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BRIEF



An artist performs during the 7th edition of India International Ramayan Mela, at the Purana Qila in New Delhi, Thursday.

Denied bail

New Delhi: A Delhi court on Thursday dismissed the bail application of Neelam Azad, an accused in the Parliament security breach case. Additional Sessions Judge Hardeep Kaur denied bail to Azad, saying it would not be right to grant her the relief at this stage. The court had on Saturday sent all the accused in the case, including Azad, Manoranjan D, Sagar Sharma, Lalit Jha, Amol Shinde and Mahesh Kumawat, to judicial custody after they were produced before it on expiry of their police remand.

Suspended

New Delhi: A train ticket examiner (TTE) has been suspended after a video went viral on microblogging site X in which he is seen slapping and dragging a passenger. According to railway officials, the incident occurred on Thursday when Barauni-Lucknow Express was travelling between Gonda and Barabanki in Uttar Pradesh.

CBI action

New Delhi: The CBI has registered an FIR against Environics Trust for alleged violations of provisions of the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act in several bank transfers carried out in 2018, officials said Thursday. The central probe agency has also named the late R Sreedhar, who died in December last year, and Vanitha Sreedhar of the trust in the FIR, they said.

Suicide

Kanpur: A 29-year-old PhD student at the Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur allegedly committed suicide here on Thursday, the third such case in recent weeks, police said. Priyanka Jaiswal, who was pursuing a PhD in Chemical engineering, allegedly hanged herself from the ceiling fan in her hostel room, they said.

Weather
High 26 Low 17

MARKET
NIFTY 21,462.25
SENSEX 71,186.86

BULLION
GOLD 61,669
SILVER 71,351

Ram Lalla idol placed in temple's 'garbha griha'

Ayodhya, Jan 18:

'Light diyas, celebrate Ram temple consecration like Diwali'

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday asked his Cabinet colleagues to celebrate the Ayodhya Ram temple consecration ceremony on January 22 like Diwali by lighting up diyas at their homes and also feed the poor, sources said. He made these remarks at the Union Cabinet meeting amid a nationwide religious fervour in the run-up to the ceremony which he will be attending.

Half-day holiday for central govt staff on Jan 22

New Delhi: All central government offices across the country will remain closed for half a day on January 22, due to the Ram temple consecration ceremony in Ayodhya, a Personnel Ministry order issued on Thursday said. The 'Pran Pratishtha' ceremony of the new idol of Ram Lalla at the sanctum sanctorum of the Ram temple is scheduled for Monday. The ceremony is set to be performed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. "The Ram Lalla Pran Pratishtha at Ayodhya will be celebrated on 22nd January 2024 across India. To enable employees to participate in the celebrations, it has been decided that all central government offices, central institutions and central industrial establishments throughout India will be closed for half day till 1430 hours on 22nd January 2024," it said in the order issued to all central government ministries/ departments. When contacted, Union Minister of State for Personnel Jitendra Singh told PTI that the decision has been taken in view of the "overwhelming" public sentiments.

(UPSSF) personnel are deployed outside the sanctum sanctorum to prevent entry of unauthorized persons. The consecration of the Ram Temple will take place on January 22.

According to sources, after the consecration, a new method of worship will be followed, incorporating the rituals of the Ramandi sect. There will be a special Aarti five times a day. The attire of Ram Lalla will be changed daily. A special suit will be used for the first and last Aarti.

Aadhaar not a valid proof of date of birth: EPFO

New Delhi, Jan 18 (PTI):

Retirement fund body EPFO has said it will no longer use Aadhaar as a valid document for proof of date of birth.

In an official circular on January 16, the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) said the decision to remove Aadhaar was taken following a directive from the Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI).

As per the circular, Aadhaar is also being removed from the list of documents for correction in date of birth. The UIDAI in a circular on December 22, 2023, had said an Aadhaar number can be used for establishing identity of an individual, subject to authentication, and thereby, per se, it is not a proof of date of birth. The UIDAI also noted that many bodies like the EPFO have been using Aadhaar to validate date of birth. UIDAI had also said that many high courts in their orders have highlighted that Aadhaar is not a valid proof of date of birth.

Various documents like birth certificate issued by the Registrar of Births and Deaths, marksheet issued by any recognised government board or university, PAN (Permanent Account Number) card are used as valid proof for date of birth.

GUIDELINES FOR COACHING CENTRES

'No intake of students below 16 years, no misleading promises'

New Delhi, Jan 18 (PTI):

Coaching centres cannot enrol students below 16 years of age, make misleading promises and guarantee rank or good marks, according to new guidelines announced by the Ministry of Education. The guidelines for regulating coaching institutes have been framed to address the need for a legal framework and manage the unregulated growth of private coaching centres.

It comes following complaints received by the government about rising cases of student suicides, fire incidents, lack of facilities in coaching incidents as well as methodologies of teaching adopted by them. "No coaching centre shall engage tutors having qualifications less than graduation. The institutions cannot make misleading promises or guarantee rank or good marks to parents for enrolling students in the coaching centres. The institutes cannot enrol students below 16 years of age. Student enrolment should be only after secondary school examination," the guidelines said. "The coaching institutes cannot pub-

lish or cause to be published or take part in the publication of any misleading advertisement relating to any claim, directly or indirectly, of quality of coaching or the facilities offered therein or the result procured by such coaching centre or the student who attended such class," it added. The coaching centres cannot hire the services of any tutor or person who has been convicted of any offence involving moral turpitude. An institute will not be registered unless it has a counselling system as per the requirement of these guidelines.

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RECORD HOLDER

PM releases commemorative postage stamps on Ram temple

New Delhi, Jan 18 (PTI):

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday released commemorative postage stamps on the Ram temple in Ayodhya and a book of stamps issued on Lord Ram around the world, and said these are not merely pieces of paper but act as medium to pass on historical events to future generations.



PM Modi releases commemorative postage stamps on Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Temple and a book of stamps issued on Lord Ram around the world, in New Delhi, Thursday.

These tickets are the smallest form of history books, artefacts and historical sites and serve as a miniature form of epics and great ideas, he said in a video message.

Officials said the components of the design include the Ram temple, the 'chaupa' 'Mangal Bhavan Amangal Hari', sun, Saryu river and sculptures in and around the temple.

Modi said the appeal of Ram, Sita and Ramayana goes beyond the boundaries of time, society, caste, religion and region and connects with every-

one. Quoting Valmiki, the author of Ramayana, the prime minister said the epic and the Ram's personality will live on among people as long as there are mountains and rivers on earth.

Ramayana gives the message of the victory of love and teaches people sacrifice, unity and bravery in the most difficult of times while connecting humanity, he said, adding that is why the epic has been a centre of global attraction and is looked at with respect everywhere.

ILLUMINATED 'RAM PATH'



An illuminated view of 'Ram Path' ahead of the consecration ceremony of the Ram Mandir, in Ayodhya, Thursday.

Navy responds to drone attack on vessel with 9 Indians

New Delhi, Jan 18 (PTI):

In a swift operation, a guided missile destroyer of the Indian Navy intercepted a cargo vessel with 22 crew members, including nine Indians, little over an hour after the Marshall Island-flagged ship came under a drone strike in the Gulf of Aden on Wednesday night.

The strike on the cargo vessel MV Genco Picardy around 60 nautical miles South of Port Aden came amid increasing global concerns over attacks on merchant ships in the Red Sea and Arabian Sea. There was no report of any casualties



and the fire on the vessel was contained, officials said. The Indian Navy's frontline warship INS Visakhapatnam responded

within an hour to the distress call by MV Genco Picardy following the drone attack at 2311 hours on Wednesday, they said. The

Indian Navy's EOD (Explosive Ordnance Disposal) specialists boarded the vessel early Thursday morning to inspect the damaged area, they said, adding the vessel was cleared further transit following thorough scrutiny. The vessel is proceeding to the next port of call.

"The INS Visakhapatnam, mission deployed in Gulf of Aden for anti-piracy operations, swiftly responded to a distress call by Marshall Island flagged MV Genco Picardy following a drone attack at 2311 hours on January 17," the Navy said.

Eyewitness identifies Yasin Malik as shooter who killed 4 IAF men

Jammu, Jan 18 (PTI):

JKLF chief Yasin Malik lifted his 'pheran', pulled out his gun and opened fire at a group of IAF personnel, an eyewitness deposed before a special CBI court on Thursday while narrating what happened in Srinagar on January 25, 1990.

Former IAF corporal Rajwar Umeshwar Singh, who survived the terror attack in which four IAF personnel were killed, pointed to Malik in the courtroom as the main shooter. Malik attended the court proceedings on video from Delhi's Tihar Jail where he has been incarcerated since 2019. Besides the four men, including squadron leader

Ravi Khanna, who were killed, 40 people were injured on January 25, 1990, in Rawalpura on the outskirts of Srinagar. The IAF employees were waiting for their pickup to old Srinagar airfield for duty when they came under fire from terrorists.

A charge sheet was filed on August 31, 1990 against Malik and five others before the designated TADA Court at Jammu. Besides Malik, others accused in the killing of the IAF personnel are JKLF operatives Ali Mohammed Mir, Manzoor Ahmed Sofi alias Mustafa, Javed Ahmed Mir alias 'Nalka', Showkat Ahmed Bakshi, Javed Ahmed Zargar and Nanaji.

SCINDIA ON PASSENGERS EATING ON TARMAC 'Unacceptable, security compromised'

Hyderabad, Jan 18 (PTI):

Union Civil Aviation Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia on Thursday said incidents like passengers having food on tarmac at Mumbai airport were unacceptable and that penalties were imposed.

The safety and security of citizens is primary for the government, he said.

"Within hours of being informed or getting to know of that incident happening, beyond midnight, a meeting was held with all officials within the ministry. The showcase notice was issued immediately," he told reporters here during the Wings India 2024 that



began here today. The fact that passengers were inconvenienced and that they had to eat on the tarmac, apart from security being compromised across all points was unacceptable, he said. The minister pointed out that within three to four hours, notices were issued

and within 24 hours, the necessary penalties were levied. "This or any incident like this is unacceptable for us. Therefore, penalties were issued," he said. He added that two separate Civil Aviation Requirements (CAR) were issued.

Boat capsizes; death toll rises to 16

Vadodara, Jan 18:

At least 16 people, including three school children and teachers, died after a boat they had boarded in the Lake Zone of the Harni Lake in Vadodara capsized on Thursday evening during a picnic organised by a private school. Several school children died after a boat overturned in Harni Lake on the outskirts of Vadodara city in Gujarat on Thursday. The students were on a picnic when the incident happened. A search operation is underway to trace the remaining students. According to the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF), the boat had around 27 occupants at the time of



the incident. While 19 children and four teachers, were pulled out and rushed to various hospitals, a search operation is currently on to look for four missing children. Many students are still reported missing in this accident. Gujarat government and administration expedited the relief and rescue operations and make every possible effort to save the lives of the students.

Inter-district gang of bike lifters busted

22 vehicles worth Rs 14.70 lakh seized

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Jan 18: With the arrest of three ruffians, police claimed to have busted an inter district gang of bike lifters. One Activa scooter, 03 Splendor bikes and 18 Hero HF Deluxe bikes worth Rs 14.70 lakhs were recovered. It was a joint action of Anti Crime and Cyber Unit Durg and Police Stations Mohan Nagar, Pulgaon and Padmanabhpur.

Taking a serious note over the incidents of bike lifting, Senior Superintendent of Police (Durg) Ram Gopal Garg gave instructions to take prompt action in the cases of vehicle theft, trap the accused and recover the vehicles. Acting on the instructions, Additional Superintendent of Police (City) Abhishek Jha, Additional Superintendent of Police (Crime) Dr Anurag Jha and City Superintendent of Police



(Durg) Manishankar Chandra constituted a joint team led by Inspector Naresh Patel (I/c ACCU), Inspector Santosh Mishra, Inspector Vijay Yadav, Inspector Tapeshwar Netam and Inspector Anil Sahu.

The team maintained vigil on the suspects and criminal record holders. The network of informers was also activated. Habitual criminals released from jail were also monitored. Meanwhile, police received a tip off about Mukhtar Ahmed, a resident of New Adarsh Nagar

Durg, and his partner Sheikh Salim, a resident of Shankar Nagar Durg.

They were searching for a customer to sell the stolen motorcycle. Acting on the tip off, police team swung into action and arrested the suspects Mukhtar Ahmed and Sheikh Salim in Mohan Nagar. They kept misleading during the initial enquiry, but after sustained and factual enquiry, both of them confessed to committing vehicle thefts.

They had stolen a total of 22 vehicles in the last one year from the liquor shops

located under Mohan Nagar, Pulgaon and Padmanabhpur Police Station areas. They had sold the stolen vehicles to their friend Mohammad Baig alias Golu, a resident of Hanoda Durg. He works as a building construction contractor.

Mohammad Baig was caught and interrogated. He disclosed that he had given the motor cycles to the labourers. Police recovered one Activa scooter, 03 Splendor bikes and 18 HF Deluxe motorcycles worth Rs 14.70 lakh. The stolen bikes were recovered and

confiscated. Further action is being taken from the concerned police stations.

The accused Mukhtar Ahmed alias Sonu (27) son of Mustaq Ahmed, a resident of Durg, New Adarsh Nagar; Sheikh Salim (33) son of Sheikh Ismail, a resident of Shankar Nagar Durg and Mohammad Baig alias Golu (33) son of Hakim Baig, a resident of village Hanoda Chandkhuri Road, Padmanabhpur were produced before the court and have been sent to jail on judicial remand.

ASI Rajesh Pandey, Head Constable Santosh Mishra, Pradeep Singh Rajput, Chandrashekar Banjeer, Constable Balmukund Sahu, Chitrasen Sahu, Jagjit Singh, Narendra Sahare, Sanat Bharti, Komal Rajput, G Ravi, Khurshid Khurram Baksh, Tishwar Rathore from ACCU and teams of Police Station Mohan Nagar, Pulgaon and Padmanabhpur played a vital role in arresting the accused.

Bhilai Ispat Mazdoor Sangh demands holiday on January 22

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Jan 18: A delegation of Bhilai Ispat Mazdoor Sangh met the Director Incharge Anirban Dasgupta and discussed employee issues with him. The union also demanded a holiday on January 22 on the occasion of Pran Pratistha at Ram Mandir.

He spoke about the frequent accidents in the plant and emphasised on working seriously on employee issues in the plant. Considering the continuous increase in production and productivity, he demanded to increase the incentives proportionately and provide SIM cards to all the employees.

With the aim of providing better accommodation to the employees, the union demanded to build



new houses in place of the demolished houses. The BSP has made a policy to shift the lease holders living in the dilapidated building to another place and new houses will also be constructed soon.

The union put forth the demand for water supply during the summer season. The union also discussed the issue of necessary reforms in the new promotion policy as well as illegal retrenchment of contract workers by the contractor, etc. The union demanded compensation

for contract workers in case of an accident.

The management informed that an insurance of Rs 10 lakh will be provided to them soon. The union demanded a holiday in the plant on the occasion of Pran Pratistha of Ram Mandir in Ayodhya on January 22. Executive President Ravi Shankar Singh, General Secretary Channa Keshavlu, Joint General Secretary Vashishtha Verma and Harishankar Chaturvedi were present in the meeting.

INTUC demands introduction of daily reward scheme



Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Jan 18: Steel Employees Union (INTUC) has demanded from the Director Incharge of Bhilai Steel Plant to reintroduce the Daily Reward Scheme for the employees of Bhilai Steel Plant. A delegation of INTUC submitted a memorandum, addressed to the Director-in-charge of Bhilai Steel Plant.

The memorandum was handed over to JN Thakur, General Manager, IR Department. In the memorandum, INTUC demanded

to start the Daily Reward Scheme as soon as possible to boost the morale of the plant employees. It needs to be mentioned here that in the financial year 2021-22, the Daily Reward Scheme was started with the efforts of INTUC, which was operational from 20 October 2021 to 31 December 2021 and from 5 February 2022 to 31 March 2022. This scheme increased the production of the plant and the employees get benefits. Gifts were purchased and given to employees in all departments. Through the memorandum, INTUC Union

said that the wage revision of the plant employees has not been done for a long time, due to which the morale of the employees is falling. Bhilai management must start the Daily Reward Scheme which will boost the morale of the employees. This scheme will also increase production. INTUC General Secretary Vansh Bahadur Singh, Working President Puran Verma, Shekhar Kumar Sharma, S Ravi, GR Suman, Shiv Shankar Singh, Gyanendra Pandey and Resham Rathore were present.

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Jan 18: Bhilai Education Charitable Trust (BECT), in support with the District Education Department and partner OP Jindal University, hosted the much-celebrated "Jigyasa" Inter-School Quiz Contest at the BSP Human Resources Development Center, BSP, on January 17, 2024.

This intellectually charged event witnessed the participation of 30 Swami Atamanand schools from Durg District, showcasing the academic brilliance of the students. The quiz was held in four rounds, with 30 preliminary screening teams, followed by 12 teams advancing to these semifinals. The final round witnessed a thrilling competition among the top 6 teams, ultimately determining the

BECT's Jigyasa Quiz Contest ignites Intellectual Sparks among SAGES schools



winners. The Quiz Masters for the event were none other than the celebrated KBC Winners - Harpreet Singh (GM, BSP Project) and Umesh Sahu (AGM, BSP Project), bringing their expertise and flair to the quiz, adding an extra layer of excitement.

The winners of Jigyasa are as follows: 1st Prize (Rs 6000): SAGES Pahanda (Prakhar Dwivedi and Tikesha Verma), 2nd Prize

(Rs 4000): SAGES Risali (Sanmeet Singh and Advitiye Nirankari), 3rd Prize (Rs 3000): SAGES Kumhari (Pallavi Sinha and Hasan Ali)

In addition to the student competition, a special round for teachers and the audience further enriched the event, with exciting prizes for the participants. The event was graced by a distinguished guest list, including: Amit Ghosh (Asst Director, Education,

Amulya Priyadarshi (GM, BSP HRDC), Mukul Sahare (DGM, BSP, HRDC), Arvind Bhardwaj (Principal, SAGES Bori Dhamdha), BECT Trustees Rajni Kathuria and S Sajeev, Rajkumar Sharma (Ex Principal Shri Shankar), BECT Advisor, Wilson Mammon (BECT Advisor), Dr Saket Jeswani and Dr Pranjal Dewangan from OP Jindal University.

Approximately 120 individuals, including teachers, actively participated in the event. Furthermore, Dr Pranjal and Diptanshu Choubey (Physics wallah Vidhyapeeth, Bhilai) conducted a career guidance session, adding a valuable dimension to the overall program.

BECT, an NGO founded by passionate alumni of Bhilai-Durg Schools, remains committed to supporting underprivileged students in Chhattisgarh. Jigyasa is a testament to their dedication to educational initiatives, with the promise of more such events in the future.

