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## ED officers attacked during raid in Bengal

Oppn demands President's Rule

tion of President's Rule. The ruling TMC, however, rejected the charges and accused the central agency officials of inciting locals.

The incident occurred when ED officers executed a raid on the residence of TMC leader Sheikh Sajahan, where they faced attacks from his supporters, resulting in substantial damage to both officers and their vehicles.

Sajahan is considered to be a close aide of state minister Jyotipriyo Mallick who was arrested in connection with the multi-crore ration distribution scam.



An Enforcement Directorate (ED) official after getting assaulted allegedly by the supporters of TMC leader Sheikh Sajahan during a raid at the latter's residence, in North 24 Parganas district, Friday.

forcing the officers to abandon their damaged vehicles and seek refuge in auto-rickshaws and two-wheelers.

At least two officers suffered serious injuries, necessitating hospitalisation. "This kind of attack is unprecedented. We have sent a report on Shiekh Sajahan to our Delhi office," the ED officer told

## 17 BSF personnel injured as mini truck overturns

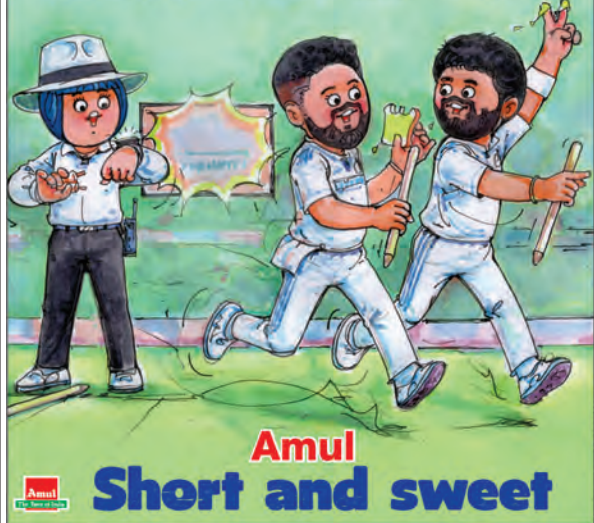
Kanker, Jan 05 (PTI):

Seventeen personnel of the Border Security Force (BSF) were injured after a mini truck they were travelling in overturned in Kanker district of Chhattisgarh on Friday, police said.

The incident took place in the afternoon when the jawans were heading to Antagarh from their camp in Phulpad village in the district, a senior police official said.

As per the preliminary information, the vehicle carrying jawans, belonging to the 162nd battalion of the BSF, was heading to Antagarh railway station to drop them as they were going on leave, he said.

## Fastaste match ever



Amul Short and sweet

## Cabinet approves naming Ayodhya airport after Maharishi Valmiki

New Delhi, Jan 05 (PTI):

The Union Cabinet on Friday approved the proposal to name Ayodhya airport as 'Maharishi Valmiki International Airport, Ayodhyadham'.

ternational airport. Modi inaugurated the airport on December 30. "The airport's name 'Maharishi Valmiki International Airport, Ayodhyadham' pays homage to Maharishi Valmiki, the sage attributed to composing the epic Ramayana, adding a cultural touch to the airport's identity," an official release said.

### BRIEF



Tourists during 'Pongal' festivities at Sawyerpuram, in Thoothukudi district, Friday.

### Gangster shot dead

Pune: Gangster Sharad Mohol was shot and killed allegedly by some members of his gang in Pune on Friday afternoon, a police official said. The 40-year-old gangster died while undergoing treatment at a private hospital in the Kothrud area, he said. "Three to four assailants fired two rounds at Mohol from a close range at Sutardara in Kothrud around 1.30 pm. He suffered bullet wounds and was rushed to a hospital," the official said.

### Properties auction

Mumbai: Two properties belonging to the family members of fugitive gangster Dawood Ibrahim were sold off here on Friday at an auction organised by the competent authority under the Smugglers and Foreign Exchange Manipulators (Forfeiture of Property) Act, an official said. A total of four properties, located at Mumbke village in Khed tehsil of coastal Ratnagiri district in Maharashtra, were available at the auction, but no bids were received for two of them.

### Sloth bear

Bhopal: A 36-year-old male sloth bear died due to multi-organ failure at a zoo-cum-animal rescue centre in Madhya Pradesh capital Bhopal, an official said on Friday. This bear named Bablu was the oldest one in captivity in the country at present, an office-bearer of a non-government organisation that runs a bear rescue centre at the zoo said. "Bablu died on Thursday at the Van Vihar National Park-cum-animal rescue and rehabilitation centre," its veterinarian Dr Atul Gupta told PTI.

## Guv has to act on recommendation of council of ministers

SC on plea to remove Senthil Balaji

New Delhi, Jan 05 (PTI):

The governor of a state has to act on the recommendation of the council of ministers, the Supreme Court said on Friday while dismissing an appeal challenging the decision of the Madras High Court refusing to consider a petition against the continuance of V Senthil Balaji as a minister in the Tamil Nadu government despite his arrest.

A bench of Justices Abhay S Oka and Ujjal Bhuyan said no interference was called for by the apex court, which concurs with the view taken by the high court. "Prima facie, the high court is right that the Governor could not have dismissed the minister. The Governor has to act on the recommendation of the council of ministers..."

ters, the high court had said, "If the Governor chooses to 'withdraw his pleasure' in respect of a Minister, he must exercise his discretion with the knowledge of the Chief Minister and not unilaterally. In the present case, the Chief Minister had never consented for the exercise of discretion by the Governor."

## MHA orders CBI probe into supply of substandard medicines in Delhi govt hospitals

New Delhi, Jan 05 (PTI):

The Union Home ministry has ordered a Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) inquiry into the supply of substandard medicines in Delhi government hospitals and whether the drugs were also distributed through mohalla clinics, sources said on Friday. The CBI probe was ordered following a recommendation by Delhi Lt Governor V K Saxena on the matter in December last year.

said any action for supplying 'Not of Standard Quality' drugs should not be confined to the CPA and there is need to investigate the entire supply chain - the role of the suppliers who procured from manufacturers and provided supply to the end users, that is, hospitals (patients). "Besides, there is a need to lift the corporate veil to understand the gravity and motives of supplying 'Not of Standard Quality' drugs," read the Directorate of Vigilance letter. The drugs that were found to be of "substandard quality" included critical life-saving antibiotics used for the treatment of lung and urinary tract infections such as Cephalixin, according to officials.

## AAP nominates DCW chief Swati Maliwal as Rajya Sabha MP

New Delhi, Jan 05 (PTI):

The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) on Friday nominated Delhi Commission for Women chief Swati Maliwal as its Rajya Sabha MP and renominated Sanjay Singh and ND Gupta for the second term in the Upper House of Parliament. The nominations were announced by the party's political affairs committee (PAC), chaired by AAP national convener and Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal. "DCW chairperson Swati Maliwal has been nominated for the first time. The PAC has decided to continue with Sanjay Singh and ND Gupta for their respective second term as Rajya Sabha members," the party said.

**Weather**

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**MARKET**

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SENSEX 72,026.15

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## Rathore takes charge as Divisional Commissioner

Central Chronicle News

**Bhilai, Jan 05:** The newly posted Commissioner of Durg division, Satyanarayan Rathore assumed charge of the office on Friday. Rathore, an Indian Administrative Service 2008 batch officer, will be the 11th Commissioner of Durg division. Outgoing Divisional Commissioner Janak Prasad Pathak (IAS) handed over the charge to Rathore and congratulated him for his new responsibility.

After assuming charge, Divisional Commissioner Rathore inspected various



branches of the office and got acquainted with the officers and employees. Outgoing Divisional Commissioner Pathak was bid a farewell in a gra-



acious programme organized by the office officers and employees.

The newly appointed Divisional Commissioner Rathore was welcomed in

the same programme. Deputy Commissioner (Development) Ajay Mishra and other officers and employees were present.

## Old lady dies in road accident

**Bhilai, Jan 05:** A 65-year-old lady was killed in a road accident which occurred on Friday afternoon near Avanti Bai Square, Kohka. She suffered fatal injuries after being hit by a speeding school bus. She succumbed at a private hospital during treatment. Police have lodged an offence against the bus driver. The body has been sent for autopsy. According to information, the deceased was Shanti Dubey (65) a resident of Krishna Nagar, Supela. Around 13:30 hrs, he left home and was moving towards Avanti Bai Square. Near Avanti Bai Square, she was hit by a speeding school bus bearing registration number CG07-E-1601. Fatally injured lady was rushed to Shri Shankaracharya Hospital where she breathed last during treatment. Police have lodged an offence.

## Operation Muskaan: 10 missing children recovered

Central Chronicle News

**Bhilai, Jan 05:** Durg Police is conducting Operation Muskaan to bring happiness to the families who have lost their children. A special team has been formed to trace the missing / abducted minor children. On the basis of technical assistance and mobile location, police teams visited other states also to recover the children.

As per the intention of the state government, in compliance with the instructions given by the Director General of Police, Chhattisgarh, Raipur, for tracing and recovering the missing children, Durg Police is conducting "Operation Muskaan" as per the instructions of the Senior Superintendent of Police (Durg) Ram Gopal Garg and supervision of Additional



दुर्ग पुलिस

Superintendent of Police (Durg) Anurag Jha and Deputy Superintendent of Police (Special Juvenile Police Unit, Durg) Sanjay Pundhir.

Giving top priority to the cases of missing children in the district, a separate human trafficking cell has been formed to trace the missing boys and girls for years. Every pending case was reviewed again. The team and the concerned police station in-charge contacted the family

members and villagers of the missing person and interrogated them. Police teams were also sent to different states on the basis of the information received with the help of mobile data location and social media posts of the missing children and the relatives.

In the campaign conducted on January 04, 2024, the police was successful in finding 07 boys / girls and during the campaign, a total of 10 boys / girls were found. The recovered children were handed over safely to their families. This special campaign being run by the police has brought smiles on the faces of many families. To make the campaign more successful, instructions have been given to the police station in-charges and human trafficking cell to trace the remaining missing children.

## Newly posted Collector meets officials



Central Chronicle News

**Bhilai, Jan 05:** The newly appointed Collector, Richa Prakash Chaudhary got introduced to the officers in the Collectorate auditorium and took information

regarding their work. While interacting with the officials about development of the district, the Collector said that 100 percent and better implementation of the government schemes will be her priority. She asked them

to carry out their work in a better manner within the stipulated time period and to benefit the common people from the public welfare schemes of the government. All the departmental officers were present.

## Federation Cup National Cycle Polo Championship concludes



- **Assembly Speaker Dr Raman Singh distributes prizes to the winners**
- **Indian Air Force lifts trophy in men's category and Chhattisgarh wins women's category**

Central Chronicle News

**Bhilai, Jan 05:** The 17th Men's and 13th Women's Federation Cup National Cycle Polo Championship was held in Bhilai Nagar of Durg district from 3 to 5 January 2024. 160 players from Chhattisgarh, Kerala, West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh and Maharashtra as well as

Indian Army, Territorial Army and Indian Air Force participated in this competition organized by Chhattisgarh Cycle Polo Association. In the prize distribution of the competition, State Assembly Speaker Dr Raman Singh was present as the chief guest. He gave away prizes to the winning players.

Chief Guest Assembly Speaker Dr Raman Singh, in his brief address, while congratulating all the players participating in the competition, said that the participating players should bring glory to the state and the country by showcasing their talent. He said that the future of the players in cycle polo is bright. He

thanked the organizers for organizing the competition to promote sports. Municipal Corporation Bhilai Mayor Neeraj Pal, former MLA Labhchand Bafna along with other public representatives, officials, participating players and a large number of sports lovers were present in the programme.

## Youth gets three years jail for molestation

Central Chronicle News

**Bhilai, Jan 05:** A Fast Track Special Court in Durg awarded imprisonment of three years to a 19-year-old youth on charges of molesting a minor girl. Additional Sessions Judge (Fourth), FTSC - POC SO, Sangeeta Naveen Tiwari convicted Bhuneshwar Sahu alias Vikram Sahu (19) son of Bhimsen Sahu a resident of Mahuda, Amleshwar. Special Public Prosecutor Santosh Kasar informed that the incident occurred on July 15, 2023. The victim is a 15-year-old minor girl. The accused resides in the same village. Around 20:00 hrs on July 15, 2023, the victim was standing

outside her home. The accused reached there and got hold of her hands and tried to kiss her. The victim resisted and screamed after which her mother came out of the house. Sensing trouble, the accused fled from the spot. On July 16, the family lodged an FIR at Amleshwar Police Station under section 354 of IPC and Section 08 of POC SO Act. After trial, the Special Court found the accused guilty and awarded three-year rigorous imprisonment and Rs 500 fine under section 08 of POC SO Act. In case of non payment of fine, the accused will serve an additional imprisonment of one month.

## Women judo players of HYU qualify for national level Competition

Central Chronicle News

**Bhilai, Jan 05:** Four Judo players from the Women's team of Hemchand Yadav University, Durg have qualified for the All India level Competition by performing excellently in the North Eastern Region Inter-University Competition organized at Kanpur University from December 31, 2023 to January 02, 2024, informed Dr Dinesh Kumar Namdev, Director, Physical Education. He explained that top 16 ranked players are selected to participate in the All India Judo Women's Competition. Divya

Kumari of Hemchand Yadav University, Durg won in 63 kg securing 10th rank in weight group, Deepika Sahu 48 kg 7th in the weight group, Tanu Rani Sahu 52 kg 8th in the weight group and Sneha Nyogi 78 kg Achieved 6th rank in weight group. These 04 players have qualified to participate in the All India Competition to be held in February 2024. On the achievement of the players, Vice Chancellor of the University, Dr Aruna Palta, Registrar Bhupendra Kuldeep and the university fraternity congratulated the players and also extended their best wishes.

## Dist Admin signs MoU with Indus Towers Company

Four students of Government ITI get employment



Central Chronicle News

**Bhilai, Jan 05:** Innovative steps are taking place in the field of education and employment in Durg district. In this sequel, an MOU was signed between the district administration and IndusTower Company in the presence of MP Vijay Baghel. MP Vijay Baghel congratulated the newly appointed Collector Richa Prakash Choudhary with a flower bouquet.

It needs to be mentioned here that youth are given training for employment in government industrial training institutes. Four diploma holder trainees of Government Industrial Training Institute were selected in IndusTower Company. It is a telecom tower infrastructure service provider that manages telecom towers and communication infrastructure for various mobile operators. Students will be

taught by the trainers of the concerned institution and there will be workshops also. MP Vijay Baghel presented appointment letters to Janak Lal Sahu, Sadanand, Pankaj Sahu and Sharad Kumar, who have been selected by Industry Tower Company for the post of Technician. All four students are receiving training as electricians at the Government Industrial Training Centre.

The MOU was signed by Collector Richa Prakash Chaudhary and Company CEO Ashish Mitra. MP Vijay Baghel congratulated the children and the entire team of IndusTower. He said that good works are happening in the district and will continue to happen in future too. The expectations of the youth are being fulfilled. There are promising youth in the Government Industrial Training Institutes and everyone will get a chance to move ahead. Good companies will continue to come to the district in future also. On this occasion, Superintendent of Police Ramgopal Garg, IndusTower Company CEO and entire team along with ITI Principal Anil Temrekar, AA Mansuri, Pramod Singh and Saurabh Choubey were present.

स्वागत... स्वागत... स्वागत... स्वागत... स्वागत...

मान. विष्णुदेव साय जी (मुख्यमंत्री)  
सामान्य प्रशासन, खनिज शासन, ऊर्जा, जनसंपर्क आदि विभाग (आवकारी) परिकल्पना विभाग

मान. डॉ. रमन सिंह जी (विधानसभा अध्यक्ष)  
छत्तीसगढ़ शासन

मान. अरुण साव जी (उपमुख्यमंत्री)  
लोक निर्माण, लोक स्वास्थ्य आदि विभाग, विधि और विचारणीय कार्य, नगरीय प्रशासन विभाग

मान. विजय शर्मा जी (उपमुख्यमंत्री)  
गृह एवं जेल, पंचायत एवं ग्रामीण विकास, तकनीकी शिक्षा एवं रोजगार, विज्ञान और प्रौद्योगिकी विभाग

मान. किरण सिंह देव जी (प्रदेश अध्यक्ष)  
भाजपा छत्तीसगढ़

मान. बुधनारायण अग्रवाल जी  
मान. राम विहार मेहता जी  
मान. देवकांत दास शर्मा जी  
मान. ओपी चौधरी जी  
मान. लखन ताल देवगन जी  
मान. लक्ष्मी राजवंशी जी  
मान. रमण सिंह जी  
मान. देवकांत शर्मा जी  
मान. देवकांत शर्मा जी

ललित बिंदोकार  
विचार, पुनर्जागरण

मजुंदर यादव  
विचार, पुनर्जागरण

पं. रविशंकर शुक्ल 6 जनवरी 2024 स्टेडियम, दुर्ग

मान. विष्णुदेव साय जी  
मुख्यमंत्री, छत्तीसगढ़ शासन और  
मान. ओमप्रकाश माथुर जी  
भारतीय जनता पार्टी छत्तीसगढ़ के प्रदेश प्रभारी  
मान. किरण सिंह देव जी  
प्रदेश अध्यक्ष  
सहित तमाम दिग्गज भाजपा नेता  
के दुर्ग आगमन पर  
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## Dayanand takes over as 12th Chairman of CSPC

**Raipur, Jan 05:** In a significant development, IAS P. Dayanand has taken the reins as the 12th Chairman of Chhattisgarh State Power Company (CSPC). Upon assuming his new role, Dayanand wasted no time and immediately convened a marathon meeting with top officials of the power company.

During the extensive meeting held at Seva Bhawan, the Company's headquarters, Dayanand delved into the intricate details of electricity production, transmission, and distribution within the state. His primary directive was to formulate a comprehensive action plan that aligns with the future electricity demands of Chhattisgarh. Additionally, he emphasized the importance of proposals for electricity generation through solar energy and water resources.

The Chairman conducted separate sessions with senior officials from the



Power Company's Generation, Transmission, and Distribution segments. Over the course of three hours, Managing Directors from all divisions provided insights into the Company's achievements and organizational structure. Special Secretary of the Energy Department, Sunil Kumar Jain, was also present to witness the pivotal discussions.

Managing Director of the Distribution and Transmission Company, Manoj Khare, shared that the state currently deliv-

ers uninterrupted electricity to 62 lakh consumers round the clock. Despite a maximum demand of 6157 MW, the supply has been consistently met without disruption, contributing to the improved financial health of the distribution company.

Meanwhile, Managing Director of the Generation Company, SK Katiyar, highlighted the Company's total capacity of 2978.7 MW. The power plants under their purview, including the Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee Power Plant and Atal Bihari Vajpayee

### 'State aims to lead nation in energy development'

**Raipur:** In a show of unity and support, P. Dayanand, the newly-appointed Chairman of Chhattisgarh State Power Company, received warm wishes and congratulations from power companies, officials, employees, and representatives of various labor unions and organizations today at Vidut Seva Bhawan. Dayanand expressed his deep gratitude to the honorable Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai and reiterated

his commitment to fulfilling the state government's vision. He emphasized that his foremost priority will be to elevate Chhattisgarh to a leadership position in the realm of power development at the national level. This ambitious goal aligns seamlessly with the state's customs and policies, underlining the chairman's dedication to propelling Chhattisgarh to the forefront of energy matters in the country.

Power Plant in Madwa, are operating at full capacity, resulting in cost-effective power generation. Chairman Dayanand also inquired about recruitment initiatives and vacant positions within the power company, stressing the need for meticulous

planning in the electricity sector.

Expressing his satisfaction with the performance of the power plants, which are achieving more than 87 percent ash utilization, Dayanand encouraged further improvements in this area.

## ANNUAL DAY



Students of Ramkrishna Institute performed variety of dance and other programme in the annual day celebrations.

### 29 SAS officers given fresh posting

**Raipur, Jan 05:** The State Government has issued fresh posting order to CEO District Panchayats, Joint Collectors and Dy. Collectors all over the state and in this 29 officers from the State Administrative Services (SAS) have been affected and given fresh posting.

### IFS Alok Katiyar shifted from Mantralaya

**Raipur, Jan 05:** State Government on Thursday transferred the services of Indian Forest Services (IFS) Alok Katiyar from General Administration Department to Forest headquarters. IFS Katiyar was presently holding the post of Chief Executive Officer of Chhattisgarh Renewable Energy Development Authority (CREDA) on deputation and was given additional charge of Mission Director of Jal Jeevan

Mission and Secretary Public Works Department. GAD has issued an order in this regard under which the services of IFS Katiyar has been transferred to Forest headquarters. It is notable that Katiyar had been on deputation from Forest headquarters for nearly 10 years. Administrative reshuffle order issued late last night, had made it clear that his services would be returned back to Forest.

