests on this occasion. Paramita Mohanty, DGM (CET, BSP), Rakesh Srivastava, Sr DGM



(RITES Ltd), and Anuradha Dhanank, Sub Divisional Engineer (Rajbhasha-BSNL, Durg) were the Judges of the Essay Competition. Chief Guest, Pankaj Tyagi in his address said that the feeling of patriotism is imbibed in every Indian's heart, therefore we should only do what is based on the best interests of the Nation. The Literary Competitions, not only invoke our com-

mitment to the Nation but also enrich our knowledge of the Hindi language. Therefore, such events must be organized regularly, Pankaj Tyagi said, thanking Bhilai Steel Plant for organising the competition. At the outset Soumik Dey, DGM (L&A & I/c Rajbhasha) and Secretary of (NRKS Bhilai-Durg) welcomed Chief Guest by presenting him a book, and gave the welcome

Address. In the concluding remarks, Anuradha Dhanank urged the participants to inculcate more original ideas in similar writing competitions, to enhance their writing and thinking prowess. The results of the competition were as follows: First Prize- Aditya Kumar OCT, (Power and Blowing Station No 2, BSP) Second Prize- Akshay Kumar Samal, Sr Mgr (NSPCL, BSP) Third Prize - Kedarnath Sonber, Lecturer (Education Department, BSP) Consolation Prize - Jaya Tiwari, AGM (Projects, BSP) and Vishal Malviya, Technical Assistant (RITES Ltd). Jitendra Das Manikpuri, Asst Mgr (L&A - Official Rajbhasha) compered the programme and proposed Vote of Thanks.

Joint TUs stage demonstration at Boria Gate



Bhilai, Dec 20: Highly aggrieved with the non-settlement of wage revision even after 7 years, the BSP employees under the banner of Joint Trade Unions staged a demonstration at Boria Gate on Tuesday. They distributed pamphlets and appealed to the workers to join the strike. Hundreds of members and office bearers of INTUC, AITUC, CITU, HMS, AICTU, LOIEMU, Ispat Shramik Manch and Steel Workers Union BSP SAIL Contract Employees Union staged protest from 8:00 am to 9:00 am. They distributed pamphlets and appealed to the workers to join the strike on January 29 and 30. According to the decision of

the central union leaders, the joint union has also demanded from the SAIL management to give an additional increment to all the employees. Addressing the demonstrators, the union leaders said that SAIL management has money to give to the officers but it does not have money for the employees. No decision is being taken on 39 months arrears, house rent allowance, night shift allowance of SAIL employees. They spoke about ceiling on gratuity, festive bonus and other issues. Aggrieved with the dictatorial attitude of the management, the NJCS unions have decided to go on strike in all the units of SAIL on 29th and 30th January.

Welfare of backward classes, women and farmers to be govt's priority: Governor

Raipur, Dec 20: Chhattisgarh Governor B i s w a b h u s a n Harichandan on Wednesday said the scheduled castes, scheduled tribes, OBCs, women, farmers and rural communities require an extra-sensitive approach and these groups will continue to be a priority for the state government.

In line with the ideals and principles of former prime minister late Atal Bihari Vajpayee and incumbent PM Narendra Modi, the state government is dedicated to ushering in a new era of good governance in Chhattisgarh, the governor said addressing the state assembly.

The governor said, "The significant voter turnout in constituencies affected by Naxalism showcases the determined commitment of the rural and forest-dwelling communities to protect their democracy. I hope that the steadfast trust in the welfare-focused initiatives of my government continues to grow through our people-centric endeavours."

Various poll promises made by the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) were mentioned in the governor's address.

Harichandan assured that the state government will implement necessary measures to fulfil promises made to the people.

"My government aims to construct paths of pros-



perity and well-being for all regions and people of the state, working towards upliftment of the standard of living with peace and goodwill, ensuring constitutional rights for all, and establishing the state as a leading entity in the country are the goals set before my government," he said.

There are still many people in the state who require special assistance for social and economic development, he noted.

"The scheduled castes, scheduled tribes, other backward classes, women, youth, farmers, forest-dependents, rural communities and individuals engaged in traditional occupations require extra sensitive approach and these groups will continue to be a priority for my government," the governor said.

Hailing the newly formed state government's first cabinet decision to construct 18 lakh houses under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana, he said the move signifies a strong start of working of the state government.

"My government is committed to taking appropriate steps to fulfil various promises made during the elections," he said.

This includes assessment and decisions on issues like the payment of paddy procurement bonuses pending for two years, farmer welfare schemes such as the Krishi Unnati Yojana, Deendayal Upadhyay Krishi Majdur Kalyan Yojana, Mahtari Vandan Yojana, Ghar-Ghar Nirmal Jal Abhiyan and Rani Durgavati Yojana, he said.

This also includes increasing tendu leaves collection rate to Rs 5,500 per standard bag, bonus up to Rs 4,500, restarting facilities like Charan Paduka, and other initiatives mentioned in the election manifesto, in a timely manner, he said.

Underlining that the newly-elected government has received unwavering trust from women and youth, the governor said, "Empowering women and youth will be the top priority of my government to further strengthen this trust."

In this regard, the government is committed to filling one lakh vacant government posts with a transparent and time-bound recruitment process, investigation of the PSC case, systemati-

cally organising all major exams similar to the UPSC and providing monthly travel allowances for students.

The government is also committed to establishing 'Chhattisgarh Institute of Medical Sciences' in each division on the lines of AIIMS, and building 'Chhattisgarh Institute of Technology' in each Lok Sabha constituency on the lines of IIT. These measures are aimed at making positive strides towards empowerment and development, he said.

Congratulating the newly-elected assembly members, the governor said, "I believe that all members, both from the ruling party and the opposition, will remain committed to fostering camaraderie and respectful relationships to enhance the dignity of this sacred house."

It is essential for both sides to collaborate and uphold the ideal parliamentary traditions, to propel the chariot of the state's development forward and live up to the trust of the people, he said.

Harichandan congratulated the Election Commission of India, Chhattisgarh's chief election officer and the thousands of officers and employees who played a vital role in the successful conduct of the recently concluded assembly polls in the state.

2nd Supplementary Budget of nearly Rs 13000 crore presented in Chh'garh Assembly

Raipur, Dec 20: Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai on Wednesday presented the 2nd Supplementary Budget for the financial year 2023-24 in Chhattisgarh Legislative Assembly.

Discussion on the proposed Supplementary Budget would be held on Thursday before seeking approval from the House during the proceedings.

Speaker Dr Raman Singh has fixed time of 2 hours for discussion on the Supplementary Budget during which the members from the ruling party would speak in favour of it whereas the opposition might come up with their protest and own demands on it.

According to the provisions being made in the 2nd Supplementary Budget, the state government would seek budget-



ary provisions for various schemes (promises) being made to the people in the recently held Legislative Assembly polls. Provision for PM Housing Scheme, Bonus to farmers against paddy procurement as well as much-talked Mahtari Vandan scheme and others have been made in the 2nd Supplementary Budget for the fiscal 2023-24.

It is notable that the

state government has announced to provide bonus of nearly Rs 4000 crore to the farmers on December 25 on the occasion of birth anniversary of former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee who is considered to be have played pivotal role in creation of separate state of Chhattisgarh out of Madhya Pradesh in the year 2000.

Nand Kumar Sai quits Congress

Raipur, Dec 20: Senior tribal leader Nand Kumar Sai on Wednesday resigned from the Congress. He has forwarded his resignation letter from the primary membership of Congress to the Chhattisgarh Pradesh Congress Committee (CPCC) President Deepak Baij and has forwarded a copy of it to the Congress President Kharge and PCC in-charge Kumar Shaileja.

It is notable that Sai had quit Bharatiya Janata



Party (BJP) few months back after being allegedly ignored by central leadership. Sai had joined Congress in the month of May seeking party ticket from Kunkuri Legislative Assembly but was denied

the party ticket. However, he was accorded Cabinet Minister Status after being appointed as Chairman of Chhattisgarh Industrial Development Corporation (CSIDC) by the Bhupesh Baghel government.

Nand Kumar paid a courtesy visit to the new Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai to congratulate him. It is understood that the former BJP President Sai might try to rejoin the saffron brigade in coming days.

Dividers to be built on both sides on Mowa overbridge



District Level Road Safety Committee meeting held

Raipur, Dec 20: Necessary measures to improve the traffic system in Raipur city were discussed at a meeting of District Level Road Safety Committee, held here today under the chairmanship of Collector Dr Sarveshwar Bhure. It was agreed in the meeting held in the presence of SSP Prashant Agrawal and Municipal Commissioner Mayank Chaturvedi to construct 50-meter divider on both sides of Mowa Overbridge.

It was observed in the meeting that in case of red signal at the intersections on both sides of Mowa overbridge, a traffic jam is created due to a large number of vehicles stopping haphazardly. After construction of 50-meter divider on each side, the drivers will systematically stop on their respective sides when the signal turns red and the jam situation will be avoided. ADM NR Sahu, DSP Traffic Gurjit Singh, SDM

New traffic related facilities to start in 'Mor Raipur' app from new year

It was also agreed to launch two new facilities in the 'Mor Raipur' app operated under Raipur Smart City. Tow vehicle tracking system and vehicle information tag facility will be started in 'Mor Raipur' app for tracking the vehicles parked in no parking zone and taking them to the concerned police station. On lifting the vehicles parked in such

no parking zone by tow vehicle, the concerned driver will be able to get information about the collection point of his vehicle on his mobile and will be able to get his vehicle released by going to the designated place and paying the fine. Residents of the city are likely to get both the facilities from the beginning of the new year.

Devendra Patel along with senior officials of Public Works Department, National Highways and Municipal Corporation also participated in the meeting.

It was also considered to make dividers from Bhatagaon Chowk to Kathadih Chowk Hanuman Temple and from Avanti Bai Chowk to Crystal Arcade or to put markers etc. to divide the road from the middle for left-right traffic. Similarly, it was proposed to raise the divider by three feet from

Purani Basti and Katora Talab Road, who keep goods outside the shops. He also directed to start electric signals under Shankar Nagar Expressway Bridge, under Pandari Expressway Bridge and at Kamal Vihar Chowk as soon as possible. Dr Bhure also expressed concern over the damage to the spring post channelizers installed for free left turn in the intersections of the city and also directed the officials to repair the damaged spring posts or install new spring posts.

Businessman shot in broad daylight, police nab shooter



Raipur, Dec 20: A miscreant fired at a businessman in broad daylight in Labhandi area falling under jurisdiction of Telibandha Police. The firing incident caused panic among the people of the area after. However, the police arrested one suspect in this case and started investigation.

According to the information received, the incident of firing took place at 11:30 am on Wednesday. It is being told that suspect

Aman Sharma opened fire on Raipur businessman Sandeep Kumar. During the firing, businessman Sandeep was shot in the chest. The injured businessman was sent to the hospital for treatment.

Meanwhile the police caught the suspect with a pistol. According to Police suspect Aman Sharma is a resident of Sundergarh, Odisha. Aman is now being interrogated regarding the reason for the incident.

Stop works that were approved by DMFT but not started yet

Instructions issued by Mineral Resources Department

Raipur, Dec 20: New guidelines have been issued by the Chhattisgarh Mineral Resources Department today from Mantralaya regarding the implementation of Chhattisgarh District Mineral Foundation Trust Rule-15. According to it the Governing Council of the District Mineral Foundation Trust (DMFT) has given instructions to stop with immediate effect works that have been given administrative approval but not started.

According to Rule 5 of Chhattisgarh DMFT Rules, 2015, "The objective of the DMFT is to work in

such a manner for the benefit of the people and areas affected by mining or mining related operations." For the successful conduct of the activities of the Trust, various instructions have been issued by the State Government from time to time, in compliance with which new instructions have been issued today by the Mineral Resources Department. Every Collector-cum-Chairman DMFT has been told to stop with immediate effect all those works that were not started yet after administrative approval by Collector-cum-Chairman, DMFT/Governing Council under the Chhattisgarh DMFT Rules, 2015 (as amended).

As per the instructions such unstarted work should be re-reviewed by

the Governing Council. Thereafter, further necessary action should be taken as per the decision/approval of the Governing Council. Collector-cum-Chairman, DMFT should not start any new work without the administrative approval of the Governing Council. Under the provisions of Rule 10 (1B) of DMFT Rules 2015, information should be given to all the newly elected assembly members of the concerned district, who are ex-officio members. Under the provisions of Rule 10(2), 10(3) and 10(4) of DMFT Rules 2015, new nominations were made in place of such nominated public representatives/members of the concerned district on completion of 3-year of term in office.

Gyan Ganga Educational Academy organises Annual Fest 'Abhyuday'



Raipur, Dec 20: To promote students' hidden talent and co-curricular skills, every year school organizes annual fest, to celebrate Indian culture and tradition in different forms of art, Gyan Ganga Educational Academy is organising Annual Festival - 2023, 'Abhyuday' -

a celebration of knowledge & culture from December 19 to 22. 20th December, 2023 has been planned to showcase students' genius in the form of 'group dance competition', where students from classes VI to XI, participated with heart and soul on different folk song, fusion and latest

numbers. Our chairperson and chief guest Smt. Manju Shandilya, Guest of honour Smt. Pratibha Parashar, Director Smt. Priyanka Shandilya, Principal Smt. Pratima Rajgor have graced the occasion with delight and ecstasy. Respected Judges Smt. Sona Kulkarnee & Ekta Pansari have not only judged the group dance competition but also enjoyed it. Colourful fest continued with the active participation of the overjoyed and charming students in Fashion Show. Brilliant participants in their lovely, graceful attire have filled the campus with great energy and big applause by the audience. The talent journey of confident walk has left us all mesmerized and elated. Students praised the participants honorable spectators have become spell-bound and the judges encouraged the student to participate more in such programs in future.

Chief Minister visited Bank of Baroda stall



Distributed cheques to the beneficiaries of the Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana and PM SVANidhi schemes

Raipur, Dec 20: The Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra was inaugurated by the Chief Minister of Chhattisgarh, Vishnu Deo Sai, in Raipur district on December 16, 2023. The

Chief Minister visited Bank of Baroda stall and distributed cheques to the beneficiaries of the Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana and PM SVANidhi schemes. Mr. Bhartkumar Chavda, Network DGM, Chhattisgarh along with Mr. Amit Banerjee, Regional Head for Raipur Region attended the event and highlighted various government-sponsored loans to the people.

Meeting of Business Advisory Committee of Legislative Assembly concludes



Raipur, Dec 20: The meeting of the Business Advisory Committee of Chhattisgarh Legislative Assembly was

held today in the main committee room of the Legislative Assembly premises under the chairmanship of Legislative Assembly Speaker Dr Raman Singh. Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai,

Leader of Opposition Dr Charandas Mahant, Deputy Chief Minister Arun Sao, Deputy Chief Minister Vijay Sharma, MLAs, Legislative Assembly Secretary Dinesh Sharma and Chief Secretary, Chhattisgarh Government Amitabh Jain were also present.

Collector instructs to complete all preparations in next 3 days

For Good Governance Day on Dec 25

Elected public reps and common citizens to pledge for good governance

Cleanliness drive to be run for a week in urban bodies and panchayats from Dec 25

Raipur, Dec 20: The birth anniversary of former Prime Minister of India Bharat Ratna Late Atal Bihari Vajpayee will be celebrated as Good Governance Day on 25th

December in all the urban bodies and panchayats of the district. Collector Dr Sarveshwar Bhure, in a weekly time limit meeting today, instructed the officials to complete all the preparations in the district in the next three days to celebrate Good Governance Day. Before Good Governance Day on 25 December 2023, instructions have been given to clean the Atal Pillars installed in Gram Panchayats and urban bodies and get necessary repairs done.

On the day of Good Governance Day, elected public representatives and common citizens will also take a pledge to establish good governance in the

urban bodies and gram panchayats of their respective areas. Cleanliness drive will be conducted in villages, gram panchayats and urban bodies from December 25 for the next one week. The Good Governance Day program will be started on 25 December 2023 from Atal Chowk at 10 am in presence of elected public representatives and common citizens. Elected representatives and the general public will take a pledge for good governance after garlanding the photograph of former Prime Minister of India Bharat Ratna Late Atal Bihari Vajpayee at Atal Chowk and lighting the lamp.