The event's seamless coordination was led by the Chief Program Officer, EP Ritesh, ensuring that every student left the venue with a renewed sense of motivation and enthusiasm for general knowledge quizzes.

Traffic Police felicitates riders for wearing helmets

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Jan 18: Traffic Police felicitated the riders for wearing helmets and drivers for wearing seat belts. On the fourth day of Road Safety Month, a total of 983 students of Forebell's Public School, Khursipar, Delhi Public School Pulgaon, SRI School Kumhari, Khalsa Public School, KPS School Nehru Nagar and Sharda Vidyalaya Vaishali Nagar were detailed about traffic rules. The students and teachers were given detailed information about traffic rules, road signs, road markings, traffic signals, etc at the exhibition. The students were asked to make their family members and



friends follow the traffic rules. Assistant Sub Inspector Rajmani Singh and Constable Vijay Sharma conducted the training session. The children played the traffic related games and correct matching games. Free health and eye tests



were conducted for heavy and medium vehicle drivers at Bafna Toll Plaza. 150 drivers were examined at this camp. As part of the awareness programme, the drivers wearing helmets and seat belts were honoured at Gurudwara

Chowk. Anjor Rath fitted with LED Screens visited the weekly market in village Ganiari and video clips on road accidents were played. Through these video clips, an effort was made to make the villagers aware of traffic rules.

Durg Police gears up for effective implementation of new criminal laws

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Jan 18: The Government of India has notified new criminal laws - the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, and the Bharatiya Sakshya Sanhita 2023, which will replace the Indian Penal Code, the Code of Criminal Procedure, and the Indian Evidence Act of 1872. The new laws are likely to be implemented in the near



future. Special provisions have been made in the new laws for the safety of women and children.

In order to implement the new laws in the district, it is necessary to provide training to the police offi-

cers / personnel working in the district in the first phase. Accordingly, an action plan has been prepared for training at the district level. Three new law books have been distributed to all the gazetted

officers and police station / chowki in-charges in the district.

A summary regarding the new laws has been prepared and made available at all places. Apart from this, awareness is being increased by preparing posters / pamphlets related to the new laws and making them available at all places. Training is being given to officers / personnel regularly in all the police stations/posts.

BJP leaders clean Shitala Mata temple premises in Baigapara

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Jan 18: There is enthusiasm all over the country for the consecration of Lord Shri Ram, who will be enshrined in Ayodhya, and preparations to celebrate it are in full swing. Under this, on the call of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, cleanliness campaigns are being run in all the temples across the country. In this context, on Thursday cleanliness campaign was taken up by BJP leaders in the ancient Shitala Mata temple located in Baigapara Durg.

The temple premises were jointly cleaned by Rajya Sabha MP and BJP National Vice President Dr Saroj Pandey, Durg District BJP President Jitendra Verma, Durg (City) MLA Gajendra Yadav along with BJP leaders, councilors and workers. During this, a special puja was offered to Shitala Mata and prayers were offered seeking good health of the people. Under the cleanliness campaign, the leaders cleaned the temple courtyard, "Jyoti" room premises as well as the bells installed above and also

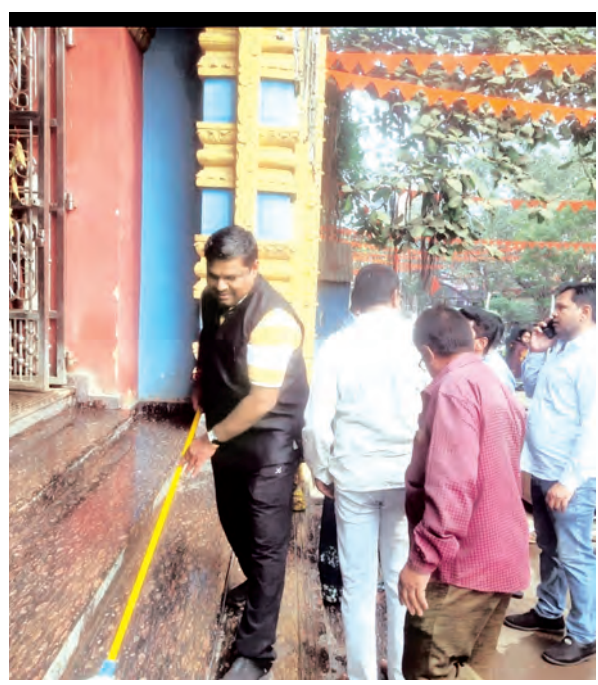
cleaned the three doors. Former Mayor Chandrika Chandrakar, Usha Tawri, District General Secretary Surendra Kaushik, Vice President Natwar Tamrakar, Vinayak Natu, Kantilal Jain, Manoj Mishra, Deepak Chopra, Vinod Arora, Senior leader Shiv Chandrakar, Dinesh Dewangan, DMC Leader of Opposition Ajay Verma, Raja Mahobi participated who also kept chanting Jai Shri Ram during the cleanliness drive. A large number of workers including Rakesh Duggad, Rajneesh Srivastava, Mandal President Vijay Tamrakar, General Secretary Asif Ali, Rita Meshram were present.

It is noteworthy that before the consecration of Shri Ram Ji in Ayodhya, Prime Minister Narendra Modi himself visited the ancient and mythological temples and appealed to the people for cleanliness, under which on Thursday a special cleaning campaign was conducted in the ancient Shitala temple located at Baiga Para.

The mythological importance of Shitala Mata has been described in



the Puranas and the Shitala Temple located at Baigapara is also one of



the ancient temples of the city. It is also called Nagar Mata. Worshipping

her and offering water to her helps in preventing serious and seasonal diseases like smallpox, epidemic, Sundry Mata etc. People remain safe here and people come here daily with good wishes. In such a time, on the special day of Thursday, a special cleaning campaign was conducted in Mata Shitala Temple in which Rajya Sabha MP Saroj Pandey herself mopped the floor of the courtyard, cleaned the wall, gate and bells. MLA Gajendra Yadav and District BJP President Jitendra Verma also gave the message of cleanliness by washing the floors in the temple premises.

Saroj Pandey termed January 22 as the golden day in the history of the country and said that this day was awaited by both god and humans alike because Lord Shri Ram is going to sit in Ayodhya after hundreds of years. Temples are being cleaned prior to Deepotsav. District President Jitendra Verma and MLA Gajendra Yadav also appealed to the people to participate in the cleanliness campaign. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has appealed to clean the pilgrimage

places and temples of the country and run a cleanliness campaign by January 21 before the consecration.

Other prominent persons present were councilors Rajiv Aggarwal, Anup Soni, Narendra Banjare, Manish Sahu, Ajit Ved, Shashi Dwarika Sahu, former councilors Ratnesh Chandrakar, Dnyaneshwar Tamrakar, Prakash Meshram, Sarita Mishra, Jyoti Chandrakar, Govind Dewangan, Bunty Chauhan, Virendra Tanna, Wasim Qureshi, Zakir Khokhar, Mehrunisha, Yasmin Begum, Mahendra Chopra, Atul Pahade, Ishwar Dewangan, Krishna Nirmalkar, Chandraprakash Meshram, Ashwini Chandel, Vinod Tamrakar, Sheetal Jangid, Mamta Dewangan, Dineshwari Turkar, Jyoti Chandrakar, Riju Tamrakar, Kalindri Sahu, Seema Tidke, Vidyanamdev, Meenakshi Mahobiya, Asha Yadav, Rahul Pandit, Prakash Rajput, Dadu Ahir, Kishan Yadav, Harpal Singh Bhatia, Santosh Tiwari, Milap Jain, Bhupendra Yadav, Girish Yadav, Narayan Sharma and others.

Research in new areas is necessary for survival of universities: Harichandan

● Governor inaugurates two-day conference of Vice Chancellors

Raipur, Jan 18:

Governor Vishwabhushan Harichandan on Thursday inaugurated the two-day conference of Vice-Chancellors organized by the Association of Indian Universities Central Region at Central Guru Ghasidas University, Bilaspur. He said that universities are factories and major centers for molding true human beings. It's important work is to create new knowledge through research and innovations. It is considered essential to conduct new research daily for the survival of the university as well as for the continuity of the country



and the world.

On this occasion, the Governor also released the special issue of the magazine 'Universities News' published by the Association of Indian Universities. The inauguration ceremony was presided over by Mr. GD Sharma, President of the Association of Indian Universities and Mr. Atul Kothari, Secretary of Education Culture Upliftment Trust, New Delhi was present as a special guest. A large number of Vice Chancellors and educationists of universities from the states of

Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha and Telangana participated in the conference.

Governor Harichandan said that I am hopeful that some concrete recommendations will emerge from this meeting which will prove helpful for the government, top institutions of higher education and the youth. He said that the major institutions of Indian higher education have performed well in terms of research. But there is potential for much more to be done. Only 75 Indian universities feature

in the World University Rankings, but none of them could reach the top 200 rank. To improve these, a good research ecosystem is required.

The Governor said that to promote innovation and startups in the country and create a strong eco-system, the Government of India has launched a 'Startup India Action Plan' which provides support to recognized startups through handholding funding and incubation. The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 report has also given adequate emphasis on research and innovation.

Universities should strengthen relationships with industries, government and other stakeholders.

The President of the Association of Indian Universities, Mr. GD Sharma, Vice President Vinaykumar Pathak, Dr. Atul Kothari also addressed the function. The welcome address was given by the Vice Chancellor of Central Guru Ghasidas University, Alok Kumar Chakrawal and the vote of thanks was given by the Registrar Manish Srivastava. The valedictory ceremony of the Meet of Vice-Chancellors of the Indian University Association Central Zone 2023-24 will be held on January 19, 2024 at 12.30 pm. The chief guest of the valedictory ceremony will be Arun Sao, Deputy Chief Minister, Government of Chhattisgarh.

ANNUAL FUNCTION



Students of Mahant Laxminaryan Das College presented variety of cultural programme and in this excerpts from the epic Ramayan was also presented.

Police seizes smuggled gold worth Rs 2 cr



Mahasamund, Jan 18:

The Mahasamund Police got a major breakthrough in gold smuggling case when they nabbed a person in luxury car with 11 pieces of Gold biscuits and gold 'pattis' weighing 3.126 Kg worth Rs 2.0 cr. The police had seized the gold and car and taken the youth into custody. The case is that of Singhoda thana area. Actually the police got tip from an informer

that a car from Odisha is coming with gold in large quantity. On this the Cyber Cell and Singhoda police team started checking vehicles at Rehatikhil inter-state check-post and started search in the vehicles. During this a Luxury car with Maharashtra pass bearing No. MH 26 AK 4501 was coming towards Mahasamund.

The police stopped the car and on asking about his destination details, he

■ From a Luxury car coming from Odisha with Maharashtra passing

said that he is going to Nanded in Maharashtra from Kharagpur of West Bengal. On finding his statement dubious, the police conducted search in his vehicle. In their search they found 11 pieces of gold biscuits packed in a plastic and in another packet 3 pieces of big gold 'patti' and 5 small gold 'pattis' of gold weighing 3.126 kg and costing total Rs 2.0 cr. The driver failed to produce any valid documents in support of the same.

The police seized the gold biscuits and 'pattis' and the car and started the course of investigation into the case.

IAS Officer Subrat Sahoo posted as DG of Administrative Academy

Central Chronicle News

Raipur, Jan 18: In a minor administrative reshuffle, the state government on Thursday has entrusted the senior IAS Officer and Additional Chief Secretary Religious Trust and Endowment Subrat Sahoo on the additional charge of Director General of Panchayat & Rural Development Institute to the post of Director General of Chhattisgarh Administrative Academy. Additional Chief Secretary Public Health & Family Welfare and Medical Education Mrs Renu Pillai would be relieved from her additional

charge of Director General of Chhattisgarh Administrative Academy once Subrat Sahoo assumes office. Similarly, the 2007 batch IAS Officer Janak Prasad Pathak has been given the charge of Commissioner Medical Education with the additional charge of Registrar Firms & Societies whereas Additional Managing Director of Mandi Board Mahendra Singh Savanni has been posted as Managing Director of Mandi Board. General Administration Department (GAD) Secretary Dr Kamalpreet Singh has issued an order in this regard here on Thursday evening.

MLAs submit nearly thousand questions for Budget session



Central Chronicle News

Raipur, Jan 18: Members of Legislative Assembly (MLAs) have submitted nearly one thousand questions for the Question Hour session during the forthcoming Budget session of Chhattisgarh Legislative Assembly scheduled to begin from February 5 onwards. According to the informa-

tion received, total 957 questions have been submitted by the MLAs which include 880 questions submitted through online mode whereas the remaining questions have been submitted in off-line mode.

MLAs questioned in-clude 505 questions as started whereas the remaining are unstarred.

It is learnt that few MLAs would further sub-

mit questions related with their respective constituencies in next few days. Through the questions, the MLAs would corner the Treasury bench on key issues of their respective region.

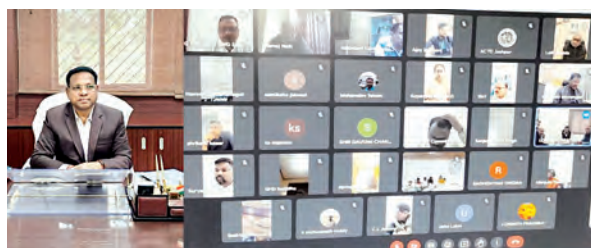
Apart from the Question Hour session, the MLAs would try to corner the Treasury bench on key issue through Call Attention motion apart from bring adjournment motion on important issues. It is notable that the Budget session would begin with the Governor's Speech on inaugural day whereas the Finance Minister would be presenting annual budget for the fiscal 2024-25 in next week seeking approval from the House.

Improve results of 10th-12th board exam: Dugga

Instructions given to officials to improve the facilities of ashram-hostels

Raipur, Jan 18:

Newly appointed Secretary cum Commissioner of Tribal and Scheduled Caste Department, Narendra Kumar Dugga took charge on Thursday. As soon as he took charge, he held a meeting of departmental officers through video conferencing and instructed the Assistant Commissioners and Project Administrators posted in the districts to speed up and tighten the departmental work. Secretary Dugga said that availability of all basic facilities should be ensured in hostels and ashrams. Special attention needs to be paid to educational



quality in hostels and ashrams. The result of class 10th and 12th board examination should be 100 percent. Negligence in children's education will not be tolerated. He said that work should be done in a planned manner towards improving the results of class 10th-12th board examination. If the examination results are not satisfactory, discipli-

nary action will be taken against the concerned Assistant Commissioner. He instructed the principals, teachers and superintendents posted in hostels and ashrams to take the education and feeding of children on priority. Dugga also gave instructions to ensure cleanliness, nutritious food and proper arrangements for education in hostels and

ashrams. Secretary Dugga said in the video conferencing that instructions were given to make necessary improvements in order to improve the results of the children of Prayas and Eklavya schools in the examinations like IIT, NIT, Triple IT, Engineering and MBBS. According to the interests of the children, arrangements should be made for counseling to help them choose a better career. Through video conferencing, Dugga also took detailed information about other departmental schemes including Durguri and directed to complete all the incomplete construction works soon.

NIT Raipur inaugurated The Annual Sports Fest SAMAR

Raipur, Jan 18: National Institute Of Technology (NIT) Raipur's sports committee Team Shaurya- The Sports Committee has kickstarted its highly anticipated 4-day annual sports fest, SAMAR 2023-24 here on Thursday. 'Samar' being the largest sports fest of Central India, featuring a diverse array of sports competitions.

Dr RK Tripathi during his address, underscored the significance of sports in shaping an individual's path to success, emphasizing the mantra of "Being of sound mind and body." Dr NK Jain, in his speech, advocated dedicating a minimum of 30 minutes daily to sports, emphasizing the importance of enjoying it without the burden of work-related stress.



Drawing inspiration from the historic 1983 World Cup match for cricket, he urged perseverance, highlighting the lesson of never giving up. Extending congratulations to Team Shaurya for the triumphant organization of SAMAR'24, Dr. M Atulkar expounded on the symbiotic relationship between a healthy body and a sharp mind, defining success as the progressive realization

of a worthy goal. He elaborated on how sports cultivate qualities such as burning desire, dedication, determination, discipline, and adherence to deadlines in pursuing one's objectives. Addressing the gathering, Dr. NV Ramana Rao delved into the alignment of sports with the National Education Policy (NEP), elucidating its pivotal role in scholastic development and the cultiva-

tion of willpower. He highlighted the multifaceted benefits of sports, including the development of reasoning skills, the nurturing of leadership qualities, enhanced academic focus, and social development. Dr. Rao advocated the integration of sports into daily routines, commending Team Shaurya for their commendable efforts in organizing the sports fest.

Agarwal takes stock of preparations of 'Gatha Shri Ram Mandir Ki' prog



Raipur, Jan 18: Various programs are also being organized in Chhattisgarh on the occasion of the consecration of Shri Ram Temple in Ayodhya on January. The preparations of which are going on in full swing. In this series, Chhattisgarh Culture Department is making enthusiastic preparations for the much awaited program 'Gatha Shri Ram Mandir Ki' to be held on January 20 at the Police Parade Ground. Everyone knows the story of Lord Shri Ram, but very few people are aware of

the struggle of the last 500 years for building the grand temple. In such a situation, this event is being organized by the Chhattisgarh Culture Department with the aim of acquainting the public with the great story of the grand Shri Ram Temple. Under this, Minister of Religious Trusts and Endowments, Tourism and Culture, Brijmohan Agarwal took stock of the preparations at the Police Parade Ground, the venue of the program late at night. During this, officials

● Visited Police Parade Ground late at night on Wednesday

of the organizing committee, police, administration, municipal corporation, tourism, culture, endowment department met officials and took information and gave necessary guidelines. Apart from this, Brijmohan Agarwal also visited Shri Ram Temple located on VIP Road and took stock of the preparations being done there. Agarwal said that the entire country and the world are waiting for the arrival of Lord Shri Ram and Shri Ram's maternal family is especially excited about the arrival of the Lord and no stone will be left unturned in this. Necessary instructions have been given to the officials and to keep an eye on the events, Mr. Agarwal reached the Police Parade Ground and Shri Ram Mandir

MATS university to participate in All India Rugby event



Central Chronicle News

Raipur, Jan 18: MATS University team would be participating in the All India Inter University Rugby (Men) tournament being organized at Chandigarh University Mohali from January 20. A press release issued here informed that Pradeep, Abhishek, Bhushan, Yogiraj, Rahul, Pradeep, Janesh, Akshay,

Himanshu, Tikesh, Nitesh Kumar and Ramdukhar are part of the team for the tournament. MATS University Chancellor Gajraj Pagaria, Vice Chancellor Professor Dr KP Yadav, Deputy Vice Chancellor Dr Deepika Dhand, Director General Priyesh Pagaria and Registrar Gokul Nanda Panda have extended best wishes to the team for the tournament.