## Budget session of Legislative Assembly from Feb 5

● Govt to present budget in second week

**Raipur, Jan 05:** Budget session of Chhattisgarh Legislative Assembly would be held from February 5 to March 1. Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai-led Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) government would present the first Budget for the fiscal 2024-25 which would aim to deliver the promises made as Modi's Guarantee during the recently held Legislative Assembly polls.

According to the information received, Budget

session would begin with Governor's Address on inaugural day. Sai Cabinet had given approval to the consent to convene the Budget session from February 5. After approval from Governor House, the Legislative Assembly Secretariat has released the notification for the session. As per the notification issued, total 20 sittings would be held during the Budget session.

Cabinet Minister OP Choudhary who has been entrusted with the Finance portfolio, would be presenting the annual budget for the forthcoming fiscal in the second week of February.

## Indore Infoline Expo's witnesses heavy rush on inaugural day

● Stall owners happy with tremendous response

**Raipur, Jan 05:** National Expo (Steel & Power) organised by Indore Infoline (13th Year) was inaugurated by Rajiv Kumar, Director, MSME Raipur on Friday. Other present were Vikram Jain, Sanjay Agrawal, Neeraj Agrawal from Urala Industries Association and Mr. Rajkumar Agrawal, Managing Director, Indore infoline Pvt. Ltd. Large number of visitors came from Bhilai, Durg, Bilaspur, Nagpur and other cities also. National



Expo is open to next 2 days for visitors from 11-7 pm. More than 200 participants and 10,000+ products on display. Heavy machinery, CNC Machines, Solar Equipments, industrial automation and many other products are on display.

The inaugural day of

the Indore Infoline Pvt Ltd at Shriram Business park, Vidhansabha Road, Raipur saw large number of visitors. The visitors mainly comprised the small and medium entrepreneurs of Raipur and Chhattisgarh, who visited the show to observe the latest technologies for their units. Large num-

ber of business enquiries were generated on Day 1 which has made the stall owners happy, informed RK Agarwal, Managing Director, Indore Infoline Expo. He said that exhibition has been organised to bridge the gap between the industrial buyer and seller.

More than 200 ex-

hibitors from across the country from cities like Raipur, Bhilai, Bilaspur, Durg, Bhilai, Mumbai, Nagpur, Bangalore, Chennai, New Delhi, Kolkata, Hyderabad are showcasing their products like industrial automation, cooling towers, machine tools, bearings, switchgears, welding equipment's, power tools, hand tools, cutting tools, scientific equipment's, lab equipment's, Pre Engineering materials, material handling products, safety products, maintenance products and many more products. NBC Bearing is main sponsor of expo and Many leading companies

like Metal Power, Wendt India, Ingersoll Rand, JR Seamless, Wesman, Jain Bearings, Tirupati CNC, Aakar Carbons, Admas, Chirayu Power, Shiva Infra and many big names are participating in this expo.

This expo will benefit the industries of Raipur and Chhattisgarh with latest technology exposure to local industries. This Expo will provide a great opportunity for networking of MSME sector. This year focus is on Industrial Automation & Solar Energy. Visitors will get the latest information about industrial automation products, bearings etc,

## Agrawal inaugurates 40th NTPC National Sub-Junior Archery Competition



**Raipur, Jan 05:** National Sub Junior Competition organized by Chhattisgarh Pradesh Archery Association at the Science College

Minister Brijmohan Agrawal today inaugurated the 40th NTPC

Ground in the capital Raipur.

Once again good days are going to come for sports and players in Chhattisgarh, Agrawal said in his address. He said that government started efforts to promote sports in the state. He said that this event will give Chhattisgarh a different identity at the national and international level.

Chhattisgarh Archery Association has hoisted its flag all over the world, Agrawal said. He said that state government was committed to promoting sports. He talked about providing all possi-

ble help for the development of sports in the state. Agrawal also said that focus would be laid on the training and facilities of the players in the state, so that they can bring glory to Chhattisgarh in sports.

About 1000 players from all the states of the country are participating in this competition. Chhattisgarh Archery Association President Kailash Murarka, members of the association, sports trainers, managers, players from different states and other distinguished citizens were present in the program.

## Collector inspects under construction 'Smart Reading Room'



**Raipur, Jan 05:** New Collector Dr Gaurav Kumar Singh inspected the "Smart Reading Room" under construction near Motibagh soon after he took charge in the district. He was accompanied by Municipal Corporation

Commissioner Abinash Mishra. "Smart Reading Room" is being constructed by Raipur Smart City Limited near Motibagh at a cost of Rs. 6 crores.

The Collector stressed the need for making available books and internet connectivity and creative

conducive environment for reading in Smart Reading Room. He directed that important books useful for competitive examinations should be studied in this 600-seater reading room-library. Upper floor should also be used on priority for stud-

ies, so that most of the students get the benefit of this reading room-library, he said. Dr Gaurav Singh gave instructions to complete the construction soon. The library will be operated by a committee on the lines of Nalanda campus.

DFO Vishvesh Kumar, Additional Commissioner of Municipal Corporation Abhishek Agrawal, Raipur Smart City Limited Chief Operating Officer Ujjwal Porwal, General Manager (Technical) PK Panchayati, District Employment Officer Kedar Patel, Deputy Manager Sanjay Agrawal and Mrs. Neha Patel were also present.

## Two nabbed with 10.190 Kg 'Ganja' from Bolero vehicle



**Raipur, Jan 05:** The Kabir Nagar thana got tip from an informer that a person is roaming along with drugs and looking for customers. The team of police under leadership of TI Kabir Nagar reached the venue and identified the vehicle and stopped it. Two persons were sitting inside and in inquiry they disclose their names as Devendra Singh S/o Randhir Singh, (38), R/o Kumbhari Kharun Greens, H. No. 33 Thana Kumbhari, Durg district and

Dharmendra Singh, S/o Late Rajendra Pal Singh, R/o Veersavarkar Nagar Heerapur, R/o Kabir Nagar thana Raipur.

On conducting checking in the vehicle the police found 10.190 kg of 'Ganja' inside their Bolero vehicle bearing No. CG 04 HC 4987. The police seized the vehicle along with two mobile phones and entire lot costing around Rs 6.50 lakh. The police nabbed the two under Section 20 (B) of Narcotics Act and seized the drugs and the vehicle.

## Ch'garh's tableau clinches a spot in the R-Day Parade

**Raipur, Jan 05:** Chhattisgarh's tableau, "Bastar Ki Aadim Jan Sansad: Muria Darbar", clinches a spot in the Republic Day Parade in New Delhi after an intense nationwide competition. Out of 28 states, 16 have earned the prestigious opportunity to participate in the parade on the Kartavya Path. The Defence Ministry's expert committee praised the distinctive theme and design of Chhattisgarh's entry. The Chief Minister Mr. Vishnu Deo Sai expressed pride over the selection of the theme from Chhattisgarh and stated that it is a significant achievement for the state.

Chhattisgarh's Republic Day Parade tableau revolves around the theme "India is the mother of democracy", aligning with the Government of India's vision. The depiction titled "Aadim Jan-Sansad" showcases the enduring democratic ethos within the tribal society of Bastar, which has persisted for over 75 years of independence.



Highlighting the renowned Bastar Dussehra tradition, the tableau will portray the Muria Darbar, an ancient assembly dating back 600 years. Situated in Limauraj. Bade-Dongar, Kondagaon district, this tradition traces its roots to a time when a lemon symbolised kingship and decisions were collectively made by primitive communities.

Crafted through meticulous local research and guidance from senior officials, Chhattisgarh's

tableau theme and design have secured final approval in a five-stage, rigorous process. The 3D model, presented to the Defence Ministry's expert committee, along with the music selection, have secured final approval. The tableau's compelling theme and design captivated selectors, solidifying its place in the Republic Day Parade and marking a noteworthy achievement for Chhattisgarh on the national stage.

The Defence Ministry

called for proposals from all states, union territories, and central ministries for Republic Day parade tableaux. Proposals undergo thorough evaluation in multiple meetings with an expert committee comprising eminent figures in art, culture, painting, sculpture, music, architecture, and choreography. The committee meticulously assesses submissions based on their thematic content, conceptual strength, design, and visual impact before making recommendations.

## Workshop on new treatment techniques for Cleft Lip & Palate



**Raipur, Jan 05:** Department of Orthodontics & Pedodontics of Government Dental College & Hospital organised a two-day workshop on newer techniques for treatment of Cleft Lip and Palate. Keynote speakers were Dr. Virag Bhatia, Principal Dr. Virendra Vadhwa, Registrar of State Dental Council Dr. Amit Wasti & HoD Pedodontics Dr. Arvind Nair.

In the first session, the Post Graduate students were made aware about the newer techniques in treatment of Cleft Lip and Palate along with problems

encountered in the patients of Cleft Lip and Palate. In the second session of the workshop a live demonstration was provided. Dr. Virag Bhatia explained about the new technique of Naso-alveolar moulding which can be used in newborn babies having Cleft Lip and Palate and the treatment can be started after 1 week of birth. In this technique, not only Cleft Lip and Palate is repaired, but work is also done on the correct position of teeth in jaw, phonetics and esthetics of face. More than 50 Post graduate students benefitted from the workshop.

## Sports training infrastructure needs to be strengthened: Verma

**Sports Minister gave instructions in the meeting of departmental officers**



**Raipur, Jan 05:** Sports and Youth Welfare Department Minister Tankram Verma, during a courtesy meeting with the department officials at New Circuit House here, directed the sports academies of the state to be equipped with resources and to strengthen the sports training infrastructure. During this, the Sports Minister took detailed information about the departmental activities from him. Secretary of Sports and Youth Welfare Department, Mr. Neelam Namdev Ekka, Director Mrs. Shweta Srivastava Sinha and officials of Sports Directorate were present on this occasion.

Sports Secretary Mr. Ekka and Sports Director Mrs. Sinha gave him information about all the residential sports academies and non-residential sports academies running in the

state, various sports activities including youth welfare activities. The Sports Minister said that there is a need to make the currently running sports academies resourceful and strengthen the sports training infrastructure and make the training activities modern and quality. Emphasis should be given on training of various sports with new techniques. He also took information from the officials about the budget available for departmental schemes in the current financial year 2023-24. Instructions were also given to the offi-

cial to prepare proposals as per the current requirement for the players in the state.

The Sports Minister also took information from the officials about the sports grounds available in all the districts of the state and the facilities available there. He said that action should be taken to develop playgrounds in all the districts to provide well-organized playgrounds for children to play. He gave instructions to the officials to identify suitable land for sports grounds in all the villages of all the districts and secure it for

making sports grounds.

Sports Minister Verma said that instructions have been issued to all the district collectors to ban any kind of transfer of funds and expenditure of funds under the Rajiv Yuva Mitran Club Scheme with immediate effect, which should be strictly followed.

The Sports Minister instructed the departmental officers to take all necessary steps and smoothly implement the departmental schemes to ensure proper development of the skills of the players through various sports competitions.

## School girls praise IIT during their educational visit

**Under Vigyan Jyoti Prog conducted by JNV Korea, funded by DST**

**Raipur, Jan 05:** Fifty school girls, accompanied by faculty from Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya (JNV), Korea (CG), made an educational visit to IIT-Naya Raipur on Jan 5. These school girls are undergoing one year Vigyan Jyoti Programme, conducted by JNV Korea. This programme, funded by the Department of Science & Technology (DST), Government of India, aims at organizing various activities, including visit to an institution of National Importance, to encourage girls to pursue their higher studies in Science & Technology. DST has selected IIT-NR to act as a Knowledge Partner for mentoring the students of Vigyan Jyoti Programme.

Department of Science & Technology (DST) had launched the Vigyan Jyoti programme in 2019-20, for meritorious girl students studying in Class IX to XII, with an objective to create a gender enabling environment in the country for attracting more girls into under-represented areas in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM). The programme is in



its fourth year and is being implemented in 250 selected districts of the country through Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas (JNVs). At each District Centre, about 100 meritorious girl students (50 each in Class IX-X and Class XI-XII), studying in JNV and other centrally funded/govt. schools, located in the vicinity of the implementing JNV, are being selected. These selected students are then exposed to various round-the-year activities, such as interaction with women role models, participation in Science Camps, visits to Knowledge Partner, lectures/tutorials, career counselling, special classes, tinkering activities, workshops, etc. Since the mandate of the Vigyan Jyoti Programme is to motivate girls to pursue higher studies and careers in under-represented areas of STEM, therefore, it is important to connect institutions of National importance,

National R&D Labs, IITs, NITs, IISERs, etc., as Knowledge Partners with these JNVs to mentor and help them garner resources required to implement some of these activities.

The day-long program started with the inaugural ceremony, in which Dr. Pradeep K. Sinha, Director IIT-NR, welcomed the students and gave them an insight about the institute and its vision and mission. He encouraged the students to make the most out of this visit to IIT-NR and subsequently decide how each one of you would like to contribute to the Viksit Bharat @2047 movement of India to make India a developed nation by 2047. The students were then shown a glimpse of the activities conducted in the institute through an institute video. This was followed by a Panel Discussion by Women Faculties of IIT-NR in Science and Engineering. The students were then taken for a

visit to the state-of-the-art laboratories of the institute like Internet-of-Things lab, Robotics lab, 3-D Printing lab, Biomedical & Speech Processing lab, etc. The students were also made to do hands-on practical on some of the lab equipment available in the laboratories. In the end, a student-to-student interaction session was organized, in which IIT-NR students briefed the school students about the institute, subjects taught, research initiatives, placements, etc. A feedback session was also conducted, in which the school girls shared their views about the programme. The students conveyed that they were very happy to see a world class institute developed in Chhattisgarh, and would study hard to get selected to study in this institute. Student Anushka said that the visit to IIT-NR was very fruitful and they could see latest labs like Robotics lab, 3-D printing lab, IoT lab, etc. Student Siddhi Tripathi said that this visit will be beneficial for selecting the right career path in future. JNV Korea faculty Mrs. Sangeeta Thakur and Shailendra Sharma also praised the efforts taken by the faculty, staff and students of IIT-NR in motivating the students to set larger goals in their academic pursuit. They said that this exposure will be a game changer for them.

## e-Library begins at SECR Headquarters



**Library books, magazines of SECR Headquarters also available online**

**Raipur/Bilaspur, Jan 05:** Library books and magazines of South East Central Railway (SECR) Headquarters have also become available online, which members can access through ID and password. In the month of September 2023, the library of South East Central Railway Headquarters has been linked to the e-Library developed by the National Informatics Center (NIC). As many as 36 libraries

are currently functioning in South East Central Railway and 12 of them are located in Bilaspur Division, 12 in Raipur Railway Division, 9 in Nagpur Railway Division and 3 in Wagon Repair Shop and Moti Bagh Factory. Moreover 23554 books are presently available in all these libraries.

The catalog of 11 thousand books present in the library is being made online and the process of issuing books and membership has also been made online. This library was established with the establishment of SECR. Now it is being redesigned as an e-library. The library of

SECR Headquarters has been connected to the cloud of National Information Center (NIC) and facilities are being provided through its servers. Indian Railway Library and Resource Center is the main center of this Railway e-Library group. Libraries of all the railway headquarters are connected through e-library.

Apart from technical books, books on subjects like literature, religion, philosophy, travel literature, history and science etc. for enhancing the knowledge of railway employees are available in the library of SECR headquarters.

Mooks on many subjects including journalism, physics, engineering, technology, agriculture science, medicine, medicine, fine arts, management arts, pedagogy and sociology and jurisprudence and various types of magazines and newspapers are also available in the library.

## Uttarakhand eves defeat Ch'garh by 94 runs

**Raipur, Jan 05:** Uttarakhand defeated Chhattisgarh by 94 runs in the Women' One Day Trophy match being organised under the aegis of BCCI at New Delhi.

Electing to field first, the Chhattisgarh faced tough time as Punam Raut (79 runs) and Sarika Koli (72 runs) helped the Uttarakhand to score 262



runs in 50 overs. Pallavi Verma was the most successful bowler as she claimed 3 wickets. In reply, the Chhattisgarh team managed to score just 168 runs and lost the match by 94 runs. Shristi Sharma scored 53 runs for the team whereas Priyanka Mallick to scored 45 runs but failed to ensure victory.

## Municipal Commissioner Abinash Mishra meets Divisional Commissioner Dr Alang



**Raipur, Jan 05:** The newly appointed Municipal Corporation Commissioner of the district, Abinash Mishra paid a courtesy visit to Divisional Commissioner Dr Sanjay Alang. Alang discussed with Mishra regarding the development and other activities related to the city.

## Shyam Parande shares his valuable insights

**In the 13th edition of Gyanvarsha at IIM Raipur**

**Raipur, Jan 05:** Indian Institute of Management Raipur (IIM Raipur) hosted the 13th edition of Gyanvarsha on January 2, 2024, featuring Shyam Parande, Secretary (Global Coordinator and Social Leader) of Sewa International. Prof. Ram Kumar Kakani, Director of IIM Raipur, set the tone for the session by warmly welcoming dignitaries and attendees, paving the way for an enlightening discourse.

Prof. Kakani expressed gratitude for Shyam Parande's presence, acknowledging the profound impact of Sewa International's contributions to global humanitarian efforts. Shyam Parande commenced the session by highlighting Sewa International's vital contributions, citing instances from the Ukraine-



Russia war and the COVID-19 pandemic. He highlighted the organization's global footprint with 25+ countries, 5000+ volunteers, and 75+ disaster relief missions. Drawing on real-life scenarios, he narrated Sewa International's rapid response, notably during the Ukraine-Russia war, where volunteers grew from 20 to 300, facilitating the return of Indian citizens and aiding 1200 Nigerian students.

He emphasized the significance of the Indian diaspora, quoting Atal Bihari Vajpayee on how every Indian abroad carries a piece of Bharat with them. Stressing service without distinctions, he

highlighted Sewa International's achievements, including global tree planting and being the go-to organization in crises, recognized even by the US police force. He delved into Sewa International's flagship program, LEAD - High school student volunteer development, showcasing the organization's commitment beyond crisis management to education, livestock, and infrastructure development.

Shyam Parande concluded by asserting the diaspora as a powerful medium to propagate the ethos of service globally. The event concluded with Dr. Anand Joshi, presenting a token of appreciation to Shri Shyam Parande, symbolizing gratitude for the profound insights shared. Prof. Mrunal Chavda extended the vote of thanks, acknowledging Shyam Parande's invaluable contribution to reshaping global service and community engagement perspectives.

## Bus driver dies in bus-truck collision



**Jagdalpur, Jan 05:** The passenger bus of Gupta Travels, which left from the district headquarters Jagdalpur for Tirupati, met with an accident near

a village in Andhra Pradesh at around 4 am on Friday morning after colliding with a truck coming from the opposite direction. The bus driver has died in this accident, 4 passengers on the bus are injured. The truck driver has also been seriously injured.

According to the information received, the passenger bus had left from Jagdalpur for Tirupati at around 12 noon on Thursday.

The bus was going to Tirupati via Vijayawada. People from Bastar and Andhra Pradesh were also travelling in it. Today at 4 am on Friday, a bus collided with a truck coming from the front in a village in Andhra Pradesh. The accident was so severe that the bus driver died on the spot. Four people travelling in the bus have been injured.

The police reached the spot with the help of the people and took all the injured to the hospital, where they are undergoing treatment. Information about the names of the deceased and injured was not available.

## Bijapur is a district with possibilities: Katara

**Bijapur, Jan 05:** IAS officer Rajendra Kumar Katara, who was transferred from Bijapur and posted as Director SCERT, was given a touching farewell in the district office here on Friday. On this occasion, the district officials highly appreciated the tenure of outgoing Collector Katara, describing him as unforgettable and public welfare. In the farewell ceremony organized in the district auditorium, the chief guest Rajendra Kumar Katara said that Bijapur district is a district full of possibilities and working here is a pleasant experience.



He said that the place where there are challenges, work has to be done in a mission mode and we have tried to take the governance plans to the last person by coordinating with all the departments in a planned man-

ner. The role of the officers and employees of the district in the work that has been done in important areas like education, roads, electricity, rural development and communication is commendable. To do better work in ad-

ministration, it is necessary to work stress-free and in coordination with a clear goal. This kind of environment has been created in the district, the results of which we all are seeing. If any work is done with positive thinking then small obstacles do not matter and it takes us to the end of success. We all expanded the government schemes in the district to inaccessible and remote areas, the credit for this goes to the district officials.

Katara said that he believes in the fact that Bijapur district will be included among the better

districts of the state in the coming time and the development work here will be an example for the people.