Raipur, Dec 20: It was a momentous victory for Raipur Region in the exhilarating team competition of the three-day inter-regional lawn tennis tournament, hosted by Chhattisgarh State Power Company. In a spectacular showdown, Raipur Region clinched the championship title by defeating the Korba West team with a resounding 3-0 victory.

The tournament, which featured a display of remarkable sportsmanship and extraordinary skills, also included open singles and doubles matches that kept spectators on the edge of their seats. On the second day of the competition, quarter-final matches for open singles and semi-final



Matches for doubles were played, further intensifying the competition.

Now, on the third and last day of the competition on Thursday, the final of dou-

bles event and semi-finals and final matches of singles event will be played.

Represented by the talented players RK Banchhor, Ehtesham, Pawan Ogle, Shekhar Verma, and Toman Delhiwar, Raipur Region showcased outstanding teamwork and sportsmanship throughout the tournament, earning them the coveted championship title.

Lawn tennis competition in-charge, Manoj Verma, expressed his excitement as the three-day competition is set to conclude on Thursday. With 40 players from seven regional teams across the state, including Raipur Region, Raipur Central, Bilaspur Region, Durg Region, Rajnandgaon Region, Korba East, and Korba West, this tournament has been a testament to the passion and skill of tennis players in Chhattisgarh.

Advocate Commissioner attached property in Bank of Baroda case

Action taken on the orders of DRT

Raipur, Dec 20: NPA account of Bank of Baroda, Gudiyari branch owned by M/s Dauji Chawal Udyog and others (Prof. Prahlad Kumar Pandey) Guarantor, Pawan Kumar Pandey, on the orders of Recovery Officer Vatsalya Kumar of Debt Recovery Tribunal, Jabalpur. Khasra number 34,36,39,109, personal immovable property located in Panda Parswani village, Tehsil Tilda district, Raipur was attached on December 15, 2023 by Advocate Commissioner Mahesh Kumar Pandey appointed by Bank of Baroda. During the attachment process, an announcement was made by pasting the attachment



warrant on the immovable property. During the attachment process, Bank of Baroda, ROSRB branch senior manager AK Alliwari, Patwari Deepak Sahu and Kharora police force were present at the venue.

Advocate Commissioner Mahesh Kumar Pandey said that this action was taken in the Debt Recovery Tribunal, Jabalpur for execution of recovery certificate for recovery of approximately Rs 2 crore 32 lakh. The outstanding

amount of the bank will soon be recovered by auctioning the property by the tribunal.

Mahesh Kumar Pandey further said that this action has been taken on the orders of the Recovery Officer of DRT Jabalpur and on the orders of DRT, the defaulters and guarantors who willfully do not pay the bank money are arrested and civil action is taken against them including seizure and sale of their movable and immovable properties. Jail pro-

ceedings are carried out. Strict action is taken against defaulters who do not return the money to the bank despite being capable. It was also informed that similar action is now being taken continuously by the Debt Recovery Tribunal, Jabalpur against the defaulters and their guarantors who deliberately do not repay the money. If defaulters want to avoid this situation, then deposit the loan taken from the bank on time. Bank of Baroda Regional Head Mr. Amit Banerjee, Deputy Regional Manager Mr. Deepak Mishra, Law Officer Sandeep Kumar and Revenue Naib Tehsildar Mr. Srajal Sahu had special support in the process of execution of the property, informs a release issued by Amit Banerjee, Regional head

Mesmerizing performances mark 'Euphoria 2023'



Central Chronicle News

Raipur, Dec 20: Cultural Excellence marks the annual function Euphoria 2023 at Shri Gujrati English Medium Higher Secondary School, Devendra Nagar here. It was a day when the students exhibited their artistic talent in the form of dance, music, song and skits. One after the other breath taking performances which was a mixed bag of dance from the west, north and east apart from raising cultural issues like Save Girl Child, Ruining Childhood and skit based on the teacher and students

kept the audience tied to their seats till the end. Further tiny-tots stole the limelight with their cute performances on My Father-My Hero, 'Bachpan Suhana', Rassleela and others. The students of primary sections also gave energetic performances on epics like Mahabharat, Five Elements of Nature and may more. When it came to the students of middle section, stage was set on fire with dances titled Adishakti, Historical Victory and what not.

At the beginning programme got off to a start with the lighting of ceremonial lamp by the invited guests which include Ramji Bhai Patel, President of the Patron Committee, Magan Bhai Patel, Vice President, Jayanti Bhai Patel member; Narayan Bhai Patel, President Executive Committee, Ashok Patel Vice President, Tulsidas Patel Secretary, Ashok Devsi Bhai Patel Secretary,



Jayant Bhai Taunk Treasurer and others. Melodious Saraswati Vandana and Welcome Song by the musical group set the tone for the programme.

Narayan Bhai Patel, President Executive Committee showered his blessings while Tulsidas Patel Secretary read out the school annual report. School Principal Dr

Shailesh Sharma welcomed the guests. The solo song presentation by Kavya Sharma Class VI and Lakshya Dewangan Class VIII stole the show and won applause of the audience. Music faculties Vijay Shankar Jha and Rupendra Shrivastav gave their best with their musical team. Vote of thanks at the end was proposed by Shyanti Bhattacharya.

Jack & Jill School celebrates its 18th annual function



Raipur, Dec 20: Jack & Jill School celebrated its 18th annual function in which the theme was 'Earthern Symphony'. Mother Nature has given all precious things to us and is selflessly nurturing us but we engaged in polluting and destroying it. The program of the school is a small effort to bring awareness about Mother Earth and to provide responsibility of its security and protection. Expressing gratitude to the Mother Earth, the

function started with Saraswati Vandana. Kids also participated in the fashion show organised in this theme. In addition to this Yoga and Edusport was also presented by them in which various asanas was displayed. A special drama was also presented by the students in which the appeal was done not to cut trees. In the end the winners of the various events were felicitated by the school which was followed by dinner for students and their parents.

Academic prize distribution function held at RKC

Raipur, Dec 20: Following the rich tradition of Rajkumar College, Raipur, Chhattisgarh, the Day 1 of the Prize Giving Function, 2023 began with great zeal and fervour on Dec 20. Raja Shri Tribikram Chandra Deb of Baramba, Chairman, Managing Committee, was the Chief Guest of the Day 1 (Academic Prizes) prize giving function.

The programme began at Jashpur Hall with the arrival of the chief guest and after the Flag Hoisting and Guard of Honour by the NCC Cadets, the dignitaries moved into Jashpur Hall. The Programme inside the Hall started with the School Song "Sare jahan se achha" and bouquets were presented to the dignitaries. After the welcome address by Principal, who continued with his annual report, the Academic Prize Distribution commenced from 9:30 to 11am.

The highlights of the prize winners are as follows: - 1. Aryansh J. Tekam, the Head Boy received the Nandgaon Challenge Shield and Principal's Cup for the Best All-Round Boy. 2. Womack Medal for Good Conduct and Wing Commander Raja Shri Shankar



Pratap Mahendra Bahadur Deo of Dhenkalan Memorial Environmental Scholarship (Rs. 1001) were won by Suraj Ratre, Class XII. 3. Governor of Odisha Cup for the Best Scholar (Senior School) went to Sakshi Sirmour, Class XI. 4. Reyansh Aggarwal, Class XII won the Smt.Rani Shashi Prabha Devi of Kawardha's Prize for the Best English Debater. 5. Shri Devi Singh Chauhan's Cup for the Best Hindi Debater was won jointly by Tanishka Vajpayee, Class XII and Ankush Singh, Class XII. 6. Ashish Chaudhari Memorial Trophy for Best Conduct (Girls) was shared by Navdhi Kiri, Class XII and Kirat Kaur, Class XII. 7. Governor of Odisha Cup for the Best Team in Inter Set Quiz presented by Shri Debi Prasad Mishra

was jointly won by Sakshi Sirmour, Class XII and Suraj Ratre, Class XII.

In the report, Lt. Col. Avinash Singh (Veteran), Principal, Rajkumar College briefed the gathering about the academic excellence and all round development of the school and the students in various fields. It covered a whole gamut of activities in the school and also the performance of our students outside the school, in the Inter School Competitions.

The Cultural Programme of the Junior School included four adorable stage shows namely 1. Anokha Bhumi Putra by Class I students, 2. War and Peace by Class I students, 3. Sands of Grace - a journey through the Dance Heritage of Rajasthan by students of Class II and III, 4. Cinematic

Galore of South India by students of Class IV and V. In between, there was a Bhajan Duet by Bhairav Kaur and Ishika Bhama and an Indian Classical Instrumental Solo by Tanveer Bhama and Lakshya Sethiya.

The Cultural Programme of the Senior School included four superb stage shows namely 1. Valour Of Tanaji - A tribute to the great warrior by the students of Class VI, 2. Samridhi Sanskriti by students of Class VII, 3. Panchabhootam by the students of Class VIII and 4. Cultural Synthesis by students of Class IX. The anchoring for the Cultural Programme was done by Aryansh Tekam, the Head Boy and Ananya Sinha, the Head Girl of the school.

Anesthesia must be used carefully during caesarean section: Experts

Raipur, Dec 20: A state level conference on Obstetric Anesthesia was organized in the old auditorium of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru Memorial Medical College, Raipur by the Department of Anesthesia in collaboration with the Indian College of Anaesthesiology.

Professor Dr. Pratibha Jain Shah, Head of the Department of Anesthesia, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru Memorial Medical College, said that the main objective of this conference was to get the child safely out of the womb by conducting safe caesarean section for normal and pregnant women suffering from various diseases. Discussions were held on special precautions to be taken by an anaesthesiologist during this procedure, quantity of anaesthetic medicines to be given and latest guidelines available in this regard etc.

The chief guest of this program was Dr Trupti Nagaria, Dean of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru Memorial Medical



College, Raipur while Dr Manjula Sarkar, former Head of the Department, KEM Hospital, Mumbai and senior member of the Indian College of Anaesthesiology, and Dr Mahesh Sinha, Vice President of the Indian Society of Anaesthesiology were the special guests. Conference President and Head of Department of Anesthesia in the Medical College, Dr. Pratibha Jain Shah, Conference Secretary, Dr. Pratiksha Agrawal and Director of CIMS Bilaspur, Dr KK Sahare, heads of departments of anesthesia from all the medical colleges of the state attended the programme and shared their experiences.

Code of conduct to be imposed again in March, schedule released

Voter list revision from today, names will also be added

Raipur, Dec 20: As soon as the assembly elections are over, the dates for the voter list revision work for the Lok Sabha elections have been released. It is starting from December 20th. During this time, any kind of amendment can be made in the voter list as well as new names can also be added. Apart from this, rearrangement of polling stations, formation of sections, location of polling stations, section boundaries and proposed reorganization can be finalized.



electoral roll. The initial publication of the voter list will be done on January 6, 2024. The schedule for this has been released by the Election Commission. This schedule, which came from the Chief Election Commission, has been released by Raipur Collector Dr. Sarveshwar Narendra Bhure. Apart from this, the final publication of the voter list will be done on

February 8, 2024. At the same time, code of conduct can be imposed any time after the publication of the voter list.

After the initial publication of the voter list, claims and objections will be invited for it. For this, the time has been fixed from January 6 to January 22, 2024. During the said period, if there is any kind of claim or objection in the voter list, application

can be submitted.

Currently, the code of conduct for the assembly elections ended just a few days ago after two months. At the same time, the date of implementation of code of conduct for Lok Sabha elections is also looming ahead. In such a situation, after two months, when the code of conduct is imposed again, all the officers will be busy in review and other work and people will again have to wait for various tasks. Along with adding names to the voter list, camps will also be organized for correction. Since this work was done for a long time during the assembly, less time is being given to the camp for this during the Lok Sabha elections. This camp will be organized on January 13th and 14th

About 3500 students participated in suppl exam of RSU

Raipur, Dec 20: Students appearing in the supplementary examinations of Pt. Ravi Shankar Shukla University will have to prepare for the annual examinations in just two and half months. According to the academic calendar released by the Higher Education Department, the annual examinations of the university will start in March. In this context, students have very little time left to prepare for the annual examinations. This year the supplementary examinations of the university were held till November 29th. The results have also been released as soon as the examinations are completed. Students who have passed the supplementary examinations have also got admission in the next class.



It is noteworthy that this year the rules related to supplementary examination have been changed, due to which the examinations started late. Students who have failed in two subjects are also eligible for supplementary. Due to this, the number of students appearing in the supplementary examination has also increased. For the first time, about 35 thousand students have participated in the supplementary examination. Usually the supplementary examinations of the university are held in the month of September, but this time the examinations could start from

the last week of October. Supplementary examination results have been released according to different classes by the second week of December.

This time the university management had changed the evaluation system of answer sheets of examinations. This time the evaluation of answer sheets was done in the university campus itself. Faculties coming here to check the copies made it easier to release the exam results on time. Errors in evaluation have also reduced. Earlier, answer sheets were given to the professors for checking and the professors used to check the copies from home and send them. There were many complaints about negligence in checking copies, due to which the university management has changed the answer book evaluation system and implemented a central-

ized system. Due to delay in supplementary examinations, the education of students who failed in two subjects has been affected. A student who fails in one subject automatically gets admission in the next class, but a student who fails in two subjects has to study in the same class, but this time by changing the rules, the student who fails in two subjects is also given the eligibility for supplementary. This rule was made in the month of October, due to which there was confusion among the students as to which class they should study. Because of this the studies were affected. Due to failure in two subjects, it took time for students to prepare for the supplementary examination. The biggest challenge after passing the supplementary is to prepare for the annual examinations in two and a half months.

'Sadhus suffered due to colonial-era criminal laws'

New Delhi, Dec 20 (PTI):

BJP MP Pragya Thakur on Wednesday said she and other sadhus or sanyasis had suffered due to the colonial-era criminal laws as she slammed the earlier Congress governments for lacking the will power to bring a change for ensuring justice.



Pragya Thakur

Participating in the debate on the Bharatiya Nyaya (Second) Sanhita, Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha (Second) Sanhita and the Bharatiya Sakshya (Second) Bill in the Lok Sabha, Thakur said when there is "apna desh (our country), apna kanon (our law) aur apna anushasan (our discipline)" then development will happen in a proper way.

power and the one who does, is committed to the country. They (the British) changed the name of our country and kept the name Indian Penal Code. It reiterated that 'you are still our slaves' and with this mindset these bills were given to us but those who sat in power could not honour our independence," Thakur said.

power and commitment towards the country, she said hitting out at the Congress. "We have come to change these colonial-era laws today but it cannot be imagined what many have suffered for so many years. We were saying that we were breathing in independent India but we had to suffer from not being under laws of independent India," Thakur claimed. "When India be-

came independent after years of slavery, what we lacked that for 65 years the Congress and other governments could not do this...We are moving forward setting aside the mindset of slavery and now the laws that will be made touching the soul of the country and there will be justice for Indians, by Indians and of Indians," she said.

In an apparent swipe at AIMIM chief Asaduddin Owaisi, Thakur said, "A member stated that this is done to Muslims, that is done to Muslims...I want to say why are you pained, you had the protection of big people over you. Despite being criminals, they used to get bail." She thanked Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah for the bills and said that people have given them power so that they can work for the people.

'Respect mother tongue, not promote foreign languages'

Bhubaneswar, Dec 20 (PTI):

Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) chief Mohan Bhagwat on Wednesday urged people to converse in their mother tongue and respect it, instead of promoting foreign languages like English.



RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat during 'Sarvabhasha Sahityakar Samman' award ceremony organised by Akhil Bharatiya Sahitya Parishad, in Bhubaneswar, Wednesday.

Bhagwat, while addressing a gathering at an event of the Akhil Bharatiya Sahitya Parishad here, said people in the country have stopped using their mother tongue.

"Here in our country, there are a lot of issues on the use of mother tongue. We have stopped using our mother tongue. As a result, we have to refer to English dictionaries to understand the meaning of our own granths (books)," he said. "Today, we have felicitated several writers of different Indian languages. But, our mother tongue will get real respect, if we start using it," he said. Speaking about literature, the RSS chief said it should be written for the benefit of society, and not for entertainment or any

harm to mankind. "Literature should be written to make a person responsible," he said. Bhagwat also claimed that in ancient times, there was no dharm' in other countries, and it spread from India to some other nations like China and Japan. He alleged that the contents of some recent books give one an impression that "you are not a Hindu", and such writings lead society in a "negative" direction, which is "dangerous".