SPORTS ROUND-UP

Ch'garh announces team for Khelo India Squash games



Central Chronicle News

Raipur, Jan 18: Malay Rathod, Vansh Chandrakar, Yash Sonwani and Reyansh Kulshehstra have been selected in team Chhattisgarh for the

Khelo India Youth Games in Squash event to be held at Chennai from January 20. A press release issued here informed that Bappa Shree Sahu is the Team Coach whereas Keshav Kumar and Rahul Sahu are the Technical

Officers. Chhattisgarh Squash Association Vice President Dr Manoj Kumar Agrawal, Dr Ravindra Mishra, Pravin Richaria and Sandeep Govalkar have extended best wishes to the players for the event.

Goals are achieved through determination : Choudhary

There is no option other than hard work for success: Tankram Verma



Raipur, Jan 18: To achieve any goal, it is very important to have hard work, sacrifice and dedication along with continuous efforts. The youth should adopt the lifestyle of Swami Vivekananda and successful personalities in history. Youth should not be afraid of failure but should know that failure is the first step to success. This was said by Finance Minister O.P. Choudhary in the youth festival organized on Wednesday at Government Badri Narayan Bagadia Higher Secondary School, Newra, under the joint aegis of District Administration and Sports and Youth Welfare Department, on the auspicious occasion of the birth anniversary week of Swami Vivekananda Ji.

Similarly, Revenue Minister Tankram Verma, while encouraging the youth in the program, asked the youth to adopt Swami Vivekananda's motto 'Arise, awake and stop not till the goal is reached' in their behaviour. He said that there is no substitute for hard work. No task or goal is impossible. If we decide. The common people will have to work together for the development of the state. On this occasion, he called for ensuring equal participation of all in the direction of building a developed state.

On this occasion of Youth Mahotsav, 42 young talents including Judge Vaishali Baghel, National Sports Talent Rajendra Verma, Saurabh

Verma, Dhananjay Gendre, Karan Yadav, Mansi Verma, Bharti Gidani, Ruchika Dewangan were felicitated for their excellent performance and friend Manas Parivar Tilda. Young artists including folk art stage artist Sandeep Yadu, bamboo singer Saguni were also felicitated. The audience was enthralled by the poetry recitation in the program.

Poet's conference was also organized in this program of Youth Mahotsav. In this, Mir Ali Mir, awarded with Pandit Sunderlal Sharma Award, poet duo of Veer Ras, Devendra Parihar, Mungeli and poet Mahendra Bezubaan mesmerized the gathering with their poetry recitation.

On this occasion, Municipal President Lemiksha Guru, Municipal Vice President Vikas Sukhwani, District President, Shivshankar Verma and Sarja Thakur Ram Verma, other public representatives, Chief Executive Officer District Panchayat, Vishwadeep, SDM, Prakash Kumar Tandon, Principal, Rajesh Chandani, students, and a large number of residents including parents were present.

CM pays tribute to DRG Jawan Arvind Ekka

Our determination to fight against Naxalites will remain strong, says CM Sai

Raipur, Jan 18: Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai has expressed deep grief and paid tribute to the Head Constable Arvind Ekka, who lost his life in the line of duty. Chief Minister extended condolences to the grieving family members.

Ekka, a dedicated DRG jawan, sustained injuries on December 29 during a Naxalite blast in the village of Kawadgaon Hilori in the Gangalur police station area of Bijapur. He was admitted to Narayana Hospital for treatment, where he succumbed to his injuries during treatment. Chief Minister stated that Shri Ekka has made the ultimate sacrifice while protecting his motherland. The entire nation and our state are indebted to him, and we honour his supreme sacrifice. Our determination to fight against Naxalites will remain strong.

IIT-NR conducts seminar on 'AI for Applications in Psychiatry'

By Dr. Justin Dauwels of TU Delft, Netherlands

Naya Raipur, Jan 18:

IIT Naya Raipur conducted seminar on 'Artificial Intelligence for Applications in Psychiatry' in its campus on 16 January 2024. This program was conducted by Dr. Justin Dauwels from TU Delft, Netherlands under the umbrella of 'IEEE Distinguished Lecture Series' in India.

Dr. Justin is an IEEE distinguished speaker. Presently, he is an Associate Professor at the TU Delft (Signals and Systems, Department of Microelectronics). Earlier he was an Associate Professor of the School of Electrical and Electronic Engineering at the Nanyang Technological University (NTU) in Singapore. He was the Deputy Director of the ST Engineering - NTU



corporate lab, which comprises 100+ PhD students, research staff and engineers, developing novel autonomous systems for airport operations and transportation. At the TU Delft, he serves as scientific lead of the Model-Driven Decisions Lab (MoDDL), a first lab for the Knowledge Building program between the police and the TU Delft. He also serves as Chairperson of the EE Board of Studies at the TU Delft, and is a board member of the Netherlands Institute for Research on ICT. In his inaugural address, Dr Pradeep Kumar

Sinha, VC & Director of IIT Naya Raipur welcomed Dr. Justin and briefed him about the institute and the background of the audience. Prof. Rajesh Ingle, Dean Academics of the Institute, then briefed about various IEEE activities happening in the institute. After his talk, Dr Justin interacted with faculty members and research scholars of IIT-NR regarding possible research collaborations. Dr Maifuz Ali, faculty-in-charge of IEEE Student Branch coordinated the session. A separate one-to-one interac-

tion with the faculty and students was also arranged after the session at institute board room.

IIT NR IEEE Student Branch was formed in the year 2019 and IEEE Women in Engineering (WIE) affinity group in 2022. Many IEEE events have been conducted at IIT Naya Raipur such as International conferences like IEEE WIECON ECE in Dec 2022, IEEE ICBDS in 2023, IEEE TRIBE Conference in 2020 and IEEE ILS 2023.

We have a very strong IEEE Team at IIT Naya Raipur. Almost all faculty members are IEEE members, many are elevated to IEEE Senior Member Grade. Today, almost all IIT-NR faculty members as well as several research scholars and students of IIT NR are IEEE members- benefiting in their research and education from activities of local and global IEEE professional communities.

CM pays tribute to late Shri Kumar Lakshmi Narayan Dev



Sukma, Jan 18:

After 'darshan' of the mortal remains of late Shri Kumar Lakshmi Narayan Dev, father of Jagdalpur MLA Shri Kiran Dev, at his residence in Sukma, Chief Minister Shri Vishnu Deo Sai prayed for the eternal peace of the departed soul and expressed condolences to the bereaved family members. On this occasion, Forest and Climate Change Minister Kedar Kashyap, Agriculture Minister Ramvihar Netam, MLA Lata Usendi, Chaitram Atami, Vinayak Goyal, Guru Khushwant Sahab, former MP Dinesh Kashyap, former MLA Santosh Bafna, Mahesh

Gadga, Rekhchand Jain, Lachchuram Kashyap, Baiduram Kashyap and Divisional Commissioner Shyam Dhawade, Inspector General of Police Sundarraj P, Deputy Inspector General of Police Kamlochan Kashyap, Collector Harish S, Superintendent of Police Kiran Chavan and a large number of public representatives and area residents had the last view of the mortal remains of Shri Lakshmi Narayan Dev and paid homage. It is noteworthy that late Kumar Lakshmi Narayan Dev, a member of the Sukma Zamindar family, died on Wednesday at his residence in Jagdalpur at the age of 104.

Problems to be resolved in BALCO-SECL: Jyotsana



Korba, Jan 18:

Member of Parliament of Korba Lok Sabha Constituency Mrs. Jyotsana Charandas Mahant has said that if the laborers of BALCO established in Korba district agitate with their demands, the management should negotiate with them and similarly, when SECL's land displacement rights are being sought, FIRs are being registered against the employees, which is wrong she said. The MP said that the land displaced people have to stage a sit-in protest for compensation and reha-



management is not ready to listen. The MP said that SECL officials are coming to Korba area but they are focusing only on production leaving the interests of the laborers and have nothing to do with community development activities. The MP said that after meeting the workers and common people of Baikunthpur-Korea and Manendragarh, apart from Gaurela-Pendra-Marwahi district under Korba Lok Sabha constituency, a conference of workers of Rampur Assembly Constituency has been organized.

VBSY camp organized successfully



Dongargaon, Jan 18:

In order to raise awareness through outreach activities for the saturation of the major schemes of the Government of India, the Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra was organized in Nagar Panchayat Dongargaon on 17th January 2024 in Saketdham Parishad Dongargaon Ward 11. After the welcome of the guests on the stage, oath was taken by the guests, staff officers, public representatives, journalists and common citizens present in the development of Bharat Sankalp Yatra program. Meri Kahani Meri

Jubani by Beneficiaries of Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana under Nagar Panchayat Dongargaon, Ayushyaman Card, Pradhan Mantri Samman Yojana, Ujjwala Gas, Poshan Ahar Yojana, PM Swanidhi Yojana, Swachh Bharat Mission Yojana, Gas Connection, Poshan Kit Distribution Yojana, etc. was also highlighted. A cultural program was presented by the students of various schools and a quiz competition was organized by the present guests, public representative officials, students, citizens, etc. and apart from the office staff of the Nagar Panchayat at the

program site, the Revenue Department, Health Department, Veterinary Department, Women Child Development Department, Agriculture Department, Cooperative Service Committee staff were also present. In the camp Aadhaar Card Updation related schemes like PM Swanidhi 1, PM Awas Yojana 20, PM Vishwakarma Yojana 102, Ayushyaman Card 70, Ujjwala Yojana 31, Atal Pension, Aadhaar Card 37, 2031 applications for health check-up were obtained from the citizens by setting up stalls and information was given.

Classifieds

VACANCY
Tendering and Marketing Vacancy- Vacancy for Raipur in a Reputed Iron & Steel Company, for supplying material to Government Departments by participating through Tenders. The Candidate must have good Experience in the steel industry, and knowledge about Tendering procedures and processes to able to participate, manage and execute. The job requires expertise in operating computer and proficient in English Language. Interested Candidates please contact or send resume @ 07980002151

Senior Accountant Vacancy- Vacancy for Raipur in a Reputed Iron & Steel Company. The candidate Should be accustomed to preparing financial reports, perform research and analysis, maintaining the general ledger, perform account reconciliations, assist with audit preparations, and carry out other accounting duties as may be required. The job requires expertise use of Tally and Excel, and well experienced candidate. Interested Candidates please contact or send resume @ 07980002151

Land Revenue Officer- This role requires a strong understanding of land revenue management. Exp-patwari and Ex-Revenue Inspector can also apply for this job, and candidates must have good knowledge about Land revenue records and its management. Job Posting for Raipur, Chhattisgarh in a Reputed Iron & Steel Company. Interested Candidates please contact or send resume @ 07980002151

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Chronicle

'The Sindh Project Unveiled: A pioneering initiative to promote and conserve Sindh community heritage'

'Empowering Tradition, Preserving Legacy'

In a bid to celebrate, preserve, and promote the rich cultural heritage of the Sindh community, The Sindh Project has been officially launched. This groundbreaking initiative aims to safeguard the unique traditions, languages, and history of the Sindh region, fostering a sense of pride and continuity among its people.

Led by a dedicated team of cultural enthusiasts, historians, and community leaders, The Sindh Project endeavors to create a platform for the Sindh community to thrive in the modern era while honoring its deep-rooted traditions. Through a multifaceted approach, the project will focus on cultural events, educational programs, and digital initiatives to bridge the gap between the past and the present.

Key Objectives
Cultural Celebrations: The Sindh Project plans to organize vibrant cultural festivals, art exhibitions, and music events that showcase the richness of Sindh's cultural tapestry.
Language Preservation: Recognizing the importance of language as a cultural cornerstone, The Sindh Project will initiate language preservation programs, promoting the use of native languages within the community.

Education Initiatives: Collaborating with local educational institutions, the project aims to introduce Sindh's history and cultural significance into school curricula, ensuring that future generations carry forward their heritage.
Digital Archives: A digital repository will be established to document and preserve historical artifacts, stories, and traditions, making them accessible to a global audience and future generations.
Community Engagement: The Sindh Project encourages active community participation, fostering a sense of unity and pride among Sindh's diverse population. Sustainable Development: The initiative seeks to strike a balance between modernity and tradition, promoting sustainable practices that align with the cultural values of the Sindh community.

This ambitious undertaking has garnered widespread support from local leaders, cultural experts, and the community at large. The Sindh Project is poised to become a beacon of cultural preservation, ensuring that the vibrancy of the Sindh community continues to shine brightly for generations to come.

Rohit Sahu inaugurates development works

Rajim, Jan 18:

MLA Rohit Sahu inaugurated various developmental works, including drain construction work, paver block and community building renovation work in nearby village Lafandi in the presence of Chief Guest Siddheshwaranand Ji Maharaj Panchkoshi Peethadhiswar, while District Panchayat Member Chandrasekhar Sahu presided over the program. Special Guest were District President Jagdish Sahu, Sarpanch Indrani Sahu, Upasarpanch Nehru Sahu and others.

On reaching the village, the villagers gave a grand welcome to the guests, and performed puja and circumambulation of Panchkoshi Dham Baba Aughad Nath. Village Sarpanch Indrani Sahu delivered the welcome address and Deputy Sarpanch Nehru Sahu read the petition on behalf of the villagers. Addressing the gathering, Chief Guest Rohit Sahu said that all the programs are being successful with the grace of Baba Aughad Nath and



the guarantee that Narendra Modi, the successful Prime Minister of the country made to the people of the region before the elections, is now being fulfilled. In the presidential address, Zilla Panchayat member Chandrasekhar Sahu said that with the blessings of Baba Aughad Nath, this village Lafandi is touching new heights of continuous development. The meeting was addressed by Panchkoshi P e e t h a d i s h w a r

Siddheshwarananda Ji, District President Jagdish Sahu and other guests. On this occasion Roop Kumar Sahu, Lalji Sahu, Hiranam Sahu, Yadram Sahu, Dhanaji Sahu, Hulas Sahu, Tukaram Sahu, Govardhan Sahu, Ramadhar Sahu and a large number of villagers including Kandara, Bodhan Sahu, Tulas Sahu District Member Representative and Panna Sahu were present.

Bharat Sankalp Yatra to be organized

Korea, Jan 18: In order to provide information about the welfare schemes of the Central Government and to provide benefits to the eligible beneficiaries, on January 19 Municipal Council, Baikunthpur and Municipal Council Shivpur-Charcha will be organized Bharat Sankalp Yatra camp. According to information received, the camp has been organized at Shramveer Stadium in Shivpur-Charcha from 9 am to 2 pm and at Government Ramanuja Pratap Singhdev College, Baikunthpur from 2 pm to 6 pm. During this time, the revenue department, food department, agriculture department, health department, livestock development department, women and child development department, cooperative bank etc will be present. At the same time, applications will be registered from the beneficiaries for the benefit of schemes like Aadhaar Card, Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana, Pradhan Mantri Awas (Urban), Toilet Construction, Urban Nal-Jal Yojana and Ayushman Card dispersal.

Expelled Assam Cong leader holds protest during Yatra

Seeks justice from Rahul Gandhi

Sivasagar (Assam), Jan 18 (PTI):

Former Assam Pradesh Youth Congress president Angkita Dutta, who was expelled for anti-party activities last year, on Thursday demonstrated demanding justice and sought to meet Rahul Gandhi, who is currently leading the Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra in the state.

The Congress, however, termed her a political stooge of Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma who, the party claimed, acted like 'Narad Muni' in her case. Dutta along with a few supporters were on a sit-in at Amguri town in

Sivasagar district, seeking 'nyay' (justice) from Gandhi who passed through the town leading the Yatra. She also brought a memorandum for giving it to the Congress MP, but did not get a chance to meet him.

"I am here to seek justice in my case. I have been in vanvas (exile) for 10 months. I complained about harassment and instead of giving justice to me, the party expelled me," Dutta told reporters. Failing to hand over the memorandum, she broke down in front of the media and said she really hoped that Gandhi would listen to her.

Prior to this, several hoardings bearing a photograph of Dutta and Gandhi together were put



Angkita Dutta

up along the route of the march in and around Amguri, seeking justice for women in the Congress party. "Are you tired of the injustice women face everyday?... Nyay for Angkita," read the hoardings, which also had the logo of 'Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra'. Dutta in April last

year had filed an FIR against Youth Congress president Srinivas B V alleging that he was "persistently harassing and torturing" her for six months by making sexist comments, using swear words and also threatening her with dire consequences if she complained to the senior leaders.

She had also mentioned in the complaint that during the party's plenary session at Raipur, the accused had physically heckled her and threatened to ruin her career if she made any complaint against him. The Congress issued a show cause notice to Dutta and later expelled her from the primary membership of the party for six years for anti-party activities.

Odisha artist carves Hanuman Chalisa on wood

Berhampur (Odisha), Jan 18 (PTI):



Artist Arun Sahu (35) of Kanchuru village who has carved out a 'Hanuman Chalisa', in wood ahead of the consecration of the Ram temple at Ayodhya.

An artist in Odisha's Ganjam district has carved out a 'Hanuman Chalisa', in wood on the occasion of the consecration of the Ram temple at Ayodhya on January 22. He would like to present it for installation in the newly built Ram temple. Arun

Sahu (35) of Kanchuru village near Hinjili town of the district has made the Chalisa in 5.6-foot height and 30-inch wooden frame along with the carving of the image of the Lord Hanuman. The letters in Hindi were carved in the 'gambari' wood and pasted in the two-inch thickness wooden frame. He has also pol-

ished it in such a manner that it would last long. Sahu, who owns an institute to train the youngsters, said he took nearly one month to finish the wood carving craft. Some of his students have also extended helping hands in carving the letters and to paste these to form 40 verses or 'dohas' of the Chalisa.

TIGHT SECURITY



A security personnel in armoured vehicles keeps vigil ahead of the consecration ceremony of Ram Mandir, in Ayodhya, Thursday.

Civil services aspirant with heart disorder faints in coaching class

Dies in hospital

Indore, Jan 18 (PTI):

A 20-year-old man preparing for the civil services exam died after he fell unconscious at his coaching class in Indore in Madhya Pradesh due to a heart-related disorder, officials said on Thursday.

In footage from the coaching class' CCTV network, which went viral on social media, Raja Lodhi, a resident of Sagar district, can be seen falling unconscious on a table. "Lodhi fell unconscious on Wednesday at the coaching class located in Bhanwarkuan and died during treatment at a nearby hospital.

He was preparing for the civil services exam," said Additional Deputy Commissioner of Police Abhinav Vishwakarma. Cardiologist Mahendra

Chaurasia, who treated the student, said Lodhi was brought to the hospital in an unconscious state in the afternoon.

"He was put on life support system. We tried to revive him for 40 to 45 minutes, but his life could not be saved. The ECG report showed the 20-year-old was suffering from a genetic heart disorder called Brugada Syndrome," Chaurasia said.