On this occasion, CEO District Panchayat Ravi Kumar Sahu, SDM Pawan Kumar Premi, Deputy Collector Vikas Surve, Uttam Panchari, Dilip Uike, Assistant Commissioner Tribal Development KS Masram, CMHO Ajay Ramteke, DEO BR Baghel and other departmental officials. The officials praised the tenure of outgoing Collector Rajendra Kumar Katara and presented memento with best wishes for his new posting.

## Ch'garh Thai Boxing team embarks on a journey of glory

**Raipur, Jan 05:** The 10th Federation Cup National Thai Boxing Championship and Pro Night Fight is scheduled to take place from January 6 to 8, in

Khandwa, Madhya Pradesh. This prestigious event is being organized by the Madhya Pradesh Thai Boxing Association under the patronage of the Thai Boxing Indian Federation (TIF), an organization that holds affiliation with SGFI (Sports Authority of India).

A spirited 12-member contingent from Chhattisgarh, comprising 8 players (4 girls and 4 boys) and 4 officials (including 1 international referee, 1 national referee, 1 coach, and 1 representative of the State Thai Boxing Association), will represent the state in this high-profile championship. Remarkably, this team includes 8 members from Raipur and 4 from Durg. Notably, due to the impending examinations and the rising number of COVID-19 cases across



the country, several players made the difficult decision to withdraw their participation. On January 05, the determined Chhattisgarh boxing team embarked on their journey to Khandwa via the Chhattisgarh Express. This significant undertaking was made possible under the expert guidance of Chhattisgarh Boxing Association President, Anees Memon. The

team was led by the experienced international referee, Tikeshwari Sahu, and accompanied by their dedicated coach, Pallavi Sahu.

What makes this achievement even more special is the close association of all 8 members from Raipur with Shri Gujarati School, Raipur. From players like Priyanka Sahu, Manju Sahu, and Yash Rai representing Shri Gujarati Hindi

Medium School, to Pallavi Sahu, a former student and coach, and Tikeshwari Sahu, the sports teacher, all are part of this inspiring journey. School principal Anees Memon will accompany them as a state association representative, while Sadanand Prasad Bhanjdev and Drishti Patel, former students from Shri Gujarati English Medium School, will also be participating as players.

Before their departure, the Managing Committee of Shri Gujarati Shikshan Sangh, represented by Secretaries Tulsidas Patel and Ashok D Patel, along with Treasurer Jayant Bhai Tank, extended their heartfelt best wishes to the players and officials from Raipur, inspiring hope and support for their upcoming endeavour.

## Young man chewed sister's thumb

**Jagdalpur, Jan 05:** There was a dispute between the son of Nirmala Bonella, living near Lalbagh under Kotwali police station area of the district, and a young man living in Mohe. To solve this, Nirmala and Deepika reached the spot. During the dispute, another youth pushed Nirmala and started scuffling. Deepika also started stopping the young man to save her brother. Then the accused youth severed Deepika's finger by biting it with his teeth. On this matter, a report



was registered against the young man in the police station and Deepika was immediately taken to Dimrapal Medical College for first aid and the doctors asked to admit Deepika considering her condition and her treatment is going on.

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# Celebrate Diwali on Jan 22 by lighting diyas: BJP chief

Solan/Shimla, Jan 05 (PTI):

BJP chief JP Nadda on Friday urged people in Himachal Pradesh to light five diyas in their houses to celebrate "Diwali" on January 22, the day of the consecration ceremony at the Ram temple in Ayodhya.

He also told a public gathering in Solan that on June 11, 1989, it was in Himachal Pradesh's Palampur that a national resolution to build the temple was passed.

Nadda, who is a Rajya Sabha member from Himachal Pradesh, urged people of the state to "light five diyas (earthen lamps) and celebrate the January 22 consecration ceremony at the Ram temple in Ayodhya as Diwali".



BJP National President JP Nadda waves at supporters during a roadshow, in Solan, Himachal Pradesh, Friday.

"Devbhoomi Himachal Pradesh played a significant role in laying the foundation of the Ram temple as a national resolution to build it was passed in Palampur on June 11, 1989," he said.

The BJP chief also said that a cleanliness drive would be started from January 14 — Makar Sankranti — at temples. During his address, Nadda also exuded confidence that the BJP, which

won the assembly polls in Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh last year, will again do a "hat-trick" in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections in these states under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Nadda would also be attending a meeting of the state BJP core group.

Braving intense cold, several BJP workers gathered at the Mall Road in Solan to welcome Nadda, who, after his arrival, held a roadshow. He was also presented a 'trishool' (trident) at the end of the roadshow.

State BJP president Rajiv Bindal and leader of the opposition in the state assembly, Jai Ram Thakur, welcomed Nadda on his arrival at Solan.

## 3 juveniles apprehended for opening fire, thrashing man

New Delhi, Jan 05 (PTI): Three juveniles have been apprehended for allegedly opening fire outside a trader's house in northeast Delhi's Kabir Nagar area to extort money and beating up his nephew, police said on Friday. A country-made pistol was found in their possession, a senior police officer said.

"On the January 4 evening, there was a PCR call regarding the firing and thrashing of a man in the Kabir Nagar area. Complainant Mursaleen, who runs a small business, told police that he was getting extortion calls," the officer said.

The complainant further told police that on Thursday, a few men smashed a glass bottle outside his house and told him to step out. "When he did not come outside, the accused fired a bullet in the air and roughed up his 25-year-old nephew when he was returning home," the police officer said.

# Museum gets bomb threat, search yields nothing

Kolkata, Jan 05 (PTI):

Authorities of Kolkata's iconic Indian Museum on Friday received an email claiming bombs were planted inside, prompting police to launch a search operation at the over 200-year-old repository, officials said. However, no explosive could be found during the three-hour operation, they said. "We conducted a thorough search of the building, but no bomb was found," a senior police officer told PTI.

Public entry inside the museum was also put on hold for the day, he said. "The threat mail stated that several bombs were planted inside the Indian Museum, and those would explode any moment," the officer said. Personnel of the bomb squad of Kolkata Police started the



Bomb disposal squad personnel with sniffer dogs conduct a search at the Indian Museum following a bomb threat in Kolkata, Friday.

search and sanitisation operation at the museum around 11.30 am. Apart from the bomb squad, sniffer dogs, a quick response team (QRT) and a huge contingent of police were

positioned in and around the building in central Kolkata, he said. The cyber section of police has also started a probe to trace the source of the email, the officer added.

# Court grants bail to Hindu activist arrested in connection with 31-year-old case

Hubballi (Karnataka), Jan 5 (PTI):

A Sessions Court here on Friday granted bail to Srikanth Poojari, a Hindu activist, who was arrested by police here last week in connection with a case of rioting registered in December 1992.

The opposition BJP had been holding protests against the arrest in connection with a 31-year-old case related to the Ram Janmabhoomi agitation.

and demanded his release. The BJP has accused the Congress government of being harsh on Hindus, and also indulging in minority appeasement. The Congress had charged the BJP with politicising the issue.

The Chief Minister Siddaramaiah had described Poojari as a "social miscreant" and "criminal suspect" and said he is facing allegations of involvement in 16 anti-social ac-

tivities, including illegal liquor sales, gambling and matka.

The Additional District and Sessions Court Judge Parameshwara Prasanna B announced the order granting bail.

The government counsel had submitted objections on Thursday and claimed that Poojari was wanted in several other cases and had been avoiding attending court hearings.

# Indian Navy deploys warship, surveillance aircraft after hijacking of merchant vessel

New Delhi, Jan 5 (PTI):

The Indian Navy deployed a warship and a maritime patrol aircraft in the Arabian Sea following hijacking of a Liberian-flagged merchant vessel that is understood to have over a dozen Indian crew members.

The bulk-carrier MV Lila Norfolk sent a message on the United Kingdom Maritime Trade Operations (UKMTO) portal indicating that five to six unknown armed personnel boarded the vessel

on Thursday evening, the Indian Navy said. It said the overall situation is being "closely monitored" in coordination with other maritime agencies in the region.

The hijacking comes amid growing concerns over Houthi militants stepping up attacks on merchant vessels in the Red Sea amid the Israel-Hamas conflict. The Navy said it responded swiftly to the "developing situation" and deployed a maritime patrol aircraft and diverted frontline warship INS Chennai

for security of MV Lila Norfolk.

"Responding swiftly to the developing situation, the Indian Navy launched a maritime patrol aircraft and has diverted INS Chennai deployed for maritime security operations to assist the vessel," it said in a statement.

"The aircraft overflew the vessel early Friday morning and established contact with the vessel, ascertaining the safety of the crew," it said. Though there is no clarity from the Navy on the nationality of

the crew, it is learnt that over a dozen of them are Indians. The Indian Navy remains committed to ensuring safety of merchant shipping in the region along with international partners and friendly foreign countries.

"Naval aircraft continues to monitor movement and INS Chennai is closing the vessel to render assistance," the Navy said. The UKMTO is a British military organisation that tracks movements of various vessels in strategic waterways.

# SC notice to Centre on plea for guidelines on search and seizure of digital devices

New Delhi, Jan 5 (PTI):

The Supreme Court on Friday sought responses from the Centre and probe agencies like the CBI and the ED among others on a plea seeking guidelines for search and seizure of digital devices.

A bench of justices B R Gavai and Sandeep Mehta issued notice on the petition filed by news portal NewsClick and its founder Prabir Purkayastha. The apex court said the matter will be heard along with pending petitions raising similar issues. At the outset, the bench observed it does not appreciate everybody coming directly to the apex court with a petition under Article 32 of the Constitution.

Article 32 of the Constitution deals with remedies for enforcement of rights and 32 (1) says that right to move the apex court by appropriate proceedings for enforcement of rights conferred by this part is guaranteed. Senior advocate Kapil Sibal, appearing

for the petitioners, said they have approached the top court as other pleas raising similar issue have been entertained by the court and are currently pending.

He said in the pending petitions, the Centre has to come up with guidelines in this regard. The bench issued notice to the Centre, the CBI, the Enforcement Directorate (ED), Income Tax department, Delhi Police and others seeking their responses on the plea.

While the apex court was hearing the pending petitions last month, the Centre had said several rounds of talks have been held in order to formulate guidelines for seizure of electronic devices like mobile phones and laptops of individuals, especially those from the media, in the course of criminal investigations.

The Centre had assured the court that till the time the new guidelines are put in place, central probe agencies will follow the CBI manual for search and seizure of such equipments.

# JMM seeks Gandey assembly bypoll 'at earliest'

Ranchi, Jan 05 (PTI):

The ruling Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) on Friday urged the Election Commission of India (ECI) to conduct a by-election to the Gandey assembly seat "at the earliest". The seat has fallen vacant after JMM legislator Sarfaraj Ahmad resigned from the assembly on December 31. A notification in this regard was issued by the assembly secretariat on January 1.

A six-member delegation of the JMM led by party general secretaries Vinod Pandey and Supriyo Bhattacharya visited the office of Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) K Ravi Kumar during the day and submitted a memorandum to him with a request to conduct the by-election.

Later, Pandey told reporters, "We urged him to conduct the by-election to Gandey assembly seat within six months (from the date of resignation). The seat has fallen vacant after party MLA Sarfaraj Ahmad put down his papers."

According to Section 151A of the Representation of People Act, 1951, there is a provision to hold a by-election within six months in case the tenure of the assembly is more than one year, he said. "The first session of the fifth Jharkhand Assembly was convened on January 6, 2020. According to Article 172 of the Constitution of India, the tenure of the fifth Jharkhand Assembly is till January 5, 2025," the JMM said in its memorandum.

Pandey said that since more than one year is left in the tenure of the fifth assembly, the by-election should be conducted within six months. "The CEO assured us that our request would be forwarded to the ECI and whatever guideline is received from the commission will be followed," he said. Earlier, BJP MP from Godda constituency, Nishikant Dubey, in an X post, had said that with assembly elections in Jharkhand due in less than a year, by-election to Gandey cannot be conducted now.

# Priest who joined BJP removed from church positions

Thiruvananthapuram, Jan 05 (PTI):

Kerala priest Fr Shaiju Kurien of the prominent Orthodox Church, who joined BJP with around 50 Christian families, has been temporarily removed from his positions in the diocese pending an inquiry, authorities said on Friday.

Kurien was serving as the secretary of the Orthodox Church Nilakkal bhadrassanam (diocese) in Pathanamthitta district and as vice president of Nilakkal Bhadrassanam Sunday school.

The BJP, which has been wooing the Christian community in Kerala for some time, had announced on December 31 that Fr Kurien and around 50 families from the minor-

ity community joined the party in the state.

According to a statement issued by the Nilakkal bhadrassanam on Friday, the decision to temporarily remove the priest from all current church positions, pending an inquiry, was taken by the diocese council convened January 4.

However, the public relations officer's statement did not specify the reason for the action against him.

As per the statement, the council decided to request Catholica Bava, the supreme head of the Malankara Orthodox Church, to appoint an inquiry commission to probe the complaint received against Fr Kurien. It has been decided to complete the investigation within two months, it said.

A new priest would be appointed as the vice president of the Nilakkal Bhadrassanam Sunday school, it added.

On December 31, the BJP had announced through a Facebook post that Fr Shaiju Kurien and around 50 Christian families joined the party in the presence of Union Minister V Muraleedharan.

The BJP has said that many people from the Kerala Congress (Jacob) faction also joined the party in the presence of state president K Surendran in Thrissur district last Saturday.

The party attributed this trend of minorities joining its ranks to the visionary approach of development of the Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led government.

FORM NO. 14 [See Regulation 33(2)]

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RC/215/2023 22.12.2023

**PUNJAB NATIONAL BANK** Versus **M/S M V STEEL INDUSTRIES**

(TO) M/S M V STEEL INDUSTRIES SHRI VINOD SHARMA S/O SHRI DAMODAR SHARMA RAMSAGAR PARA, SHIV CHOWK, DHAMTARI (CD 2) SHRI VINOD SHARMA S/O SHRI DAMODAR SHARMA TARAI P H NO 18/24 DHAMTARI (C.G) (CD 3) SMT RANJANA SHARMA W/O SHRI VINOD SHARMA RAMSAGAR PARA, SHIV CHOWK, DHAMTARI (C.G)

This is to notify that as per the Recovery Certificate issued in pursuance of orders passed by the Presiding Officer, DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL JABALPUR in OA/1618/2019 an amount of Rs 3957450.30 (Rupees Thirty Nine Lakh Fifty Seven Thousand Four Hundred Fifty And Paise Thirty Only) along with pendent interest and future interest @ 12% Simple Interest Yearly w.e.f. 09/10/2019 till realization and costs of Rs 42000 (Rupees Forty Two Thousand Only) has become due against you (Jointly and severally / Fully / Limited).

- You are hereby directed to pay the above sum within 15 days of the receipt of the notice, failing which the recovery shall be made in accordance with the Recovery of Debts Due to Banks and Financial Institutions Act, 1993 and Rules there under.
- You are hereby ordered to declare on an affidavit the particulars of your assets on or before the next date of hearing.
- You are hereby ordered to appear before the undersigned on 07/02/2024 at 10:30 a.m. for further proceedings.
- In addition to the sum aforesaid, you will also be liable to pay:
  - Such interests as is payable for the period commencing immediately after this notice of the certificate / execution proceedings.
  - All costs, charges and expenses incurred in service of the service of this notice and warrants and other processes and all other proceedings taken for recovering the amount due. Given under my hand and the seal of the Tribunal, on this date: 22/12/2023

Recovery Officer  
Debts Recovery Tribunal, Jabalpur

**बैंक ऑफ महाराष्ट्र**  
**Bank of Maharashtra**  
भारत सरकार का उद्यम  
एक परिवार एक बैंक

Branch: Byron Bazaar, Raipur, C.G.  
0771-4265624, 4265623  
e-mail: bom981@mahabank.co.in

Head Office:  
LOKMANGAL, 1501, SHIVAJINAGAR, PUNE-5

**DEMAND NOTICE**

Notice is hereby given that the following (Borrowers) and (Guarantors) have defaulted in repayment of principal and interest of the loan facilities obtained by them from the Bank of Maharashtra and the loans have been classified as Non Performing Assets (NPA). The notice was issued to them under Section 13(2) of Securitization and Re-construction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002 on their last known addresses. Further borrower & guarantor are hereby informed by way of this public notice.

Name of the Borrowers / Guarantors & Address	Nature of Facility & A/c Number	Nature of Security	Present outstanding (as on 31/12/2023)	
			Principal	Unapplied interest
<b>Borrowers: 1. Smt. Murshida Begam (Deceased) w/o Shri Shekh Mujibur Rahman through her legal heirs:</b> 1) Shri Mujibur Rahman (Husband) 2) Shri Nasiruddin Ahmed (Son) 3) Ms. Sabana Yasmin (Daughter) 4) Ms. Sabana Parveen (Daughter) 5) Ms. Majeda Sultana (Daughter) 6) Shri Maniruddin Ahmed (Son)	TL Housing Loan- (HSG MAHASUP PRI-U & METRO) A/c - 60128474844 Rs.15.00 Lakh.	Primary security:- Property: Additional EM of Residential House (G+1) on Plot Kh No- 533/1, (Part), P.H. No-114, Ravindra Nath Tagore Ward, Ward no.51, Mauza- Tikarapara, Krishna Nagar, Tah. & Distt- Raipur (C.G.) Area of 1560 Sq. Ft. in the name of Smt. Murshida Begam. Boundaries of the property; North: Land of others, South: Road, East: Land of seller, West: Land of Uttam Parihar	Principal- <b>Rs. 9,79,708.50/-</b>	Unapplied interest till 31.12.2023- <b>Rs.35,050/-</b>
<b>2. Mr. Shekh Mujibur Rahman S/o Late Shri Raushan Ali. Both of their Add.: Mursida Manjil, Gali No.4, Krishna Nagar, Santoshi Nagar, Opposite Wardman School, Raipur, Chhattisgarh 492001</b>			<b>Total Rs. 9,79,708.50/-</b>	<b>Rs. 35,050/-</b>
<b>Final Total Rs.10,14,758.50 (Rupees Ten Lakh Fourteen Thousand Seven Hundred Fifty Eight and Paise Fifty only)</b>				

Hence, this Paper Publication. The above Borrower(s) and/or their Guarantor(s) (whenever applicable) are hereby called upon to make payment of outstanding amount within 60 days from the date of publication of this notice, failing which further steps will be taken after expiry of 60 days from the date of publication of this notice under sub-section (4) of section 13 of Securitization and Re-construction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002.

This notice is also being published in vernacular language. The English version shall be final in case any question of interpretation arises.

Date: 06.01.2024, Place: Raipur Chief Manager / Authorized Officer Bank of Maharashtra

**बैंक ऑफ महाराष्ट्र**  
**Bank of Maharashtra**  
भारत सरकार का उद्यम  
एक परिवार एक बैंक

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Name of the Borrowers / Guarantors & Address	Nature of Facility & A/c Number	Nature of Security	Present outstanding (as on 31/12/2023)	
			Principal	Unapplied interest
<b>Borrowers: 1. Mr. Shekh Mujibur Rahman S/o Late Shri Raushan Ali. 2. Smt. Murshida Begam (Deceased) w/o Shri Shekh Mujibur Rahman through her legal heirs:</b> 1) Shri Mujibur Rahman (Husband) 2) Shri Nasiruddin Ahmed (Son) 3) Ms. Sabana Yasmin (Daughter) 4) Ms. Sabana Parveen (Daughter) 5) Ms. Majeda Sultana (Daughter) 6) Shri Maniruddin Ahmed (Son)	TL Housing Loan- (HSG MAHASUP PRI-U & METRO) A/c- 60222194531 Rs.17.00 Lakh.	Primary security:- Property: Additional EM of Flat No-305,3rd Floor, "Krishna Vihar Pride" Jagatpur, Ward No-04, Raigarh, Tah. & Distt- Raigarh (C.G.) Area of 1342.00 Sq.Ft. in the name of Shri Shekh Mujibur Rahman. Boundaries of the property: North: Flat No.304, South : Open Sky, East : Open Sky, West : Stairs and Corridor	Principal- <b>Rs. 16,09,936.70/-</b>	Unapplied interest till 31.12.2023- <b>Rs. 60,252/-</b>
<b>3. Mr. Sk Nasiruddin Ahmed S/o Shri Shekh Mujibur Rahman. All of their Add.: Mursida Manjil, Gali No.4, Krishna Nagar, Santoshi Nagar, Opposite Wardman School, Raipur, Chhattisgarh 492001</b>	TL- (TL-SME-RTBE,PSE-UPTO-25LA) - A/c- 60284395892 Rs.9.00 Lakhs (Credit Facility extended to Mr. Shekh Mujibur Rahman S/o Late Shri Raushan Ali )	Primary security- 1. Hypothecation of Machinery (Mixer Machine Plain, 4 Wheel Water Tanker and Other Equipment)	Principal- <b>Rs.2,26,489.61/-</b>	Unapplied interest till 31.12.2023- <b>Rs. 12,239/-</b>
<b>Final Total Rs.19,08,917.31 (Rupees Nineteen Lakh Eight Thousand Nine Hundred Seventeen and Paise Thirty One only)</b>			<b>Total Rs.18,36,426.31</b>	<b>Rs.72,491/-</b>

Hence, this Paper Publication. The above Borrower(s) and/or their Guarantor(s) (whenever applicable) are hereby called upon to make payment of outstanding amount within 60 days from the date of publication of this notice, failing which further steps will be taken after expiry of 60 days from the date of publication of this notice under sub-section (4) of section 13 of Securitization and Re-construction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002.