Newly elected members of Rajasthan Assembly take oath

Jaipur, Dec 20 (PTI):



Newly elected members of the Rajasthan Legislative Assembly on Wednesday took oath on the first day of the two-day Assembly session.

The first session of the 16th Legislative Assembly began at 11 am. On the first day, 190 out of 199 members took oath.

Congress legislators had come to the House wearing black ribbons on arms in protest against the suspension of MPs in Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha. Elections on 199 out of 200 seats were held last month. Due to the demise of the Congress candidate, the election for the Karanpur seat was adjourned and will now be held on January 5.

Chief Minister Bhajan Lal Sharma took the oath first, followed by Deputy

CMs Diya Kumari and Prem Chand Bairwa.

While most of the members took oath in Hindi, some of them, including Zuber Khan (Congress) and Yonus Khan (Independent) took oath in Sanskrit. A few legislators also expressed their desire to take oath in the

Rajsthani language but Protom Speaker Kalicharan did not allow them saying that it was not included in the scheduled eight of the Constitution.

The MLAs who were absent today will be administered oath on Thursday.

Election for the post of Speaker will also be held tomorrow. The BJP has already named Vasudev Devnani for the post of Speaker. Soon after the House proceedings began, Congress MLA and former parliamentary affairs minister Shanti Dhariwal raised an objection over calling the session on a short notice. After taking oath, Congress MLA and PCC chief Govind Singh Dotasra raised the issue of suspension of MPs in the Parliament, but the protom speaker did not allow him.

Assam bars school teachers from further studies without permission

Guwahati, Dec 20 (PTI):

The Assam government has barred teachers and non-teaching staff working in provincialised secondary schools from studying further or obtaining any degree while in service without prior permission of the competent authorities, an official said on Wednesday. 'Provincialised schools' means those institutes in which the government has taken over all liabilities of a non-government school. The government generally takes over only those institutes that are in remote places or serve a backward community or where there are no government schools. In a letter to the Inspector of Schools across the state on Tuesday, Secondary Education Director Mamata Hojai cited an old clause from the Assam Civil Services (Conduct) Rules, 1965 and to implement it strictly. Hojai said that it is a violation of service rules if a teaching or non-teaching staff of a provincialised school pursues educa-

tional or professional qualifications without permission. She said, "Departmental proceedings should be immediately initiated against those teaching and non-teaching staff of the provincialised secondary schools who have acquired any academic or professional qualification during the service period without obtaining permission from the appointing authority."

Naqiyah Haji makes her TV debut



Mumbai, Dec 20: Star Bharat is once again gearing up for an exhilarating experience with the unveiling of their latest show, "Shaitani Rasmain." Far from the ordinary drama, this production promises a unique blend of mystery, romance, thriller, and emotions, set against the backdrop of a wedding fantasy. What adds to the allure is the stellar cast, with the exceptionally talented Naqiyah Haji taking on the lead role as Nikki in the show ensuring that it's not only promising but a total masterpiece that will undoubtedly keep viewers enthralled.

आम सूचना

पब्लिक को सूचित करने हेतु यह सूचना दी जाती है कि... (Public notice regarding legal proceedings or court orders.)

NOTICE

This is for the information of the public at large that with respect to Laxmi Ventures (India) Ltd., the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India in Sunil Kumar Agarwal & Ors. v. Laxmi Ventures (India) Ltd. & Ors., SLP (C) No. 26652 of 2023 has inter alia passed the following: Order on 11th December, 2023 in the above matter.

(GENERAL INFORMATION) SALE DEED (REGISTRY PAPERS) LOST

This is to inform that my client Mr. Durga Prasad Agrawal s/o Late Mr. Vishva Kumar Agrawal r/o Agroha Society J-04, Raipura, Raipur Chhattisgarh has been lost original copy of ownership and sale deeds which were registered at sub registrar office Raipur Chhattisgarh and also registered missing information in D.D. Nagar Police Station on dated 25/12/2011. Details of property and sale deeds are 1. Plot Number N-15, Part of Khassa Number 359/1 Area 2400 Square feet, Village Raipura, sale deed executed by Mr. Pradeep Agrawal in favour of Mr. Durga Prasad Agrawal, registered Vide book number is A-1, Volume number 49535, Pages from 01 to 14, Document Serial Number is 8051 (KH) dated 03/02/2011 2. Plot Number N-16, 17, Part of Khassa Number 359/1 and Kh. No. 359 Area 2400 Square Feet, Village Raipura, sale deed executed by Mrs. Indira Agrawal in favour of Mr. Durga Prasad Agrawal registered Vide book No. A-1, Volume number 49654, Document Serial Number 8629, on dated 14/02/2011 3. Plot Number N-04 & 05, Part of Khassa Number 359/1 Area 6320 Square feet, Village Raipura, sale deed executed by Mrs. Madhusree Agrawal in favour of Mrs. Monika Mittal registered Vide book No. A-1, Volume number is 49534, Document Serial Number 8050 (KH), on dated 03/02/2011.

Rajiv Lochan Tiwari Advocate Mo. No. 7000628794, 9009388375

बैंक ऑफ बरौदा Bank of Baroda. श्रेणीय कार्यालय- धमतरी, प्रथम तल, बैंक ऑफ बरौदा, सोनकर प्लाजा, डॉ. अंबेडकर वार्ड, रुद्री रोड, जिला- धमतरी (छ.प्र.) 493773, फो.: 0788-2963574. महत्वपूर्ण: विज्ञापन की तारीख: 20/12/2023. आवेदन पत्र भरने की अंतिम तिथि: 05/01/2024.

सेन्ट्रल बैंक ऑफ इंडिया Central Bank of India. शाखा: भाटापारा (छ.प्र.) Branch: Bhatapara (C.G.)

Table with 5 columns: S. N., Name of Borrower/Guarantor & Address/Branch, Description of the Immovable property, Demand Notice Date/Amount. Contains multiple entries for property auctions.

GENERAL INFORMATION

I am Advocate Jai Ram Bhagwati (District Court Durg) I publish this information as per the authority and instructions received from my party Jasveer Kaur D/o Shri Swarna Singh R/o Q.No. 03-Q, Street No. 11, Sec. 11, Sec. 06, Bhalil Tah. & Dist. Durg (C.G.)

Notice under section 13(2) of the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (The Act)

Table with 5 columns: S. NO, Name of Borrower(s) (A), Particulars of Mortgaged property/ (ies) (B), Date Of NPA(C), Outstanding Amount (Rs.) (D). Lists loan details and enforcement actions.

Aadhar Housing Finance Ltd. Corporate Office: Unit No.802, Natraj Rustomjee, Western Express Highway and M.V.Road, Andheri (East), Mumbai-400069. Bhalil Branch: Halli No-1, 2nd Floor, Crescent Plaza, Gurdwara Road, Opp. Utsav Palace Durg-491001, (CG).

E-AUCTION - SALE NOTICE

E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Properties under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Asset and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8 (6) of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002. Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower (s) and Guarantor (s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged, possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of Aadhar Housing Finance Limited will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is", and "Whatever there is" with no known encumbrances Particulars of which are given below:-

District level essay competition held Newly constructed road uproots

In memory of Padumlal Punnalal Bakshi

Khairagarh, Dec 20:

A district level essay competition was organized in the memory of literary scholar Padumlal Punnalal Bakshi, on the topic "Bakshi ji's contribution to Hindi literature". A total of 188 students participated in the district level essay competition organized on the subject and before the competition, students with literary interest who came from government and private educational institutions of the district, in collaboration with Iqra Foundation and Shantidoot Sanstha, first presented the national anthem and then conducted the examination



with full discipline. During this, senior litterateur Balkrishna Gupta (Guru) inspected the examination centre. During the examination, teachers Anurag Singh, Suresh Guni, Davan Deshmukh, Dr. Medhavani

Ture, Ravi Vaishnav, senior officer of Iqra Foundation Shamshul Hoda Khan (Baba Bhai), coordinator of Shantidoot organization Anurag Shanti Ture, Yakub Khan, Manohar Sen, including the contri-

buton of Master Rushil was commendable.

The winning students participating in the district level essay competition will be felicitated on 28th December at 4:00 pm at Ambedkar Chowk.



Kurud, Dec 20:

The road built by the Public Works Department Kurud, built just a few months ago, has uprooted in many places at a stretch of 10 km, from Bhatgaon to Bhakhara. The road reportedly has been built with such low quality and disregarding the prescribed standards and norms that the following problems have occurred at 40 places in this 10 km long

road. The level was uprooted due to asphaltting and poor quality material and in order to hide this huge corruption, the contractor and the responsible engineer of PWD did the repair work and made the road tarmacked till Bhatagaon-Thuha-Koliyari-Bhakhara. Also the collusion between the contractor and the PWD officer in the work is such that the information board of the construction work from Bhathagaon to



Bhakhara was not put up, in which the start date of the construction work, completion date, name, address and category of the contractor and standard capacity of the road etc. are mentioned. As per information regional MLA Ajay Chandrakar got the works worth crores of rupees approved from the government and got the construction work done on Bhakhara road from Bhata

village, and a lot of anger is being seen among the citizens seeing the dilapidated condition of the road. Villagers and residents of Bhatagaon - Thuha - Koliyari - Bhakhara, situated on the road from Bhatagaon to Bhakhara, told that as the months of road construction passed, the roads started getting uprooted and potholes started forming, just a few days after construction.

Illegal liquor trade not stopping in region including Bazaar Ataria

Bazaar-Ataria, Dec 20:

After the creation of KCG district, there is still a stir in the case of illegal liquor in Bazaar Ataria area and reportedly due to negligible police action here, the courage of illegal liquor vendors is increasing, which is adversely affecting the environment of the village.



coaches is increasing further.

As per reports, the liquor vendors here are now selling liquor from different locations, and customers are buying liquor from them at higher prices and reportedly the police are not taking any action on this, due to which the morale of the

young generation. According to the information, consignments of liquor and ganja are also reaching Kukumuda, Udaipur and Singhori along with market Ataria, which Kochiya is carrying out fearlessly, apart from this, illegal liquor is also being served openly in Jalbandha and Pawantara. At present, with the coming of the BJP government, bulldozers have been running in the tasting centres, but the work of serving liquor is going on in full swing in the chicken shop of Market Chowk of Bazaar Atria along with Hotel Dhaba of Khairagarh city.

As per reports, action has been taken against some liquor vendors, but some are still out of control, because as the evening approaches, the atmosphere of the region becomes worse and this can have a bad impact on

Korba, Dec 20:

Information about central government schemes were received in Vikas Bharat Sankalp Yatra, which was started with the aim of taking the Central Government schemes to the masses and communicating with the beneficiaries who will benefit from them.

In this series, information about the schemes was given by organizing camps in villages under different districts of Korba district, mainly in village Uрга in Korba district, Patadhi, village Podi Uprora under Podi Uprora, village Konkona, village Dhelwadhi under



Katghora district panchayat, village Arda, village Kotmer under district Panchayat Kartala, village Katala and village under Pali district. Camp was organized at Nanbanka, Badebanka.

Ward no. under Municipal Corporation. 51 Waiting Bus Stand in Darri and Ward No. 67 Camp was organized at Gajra ground B a n k i m o n g r a . Applications were also

taken in the camp to avail the benefits of the schemes and along with giving information about PM Awas, Ayushman Health Card, One Nation One Card, Ujjwala Yojana, Jal Jeevan Mission, Pradhan Mantri

Vishwakarma Yojana, Aadhar Updation, cheap and good generic medicines etc., applications were taken from the beneficiaries deprived of the schemes.

Manoj Kumar Ratre, who came to the camp from Gajra Basti, told that the house is approved in his father's name and similarly Nandram told that information about the schemes was received in the camp and he also talked about getting BP and sugar checked in the camp organized by the health department. Local public representatives, sarpanch, councilors and officers and employees were present at the camp site.

Three nabbed with banned tablets worth Rs 4260

6 packets with 600 no's of Nirosum Nirazepam seized

Dhamtari, Dec 19:

In a combined action by the Cyber Cell technical branch and Thana City Kotwali of Dhamtari, banned psychotropic drugs and tablets along with 3 accused were nabbed here on Tuesday. As per instructions by the SP Dhamtari Prashant Thakur and guidance of Addl. SP Madhulika Singh, a combined team of Cyber Cell Technical and City Kotwali under leadership of DSP Neha Pawar was formed and regular search and raids are being conducted to put a check on sale of banned cough syrups, tablets and psychotropic drugs. It was during patrolling



on Dec 18, the police got tip from an informer that 3 persons near Samru Hotel in Vindhyawasini ward are looking for customers to sell banned tablets and drugs. The police reached the site and nabbed the three accused and on interrogation they accepted selling banned tablets.

The three accused nabbed are Lucky Gidwani, Sanjay

Kanjwani and Gaurav Soni, all resident of Dhamtari. The police on conducting search seized 6 packets of banned tablets Nirosum Nitrazepam totalling 600 numbers worth Rs 4260 and on asking about valid documents to keep such banned tablets they could not produced any. They used to sell a tablet costing around Rs 7 each at around Rs 100-120



each. A crime under section 21.22 of Narcotics Act was filed against the three in City Kotwali thana and all three were sent jail on judicial custody.

The three accused nabbed are - Lucky Gidwani, S/o Suresh Gidwani, R/o Gurudwara Gali, near Old Bus Stand, Dhamtari; Sanjay Kajwani, S/o Srichand Kajwani, R/o Baniyapara ward Dhamtari and Gaurav Soni S/o Heeralal Soni, R/o Baniyapara Dhamtari.

In nabbing the above



three accused, the TI Kotwali Thana Dhamtari, Inspector Brijesh Tiwari, Cyber cell technical in-charge SI Ramesh Sahu, SI Dhamtari Thana Viniod Sharma, Birendra Bais, Cyber Cell head constable Devendra Rajput, R Kamal Joshi, Dheeraj Dadsena, Mukesh Mishra, Krishna Kanhaiya Patil, Anand Katakwar, Yuvraj Thakur, Yogesh Dhruv, Manoj Sahu, Fanesh Sahu, Anurag Pandey from Thana Dhamtari- Ankush Nanda and others played an important role.

Dream of housing the poor with PMAY will come true: Singh

Gaurela-Pendra-Marwahi, Dec 20:

In the first cabinet meeting after the formation of BJP government in Chhattisgarh state, the Chief Minister of the state, Vishnudev Sai has approved Rs. 18 lakh PM housing. Welcoming this first decision, Bharatiya Janata Yuva Morcha Chhattisgarh leader Akarsh Singh said that as soon as Congress's Bhupesh Baghel government was formed with full majority in Chhattisgarh state in the 2018 assembly elections, 18 lakh PM houses were stopped from being built in the state, due to which lakhs of poor families of the state were deprived of housing.

In the entire state, all the basic works, electrici-



ty, roads, water, all the development works of bridges and culverts were banned by the Bhupesh government, but now in Chhattisgarh state, with this decision of the cabinet, the poor of every society of the state will get permanent houses.

Minority Morcha State President Shakeel Ahmed further said that for the last 5 years, and now the Ganga of development will flow in every assembly and remote village of Chhattisgarh state which is sharing development.

Akarsh Singh further said that the words and deeds of BJP are one and the same and the promise of BJP was that the housing of the poor will be approved immediately after taking oath. Apna Ghar for every poor of the state is BJP's resolve and BJP has fulfilled it. Chief Minister Vishnudev Sai has fulfilled the dream of the poor by approving 18 lakh PM houses during the first cabinet meeting itself, he said.

Seven flag bearers in Satnam Sandesh procession welcomed



Kharora, Dec 20:

Before the 267th birth anniversary of Saint Shiromani Baba Guru Ghosidas, under the joint auspices of Satnami Samaj Kesla Kharora, Satnam Sandesh Shobha Yatra started from village Kesla and toured through streets, mohallas, ward towns and ended at Rajiv Nagar Satnam Dham.

On the occasion, the seven flag bearers were given a grand welcome at Tigda Chowk Kharora by presenting coconut quince and saluting their feet and along with the Shobha

Yatra, prominent dignitaries, social workers and senior citizens were also welcomed. Vedram Manhare, Bhojram Manhare, Mukesh Bhardwaj, Sudhir Bandhe, B. D. Gautam, Pinky Kurre, Premalata Manhare, Dageshwar Joshi, Sumit Markandey, Sant Navrange, Nagar President, Bhagdas Chaturvedi, Jitendra Kosaria, Ramkumar Kosaria, Praveen Chand Gilharen, Surendra Kosaria, Hemlal Dhidhi, Pankaj Jangde etc. and a large number of citizens were present.