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WORKS DEPARTMENT- KIRANDUL Tender Enquiry No: Works-Kirandul/works office/2023/138/06, Dt:19/01/2024. MSTC Ref. No.: NMDC/Kirandul/277/23-24/ET/704. Estimated cost including GST is Rs. 308.69 lakhs.

NAME CHANGE

It is informed to the general public that I, HARJEET KAUR D/O MAKHAN SINGH DHARWAL resident of Plot-518 Street 8, Dixit Colony Marg, Dixit Colony, Nehru Nagar East Bhillai, Chhattisgarh, India have changed my old name HARJEET KAUR D/O MAKHAN SINGH DHARWAL, so in future I should be recognized by my new name that is HARJEET KAUR DHARWAL D/O MAKHAN SINGH DHARWAL in all Government and other documents.

HARJEET KAUR DHARWAL Plot-518 Street 8, Dixit Colony Marg, Dixit Colony, Nehru Nagar East Bhillai, Chhattisgarh, India

Regional Office, Jeevan Prakash, L.I.C. Building, Pandri, Raipur (C.G.) PH: 0771 - 4222601, E-mail: pe.raipur@bankofbaroda.com

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The Bank of Baroda invites offers from the Owners / Power of attorney holders of premises on lease basis at first / second / third Floor with the area of 4000 Sq. Ft. (with +25% variance i.e. 4000 sq. feet to 5000 sq. feet) for housing its Zonal Office, at Raipur, preferably within 500 meters from Prominent Area of Raipur City, with all facilities including adequate power, water, washroom facilities, Lift, sufficient Car and two wheeler parking. The premises shall be ready for occupation.

Sealed offers are invited in two bid system, viz. (1) Technical Bid (TB) and (2) Financial Bid (FB).

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(2) Financial Bid (FB) should contain strictly financial details, viz. rate per sq.ft. On carpet area, detail of municipal taxes and lease expenses etc. Carpet area (as per IS Code 3861-2002- rate should be quoted including property tax) shall exclude staircase, corridor & passage, porch, shaft & machine rooms for lifts, air-conditioning duct, loft, build in wardrobes & shelf, intermediate pillars/ columns, partitions & walls and other obstructions, verandas, balcony, bathroom and lavatory etc.

The advertisement date of inviting tenders has come in-3- local newspapers on 19.01.2024. Last date of submission is 09.02.2024 up to 4.00 pm.

Offer should be valid for minimum period of -120- days from the last date of submission. No brokerage shall be paid. Both the sealed covers marked as TB & PB super scribing applicant name & address, be put in one sealed cover addressed and submitted to:

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Within -21- days from the day of publication of this advertisement in newspaper and bank's website i.e. from 19.01.2024 to 09.02.2024

Technical Bid and Financial Bid are to be submitted in separate sealed covers marked as TB & FB, super scribing advertisement reference, name of the applicant and address of the applicant.

Both the tenders (TB & FB) must be signed by the property owner / POA holder only. Both the sealed covers (TB & FB) are to be put in one sealed cover marked as "Offer for premises at Raipur"

Any decision taken by bank at any point of time in connection with this process shall be final and conclusive and no claim or dispute from any quarter in that regard shall be entertained. Visit us on www.bankofbaroda.co.in/tenders

Note: Technical Bid and Financial Bid are to be submitted in separate sealed covers marked as TB & FB super scribing advertisement reference, name of the applicant and address of the applicant. Both the sealed covers (TB & FB) shall be put in one sealed cover marked as "Offer for premises at Raipur"

Technical Bid must be signed by the property owner / Registered POA holder only.

Asst. General Manager Bank of Baroda, R.O. RAIPUR Date: 19.01.2024, Place: Raipur, C.G.

PUBLIC NOTICE

(Property bearing Part of Khaska No. 1013, Area, 1000 Square Feet, Village-Urkura P. H. No.108/40, Ward No. 19 Madhav Sagar Ward, Tehsil and district-Raipur Chhattisgarh)

It is informed to the general public that, My client, ICICI Home Finance Company Branch-Raipur mortgaged the property bearing Part of Khaska No. 1013, Area, 1000 Square Feet, Village-Urkura, P. H. No.108/40, Ward No. 19 Madhav Sagar Ward, Tehsil and district-Raipur Chhattisgarh belongs to Smt. Rupa Singh W/o Shri Ravendra Singh resident of Ward-12, Village- Marela, Post- Pandri Thana Simour, Tehsil & District- Rewa (M.P.). That Smt. Rupa Singh W/o Shri Ravendra Singh purchased the above said property from seller Shri Subodh Agrawal (Singhania) S/O Shri Shri Shyam Lal Agrawal (Singhania) by means of Sale deed duly registered vide Volume No. -74538 at pages 218 to 235, document No. 9617 dated 22.02.2020. The above said Registered Sale Deed Dated 22.02.2020 is null and void.

Therefore, in relation to the above mentioned transaction - any person, institution, firm, bank, moneylender, government and semi-government body, etc., who have any obligation, claim or objection, may within 7 (Seven) days from the date of publication of this general notice appear in my office along with the documents and register your written objection. The objection made after the passage of time will be considered invalid and void.

Place- Raipur Date- 18.01.2024 Ashish Kumar Valecha (Advocate) Office- Office No. F-10-C, First Floor, Shyam Plaza, Pandri Raipur (C.G.) No. 8109772000, 957564000

IDBI BANK LTD. Regional Office- 1st Floor Civil Lines, Dev Tower, Sant Kabir Chowk, Near Holy Heart School, Raipur (C.G.) E-AUCTION 23.02.2024 Time-12 PM. To 2 P.M.

PUBLIC NOTICE FOR SALE

The undersigned being the Authorized Officer (AO) of the IDBI Bank Ltd. (IDBI) invites Bids/Offer for E-Auction for sale of the following property mentioned below under the provisions of the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002. Possession whereof has been taken by the AO, IDBI Bank Ltd.

Table with 4 columns: S. No., Name of Borrower & Address, Outstanding amount as per Demand Notice, Demand Notice Date, Reserve Price. Includes details for Shri Pyare Lal C/o Dharog Ram, Shri Shiv Charan Sharma, and Shri Shiv Charan Sharma.

Last Date of EMD Deposit - 22.02.2024 Bids Incremental Amount - For Serial No. 1 & 2 - Rs. 10,000/-

Date & Time of Inspection of Property - From 01.02.2024 To 22.02.2024, Time: 2pm to 5pm on working days.

Contact person for Sr. No. 1 & 2 Smt Sudeshma Roul (7978441539), Shri Shubhranshu Shekhar Sahoo (9560523100)

List of the terms & conditions appearing in Bid Document: 1. The sale of Secured Assets is on "as is where is basis", "as is what is basis", "whatever there is basis" and "no recourse basis" for and on behalf of the Secured Creditors viz., IDBI Bank Ltd. 2. The aforesaid property shall not be sold below the reserve price mentioned above. 3. The Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) has to be deposited in Favor of IDBI Bank Ltd. through DD/Transfer to Account No. 11503700010771, IFSC CODE-IBKL0000556, Branch- VIP Road, Raipur. 4. The Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) will not carry interest. AO may retain EMD of top three bidder's up to 3 months from the date of opening of the bids. 5. The AO may permit inter-se bidding among the top three bidders. 6. The successful bidder will be required to deposit 25% of the sale price (less the amount of EMD deposited) at the time of confirmation of sale. The balance amount of the sale price is to be paid within 15 days of the confirmation of the sale or such extended period as may be agreed by the AO. In case of failure to deposit the balance amount within the prescribed period, the deposited amount shall be forfeited including earnest money. 7. AO reserves the right to accept or reject any of all bids without assigning any reason(s). In case all the bids are rejected, the AO reserves the right to sell the assets by any of the modes as prescribed in the SARFAESI Act. 8. The Secured Assets mentioned in the Bid Document are based on the charges / mortgages created by the Borrower in favour of Secured Creditors, the details whereof are given in the bid document. Interested parties are requested to verify the details of the Secured Assets and inspect the records relating to mortgaged assets available with AO on request. 9. Secured creditors do not take responsibility for any errors/omissions/discrepancy/shortfall etc in the secured Assets or for procuring any permissions etc for the dues of any authority established by law. 10. The Secured Assets are being sold free from charges and encumbrances of Secured Creditors only. 11. The successful bidder would be required to bear all the necessary expenses like stamp duty, registration expenses, tax liabilities, government & any other Statutory dues for transfer of secured asset. 12. The sale is strictly subject to terms and conditions given in the advertisement and in the "Bid Documents". Bid Documents can be obtained from any of our offices, on all working days or downloaded from IDBI's website i.e. www.idbi.bank.in also at www.bankauctionwizd.com. 13. E-Auction Service Provider: The sale would be on e-auction platform & at website www.bankauctionwizd.com through e-auction provider antaresystems.com, Contact - BM Sushmitha (Mobile- 8951944383, Email-sushmitha.b@antaresystems.com/rakeshkumar@antaresystems.com) for Sr. No. 1 & 2 Statutory 30 days Sale Notice under Rule 8(i) of the SARFAESI Act 2002. The borrower/guarantor/mortgagor are hereby notified to pay the sum as mentioned above along with upto date interest and ancillary expenses before the date of auction, failing which the property will be auctioned/sold and balance dues, if any will be recovered with interest and cost.

Place : Raipur Date: 19.01.2024 Sd/- Authorised Officer, IDBI Bank Limited

Kenara Bank E-auction Sale Notice For Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with provision to Rules 8(i) of The Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002. E-Auction Date: 20.02.2024

SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) & Guarantor (s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged / charged to the secured creditor, the constructive possession of which has been taken by the authorised officer the Canara Bank (secured creditor) will be sold on "AS IS WHERE IS BASIS, AS IS WHAT IS BASIS" & "WHAT EVER THERE IS" on 20.02.2024 from 12.30 Noon to 2.30 pm for recovery of bank dues to the Canara Bank (secured creditor).

Table with 5 columns: Name and address of the Borrower & Guarantors, Description of Properties & Name of Property Owner, Demand Notice Dt., Reserve Price, Branch Name & Account No. & IFSC Code. Lists multiple properties for sale, including restaurants, residential plots, and commercial buildings.

Terms and Conditions: A. Auction / bidding shall be only through "Online Electronic Bidding" through the website www.indianbankseaction.com. Bidders are advised to go through the website for detailed terms before taking part in the e-auction sale proceedings. B. The property can be inspected, with Prior Appointment with Authorised Officer Date on 19.02.2024 at 10.30am. C. EMD amount of 10% of the Reserve Price is to be deposited by way of Demand draft in favour of Authorized Officer of above mentioned branches respectively OR shall be deposited through RTGS/NEFT/Fund Transfer to credit of account of above mentioned branches respectively on or before 19.02.2024, 5:00 pm. D. The successful bidder shall deposit 25% of the sale price (inclusive of EMD already paid), immediately on declaring him/her as the successful bidder and the balance within 15 days from the date of confirmation of sale by the secured creditor. If the successful bidder fails to pay the sale price within the period stated above, the deposit made by him shall be forfeited by the Authorised Officer without any notice and property shall forthwith be put up for sale again. E. For further details contact Branch Manager of respective branches OR Authorised Officer OR the service provider M/s Canbank Computer Service Ltd., Help Line E-mail ID :- eauction@csl.co.in or www.canarabank.com.

Date: 18.01.2024, Place: Raipur (C.G.) Authorized Officer, Canara Bank

State level honour for Dr. Prashant Jha

Khairagarh, Jan 18:

Dr. Prashant Jha was awarded the State Level Conference Award 2023 for his commendable role in Chhattisgarh Pradesh Hindi Sahitya and Pathak Manch. Dr. Jugal N. Raylu was the chief guest, Dr. Rakesh Tiwari, Asha Sharma was the special guest and Santosh Jhanjhi was the chief guest in the program.

On this occasion, Dr. Prashant Jha thanked Dr. Jeevan Yadu, Vinaysharan Singh, Sankalp Pahatiya, Yashpal Janghel, Neeraj Chandel and remembered their contributions. Recalling the first incident, after joining the Pathak Manch, Dr. Prashant Jha said that Dr. Chandel and Dr. Jeevan active members of the Manch sat with the members of the Pathak Manch and told all of them that due to lack of direction of education, the people of the village are disintegrat-



ing and becoming undisciplined and then in the conversation to give direction to his education, 'Chalo Gaon Ki Oar' was started and he started it in his own village, he said.

Congratulating Dr. Prashant Jha, Dr. Jeevan Yadu said that he still has close relations with the villagers and has seen the values of the people and their suffering together,

that's why after retiring from government job, due to his literary interest; he turned towards literature and took a vow of literary public service. Same way Vinay Sharan Singh said

that today our coordinator Dr. Prashant Jha first realized the need to take literature to the villages and showed us a new path by connecting us. Sankalp Pahatia said that Dr. Prashant Jha, rich in anecdotes, is like an anecdote for every work. In "Chalo Gaon Ki Oor" and Premchand Jayanti, storytelling and discussion in villages, chaupals and schools and colleges are like a new story every time, which ends at a new height every time.

Along with literature lovers from all over the state, Nirmal Jain, Arun Tahguria, Pushpa Janghel, Tusharika Chandel, Vasu Chandel, Dr. Deepshikha Patel, Tulsa Yadu, Riddhima Jha from Khairagarh were present. On this achievement, the city's social workers Keshav Singh, Mihir Jha, Gulab Chopra, Jeevendra Singh and prominent citizens have congratulated Dr. Jha.

CM Sai empowers beneficiaries through distribution of essentials

Balod, Jan 18:

Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai extended support to beneficiaries by distributing essentials under various government public welfare schemes in a programme held in Gunderdehi today.

In this initiative, Chief Minister Sai presented a cheque of Rs 25,000 each to two beneficiaries for housing construction under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Rural) and provided similar assistance to three beneficiaries under the Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana, while five beneficiaries received nutrition kits as part of the National Nutrition Campaign. Besides, as many as 10 beneficiaries were provided maize seeds to encourage the cul-



tivation of maize instead of summer paddy.

Other beneficiaries included one recipient of an ice box, one individual who received a box and net under the Matsya Palan Prasar Yojana, and two Divyangs who were presented with battery-operated tricycles. Two beneficiaries received a cheque

of Rs 10,000 each under the Pradhan Mantri Swanidhi Yojana, and ten individuals received employment offer letters through placement camps organized under the Mukhyamantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana. Shri Sai also distributed Ayushman cards to five beneficiaries.

Action will be taken focusing on three E-formulas: Sudarraaj

Jagdalpur, Jan 18:

The 34th National Road Safety Month-2024 was inaugurated in Bastar District Headquarters in Jagdalpur. Various programs related to road safety awareness will be conducted continuously for one month till Feb 15. Superintendent of Police Bastar Shashi Mohan Singh presented information regarding the efforts being made by the police and administration regarding road safety in Bastar district. He said that in the year 2019, 675 people died and 1899 people were injured in a total of 1631 road accidents in all the seven districts of Bastar division. In the year 2023, 867 people died and 1294 people were injured in a total of 1445 road accidents.

During this, Bastar IG Sudarraaj P told that due to the continuous awareness campaign being organized regarding road safety, there was a 12 percent reduction in road accidents in Bastar division in the year 2023 as



compared to the year 2019. And the number of people getting injured in the said road accidents has decreased by 32 percent. But on the other hand, the loss of life due to road accidents is increasing every year. He said that in the coming days, in the context of road safety, focused action will be taken on the subjects of three e-formulas i.e. education, engineering and enforcement.

Addressing all types of utilities present in the program, Collector Vijay Dayaram said that following traffic rules is everyone's joint responsibility

and priority. During the program, Padmashree Dharampal Saini and Leader of Opposition Sanjay Pade of Municipal Corporation, Jagdalpur also appealed to all road utilities to drive responsibly and follow traffic rules. Bastar Chamber of Commerce President Manish Sharma, senior councilors Yogendra Pade, Suresh Gupta, citizens, students, principals, parents and police and administration officers/employees and others were present in this program organized at Division Headquarters Jagdalpur, Kotwali premises.

On the occasion of Shri Ramlala Pran Pratistha

Korba, Jan 18:

District Collector Ajit Vasant reviewed the work progress of departmental schemes and pending cases of department-wise TL in the deadline meeting held here. In the meeting he gave instructions while reviewing the revenue matters including organizing cultural program by Manas Mandali and preparation for Republic Day celebrations, paddy purchase and storage and lifting, paddy bonus distribution, effective implementation of PM Janman Yojana, transportation of ashes, and control of encroachment.

Divisional Forest Officer Korba Arvind PM, Katghora Forest Officer Nishant Kumar,



Pran Pratistha Day, large scale devotional programs will be organized in the district at the development block and district level. Giving information regarding the detailed outline of the above event, he told the officials that Ramayana Manas singing programs will be organized in urban bodies and panchayats with the coordination and cooperation of the common people and

Manas groups. For this, guidelines have been issued by the state government regarding organizing the program and an amount of Rs 5000 will be provided as incentive to the registered and active Manas Mandals in the district. He instructed to ensure all necessary preparations for organizing Ramayana Manas Gaan program at Panchayat, urban bodies and district

level and while reviewing the preparations for organizing the main program of the Republic Day celebrations, he instructed all the officers to discharge the assigned tasks responsibly. The Collector also talked about providing benefits to the farmers in the district who were deprived of paddy bonus for 2014-15 and 2015-16 by getting their accounts verified through the Tehsil module as soon as possible. The Collector said that pension related and compassionate appointment cases should not be pending in any department and instructed the entire district CEOs to give information about the common people meeting the Collector through wall writing in Gram Panchayats, so that the villagers coming to the Collectorate do not face any kind of problem.

VBSY organized in Nagar Panchayat Gaurela

Gaurela-Pendra-Marwahi, Jan 18:

Vikas Bharat Sankalp Yatra (VBSY) was organized here in Municipal Council Gaurela and Pendra under the chief hospitality of MLA of Marwahi Assembly Constituency Pranab Kumar Marpacchi. Information about the flagship schemes of the Central Government was given through publicity vans in the Vikas Bharat Sankalp Yatra organized at the Office of the Municipal Corporation, Gaurela and Atal Auditorium, District School Complex, Azad Chowk, Pendra.

When the campaign van arrived, people welcomed



it with applause and saw and heard the message of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. MLA Pranab Marpacchi, worshiped the images of Atal Bihari Vajpayee and Chhattisgarh

Mahtari and formally inaugurated the event by offering flower garlands and distributed checks and materials to the beneficiaries under various schemes. On this occasion, various

departments set up stalls and gave information about beneficiary oriented and public welfare schemes. The MLA urged all the people present at the program to realize the

dream of making India a self-reliant and developed nation by 2047, and uproot the mentality of slavery, and be proud of the rich heritage of the country and strengthen the unity of India. The program organized in Pendra was presided over by Chairman Municipal Council Rakesh Jalan and a large number of citizens including Kanhaiya Singh Rathore and distinguished citizens Rakesh Chaturvedi, Neeraj Jain, Premwati Kol, Maiku Bharia, Sunita Rathore, Aruna Jaiswal, Sharad Gupta, Sahid Raine, Ashish Gupta, Paras Chaudhary and many others.