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Date: 06.01.2024, Place: Raipur Chief Manager / Authorized Officer Bank of Maharashtra

## Ayushman Bharat: Transforming lives with health insurance

### Beneficiaries share their Ayushman Bharat success stories

Dhantari, Jan 05:

The Ayushman Bharat scheme, launched by the government, has been a beacon of hope for the underprivileged and middle-class families across the nation, providing them with improved healthcare facilities. This scheme has alleviated the worries of healthcare expenses for millions of people, turning their health struggles into success stories.

Santoshi, a resident of Gaurav village Kandel in Dhantari district, is one such beneficiary whose life took a positive turn with Ayushman Bharat. When she received the devastating news of her mother-in-law, Devkunwar Sahu, being diagnosed with breast cancer, she felt overwhelmed by the daunting task of securing treatment for such a severe illness. Santoshi, a hardworking individual determined to support her family, turned to the Ayushman Bharat scheme



emerged victorious in her battle for life. Under the guidance of Collector Rituraj Raghuvanshi, resolution camps are being organized daily as part of the Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra, reaching out to various development blocks in the district. At these camps, eligible beneficiaries receive valuable information about government welfare schemes directly from district-level officers. Furthermore, beneficiaries who have benefited from these schemes are eager to share their success stories.

The Central Government offers health insurance ranging from Rs 50,000 for APL families to Rs 5 lakh for eligible BPL families under this program. Families are provided with Ayushman Golden Cards, which grant them access to free treatment at designated hospitals, making healthcare more accessible to those in need.

For assistance, she immediately initiated the treatment process for her mother-in-law and, with the help of the Ayushman card, witnessed her recovery. Expressing her gratitude to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Santoshi admits that she could not have imagined, even in her wildest dreams, that her mother-in-law would overcome a life-threatening illness like cancer. Thanks to the Ayushman card, Devkunwar Sahu has

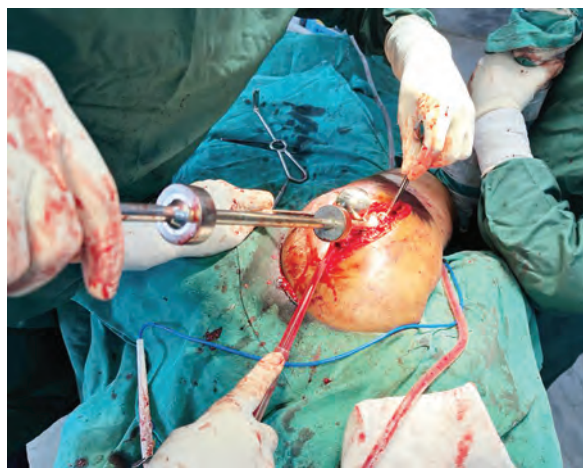
emerged victorious in her battle for life. Under the guidance of Collector Rituraj Raghuvanshi, resolution camps are being organized daily as part of the Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra, reaching out to various development blocks in the district. At these camps, eligible beneficiaries receive valuable information about government welfare schemes directly from district-level officers. Furthermore, beneficiaries who have benefited from these schemes are eager to share their success stories.

## District hospital's Orthopedic team transform lives

### Exceptional orthopedic team brings relief to patients

Kawardha, Jan 05:

The district hospital's orthopedic department has emerged as a beacon of hope and healing, bringing respite to countless patients who previously faced the challenge of referrals to distant medical facilities. Under the dynamic leadership of Collector Janmejey Mahobe, and with the invaluable guidance of Chief Medical and Health Officer Dr. Sujoy Mukherjee, the district hospital has achieved remarkable recognition at the state and national levels. This achievement reflects the unwavering commitment to healthcare excellence in the region. Civil surgeon Dr. Mahesh Suryavanshi, an anesthesiologist, goes



above and beyond his regular duties to ensure patients receive the necessary anesthesia during emergencies. Orthopedic specialists Dr. Vikash Kumar and Dr. Pranjal Jain have been instrumental in successfully performing orthopedic surgeries for 167 patients since January 23, thanks to their expertise and dedication. The hospital's efficient management also re-

ceives crucial support from Dr. Adesh Bagde, an anesthesiologist, RMO Dr. Purushottam Rajput, and hospital consultant Nilesh Gupta. The district hospital's orthopedic department addresses a wide range of conditions, including arthritis, spinal tumors, ligament and tendon issues, bone infections, fractures, muscle strains, joint pain, and congenital deformities, among others.



Dr. Vikash Kumar, with over two years of experience, has successfully performed numerous orthopedic surgeries, offering local residents an affordable alternative to private hospitals. Several heartwarming success stories stand as testimony to the hospital's orthopedic prowess. Patients like 60-year-old man Kumari Sarathi Kukdoor, who underwent a successful hip

bone operation, now lead normal lives, while young 12-year-old Kumkum Banwale's broken hand was mended using an innovative technique, restoring her health. Even congenital deformities, such as the case of one-week-old baby Hansika Khaira, have been effectively treated through serial casting and minor operations, offering newfound hope to patients and their families.

## Continuous improvement and lifelong learning propel success: Collector

Manendragarh, Jan 05:

In a remarkable initiative aimed at enhancing student performance in upcoming board examinations, a meeting gathered all principals from Manendragarh and Kharagwan at the Swami Atmanand English Medium School auditorium. Collector Narendra Kumar Dugga, in his address, extended his warm congratulations to the teachers for their diligent work during the elections and conveyed his heartfelt New Year wishes to everyone. Collector Dugga urged 10th and 12th-grade students to undergo pre-board



examinations before their main exams. Emphasizing the importance of these preparatory tests, he stressed that sharing the results of these exams with students and their parents would facilitate better performance in the final examinations. He highlighted the need for special attention to be

given to students facing challenges, ensuring no one is left behind. In his instructions to all principals, Collector Dugga challenged them to exceed the 85-90 percent school result threshold and strive for more students from their schools to make it onto the merit list. He emphasized that continuous improve-

ment and lifelong learning are keys to success, encouraging rigorous practice for the pre-board exams. Recognizing meritorious students is a collective achievement that brings pride to the entire district. Collector Dugga motivated 12th-grade students to explore opportunities beyond the board

exams by participating in competitive examinations such as JEE, NEET, and CLAT. He also took note of students who had been absent from school for consecutive days, urging principals to engage with parents or guardians to understand the reasons and ensure their prompt return to school. He instructed Block Education Officers and Sankul principals to regularly inspect schools within their Development Blocks and Sankuls, emphasizing the importance of maintaining cleanliness in school premises, as well as keeping libraries and laboratories organized and pristine.

## SP Bemetara holds review meeting



Bemetara, Jan 05:

The Superintendent of Police Bhavna Gupta (IPS) directed Gazetted Officers to quickly resolve the cases registered in the police stations of Bemetara district related to fraud and IT Act and women and children. After holding a meeting of the police station in-charge and the investigator, against the absconding accused in the cases of fraud and IT Act, 173 (8) in the cases, after completing the investigation quickly, arrest the absconding accused

### With police station in-charge and the investigators

### Instructions given to arrest the absconding accused in fraud and IT Act

and present them in the Court and get the hold amount returned in the cases of IT Act. Instructions were given to take action regarding the crime cases as per rules. And after taking information about

police station-wise crimes related to women and children, she directed to be resolved them as soon as possible by running a campaign under 'Operation Muskaan'. In the said meeting, SDO Bemetara Manoj Tirkey, Police Station City Kotwali in-charge Inspector Ajay Kumar Sinha, Police Station Navagarh in-charge Inspector Chandradev Verma, Cyber Cell in-charge Sub Inspector Mayank Mishra, Suni Dwarika Deshlehara, Head Constable Lokesh Singh and other staff were present.

## Baiga Tribe receives comprehensive healthcare benefits

Manendragarh, Jan 05: On the instructions of Collector Narendra Kumar Dugga, Chief Medical and Health Officer Dr. Suresh Tiwari has taken proactive steps to ensure the health and well-being of the Baiga tribe, a Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group (PVTG) residing in the remote region of Janakpur in the district. Dr. Suresh Tiwari led a special camp that provided 100 percent Ayushman cards, TB tests, dialysis, sickle cell testing, and non-communicable disease screenings to the Baiga tribal community. This program was executed with utmost urgency,

### Dedicated health staff unite for remote district's welfare

benefitting 90 percent of the Khadgwan and Manendragarh block populations on the 1st and 2nd of January. Remaining outreach is achieved through dedicated camps, managed by 20 Ayushman card operators from Manendragarh and Khadgwa blocks, under the guidance of DPM Suleman. Notably, Ayushman card creation efforts have been ongoing in the Janakpur block for three days. This initiative is a testament to the Chief

Medical and Health Officer's commitment to extend healthcare benefits to the entire Baiga tribe across the district. Despite resource challenges in the Janakpur block, where 70-75 percent of the Baiga tribe population resides, the district's health staff has formed a dedicated team.

This collaborative effort, under the leadership of CPM Co-Nodal Officer Rakesh Verma, DPC Deepak Chaudhary, and DDM Bhaskar Nirala, exemplifies a profound commitment to the welfare of the Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group (PVTG).

## Three fraudsters nabbed for cheating in the name of doubling money

Jagdalpur, Jan 05:

Kotwali police station of the district arrested three absconding accused in the case of conducting fraud of more than Rs 3.13 cr on the pretext of doubling the money. In which Jogendra Yadav alias Jugnu, Aruna Yadav and Uttam Yadav were arrested. The accused had filed a case against the absconding accused for extorting crores of rupees from about 70 people in the name of doubling their money in a year and not returning the money. During interrogation of the arrested accused Jogendra Yadav alias Jugnu, Aruna Yadav and Uttam Yadav, informed that in the year



2021, they made daily and monthly collections from all the people by posing as agents. It has been accepted that the amount of Rs 3,03,12,808 will not be returned after saying that the amount will be returned by doubling it in the annual payment. After the proceedings in the

Kotwali police station, the three accused of fraud with many people were sent on judicial remand on Thursday.

According to the information received from the police, the applicant Vekanteshwar Rao, R/o Maharani Ward Jagdalpur, lodged the re-

port that on August 7, 2021, Jogendra Yadav alias Jugnu, S/o late Mayaram Yadav and his wife Aruna Yadav and brother Uttam Yadav, R/o Housing Board Colony Lalbagh, made daily collection of money from various government and non-government traders of the city, month-

ly collection and annual payment. A total of Rs 3,03,12,808 was deposited from 70 people by telling them that amount will be doubled and till date the money has not been returned.

By not repaying the deposited money to anyone, agents Jogendra Yadav alias Jugnu, Aruna Yadav and Uttam Yadav have cheated everyone with embezzlement of funds worth crore. On the report of the applicant, a crime under section 409, 420, 34 of IPC has been registered against the three accused in the police station Kotwali and all the three accused in the case have been arrested today and are being investigated.

## Maharashtra, CBSE and MP in semi-finals

### Players from Chhattisgarh and Jammu Kashmir will face in quarterfinals

### 67th National School Sports Competition

Bilaspur, Jan 05:

The 67th National School Sports Competition is in full swing, and it's brimming with excitement and remarkable performances. As the tournament entered its second day, teams from different states showcased their prowess in the league matches, securing their spots in the next stage. The quarter-finals witnessed intense battles, setting the stage for more thrilling action. With each passing day, the competition's intensity and enthu-

siasm continue to soar. Out-of-state players have expressed their appreciation for Bilaspur's warm hospitality, adding to the positive ambiance of the event. With just two days remaining until the competition's grand finale on Friday, the 5th, anticipation is at an all-time high, with Deputy Chief Minister Arun Sao set to grace the event as the chief guest.

### Result of Girls' Category

The first match in the 17-year-old girls' category was scheduled between IPSC and Haryana, but due to the absence of the IPSC team, Haryana received a walkover. The second match saw Chandigarh triumph over Madhya Pradesh by 5 points. Delhi secured a 5-point victory against



Haryana in the third match. Chhattisgarh won against Jammu Kashmir by 10 points in the fourth match. Chandigarh registered a significant 10-point win over Telangana in the fifth match. Andhra Pradesh clinched victory by 2 points over Madhya Pradesh in the sixth match. Gujarat secured a 10-point win over Jammu

Kashmir in the seventh match. Maharashtra emerged victorious by two points against Delhi in the eighth match. CBSE Welfare Organization dominated Vidya Bharti with a resounding 10-point victory in the ninth match. Chandigarh won by 9 points against Andhra Pradesh in the tenth match. The eleventh

match between IPSC and Maharashtra resulted in a walkover for Maharashtra. CBSE won by 10 points against Tamil Nadu in the twelfth match. Maharashtra, Vidya Bharti, Chhattisgarh, Andhra Pradesh, Chandigarh, Gujarat, CBSE Welfare Organization, and Delhi secured their places in the

quarter-finals by winning their respective matches. In the evening, the first quarter-final match in the women's category witnessed Maharashtra defeating Vidya Bharti by 10 points.

### Result of Men's Category

In the 17-year-old boys' category, the league matches showcased in-

tense competition and remarkable performances. Andhra Pradesh secured a 3-point victory against Maharashtra in the first match. Gujarat triumphed over Haryana by 5 points in the second match. Chandigarh won by 3 points against Vidya Bharti in the third match. Madhya Pradesh emerged victorious by 10 points against Jammu Kashmir in the fourth match. Chhattisgarh registered a significant 16-point win over Telangana in the fifth match. CBSE secured an 11-point victory over Gujarat in the sixth match. Maharashtra won by 11 points against Telangana in the seventh match. Jammu Kashmir secured a narrow 1-point win over Tamil Nadu in the eighth match.

Chhattisgarh won by 1 point against Andhra Pradesh in the ninth match. Delhi dominated Chandigarh with a 10-point victory in the tenth match. The eleventh match saw Chhattisgarh winning by 1 point against Maharashtra. CBSE Welfare Organization, Chandigarh, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Delhi, Haryana, Chhattisgarh, and Jammu Kashmir secured their places in the quarter-finals by winning their respective league matches. In the evening, two quarter-final matches in the boys' category were held, with CBSE defeating Chandigarh by 11 points and Madhya Pradesh securing a narrow 1-point victory over Andhra Pradesh.

## India committed to redefining ties with partners in neighbourhood: EAM Jaishankar

Kathmandu, Jan 05 (PTI):

India under Prime Minister Narendra Modi is committed to redefining its relationship with partners in its neighbourhood, especially with Nepal, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said on Friday as he inaugurated several post-earthquake reconstruction projects in the Himalayan nation.

Jaishankar, who was here on a two-day visit, also hoped that the India-Nepal ties would continue to cross more and more milestones in the days to come.

Jaishankar along with his Nepalese counterpart N P Saud on Friday jointly inaugurated the new building of Tribhuvan University Library constructed with India's assistance at Kirtipur, 8 km South of Kathmandu.

They also remotely inaugurated other post-earthquake reconstruction projects which include 25 schools, 32 health facilities and a culture



External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar with Nepal's Foreign Minister NP Saud and others during the inauguration of Tribhuvan University Central Library and other post-earthquake reconstruction projects, in Kathmandu, Friday, Jan. 5.

centre by lighting a laser beam on the monitor.

These projects were undertaken as part of a collaborative effort to support the people of Nepal in the aftermath of the devastating earthquake of 2015.

"Joined my colleague FM @NPSaudnc at the inauguration of Tribhuvan University Central Library, 25 schools, 32 health facilities and culture sector project," Jaishankar posted on X.

"Concrete delivery of the commitments made by PM @narendramodi on Nepal's post-earthquake

reconstruction," he said.

Speaking at the occasion, Jaishankar said in recent years, "We have witnessed the real transformation of the India-Nepal relationship with significant strides made in a variety of areas."

"Under the leadership of Prime Minister Modi, the government of India is committed to continuing redefining its relationship with partners in our neighbourhood, especially with Nepal," Jaishankar said.

The bilateral partnership has expanded multi-

fold and connectivity, be it physical, digital or energy-related, has become a cornerstone of this expanding collaboration and this has further strengthened people-to-people linkages between our two countries, the minister said.

He said during his visit, the two nations signed some really important agreements, both in the areas of power sector cooperation as well as project implementation.

"I am very confident that this will positively impact the lives of the ordinary person in Nepal," he said.

The development cooperation between the two nations has also been bolstered by educational and capacity-building initiatives in various sectors including a large number of scholarships in premier educational institutions in India as well as in Nepal to encourage the brightest students here to continue their studies, he said.

## TEATRO A MIL FESTIVAL



Members of La Patogallina street theater company perform during the 'Teatro a Mil' festival in Santiago, Chile. "Teatro a Mil" is the largest performing arts festival in Chile with participating groups originating from several countries.

## Pak SC reserves verdict in lifetime disqualification case

Islamabad, Jan 05 (PTI):

Pakistan's Supreme Court on Friday reserved its judgment in the hearing of a key case that would settle the issue of lifetime disqualification of some leading politicians, including former prime ministers Nawaz Sharif and Imran Khan.

The verdict is expected to determine once and for all the controversy around the period of disqualification under Article 62(1)(f) of the Constitution and the Elections Act 2017.

A 2018 judgment by a five-member bench of the apex court had declared that disqualification under Article 62(1)(f) was for life, but changes made in the Elections Act 2017 on June 26, 2023, by a coalition government led by Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) restricted

it to a five-year term only.

A seven-member bench, headed by Chief Justice Qazi Faez Isa, conducted the hearing on Friday.

During the hearing, the chief justice remarked that the Supreme Court verdict on lifetime disqualification and the amendments to the Elections Act 2017 could not co-exist. He also stated that discrepancies in the apex court's interpretation and the law could result in "confusion" in the upcoming general elections.

At the hearing's conclusion, the chief justice said a short order would be issued without specifying a time for its announcement.

"We will try to come up with a shorter order as soon as possible. Probably not today, but it will be very soon, God willing," he said.

During the hearing, which spanned several days, the court heard many lawyers, garnering their views on the duration of disqualification.

The remarks made by the chief justice and some other judges indicated they were not comfortable with the lifelong ban on convicted politicians, the Pakistani media reported.

However, it was not clear if the limit of disqualification should be imposed through a court order or an amendment to the Constitution.

Most of the arguments were in favour of nullifying the concept of the lifelong ban and limiting it to a five-year term. However, the chief justice repeatedly said that he also wanted to hear arguments supporting lifelong disqualification and asked lawyers to come forward.

## Another Hindu temple attacked' with pro-Khalistan graffiti in California

San Francisco, Jan 05 (PTI):

A Hindu temple in California has been defaced with pro-Khalistan graffiti, two weeks after a prominent temple was vandalised in the same US state.

Unknown persons vandalised Vijay's Sherawali Temple in Hayward in the Bay Area, the Hindu American Foundation (HAF) said on Friday.

It comes a few weeks after the Shri Swaminarayan Mandir Hindu Temple in Newark was vandalised with anti-India graffiti.

"Another Bay Area Hindu temple attacked with pro-Khalistan graffiti. The Vijay's Sherawali Temple in Hayward, CA sustained a copycat defacement just two weeks after the Swaminarayan Mandir attack and one week after a theft at the Shiv Durga temple in the same area," the HAF posted

on X on Friday.

The foundation has said that they have contacted the Alameda Police Department and Civil Rights Division.

"HAF is in touch with temple leaders and contact with @AlamedaPD & @CivilRights," the post read. The foundation also asked temple leaders to download temple safety guide that discusses that temple graffiti qualifies as a hate crime. "We are once again encouraging all temple leaders to download the @HinduAmerican temple safety guide...The guide specifically discusses that temple graffiti qualifies as a hate crime and also the importance of installing working security cameras and alarm systems in view of the rising threat from #Khalistan proponents as well as the omnipresent risk from anti-Hindu actors," the post said.