Two-day int'n'l conference held at Samadhan Mahavidyalaya

Bemetara, Dec 20:

A two-day international conference was organized at Samadhan Mahavidyalaya on the topic of multidisciplinary education and innovation for sustainable development based on human consciousness. The program started with garlanding the picture of Goddess Saraswati and lighting the lamp. The chief guest of this international conference was Dr. Aruna Palta, Vice Chancellor of Hemchand Yadav University.

Congratulating the College for getting A grade in NAAC assessment and organizing the international conference, she said that the quality of good participation was seen among the professors and students of the college. Today is the time of multitasking, we cannot fulfill our needs with a single task and we all should play our part in making education quality. On this occasion, the abstract proceedings in the Research Journal were released by the guests in which 115 research abstracts have been written and the Abhas exhibition



based on Mediator Philosophy was inaugurated. Director Dr. Alka Tiwari heartily welcomed all the guests, professors and students and explained the importance of the conference. Director of the college, Dr. Awadhesh Patel threw light on the establishment and objective of the college and informed about the partial use of life science and value education in the college and assured to make full efforts to carry forward the research work in the next 5 years. Subject expert of IIT Delhi, Mr. Ajay Jain said that humans can make their life happy by getting solutions to all the questions. Educationist Somdev Tyagi said that study of

humans is also a part of education. Dr. Sadhan Bhattacharya, President of Divya Path Sansthan, said that till now the study of human beings is not included in any education because there is still a long way to understand human beings. The truth of creation can be understood through the method of logic through life education and value education. After this, President of Gandhi Vidya Mandir, Himanshu Duggad said that according to the intermediate philosophy, only the thing that exists can be explained. In the two-day conference, about 55 assistant professors, research scholars, college

assistant professors and students from various colleges and universities presented their research papers. Academicians from a total of 4 countries addressed this program and highlighted the need and importance of research. On the second day of the conference, the chief guest was Dr. SK Pandey, former Vice Chancellor of Ravi Shankar University. He explained the importance of astronomy and said that it is essential to spread its knowledge to the public because we all exist from the infinite universe. Registrar of Hemchand Yadav University, Durg, Mr. Bhupendra Kuldeep, while congratulating for organizing

the international conference, said in his statement that due to value education based on intermediary philosophy, the students and assistant professors here show participation in the work. Dr. Hina Chavda from NIT Raipur, Dr. Sanket Thakur and Dr. Meenakshi Rathore, educationists from Abhyudaya Sansthan Achoti, participated as panel experts. They said in the statement that the research papers of all the participants are showing positive results. Certainly this event will prove to be a milestone for the entire education world. In this international conference, researchers and assistant professors presented their research papers on useful topics like Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam, Climate Change, Global Warming, New Education Policy 2020 and Sustainable Development etc. which were quite informative. In the end, certificates were given to all the research scholars and assistant professors. Assistant professors of Samadhan Mahavidyalaya were awarded certificates in recognition of their excellent work in NC. Principal of M.J.

College Bhilai, Dr. Anil Choubey, Dean of Kalinga University, Dr. Asha Abhyakar, Dr. Sanket Thakur from Achhoti and Professor Satish Saxena from Vidisha were present as panel experts. Director of the college, Mr. Avinash Tiwari sent his thanks. He said that this is an important step towards humanizing education. In this international conference, Dr. Tien Anh Tran from South Korea, educationist Naomi Turner from Canada, Chandra Shekhar Tiwari from California, USA, Dr. Preeta Lal from Hemchand Yadav University Durg, and Dr. Surendra Pathak, Yogesh Shastri from Delhi, Director Ganesh Along with Verma, research scholars and assistant professors of all other universities and colleges and administrative officer of Samadhan Mahavidyalaya, Umesh Singh Rajput and all the assistant professors were present. The program was conducted by Ms. Sweety Malik, Deepali Saluja, Pitambar Jha and Pooja Sinha. This international conference was full of achievements for everyone.

Imran Khan to contest general elections from at least three constituencies, says his party

Islamabad, Dec 20 (PTI): Pakistan's jailed former prime minister Imran Khan will contest the upcoming general elections from at least three constituencies, his party announced on Wednesday. On August 5, the 71-year-old former cricketer-turned politician was convicted by a trial court in Islamabad in the Toshakhana corruption case filed by the Election Commission of Pakistan. The verdict meant he was disqualified from contesting elections for five years. However, days later the Islamabad High Court suspended his three-year sentence but he still remains in jail in other cases.

Imran Khan sahib wants to inform that he will be contesting elections from at least three constituencies of Pakistan," Barrister Ali Zafar told the media outside Adiala Jail. He said the IHC was set to release its verdict on Khan's petition challenging conviction in the Toshakhana case, Dawn newspaper reported. "We hope that the judgment will soon be announced because the [election] schedule has been released," he said. Zafar said that the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party workers had been given directions to

file their nomination papers. "As long as the PTI candidates are concerned, our workers in jail, who have rendered sacrifices for the party in this difficult time, would be 100 per cent allotted tickets on a priority basis," he said. "The rest of the candidates have also been finalised and their names will be announced soon," Zafar added. He added that stopping party workers from filing nomination papers was an "undemocratic exercise" and would jeopardise free and fair elections. Meanwhile, the party Chairman Gohar Khan said the PTI wanted elections to be held on February 8 at any cost. "Today, we were very upset at what Shah [Mehmood Qureshi] sahib told us," he noted, claiming that the PTI vice chairman's nomination papers had been "snatched" from Qureshi's secretary. "Snatching nomination papers from people on the street would make these elections a shame," he said. Gohar added that Khan would be provided with his nomination papers tomorrow, vowing that "Khan sahib will contest these polls, God willing". Gohar said he too would participate in the upcoming polls from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Buner.

Israel to recruit thousands of construction workers from India

Jerusalem, Dec 20 (PTI):

A team of "selectors" from Israel visited India last week and another senior delegation will leave for India next week to start the process of recruiting thousands of workers to be brought to the country to fill in the acute shortage faced by its construction industry, a senior executive at the Israel Builders Association said on Wednesday. "We will start the process in Delhi and Chennai next week on December 27. At the moment we are looking to bring in 10,000 as per government approvals and this

will scale up to 30,000 in the near future depending on how it goes. It is an ongoing exercise and will take months," Deputy Director General and Spokesperson for the Israel Builders Association (IBA), Shay Pazner, told PTI. "The selection starting next week will last 10-15 days," Pazner said. A delegation led by Izhack Gurvitz, who heads the IBA's division dealing with workers' issues and the selection team, was in India last week and would be joining CEO Igal Slovik again next week with other members of the IBA team, he said.

Deadly blast in Guinea's capital threatens gas shortages across the West African nation

Conakry (Guinea), Dec 20 (AP): Residents in Guinea's capital on Tuesday woke up to rising costs of transportation after authorities closed gas stations as a major explosion and ensuing fire left several dead, hundreds injured and could now disrupt the supply of gas across the West African nation. At least 18 people were killed, more than 200 injured and hundreds displaced by Monday's blaze that followed an explosion at the country's main fuel depot in the capital, Conakry, ripping through structures mostly in the Coronthie area that is home to some of the country's poorest households. Four more deaths were confirmed on Tuesday, bringing the total death toll to 18, while 85 of the 212 injured people were still receiving treatment in hospitals, government spokesperson Ousmane Gaoual Diallo said on state television, adding that the fire affected 738 households.

Australia and New Zealand leaders seek closer defence ties

Canberra, Dec 20 (AP): Australia and New Zealand leaders agreed on Wednesday to seek closer defence ties as the latter considers sharing advanced military technologies with the United States and Britain through the so-called AUKUS partnership. New Zealand Prime Minister Christopher Luxon made Australia the destination of his first overseas visit since forming a coalition government following his election in October. Luxon said he and his Australian counterpart, Anthony Albanese, agreed at their meeting in Sydney the two countries' defence and foreign ministers would meet in early 2024 to ensure their plans were "aligned and coordinated." "We know we're facing a more challenging and complex world. Close security and defence relationships we have with our only ally, Australia, is very foundational for New Zealand," Luxon told reporters. "New Zealand is committed to doing our share of the heavy lifting in the alliance and I'm determined that New Zealand will continue to be alongside Australia as we seek to advance our shared interests and our common values," Luxon added.

NMDC STEEL Limited (A Government of India Enterprise) Tender Enquiry No: NSL/Contracts/Pig loading /2023/393 Dt: 21/12/2023 NMD Steel Limited, a public sector company under Ministry of Steel, Govt. of India, invites tenders from experienced domestic bidders for Providing Services for loading of Pig Iron and Pit Iron or any equivalent material, using pay loader and any other associated equipment into Railway Wagons from railway Yard and into Trucks from the pig Iron yards/PCM (Pig Casting Machine) respectively for outside transportation at NSL Nagarnagar (CG). The detailed NIT and Bid documents can be viewed and/or downloaded from 21/12/2023 to 28/12/2023 from following website links: 1. NMD website - https://nmdcportals.nmdc.co.in/nmdcorder 2. Central Public Procurement portal - https://www.eprocure.gov.in/

CHHATTISGARH STATE POWER DISTRIBUTION CO. LTD. (A GOVERNMENT OF CHHATTISGARH UNDERTAKING) (A SUCCESSOR COMPANY OF CSEB) (O/O THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER, CCI, RAIPUR) Website - www.cseb.gov.in Office Mail ID - sec.raipur@cseb.gov.in Phone No. 9771-3574000, 3574001 Fax No. 9771-3574065 No. 10-10/PUR/Tender/3633 Raipur dt. 20.12.2023 NOTICE INVITING TENDER THROUGH E-BIDDING E-tenders are invited against NIT No.10-10/PUR/TR- 2023_54 dated 20.12.2023 due date 09.01.2024 from experience & Eligible Contractors for following work. Awarding contract for engagement of 1 Peon for O/o City Circle-I, CSPDCL, Raipur, the period of contract will be for 3 year on the monthly rate basis. The CSPDCL reserves the right to terminate the term of contract period/order on 1 month advance notice basis. GST will be paid extra on production of actual documentary evidence. Tentative contract value will be Rs.562053/- with GST. Details of Tender, Technical Specifications, Terms and Conditions etc are available on our website www.cseb.gov.in, www.cspdcl.co.in and e-bidding.cspdcl.co.in. Last date and time of submission of bid is on 09.01.2024 upto 01:30 P.M. and due date of opening is on 09.01.2024 upto 02:00 P.M. The Tender document can also be downloaded from CSPDCL's official website mentioned above. The cost of required Tender fee of Rs. 2000/- may be deposited in this office by cash or through MICR Demand Draft drawn in favor of "The Sr. A.O.-I, C.S.P.D.C.L., Raipur" should be received in this office on or before 09.01.2024 upto 01:30 P.M. which is non-refundable. An amount of 1% of the Tender value i.e Rs. 5600/- (Rs Five Thousand Six hundred) only towards EMD has to be deposited by the Contractor in this office through MICR Demand Draft drawn in favor of "The Sr. A.O.-I, C.S.P.D.C.L., Raipur". The Envelopes containing cost of the Tender Money and EMD must be super scribed clearly with "Tender work name", "Tender No. & Date", "Cost of Tender Money/EMD amount with details of MR/DD, due date of opening and name of firm with Address, Tel/Mob No. and shall be addressed to S.E. City Circle-I, CSPDCL, Old Mantralaya, Raipur. NON-MICR DEMAND DRAFTS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTABLE IN BOTH THE ABOVE CASES. The Notice for extension of Due Date of tender submission/opening/corrigendum/amendment, if any, to the tender document will not be published in newspapers. It will only display on CSPDCL's official websites as mentioned above. Superintendent Engineer City Circle-I, CSPDCL, Raipur. SAVE ELECTRICITY S-39154/1

बैंक ऑफ इंडिया Bank of India BOI E-Auction Date and Time : 25.01.2024, Time - 11.00AM, to 5.00 P.M. THE PROPERTIES MENTIONED BELOW ARE TO BE SOLD UNDER THE PROVISIONS OF THE SARFAESI ACT 2002 ON 'AS IS WHERE IS BASIS'

Table with columns: Sl. No., Branch & Borrower/Guarantor & Address, Description of the Mortgaged Property, Reserve Price (in Lakhs), A) Demand Notice Date, B) Possession Date, C) Amount Due (in Lakhs).

Terms and Conditions of E-Auction-1. The Auction Sale bidding will be online through the website https://www.mscoecommerce.com/auction/home/ibapi/index.jsp. 2. Bidder may visit https://www.ibapi.in, for Guidelines. 3. The Bid Amount should be higher than the Reserve Price. 4. The highest successful bidders shall deposit 25% of bid/ purchase money... 15 / 30 DAYS SALE NOTICE TO THE BORROWERS/GUARANTORS/MORTGAGORS The above mentioned Borrowers/Guarantors/Mortgagors are hereby notified to pay the sum as mentioned in Section 13(2) Notice along with interest & charges before the date of Auction failing which the property will be auctioned and balance due, if any, will be recovered with interest and cost from you.

E-Auction Date: 23.01.2024 SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) & Guarantor (s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged / charged to the secured creditor, the constructive possession of which has been taken by the authorised officer the Canara Bank (secured creditor) will be sold on "AS IS WHERE IS BASIS, AS IS WHAT IS BASIS" & "WHAT EVER THERE IS" on 23.01.2024 from 12.30 Noon to 2.30 pm for recovery of bank dues to the Canara Bank (secured creditor).

Table with columns: Name and address of the Borrower & Guarantors, Description of Properties & Name of Property Owner, Demand Notice Dt., Possession Dt., Reserve Price, EMD Amt., Branch Name, Account No. & IFSC Code.



CENTRAL Chronicle

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Safeguarding Democracy

The Need for Bipartisanship

The indiscriminate suspension of 141 Opposition Members of Parliament (MPs) has left the cornerstone of our democracy, parliamentary discourse, in a state of shock. The ruling party's unprecedented move, suspending 78 MPs on Monday, followed by 49 on Tuesday, and an additional 14 last Thursday, raises serious questions about the health of our democracy. The Congress party has not minced words, accusing the BJP-led government of orchestrating a purge to railroad the passage of 'draconian' Bills without allowing for meaningful deliberations in Parliament. The two political factions find themselves engaged in a bitter war of words, with the recent December 13 security breach at the heart of the controversy. Prime Minister Modi, in an interview published on Sunday, acknowledged the gravity of the incident. However, the Opposition's demand that Home Minister Amit Shah make a statement in the House regarding the episode has not been taken seriously by the government. Parliamentary Affairs Minister Pralhad Joshi's assertion that the protesting MPs are simply frustrated over the Assembly election results in the Hindi heartland is an unfortunate attempt to divert attention from the crux of the matter — the security breach itself. What the nation needs at this juncture is a comprehensive discussion in both Houses regarding the lapses that led to the December 13 pandemonium. Drawing parallels between vociferous protests by Opposition lawmakers and attempts to disrupt House proceedings is not only misleading but also counterproductive. In light of these developments, it is incumbent upon the government to provide a detailed explanation to the nation regarding the lapses that allowed the December 13 incident to occur. Suspending a large number of MPs, without discrimination, should not be the knee-jerk response to parliamentary disruptions. Rather, such a punitive measure should be reserved for lawmakers found guilty of gross misconduct within the hallowed halls of Parliament. The unfortunate consequence of this suspension spree is that the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha are now regularly adjourned, casting a dark shadow over the ongoing winter session. It is disheartening to witness that the brand-new Parliament complex, which witnessed its inaugural session in September, is now making headlines for all the wrong reasons. Animosity and intolerance appear to have taken precedence over dialogue and constructive debate. In this critical juncture, it is imperative for the government to take a step back and engage in a meaningful dialogue with the Opposition. The sanctity of democratic discourse is at stake, and the highhanded approach of suspending MPs indiscriminately only exacerbates the situation. The true strength of any democracy lies in its ability to accommodate diverse voices and engage in constructive deliberations. By reaching out to the Opposition, the government can demonstrate its commitment to preserving the democratic principles upon which our nation was founded. Inclusivity, dialogue, and a willingness to engage in substantive debate are the bedrock of a robust parliamentary democracy. As the winter session teeters on the brink of an ignominious end, the onus lies on our elected representatives to prioritize the nation's interests above all else. It is time to set aside political animosities and focus on the collective goal of strengthening our democracy through dialogue, accountability, and transparency. The suspension spree must come to an end, and the resurgence of democratic discourse must take precedence.