Congress leaders extend best wishes to MP Baij



On Lok Parv Diyar

Jagdalpur, Jan 18:

Senior Congress members, including MLAs and former MLAs, extended their congratulations to Bastar MP and State Congress President Deepak Baij on the auspicious occasion of Bastar Lok Parv Diyar. Gathered in Baij's hometown of Gadhiya, the leaders engaged in discussions about upcoming assembly elections and other pertinent political matters. The event saw the presence of prominent figures, including Rekchhand Jain,

Bastar MLA Lakheshwar Baghel, former Narayanpur MLA Chandan Kashyap, former Chitrakot MLA Rajman Benjram, Chhaviendra Karma, Congress candidate from Dantewada assembly constituency, along with Mahadev Nag and others.

Mayor's unresponsiveness

CM condoles demise of Kumar Lakshmi Narayan Deo

Raipur, Jan 18:

Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai has expressed deep grief over the demise of Kumar Lakshmi Narayan Deo. Sai also extended his condolences to Jagdalpur MLA Kiran Singh Deo, the late Shri Deo's son, and the grieving family members. He prayed for strength for the family to cope with this loss. Emphasizing the cultural value of "Jeevem Sharadah Shatam," Chief Minister stated that the late Shri



Deo led a successful life. Throughout his lifespan, he not only fulfilled his familial duties but also actively contributed to public life responsibilities.

Woman seriously injured in bull attack

Korba, Jan 18:

Residents of Korba district find themselves increasingly concerned about the alarming presence of stray animals. Despite the Korba Municipal Corporation's attempts to project itself as an efficient entity, the ground reality tells a different story, evident for all to see.

In yet another distressing incident, Ward No. 26 in Mudapar, Korba, witnessed a horrifying episode on Wednesday morning. Chanda Bai Usar Varsha, a retired SECL employee, stepped out of her home to dispose of household waste in the nearby bin when she was suddenly at-



tacked by a bull lurking nearby. The attack inflicted severe injuries on the woman, requiring immediate medical attention. Local bystanders intervened to chase away the rampaging bull,

and she was promptly admitted to SECL Mudapar for initial treatment. However, due to the gravity of her injuries, she was later referred to Apollo Hospital for specialized care.

Bull injured many people

Reports suggest that the marauding bull had injured several other people on the same day. Strikingly, the Municipal Corporation appears to be oblivious to these incidents, despite the evident risks posed by cattle roaming freely on the streets. It is worth noting that the Corporation is responsible for capturing stray cattle and relocating them to the Kanji House. However, this essential task remains unfulfilled, seemingly putting the community at risk of further accidents. Many believe that the Corporation's inaction is inviting disaster. Previously, the Corporation had initiated a campaign against stray cattle and impounded several of them. Had this campaign continued, the tragic incident might have been averted.

Mayor's unresponsiveness

Amidst the chaos, Sikandar Usar Varsha, the injured woman's son, attempted to contact Mayor Rajkishore Prasad to report the incident and seek assistance. Regrettably, the Mayor declined the call, citing a meeting in progress. Despite the passing of time, the Mayor did not find it necessary to inquire about the situation. In response, Sikandar Usar Varsha voiced his frustration, stating that if the Corporation failed to address these pressing issues, they would be left with no choice but to stage a protest demanding action and accountability.

Pakistan conducts 'precision military strikes' against 'terrorist hideouts' in Iran

Islamabad, Jan 18 (PTI):

Pakistan Thursday conducted "precision military strikes" against what it called "terrorist hideouts" in Iran's Siestan-Baluchistan province...

Pakistan's Foreign Office said in a statement on Thursday morning. It said a number of terrorists were killed during the intelligence-based operation...

"This morning Pakistan undertook a series of highly coordinated and specifically targeted precision military strikes against terrorist hideouts in Siestan-o-Baluchistan province of Iran,"

It said that "hideouts used by terrorist organisations namely Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA) and Balochistan Liberation Front (BLF) were successfully struck in an intelligence-based operation."

tack, Iran's state-run Press TV reported. Quoting Deputy governor of the province Alireza Marhamati, the channel said nine non-Iranian nationals, including two men, three women and four children, were killed in the attack...

ACCIDENT ON HIGHWAY



An articulated truck is stuck in a crash barrier after an accident on highway 17 before the Altfranken tunnel, near Dresden, Germany, Thursday, Jan. 18. The driver was slightly injured in the accident.

Indian-origin community leader to contest US state assembly in California

Houston, Jan 18 (PTI):

An Indian-origin community leader running for the US state of California's legislature on Thursday secured key endorsements from local firefighters and the labour federation, among others.



Tara, the only female Democrat running for the assembly in the district, launched her bid focusing on the challenges that residents face, including housing affordability, climate change, and an education system.

California State Assembly District 26 has earned the endorsement of our dedicated firefighters in Santa Clara - the International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF) Local 1171," she posted.

United Nations, Jan 18 (AP): Palestinians are dying every day in Gaza's overwhelmed remaining hospitals which can't deal with the tens of thousands of people hurt in Israel's military offensive...

An airstrike on southern Syria kills 9

Beirut, Jan 18 (AP):

An airstrike on southern Syria early Thursday killed at least nine people and was probably carried out by Jordan's air force, Syrian opposition activists said...

Abdurrahman, said the people killed had nothing to do with smuggling, suggesting that the Jordanian air force might have received incorrect intelligence from local residents.

was also a strike on the nearby village of Malah, he said, but no casualties were inflicted. Maarouf said that search operations are still ongoing and the death toll might still rise.

ELECTION CAMPAIGN RALLY



Pakistan's former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, center, and his daughter Maryam Nawaz, right, wave to supporters as they arrive to address an election campaign rally in Hafizabad, Pakistan, Thursday, Jan. 18.

Hindus in Nepal eagerly wait for consecration ceremony of Ram temple in Ayodhya

Kathmandu, Jan 18 (PTI):

Hindus in Nepal are enthusiastically waiting for the consecration ceremony of Ram temple in Ayodhya on January 22 as Nepalis, mainly from Madhesh province, plan to celebrate the occasion with huge fanfare.



Artists during a programme organised by Hindus in Nepal as part of celebrations to mark the consecration of the Ram temple in Ayodhya on January 22.

bol of the ancient bond shared by the two countries. A cleanliness drive has been launched in the entire Janakpur Sub-metropolitan city on the occasion...

colourful lights, paper flags, banners and garlands, local authorities said. Ganga Aarti, Ramkatha, as well as religious procession, are planned for the occasion...

Traffic through the Panama Canal is being slashed because of drought

Panama City: A severe drought that began last year has forced authorities to slash ship crossings by 36 per cent in the Panama Canal, one of the world's most important trade routes.

cost them between USD 500 million and USD 700 million in 2024, compared to previous estimates of USD 200 million. One of the most severe droughts to ever hit the Central American nation has stirred chaos in the 50-mile maritime route...

India among most vibrant fintech hubs: WEF study

Davos, Jan 18 (PTI):

India is among the most significant operating countries across borders, mainly in the same region as their headquarters. The study reveals that vibrant hubs such as Singapore, the UK, the US, and India have hosted a thriving cluster of fintech corporate headquarters.

said fintechs are increasingly expanding operations across borders, mainly in the same region as their headquarters. "The study reveals that vibrant hubs such as Singapore, the UK, the US, and India have hosted a thriving cluster of fintech corporate headquarters.

COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE IGKV, RAIPUR, C.G. // WALK-IN-INTERVIEW // A walk in interview will be held on 1st February 2024, for the post of one Junior Research Fellow (JRF) at 4:00 PM in the Department of Genetics & Plant Breeding...

BILASPUR SMART CITY LIMITED 3rd FLOOR, PINGLE BHAWAN, NEHRU CHOWK E-Procurement-REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL No.1437/BSC/L/2023-24 Bilaspur, Dated 17/01/2024

कार्यालय, कार्यपालन अभियंता, ग्रामीण यांत्रिकी सेवा, संभाग-रायपुर (छ.ग.)

Table with columns for 'क्रमांक', 'आनलाइन तृतीयवार निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना क्रमांक', and 'अनुमानित लागत राशि'. Row 1: क्रमांक 115/निविदा/या.यां.सेवा/2023-24, क्रमांक 16/01/2024, 4.182.

Table with columns for 'कार्य का नाम' and 'अनुमानित लागत राशि (₹. लाख में)'. Row 1: 01 नग अतिरिक्त कर्म निर्माण कार्य शा.प्र.शा.ला सडकु रायपुर, 4.182.

HIGH COURT OF CHHATTISGARH, BILASPUR NOTICE

No.1069/II-14-1/2023 Bilaspur, Dated 17/01/2024 advt. no. 04/2023 (Translator)

Vide Adv. No. 04/2023, applications were invited for recruitment to the post of Translator on the establishment of this High Court. Phase-I Screening Test for the said post is scheduled to be held on 28.01.2024 from 02.00 P.M. to 04.00 P.M. at Devkinandan Girl's Higher Secondary School, Pratap Chowk, Bilaspur (C.G.).

Admit Cards of the eligible candidates will be uploaded in website of this High Court and the candidates may download the admit cards from the website of High Court i.e. https://highcourt.cg.gov.in, which is valid. Admit cards will not be issued in any other means.

No candidate will be permitted in examination hall after commencement of 10 minutes of examination. In case of absence of any candidate in prescribed date and time of screening test, the said test will not be conducted again for him/her on any date or time and the right of such candidate will be forfeited.

(Arvind Kumar Verma) Registrar General G-07202/1

कार्यालय कार्यपालन अभियंता जल संसाधन संभाग बलरामपुर, जिला - बलरामपुर-रामानुजगंज (छ.ग.) निविदा निरस्तीकरण आदेश

GOVERNMENT OF CHHATTISGARH, WATER RESOURCES DEPARTMENT OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ENGINEER HASDEO GANGA BASIN WATER RESOURCES DEPTT., AMBIKAPUR (C.G.) e-PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTICE

CHHATTISGARH STATE POWER TRANSMISSION CO. LTD (A SUCCESSOR COMPANY OF CSEB) OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ENGINEER (CIVIL) Shed No.5, Dangania, Raipur (CG)- 492013



CENTRAL Chronicle

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LAC Clashes

India Must Remain Vigilant

In recent revelations, it has come to light that Indian and Chinese troops clashed multiple times along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) between September 2021 and November 2022. These previously unreported incidents shed light on the ongoing tensions in the region, requiring India to conduct covert operations to monitor the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA). These clashes and operations were brought to public attention during the presentation of gallantry awards by the Western and Central Army Commands. Secrecy surrounding such operations is paramount for national security, and the Army has acted swiftly to remove a video clip containing classified information from the public domain. While this breach needs thorough investigation, it is evident that the border tensions have not subsided in recent years, following the Galwan clash of June 2020. Last year, a Pentagon report highlighted China's increased deployment of forces and infrastructure buildup along the LAC in 2022, including the construction of underground storage facilities near Doklam, a new bridge over the Pangong lake, a dual-purpose airport, and multiple helipads. Indian Army Chief Gen Manoj Pande recently described the LAC situation as 'stable but sensitive.' Given the prolonged standoff, India cannot afford to lower its guard, necessitating round-the-clock vigilance to preempt any misadventures by the PLA. China appears keen to gain tactical superiority and exert pressure on India. New Delhi must respond to provocations with caution and resolve. It is commendable that External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar conveyed to his Chinese counterpart that 'unless a solution is found at the border, they should not expect other relations to move on normally.' The responsibility now lies with Beijing to take sincere steps towards resolving the LAC dispute and restoring normalcy in bilateral relations. India must remain resolute in safeguarding its territorial integrity and security, recognizing that the need for vigilance along the border remains unabated.

Milk and meat in the body politic

Sujit De

Meat and milk both have high nutritional value. They build our body. But the combination of the two can be dangerous. Drinking milk after eating meat or combining the two can trigger several issues like gas, discomfort, stomach ache, nausea, acidity, heartburn, ulcers to name but a few. To put it simply, the combination of the two can cause several ailments in the body. Similarly, politics and religion both have high societal value. But the combination of the two is as toxic as that of the mixture of meat and milk. The immediate outcome of such a combination is hate speeches which can be compared with vomiting acid after consuming meat and milk together. The Supreme Court of India rightly observed that hate speeches would end the moment politicians stop using religion in politics. Justice Joseph hit the nail on the head when he observed that the country was caught in a "vicious circle of hate" and the solution lay in expunging religion from politics. Earlier in feudalism, a king or a feudal lord used to favour his own religion over other religions. History witnessed that such a practice spelt disaster on every occasion. Just like people learned from their mistakes the need to separate milk from meat, here also they felt the need for a complete separation of religion from politics. This gave birth to secularism. All modern progressive nations have embraced secularism after learning how painful it would be to deviate from its path. The mixture of politics and religion causes two major problems. When a particular religion is favoured in a country over other religions, it divides the citizens. This mixture does not allow the policy makers to follow the progressive ideals of equality and fraternity. Rather it attracts negative things such as discrimination, marginalisation, conflict and unrest. Some of our neighbouring countries have experienced the danger of not walking in the path of secularism.

This mixture creates the second problem when a political leader tries to usurp the role of a representative of God. This sounds the death knell for democracy. How can a voter hold a ruler accountable for his actions if he is seen as being chosen by divine power? Therefore, it completely destroys accountability as well as the lock-gate to check corruption and abuse of power. It has been reported that the Prime Minister has recently issued an audio message saying he had begun an 11-day "special observance" as prescribed in the scriptures, to "awaken divine consciousness" within himself in the lead-up to the January 22 consecration. He also claimed that God had chosen him as "an instrument to represent all Indians during the consecration" of the Ram temple in Ayodhya. In a democracy a ruler has to remain accountable to the voters. But it would be difficult to hold a person accountable if he proclaims that he is chosen by God. The emergence of India as a secular, democratic country was certainly a gain of the evolution. It appears that the gains are likely to be eclipsed for a time because efforts are being made to create an impression that a religious ceremony is but a State event to exploit religion as a political instrument. Even Sankaracharyas raised objections regarding the inauguration of Ram temple in Ayodhya before its completion to coincide with the preparation of the ensuing 2024 Lok Sabha election. Swami Avimukteshwaranand Saraswati, the sankaracharya of Jyotishpeeth in Uttarakhand has said the four sankaracharyas will not attend the January 22 inauguration of the Ram temple in Ayodhya as "it is a bad idea to inaugurate an incomplete temple." Secularism separates milk of religion from political meat. It is like a doctor who advises us to consume meat and milk separately. Undoubtedly, there will be several ailments in the body politic without secularism.

Central Chronicle invites articles, write-ups, and comments on a wide range of issues for our editorial page. Submissions should be between 800-900 words in length. In addition, we welcome letters to the editor for this page. While letters may be edited for clarity, we aim to preserve the integrity of the original message, and ask that they be kept to around 50-60 words. Submissions can be sent via email to editorcentralchronicle@gmail.com.

R-DAY REHEARSAL

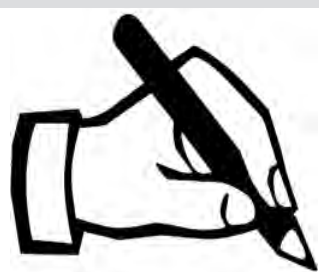


CRPF women Dare Devils perform during a rehearsal for the Republic Day Parade 2024 at the Kartavya Path, in New Delhi, Thursday, Jan. 18.

Alarm bells: Antibiotic abuse



DR SATYAVAN SAURABH



Antibiotics are important medicines. Many antibiotics can successfully treat infections caused by bacteria (bacterial infections). Antibiotics can stop the disease from spreading. Antibiotics can reduce serious disease complications. However, some antibiotics that used to be typical treatments for bacterial infections no longer work as well. And some drugs don't work at all against some bacteria. When an antibiotic no longer works against certain strains of bacteria, those bacteria are said to be antibiotic-resistant. Antibiotic resistance is one of the world's most urgent health problems. Taking antibiotics for colds and other viral illnesses doesn't work - and it can create bacteria that are harder to kill. Taking antibiotics too often or for the wrong reasons can cause bacteria to change so much that antibiotics no longer work against them. This is called bacterial resistance or antibiotic resistance.

But if a person is using antibiotics repeatedly, then the bacteria develop immunity against that medicine. After this, it becomes very difficult to fix it. This is called anti-microbial resistance. In such a situation, treatment is not done properly but toxins start accumu-

lating in the liver. A recent survey by the National Centers for Disease Control found that more than half of the nearly 10,000 hospital patients surveyed for the study were given antibiotics to prevent rather than treat infections. This is a worrying sign as India has one of the highest burdens of drug-resistant pathogens worldwide, leading to the high incidence of antimicrobial resistance (AMR). Overuse of antibiotics - especially when they are not the right treatment - promotes antibiotic resistance. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, about one-third of antibiotic use in people is neither necessary nor appropriate.

Antibiotics treat infections caused by bacteria. However, they do not treat infections caused by viruses (viral infections). For example, antibiotics are the right treatment for strep throat caused by bacteria. But it is not the right treatment for most sore throats that are caused by viruses. India has taken a major step in reducing antimicrobial resistance, which is becoming a growing concern across the world, by implementing the National Action Plan on Antimicrobial Resistance (NAP-AMR). It is a key component of

India's National Action Plan on Antimicrobial Resistance. The strategy emphasizes the importance of educating healthcare workers, the general public as well as stakeholders in the veterinary and agricultural industries. This educational initiative is important in promoting responsible behavior and reducing the misuse of antibiotics. The plan recognizes that antimicrobial resistance is not just a challenge to human health; it is also a result of antibiotic misuse in veterinary and environmental settings. Which includes ministries responsible for health, animal husbandry, agriculture, and the environment.

The National Action Plan on Antimicrobial Resistance underlines the importance of robust data collection and surveillance. This includes closely monitoring the use of antibiotics in the agricultural, human health, and veterinary sectors. Every day, thousands of people are admitted to hospitals for treatment of infectious diseases that require antibiotic therapy. Antibiotic misuse is a leading cause of antimicrobial resistance, adverse events, and treatment costs among hospitalized patients. Antibiotic safety must be ensured in hospital settings to promote effective and rational therapy. There is growing evidence that measures to increase antibiotic prescribing may help patients. To help healthcare practitioners reduce inappropriate inpatient prescribing, it is necessary to determine how often inappropriate inpatient prescribing occurs in hospitals and how much less prescribing would benefit patients.