## North Korea conducts artillery drills along disputed sea border

Seoul, Jan 05 (AP):

North Korea fired artillery rounds Friday near its disputed sea boundary with South Korea in violation of a fragile 2018 military agreement, officials said, prompting the South to plan similar drills.

North Korea's front-line maritime firing exercise was the first of its kind in about a year. Experts say North Korea will likely intensify a run of weapons tests in the coming months, escalating tensions on the Korean Peninsula ahead of the South's parliamentary elections in April and the United States presidential election in November.

South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff said North Korea fired 200 rounds in the waters north of their disputed western sea boundary. It said South

Korea suffered no damages.

Joint Chiefs of Staff spokesperson Lee Sung Joon told a televised briefing that the North's artillery firing was "an act of provocation that threatens peace and heightens tensions on the Korean Peninsula." Lee said South Korea strongly urges North Korea to stop provocations.

He said South Korea's military will take an unspecified step in response to the North's artillery firing while closely monitoring North Korean moves in close coordination with the United States.

Lee didn't elaborate what corresponding step South Korea would take. But residents of South Korea's front-line island of Yeonpyeong said the South Korean military has asked them to evacuate because

it plans to launch maritime firing drills later Friday.

The Koreans' poorly marked western sea boundary witnessed bloody naval clashes in 1999, 2002 and 2009. The North's alleged torpedoing of a South Korean warship killed 46 South Korean sailors in March 2010, and the North's artillery bombardment of Yeonpyeong Island killed four South Koreans in November 2010.

The 2018 agreement requires the two Koreas to halt live-fire exercises and aerial surveillance in no-fly and buffer zones that they established along their border. But the deal is in danger of collapsing after the two Koreas began bickering since the North's first successful military spy satellite launch in November.

## Trains collide on Indonesia's main island of Java, killing at least 4 people

Bandung, Jan 5 (AP):

Two trains collided on Indonesia's main island of Java on Friday, causing carriages to buckle and overturn and killing at least four people, officials said. The accident happened about 500 meters (yards) from Cicalengka train station in West Java province, said Ayep Hanapi, a spokesperson for PT Kereta Api Indonesia, the national railways.

He said the Turangga express train carrying 287 passengers was traveling from Surabaya, the capital of East Java province, when it plowed into a Bandung Raya commuter train with 191 passengers heading to Padalarang from Cicalengka station at about 6:30 a.m. "All passengers of the two crashed trains have been evacuated safely," Hanapi said, adding that 28 people were injured. He said 22



A crane tries to remove the wreckage after the collision between two trains in Cicalengka, West Java, Indonesia, Friday, Jan. 5. The trains collided on Indonesia's main island of Java on Friday, causing several carriages to buckle and overturn, officials said.

were being treated at a hospital, mostly with head injuries.

West Java Police spokesperson Ibrahim Tompo said at least four train crew members were killed the driver and his assistant on the commuter train and a steward and a

security guard on the express train. Television video showed several carriages overturned or badly mangled. One carriage plunged into a nearby rice field. People screamed as panicked passengers tried to get out of the train. Some walked

through the fields carrying suitcases and other items as ambulances evacuated the injured. Transportation ministry spokesperson Adita Irawati apologized for the accident and for the disruption of railway services across Java island.

She said the cause of the accident was being investigated and that rescuers had evacuated all passengers and were working to remove the trains to restore service.

Train accidents are common on Indonesia's aging railroad network, especially at crossings.

In October 2013, a passenger train slammed into a minibus that was carrying families of hajj pilgrims at an unguarded crossing in West Java's Indramayu district, killing 13 people. A train from the capital, Jakarta, in 2010 plowed into the rear of a train that was sitting at a station in Central Java province, killing 36 people. The government has spent billions of dollars on improving infrastructure, including roads, railways, airports and power plants, in the world's largest archipelago nation, home to more than 270 million people.

## Maldivian President Muizzu to visit China next week

Beijing, Jan 05 (PTI):

Mohamed Muizzu, the new Maldivian President, will pay a state visit to China from January 8 to 12, the Chinese Foreign Ministry announced here on Friday.

Muizzu, who is seen as a pro-China politician, took oath as the eighth President of the Maldives after defeating the India-friendly incumbent Ibrahim Mohamed Solih in the presidential runoff held in September.

Muizzu is visiting China at the invitation of Chinese President Xi Jinping, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Hua Chunying said in a press release.

Muizzu's predecessors in the recent past visited India first, considering the wide-ranging bilateral ties and the Maldives' proximity to India, followed by China which has expanded its

influence in the island nation by investing in major infrastructure projects there.

However, Muizzu chose Turkiye as his first destination for a foreign visit soon after his election followed by the UAE where he met Prime Minister Narendra Modi on the sidelines of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP28) on December 1 and discussed the progress of the wide-ranging bilateral ties.

During the meeting, both leaders agreed to set up a core group to discuss the multi-dimensional relations and further deepens ties.

The meeting took place after Muizzu requested

New Delhi to withdraw 77 Indian military personnel from the Maldives and decided to review more than 100 bilateral agreements between the two countries.

Earlier, Muizzu's government announced its plans to drop a hydrographic survey agreement with India.

Muizzu will be the second-highest politician to visit China in recent weeks.

The new Maldives Vice President Hussain Mohamed Lathief last month visited China, his first visit abroad, and took part in the China-sponsored China-Indian Ocean Region Forum on Development Cooperation (CIORF) in Kunming.

## Sri Lanka repatriates 21 Indian fishermen to Chennai

Colombo, Jan 05 (PTI):

The Sri Lankan government on Friday repatriated 21 Indian fishermen to Chennai, days after they were arrested by the island nation's Navy for illegally fishing in the country's waters.

The Navy said in 2023 they had arrested 240 Indian fishermen along with 35 trawlers for poaching in Sri Lankan waters. "21 #Indian fishermen

have been repatriated from #SriLanka to #Chennai a short while ago," the Indian High Commission in Sri Lanka posted on X. The fishermen issue is a contentious one in the ties between India and Sri Lanka, with Lankan Navy personnel even firing at Indian fishermen in the Palk Strait and seizing their boats in several alleged incidents of illegally entering Sri Lankan territorial waters.

## B-1 bomber crashes at South Dakota Air Force base, crew ejects safely

Washington, Jan 05 (AP):

A B-1 Lancer bomber from Ellsworth Air Force Base in South Dakota crashed Thursday, with all four of its crew members ejecting, the Air Force said. The B-1 crashed "at approximately 5:50 pm today while attempting to land on the installation. At the time of the accident, it was on a training mission. There were four aircrew on board. All four ejected safely," the 28th Bomb Wing at Ellsworth

said in a statement. At the time of the crash visibility was poor with freezing temperatures and low clouds, according to automated weather reporting equipment recording airfield conditions. The B-1 is a conventional supersonic bomber that first came into service in the 1980s. It has been used to support the US bomber presence in the Asia-Pacific region and to conduct close air support missions in US operations in Afghanistan.

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**Public Notice**

In compliance to provisions contained in Chhattisgarh State Electricity Regulatory Commission (Terms and Conditions for determination of tariff according to Multi-Year Tariff Principles and Methodology and Procedure for determination of Expected revenue from Tariff and Charges) (First Amendment) Regulations, 2023, Fuel & Power Purchase Adjustment Surcharge (FPPAS) to be billed in the month of January 2024 (billing period December 2023) on the billed energy charge of November 2023 is given in the table below: -

1. All category of consumers	7.04% on the energy charge of November 2023
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The computation details of aforesaid FPPAS are displayed in company's website www.cspdcl.co.in

**SAVE ELECTRICITY** IS-39271/2 Executive Director (RA & PM) CSPDCL: Raipur

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**EMPANELMENT OF VENDORS**  
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NCERT wishes to empanel Vendors for distribution of its publications including school textbooks from the year 2024 onwards. Reputed stockist/wholesellers having experience of distribution of books with sound financial background and who are in a position to give stipulated target business in a year, and fulfill other conditions as detailed in the application form, may apply. The application form and documents can be downloaded from the **NCERT website - www.ncert.nic.in**. The existing vendors also need to apply afresh if they wish to get empanelled for the year 2024. The duly filled-in applications along with the required documents and Demand Draft of Rs 1000/- issued in favour of Publication Division, NCERT payable at New Delhi, should reach the Administrative Officer, Publication Division, NCERT, Sri Aurobindo Marg, New Delhi-110016 (Ph.:011-26562708) within 15 days from the date of Publication of this Advertisement in Newspapers.

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## CENTRAL Chronicle

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### India's Resilient Growth

#### A Steady Ascent

India, with its vast and diverse landscape, is on an economic journey that continues to captivate the world. The United Nations World Economic Situation and Prospects (WESP) 2024 report reaffirms India's status as the fastest-growing large economy globally. This is a testament to the resilience and dynamism of the Indian economy, which is poised for sustained growth. The report predicts a growth rate of 6.2 percent for India in 2024, underpinned by robust domestic demand and a flourishing manufacturing and services sector. This projection, while marginally lower than the 6.3 percent estimated for 2023, highlights India's unwavering trajectory of progress. One cannot help but admire India's consistent performance over the past few years. The nation has consistently surpassed the six percent mark in economic growth, a remarkable feat in a rapidly evolving global economic landscape. It is a testament to the dedication and hard work of the Indian people and the resilience of the Indian economy. As we delve into the report's findings, it becomes evident that India's growth story is multifaceted. The manufacturing and services sectors continue to be the bedrock of India's economic prosperity. Their sustained expansion contributes significantly to India's GDP growth. However, there is a cloud on the horizon in the form of erratic rainfall patterns, which could potentially impact agricultural output. This emphasizes the need for India to adopt resilient agricultural practices that can withstand the challenges posed by climate change. The report highlights a crucial aspect of India's economic resilience – the role of private consumption and public investment. It is heartening to note that private consumption remains robust, driving economic growth. Strong public investment further bolsters this growth, reinforcing the government's commitment to infrastructure development and economic expansion. Inflation, a perennial concern for many economies, has been managed effectively in India. While inflation rates were relatively high, India managed to avoid drastic rate hikes, resulting in a gradual decline in inflation. This prudent approach to monetary policy ensures that economic stability remains a priority, contributing to India's steady growth. Amidst these accolades, one might wonder if there are any factors holding back India's economic growth. The report's projections, from 7.7 percent in 2022 to 6.6 percent in 2025, may seem like a tapering trajectory, but they are reflective of a balanced and sustainable growth strategy. Shantanu Mukherjee, Director of the Economic Analysis and Policy Division, aptly points out that growing at much faster rates could risk overheating the economy. India, with its vast population and complexity, must tread the path of growth with caution. Sustaining a growth rate of over six percent is not merely an achievement; it is a testament to prudent economic policies and strategic planning. It ensures that India's economic engine keeps chugging forward without the risk of burning out.

### Hindenburg Row

#### SC Ruling Upholds SEBI's Credibility

A year after US-based short-seller Hindenburg Research accused the Adani Group of manipulating its share prices, the Supreme Court of India has delivered a verdict that deserves attention and scrutiny. The ruling has declined the transfer of the probe into these allegations to a special investigation team or the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI). Instead, it has placed its trust in the country's market regulator, the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI), to conclude its inquiry into two pending cases within a span of three months. This decision comes in response to a slew of petitions seeking either a court-monitored investigation or a CBI inquiry into the allegations made by Hindenburg Research. One of these petitions rested its case on a report from the Organised Crime and Corruption Reporting Project (OCCRP), a global network of investigative journalists. The OCCRP report had accused the Adani Group of channelling investments into publicly traded stocks through what it termed 'opaque' funds. It is important to note that among the OCCRP's donors is a funding organization founded by the controversial American billionaire, George Soros. Mr. Soros, in February of the previous year, had publicly stated that Prime Minister Narendra Modi would need to address questions from investors and parliamentarians regarding the Adani row. The Supreme Court, however, has taken a clear stance that unverified reports from third-party organizations cannot serve as conclusive proof. This decision by the Supreme Court carries considerable weight, especially in light of accusations from the Opposition that SEBI has displayed a lackadaisical approach in its investigation. Equally significant is the fact that, despite the Hindenburg and OCCRP reports, the United States government has not hesitated to become involved in an Adani project through one of its agencies. In November of the preceding year, it was announced that the US International Development Finance Corporation would invest a substantial \$553 million in Colombo West International Terminal Pvt Ltd, a consortium involving Adani Ports & Special Economic Zone Ltd and two Sri Lankan entities. The responsibility now lies squarely on SEBI's shoulders to conduct a thorough and unbiased investigation within the stipulated timeline. It must strive to negate all attempts by its detractors to undermine its credibility and integrity. The confidence placed in SEBI by the Supreme Court is a testament to the regulator's capabilities and its commitment to upholding the sanctity of India's financial markets. While it is crucial to scrutinize the actions and allegations surrounding such high-profile cases, it is equally important to trust the institutions tasked with addressing them. SEBI's role in safeguarding the interests of investors and maintaining the integrity of our financial markets is paramount. The Supreme Court's decision is a recognition of this role and a reminder that, in matters of financial markets and regulatory oversight, trust in institutions is essential for a healthy and thriving economy. It remains to be seen how SEBI proceeds with its investigation and whether it can conclusively address the allegations against the Adani Group. However, one thing is clear: the regulatory framework in India has been tested, and the faith placed in SEBI's capabilities is a testament to the resilience of our financial system. As the investigation unfolds, it is imperative that all stakeholders, including investors and the broader public, closely follow the proceedings to ensure transparency and accountability.

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](mailto:email@editorcentralchronicle@gmail.com).

### REPUBLIC DAY 2024 REHEARSAL



ITBP women personnel during rehearsal for the Republic Day 2024 celebration on a cold and foggy winter morning, in New Delhi, Friday, Jan. 5

## Evolution of Public Relation



ER. PRABHAT KISHORE



Public relation is the management function which evaluates public attitude, identifies the policies and procedures of an individual or an organisation with the public interest and executes a programme of action to learn public understanding and acceptance. According to Edward Barney's, "Public relation councillor directs, advises upon and supervises activities of his clients which affect the interest of the public. He interprets his clients to the public and public to the clients." Engineering of concept is the attempt by information, persuasion and by adjustment to public support for an activity, cause, movement or institutions. Sam Black defines PR as "The fundamental purpose of public relations practice is to establish a two-way flow of mutual understanding based on truth, knowledge and full information." According to John E. Marston, "Public relations is planned, persuasive communications designed to influence significant publics."

The evolution of public relation took place in United States of America, when a mass agitation

was done between 1860-65 to 1900 for the removal of a railway track. The slogan raised there was 'Public be informed', which later became the principle of Public Relation. Discussing the history of public relation some scholars recall the events of pre-historic days, such as 'The Sermon of Mounts' and other such historic happenings to prove that the tradition of public relation is very old. Inevitably, the manner in which public relation is defined today will not be appropriate to keep it in the category PR. It is true that earlier some ruling persons, Rajas, Samrats, Dharamgurus, poets & other scholars were anxious about the people verdict, but it will be appropriate to keep their effort in the category of public recreation. The system of PR evolved in the middle of 19th century when industrial revolution took place in the western countries. Before this during French revolution, the message of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity was spread over which created favourable environment for revolutionists. But this message was just the product of

prevailing situation and not of the scientific thinking or of any system. On the contrary, in 20th century, the campaign work by Bolshevik revolutionists was done in more organised ways. People attention were drawn upon their posters, pamphlets, and other printouts, but that do not fall under the current definition of PR the committee for propaganda of the faith' of Roman Catholics or 'Institute of propaganda' (founded to train the priest for Dharamprachar), which were constituted between 15th to 17th century, also not fall under the present day PR. Actually the profession or activity of PR which we talk today has been originated in America in the middle of 19th century and was rapidly developed by the end of the century. On the statement 'public be damned' of the industrialist William Henry Vanderbilt, people like Mark Twain reacted sharply as- 'Public be informed'. As much the industrialist talks on Laissez Faire, so much the people reacted and went away from them. Now a day, not only in western countries, but also in Bharat, there are Public Relation units in most of the institutions, which are lashed with dedicated workers. In central government offices, the importance of PR had already been accepted during British Raj. During Second World War 'War Propaganda Departments' were opened at the centre as well as in states. After independence, its necessity was felt. In the country, a lot of works like economic development and social consciousness were done which could not have succeeded without the people co-operation. As a result, the work of PR was done

in a systematic way. In various states a cadre of PR experts was constituted and they were engaged in press relations, publication and other like activities. Some government information agencies are playing important role as PR agents. At one hand development of electronic Medias like Akashvani, Doordarshan, & a large number of private channels took place rapidly, on the other hand audio-visual mediums like video-films are being used frequently. Not only on national but on international level UNESCO chapter has been accepted which deals the need of independent, expanded and balanced propaganda of information to remove distinction and create harmonious environment all over the world. For fulfillment of these needs, the mass communication experts and PR worker have to play vital role. The seed, developed due to debarring of people from the right of information has now grown up in a large tree, which provides shadow of truth and discipline by removing suspicion and fear of the people. The Indians, too, are not bereft of this shadow which is appreciable for PR activities. The objectives of PR are to inform the people with the main activities of the institutions, to highlight the special services available in the institutions, discussion of activities received by the nation and society, role of organisation in the field of research and development and to promote and propagate the human values in life.

(Author is a technocrat and educationist.)

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

#### Hit-and-Run Crisis

The nationwide upheaval and its impact on essential supplies highlight the urgent problem of hit-and-run fatalities. It is clear that a stringent and all-encompassing law addressing hit-and-run incidents is crucial. The strike stemmed from drivers' apprehension of facing attacks from bystanders if they do not escape following an accident. The Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita includes measures against mob lynching, such as the death penalty or life imprisonment. It is essential to raise public awareness about these provisions and ensure their effective enforcement to reduce instances of mob violence.

MK Nair, Rapur

#### Truckers' Valid Concerns

The recent truck operators' strike, which protested a new penal provision, undoubtedly inconvenienced the public, yet their concerns hold merit. After accidents, regardless of fault, crowds often turn violent, endangering the lives of truck drivers. In such situations, the police may be absent or passive observers. While the state should primarily bear the responsibility for transporting the injured to the hospital, all present at the scene should, out of humanitarianism, assist. However, legislating this responsibility onto drivers lacks logic, as innocent drivers could become victims of mob violence.

Shiv Kumar Mishra

#### Japan's Lessons

There is much to glean from Japan when it comes to disaster management. Strengthening the system for better preparedness and swift responses to natural calamities is imperative to prevent immense damage. Despite experiencing a 7.6-R earthquake recently, Japan managed to minimize losses due to exceptional handling of the situation. Japan's ability to record low fatalities despite frequent earthquakes is credited to the resilience of its people, advanced engineering skills, construction technology, and rigorous enforcement of construction laws.

Rakesh Gupta, Korba

#### India's Space Success

Following Chandrayaan-3, ISRO's triumph with the successful launch of PSLV-C58 marks another major milestone for India's space program. The placement of XPOsat into orbit for black hole research solidifies India's position among spacefaring nations like the US, China, and Russia. Surprisingly, this Indian mission achieved success at a cost of \$30 million, boasting a five-year lifespan, in stark contrast to the US's \$188-million IXPE mission, which offers only a two-year lifespan. This cost-effectiveness underscores India's prowess in space endeavors.

Ramkumar Menon, Kollam

## Striking a Balance: Doctors' Accountability and Patient Safety



Yash Pal Raihan

In the intricate world of healthcare, a delicate equilibrium must be maintained between the accountability of doctors and the safety of patients. Recent developments in India have brought this complex issue to the forefront, sparking debates about the responsibilities of medical professionals and the rights of those they serve.

#### A Thin Line: Ineptitude vs. Dedication

At the heart of this debate lies the question: when should doctors be held accountable for the unfortunate outcome of a patient's treatment? It is a question without easy answers. In instances where a doctor has genuinely given their best efforts, and despite this, the patient does not survive, should the physician bear the

burden of responsibility? The prevailing sentiment suggests otherwise. However, when ineptitude or negligence is evident, it is only fair that doctors be held accountable. Yet, the challenge remains in distinguishing between ineptitude and dedication. In the field of medicine, where uncertainty is a constant companion, drawing the line between these two can be incredibly challenging.

#### Addressing Medical Negligence

India grapples with a staggering statistic: more than 5.2 million people die each year due to medical negligence. Historically, such cases were categorized as culpable homicide not amounting to murder, a somber reflection of society's apathy toward patient lives. However, in 2023, the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha (Second) Sanhita introduced significant changes to the legal landscape.