Judiciary's Quest for Adequate Judges

The perpetual surge in pending court cases across India is a problem deeply intertwined with the glaring shortage of judges. In a recent report commissioned by the Supreme Court, it was revealed that the Indian judiciary grapples with a staggering caseload of over five crore cases while having fewer than 21,000 judges. As of November 21, the backlog included 4.4 crore cases in district and taluka/tehsil courts, 61.7 lakh cases in High Courts, and 79,593 cases in the Supreme Court. The report further highlights that between 2015 and 2022, the backlog surged by a staggering 59 percent, while the judicial workforce in the district judiciary, which represents the grassroots level of the judiciary, increased by a mere 22 percent. The sluggish pace of appointing judges has a profound impact on the rate at which cases are resolved, and consequently, on the judiciary's ability to deliver timely justice. Presently, India has approximately 14.2 judges per million people, a far cry from the desired ratio of 50 judges per million. To meet this benchmark, India would require a total of 69,600 judges, a considerable leap from the current sanctioned strength of 25,081 for the district judiciary. The urgency of addressing this disparity is underscored by the fact that in 2002, the Supreme Court endorsed the Law Commission's 1987 recommendation to increase the judges' strength to 50 per million population and instructed the government to take necessary steps within five years. However, successive governments have failed to accord the matter the priority it deserves. Closing the gap between sanctioned and actual judge strength is a collaborative endeavor, necessitating the cooperation of both the judiciary and the executive. Regrettably, the executive has, on occasion, exacerbated the problem by delaying judicial appointments. Such delays have contributed to the sluggish pace of case disposal, resulting in frequent adjournments and mounting frustration among litigants. The recently resurfaced proposal of establishing an All-India Judicial Service, which garnered attention following President Droupadi Murmu's endorsement, offers a glimmer of hope. This initiative holds the potential not only to fill existing vacancies but also to augment the sanctioned strength, aligning it with the needs of India's burgeoning population. The significance of addressing this issue cannot be overstated. A functioning and efficient judiciary is the bedrock of a just society. The delay in delivering justice not only erodes public trust but also perpetuates the suffering of those seeking redress through the legal system. The mounting backlog of cases exacerbates the burden on the judiciary and perpetuates a cycle of inefficiency. The consequences of inadequate judicial strength are multifaceted. Beyond the delayed resolution of cases, it leads to overburdened judges, burnout, and a compromised quality of justice. It undermines the principles of a fair and equitable legal system, where justice should be accessible, swift, and impartial. In essence, it infringes upon the fundamental right of citizens to timely justice, enshrined in the Constitution. The remedy to this longstanding issue lies in a concerted effort by all stakeholders. The judiciary must streamline its processes and adopt modern technologies to enhance efficiency. The executive, on the other hand, must prioritize the appointment of judges and work towards expediting the filling of vacancies. The legal community and civil society organizations should also play an active role in advocating for reforms and increased transparency in the appointment process. The shortage of judges is not just a matter of numbers; it is a matter of fundamental rights and the integrity of the justice system. India's journey towards becoming a more just and equitable society hinges on its ability to address this pressing issue. It is a collective responsibility that demands swift action and unwavering commitment to the principles of justice, fairness, and the rule of law. The call for adequate judges is not just a plea for numbers but a plea for justice itself.

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.

SMART INDIA HACKATHON 2023



Prime Minister Narendra Modi interacts with students during the Grand Finale of Smart India Hackathon 2023 via video conferencing, in New Delhi.

Protecting Next Generation: Air Pollution and pregnancy



SHIVANISHU K. SRIVASTAVA

In an era dominated by environmental concerns, a recent study titled "Effects of air pollution on adverse birth outcomes and pregnancy complications in the U.S. state of Kansas (2000-2015)" published in Scientific Reports adds a critical layer to our understanding of the intricate relationship between air quality and maternal health. This research underscores the pressing need to minimize exposure to air pollutants during pregnancy, offering insights into the risks of preterm birth, low birth weight, and related complications. While the study brings both encouraging and alarming findings to light, it serves as a clarion call for policymakers, healthcare professionals, and society at large to take proactive measures in safeguarding the well-being of the next generation. Over the past decade, public discourse on climate change and environmental sustainability has gained momentum. From international agreements to grassroots movements, the global community has become increasingly aware of the impact of human activities on the planet. However, the implications of environmental factors on individual health, especially during vulnerable periods such as pregnancy, have received comparatively less attention. The Kansas study provides a crucial lens through which we can exam-

ine the intersection of environmental health and maternal well-being. One of the noteworthy findings of the study is the apparent decrease in nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) and fine particulate matter (PM) 2.5 levels over the 15-year period under scrutiny. On the surface, this might seem like a positive trend, signaling potential improvements in air quality. However, the devil is in the details. While these reductions are commendable, they don't paint the entire picture, as the study concurrently reports an alarming increase in ozone (O₃) levels. This rise in ozone levels underscores the complexity of air pollution dynamics. It challenges the simplistic notion that reducing one type of pollutant automatically leads to an overall improvement in air quality. Instead, it highlights the need for a more nuanced and comprehensive approach to environmental regulations and public health policies. As we celebrate progress in one area, we must remain vigilant to unintended consequences in other aspects of air quality. The study's revelation of moderate to low correlations between different air pollutants adds a layer of intricacy to the challenge at hand. It suggests that the sources and mechanisms behind each type of pollutant may vary, requiring tailored strategies for effective mitigation.

Policymakers and environmental agencies should heed this call for specificity in crafting regulations and interventions. A one-size-fits-all approach is unlikely to yield optimal results when addressing the diverse array of pollutants impacting maternal and fetal health. Perhaps the most disconcerting aspect of the study is its clear indication of the potential harm air pollution can inflict on pregnant individuals and their unborn children. The heightened risks of preterm birth and low birth weight are not trivial concerns; they have long-lasting consequences for the individuals involved and society at large. Preterm birth, in particular, is associated with increased healthcare costs, developmental challenges, and a higher likelihood of chronic health issues in the offspring. The findings from Kansas should resonate far beyond state borders. They should prompt a national and international conversation on the intersection of environmental justice, public health, and reproductive rights. Environmental policies must be designed with a keen awareness of their impact on vulnerable populations, including pregnant individuals and developing fetuses. Moreover, it is crucial to recognize that those who bear the brunt of environmental injustice are often marginalized communities with fewer resources to adapt or protect themselves. To address the challenge posed by air pollution and its impact on pregnancy, a multi-faceted approach is imperative. First and foremost, there is a need for enhanced monitoring and research to better understand the specific sources and mechanisms of different pollutants. This knowledge can inform targeted interventions and regulations, en-

suring that efforts are focused on the most critical contributors to adverse birth outcomes. Second, public awareness campaigns are essential in empowering pregnant women to take steps to protect themselves. This includes providing information on air quality, educating about potential risks, and offering practical advice on minimizing exposure. Additionally, healthcare providers should integrate discussions about environmental factors into prenatal care, fostering a holistic approach to maternal health. Third, regulatory bodies must reevaluate and update existing environmental policies to reflect the evolving understanding of air pollution's impact on pregnancy. This includes setting stringent standards for ozone levels and other pollutants implicated in adverse birth outcomes. Moreover, cross-disciplinary collaboration between environmental scientists, healthcare professionals, and policymakers is vital to developing comprehensive and effective strategies. As a society, we cannot afford to overlook the nexus between environmental health and reproductive well-being. The findings from the Kansas study are a wake-up call, urging us to reassess our priorities and adopt proactive measures. The future health and vitality of our communities depend on our collective commitment to creating a cleaner, safer environment for everyone, especially those who are most vulnerable. It is time for bold and decisive action to protect the next generation from the silent but potent threat of air pollution during pregnancy. **Writer, poet and advocate, pursuing Master of Laws (LL.M.) from Banaras Hindu University (BHU).**

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dawood Ibrahim Poisoned

Notorious underworld don and terror mastermind Dawood Ibrahim has reportedly been hospitalised in Pakistan's Karachi, following health complications, with some media outlets suggesting poisoning. Dawood Ibrahim is one of the most wanted fugitives in the world and has been labelled as a "global terrorist" by India and the United States. He is also the founder of the crime syndicate D-Company. However, Dawood's close aide Chhota Shakeel, while speaking to a news channel, claimed that the reports of death are false. "He is alive and healthy."
MT.Farooqi, Chennai

Equal Status

Women have advanced in all fields in the past few years and proven themselves, but even today women are considered inferior to men. Even today in the 21st century, women are not given equal status in society nor they are given the right to education. Even today, important decisions regarding their lives are made by their father, brother or husband. It is clear men and women will not cooperate equally in the country's development, the country will not be able to develop in the true sense. For the safety, education and making of women self-reliant, the Government of India runs several schemes including "Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao", "Sukanya Samridhi Yojana", and "Women Empowerment Scheme", but despite of it, there is no significant improvement in the status of women. Therefore, everyone needs to take steps in this direction.
N Mateeni, Mumbai

Karnataka Horror

The Karnataka High Court expressed anguish by asking, "Are we regressing to the 17th century?" This was in response to a distressing incident where a woman was forcibly undressed, publicly paraded naked through a village in Belagavi district, Karnataka and subsequently fastened to an electricity pole. The cause of this barbaric act was her son's elopement with a betrothed girl, leading the enraged family of the bride to take matters into their own hands, disregarding the law to administer this cruel form of 'instant justice'. Unfortunately, the authorities have also been negligent in providing justice to the victimized woman who endured public humiliation.
Karan Singh, Chennai

Telecommunication Bill

The Telecommunications Bill, 2023, introduced in the Lok Sabha, aims to revamp telecom laws after 138 years, consolidating various regulations, including spectrum rules and dispute resolution. It replaces the Telegraph Act, 1885, and allows administrative spectrum allocation for satellite broadband, aligning India with global norms for spectrum assignment, fostering a dynamic and secure telecom environment for the digital future.
Jahangir Ali, Mumbai

Ephemeral Trajectories of Human Cognition: An Inquiry into the Disposition of Forgotten Thoughts

Dr. Pratyush Ranjan Padhee

Where does the faculty of cognition direct its vestiges when relinquished from conscious recall? This is a difficult and unresolved question. Each countenance proffers a chronicle, some narrated and others latent and unarticulated. The intricately convoluted neuro-mechanical substrate that constitutes the human mind is predisposed to the deliberate forgetting of certain impressions. Indeed, the tandem procession of remembrance and oblivion is an inherent facet of cognitive functioning. The unuttered testimonials concealed even from the self-awareness of the cerebrum endure within the hippocampal precincts of the human brain. However, any

presumption regarding the obliteration of a given memory is susceptible to fallacy. Memories deemed forgotten, fraught with adversity, may, in fact, be resurrected through the manipulation of various cognitive defense mechanisms, particularly when experiences of distress and culpability pervade the psyche. It is incumbent to acknowledge trauma as a cognitive rejoinder to antecedent injury. Chronically the unspoken past proves to be an arduous endeavor; yet certain authors demonstrate an extraordinary capacity to articulate such narratives. Contemporary scholarship in memory studies, exemplified by the works of Van der Kolk, Cathy Caruth, Deluge, Malibu, and Joseph E. LeDoux, delves into

the neurodynamic underpinning the cognitive dimension of human memory. The interplay between recollection and oblivion extends beyond the neural framework, manifesting at various cognitive levels. Forgetfulness, construed as a manipulative and politically charged investment, governs the selective retention and relinquishment of memories. Contrary to the misconception that forgetting entails the annihilation or loss of a memory, it is imperative to recognize that the act of forgetting initiates a nuanced process of subsequent recollection and reinterpretation. Memories ostensibly consigned to oblivion are, in truth, subject to repression—an act of displacement or sublimation. The concept of repression finds eluci-

ation in the example of an individual suppressing a desire for ice cream in the absence of any proximate purveyor. The narrative constructed during repression serves as a palliative for the cognitive dissonance arising from the unfulfilled desire. However, the ostensibly forgotten desire resurfaces in diverse emotional manifestations—anger, melancholy, indecision—indicating that every act of recollection is an imaginative, reconfigurative and anticipatory endeavor. When the faculty of forgetfulness falters, yielding to pathological disorders, the human mind is besieged by maladies. Paradoxically, forgetting, construed not as obliteration but as the cognitive defense of memories, as-

sumes cardinal significance in the repertoire of mental activities. This cognitive mechanism, explicable within the realms of science, philosophy, and epistemology, manifests as a reconstruction of memories through the intricate interplay of neurons and synapses. Memory, construed as an unceasing, nonlinear activity, begets a nuanced paradox: what is remembered is not the original memory but its latest recollected iteration. Thus, the forgotten act of memory is encoded, perpetuating the perpetual evolution of cognitive remembrance.

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BRIEF

Semiconductor unit



New Delhi: Taiwanese electronics manufacturing services company Foxconn has submitted an application for setting up a semiconductor fab in the country. Parliament was informed on Wednesday. Minister of state for electronics and IT Rajeev Chandrasekhar said in a written reply to Lok Sabha that the government has taken several measures to boost electronics manufacturing, including semi-conductors, incentivising large investments in electronic goods and appliances, and promote exports.

Senior citizens



Kolkata: Private lender Bandhan Bank on Tuesday announced the introduction of a new facility aimed at the senior citizens of the country. The bank launched 'INSPIRE' which will offer 8.35 per cent interest per annum on fixed deposits for a tenor of 500 days. INSPIRE will also provide enhanced banking experience along with healthcare benefits, the bank said in a statement.

Trade measures

New Delhi: Trade measures introduced by G20 member countries have become more restrictive in recent months, according to a report from the World Trade Organisation (WTO). According to the 30th WTO Trade Monitoring Report on G20 trade measures, between mid-May and mid-October 2023, the countries have introduced more trade-restrictive than trade-facilitating measures on goods.

India expected to be surplus in coal production by FY26: Govt

New Delhi, Dec 20:

The country is likely to be surplus in coal production by FY26, Parliament was informed on Wednesday. India may be surplus in coal production except for some high quality fossil fuel and coking coal needed for the steel industry and imported coal-based power plants. Replying to a query in Lok Sabha, coal and mines minister Pralhad Joshi said, "India is expected to be surplus in coal production by the year 2025-26 except for some high quality coal and coking coal required for steel sector and



ICB plants." To another query, the minister said that against the estimated coal demand of 1,196.60 million tonne (MT) in the current fiscal, the country's production target of

the fossil fuel is 1,012.14 MT. Joshi said "the estimated coal demand for 2023-24 is 1,196.60 MT."

The coal production target for 2023-24 is 1,012.14 MT, the minister said. The government, he said, under a central sector scheme, carries out exploration of coal and lignite through Central Mine Planning & Design Institute Ltd (CMPDI) in two broad stages - regional exploration and detailed drilling. "Coal exploration is also carried out through National Mineral Exploration Trust (NMET) funding," he added, adding that the

Geological Survey of India (GSI) also undertakes exploration of coal and lignite.

As per the Inventory of India published by GSI for coal and lignite on April 1 last year, 6,457.72 MT of lignite resource are available in Rajasthan. One open-cast lignite mine with a capacity of 2.1 million tonne per annum (MTPA) at Barsingsar, Bikaner district of Rajasthan, is operated by Neyveli Lignite Corporation India Ltd (NLCIL), and there is no immediate proposal for further mining activity in the desert state.

Union Transport Minister aims for India's road infrastructure to match US in next 5 years

Thiruvananthapuram, Dec 20:

India aims to elevate its road infrastructure to match that of the US within the next five years, said Minister of Road Transport and Highways, Nitin Gadkari. As part of a comprehensive strategy, the government seeks to alleviate metro congestion, significantly reduce travel time, and minimise road accidents, he said. In the preceding nine years, his ministry has allocated projects exceeding Rs 50 lakh crore and has streamlined the

contract approval process by refining existing policies. "No contractor needs to come to me for sanctioning the contract. We are transparent, time-bound, result-oriented and quality conscious and fast in decision-making. We consider the ministry, contractors and bankers as one family. "We encourage good work, and that is why we have seven world records. This is the great achievement of the ministry," he said in an interview published in the Manorama Yearbook 2024.