There should be a strong regulatory framework to monitor and en-

force compliance with antibiotic prescription guidelines. It includes mechanisms to punish non-compliance and encourage compliance. Regular monitoring of antibiotic resistance patterns is important. The effectiveness of guidelines can be assessed by the ability to track changes in resistance patterns over time and take corrective action. Restricting access to reserve antibiotics is important to reduce resistance. Overuse and misuse of antibiotics are major factors in antibiotic resistance. The general public, healthcare providers, and hospitals can all help ensure that medications are used correctly. This may reduce the growth of antibiotic resistance. Healthcare professionals and especially pharmacists play/can play an important role in drug abuse and drug safety.

Appropriate and effective patient education and counseling by pharmacists is key to achieving desired outcomes for treating patients, including clinical, economic, and humanitarian outcomes. Medication abuse and misuse can be prevented/reduced by educating patients about medications when prescribing and dispensing them and how they can use them appropriately. It is very important and necessary to increase awareness among the public, patients, and healthcare professionals about the complications of the misuse and abuse of medicines. It is very important to follow drug dispensing regulations and stop dispensing prescribed and controlled drugs to prevent misuse and abuse of drugs.

(Writer is a Poet, freelance journalist and columnist, All India Radio and TV panelist.)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Smokers decrease

According to the latest WHO report, the number of tobacco addicts has reduced substantially in almost 150 countries surveyed by it. In 2022, one in every five adults was a smoker, compared to one in every three in 2000. Though the number of smokers saw a remarkable decline, complacency cannot be encouraged as tobacco-related deaths are still high. According to the data released by the WHO, nearly 8 million people die every year across the globe. Fifty-six countries are expected to reach the target of slashing 30 percent of use, with Brazil at the top slot with a 35 percent reduction since 2010. Six countries have witnessed an increase in tobacco usage, including Oman, Moldova, Moldova Congo, Egypt, Egypt Indonesia, and Jordan. Besides a great decrease in tobacco usage, the world is yet to achieve its 30 percent drop between 2010 and 2025.

Arka Goswami, Durgapur

World's Wealth Diminished

The world's five richest men have more than doubled their fortunes from \$405 billion to \$869 billion since 2020 'at a rate of \$14 million per hour', while nearly five billion people have already been made poorer in this 'decade of division', said the Oxfam report on inequality and global corporate power. It is being witnessed that the beginnings of a decade of division, with billions of people shouldering the economic shockwaves of pandemic, inflation and war, while billionaires' fortunes boom. This inequality is no accident; the billionaire class is ensuring corporations deliver more wealth to them at the expense of everyone else. While the reality is that the poor get nothing instead of being poorer to poorest.

Ibne Farooq, Ausanpur

New Yatra

Rahul Gandhi has started Bharat Jodo Nyaya Yatra from Manipur, the North East state of the country. This journey is of 67 days. During this time it will travel more than 6000 kilometers, covering 129 districts of 15 states. The journey will pass through 20 districts in the country's largest state Uttar Pradesh and reach Rajasthan in 11 days. It will be interesting to see how this yatra will be welcomed when it reaches Varanasi via Chandauli and how much crowd will join Rahul Gandhi's yatra.

N Ashraf, Mumbai

Lok Sabha Elections 2024

Political Landscape in Northern India



Dr. Vasisht M.C

Introduction

The political landscape of Northern India is poised for a significant transformation in the upcoming 2024 Lok Sabha elections. This region comprises four states - Punjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, and Uttarakhand - along with four union territories - Chandigarh, Delhi, Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh. A total of 46 Lok Sabha seats are at stake in this fiercely contested battleground. As the election drama unfolds, let's delve into the dynamics, alliances, and key players that will shape the political future of Northern India.

Punjab

Punjab has been a political hotbed with four major players in the fray: the Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD), Congress, BJP, and Aam Aadmi Party (AAP). The SAD, once a stalwart ally of the BJP within the NDA, severed ties in September 2020 to protest against the BJP-led NDA government's stance on farmers' issues. The possibility of a reunion between these former allies remains uncertain. In the 2022 assembly elections, both the BJP and SAD faced a setback, winning just two and three seats, respectively, while AAP secured a whopping 92 seats. In the 2019 Lok Sabha elections, when the BJP and SAD contested 13 seats together, the BJP won four, Congress secured eight, and AAP clinched one. Although Congress and AAP are part of the Indian National Congress, the chances of an alliance between them in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections appear bleak.

Haryana

Haryana, often considered a BJP stronghold, will witness a fierce battle with ten Lok Sabha seats up for grabs. The Jannayak Janata Party (JJP) and the Haryana Lokhit Party (HLP), NDA allies, played crucial roles in the recent assembly elections. Apart from these regional parties, AAP and Congress also have a significant presence. In the

2014 elections, the BJP won seven seats, a number that soared to all ten seats in 2019. With an impressive rise in vote share from 36 lakh to 73 lakh in 2019, the BJP strengthened its grip. In a strategic move, the BJP and JJP have forged a formal alliance, likely boosting their chances in the upcoming elections.

Chandigarh

Chandigarh, a union territory, has been consistently represented by the prominent actress Kirron Anupam Kher. She clinched victory in both the 2014 and 2019 Lok Sabha elections, defeating Congress' Pawan Kumar Bansal by a substantial margin in 2019. However, Aam Aadmi Party's candidate Harmohan Dawan secured just 13,781 votes, indicating the dominance of Kirron Anupam Kher.

Himachal Pradesh

Himachal Pradesh contributes four Lok Sabha seats: Kangra, Mandi, Hamirpur, and Shimla. The BJP triumphed in all four seats in the 2019 elections, maintaining its winning streak from 2014. The 2019 elections witnessed significant margins of victory for BJP candidates. However, the 2022 assembly elections marked a remarkable resurgence for Congress, securing 40 out of 68 seats. This victory has rejuvenated Congress and may boost their confidence in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections.

Uttarakhand

Uttarakhand, carved out of Uttar Pradesh in 2000, has five Lok Sabha constituencies: Garhwal, Tehri Garhwal, Nainital, Almora, and Haridwar. BJP, Congress, and BSP are the prominent parties active in the state. The BJP demonstrated its supremacy by winning all five seats in both the 2014 and 2019 elections.

Jammu and Kashmir

The special status of Jammu and Kashmir under Article 370 was revoked by the Indian government in August 2019, a move upheld by a unanimous Supreme Court verdict in December 2023. Jammu and Kashmir will be represented by five Lok Sabha members, with constituencies in Baramulla, Srinagar, Anantnag, Udhampur, and Jammu. Additionally, Ladakh will have one representative in parliament. In the 2019 elections, the Jammu and Kashmir National Conference secured three seats, while the BJP won three as well. The BJP dominated Udhampur, Jammu, and Ladakh, whereas the National Conference emerged victorious in Baramulla, Srinagar, and Anantnag. Notably, Farooq Abdullah, the National Conference leader, won the Srinagar seat with a substantial 70,000-vote margin. For the upcoming elections, the BJP, Congress, National Conference, and the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) are

the key contenders. The National Conference has indicated its ambition to secure all valley seats, possibly forming alliances only where BJP poses a challenge. This suggests a lack of alliance between opposition parties in Jammu and Kashmir, potentially putting them at odds with the PDP and Congress.

Delhi

Delhi, a union territory with seven Lok Sabha seats, might witness a triangular battle if Congress and AAP do not form an alliance. The BJP could benefit from this three-cornered contest and stand a better chance of retaining all seven seats, which it won in both the 2014 and 2019 elections.

The Road Ahead

In summary, Northern India presents a diverse political landscape, with BJP's dominance evident in several states. However, the winds of change can sweep in quickly, as seen in recent assembly elections. The outcome of the 2024 Lok Sabha elections in Northern India will be influenced by evolving alliances, regional dynamics, and the performance of key players. The Modi wave, which played a pivotal role in the BJP's success in 2014 and 2019, may face new challenges in the upcoming polls. As the nation awaits the unfolding political drama, only time will reveal the destiny of Northern India in the 2024 elections.

BRIEF

Appointment



New Delhi: The Council for Leather Exports (CLE) on Thursday said Rajendra Kumar Jalan has taken over as the new chairman of the exporters body. He has replaced Sanjay Leekha. CLE is an export promotion council sponsored by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry. Jalan was earlier vice chairman of the council. He has also served in the Governing Council of Footwear Design and Development Institute (FDDI), and Board of Governor of Central Footwear Training Institute (CFTI), Agra.

Stamp Bill

New Delhi: The finance ministry on Wednesday invited suggestions from the public on the draft Indian Stamp Bill, 2023, which would align the stamp duty provisions with the modern regime. Stakeholders can submit their suggestions within 30 days in a specified format. Once enacted, the Bill shall replace the Indian Stamp Act, 1899, the finance ministry said in a statement. "The Department of Revenue, Ministry of Finance, Government of India, has prepared a draft Indian Stamp Bill, 2023 to align it with modern stamp duty regime," it said.

Tripartite pact



New Delhi: The agriculture ministry on Wednesday said a tripartite agreement has been signed to leverage artificial intelligence (AI) in the agriculture sector. The agreement was signed between the National Farmers' Welfare Programme Implementation Society (NFWPIS), IndiaAI under Digital India Corporation and Wadhvani Foundation, according to the agriculture ministry.

'Indian economy to see stronger-than-expected growth in 2023-24'

Mumbai, Jan 18:

The Indian economy is projected to record stronger-than-expected growth in 2023-24, and the government's thrust on capex has started to crowd-in private investment, said an article published in the latest RBI Bulletin. The world economy faces divergent near-term growth prospects and emerging market economies led by Asia are poised to outperform the rest of the world, said the article on 'State of the Economy'. "The Indian economy recorded stronger-than-expected growth in 2023-24, underpinned by a shift from consumption to investment," it said. The government's thrust on capex is starting to crowd-in pri-

ate investment, said the article authored by a team led by Reserve Bank Deputy Governor Michael Debabrata Patra. In India, the authors said potential output is picking up with actual output running above it, although the gap is moderate.

"In 2024-25, the objective should be to sustain this momentum by securing real GDP growth of at least 7 per cent in an environment of macroeconomic stability," they said. Accordingly, inflation needs to align with the target by the second quarter of the year, as projected, and get anchored there. Also, balance sheets of financial institutions need to be strengthened and asset quality improved even further, the article said, and added the

ongoing consolidation of fiscal and external balances needs to continue. "The gains of the transformative technological change that is underway must be harnessed for inclusive and participative growth in a sound risk-free environment.

"Above all, the virtuous thrust to investment from government capex must be partnered and even led by the corporate sector, supplemented by foreign direct investment," it said. The article also stressed that the weak global outlook can be brightened if geopolitical conflicts end and their repercussions through commodity and financial markets, trade and transportation, and supply networks are contained. "Inflation must

be vanquished, paving the way for financial conditions to ease in support of growth," it added. The RBI, however, said the views expressed in the Bulletin article are of the authors and do not represent the views of the central bank. The Reserve Bank has called upon internal ombudsmen of banks, NBFCs, and CICs to provide inputs for enhancing internal systems and processes. As part of the Reserve Bank's continuing engagement with regulated entities, the second Conference of Internal Ombudsmen on the theme 'Orchestrating Customer Delight through an Empowered Internal Ombudsman', was held in Mumbai on January 16, 2024.

Air passenger traffic in India expected to reach 300 million by 2030: Scindia

Hyderabad, Jan 18:

The number of domestic air passengers in India is expected to double to about 300 million annually by 2030 and the country would still have a vast untapped market, Union Civil Aviation Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia said on Thursday. Speaking at the inaugural session of Wings India 2024, a civil aviation conclave and exhibition here, Scindia said India under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi in the last decade has been a "shining star" on the global firmament of civil aviation. He said the number of airports and water-dromes will go up to over 200 from the existing 149 in the country. With 300 million passengers a year in 2030, India's aviation penetration would be at 10-15 per cent and still be a potential market in the decades to come. "That is the potential that India holds not only to herself and Asia, but to the world...even with achieving



300 million domestic passengers by 2030, we will still be one of the most under-penetrated markets across the top 20 in the world. Today our penetration is roughly about 3 to 4 per cent that will grow to about 10 to 15 per cent. We still have 85 per cent penetration to go," he said.

Under the guidance of PM Modi, steps have been taken to create capacities, remove bottlenecks and simplify processes and procedures and ensure that in 2047, the aviation sector in the country supports a USD 20 Trillion economy in the country, Scindia said.

India among most vibrant fintech hubs: WEF study

Davos, Jan 18:

India is among the most significant operating countries for hosting a thriving cluster or fintech headquarters, a WEF study showed on Thursday. Releasing the report during its Annual Meeting 2024 here, the World Economic Forum said fintechs are increasingly expanding operations across borders, mainly in the same region as their headquarters.

"The study reveals that vibrant hubs such as Singapore, the UK, the US, and India have hosted a thriving cluster of fintech corporate headquarters. "Among the countries surveyed, the most significant operating countries for fintechs include the US, the UK, Singapore, Mexico, and India," it added. According to the report, the global fintech industry remains strong, with customer growth rates averaging above 50 per cent across industry verticals and regions.

NMDC committed to India's steel demand



Hyderabad, Jan 18:

National Miner NMDC is scaling up production of iron ore to meet the demands of a thriving domestic steel market, earning higher sales realizations with zilch export.

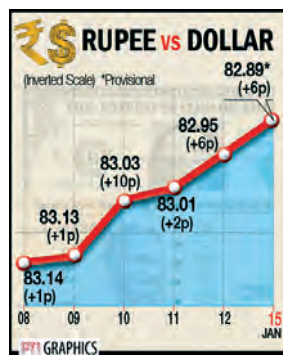
One of Government of India's most respected and dependable companies, NMDC has not proposed to export its ore to China as dishonorably claimed in a story run by Reuters on Tuesday evening.

In recent interactions with business media, the company maintained that India's appetite for iron ore is on a historic high and NMDC is consumed and committed, catering to the demand from domestic steelmakers. Speaking on the economics of export, the company said that even though iron ore export prices are showing an increasing trend, the net sales realizations in the domestic market are superior.

Rupee rises 2 paise to 83.12 against US dollar

Mumbai, Jan 18:

The rupee appreciated 2 paise to settle at 83.12 (provisional) against the US dollar on Thursday, tracking a weak American currency against major rivals overseas. A weak trend in domestic equity markets and rising crude oil prices kept the movement of the domestic currency restricted, forex traders said. At the interbank foreign exchange, the domestic currency opened at 83.16 and traded in the range of 83.10 to 83.18 against the



greenback. The unit finally settled at 83.12 against the dollar, registering a gain of 2 paise over its previous close.

WINGS INDIA AIRSHOW



Helicopters fly over a parked aeroplane during the inauguration of the Wings India Airshow, at Begumpet Airport in Hyderabad, Thursday, Jan. 18.

India most-trusted country; world should consider 'trust-shoring' for doing business: Vaishnav

Davos, Jan 18:

Asserting that Prime Minister Narendra Modi has made India the most-trusted country for the world, senior Union minister Ashwini Vaishnav on Thursday said global businesses should consider "trust-shoring" to reap benefits of the resilience and steady high growth of the Indian economy. In an extensive interview to PTI here at the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting 2024, Vaishnav said India will deliver 6-8 per cent economic growth



for at least 10 years, given the strong foundation laid by Prime Minister Modi and there will be opportunities for everyone across all sectors. "In my meet-

ings with business leaders, investment bankers, tech CEOs and other leaders, one common factor that has come out very clearly is the resilience of the Indian economy and people want to know more about it. "People want to know in deep about Prime Minister Narendra Modi's policies. I had discussions with several top investment bankers and global CEOs on how PM Modi has given a stability and resilience to the Indian economy and how it has been given a steady growth path," the minister said.

Samsung to make Galaxy S24 series in Noida for sale in India, export

San Jose, Jan 18:

Korean electronics major Samsung will manufacture its latest artificial intelligence-loaded Galaxy S24 series at its India factory for both domestic sale as well as exports, senior company officials said here. The company unveiled its latest flagship device -- Galaxy S24 series -- with focus on Artificial Intelligence (AI)-based applications to enhance productivity like real-time voice call and message translation in select languages, including Hindi, improved image editing, camera effects to woo content creators, and Corning Gorilla Armor glass to enhance durability of display. "This is a device of the future. While the world talks about AI as the next big

thing, the Galaxy S24 series brings it live to you. I am very happy to announce that Galaxy S24 series will be manufactured at our Noida factory in India," Samsung India President and CEO J B Park said. He said consumers in India can start pre-booking Galaxy S24 series smartphones from January 18 and it will go on sale from January 31. Samsung has priced Galaxy S24 series smartphones with storage capacity in the range of 8GB system memory (ROM) and 256 GB storage (RAM) to 12 GB ROM with 1 terabyte (TB) RAM. The devices will be available in India in the price range of Rs 79,999 to Rs 1,59,999 apiece. "At Samsung, we are proud to be driving premiumisation in India.

Stock markets fall for 3rd day on profit-taking, HDFC Bank major drag

Mumbai, Jan 18:

Benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty fell for the third day running on Thursday, dragged by continuous selling in HDFC Bank and profit-taking in consumer durables and utility shares. The 30-share BSE Sensex fell by 313.90 points or 0.44 per cent to settle at 71,186.86. During the day, it tanked 835.26 points or 1.16 per cent to 70,665.50. The Nifty declined 109.70 points or 0.51 per cent to 21,462.25. During the day, it plunged 286.4 points or 1.32 per cent to 21,285.55.



The heavy fall in the markets comes on the back of a recent record-breaking rally. The BSE benchmark hit an all-time high of 73,427.59 on Tuesday, and the Nifty also reached its lifetime peak of 22,124.15 the same day. In three days,

Donatekart, Swasti efforts bring relief to thousands affected

New Delhi, Jan 18:

On June 2, 2023, a catastrophic collision involving the Coromandel Express and two trains at Odisha's Bahanaga Bazar railway station resulted in devastating consequences, claiming nearly 300 lives and leaving over 1,200 individuals injured. In response to this tragic event, Donatekart, a social enterprise facilitating essential supply donations instead of monetary contributions, teamed up with Swasti, The Health Catalyst, a leading public health non-profit organization dedicated to advancing the health and well-being of marginalized and vulnerable groups, to provide critical support to survivors directly impacted by the disaster. Bhoopathy Pandarinathan, National

Social Protection Co-ordinator, Swasti Health Catalyst, says, "We at Swasti are committed to ensuring the health and well-being of communities, especially during times of crisis. Collaborating with Donatekart allowed us to swiftly respond to the urgent needs of survivors affected by the Balasore train disaster. Our focus has been to provide tailored assistance, ranging from immediate relief provisions to comprehensive support, to aid in their recovery journey." Commenting on the collaboration, Sarang Bobade, CEO & Co-Founder at Donatekart, said, "The collaboration with Swasti exemplifies our belief in the collective strength of communities coming together to effect real change.