The Indian Medical Association (IMA) advocated for the decriminalization of medical negligence, a move that would grant doctors immunity from legal consequences. While complete immunity was not granted, registered medical practitioners now face imprisonment of up to two years and a fine if medical negligence can be proven. Additionally, an essential clause stipulates more severe penalties, including imprisonment of up to 10 years, for those who flee or fail to report incidents.

#### The Complexity of Medical Negligence

Establishing medical negligence is

not a task to be taken lightly, as it requires specialized knowledge. The realm of medicine is highly specialized and unpredictable, often fraught with ambiguity. The vagueness surrounding this issue, inherited from the Indian Penal Code, can be weaponized, as evidenced by the case of Dr. Kafeel Khan from Uttar Pradesh, who fought a protracted battle to clear his name of charges of medical negligence. Doctors must indeed be held accountable for any ineptitude, but it is essential to remember that this responsibility has two sides. A substantial number of doctors face violence and threats from patients' families, often based on imagined or exaggerated charges of negligence. Although central legislation is yet to be enacted, 19 Indian states have passed laws to protect healthcare workers and establishments from such unruly behavior since 2007. Surprisingly, not one conviction has taken place under these laws, underscoring the need for effective implementation.

#### A Burdened Healthcare System

Punitive measures alone may not be sufficient to eradicate the problem of medical negligence. India's doctors are overburdened, working tirelessly to serve a vast population with limited resources. The country faces a shortage of at least 2.4 million hospital beds, and in such circumstances, doctors cannot be solely held responsible for deaths resulting from inadequate facilities. The

punitive response to medical negligence must be carefully considered. The rights of doctors are as vital as the lives of patients. Striking a balance between accountability and fairness is essential for the healthcare system to function effectively.

#### The Legal Framework: Seeking a Balance

The amended Bharatiya Nyaya (Second) Sanhita Bill has been a subject of much debate. Initially, it appeared to grant blanket immunity to doctors, but this perception evolved. The final version of the legislation specifies that a registered medical practitioner may face imprisonment for up to two years and a fine, effectively retaining the punishment outlined in Section 304(A) of the Indian Penal Code. Behind the scenes, a draft bill submitted to the Parliamentary Standing Committee proposed a seven-year imprisonment term for medical negligence cases involving registered medical practitioners. The IMA successfully argued that such a punishment was disproportionate to the absence of criminal intent in the doctor-patient relationship, leading to the final two-year imprisonment clause.

#### The Case of Jacob Mathew vs. State of Punjab & Anr. (2005)

It is essential to reflect on the landmark case of Jacob Mathew vs. State of Punjab & Anr. (2005), which laid the groundwork for guidelines on medical negligence. The court

emphasized that negligence should be "gross," of a significantly high degree, and that criminal liability would only apply if a physician's actions were proven to be negligent or reckless, resulting in death. During prosecution, the opinions of similarly qualified experts weigh heavily in determining whether negligence led to a patient's demise. Despite adequate legal safeguards, the unfortunate reality is that violence against medical professionals continues to escalate.

#### Protecting Doctors for the Sake of Patient Care

To offer doctors refuge from the fear of assault while fulfilling their duties is crucial. The decisions doctors make should remain unclouded by the looming threat of violence. While no one is above the law, any attempt to demonize doctors for patient deaths could deter them from delivering the best possible care.

#### Conclusion

Doctors must remain loyal to their profession, with unwavering dedication to their patients. There should be no doubt about their sincerity. When human errors occur beyond doubt, they must be accepted. In the grand scheme of healthcare, both the health of the patient and the security of the doctor are equally important. Balancing these two pillars is the key to a harmonious and effective healthcare system.



**BRIEF**

**Wind energy**



**New Delhi:** Renewable energy solutions provider Suzlon Group has secured a new 225 MW wind energy order from Everrenew Energy. Suzlon will install 75 wind turbine generators (WTGs) with a Hybrid Lattice Tubular (HLT) tower and a rated capacity of 3 MW each at Everrenew Energy's sites at Vengaimandalam, Trichy district and Ottapidaram, Tuticorin district in Tamil Nadu, a company statement said. This order is for the company's larger rated 3 MW, S144-140m turbines from the 3.15 MW product series, it added. "This project with Everrenew Energy serves the promising commercial and industrial (C&I) segment of the Indian market, which will be important in driving our national targets over time," Girish Tanti, Vice Chairman, Suzlon Group said in the statement.

**Builders' conference**

**New Delhi:** Real estate body NAREDCO on Friday said it plans to organise a builders' conference in Ayodhya to tap its commercial and residential opportunities as the holy city gears up to attract lakhs of tourists post inauguration of the Ram temple on January 22. National Real Estate Development Council (NAREDCO) National President G Hari Babu said there are opportunities to set up hotels, resorts and apartments in Ayodhya as the tourist flow would increase in the coming months. "The entire Indian real estate industry wants to look at Ayodhya."

**Investment**



**Guwahati:** Assam received investment proposals worth over Rs 11,000 crore in 2023, which has potential to generate more than 10,000 jobs, Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said. Sarma termed 2023 a "landmark year" in Assam's industrial landscape, with a "conducive" environment for investments. "In 2023, Assam saw a record investment proposal of over Rs 11,000 crore with proposed generation of more than 10,000 jobs due to our path-breaking customised incentive policy," he said on X. Customised incentives are offered for "mega projects which have a minimum investment of Rs 100 crore and minimum employment generation of 200 permanent employees", he said on Thursday.

## India's GDP to grow by 7.3 pc in 2023-24: Govt estimates

New Delhi, Jan 05:



The Indian economy is estimated to grow by 7.3 per cent in the 2023-24 fiscal against 7.2 per cent a year ago, mainly due to good show by mining and quarrying, manufacturing and certain segments of services sectors. As per the first advance estimates of national income released by the National Statistical Office (NSO) on Friday, the manufacturing sector output is estimated to grow to 6.5 per cent in the current fiscal compared to 1.3 per cent in 2022-23. Similarly, mining sector growth is estimated at 8.1 per cent in the current fiscal against 4.1 per cent in 2022-23. Financial services, real estate and professional services are estimated to record a growth of 8.9 per cent this fiscal compared to 7.1 per cent in FY23. "Real GDP or GDP at Constant (2011-12) Prices in the year 2023-24 is estimated to attain a level of Rs 171.79 lakh crore, as

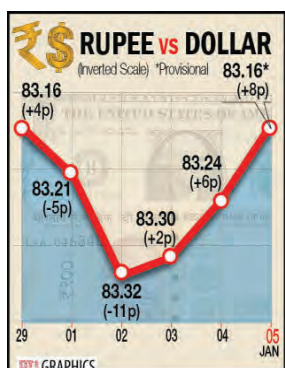
against the Provisional Estimate of GDP for the year 2022-23 of Rs 160.06 lakh crore, released on 31st May 2023," an NSO statement said. According to the statement, the growth in real GDP during 2023-24 is estimated at 7.3 per cent compared to 7.2 per cent in 2022-23.

The NSO estimates are higher than the 7 per cent GDP growth projection of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) for the current fiscal. It also said that nominal GDP or GDP at Current Prices in the year 2023-24 is estimated at Rs 296.58 lakh crore against the provisional estimate of GDP for the year 2022-23 of Rs 272.41 lakh crore. The growth in nominal GDP during 2023-24 is estimated

at 8.9 per cent compared to 16.1 per cent in 2022-23. The size of the economy, as per the current estimates, is slated to be at Rs 296.58 lakh crore or USD 3.57 trillion (@ Rs 83/USD) during 2023-24. The agriculture sector is projected to see a growth of 1.8 per cent this fiscal, lower than the four per cent expansion recorded in the previous financial year. Trade, hotel, transport, communication and services related to broadcasting segment is estimated to grow at 6.3 per cent, down from 14 per cent in 2022-23.

The construction sector is likely to grow at 10.7 per cent year-on-year from 10 per cent in the current fiscal. Similarly, public administration, defence and other services growth is estimated to grow by 7.7 per cent this fiscal against 7.2 per cent in FY23. The growth in gross value added (GVA) at basic prices is pegged at 6.9 per cent this fiscal, down from 7 per cent in 2022-23.

**Markets extend gains for 2nd session on fresh foreign fund inflows**



**Mumbai, Jan 05:** Benchmark stock indices Sensex and Nifty closed higher for a second straight day on Friday, following gains in IT, tech and capital goods shares amid fresh foreign capital inflows. After slipping briefly during the late afternoon trade, the 30-share BSE Sensex made a quick recovery and jumped 178.58 points or 0.25 per cent to settle at 72,026.15. During the day, it soared 308.91 points or 0.42 per cent to 72,156.48. The Nifty climbed 52.20 points or 0.24 per cent to 21,710.80. Among the Sensex firms, Larsen & Toubro, Tata Consultancy Services, Infosys, HCL Technologies, Hindustan Unilever, Axis Bank, ICICI Bank and Wipro were the major gainers.

## IIFCL plans IPO in FY25 ; unlock value for govt: MD

New Delhi, Jan 05:



State-owned India Infrastructure Finance Company Ltd (IIFCL) plans to go public in the next financial year, company's Managing Director P R Jaishankar said on Friday. "We are examining the listing... hopefully it should be done next financial year."

IIFCL has come to a stage where we unlock the value for the benefit of the government," he said on the sidelines of the company's foundation day. The company will very soon initiate the consultation process, he said, adding various approvals are required including from the government. Asked about the quantum

of stake dilution, he said, the decision about that would be taken after detailed discussion.

As of now, IIFCL is 100 per cent owned by Government of India. From the performance perspective, he said the company has been consistent both on topline and bottomline parameters.

He expects the FY24 profit to cross Rs 1,500 crore. IIFCL reported a two-fold jump in standalone net profit to Rs 1,076 crore for FY23 aided by an increase in lending and reduction of bad loans.

The infra lender posted record sanctions and disbursements at Rs 29,171 crore and Rs 13,826 crore, respectively. Since the inception, the company has given Rs 2.5 lakh crore loans to 750 infra projects. As of December 2023, the company has earned a profit of Rs 1,189 crore with loan sanctions of Rs 30,315 crore, exceeding the figures of last fiscal in just three quarters.

Given the demand so far, he said, the loan sanction would cross Rs 40,000 crore by March 2024. He

emphasized on the role that IIFCL is set to play to fund the next phase of infrastructure growth story and the slew of reforms needed to take the infrastructure sector to the next level.

Gross non-performing assets (NPAs) and net NPA ratio has been consistently falling and stood at 3.77 per cent and 0.85 per cent, respectively, as on September 30, 2023. Asked about the next year's profit, Jaishankar said, the company is aiming Rs 2,000 crore. Speaking during the occasion, IIFCL Deputy Managing Director Pawan K Kumar said the company has done credit enhancement of instruments worth Rs 2,500 crore.

## Esconet Technologies files DRHP with NSE Emerge

New Delhi, Jan 05:

Esconet Technologies Limited (The company), a leading homegrown integrated IT solutions company, has filed its Draft Red Herring Prospectus (DRHP) with NSE Emerge. The company's initial public offering comprises a fresh issuance of 33,60,000 Equity Shares, each with a face value of Rs. 10. Corporate Capital Ventures has been appointed as the Book Running Lead Manager for the issue while Skyline Financial Services is the Registrar.

The New Delhi-headquartered company manufactures high-performance supercomputers, data servers and workstations, besides providing a comprehensive range of IT solutions to SMEs, large organizations, and public sector clients, including data storage, networks, security, virtualization, and data protection.

Recognizing the burgeoning demand in the Indian market, Esconet introduced its brand, HexaData, specializing in high-end Servers, Workstations, and storage systems through the Make in India initiative. Furthermore, Esconet's strategic collaboration with NVIDIA has propelled remarkable growth in the AI and ML domain, enhancing their servers and workstations.

According to the DRHP document, Esconet proposes to utilize Rs. 16 crore of the IPO proceeds towards funding its long-term working capital requirements, besides investing Rs. 2.5 crore in its wholly-owned subsidiary, ZeaCloud Services Private Limited, to reinforce its infrastructure by acquiring additional hardware and software, with a goal of bolstering capacity, elevating security measures, and enhancing overall monitoring capabilities.

ZeaCloud offers an extensive range of cloud and managed services, including Private and Public Cloud services, Backup-as-a-Service (BaaS), Disaster Recovery-as-a-Service (DRaaS) and Desktop-as-a-Service (DaaS). ZeaCloud operates its data centers in Noida and Mumbai. The company is embarking on a transformative roadmap by integrating cutting-edge Object Storage into its infrastructure to bolster the immediate customer onboarding capabilities.

Apart from fortifying the backup capabilities, this will establish ZeaCloud as a leading provider of advanced and versatile Object Storage solutions to its clientele. Founded in 2012 by second-generation entrepreneurs Santosh Kumar Agrawal and Sunil Kumar Agrawal, Esconet has been forging fruitful partnerships to deliver innovative and resilient IT solutions.

## Confident of achieving 13,814-km highway construction target: Road secy

New Delhi, Jan 05:



The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH) is confident of achieving the highways construction target of 13,814 kilometres for the current fiscal, its secretary Anurag Jain said on Friday. Addressing a press conference, Jain further said the total length of national highways in India increased 60 per cent to 1,46,145 km till December 2023, from 91,287 km in 2014, since the Narendra Modi government came into power. "The pace of highway construction in 2023-24 so far has been better than last year, and we are confident of achieving the 13,814-km highway

construction target during the current fiscal," he said. Up to December 31, 2023, the ministry has built 6,217 km of national highway, higher than last year's 5,774 km for the same period. According to him, the government is planning to award 10,000 km of national highway

projects in 2023-24. Jain also said that the government has asked companies to prepare detailed project reports (DPR) for un-awarded identified projects to increase the pace of awarding in 2023-24. He said the total length of four-lanes and above national highways (NHs) increased by 2.5 times to 46,179 km in December 2023 from 18,387 km in 2014.

While the total length of high-speed corridors in 2014 was 353 km, which increased to 3,913 km in 2023, the total length of less than 2-lane national highways decreased from 30 per cent (2014) to 10 per cent of national highway network in 2023.

## BIOTECH STARTUP EXPO

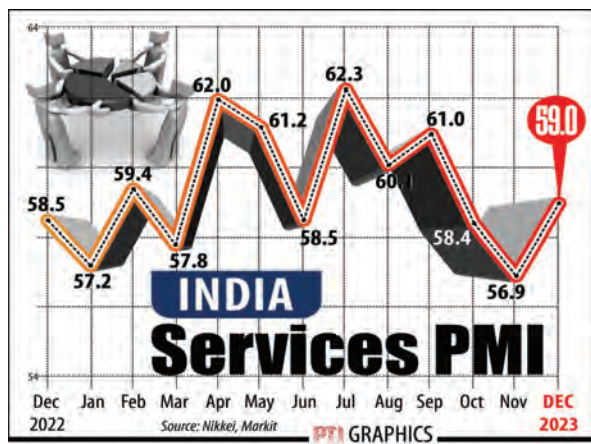


Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar with Union Minister of State Jitendra Singh visits a stall after inaugurating the Biotech Startup Expo on Emerging Startup Trends in North India in Kathua district.

## India's Dec services PMI hits 3-month high on sharp rise in new orders amid positive demand

New Delhi, Jan 05:

The services sector growth in India rose to a three-month high in December supported by favourable economic conditions and positive demand trends, a monthly survey said on Friday. The seasonally adjusted HSBC India Services PMI Business Activity Index rose from 56.9 in November to 59 in December, highlighting a sharp increase in output that was the most pronounced since September. In Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) parlance, a print above 50 means expansion while a score below 50 denotes contraction. The survey is compiled from responses to



questionnaires sent to a panel of around 400 service sector companies. "India's services sector ended the year on a high note, with an uptick in business activity, led by a three-month high new or-

ders index," said Pranjul Bhandari, Chief India Economist at HSBC. The rise in total new business was supported by continued growth of international sales. Service providers noted higher demand from

clients based in Australia, Canada, Europe, the Middle East and South America during December.

"Demand buoyancy spurred sales, subsequently fuelling business activity. Job creation extended into a 19th successive month, while business optimism strengthened," the survey said. Going ahead, services firms in India expect the strong demand momentum to carry forward to 2024 on advertising and better customer relationships. On the prices front, cost pressures receded further, reaching their lowest in nearly three-and-a-half years. Still, there was a quicker and solid upturn in selling charges.

## Kamdhenu Ltd. delivers robust performance

Mumbai, Jan 05:

Kamdhenu Limited, India's largest manufacturer and seller of branded TMT Bars in retail, is proud to announce that it has witnessed an overwhelming demand for its premium branded TMT bar 'Kamdhenu Nxt' in the past year. Aligning its business strategy to cater to this demand, it has successfully expanded the production capacity of its premium brand 'Kamdhenu Nxt' - the next generation high-end interlock steel TMT bar from 3,60,000 MT of premium TMT bars to 4,80,000 MT in a year. The channel partner network has also widened to 1,200 dealers from 1,000 dealers in January 2023. In order to augment the growing demand of infra and steel,

Kamdhenu Limited plans to further increase the production capacity of Kamdhenu Nxt TMT bar to 5,00,000 MT by the end of next year. To support this revised capacity, the company will also expand its channel partner network by adding 200 more dealers and distributors. Commenting on the company's growth journey and business plans, Mr. Sunil Agarwal, Director of Kamdhenu Limited said, "We are delighted to see the growing demand for our premium TMT bar, 'Kamdhenu Nxt,' in Chhattisgarh. This surge reflects the market's confidence in the quality and reliability of our products. The expansion of our production capacity and channel partner network demonstrates our commit-

ment towards meeting the growing needs of our customers. Kamdhenu Limited remains dedicated to innovation and customer satisfaction." "Kamdhenu Nxt" is the result of advanced research and innovation in product development at Kamdhenu, showcasing a world-class standard. With an impressive 2.5 times stronger concrete-steel interlock, Kamdhenu Nxt possesses attributes perfectly tailored to meet the demands of modern engineered reinforcement structures and innovative architectural designs. Kamdhenu is dedicated to creating exceptional products that cater to evolving industry needs, aiming to set a benchmark for affordability in technologically advanced products within

the market," he further added. Kamdhenu Nxt's unique and critically designed double rib, fatigue strength and ductility makes it much superior to ordinary steel bars. The distinctive design of 'Kamdhenu Nxt' sets a benchmark for better interlock with concrete mix, giving more power to the structure. The two angular ribs on this steel bar amplify the interlock strength between steel and concrete thereby providing optimum security to structures that are subject to unexpected forces like seismic, dynamic impact etc. This makes it suitable for concrete reinforced structures like bridges, flyovers, dams, thermal and hydel plants, industrial towers, skyline buildings, underground platforms.

## Tata Passenger Electric Mobility plans to roll out over 5 EVs in next 18 months

New Delhi, Jan 05:

Tata Passenger Electric Mobility plans to bring in more than five products in the next 18 months on its first advanced pure electric vehicle architecture 'acti.ev'. The company on Friday said the 'Punch.ev', the electric version of its compact SUV Punch, will be the first product based on its first pure EV architecture, acti.ev. The acti.ev platform will underpin future products from the Tata Passenger Electric Mobility (TPEM) portfolio and spawn a variety of products with multiple body styles and sizes, the company said in a statement. On a promotional video of the acti.ev platform, the company said it



plans "five-plus products in the next 18 months". TPEM Chief Products Officer, Head of HV Programs and Customer Service Anand Kulkarni said, "This architecture has been meticulously designed to enable class-leading efficiencies, maximising space, and battery capacity and enhancing the

overall driving experience. acti.ev is a global-ready, future-facing pure electric architecture that enables the implementation of software-oriented features, ensuring that our vehicles are not only technologically advanced but also future-proof."

The company said acti.ev features an optimised battery pack design offering multiple range options from 300 km to 600 km along with choices for front, rear and all-wheel drives.

The pure EV platform can support 7.2kW to 11kW on board charger for AC fast charging and DC fast charging of up to 150kW, enabling adding about 100 km range in just 10 minutes.

## Police nab bike thief, seize 2 stolen bikes

Accused caught and sent to jail within 24 hours

Central Chronicle News

**Khairagarh, Jan 05:** The Khairagarh police have swiftly apprehended a bike thief and sent him to jail within 24 hours. The accused, identified as Rupesh Pal, age 25, resident of Ganjipara Ward No. 4 Khairagarh, was found in possession of two stolen motorcycles.

The ordeal began when Harsh Verma, an 18-year-old resident of Dewaribhath, reported the theft of his Hero HF Deluxe motorcycle, bearing serial number CG 08 AA 1118, from outside a State Bank of India ATM. Similarly, Devi Chand Pal, a 37-year-old resident of Pendrikala, reported the theft of his bike with registration number CG 08 N 4606 from Ward No. 04 Khairagarh.