TVS Motor says aiming for bigger market share in premium motorbike segment

Kolkata, Dec 20:

Two and three-wheeler manufacturer TVS Motor is aiming to capture a bigger market share in the premium motorcycle segment, an official of the company said on Wednesday. The company enjoys the number two position in the premium motorbike segment in India, which is growing at 10 per cent at present, he said. Motorcycles having an engine displacement of 150 cc and above are categorised in the premium segment.

"We enjoy the number two position in the premium segment in the Indian motorcycle market. We aim to have a bigger market share in this category," Vimal



TVS Motor Company's Premium Two-wheeler Business Head Vimal Sumbly poses with the newly-launched 'TVS Apache RTR 310' motorcycle during the launch ceremony, in Kolkata.

India Yamaha Motor launches R3 and MT-03 as completely built units

Chennai, Dec 20:



Two-wheeler major India Yamaha Motor has launched its latest sports motorcycles - R3 and MT-03 - widening its product portfolio in the domestic market, the company said on Wednesday. The two products - the track-oriented R3 and the street fighter MT-03 - have been launched as part of the brand campaign - The Call of the Blue - and would be sold in the country as 'completely built-up units' (CBUs). "These two iconic motorcycles truly represent Yamaha's racing DNA and underscore the brand's unwavering commitment to advancing the premium motorcycle segment in the Indian market," a company statement said. The R3 motorcycle is priced at Rs 4,64,900 while the MT-03 is priced at Rs 4,59,900 (ex-showroom Delhi). Both motorcycles are exemplary specimens of Japanese technology and would be exclusively sold through select Blue Square dealerships in the country, the statement said. "As an integral aspect of the Call of the Blue Brand campaign, Yamaha is committed to strengthen

its premium segment range by introducing models that appeal to the need of young Indian consumers. The R-Series and MT series models enjoy a huge fan base in India because of their superior performance and iconic design," Yamaha Motor India Group of Companies Chairman Eishin Chihana said. ".we are excited to announce today the launch of our latest - R3 and MT-03 in India.

Rupee settles flat at 83.18 against US dollar

Mumbai, Dec 20:

The rupee ended flat at 83.18 (provisional) against the US dollar on Wednesday amid massive selling in equity markets as concerns over oil supplies through the Red Sea route dented investor sentiment. Forex traders said though the US dollar index below 102 level provided support, the Indian currency was weighed down by foreign fund outflow amid volatile crude oil prices. At the inter-bank foreign exchange market, the local unit opened at 83.17 and traded between the peak of 83.13 and the lowest level of 83.18 against the dollar. It finally settled at its previous closing level of 83.18 (provisional) against the greenback.

New Kia Sonet World Premiere in India

New Delhi, Dec 20:

Kia, India's leading mass premium carmaker, has introduced the new avatar of its second best-selling innovation, The New Sonet, first in India. The more muscular and sportier Sonet has been designed keeping in mind modern couples and professionals who are tech-savvy and are looking for a one-stop mobility solution. It packs ADAS with 10 autonomous features, including Front Collision Avoidance Assist (FCA), Lane Following Departure Alert (LVDA), and Lane Following Assist (LFA) to name a few. Combined with Robust 15 Hi-Safety features, the Sonet now



boasts of more than 25 safety features. The new Sonet also becomes the only Compact SUV to offer 15 standard safety features in its segment. In addition, it hosts 10 best-in-segment features, including Dual Screen Connected Panel Design, Rear Door Sunshade Curtain, All

Door Power Window one touch Auto up/down, and Smartpure Air purifier with Virus and Bacteria protection to name a few.

After introducing industry-first standard 6airbags in Carens and segment-first in Seltos, Kia is redefining safety norms once again. The inclusion

of 6-airbags as a standard feature in the new Sonet solidifies Kia as the youngest brand to provide all its products with 6 or 8 airbags in India.

In addition to this, Kia is launching an innovative reward-based driving initiative, the 'Kia Inspiring Drive Program' or K.I.D, driven by technology. Accessible through the 'Kia Connect' app, this program evaluates Kia owners' driving behaviour, such as seatbelt usage, sudden braking, adherence to speed limits, and more, assigning them an Ecoscore that can be redeemed for rewards. The Programme is being introduced initially for Kia Sonet owners.

Govt closely monitoring rice situation in domestic, intl mkts on weekly basis

New Delhi, Dec 20:

The government is closely monitoring the rice situation in the domestic as well as international markets on weekly basis and it can increase the percentage share in global rice trade when favourable conditions arise, Parliament was informed on Wednesday. India has banned export of broken and non-basmati white rice in view of uncertainty around rice production here and other rice producing countries due to geopolitical scenario, El Nino sentiments and extreme climatic con-



ditions to check domestic prices and ensure adequate availability in the market here. "The government is closely monitoring the rice scenario in the domestic market as well as in international forum on weekly basis and the gov-

ernment can increase the percentage share in global rice trade when favourable conditions arise," Minister of State for Commerce and Industry Anupriya Patel said in a written reply to Lok Sabha. India was the largest rice exporting country in the world from 2018 to 2022 followed by Thailand and Vietnam. Rice export from India was 22.24 million tonne in 2022, which accounts for 40.63 per cent of the world's rice exports. Export of broken rice has been prohibited from September 2022 and non-basmati white rice from July this year.

Sensex, Nifty go into tailspin after hitting fresh all-time high levels

Mumbai, Dec 20:

Benchmark equity indices Sensex and Nifty went into a tailspin after hitting their fresh all-time high levels on Wednesday, closing down by over 1 per cent as investors cashed in on the recent rally. Erasing all its early gains, the 30-share BSE Sensex crashed 930.88 points or 1.30 per cent to settle at 70,506.31. The index opened higher and later gained 475.88 points or 0.66 per cent to hit its all-time high of 71,913.07. However,



selling across the board dragged the barometer down from record highs and it dropped to a low of 70,302.60.

The Nifty fell by 302.95 points or 1.41 per cent to 21,150.15. During the day, it climbed 139.9 points or 0.65

per cent to reach its record high of 21,593. All the 30 Sensex shares, except for HDFC Bank, closed in the red. Tata Steel fell the most by 4.21 per cent. NTPC, Tata Motors, HCL Technologies, Mahindra & Mahindra, State Bank of India, Power Grid, Tech Mahindra, Larsen & Toubro and JSW Steel also declined. HDFC Bank was the only gainer from the pack. In Asian markets, Seoul, Tokyo and Hong Kong settled in the positive territory while Shanghai ended lower.

Delhi HC grants significant victory to PPL India

In copyright infringement cases

New Delhi, Dec 20:

On the eve of New Year and Christmas celebrations, Phonographic Performance Ltd. (PPL India) gears up to safeguard its extensive catalogue of over 70 lakh songs. The Delhi High Court (DHC) has delivered a decisive blow against copyright infringement, restraining entities from playing copyrighted songs controlled by PPL without the requisite license. As

the 80-year-old powerhouse overseeing public performance rights, PPL India manages an impressive array of songs assigned by 400+ music labels, including industry giants like T-series, Saregama, Sony Music, Universal Music, Warner Music, Times Music, Speed Records, and more. The recent rulings by the honourable Delhi High Court serve as a shot in the arm for PPL India, specifically addressing unauthorized use of copyrighted sound recordings by prominent establishments such as One8

Commune (owned by Virat Kohli), Tim Hortons, Aprtronix, Unicorn, Gola Sizzler, Str8up Hospitality (brands like Duty Free, Sassy Oscar, Too Indian, etc.), and several others across India.

Over the years, various courts in India have consistently supported PPL by issuing injunctions against infringing entities. In a parallel legal development, the Delhi High Court took serious cognizance of misleading campaigns initiated by associations such as the DJ Association Chandigarh.

Reliance Nippon Life Insurance wins prestigious National Energy Conservation Awards

Mumbai, Dec 20:

Reliance Nippon Life Insurance, India's leading private life insurer, has been recognized by the Bureau of Energy Efficiency (Government of India, Ministry of Power) at the National Energy Conservation Awards (NECA) 2023. This prestigious award comes in recognition of the compa-



ny's efforts towards institutionalizing climate-friendly operations and

driving sustainable business growth. Mr. Ashish Vohra, ED, and CEO re-

ceived the award from Shri R.K. Singh, Hon'ble Cabinet Minister of Power and New & Renewable Energy.

This recognition highlights the company's investment in environmentally conscious technologies that aid in optimizing resource utilization and energy efficiency. The company's scale of operations allows it to harness

these advantages for benefits at large scale and pass on operating efficiencies to customers through its new line of products. Commenting on this recognition, Ashish Vohra, ED & CEO, Reliance Nippon Life Insurance said, "The drive towards energy conservation started 4 years ago for us, more as a cost reduction exercise.

CHHATTISGARH STATE POWER GENERATION CO. LTD.
(A Govt. of Chhattisgarh Undertaking) CIN: U40108CT2003SGC015821
NO.021-10/PUBLICATION/4917 Korba West, dtd. 19.12.2023
e-Bidding TENDER NOTICE No. 1259/2023

Online tenders are invited from Experienced & Prospective Firms for the following Work/Supply:

S. No.	Rfx No.	Particulars	Cost of tender doc.	E.M.D. (Rs.)	Last date of submission & opening
1.	Rfx No. 810003150	Providing expert technical electrical technician for 0.4/6.6 KV breaker maint., Control circuit checking & electrical protection testing of associated electrical system of CHP. INT. HTPS, Korba West.	590/-	6,325/-	08.01.2024
2.	Rfx No. 8100034915	Procurement of 110 Watt LED Street Light Fixings suitable for Top: Side mounting for CHP. INT. HTPS, Korba West.	590/-	8,772/-	15.01.2024
3.	Rfx No. 8100035162	Deployment of One No. Car (Cat-III) for S.E. (TRG.) O/A ACE (T&SS) & S.E. (E-I), O/A ACE (T&SP), HTPS, KWB	590/-	9,338/-	11.01.2024
4.	Rfx No. 8100035165	Deployment of One No. SUV (Earlier Jeep) for S.E. (E& RA), (x500 MW Eam. S.E. (E& RA), (x4210 & S.E. (T&QA), HTPS, Korba West.	590/-	12,892/-	12.01.2024

NOTE:- 1. Payment of Tender cost & EMD shall be done online through e-bidding portal. The tender documents can be seen from our website www.cspc.co.in - e-Bidding. 2. Quantity as per tender schedule. S-39157/1 SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER (C)

SAVE ENERGY FOR THE BENEFIT OF SELF & NATION

CHHATTISGARH STATE POWER GENERATION CO. LTD.
(A Govt. of Chhattisgarh Undertaking) CIN: U40108CT2003SGC015821
No. 15-15/ABVT/PS/E&T/W-T-35/2023/7073 Marwa, Date 12/12/2023
NOTICE INVITING TENDER

Sealed Tenders are invited, from registered/experienced Contractors for:-

S.No.	Tender Spec.No.	Particulars	Q/L period	Last date for sale of tender documents	Due date submission/opening of tender documents	Tender Fee	EMD
01.	15-15/ABVT/PS/E&T/W-T-35/2023	Deployment of 01 no. Vehicle (SUV) for S.E. (E&T) and S.E. (E&T) to discharge their day to day official duties of 2x500 MW, ABVT/PS, CSPGCL, Marwa.	24 months	03.01.2024	04.01.2024	Rs. 500/-+ GST @ 18% (590/-) (Rs.118/- Extra for Postal charges if required by post.)	(13071/-)

TERMS & CONDITIONS:- 01. Tender documents may be obtained from the office of the undersigned, by submitting Demand Draft/ Bankers Cheque/(non refundable) as mentioned above, drawn in favour of Sr. Accounts Officer, 2X500MW, ABVT/PS, CSPGCL, Marwa, Janjgir-Champa, on any working day upto 15:30 Hrs. scheduled last date for sale of tender documents during working hours. Our Banker is SBI, Branch-Champa. Postal charges of Rs. 100/- + GST@18% = 118/- shall be paid extra; if tender documents are required by post. Direct payment will not be entertained by this office. Tender documents or not transferable. Superintending Engineer (E&T)

5-39151/2 2x500 MW, ABVT/PS, CSPGCL Marwa-Tendabhatta.

NLAs reflects constant growth in resolution of cases in Chh'garh

Raipur/Bilaspur, Dec 20:

Under directions of National Legal Services Authority and under guidance of Chief Justice and Patron in Chief of Chhattisgarh State Legal Services Authority, Justice Ramesh Sinha and directives of Justice Goutam Bhaduri, Executive Chairman, CGSLSA, National Lok Adalats were organized across all District Courts, Tehsil Courts, Family Courts, Forum, Tribunal, Permanent Lok Adalat, Revenue Courts and High Court within the State on 11.02.2023, 13.05.2023, 09.09.2023 and 16.12.2023, and 3,11,607 cases for 1st National Lok Adalat, 3,94,573 for second, 4,72,177 for third and 4,85,813 cases for last National Lok Adalat and thus a total 16,64,170 cases were resolved across different Courts of the State with relief being granted to



CJ Ramesh Sinha



Justice Goutam Bhaduri

the tune of 77,89,98,37,892 in the year 2023. The said National Lok Adalats were organized with appearance of parties both in virtual as well as physical mode along with Special Sitting of Magistrates for disposal of cases related to petty offences.

It is pertinent to mention that consequent to appreciation and encouragement of all Judicial Officers by Hon'ble Shri Justice Ramesh Sinha, Chief Justice and Patron in Chief of CGSLSA for

their performance in year's past National Lok Adalats, present National Lok Adalat organized on 16.12.2023, marked a remarkable achievement with settlement of 50,882 pending cases across different Courts including settlement of 932 cases pending for over 05 years, 82 cases pending for over 10 years and 328 cases involving Senior Citizens.

It is pertinent to mention that the proceedings of National Lok Adalat on 16th December 2023 were

also inspected by Hon'ble Executive Chairman Justice Goutam Bhaduri at District Dhamtari and Kanker and Judicial Officers, Lawyers, Litigants, officer of Financial Institutions were encouraged to participate and resolve their differences under pre litigation so that the disputes should get addressed even before they are instituted before Court of Law.

Anand Prakash Wariyal, Member Secretary, CGSLSA informed that under able guidance of Chief Justice Ramesh Sinha and under constant directives of Executive Chairman Justice Goutam Bhaduri, State of Chhattisgarh has witnessed steady growth in resolution of disputes in National Lok Adalat with participation of more and more litigants for resolution of their cases through National Lok Adalat.

Umaria station blossoms under Amrit Bharat Scheme

Modernization in full swing for passenger comfort



Bilaspur, Dec 20:

The Indian Railways, often referred to as the nation's lifeline, continues its steadfast commitment to modernization and passenger comfort. The Amrit Bharat Station Scheme, aimed at enhancing existing facilities and introducing new ones, is making significant strides in the Bilaspur division.

As part of the Amrit Bharat Station Scheme's

first phase, a comprehensive redevelopment initiative is underway in 15 stations across the division. Umaria Station is undergoing a remarkable transformation, poised to offer passengers an array of modern amenities. The extensive renovation includes expanding the circulating area, improving road access, and creating an airport-inspired entrance porch. Passengers at Umaria Station can look

forward to systematic entry and exit gates, well-organized parking areas, picturesque gardens reflecting local art and culture, improved lighting, and designer signages. Additional amenities encompass wide foot over bridges, lifts, coach and train indication boards, platform flooring upgrades, extra platform shelters, and enhanced restroom facilities. The station's makeover is in full

swing, with construction of platform shelters at both ends advancing rapidly. Simultaneously, boundary wall and drainage work is progressing outside the station building. To facilitate seamless passenger movement, a spacious parking area for two and four-wheelers is being constructed with diligence. Furthermore, the station's façade is undergoing renovation and beautification.

VBSY empowers villages with govt schemes

Residents of Chingali, Madauda, Garra, and Thakurtola reap benefits



Khairagarh, Dec 20:

The Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra continues to make a positive impact in villages across the district, aiming to bring the government's public welfare schemes closer to the people. The latest event unfolded in the villages of Chingali and Madauda, located in the Khairagarh development block, along with Garra and Thakurtola in the Chhuikhadan development block.

With immense enthusiasm, the 'Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra Prachar

Rath' was warmly welcomed by women and villagers with traditional ceremonies upon its arrival. Various departments set up informative camps at the event venues, offering detailed insights into the government's welfare schemes. Officials engaged with the public, encouraging them to take advantage of these initiatives.