Bank of Maharashtra net profit rises 34% at Rs 1,036 crore

New Delhi, Jan 18:

The Pune-based lender had posted a net profit of Rs 775 crore in the same quarter a year ago. Its total income increased to Rs 5,851 crore during the quarter under review against Rs 4,770 crore in the same period last year. Speaking about quarterly numbers BoM MD & CEO AS Rajeev said, "The net interest income (NII) grew by 24.56 per cent to Rs 2,466 crore against Rs 1,980 crore in the year-ago period. The bank earned an interest income of Rs 5,171 crore during the quarter compared to Rs 4,129 crore a year ago." Rajeev further said, "Operating profit has shown a growth of 27.32 per cent to Rs 2,012 crore from Rs 1,580 crore in Q3 FY23. The bank was able to reduce gross non-performing assets (NPAs) to 2.04 per



cent of the gross loans by the end of December 2023 from 2.94 per cent a year ago. Similarly, its net NPAs or bad loans came down to 0.22 per cent from 0.47 per cent at the end of the third quarter of the previous fiscal. Its provision coverage ratio improved to 98.40 per cent from 97.18 per cent at the end of December 2022. Net interest margin (NIM) of the bank rose to 3.95 per cent from 3.60 per cent in the same quarter a year ago." Going forward, Rajeev said, "The NIM is expected to be in the range of 3.75-4 per cent in the fourth quarter. The total Basel III Capital adequacy ratio stood at 16.85 per cent, with a Common Equity Tier 1 ratio of 11.56 per cent at the end of the December quarter."

Shahrukh Khan launches New & Improved Tide

Mumbai, Jan 18:

Tide®, the World's No. 1 detergent brand, has announced an iconic new partnership as it continues its history of delighting consumers with superior laundry solutions. The last decade has witnessed Tide's commitment to innovation through a host of initiatives, including the launch of new wash care solutions like Tide Matic Liquid and Tide PODS. At the core of Tide's promise is the dedication to irresistibly delight consumers. Recognizing the significant shifts in consumer habits, from evolving wardrobes, food consumption habits, stain incidents to changing lifestyles, Tide is relentlessly focused on the consumer needs for upgraded laundry solutions. In response to these changes, the New

and Improved Tide, equipped with boosted magnets, is designed to effectively tackle deep-seated stains like tea, coffee, oils & gravy, ensuring an outstanding clean. This advanced formula not only removes tough stains but ensures your garments maintain a long-lasting freshness. Tide has been engineered with cleaning chemistry tailor made for both hand wash and machine conditions, ensuring your garments are cared for with exceptional whiteness and freshness. At the heart of this transformative launch, lies a captivating partnership with the iconic Shah Rukh Khan! The superstar has joined Tide India, as a brand ambassador to endorse Tide as the 'asli/real SRK - Stain Removal King'.

GSK launches campaign to raise awareness about vaccinations

Mumbai, Jan 18:

GlaxoSmithKline Pharmaceuticals Limited (GSK) launched a multi-channel campaign to raise awareness about vaccinations that provide critical protection to children who are 1 to 2 years of age. The Indian Academy of Pediatrics (IAP) recommends seven vaccinations for children of this age group, first dose of chickenpox and hepatitis A, second dose of meningitis and MMR, booster doses of PCV and DTP Hib IPV, and annual dose of flu. Although, immunisation coverage in the first year is high in India, drop-out rates in the second year increase. A significant number of children in the country remain partially vaccinated. Dr Rashmi Hegde,

Executive Vice President - Medical Affairs, GlaxoSmithKline Pharmaceuticals, India, says, "In the past 3 years, there have been outbreaks of certain vaccine-preventable diseases such as chickenpox, measles, and flu in the country. Vaccine-preventable diseases not only disrupt children's health for a short time, but they have a long-term effect on their developmental milestones. Completing the full immunisation schedule holds the promise of a healthy and happy childhood, which further ensures that children grow into healthy adults. Through this campaign, we want to communicate to parents the need to give their children the recommended vaccinations even in the 2nd year of their life."

Youth Day: Girls shine in speech competition

- IKSU commemorates Swami Vivekananda Jayanti and National Youth Day
- Video presentations on 'Viksit Bharat @ 2047' and AIDS awareness speech competition



Central Chronicle News

Khairagarh, Jan 18: Indira Kala Sangeet Vishwavidyalaya's Red Ribbon Club and the National Service Scheme unit celebrated Swami Vivekananda Jayanti and National Youth Day with various activities, including a video presentations on the theme 'Viksit Bharat @ 2047' and AIDS awareness speech competition.

The event, coordinated by Dr. Divakar Kashyap, National Service Scheme program officer, witnessed significant participation from university students, faculty, staff, Red Ribbon Club members, and National Service Scheme

volunteers.

In the speech competition, Priyanka Janghel secured the first position, while Suryanjali Jha from the English department and Rishika Madhavi Sharma from the Kathak department clinched the

second position. Priyanka Kadi claimed the third position.

Distinguished guests, including Prof. Dr. Naman Datt, Head of the Music Department, Assistant Professor Dr. Likheshwar Varma, and Dr. J. Mohan

from the library, graced the event. Assistant Professor (Vocal) Dr. Jagadev Netam and Om Prakash Bagdikar played pivotal roles in the event's success.

Youth Festival preparations in full swing

Preparations for the upcoming Youth Utsav are underway at the university. Students from various departments, including theatre, music, painting, dance, sculpture, craft, and design, have started gearing up for the event. Over the years, Indira Kala Sangeet Vishwavidyalaya students have consistently made their mark at block, zonal, and national levels in the festival.

Senior officials pay tributes to MLA Kiran Deo's late father



Central Chronicle News

Jagdalpur, Jan 18: Senior administrative officials from the district gathered at the residence of MLA Jagdalpur Kiran Deo to pay their respects and express

condolences following the passing of his father, Kumar Lakshmi Narayan Deo. Commissioner Bastar Shyam Dhavde, Inspector General of Police Bastar Range Sundarraj P, Collector Vijay Dayaram,

Superintendent of Police Shashi Mohan Singh, and CEO District Panchayat Prakash Sarve met with the bereaved family to offer their sympathies and prayers for strength during this difficult time.

SSM hosts enthralling Shishu Nagri event

A day of fun and learning for students and parents

Central Chronicle News

Kharora, Jan 18: Saraswati Shishu Mandir in Kharora hosted a vibrant Shishu Nagri program on Wednesday, January 17, designed for students in classes LKG to II.

The event commenced with an inaugural session featuring retired teacher Chetan Prasad Dwivedi as the chief guest, Rohit Verma as the special guest, and school principal Ashwani Patkar. Together, they inaugurated the event by light-

ing photographs of Maa Saraswati, Om, and Maa Bharati, followed by Saraswati Vandana. The guests received a warm welcome with tilak, flower bunches, and coconuts.

The program offered a range of activities, including frog races, chair races, ball-in-bucket games, and Fugdi Tritangi races for students in classes LKG to II. Mothers also participated in fun games like chair races and balloon inflating.

The closing ceremony witnessed the presence

of esteemed guests, including Ramkumar Verma, Department Coordinator of Raipur, Neelam Ekka (Principal Girls School, Kharora), and Surekha Sharma (Teacher).

The event concluded with an enchanting emotional dance performance by students from LKG to Class I. With the enthusiastic participation of 150 students, 100 parents, and 50 distinguished citizens, the one-day Shishu Nagri program was a resounding success.

Chhattisgarh Journalist Welfare Union elections held

Central Chronicle News

Korba, Jan 18: The elections for the Janjgir-Champa district unit of the Chhattisgarh Journalist Welfare Union, a prominent and influential organization representing journalists in the state, were successfully conducted on Tuesday, January 16.

The event took place at the Champa Rest House, graced by the presence of the Union's State President, Amit Gautam and other esteemed officials.

The gathering featured notable figures such as Kanhaiya Goyal, the State General Secretary, and Mahesh Acharya, the State Vice President, along with State Advisors Meghnath Joshi and



Tilka Sahu.

Officials responsible for Janjgir-Champa, Gaurela-Pendra district, and Surguja division also participated. Key representatives from the Korba district included President Vijay Lal and General Secretary

Santosh Das Mahant. During the elections, Manoj Kumar Mittal remained the patron of the Chhattisgarh Journalist Welfare Union in Janjgir-Champa, while Kunal Kesharwani continued as the convenor.

The newly appointed

officials included Rajendra Jaiswal as District President, Santosh Devagnan as District General Secretary, and Prakash Ratre, Ashish Aggarwal, Pankaj Kumar Sahu, Pramod Kumar Kashyap, and others in various

roles.

State President Amit Gautam emphasized the union's significance and the shared responsibilities of its members. He expressed confidence that the newly appointed officials would enhance the union's reputation through their diligent work. State General Secretary Kanhaiya Goyal congratulated the newly appointed officials and highlighted the essential role journalists play in society.

He also stressed the union's commitment to social service. State Vice President Mahesh Acharya and State Advisors Meghnath Joshi and Tilka Sahu further discussed the union's critical tasks and responsibilities.

Free health checkup camp organized

67 Patients screened for various ailments

Central Chronicle News

Kharora, Jan 18: Satyam Hospital and Dental Care in Saragaon, District Raipur, Chhattisgarh, hosted a free health check-up camp on Tuesday, January 16, from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM. The camp offered complimentary tests for diabetes, thyroid issues, blood pressure, chest pain, asthma, respiratory diseases, cold, cough, fever, malaria, sickle cell anemia, typhoid, jaundice, pneumonia, and more.

A total of 67 patients underwent testing for blood pressure and sugar levels. The event also fea-



tured a voluntary blood donation drive, with 36 enthusiastic youth donating blood to support the cause. The camp attracted residents from nearby rural areas seeking healthcare services.

A team of dedicated doc-

tors, including Dr. Laxmikant Sahu (MBBS MD Medicine), Dr. Swapnil Dongre, Dr. Govind Gupta, Dr. Loknath Sahu, Dr. Monesh Verma, and Jaideep Blood Bank Raipur, provided their expertise to ensure the suc-

cess of the health camp. The event aimed to address the medical needs of the community, promote health awareness, and encourage voluntary blood donations for the betterment of healthcare in the region.

Physical education teachers seek 5000 PTI across the state

- B.Ed and M.P.Ed candidates present demands to education minister

Central Chronicle News

Kharora, Jan 18: On Tuesday, candidates with degrees in Physical Education (B.P.Ed. and M.P.Ed.) met with the School Education Minister, Brijmohan Agarwal, to advocate for the recruitment of 5000 PTI across the state.

Hemant Sarva, a candidate for the position of exercise teacher, explained that



he had been selected during the Raman government's tenure, but the recruitment process had been halted by the former Congress government despite the initial announcement. Seeking resolution, they presented a memorandum to School

Education Minister Brijmohan Agarwal.

In response, Minister Agarwal pledged to initiate the recruitment process for the 5000 exercise teacher positions in line with the forthcoming education policy. The physical

education candidates emphasized that the recruitment of exercise teachers would enhance sports opportunities for students in government schools.

This initiative aims to enable Chhattisgarh's schoolchildren to represent the state at national and international sporting events. Led by Aman Yadav and Hemant Sarva, B.P.Ed. and M.P.Ed. candidates united to present their memorandum to Education Minister Brijmohan Agarwal, striving to contribute to the betterment of physical education in Chhattisgarh.

Dhamtari: Challenges, expectations and unfulfilled promises

No well-groomed pond, Gokul Nagar, hi-tech bus stand, multi-level parking are still in limbo

By Basant Sachdev

tives to address the city's pressing issues and fulfill the demands that have been pending for years.

Makai Chowk in Dhamtari serves as a crucial entry point for those travelling from the capital, Bastar. Despite the deployment of two constables for traffic control, the situation on the National Highway, including Sadar, remains chaotic, with never-ending traffic snarls and frequent accidents.

The cattle issue persists from the wards to the National Highway, adding to the challenges. Promised developments like Gokulnagar, a hi-tech bus stand, pond beautification, multilevel parking, and the Gol Bazaar project still elude the city.

Market areas remain cramped, and the dust from rice mills continues to trouble residents. Unfinished projects like shopping complex relocation, PM Awas Colony auditorium, and water augmentation scheme phase-2 further exacerbate the city's woes. Despite being included in the budget annually, these plans remain unrealized.

1. Hi-tech Bus Stand: The existing bus stand in Dhamtari faces space constraints and disorganization due to poor shop construction.



To address this issue for bus drivers and passengers, the corporation plans to construct a hi-tech bus stand in Arjuni at an estimated cost of Rs 10 crore, with land already earmarked.

2. Multilevel Parking: Despite being a separate district for 27 years, Dhamtari still grapples with a parking problem. With a significant number of four-wheelers owned by city residents, traffic jams ensue when they enter the market.

To alleviate this, the corporation aims to build a multi-level parking facility behind the employee building in Khaiya, costing ap-

proximately Rs 10 crore.

3. Transport Nagar: Dhamtari faces a parking challenge for 200 buses, 1200 trucks, 1000 autos, and other vehicles, including cargo ones. The proposal for a Transport City has been in the budget for a decade, with regular appeals to the government for attention to this issue.

3. Gokul Nagar: The persistent issue of stray cattle roaming the city streets affects more than 30 wards. Despite being included in budget plans for years, Gokul Nagar, proposed in Soram-Bhatgaon, remains unrealized under both past and present city

administrations.

4. Pond Beautification: Dhamtari, known as the city of ponds, boasts 22 ponds, none of which are properly maintained. Proposals worth lakhs of rupees have been submitted to the government for pond improvements, with Rs 3 crore approved for 8 ponds. Regrettably, work on any of these ponds has yet to commence.

Mayor Vijay Dewangan highlighted accomplishments over the past four years, securing approvals exceeding Rs 130 crore. Notably, Rs 30 crore was allocated for drainage improvements and Rs 35 crore for Water Augmentation Scheme Phase-2, both in progress.

Road networks expanded, societies saw construction progress, and National Highways were illuminated with 500-700 high mast lights under the Chief Minister's Urban Electrification Scheme.

The Urban Slum Health Scheme reached every home, focusing on Pauni Pasari, Chowpatty, and electricity NOC work. Electronic cremation facility approval during the pandemic is now under construction.

Initiatives include Barthan bank, pond beautification, clinics in 7 wards, city footpaths, and

"Development will take place in Dhamtari only when there are only development talks and work, leaving aside the politics of personal interest and credit. Today the city has lagged behind in development. There is a lack of leadership in both the parties. For Dhamtari, no one has militant tendencies nor leadership abilities. For this, it is necessary to have a vision. The waste water treatment plant being built in Muzgahan will definitely solve the problem of dirty water flow."

- Dr. Chandrashekar Choubey, Educationist.

"Many proposals were made and sent for the development of Dhamtari, out of which works worth more than Rs 130 crore have been approved. Many works are going on for the systematic development of the city. Will demand re-approval from the present government regarding the schemes made earlier."

- Vijay Dewangan, Mayor.

"You should first define what you want in Dhamtari, development. Roads, drains, cleanliness, street lights are not called development. Everyone is beating the drum of development in Dhamtari. But what exactly do we want in the name of development, it is not clear. There are dozens of old demands of the public, on which work is not being done. In two-two and a half years, a huge amount of money was also received from the government. Officer and public representative have vision, proper utilization of funds is possible."

- Dr. Anant Dixit, Educationist.

"The Mayor could not even start 56 works of the budget. The work has only been done to deceive the city residents. He should get the crown for corruption and commission. After completion of four years, one should resign and leave the chair of the corporation."

- Narendra Rohra, Leader of Opposition.

canal widening projects worth Rs 117 crore—awaiting approval from the present government. Demand letters will be resubmitted for Hitech Bus Stand, Industrial Nagar, Transport Nagar, and Gokul Nagar.

As we look ahead, the looming challenge on the horizon is the Lok Sabha elections, which leave us

with only six more months to enact substantial changes. Under these circumstances, the Mayor recognizes the significant obstacle of securing approvals and implementing development plans within this limited timeframe.

Consequently, preparations are underway to convene the first general meeting before the imposition

of the code of conduct. With all the necessary resources at our disposal, the goal is to transform the 40-ward city into a smart city.

Success hinges on the unwavering determination of public representatives, transcending party politics, as true progress can only be achieved through collective effort and a strong willpower.

USA beat Japan 2-1 to enter final of Olympic Qualifier; earn Paris ticket



Japanese players try to stop United States (in black) player Abigail Tamer (1) during the FIH Hockey Olympic Qualifiers match between United States and Japan, at Marang Gomke Jaipal Singh Astro Turf Hockey Stadium in Ranchi, Thursday, Jan.18.

Ranchi, Jan 18 (PTI):

The United States of America produced a brave performance to register a come-from-behind 2-1 win

over former Asian Games champions Japan to enter the final of the FIH Women's Olympic Qualifier, thereby securing their berth in the Paris

Olympics here on Thursday. Japan took the lead through Amiru Shimada in the 38th minute before the Americans produced

two late goals through Ashley Hoffman (52nd) and Abigail Tamer (55th), both from penalty corners, to come out winners. USA have booked their

ticket to the Paris Olympics as the top three teams from this tournament will qualify for the quadrennial extravaganza to be held later this year.

As suggested by their Indian coach Jude Menezes, Japan played attacking hockey from the onset.

Their ploy reaped rewards immediately as Japan bagged the first penalty corner of the match in the second minute, but wasted the opportunity.

The Americans too made some circle penetrations but the Japanese defence was up to the task to thwart any danger to their goal. In the 11th minute, USA secured their first penalty corner but their effort was kept at bay by Japanese goalkeeper Eika Nakamura.

Japan continued their attacking game in the second quarter and grabbed their second penalty corner in the 17th minute but they shot wide.

Prannoy, Satwik-Chirag into quarterfinals

New Delhi, Jan 18 (PTI):

Star shuttler HS Prannoy progressed into the men's singles quarterfinals with a three-game win over compatriot Priyanshu Rajawat at the India Open Super 750 badminton tournament here on Thursday.

Playing at the adjacent court, world No. 2 Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty, who are coming into the event after a runner-up finish at Malaysia Open, too sailed into the last 8 with a dominating win over Chinese Taipei's Lu Ching yao and Yang Po Han in men's doubles.

Rajawat dished out some delectable drops and half-smashes to trouble Prannoy to pocket the opening game but after he twisted his ankle in the middle of second game, things spiralled out as Prannoy prevailed 20-22 21-14 21-14 in a 76-minute clash.

The World No. 9 will face the winner of the all-Chinese Taipei match between Wang Tzu Wei and Su Li Yang. Satwik and



Chirag, on the other hand, notched up a dominating 21-14 21-15 win over world No. 25 Lu and Yang.

The Asian Games champions will face Denmark's fifth seeds Kim Astrup and Anders Skaarup Rasmussen next.