Responding swiftly to these reports, the Khairagarh police, under the guidance of District Police Captain Ankita

Sharma and Inspector Shakti Singh, launched an intensive investigation. They deployed informers to monitor the ac-

tivities of suspicious individuals with a history of theft involvement.

Their efforts paid off when they received a tip about Rupesh Pal's involvement in the bike thefts. Upon taking him into custody and questioning him, Rupesh Pal confessed to stealing two motorcycles from different locations. The stolen bikes were subsequently recovered from his possession.

The accused was promptly presented before the court and remanded into judicial custody. Inspector Shakti Singh, along with the cyber cell in-charge Tadesh Singh and their dedicated team, played a commendable role in ensuring swift justice and curbing the rising trend of serial theft in the city.

Central Chronicle News

**Manendragarh, Jan 05:** In a heartfelt gathering at the Joint District Office, Collector Narendra Kumar Dugga bid farewell to his colleagues and the district he served with unwavering dedication. This emotional event brought together all officers and employees of the Collectorate to celebrate the departing Collector's remarkable tenure.

During the farewell ceremony, accolades poured in for Collector Dugga's simple and friendly demeanour, coupled with his exceptional administrative prowess. District Panchayat CEO Dr. Ashutosh Chaturvedi, Additional Collector Anil Kumar Sidar, Joint Collector C.S. Paikra, SDM



Abhilasha Paikra, and Vijayendra Sarathi each expressed their appreciation for his leadership.

Expressing his gratitude, Dugga thanked the district's officers, employees, and residents for their unwavering support throughout his tenure. He recalled his arrival in the newly formed district, highlighting the initial need for a cohesive team. Through diligent effort, the team was built, result-

ing in the successful execution of election duties, even in a nascent district.

Dugga acknowledged the inevitability of transfers in government service and encouraged his colleagues to embrace challenges with enthusiasm. He imparted inspiring words to the present administrative staff, urging them to continue serving the public interest with a strong sense of teamwork and dedication.

As per the latest government transfer order, Collector Narendra Kumar Dugga is set to assume a pivotal role as Secretary of the Tribal Development Department, Scheduled Caste Development Department, and Minority Development Department, as well as Commissioner of the Tribal Caste and Scheduled Caste Development Department in Raipur.

## Empowering girls through 'Beti Bachao Beti Padhao' initiative

Central Chronicle News

**Kawardha, Jan 05:** The Collector Janmejay Mahobe lead the way and the Women and Child Development Department illuminated the path to safety and empowerment for girls by lighting 3000 lamps at the Mahamaya Mandir Bharat Mata Chowk, under the 'Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao' scheme.

The event also featured a spirited Rangoli competition, with girls showcasing their talent and passion for the cause of 'Beti Bachao Beti Padhao.' District Program Officer Anand Kumar Tiwari shared insights into the department's ongoing schemes during the program.

District Panchayat President Sushila Ramkumar Bhatt, the chief guest of the event, delivered an inspiring address, tracing the origins of the 'Beti Bachao Beti Padhao' initiative, which



commenced in Panipat, Haryana, on January 22, 2015. Initially, it was introduced in two districts of Chhattisgarh, namely Raigarh and Bijapur. Currently, the girls of Kabirdham district are also benefiting from the 'Beti Bachao Beti Padhao' Scheme.

Indrani Dinesh Chandravanshi, who presided over the program as President of District Panchayat Kawardha, further emphasized the scheme's pivotal role. She mentioned that, under the

guidance of the Prime Minister, the initiative has taken comprehensive steps to empower women at every stage of life, from the birth of a daughter onwards.

She passionately advocated for ensuring that daughters do not face prenatal mortality, receive proper education, become self-reliant, and achieve significant positions in society.

This commitment has led to a positive transformation, evident in the improved birth rate of girls,

an enhanced sex ratio, and elevated levels of education.

The message of 'Beti Bachao Beti Padhao' was creatively conveyed through a Kalajatha performance, captivating the audience with its powerful storytelling. The Rangoli competition saw Government Raj Mata Vijaya Raje Scindia Girls College Kawardha securing the top position, followed by daughters of Late Smt. Gudha Devi Smriti Government Nursing College and

Government High School Kailash Nagar Kawardha in second and third place, respectively. These talented participants used their art to champion girl child education and self-reliance, leaving a lasting impression.

All participants received certificates and mementos in recognition of their dedication. The District Women and Child Development Department, represented by C.L. Bhuarya, expressed heartfelt gratitude for the program's success.

The event saw the presence of District Panchayat members Ramkumar Bhatt, Satvinder Pahuja, Dinesh Chandravanshi, Vijay Lakshmi Tiwari, Chandra Prakash Chandravanshi Nagar, senior poet Ganesh Soni, Pareton Verma, District Child Protection Officer, the entire ICPS team, and students from various schools and colleges, along with the enthusiastic citizens of Kawardha city.

## UTS on Mobile App revolutionizes railway ticketing

Effortless unreserved ticket booking from the comfort of home

Central Chronicle News

**Bilaspur, Jan 05:** In a bid to promote digital ticketing, empower passengers with self-ticketing options, and eliminate the inconvenience of standing in long queues, the Railway Administration has introduced the UTS on Mobile App.

This innovative app enables passengers traveling on unreserved tickets to effortlessly book their tickets from the comfort of their homes, ensuring a hassle-free journey on their preferred trains.

With the UTS on Mobile App, passengers can conveniently secure unreserved tickets for any station, making their railway experience more efficient and user-friendly.

Specifically designed for booking unreserved tickets, renewing monthly season tickets, and purchasing platform tickets, this mobile app offers a seamless solution to the traditional ticketing process.

Additionally, it provides an eco-friendly option with paperless tickets. To further incentivize passengers to embrace



digital ticketing, the app offers an additional 03 percent bonus on R-Wallet recharge for ticket payments.

Under the guidance of Senior Divisional Commercial Manager Vikas Kumar Kashyap and the leadership of Assistant Commercial Manager Anupam Dutta, the Commerce Department's teams of supervisors and employees are working tirelessly to promote this app extensively.

Help desks have been set up at major stations across the division, including Bilaspur station, where ticket checking and booking staff provide passengers with detailed information about the UTS on Mobile

App.

In addition to personal assistance, information is disseminated through banners, pamphlets, and announcement systems. Passengers are actively encouraged to embrace the benefits of unreserved ticketing and the convenience of the UTS on Mobile App.

This initiative has gained significant popularity among railway passengers, and an increasing number of travellers are adopting this hassle-free method of obtaining train tickets. Currently, the UTS on Mobile App accounts for 20 percent of total unreserved ticket sales, reflecting its growing acceptance and usage among railway passengers.

## VBSY reaches eight gram panchayats to amplify govt schemes

Central Chronicle News

**Manendragarh, Jan 05:** The 'Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra' is on a mission to perfect the government's major schemes and ensure their swift and complete implementation among the targeted beneficiaries. This journey aims to raise awareness about various welfare programs, fostering citizen participation in the spirit of 'Jan Bhagidari' to achieve 100% scheme saturation. Its overarching goal is to bring the Central Government's public welfare schemes to the grassroots, fostering direct interaction with those who stand to benefit.

Today, the 'Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra' chariot graced eight gram panchayats across three development blocks in the district. The program unfolded in the Gram Panchayats of Lalpur, Kelhari, Chowghada, and Bichiyatola in the Manendragarh development block. Additionally, it reached the Gram Panchayats



of Kapital, Janua in Bharatpur development block, and Magora, Belkamar in Khadgawan development block. Each destination witnessed a warm welcome as local welcome committees and festival organizers greeted the 'Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra' campaign chariot. Villagers had the privilege of hearing the Prime Minister's message through the chariot, followed by cultural programs that added a vibrant touch to the proceedings.

The program's core focus was to enlighten villagers about 17 flagship schemes of the Central Government aimed at rural development. These schemes encom-

pass Ayushman Bharat, PM Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana, Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana, National Rural Livelihood Mission, PM Awas Yojana - Rural, PM Ujjwala Yojana, PM Vishwakarma Yojana, PM Kisan Samman Nidhi Yojana, Kisan Credit Card, PM Poshan Abhiyan, Har Ghar Jal Jeevan Mission, Survey of villages and mapping (ownership) with improvised technology in rural areas, Jan Dhan Yojana, Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana, Suraksha Bima Yojana, Atal Pension Yojana, PM Pranam Yojana, Nano Fertilizer, apart from this, information about Sickle Cell Anemia Eradication Mission, Registration in Eklavya

Residential School, Scholarship Scheme, Forest Rights Patta-Individual and Collective, Van Dhan Vikas Kendra was given by the officers and employees and the rural people were given the benefit of the same.

In addition, the health department conducted health check-ups and distributed free medicines to the villagers, ensuring their well-being. The event concluded with villagers pledging their commitment to building a self-reliant and developed India.

In a noteworthy development, Central Secretary Anupam Mishra, during the camp in Gram Panchayat Mongra of Khadgawan development block, celebrated the baby shower of pregnant mothers and the Annaprashan ceremony of children, adding a compassionate touch to the Yatra. Furthermore, Kisan Credit Cards were distributed to farmers, further enhancing the welfare impact of this transformative journey.

## Drone technology demonstrates efficiency in Nano urea spraying

Central government's initiative empowers farmers with knowledge

Central Chronicle News

**Manendragarh, Jan 05:** The Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra is proving to be a game-changer for farmers, as it goes beyond providing information about various Central Government schemes. This transformative journey is also equipping beneficiaries with technical knowledge and introducing them to cutting-edge farming innovations. These innovations are set to revolutionize farming practices, saving both time and money for farmers. As part of this initiative, a remarkable demonstration was held on January 04 in the villages of Mongra and Belkamar in district MCB, showcasing the use of drones for nano urea spraying in wheat crops. The sight of drones efficiently spraying urea left farmers thrilled and



inspired.

Lal Singh Armo, DDA of the Agriculture Department, highlighted that the Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra has been ongoing daily in the district since December 16. Drone demonstrations are integrated into the program in gram panchayats where the Yatra takes place. Using drones, nano urea can be sprayed in one acre of wheat crop within five to seven minutes, at a rate of 500 ml per acre. This efficient method stands in contrast to the traditional requirement of two 45 kg bags of granular urea for spraying. The adoption of nano urea maximizes plant utiliza-

tion and represents a significant cost-saving and time-saving solution for farmers. In addition to urea, drones can also be used for spraying insecticides or fungicides, subject to mandatory jar testing. Farmers have expressed enthusiasm for this innovation, acknowledging its benefits for their farming practices.

Under the Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra, led by the Department of Agriculture Development, Farmers Welfare, and Biotechnology, nano urea was distributed through drone sprayers in villages including Mongra and Belkamar. The demonstration

encouraged farmers to embrace the use of nano urea in their fields. Tumeshwar Singh, a farmer in Mongra, witnessed the drone spraying in his wheat crop, exemplifying the practicality and efficiency of this technology.

Neeraj Jaiswal, Senior Agriculture Development Officer in Khadgawan, emphasized that both small and large farmers stand to benefit from this ambitious scheme. The advantages of this new technology are applicable to farming in all seasons. The Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra also disseminated information about various schemes, including Krishi Samman Nidhi, soil health cards, natural farming promotion, credit card provisions for farmers, as well as the promotion of Nano Urea and Nano DAP. The event drew the participation of officers and employees from the agriculture department, making it a vibrant and informative exhibition for all involved.

## MLA Khushwant honours disabled in Arang Diwas celebration

Central Chronicle News

**Arang, Jan 05:** The vibrant spirit of celebration filled Kotwar Bhawan in Arang during the grand commemoration of Arang Diwas. Arang MLA Guru Khushwant Saheb, the chief guest, marked the occasion by paying homage to Louis Braille, the champion of the visually impaired, with a garland.

He hailed Braille as a messiah and expressed his deep appreciation for the warm welcome extended by the disabled community. Khushwant Saheb lauded the event and provided words of encouragement while pledging his support

across all domains. The event witnessed the gracious presence of distinguished guests, including former Mandal President BJP Salik Sahu, Councillor Dhruv Kumar Miridha, K.K. Bhardwaj, Dr. Sandeep Jain, Mandal President Abhishek Raja Tamboli, Mandal President Samoda Nand Sahu, Mandal General Secretary Devnath Sahu, District Panchayat Chairman Govind Sahu, Anil Sonwani, and Vinod Sahu Yuva Shakti Chief.

The program's highlights featured an inspiring rendition of 'Itni Shakti Hume Dena Data' by Milapadas Manikpuri,

President of the Disabled Association, and a heartfelt Louis Braille tribute song sung by the visually impaired Prakash Khelwar. Vice President Janak Lodhi was recognized for his outstanding achievements in sports.

A captivating musical presentation of Aashko Ped, a traditional musical instrument, was performed by student



Devyanshu Nayak and his team from Tilda block. Additionally, visually impaired Dhyanjay from Tarak Divyang Hostel Bhilai showcased his musical talents.

The event was skillfully orchestrated by teacher Arvind Vaishnav and drew the participation of special disabled teacher Gargi Pandey Raipur,

BRP Raipur Mahima Joseph, and BRP Tilda Suvidha Singh, among others.

The occasion was graced by the presence of Vikram Parmar, Raju Ogre, Derha Banjare, Basanti Chandrakar, Santosh Chandrakar, Shekhar Sahu, Raman Soni, Subhash Banjare, Bhuvaneshwar Dhiwar, Vijendra Das Kabir Kalyan Ashram Bhilai, and Ravi Banjare, among many others.

This special gathering celebrated the birth of Louis Braille and highlighted the nutritional support provided to disabled individuals by Amar

Jyoti Divyang Kalyan Sangh.

The event drew disabled participants from various villages, including Sahu, Purushottam Hirwani, Salik Sahu, Savita Sahu, Khilleshwari Chandrakar, Kekati Sahu, Narendra Gilhare, Ashish Sharma, Narsingh Dhiwar, Tarachand Sahu Kala Lahari, Balram Verma, Madhu Malti Manikpuri, and more.

Union President Milap Das expressed his heartfelt gratitude to all attendees and extended special thanks to the section, district panchayat, and education department for their invaluable support.

## Jamal stars for Pakistan before Australia's bowlers strike back

Sydney, Jan 05 (AP):

Fast bowler Aamir Jamal took six wickets to help Pakistan take a slender first-innings lead over Australia on Friday before the home team's bowlers regained the advantage in the third Test.

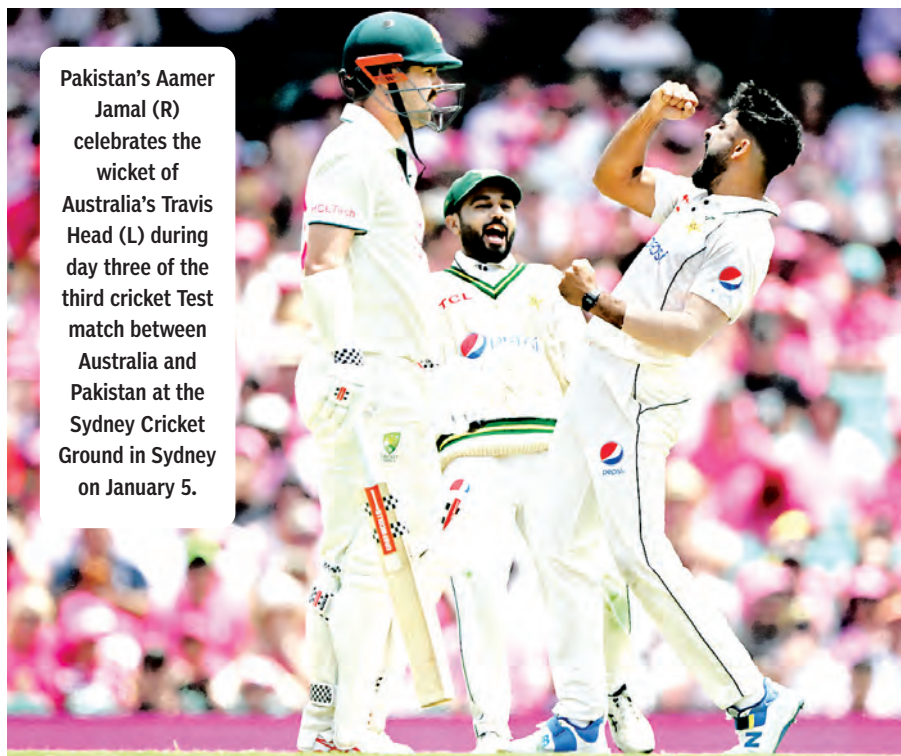
The Australians took seven wickets in the session before stumps on Day 3 to leave Pakistan facing the prospect of losing yet another Test match Down Under.

Jamal was instrumental in Australia losing its last four first-innings wickets for 10 runs to be all out for 299, trailing Pakistan by 14 runs.

It was the first time since December 2020 Australia had been behind in a home Test match ahead of the second innings.

But then, the Australian bowlers took over. Josh Hazlewood snared four wickets and Mitchell Starc, Nathan Lyon and Travis Head took one each as Pakistan slumped to 68 for seven at stumps, an overall lead of 82. Pakistan's last Test match win in Australia was in 1995, at the SCG.

After almost an early domination by the batters, the afternoon belonged to



Pakistan's Aamer Jamal (R) celebrates the wicket of Australia's Travis Head (L) during day three of the third cricket Test match between Australia and Pakistan at the Sydney Cricket Ground in Sydney on January 5.

the bowling attacks.

Aamir finished with figures of six for 69, his second six-wicket haul in just three Tests. His 18 wickets are the most for any rookie Pakistan bowler in a three-Test series.

Only minutes after the tea interval, Aamir dismissed Australia's last recognized batter Mitchell Marsh, who chipped the

ball straight to mid-off on 54 and was caught by Shan Masood.

Aamir, who picked up the wickets of Usman Khawaja (47) and Travis Head (10) in earlier spells, then dismissed Australia skipper Pat Cummins lbw for a second-ball duck in his 21st over. He removed Lyon (5) and Hazlewood (0) in his next over to fin-

ish off the innings.

"I'm over the moon now," Aamir told local broadcaster Fox Cricket after Australia's innings ended. "I'm feeling proud to be representing my country at such a level and performing for them. This is a wonderful achievement for me. I just back myself every time. If I've been

conceding runs I still back (myself) because when you try to get some wickets you get boundaries as well."

Aamir has also been a star at the crease. Batting at No. 9 in the first innings he made 82 to frustrate the Australians on Day 1.

He'll be batting on Saturday as Pakistan tries to set a decent target for Australia and avoid a series sweep.

Meanwhile, Australia opener David Warner, who was dismissed for 34 in the first innings in his final Test, revealed that his lost "baggy green" Test caps had been recovered.

Warner's couple of baggy green caps went missing in transit between Melbourne and Sydney this week and Warner thought they'd been stolen from his luggage. Ahead of Friday's play, Warner took to social media to say the caps had been located.

"It's a load off my shoulders going into the last couple of days," Warner said on Instagram. "Any cricketer knows how special their cap is and I'll cherish this for the rest of my life. I'm very grateful to all those involved in locating it..."

## Hockey Olympic qualifiers do-or-die outing for us: Savita

Ranchi, Jan 05 (PTI):



Indian women's hockey team captain Savita Punia ahead of Paris Olympic 2024 Qualifier matches at Jaipal Singh Munda Astroturf Hockey Stadium, in Ranchi.

The Asian Champions Trophy victory has boosted India's morale ahead of the Olympic Qualifiers, according to captain Savita, who expressed confidence in the side's experienced players to help the women's hockey team qualify for the Paris Games. Eight countries, including hosts India, will be vying for top three spots when the Olympic qualifiers are held here from January 13 to 19 to book berths for the Paris Games in July-August.

"The team is motivated, particularly after winning the Asian Champions Trophy," Savita was quoted as saying in a Hockey India release.

"Our preparations have been earnest and the team consists of players who have played the Olympic Qualifiers in the past and understand very well the level of performance needed to make the cut. This is a do-or-die outing for us and we are ready for the challenge." The top three teams will qualify for the Paris Games. The teams in the fray include reigning Olympic silver medallists Germany, former Asian Games champions Japan, Chile and Czech Republic grouped in pool A, while hosts India are grouped in

pool B along with United States, New Zealand and Italy. "Every member of the team wants to participate in the Olympic Games. That is the ultimate dream and after arriving in Ranchi earlier this week, we have got some good training sessions in the ground," India vice-captain Nikki Pradhan said. "There is a lot of excitement not just among the team members but among

the hockey fans in Jharkhand who I am sure will turn up in large numbers to show their support for us." India will take on United States in their opening match on January 13, followed by a match against New Zealand on January 14. After a day's rest, India will play Italy on January 16, while the semi-finals will be held on January 18 and the final on January 19.