The health department conducted free health check-ups and distributed essential medicines on-site, prioritizing the well-being of the community. Additionally, beneficiar-

ies of various central government welfare schemes received valuable materials. The Ayushman Bharat scheme saw the distribution of Ayushman cards and the creation of new ones. Beneficiaries also received domestic LPG connections under the Ujjwala scheme.

One delighted beneficiary, Dameshwar Prasad Upadhyay of Chingali, shared his experience. As a small farmer, he registered for the Kisan Samman Nidhi scheme, which provides him with annual installments. He acknowledged the significant benefits it has brought to his agricultural endeavors and praised the central government for its farmer-friendly approach. He urged fellow farmers to register for this scheme.

The event witnessed the presence of numerous villagers, along with dedicated officers and employees, making it a resounding success in advancing the reach of government welfare programs to those who need them most.

VBSY: Empowering communities across district

Camp encompasses urban and rural areas alike

Korba, Dec 20: The transformative journey of the 'Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra' continues to unfold in Gariaband district, dedicated to bringing the Central Government's welfare schemes directly to the people while fostering communication with beneficiaries. Today, the Yatra reached multiple locations, including Priyadarshini Indira Stadium in urban ward number 5, Purani Basti, Bhainsma, Salora, Dhavaipur, Bango, Lalpur, Champa, Kalgamar, Dodki, and Saguna, benefiting countless rural residents. Communities are eagerly participating in the Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra program, seeking access to various government schemes. The event features informative stalls set up by departments such as Ayushman Card, Aadhar Card Update, Ujjwala Yojana, Ration Card, Pradhan Mantri Swanidhi, Jal Jeevan Mission, Agriculture, and more. These stalls provide comprehensive information about government initiatives, empowering the general public to benefit from

them. The Health Department also plays a vital role by conducting health tests for conditions like sugar, BP, sickle cell, anemia, and TB screening.

Applications received during the camp will undergo thorough scrutiny by district and block-level officials. Eligible beneficiaries will receive priority assistance. The district administration strongly encourages the public to seize this opportunity and take full advantage of the government schemes, aligning with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision. The arrival of the 'Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra' promotional chariot was met with enthusiastic welcomes from women and villagers. With various departments participating, the program's venues served as hubs of information dissemination, where officials provided detailed insights into the available schemes and encouraged their utilization. The Health Department conducted extensive check-ups, ensuring the well-being of the community. The event witnessed the presence of numerous villagers, local public representatives, and distinguished citizens, reinforcing the collective commitment to progress and welfare.

Increase in cyber fraud cases sparks alarm

RBI guidelines ignored by e-commerce companies

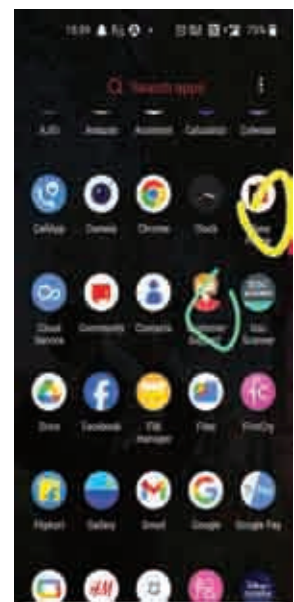
Kharora, Dec 20:

The escalation of cyber fraud cases is causing concern as scammers continue to lure victims with online payment and lottery schemes. Despite police warnings and awareness campaigns, individuals are falling prey to these fraudulent activities, and the Cyber Department faces challenges in refunding the stolen funds. Shockingly, statistics reveal a tenfold increase in cyber fraud cases over the past year.

According to RBI guidelines, companies should retain transferred amounts in their payment gateways for 48 hours for settlement.

However, in the capital and surrounding rural areas, victims of cyber fraud are struggling to recover their money. The year 2023 has seen a surge of over 400 cases registered in various rural police stations, compared to 1,422 cases reported between 2018 and 2022.

These scams involve various methods, such as tempting individuals



cluding KYC and OTP, and to exercise caution against the rising UPI fraud trend.

A recent case in Kharora involved a woman who received a call instructing her to download a customer support app to address network issues on her phone. After complying, she noticed Rs. 1 lakh deducted from her account. The incident was promptly reported to the Kharora police station and the cyber cell.

The Cyber cell in-charge, Gaurav Tiwari, affirmed that the police are actively conducting a cyber awareness campaign and have established a specialized team to combat cyber fraud. He urged people to exercise caution when conducting online transactions and to report any fraud immediately. Several victims have successfully recovered their money, and many suspects are currently under police scrutiny, with arrests expected in the near future, potentially leading to resolutions in numerous cases.

Potholes and dust plague city amidst drain construction



Kharora, Dec 20: The residents of Kharora Nagar are grappling with a multitude of challenges stemming from road conditions, potholes, and dust that have been plaguing the city. Recently, roads in Kharora Nagar underwent abrupt excavations under the pretext of drain construction. This rushed construction work has led to the creation of numerous large and hazardous potholes at various locations throughout the city. As a result, pedestrians face considerable difficulties in navigating the streets safely. Furthermore, the roads have become shrouded in clouds of dust, which has become a common sight, causing concerns among passersby, nearby residents, and shopkeepers alike. Not a single street, neighborhood, or road in the city has been spared from road excavations. Unfortunately, despite these extensive roadworks, there has been a lack of proper repair and maintenance. In the guise of road repairs, minimal

maintenance has been conducted, with most potholes filled using gravel or soil, leaving the roads uneven. These road conditions have also given rise to traffic problems, further adding to residents' woes. Efforts to initiate road repairs and apply asphalt have been progressing at a sluggish pace, with asphaltization work commencing on only a few selected roads, and even that remains incomplete. Nagar Panchayat President Anil Soni has assured residents that officials have been directed to expedite solutions to these issues promptly.

The detrimental impact of dust and pollution on public health has been unmistakable, with an increase in cases of asthma and respiratory problems attributed to the dust emanating from road surfaces. Experts and doctors have reported a surge in respiratory ailments among the population, leading to a higher number of patients seeking medical treatment at local hospitals.

District-wide 'Good Governance Day' celebrations set for Dec 25

Manendragarh, Dec 20: In a heartfelt tribute to the late Bharat Ratna Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, the former Prime Minister of India, "Good Governance Day" will be celebrated with fervour in every gram panchayat across the district on December 25. The state government has undertaken the task of rejuvenating and maintaining the already constructed Atal Pillars in the Gram Panchayats, ensuring their cleanliness and necessary repairs before the significant day arrives. As part of the commemorative events, a week-long cleanliness campaign will kick off in villages and panchayats, starting on December 25. The grand celebration on December 25 will commence at Atal Chowk, beginning at 10:00 am, with the esteemed presence of elected public representatives and the local community. The occasion will be marked by the lighting of a ceremonial lamp and the garlanding of a portrait of the revered former Prime Minister, Bharat Ratna Late Atal Bihari Vajpayee. On this "Good Governance Day," elected representatives and the public alike will solemnly pledge their commitment to "establish good governance" in their villages and Gram Panchayats. To ensure the success of this meaningful event, immediate instructions have been issued to all districts and gram panchayats within the region. It is imperative that a dignified program be organized, adhering to the outlined plan. Detailed photographs and observance reports of the event should be promptly forwarded to the Director of the Panchayat Directorate, Chhattisgarh, Naya Raipur, to commemorate this special day in honor of Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee's enduring legacy.

Collector's personal outreach to citizens bring hope

First public darshan after assembly election



Korea, Dec 20:

District Collector Vinay Kumar Langeh extended a warm invitation to address the concerns of the community during the first public darshan held at the Collector Auditorium after the recent assembly elections.

Several women, some accompanied by their young children, had traveled from Patna district's villages to seek assistance in addressing their problems. Upon their arrival, Collector Langeh promptly arranged chairs for them and encouraged them to speak freely. Overwhelmed by the warmth and accessibility of the Collector,

one woman expressed, "As the Collector, your approachability has exceeded our expectations. We never imagined that we would have the opportunity to talk with you so openly."

Collector Langeh attentively listened to their grievances and promptly instructed the relevant officers, via phone, to address and resolve the issues without delay. One pressing concern was raised by women working as cooks in a local school who had not received their wages for several months. The Collector took immediate action to ensure their concerns were addressed. In another case, a sanitation worker and

his father, who had been engaged as daily wage labourers for nearly a decade, sought assistance due to their son's unjust dismissal from work in January. Collector swiftly reviewed their application and sought an explanation from the responsible officer, demanding that appropriate action be taken in accordance with established protocols and proper information be provided. Similarly, a beneficiary of the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana sought redressal of their issue. They informed Langeh that they had received one installment but were awaiting the remaining payment.

The Collector promptly instructed the Tehsildar to take necessary action and provided directives for the timely resolution of the beneficiary's concerns. This display of responsiveness and commitment to the community reflects a positive step towards addressing citizens' needs and ensuring their well-being.

Awareness program organized to tackle gender-based violence



Korea, Dec 20:

In a proactive move guided by Collector Vinay Kumar Langeh and the District Program Officer of the Women and Child Development Department, an impactful awareness program was conducted in Gram Panchayat Chhindiya. The program was a crucial step in addressing and combatting gender-based violence as part of the "Nai Chetna Gender 2.0" initiative.

The event saw the active participation of Anganwadi workers, Mitansins, Ward Panch, Gram Panchayat women, teenage girls, and middle school students. These attendees received comprehensive education on vital topics such as recognizing

good-touch and bad-touch, combatting domestic violence, and familiarizing themselves with essential resources like Sakhi One Stop Centre, Women Helpline 181, Child Line 1098, Shakti Sadan, POCOS sexual offences, and Beti Bachao-Beti Padhao.

The Women and Child Development Department played a pivotal role in disseminating detailed information to the participants. Protection Officer Vittalbala Shrivastav, Sector Supervisor Vimala Bhagat, Counselor Nirmaala Pandey, along with Sakhi Centre representative Neeta Pandey and Shakti Sadan's Kalpana Sharma, were instrumental in delivering this essential knowledge.

Harmanpreet's masterplan to conquer Aus in one-off Test



Mumbai, Dec 20 (PTI):

India captain Harmanpreet Kaur wants the hosts to play with the same energy and intensity which they displayed against England, when they take the field in the one-off women's Test versus Australia starting here on Thursday.

India thrashed England by a record 347-run margin in the lone Test at the DY Patil Stadium to record the biggest win for any side in terms of runs and will now look to register their maiden Test win over Australia.

India have never beaten Australia in 10 Tests and the contest will definitely challenge them in terms of fitness and temperament, given they are playing back-to-back matches.

"The way we played the first Test (of the season), we want to carry the same energy into this one. It is very exciting, knowing Australia is such a good team and everyone wants to beat them," Kaur told reporters after India's training session on Wednesday.

Australia will be without Meg Lanning who has retired from international cricket recently, and in her place Alyssa Healy will lead the side.

Kaur said Lanning's absence will not make much difference as Australia has a strong side.

"They have a balanced side and everyone has experience of all formats. We can't say Meg (Lanning) is not there and take them lightly. We just need to think what best we can do rather than thinking about how good they are," she said.

The India skipper said while the prospect of playing Test cricket excites her side, it has been slightly challenging to manage the players' workload.

"When you are playing back-to-back Tests, it is important to recover and feel fresh. When you bat and bowl for three days the likes of Deepti (Sharma), Pooja (Vastrakar) who didn't get enough rest we try to take care of their loads," Kaur said.



Mumbai, Dec 20 (PTI):

After dismantling England, India Women will be eager to tick another bold point in their bucket list heading into the one-off Test against a formidable Australia here from Thursday, a maiden win in the traditional format.

India have never beaten Australia in any of their 10 Tests spanning over 46 years - home or away - as the Harmanpreet Kaur-led side would know that there could be no better opportunity to achieve

that considering that they are playing on a pitch that is expected to favour the spinners. The Indian bowlers, especially offie Deepti Sharma, showed remarkable ruthlessness against England while scoring a mammoth 347-run win at the DY Patil Stadium last week, biggest in terms of runs in women's Test history, and they would like to reproduce that burning streak against the Aussies too. But India's bowling has more sharp edges to it than Deepti. Renuka Singh Thakur is building

Match starts at 9:30am IST.

a reputation of making early inroads with the new ball since her return from injury and fellow pacer Pooja Vastrakar also warmed-up with a three-wicket burst against England.

India's batting also looks to be in safe hands with Harmanpreet Kaur (49 and 44 not out), Jemimah Rodrigues (68) and Yastika Bhatia (66) making good impact against England.

However, India would want opener Smriti

Mandhana to join the party with a big knock here at the Wankhede Stadium against the Aussies. But India could be without left-handed Shubha Satheesh, who suffered a dislocation and hairline fracture after a scintillating debut fifty against England.

Priya Punia has joined the Indian squad as a cover but Harleen Deol, who had an extended nets on Tuesday, could get the nod. Back to playing Test cricket in India after a gap of almost 40 years, Australia have indeed ven-

Indian Women's team would be incredibly dominant: Alyssa Healy

Mumbai, Dec 20 (PTI):



India are going to be an "incredibly" dominant side for a long period of time and her visiting side can only underestimate the hosts at their own peril, Australia captain Alyssa Healy said on Wednesday, ahead of the one-off women's Test here. It was here at the Wankhede that India and Australia played their last women's Test on these shores in February 1984.

"India, obviously in their home conditions, are really, really hard to beat. We have had some success over here in the past do not get me wrong but the sheer amount of talent in that dressing room, you cannot underestimate at any point in time," Healy told the media ahead of the Test beginning on Thursday.

Healy said despite Australia getting the better of the Indians in some important tournaments - such as in the T20 World Cup

semifinal this year which they won by five runs -- there could be a change coming. "We have seen over the last couple of years that we have managed to get the edge over them a little bit in key moments in key tournaments, but it is not too far down the path that, that is going to swing," she said. "This Indian team is going to be incredibly dominant for a long period of time," Healy said.

Healy, who was recently named Australia's captain following the retirement of Meg Lanning, said any series against India irrespective of the format was always "hotly contested".

India Women bank on spin trap against Aus

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that considering that they are playing on a pitch that is expected to favour the spinners. The Indian bowlers, especially offie Deepti Sharma, showed remarkable ruthlessness against England while scoring a mammoth 347-run win at the DY Patil Stadium last week, biggest in terms of runs in women's Test history, and they would like to reproduce that burning streak against the Aussies too. But India's bowling has more sharp edges to it than Deepti. Renuka Singh Thakur is building

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Priya Punia has joined the Indian squad as a cover but Harleen Deol, who had an extended nets on Tuesday, could get the nod. Back to playing Test cricket in India after a gap of almost 40 years, Australia have indeed ven-

tured in to the unknown and the task looks uphill for the newly-appointed skipper Alyssa Healy and her side. Incidentally, it was here at the Wankhede that India and Australia had played their last women's Test on these shores in February 1984.

The last Test between India and Australia was played two years ago at Carrara, in which Smriti Mandhana's first-innings 127 helped Women in Blue to secure a draw.

Healy has taken the mantle of Australian leadership from Meg Lanning

and playing a Test against India in their backyard would be a massive test for at the beginning of her tenure. But Australia's think-tank has a problem of plenty given the quality of all-rounders in their side which includes the experienced Ellyse Perry, Ashleigh Gardner, Beth Mooney and Tahlia McGrath. Australia will look to lean on their white-ball experience in India which also includes stints in the inaugural Women's Premier League (WPL) earlier this year for some of them.

Khel Ratna for Sat-Chi, Arjuna for Shami



New Delhi, Dec 20 (PTI):

The Sports Ministry on Wednesday put its stamp on the nominations for the annual sports awards, confirming the prestigious Khel Ratna honour for badminton players Satwik Sairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty and the Arjuna award for 26 sports persons, including pacer Mohammed Shami.

The awards will be conferred on the athletes by President Droupadi Murmu at the Rashtrapati Bhavan on January 9.

Chirag and Satwik are

Ojas Pravin Deotale and Aditi Gopichand Swami, boxer Mohammad Hussamuddin, chess player R Vaishali, golfer Diksha Dagar, shooters Aishwary Pratap Singh Tomar and Esha Singh, wrestlers Antim Panghal and Sunil Kumar, paddler Ayhika Mukherjee and para archer Sheetal Devi, among others.

The athletes were nominated for the awards by a government panel on December 13.

The ministry also cleared five coaches for Dronacharya award in the regular category and three in life-time category. The Dyan Chand award in the life-time category will be conferred to three persons.

Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar is the recipient of the Maulana Abul Kalam Azad (MAKA) Trophy 2023, while Lovely Professional University, Punjab and Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra are the first and second runner-ups.

The athletes selected for this year's Arjuna award include hockey players Krishan Bahadur Pathak and Sushila Chanu, archers

Tough to replace Pandya, but Gill is right person for GT captaincy: Nehra



New Delhi, Dec 20 (PTI):

Gujarat Titans head coach Ashish Nehra admitted that it will be tough to replace a multi-faceted player like Hardik Pandya but banked on Shubman Gill to shoulder the responsibility of leading the side in next year's IPL.

Pandya recently returned to Mumbai Indians and has been appointed as the skipper of the five-

time champions. "To replace a player like Hardik Pandya is difficult considering his talent and experience. We have seen how he (Gill) has shaped up in the past three-four years. He is 24-25 years of age but he has a good head on his shoulders," Nehra said in a virtual post-auction press meet on Tuesday night. The former India pacer said the franchise will back Gill irrespective of the results in the next edition of the IPL.

"We believe in him. That is why we made him captain. I am not someone who will always go by results. Yes, results are important but when you come to captaincy you have to look at other things also. We are confident that Gill is the right person (for captaincy)," Nehra added.

FIH Player of the Year award a recognition of hard work and perseverance: Hardik

New Delhi, Dec 20 (PTI):



Indian men's hockey team vice-captain Hardik Singh on Wednesday said the FIH Player of the Year award is a recognition of his "hard work and perseverance" that he has put in over the years to excel in the sport he loves.

Hardik on Tuesday became the third male player from India to win the coveted award, joining Manpreet Singh (2019) and Harmanpreet Singh (2020-21 and 2021-22).

Besides Hardik, India women's team skipper Savita Punia won the FIH Goalkeeper of the Year award for the third consecutive time.

"It's an absolute honour to receive this esteemed award. I am immensely grateful to my teammates, coaches, and supporters who have been

the pillars of my success. This recognition fuels my determination to continue giving my best to the sport I love," Hardik said.

"The journey to this award has been filled with challenges and learning experiences. It's a reminder that hard work, perseverance, and

a supportive team can pave the way for remarkable achievements."

Hardik made a successful comeback after he was ruled out midway into the 2023 World Cup jointly hosted by Bhubaneswar and Rourkela with a hamstring injury.

Salt's second T20 hundred levels series for England in Caribbean



San Fernando, Dec 20 (AP):

World champion England set up a Twenty20 series-deciding match with the West Indies after crushing the fourth game by 75 runs. A second consecutive century by opener Phil Salt from a flying start with captain Jos Buttler set up England's highest T20 score of 267-3 on Tuesday.

The West Indies stayed with the run rate required but couldn't stop leaking wickets and was all out for 192 in the 16th over. "A fantastic win," Buttler said.

"You don't play in too many of those games. It was like being at the Hong Kong Sixes. Great to be going into the last game of the tour at 2-2." The fifth and final match is on

Thursday at the same Brian Lara Stadium.

Salt and Buttler racked up 117 runs in 9.5 overs. Buttler was caught on the boundary for a 29-ball 55.

Salt was on 61 and accelerated even more, reaching a 48-ball hundred, and becoming the first Englishman to score two T20 centuries. He was out for 119, the highest T20 score by an Englishman, when he was bowled by an Andre Russell yorker. Salt's second ton in three days featured 10 sixes and seven boundaries.

But England was still shredding the West Indies bowlers; Will Jacks made 24 off nine deliveries and Liam Livingstone blasted an unbeaten 54 off 21, including four sixes and four boundaries.

New Zealand beat Bangladesh by 7 wickets in 2nd ODI

Nelson, Dec 20 (AP):



New Zealand's Henry Nicholls celebrates 50 runs.

Henry Nicholls made 95 and Will Young 89, trouncing Soumya Sarkar's career-best 169 and leading New Zealand to a seven-wicket win over Bangladesh on Wednesday in the second One-Day International.

New Zealand hold a winning 2-0 lead in the three-match series which ends Saturday in Napier.

Nicholls returned to form but fell just short of his second ODI century while Young narrowly missed his second straight ODI century as New Zealand made 296-3 in reply to Bangladesh's 291. Young made 105 as New Zealand won the rain-affected first match of the series by 44 runs. Young put on 76 for the first wicket with Rachin Ravindra who made 45 from 33 balls after making a first-

ball duck in the first match on Sunday. Young then added 128, effectively in a match-winning partnership, for the second wicket with Nicholls, who also bounced back after a second-ball duck in the opening ODI.

India eye runs from top-order in series-deciding third ODI against SA

Paarl, Dec 20 (PTI):



Match starts at 4:30 PM IST.

With a similar storyline of faltering opening combination running through the first two matches, India's hopes of registering their second ODI series triumph in South Africa will revolve around a sturdy start from the openers in the third and final match here on Thursday.

India's lone ODI series win in the Rainbow nation came in 2018, and for an encore they require a robust beginning from Ruturaj Gaikwad and B Sai Sudharsan as a pair.

Sai Sudharsan has been impressive in his two outings in the series so far, notching up 55 and 62. But Gaikwad could not support him from the other

end. The right-hander fell for five and four as India's first-wicket alliance ended at 23 and four at Johannesburg and Port Elizabeth.

In contrast, South African openers Tony de

Zorzi, who cracked his maiden century, and Reeza Hendricks milked 130 runs to kill the chase.

Similarly, Tilak Varma, who showed some early promise in his career, seemed to have tapered off a bit in the last couple of months.

Collegian held for killing 9 persons with his luxury car

Withdraws bail plea from Gujarat HC

Ahmedabad, Dec 20 (PTI):

The Gujarat High Court on Wednesday disposed of the regular bail petition of Tathya Patel, a collegian arrested for killing nine persons and injuring 13 others by ramming his speeding luxury car into a crowd in Ahmedabad in July, after he withdrew the plea.

While pronouncing the order, the court of Justice MR Mengde said the matter was "disposed of as

withdrawn", after the lawyer for the accused applicant decided to withdraw the bail plea.

The court had earlier said it was not inclined to grant bail to the 20-year-old accused. Patel was charged under sections 304 (culpable homicide not amounting to murder) and 308 (attempt to commit culpable homicide) of the Indian Penal Code and the Motor Vehicles Act.

Nine persons, including a constable, were killed when his speeding Jaguar car ploughed into a crowd gathered at an accident site on the ISKCON bridge

here in the early hours of July 20.

Police on July 27 filed a 1,700-page chargesheet against him that included a report by the luxury car maker Jaguar, which suggested that the vehicle was speeding when it rammed into the crowd.

Submitting on behalf of Patel, his lawyer had argued that a crowd had gathered on the bridge past midnight due to an accident that happened earlier at the same spot. He was not trying to run away and was neither drunk, the lawyer contended.

Patel's lawyer further

urged the court to consider the case as that of negligence instead of culpable homicide and also consider the fact that the applicant was not a hardened criminal.

The prosecution highlighted the severity of the offence and said that the accused was also involved in two other road accidents before the Iskon fly-over incident.

Yet another FIR was lodged against Patel after a probe revealed that he had crashed the same car into the premises of a temple complex in Gandhinagar earlier.

MP KHEL MAHAKUMBH



UP CM Yogi Adityanath and BJP national president JP Nadda interact with young artists during the inauguration of MP KHEL Mahakumbh, in Basti district, Wednesday.

Kerala capital turns into battlefield as police and YC activists clash



Congress workers march during a protest, in Kochi, Wednesday.

Thiruvananthapuram, Dec 20 (PTI): As the Nava Kerala Sadas of the Left government entered the southernmost district of Kerala, the heart of its capital turned into a battlefield between the police and activists of the Youth Congress (YC) on Wednesday.

The YC, led by its state president Rahul Mamkootathil, marched to the state Secretariat in protest against the attacks on its and KSU activists for showing black flags to Chief Minister Pinarayi

Vijayan. Outside the secretariat, Leader of the Opposition (LoP) in the Assembly V D Satheesan threatened that its Youth Congress (YC) and Kerala Student Union (KSU) workers will now hit back, if police action was not taken against those who attacked its people from Kalliasseri in Kannur district to Kollam during the Nava Kerala Sadas programme.

Satheesan's remarks received severe criticism from the Left front which alleged that he was "en-

couraging violence and goondaism".

It also warned of strict action if violence was unleashed by the Congress in the state.

Satheesan, in his speech outside the Secretariat, also demanded removal of the CM's "criminal" gunman and personal security officers who allegedly beat up YC-KSU activists for showing black flags to Vijayan.

"There is a limit to everything. Till now we have been telling them (YC-KSU activists) to exer-

cise restraint. I am here to change that stance.

"If these two things are not done, hit back. We will hit back. Let there be no doubt about that. We will account for every attack on us from Kalliasseri (in Kannur district) till Kollam. We know who all attacked our people. We will retaliate starting from Kalliasseri," the LoP said.

Shortly after his speech concluded, things turned violent outside the secretariat with the YC activists trying to climb over the barricades into the Secretariat and also threw sticks and stones against the police and its water cannon vehicle.

In response, the police used the water cannon several times to disperse the protestors, but the YC workers were not dissuaded and they kept throwing stones and sticks at the police and its water cannon vehicle.

The YC activists also snatched away and smashed the shields of the police personnel who stopped them from entering the secretariat and even smashed the window of a police bus.

As the YC activists be-

came violent, the police finally resorted to a lathicharge to disperse the protestors and also took several of them into custody.

Even Mamkootathil was allegedly injured in the lathicharge.

He told reporters that this kind of police action was not seen against the Students' Federation of India (SFI) activists when they protested against the Governor and demanded that his injured YC colleagues be hospitalised.

Things did not end there as YC activists alleged that a male police officer tore the dress of a female protestor and that police was denying treatment to their injured colleagues.

Soon, thereafter, Satheesan returned to the spot, sent injured female YC activists in his official vehicle to a hospital and walked with the remaining protestors to the District Congress Committee (DCC) office nearby.

The police followed them there seeking custody of those activists who had allegedly released some of the protestors from their custody.

JN.1 COVID VARIANT

Experts allay fears, cite low public health risk

New Delhi, Dec 20 (PTI):

India on Wednesday reported 21 cases of the JN.1 Covid variant, a development that is neither surprising nor particularly worrying, scientists said while allaying fears but also advising adherence to existing precautionary measures.

The announcement about the increasing numbers of the new sub-variant, detected in three states, came with the Union Health Ministry reporting 614 new Covid infections, marking the highest daily count since May 21. As panic spread and Covid came under the spotlight again, experts stepped in to say there is no need to panic available treatments are effective, the infection is mild and all viruses mutate.

"As it happens with most respiratory viruses, including the influenza viruses, the circulating viruses keep changing. Therefore, a sub-variant of SARS-CoV-2 is not a surprise at all," Chandrakant Lahariya, a senior consultant physician and public health expert, told PTI.

The SARS-CoV-2 virus is

circulating in all settings, he said. According to official sources, 19 cases of JN.1 have been traced in Goa and one each in Kerala and Maharashtra. Over the past two weeks, 16 deaths related to COVID-19 were recorded with the victims having serious co-morbidities.

On Tuesday, the World Health Organisation (WHO) classified JN.1 as a separate variant of interest (VOI) from the parent lineage BA.2.86. It was previously classified as VOI as part of BA.2.86 sublineages. The WHO defines a variant of interest as one that has genetic changes which could increase its transmissibility, virulence, and its ability to evade vaccines. Based on the available evidence, the additional global public health risk posed by JN.1 is currently evaluated as low, WHO said. "Despite this, with the onset of winter in the Northern Hemisphere, JN.1 could increase the burden of respiratory infections in many countries," it added.

India has also alerted states to take necessary precautionary measures.

Addressing concerns about the spread of JN.1, health experts said precautions are a must but there is no need for alarm as it is natural for viruses to mutate in the due course of evolution.

"In India, people have already been exposed to various sub-variants, including Omicron variants, and received at least two shots of COVID-19 vaccines. There is no renewed risk of SARS-CoV-2 variant or sub-variant causing severe illness," Lahariya said.

Kartik Vedula, infectious diseases consultant at Hyderabad's Yashoda Hospitals, agreed. He said JN.1 is a new sub-lineage of BA.2.86, an offshoot of the Omicron variant.

"JN.1 differs with an additional mutation in the spike protein. Studies have shown that JN.1 has enhanced immune evasion properties, with the potential for enhanced transmission. However, there is no current data that shows new or severe symptoms in JN.1 infected individuals, and the public need not panic," Vedula told PTI.

'IR has set target to become net-zero carbon emitter'

By 2030

New Delhi, Dec 20 (PTI):

The Indian Railways has set a target of becoming a net-zero carbon emitter by 2030 and is committed to taking steps for energy conservation, Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnav informed the Lok Sabha in a written reply on Wednesday.

Talking about the initiatives taken to achieve the target, Vaishnav said, "Broad gauge networks of 60,814 kilometres have been electrified up to November 2023. Of these, 39,013 kilometres have been electrified during the period from April 2014 to November 2023 against 5,188 kilometres during 2004-14."

He presented zone-wise details of the electrified network, according to



Ashwini Vaishnav

which the Northern Railway — at 6,799 route kilometres — has achieved the highest electrification.

Vaishnav was responding to questions from MPs Rahul Ramesh Shewale, Chandra Sekhar Sahu and Pritam Gopinath Munde, who wanted to know whether the Indian Railways was working towards achieving net-zero carbon emis-

sions by 2030 to become the world's largest "green" railway.

They also wanted to know the "details of the rail routes electrified till November 30, 2023, particularly in Maharashtra".

Vaishnav said in his reply that 2,002 kilometres of broad gauge network has been electrified during 2023-24 up to November 2023, "including 146 kilometres broad

gauge network falling in the state of Maharashtra. Electrification of balance broad gauge routes has been taken up".

On the question of developing dedicated freight corridors with a long-term low-carbon roadmap, the minister said, "The Dedicated Freight Corridor (DFCs) projects are expected to help in reducing the carbon emissions as DFC operation will bring efficiency in freight operations in the country by higher throughput per wagon, lower energy consumption and reduction in transit time."

"Eastern DFC, which has been completed, and Western DFC, which is currently under implementation, are estimated to reduce emissions by about 457 million ton CO2 over a 30-year period," he added.

'Rock classification of Silkyara-Barkot tunnel ranges from poor to very good'

New Delhi, Dec 20 (PTI):

The rock classification as per geological report submitted by the Detailed Project Report (DPR) consultant with respect to Silkyara-Barkot tunnel alignment ranges from poor to very good, Parliament was in-



Nitin Gadkari

formed on Wednesday. In a written reply to a

question in the Rajya Sabha, Union Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari said the rock classification reported by the the EPC contractor during execution ranges from very poor to fair.

Gadkari further said to overcome the problem

of weak rocks during tunnel construction, additional support such as shotcrete, fore poling, rock bolts, steel ribs, lattice girder, etc. have been provided. Total 41 workers were trapped in the tunnel on November 12 and were rescued on November 28.

Kerala woman rescued after 3 hrs in neck-deep swamp

Kochi, Dec 20 (PTI):

A 76-year-old woman trapped neck-deep in a swamp for nearly three hours had a miraculous escape after a rescue by Fire services personnel here.

Kamalakshi Amma, a local fisherwoman, accidentally fell into the sludge in Maradu Municipality while she was on her way back home on Tuesday afternoon.

The visuals of the dramatic rescue operation of the woman by a team of Fire and Rescue personnel went viral on social media platforms and was telecast by television channels on Wednesday.

In the video, the elderly woman could be seen fully smeared in thick,

wet marsh and was later pulled out and lifted ashore by the rescue team. The nearly five foot-deep swamp in Maradu is reportedly formed of piling waste.

A relieved Kamalakshi Amma said on Wednesday that there was mud up to her neck but she somehow managed to hold onto a branch of a tree until assistance came her way.

"I accidentally fell into the swamp. I couldn't pull myself up but somehow I held on to the tree branch," she told television channels.

Fire Force personnel said information passed on by a local woman about her plight had helped them rush to the spot on time and save her life.

A local resident, Seena was on her terrace when

she spotted something moving inside the nearby swamp and was shocked to realise that it was a human who needed help. She quickly contacted the Fire force personnel who rushed to the spot and lifted Kamalakshi Amma to safety.

She was later taken to a nearby hospital and given the required medical assistance, Fire Force sources added.

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