Prannoy opened up a 6-3 lead initially but Rajawat turned the tables on 9-8 before the experienced Indian managed to take a one-point cushion at the break.

Prannoy moved ahead 13-10 and 18-16 but a four-point burst gave Rajawat two game points. Prannoy, again, drew parity before the Madhya Pradesh shut-

tlar prevailed.

It was a one-way traffic in the second game as Prannoy was up 6-0 in a jiffy but then he started missing the lines as Rajawat narrowed it to 5-9.

Prannoy used deep tosses and was far more polished at the net and was successful in drawing out errors from Rajawat, who seemed to have hurt his ankle during a rally around the mid-game interval.

Prannoy, who had a six-point lead at the break, sprayed a few into the net or tossed one out to allow his younger colleague to make it 10-12.

England Lions pin India to mat despite Patidar's quick 140

Ahmedabad, Jan 18 (PTI):

England Lions continued to dominate India A despite a rollicking unbeaten hundred from Rajat Patidar on the second day of their first unofficial Test here on Thursday.

Patidar made 140 off 132 balls with 18 fours and five sixes but India A could only make 215 for eight at close, replying to England's mammoth 553 for eight declared in first innings.

India A are still trailing by 338 runs. Pacer Matthew Fisher led England's bowling with a four-wicket burst (4/57) while he received strong support from fellow pacer Matthew Potts (2/26) and left-arm spinner Callum Parkinson (2/43).

India A were, in fact, in all kind of trouble early on at 24 for four and later slipped to 95 for seven. However, Patidar

found some late support from Tushar Deshpande, who scored India's second highest individual score of 23, and Navdeep Saini as India A struggled past the 200-run mark.

Earlier, England, starting from their overnight 382 for 3, motored on riding on a fine 125 off 182 balls by captain Josh Bohannon, who resumed the day from 93.

Bohannon got excellent support from Dan Mousley (68 off 115 balls) and Potts (44 not out) and Jack Carson (53).

For India, left-arm spinner Manav Suthar took four wickets (4/137).

Brief scores: England Lions: 553 for 8 declared in 118 overs (Keaton Jennings 154, Josh Bohannon 125, Alex Lees 73, Dan Mousley 68, Jack Carson 53; Manav Suthar 4/137) vs India A: 215 for 8 in 40 overs (Rajat Patidar 140; Matt Fisher 4/57).



Hazlewood cuts through West Indies

Adelaide, Jan 18:

Australia couldn't quite complete a two-day victory in Adelaide, but are unlikely to be detained long in wrapping up a win. Josh Hazlewood dismantled West Indies' top order in ruthless style after Travis Head's hometown century secured a handy lead on a tricky surface against a spirited visiting attack.

From what was a much even contest midway through the day, with Australia six down and still 20 behind, they pulled away as pre-series prediction had suggested they would, although with the bat were made to earn their position of strength. The game hurtled along,

particularly when Head switched on the afterburners.

But though West Indies did not begin their second innings until into the last session - with Shamar Joseph completing a memorable debut by claiming a five-wicket haul - there was the looming fear about what could happen against the new ball.

And it came to pass as Hazlewood, who finished the day on 4 for 18, had taken out the top four while conceding just two runs; in fact, he had three wickets before even being scored off. He struck with his first ball of the second innings when Tagenarine Chanderpaul's technical challenges were exposed with an edge to Alex Carey. Soon after, captain Kraigg Brathwaite could consider himself a little unfortunate when a firm clip off the pads was snapped up by Head at short leg on a day where he could do no wrong.

Nagal's gritty run halted by Shang; Bopanna-Ebden pair moves to second round



Melbourne, Jan 18 (PTI):

Chinese tennis prodigy Juncheng Shang blunted Sumit Nagal's challenge at the Australian Open to halt the Indian's impressive run at the first major of the season here on Thursday.

Coming into the match after an inspiring win over a top-30 player, Nagal began in the same dominating fashion but the 18-year-old wild card entrant got better as the game progressed to walk out a winner with a 2-6 6-3 7-5 6-4 scoreline. The second round contest lasted two

hours and 50 minutes and it was clear that Nagal had run out of steam in the fourth set. In contrast, Shang began to serve well from the third set onwards and was at ease in pocketing his service games despite being troubled by high backhand balls in the match.

Nevertheless, the 26-year-old Nagal, who hails from Jhajjar in Haryana, will exit the Melbourne Park with cherished memories, having made the main draw through the Qualifiers and scripting a win over world number 27 Alexander Bublik.

World Cup squad not final but you know 8 to 10 players who will be there: Rohit



Bengaluru, Jan 18 (PTI):

The squad is not yet finalised but in his mind, India captain Rohit Sharma says he knows about 10 players who will be part of the side in the ICC T20 World Cup to be held this June in the Americas.

The series against Afghanistan was India's last T20 engagement before the World Cup. It also marked Rohit and Virat

Kohli's comeback to the format after 14 months. Fringe players like Shivam Dube also got an opportunity to prove themselves in the series that India won 3-0.

Speaking to Jio Cinema, Rohit said some of the promising players will be left out for the event in Americas but that is the nature of professional sport.

"Like when we were playing the ODI World

Cup, we tried out many boys in T20s. They perform but when the main squad is announced, some boys have to be left out. So, it is disappointing for them. But our job is to bring clarity to the team.

"So, in the pool of 25-30 players we have, they know what is expected of each player. We have still not finalised the squad for the T20 World Cup, but obviously in the mind you know the 8-10 players who are going to play," he said on Wednesday night after the third and final T20 here. Majority of the games will be played in the Caribbean where the pitches are expected to be on the slower side.

"In the West Indies, the conditions are quite slow, so we have to pick the squad accordingly. Again I say, Rahul bhai and I have tried to maintain clarity in the team. The one thing I have learnt from captaincy is that you can't keep everyone happy. You have to focus on the needs of the team," said the skipper.

Warner, Boult, Bravo among stars to light up International League T20



New Delhi, Jan 18 (PTI):

The likes of Australian big-hitter David Warner and New Zealand pace spearhead Trent Boult will headline the second edition of the six-team DP World International League T20, beginning on Friday in the UAE. A total of 34 games will be played in the league including the final in Dubai on February 17. Dubai will host 15 games, Abu Dhabi 11 and Sharjah will be the venue for the remaining eight games. Former India batter Ambati Rayudu has also signed up for the competition and will represent Mumbai Indians Emirates. The other ILT20

teams apart from MI Emirates (Reliance Industries) are Abu Dhabi Knight Riders (Kolkata Knight Riders), Desert Vipers (Lancer Capital), Dubai Capitals (GMR), Gulf Giants (Adani Sportsline), and Sharjah Warriors (Capri Global). Besides Warner and Boult, the other big games who will be a part of the tournament are Sunil Narine, Andre Russell, Corey Anderson, Dwayne Bravo, Dasun Shanaka, Rahmanullah Gurbaz, Sam Billings, David Willey, Alex Hales, Tom Curran, Rovman Powell, Shimron Hetmyer, James Vince, Chris Woakes and Martin Gupthill.

GenNext takes centerstage as rivals out to halt India's unparalleled dominance

Bloemfontein, Jan 18 (PTI):

Many dreams will take flight and futures will be shaped when the Under-19 World Cup begins here on Friday with rival teams looking to halt dominance of record five time champions India.

The legacy of the Under-19 World Cup as a breeding ground for future cricketing stars is well established.

The tournament has unearthed a bevy of Indian stars -- Yuvraj Singh in 2000, Rohit Sharma in 2006, Virat Kohli and Ravindra Jadeja in 2008, Rishabh Pant and Ishan Kishan in 2016, Shubman Gill in 2018 -- to name a few. At the world level also, the tournament has produced players who went on to become legends of the game. But at the same time, there have been many who have not been able to replicate the immense promise shown at the age group and they include the likes of Ravikant Shukla, Manish Pandey, Unmukt Chand, Yash

| The Groups | |
|------------|--|
| Group A: | Bangladesh, India, Ireland, USA |
| Group B: | England, Scotland, South Africa, West Indies |
| Group C: | Australia, Namibia, Sri Lanka, Zimbabwe |
| Group D: | Afghanistan, Nepal, New Zealand, Pakistan. |

Dhull, Manjot Kalra and Kamlesh Nagarkotti.

All eyes again would be on India, who will be led by Punjab's Uday Saharan. They begin their campaign against neighbours Bangladesh in Group A on Saturday.

Group A also features the USA and Ireland who will set the ball rolling in the opening match of the tournament that will run till February 11 with the summit clash in Benoni.

Sixteen teams are divided into four groups with top three making the Super Sixes where 12 teams will be divided into two pools. The top-two will then make the semi-finals, also slated in Benoni on February 6 and 8.

India this time did not have a proper build-up and have arrived here after a

series of National Cricket Academy camps and just two tournaments -- the Asia Cup and the recently concluded Tri-series in South Africa.

Australia are the next most successful side in the tournament with three titles in 1988, 2002, and 2010, while Pakistan secured the title in 2004 and 2006.

Bangladesh (2020), South Africa (2014), West Indies (2016), and England (1998) have won the event once. Part of India's squad is Arshin Kulkarni, who one of only two players in the team to be signed at the IPL auction.

A find of the Maharashtra Premier League, Arshin hit maximum sixes (19) to outshine the seniors like Rituraj Gaikwad, Kedar Jadhav and Rahul Tripathi.

ARTISTS AT THEIR BEST



Yakshagana artists take part in the 'Paryaya' cultural programme at Udupi, Karnataka, Thursday.

FRESH FINDINGS

Cong demands court-monitored probe into IT firm

Owned by Kerala CM's daughter

Thiruvananthapuram, Jan 18 (PTI): Accusations against the company owned by Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan's daughter T Veena continue to rock Kerala politics, with the opposition Congress-led UDF on Thursday demanding a central agency investigation into fresh allegations about its illicit transactions.

Leader of Opposition in the State Assembly V D Satheesan demanded a CBI or Enforcement Directorate (ED) investigation into the allegations

surrounding the now-defunct IT company of Vijayan's daughter, T Veena. This comes in the wake of reported findings by the Registrar of Companies (ROC) against the company.

Quoting the said ROC report, he said offences of receiving money using false documents and without providing services have been committed under sections 447 and 448 of the Companies Act.

The grand-old party questioned whether the ongoing probe initiated by the Corporate Affairs Ministry was part of a political settlement between the ruling CPI(M) and the BJP. The saffron party re-

jected the charges of a secret pact and asserted that the guilty would be punished.

As the opposition intensified its criticism of the CM and his daughter over the issue, the ruling CPI(M) reiterated that the central investigation against Veena's company was a "politically motivated" move ahead of the Lok Sabha polls.

Political reactions emerged following a section of the media releasing the said report recently submitted by the Bengaluru-headquartered ROC to the Centre. This report contained adverse remarks against the IT firm.

Based on the ROC's re-

port, the Ministry of Corporate Affairs recently ordered an investigation into complaints about financial transactions between private minerals company CMRL and Veena's IT firm Exalogic.

Neither the chief minister nor his daughter have reacted on the issue.

Stepping up his attack on CM Vijayan and the CPI(M), Satheesan said Veena's IT firm has failed to submit any documents regarding its legitimate transactions with the minerals company. He said there was no record to prove that Exalogic had provided software services to the Kochi-based minerals company.

Wedding bands overbooked as celebrations planned for Jan 22 consecration ceremony

New Delhi, Jan 18 (PTI): Traditional wedding bands in Delhi are gearing up for a busy day on January 22 with hundreds of celebratory events planned at temples across the city to celebrate the Ram temple consecration ceremony in Ayodhya. According to industry experts, more than 1,500 such events will take place in markets and temples, and the wedding bands have been booked to perform devotional songs and bhajans during these programmes to enhance the devotional and festive fervour.

The celebrations have coincided with the beginning of the wedding season in Delhi, which means the bands receiving multiple booking requests, much more than they handle in

a regular season. Yet they are trying their best to accommodate them all.

"This year has witnessed a substantial increase in the demand for dhol, and band, baaja due to 'Ram Barats' being taken out. We will start our day at 4 am. Both small and large bands are preparing," said Satya Anil Thadani, who owns Jea Band.

He said they have divided band members into smaller teams to handle the requests for January 21 and 22.

"This year has seen a 50-60 per cent rise in the demand for wedding bands," he said.

The Ram temple 'Pran Pratishtha' ceremony will be performed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday.

'More girls than boys aspire to continue studying after class 12'

New Delhi, Jan 18 (PTI): More girls aspire to continue studying after class 12 than boys, the Annual Status for Education Report, 2023 has revealed.

The report is based on a survey and found that the reasons behind the trend included -- the girls' belief that education would enable them to become better homemakers and also their interest in studying.

In general, boys were able to take or at least shape these decisions: if they were not interested in studying further, they could drop out regardless of their family's preferences. Among girls, these decisions were often not in their hands, the report said. "In the ASER

2023 survey findings, a larger proportion of boys than girls reported not wanting to study after class 12. During the discussion, girls discussed wanting to study at least to undergraduate level, while boys talked about the likelihood of discontinuing their education after completing their schooling," the report said.

"Among girls, shifting social norms with regard to the appropriate age of marriage emerged as a key driver of young women's ability to study further. Most girls talked about how they expected to get married only at the age of 21 or 22, giving them time to continue to study until then. "However, even though this perceived increase in the appropriate age

of marriage enabled higher secondary and college level studies to be a socially acceptable pathway for these girls, further education was rarely connected to better preparedness for the job market," it added. The ASER 2023 'Beyond Basics' survey was conducted in 28 districts across 26 states, reaching a total of 34,745 youths in the age group 14-18 years. One rural district was surveyed in each major state, except for Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh, where two rural districts were surveyed.

ASER is a nationwide citizen-led household survey that provides a snapshot of the status of children's schooling and learning in rural India. First implemented in 2005, the

'basic' ASER survey was conducted annually until 2014 and switched to an alternate-year cycle in 2016.

The 'basic' ASER collects information about the enrolment in preschool and school for children in the age group of three to 16 and assesses children aged five to 16 one-on-one to understand their foundational reading and arithmetic abilities.

In the intervening years, ASER dives deeper into different aspects of children's schooling and learning in rural India. Why did most girls actively desire to continue their education? The report says two major reasons emerged during the discussions with girls.

Man climbs high voltage tower in Kerala demanding house

Comes down after over six hours

Kottayam (Kerala), Jan 18 (PTI): A small village in this southern Kerala district on Thursday morning witnessed hours-long dramatic scenes when a man climbed up a high voltage tower demanding a house for his family as well as seeking to meet Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan and actor-politician Suresh Gopi.

The man who, according to the local residents, climbed the tower at 6 am, initially refused to come down despite the efforts of the police, fire rescue personnel and panchayat officials of

the area near Kattachira here. The power supply through the line was also shut off at 9.30 am, according to a KSEB official.

A fire official told PTI that when they tried to get onto the over 80 feet tall tower to rescue him, the man, a resident of Erattupetta, threatened to climb further up.

"So, we came back down," the official said.

Finally, at around 12 noon, after panchayat officials assured him that his demand for a house would be addressed, he came down from the tower and was taken into police custody.

'Assam govt, CM most corrupt in India'

Sivasagar/Jorhat (Assam), Jan 18 (PTI): Kickstarting the Assam leg of 'Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra', Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Thursday claimed the state perhaps has the "most corrupt government" and the "most corrupt CM" in the country.

Addressing a public gathering at Haloating in Sivasagar district, where the march entered Assam from Nagaland, Gandhi slammed the ruling BJP and its ideologue Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) for "spreading hatred and looting public money".

"Perhaps, the most corrupt government in India is in Assam. You know what is happening here. We will raise the issues of Assam during the Yatra," he said. In the afternoon, Gandhi addressed a street meeting at Deberapar in Nakachari of Jorhat district and alleged that a lot of injustices are being done against tribals, tea workers and other indigenous communities of Assam by the BJP-led government. "Corruption is rampant in Assam. We all know that perhaps the



Cong leader Rahul Gandhi during the Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra, on Thursday.

most corrupt CM in India is the Assam chief minister," he added. Talking about Manipur, from where the march began, Gandhi said a civil war-like situation prevails in the hill state with ethnic violence going on since May 3 last year.

Manipur is divided and the prime minister has not even once visited the state. Violence has been continuing for months now. People

'Gandhi family most corrupt in India'

Guwahati: Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Thursday alleged that the Gandhi family is the most corrupt one in the country. His statement came following Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's accusations that the BJP-led government in Assam is the most corrupt in the country. "The Gandhi family is the most corrupt family in the country. This is not 'Nyay Yatra', it's 'Miya Yatra'. Wherever there are Muslims, they visit those places," the chief minister told a press conference. 'Miya' is originally a pejorative term used for Bengali-speaking Muslims in Assam. In recent years, activists from the community have started adopting this term as a gesture of defiance.



are dying and houses are being burnt, and peace has not returned yet," he added. In Nagaland, a framework agreement (to bring about a solution to the Naga political issue) was signed nine years ago and people are now asking what happened to it as the Prime Minister has not spoken about it at all, the Congress MP said.

Countering the BJP's statement that such marches will not benefit the Congress, Gandhi said last year's 'Bharat Jodo Yatra' has changed the "political narrative" of the country. "The BJP and the RSS are spreading hatred and making one community fight against the other. Their only job is to loot public money and exploit the country," he said. The Congress leader also alleged that all the BJP-ruled states are "facing economic, social and political injustices" with the poor and marginalised sections bearing the brunt, and all these issues would be raised during the yatra.

'Bow and arrow' to 'Ramanandi tilak' on lamp posts: Lord Ram rules hearts and streets in Ayodhya

Ayodhya, Jan 18 (PTI): Streetlights on flyovers decorated with artworks depicting Lord Ram, his bow and arrow and ornamental lamp posts carrying designs themed on the traditional 'Ramanandi tilak', Ayodhya is all decked up ahead of the consecration ceremony at the temple.

The 'Pran Pratishtha' at the Ram temple here will take place on January 22 which will be attended by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and a host of other dignitaries.

With the mega ceremony four days away, even the roads leading to the holy city are getting immersed in a religious spirit. While travelling on the highway from Lucknow to

Ayodhya, one can see huge posters bearing an image of the Ram temple, the date of the consecration ceremony and slogans like 'Shubh Ghadi Aayi, Viraje Raghuraii', dotting the roads.

Many hotels and 'dhabas' along the highway carry a banner greeting devotees on the way to Ayodhya, and an image of Lord Ram, besides saffron flags bearing images of the deity and the new temple here.

While entering Ayodhya city from Faizabad city side, one can feel the spirit of the temple town in the air.

Streetlights lining the flyovers have been decked up with lights, and festooned with colourful 'AY-

ODHYA' signage, and by turns carrying designs depicting Lord Ram, a new temple with bow and arrow, or Lord Ram holding his bow and arrow or the 'Ramanandi tilak'.

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