## Khare's ton propels Chhattisgarh to 249/5



Raipur, Jan 05:

The highly anticipated Ranji Trophy 2023-24 season kicked off today, with an exciting Group B encounter between Chhattisgarh and Assam at the Shaheed Veer Narayan Singh International Stadium. Amarandeep Khare's remarkable century

took center stage as Chhattisgarh ended the day at 249 for five wickets.

Opting to field after winning the toss, Assam faced the relentless Chhattisgarh batting lineup, with Amarandeep Khare leading the charge. Khare displayed immense skill and composure, notching up a brilliant

■ Ranji Trophy 2023-24

116 runs, securing his eleventh first-class century. His exceptional innings included an array of elegant strokes and demonstrated his class as a seasoned cricketer.

Supporting Khare's efforts were Ashutosh Singh and Shashank Singh, who played crucial roles in Chhattisgarh's strong position. Ashutosh Singh contributed 58 runs, while Shashank Singh remained unbeaten with 29 runs, consolidating Chhattisgarh's total.

Assam's bowlers fought valiantly to make inroads into the Chhattisgarh batting lineup. Mukhtar Hussain, Mrinmoy Dutta, Akash Sengupta, Rahul Singh, and Kunal Sharma each managed to claim one wicket, striving to restrict the opposition's scoring.

At the end of the opening day's play, Chhattisgarh had amassed 249 runs, losing five wickets in the process.

## Yuki Bhambri-Robin Haase pair in semifinals



Brisbane, Jan 05 (PTI):

India's Yuki Bhambri and his Dutch partner Robin Haase on Friday entered the semifinals of the Brisbane International ATP Tour tournament, beating the American pair of Nathaniel Lammons and Jackson Withrow in straight sets. The eight-seeded Indo-Dutch pair won 7-6 (5), 7-6 (6) in the quarterfinal match that lasted one hour and 36 minutes.

Bhambri-Haase duo will face second seeds Lloyd Glasspool of England and Jean-Julien Rojer of the Netherlands in the semifinals.

Last year, the 31-year-old Bhambri from New Delhi won his maiden ATP title at the Mallorca Championships doubles competition, partnering with South African Lloyd Harris.

## Sabalenka to clash Azarenka in Brisbane semi-final

Brisbane (Australia), Jan 05 (AP): Aryna Sabalenka and Victoria Azarenka will be on opposite sides of the net in the Brisbane International semi-finals more than four years after teaming up on the same court in a Fed Cup semi-final against Australia.

Australian Open champion Sabalenka extended her winning streak in Australia to 14 matches with a 6-1, 6-4 win over fifth-seeded Daria Kasatkina on Friday night. She won a title in Adelaide last year before her Grand Slam breakthrough at Melbourne Park, the start of a 2023 season that also included a run to the US Open final and the semi-finals at the French Open and Wimbledon.

Sabalenka was utterly dominant in the first set of her night match in front of a Pat Rafter Arena crowd that included actor Jude Law, pinning Kasatkina to the baseline with her deep,



powerful ground strokes. She peeled off 32 winners and dropped just one service game in 1 & 1/2 hours.

Azarenka, a two-time champion at both the Australian Open and in Brisbane, had a tougher run in the opening match of the day, needing 2 & 1/2 hours to advance 6-3, 3-6, 7-5 over a hot-and-bothered former French Open champion Jelena Ostapenko. Second-seeded Elena Rybakina only needed to play seven games in her quarterfinal match.



Rybakina, who won Wimbledon in 2022 and was runner-up at the Australian Open last year, won the first set 6-1 before 11th-seeded Anastasia Potapova retired from their match with an abdominal injury.

She'll next play Linda Noskova, who beat 16-year-old Mirra Andreeva 7-5, 6-3. Sabalenka and Azarenka, both born in Minsk, Belarus, albeit about nine years apart, have only played four times previously. Sabalenka leads their head-to-head encounters 3-1. The 34-year-old Azarenka, a back-to-back Australian Open champion in 2012 and '13, clinched her quarterfinal victory three games after third-seeded Ostapenko's emotional outburst at chair umpire Julie Kjedndlie.

## T20 WC 2024: India to face Pakistan on June 9 in New York

New Delhi, Jan 05 (PTI): The riveting cricketing rivalry between India and Pakistan will reach planet's biggest show city New York on June 9 when the arch-rivals go against each other there in a Group A match of the ICC T20 World Cup 2024.

The schedule for the show-piece was revealed on Friday, and India are clubbed with Pakistan, Ireland, Canada and co-hosts USA in Group A for the league stage games. India will open their World Cup campaign with a match against Ireland on June 5 in New York. After facing Pakistan, India will stay back in New York to take on the co-host nation on June 12, and then travel to Florida to play against Canada in their final group assignment on June 15. The tournament is being co-hosted by the West Indies and the USA with 20 teams, divided into four groups of five sides each, making it the largest ever T20 World Cup. Sixteen teams contested in the last edition in 2022 in Australia. The tournament will start on June 1 with a match between the USA and Canada. The semi-finals are scheduled for June 26 in Guyana and June 27 in Trinidad while Barbados will host the final on June 29.

England are the title holders, having beaten Pakistan in Melbourne in November 2022. The group stage matches will be played from June 1 to 18 while the Super 8 games are slotted from June 19 to 24.

The top two teams from each group will enter the Super 8, where the teams will be clubbed into two groups of four each. The top two teams in each Super 8 group will advance to the semifinals. A total of 55 games will be played across six venues in the West Indies -- Kensington Oval, Barbados; Brian Lara Cricket Academy, Trinidad; Providence Stadium, Guyana; Sir Vivian Richards Stadium, Antigua; Darren Sammy Cricket Ground, St Lucia; Arnos Vale Stadium, St Vincent -- and three stadiums in the USA -- Eisenhower Park, New York; Lauderhill, Florida and Grand Prairie, Texas.

**Group A:** India, Pakistan, Ireland, Canada, USA.  
**Group B:** England, Australia, Namibia, Scotland, Oman.  
**Group C:** New Zealand, West Indies, Afghanistan, Uganda, Papua New Guinea.  
**Group D:** South Africa, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Netherlands, Nepal.

## Kohli, Jadeja to vie for Sobers Trophy

Ashwin in race for ICC Test Cricketer of Year

Dubai, Jan 05 (PTI):

Star batter Virat Kohli and premier all-rounder Ravindra Jadeja will vie for the ICC Men's Cricketer of the Year award, while ace off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin will be in the race for the Test Cricketer of the Year.

Kohli and Jadeja will have to contest for the Sir Garfield Sobers Trophy against Australian captain Pat Cummins and his team-mate Travis Head.

Ashwin will face competition from Head and his Australia teammate Usman Khawaja along with England senior batsman Joe Root, the ICC said on Friday.

Kohli made 2048 runs in 35 matches across Tests and ODIs in 2023, including the 50th one-day hundred to go past the iconic Sachin Tendulkar during the World Cup. Jadeja amassed 613 runs and 66



wickets in 35 matches and the numbers contained his 22-wicket haul against Australia in the Border-Gavaskar Trophy early the previous year. Cummins garnered 422 runs and 59 wickets in 24 matches and has also led

the Australians to wins in the Ashes, WTC Final and in the ODI World Cup. Head was in roaring form with the bat in 2023, evidenced by the 1698 runs in 31 matches that included hundreds in the

WTC Final and the ODI World Cup final, and both the knocks were produced against India.

Meanwhile, Ashwin ended the year as the top Test bowler in the ICC Rankings, taking 41 wickets at a striking average of 17.02 and recording the most five-wicket hauls by anyone in Tests - four.

Root was at the forefront of England's success in Test cricket last year. He registered 787 runs in eight Tests, finishing the year with a strong average of 65.58.

Australia opener Khawaja topped the run-scoring charts in the longest format last year, amassing 1210 runs at an average of 52.60, which included three centuries.

Nominees for the Rachael Heyhoe Flint Trophy for ICC Women's Cricketer of the Year: Chamari Athapaththu (Sri Lanka), Ashleigh Gardner (Australia), Beth Mooney (Australia), Nat Sciver-Brunt (England).

## Top stars to feature as ITF event returns to Mandya after 8 years

Mandya (Karnataka), Jan 05 (PTI): Some of the top tennis talents, including India's Sasikumar Mukund, will be seen in action when an ITF event returns to the city after eight years through the Mandya Open, scheduled between January 7 and 14.

The tournament, the first ITF event to be played here since May 2015, has attracted players from over 18 countries and offers a prize pool of USD 25,000.

Apart from Mukund, other top players on the acceptance list are: Eric Vanshelboim (Ukraine), Kris van Wyk (South Africa), Giles Hussey (Great Britain) and Thomas Fancutt (Australia).

Local star SD Prajwal Dev from Mysore, who was recently included in

India's Davis Cup team, is also among the five Indians to gain direct entry.

KSLTA Secretary, Maheshwar Rao said: "It is our endeavour to develop and grow the sport of tennis across the state."

"We hope that events like these will benefit the local players while giving small towns an international exposure."

The singles main draw comprises 32 players, with 20 gaining direct entry while four earn a wild card.

The remaining eight players come from a 32-player pool who play the qualifiers between January 7 and 8.

Indians Rishi Reddy, Manish G, Manish Sureshkumar and Neeraj Yashpal received wild card entries for the main event.

## Cash-for-vote case

### SC to hear Telangana CM's plea against HC order in Feb

New Delhi, Jan 5 (PTI)

The Supreme Court on Friday deferred till February the hearing of Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy's petition challenging the high court order dismissing his plea questioning the jurisdiction of an ACB court in conducting the trial in the 2015 cash-for-vote scam case in which he is an accused.

A bench of Justices Sanjiv Khanna and Dipankar Datta adjourned the hearing on a batch of pleas, including a petition filed by Reddy, after it was

informed about bereavement in the family of one of the lawyers dealing with the case.

Reddy has challenged the June 1, 2021 order of the high court by which his plea questioning the jurisdiction of the special anti-corruption bureau (ACB) court to conduct the trial in the case was dismissed. On May 31, 2015, Revanth Reddy, then with the Telugu Desam Party, was apprehended by the ACB while allegedly paying a Rs 50 lakh bribe to Elvis Stephenson, a nominated MLA, for supporting TDP nominee Vem

Narendar Reddy in the legislative council elections. Apart from Reddy, the ACB had arrested some others.

All of them were later granted bail.

In July 2015, the ACB had filed a charge sheet against Reddy and others under the Prevention of Corruption Act and Section 120B (criminal conspiracy) of the Indian Penal Code.

The ACB had then claimed it has collected sufficient evidence against the accused in the form of audio/video recordings, and recovered an advance amount of Rs 50 lakh.

### ED raids Baramati company of NCP chief Sharad Pawar's grand nephew

Mumbai, Jan 5 (PTI)

The Enforcement Directorate on Friday searched premises of Baramati Agro, a company owned by MLA Rohit Pawar, grand nephew of NCP supremo Sharad Pawar, and linked entities as part of a money laundering probe into the alleged Maharashtra State Cooperative Bank scam, official sources said. At least six locations in Baramati, Pune, Pimpri and Aurangabad are being searched, they said. The office of Baramati Agro in Baramati town is also being covered. Rohit Pawar, 38, is NCP MLA from Karjat-Jamkhed seat in the Maharashtra assembly and is the owner and CEO of Baramati Agro. Rohit is the nephew of Baramati MP

Supriya Sule and Ajit Pawar, the Deputy chief minister of the state and MLA from Baramati. The probe against his firm pertains to allegations of "diversion" of funds and deposit of earnest funds of a company that bid for the purchase of a Maharashtra-based ailing cooperative sugar factor (CSF). The MSCB money laundering case stems from an August, 2019 FIR of the Mumbai Police Economic Offences (EOW) wing. The police complaint came after the Bombay High Court issued an order on August 22 that year to investigate the allegations of selling sugar factories in the Maharashtra cooperative sector through alleged fraudulent means and also that they were sold at throwaway prices.

## TEACH FOR CHANGE



Actor Manchu Lakshmi with students during the inauguration of a Teach For Change programme, at a school in Hyderabad, Friday.

### MP Pratap Simha's brother Vikram framed in tree felling case: Kumaraswamy

Bengaluru, Jan 5 (PTI)

Former Karnataka Chief Minister H D Kumaraswamy on Friday alleged that BJP MP Pratap Simha's brother Vikram Simha was 'framed' in the tree felling case.

Vikram Simha was recently arrested and granted bail in the tree felling case in a farm where he intended to grow ginger.

Pratap Simha has alleged that his brother is being framed to defame him so that Chief Minister Siddaramaiah can field his son Yathindra Siddaramaiah from the Mysuru-Kodagu Lok Sabha constituency on a Congress ticket.

The JD(S) second-in-command charged that the Forest officials brought rosewood from Gendekere forest and dumped it in the land, which Simha has taken on lease, on Siddaramaiah's direction.



Former Karnataka chief minister and Janata Dal (Secular) leader H D Kumaraswamy addresses a press conference, in Bengaluru, Friday.

tions.

According to him, the lease agreement started from January 1 but he was framed even before that.

Coming to the defence of Pratap Simha's brother, Kumaraswamy said the 'Gomala' (pasture land) was granted to Rakesh Shetty, who is now dead. His daughter Jayamma is taking care of it.

Jayamma had entered into the lease agreement with Vikram Simha to grant the land from January 2024 to 2027.

The case was initially registered against Jayamma as accused number one and Ravi as accused number two, the former chief minister said.

"The A-3 (Vikram Simha) was not there (in the FIR). There is a miscreant from Bengaluru who contacted CM and told him that he has brought a case to fix Vikram Simha. CM called the PCCF (Principal Chief Conservator of Forest). If we get the call list then we will get to know. This is a misuse of power," Kumaraswamy charged.

The JD(S) leader said Jayamma and Ravi were granted bail at the forest officer's office but took the accused number three - Vikram Simha - to the court.

He claimed that the

magistrate directed the forest officials to grant him bail from the Forest officer's office as they did with two other accused.

"The CM directed the Forest officials to include Pratap Simha in the case. He (Siddaramaiah) being a lawyer knows how to create evidence. The rosewood trees from Gendekere forest were taken to the spot. The CM did this. This is how the state is being governed," Kumaraswamy alleged.

Claiming that he has information that Siddaramaiah ordered dumping the trees on the spot, he said the call list will provide all the details.

"Will you (Chief Minister) give this case to Justice Nagamohan Das committee or constitute another commission? I never discuss without knowing the facts. This is what has happened in this case," Kumaraswamy said.

### 2020 violence part of 'larger story' to quash dissent through misuse of power: JNUTA

New Delhi, Jan 5 (PTI)

The 2020 violence at Jawaharlal Nehru University was part of a larger story of putting down dissent through brute misuse of official power, the university's teachers' association said on Friday.

Violence broke out in JNU on January 5, 2020, as masked men armed with sticks and rods attacked students and teachers and damaged property on the campus.

On the fourth anniversary of the violence on Friday, the Jawaharlal Nehru Teachers' Association (JNUTA) slammed the "callous attitude" of the then vice-chancellor towards the injured and reports of "assistance" the mob received from his administration.

The JNUTA alleged that the violence was encouraged, if not deliberately organised, with the purpose of "teaching a lesson" to students and facul-

ty who were protesting against the exorbitant hike in hostel fees.

Today marks the fourth anniversary of the horrific attack on students and faculty of JNU by a masked mob brandishing rods and pelting stones. The news and images of that unprecedented assault were splashed across the media, shocking the nation and the world, the JNUTA said in a statement.

"Those chilling images, and many more which were captured on mobile phones but strangely remained unrecorded by any official CCTV camera or security staff, remain etched in the memories of all those who directly experienced that violence and the deep sense of insecurity that gripped the campus in its aftermath," it said.

That four years have passed since, without any of the culprits being brought to book by either the JNU administration

or the Delhi Police serves to vindicate JNUTA's position of their complicity in the violence, it said.

"This is the obvious conclusion to be arrived at from the fact that the mob was allowed to run riot despite the presence of both the JNU security and the police on campus and their prior awareness about the direction things were heading in, no preventive measures were put into place to prevent the violence.

"Not only did they fail to respond to several calls for help and action during the incident, video recordings that became public also showed the mob being 'escorted' out of the JNU main gate by the police," the JNUTA alleged.

"The JNUTA is conscious of the fact that what transpired four years ago in JNU is part of a larger story of putting down dissent through brute misuse of official power," it added.

### ISRO tests high efficiency, low cost battery

Bengaluru, Jan 5 (PTI)

ISRO on Friday said it has tested a new kind of battery cell which is more efficient and costs less than conventional ones.

The national space agency said it has qualified 10 Ah Silicon-Graphite-anode based high energy density Li-ion cells as a low weight and low cost alternative to conventional ones being used currently.

The flight demonstration of the cells as a battery was also successfully completed by powering a resistive load onboard the POEM-3 platform of PSLV-C58, launched on January 1, the space agency said in a statement.

"Based on the confidence gained through this performance, these cells are poised to be used in upcoming operational missions where 35-40 per cent

cost significantly. The energy density of the Silicon High energy Li-ion cells is 190 Wh/kg with an operating voltage of 4.2 to 2.8 V, against Lithium-ion cells (157 Wh/kg). During the flight, the battery system worked for 21 hours in 15 orbits delivering a capacity of 8.9 Ah with final drained voltage of 0.4 V, ISRO said.

Before inducting any new systems in operational vehicles & missions, the Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre (VSSC), the lead centre of ISRO, subjects the system to rigorous qualification and flight demonstration as flightback payloads. Same approach was followed for these cells also. The capability of the cells to survive and perform in harsh space environments was also successfully demonstrated through the POEM experiment, it was stated.

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### EC dismisses Jairam Ramesh's concerns on VVPATs, asserts full faith in EVMs

New Delhi, Jan 5 (PTI)

Dismissing Congress leader Jairam Ramesh's concerns on the VVPATs, the Election Commission on Friday said that it raised "no new assertions or reasonable and legitimate doubts which require further clarifications", adding the rules governing paper slips were introduced by the grand old party-led government in 2013.

In a communication to Ramesh, the poll body also expressed "full faith in the use of the EVMs in the elections" and made it clear that the latest updated Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) answer "adequately and compre-

hensively" all reasonable and legitimate aspects on the use of the EVMs in the Indian elections.

"Rule 49A and 49M of the Conduct of Election Rules, 1961, governing VVPAT and handling of the Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) and wanted the VVPAT slips to be handed over to the voters, who could drop it in a separate box.

The opposition alliance had also demanded 100 per cent matching of the slips and the EVMs. "The recent letter dated December 30, 2023, does not raise any unresponded issue on EVM/VVPAT," Sharma said. He said the letter dated December 30, 2023,

said to be in sequence of the earlier letters "has no new assertions or reasonable and legitimate doubts which requires further clarifications".

The Commission also dubbed as "out of context" the references made to other countries and their Constitutional Courts about the use of the EVMs in the elections.

"Based on the outcomes of the elections conducted using EVMs, legal framework, established jurisprudence, technical security and administrative safeguards, the Commission has full faith in the use of the EVMs in the elections," Sharma asserted.

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## KNOW YOUR ARMY FESTIVAL



Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath during the inauguration of 'Know Your Army Festival', in Lucknow, Friday.

Jaipur, Jan 5 (PTI)

Former Rajasthan chief minister Ashok Gehlot on Friday said Prime Minister Narendra Modi had an opportunity to send a message against untouchability by getting the consecration at Ayodhya's Ram Mandir done by Dalits and tribals instead of putting himself at the forefront.

The Ram temple inauguration, led by Prime Minister Modi, will be held on January 22.

"This was an opportunity to give a message against untouchability by getting the 'pran

pratishta' done by the Dalits, tribals, OBCs and people of all religions and keeping Shankaracharya in the front," Gehlot told reporters here.

"The President would go there. Former president Ram Nath Kovind is also from the Dalit community, he would have been called. LK Advani should have been called," he added.

The Congress leader said that just like the prime minister "called for beating thalis" during the Covid pandemic, he should have similarly given the call that there will be no untouchability

in the country after January 22.

"Untouchability is a stigma on humanity. I (Prime Minister Modi) will wash away that stigma," he added. Gehlot said that the prime minister's "aura and respect would increase" by doing this "irrespective of whether anyone likes him or not".

"I too would like it, but you (Modi) are doing 'pran pratishta' alone," he added.

The former chief minister further said democracy is under threat, adding that premier agencies like the Income Tax department, the

Enforcement Directorate and the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) were being misused.

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