

Citizens support campaign against illicit liquor

Telephone complaint number issued by Excise Department getting positive response

Bhilai, Mar 18:

As per the instructions of Collector Richa Prakash Chaudhary and under the guidance of Assistant Commissioner Excise Rajesh Jaiswal, the Excise Department is continuously taking action in view of the Lok Sabha elections 2024. A telephone complaint number has been made available for the common citizens. People can contact the Excise Department, Durg round the clock on this telephone number. People can provide information and file complaints against people involved in selling, transporting and possessing il-



legal liquor. Assistant Commissioner Excise, Rajesh Jaiswal said that the telephone complaint number issued by the Excise Department is receiving positive response from the people. As a result, the department is continuously taking action against those involved

in selling, transporting and smuggling illegal liquor.

04 cases were registered by the department on Sunday. In the first case, 130 quarters of country liquor, quantity 23.4 bulk litre, having market value Rs 14300, was seized from the possession of accused

Premendra Baghel son of Matiram Baghel, a resident of Saraswati Kunj Risali. The case was registered under Section 34(2) of the Excise Act by Dheeraj Kannaujia, Assistant District Excise Officer, and taken up for investigation. In another case, the accused M Parvati, wife of Dinesh, a resident of Steel Nagar, Police Station Vaishali Nagar was rounded up with 25 quarters of country liquor (Masala), total quantity 4.5 bulk litre, market value Rs 2750. This case was taken under investigation by Supriya Sharma, Assistant District Excise Officer under Section 34(1)(b) of the Act. 21 quarters of country liquor, quantity 3.78 bulk litre, market value Rs 2310, was seized from the possession of accused Raju Ram

Mande in village Kachadanur, Chowki Jewra Sirsa. Nirmala Thakur, Assistant District Excise Officer, is conducting the investigation under Section 34(1)(b).

Similarly, 24 quarters of country liquor, quantity 4.32 bulk litre, market value Rs 2640, was seized from the possession of accused Thakur Ram Sahu son of Balmukund Sahu, a resident of Semaria. The case was registered by Pankaj Kujur, Assistant District Excise Officer, Excise. Dheeraj Kannaujia, Supriya Sharma, Nirmala Thakur, Pankaj Kujur, Assistant District Excise Officer, Arvind Sahu, Excise Sub Inspector, Fagu Ram Tandon, Excise Head Constable, Dev Prasad Patel Constable, Durgesh (Driver) played a vital role.

BSP's RED organises 'Nayee Chetna' programme

To spread awareness among Women Contractual Workers



Bhilai, Mar 18:

Bhilai Steel Plant's Refractory Engineering Department organised the 'Nayee Chetna' Programme, on March 15, 2024 to spread awareness on safety among Women Contractual Workers. Sudhir Kumar, CGM (RED) was the Chief Guest on this occasion.

SK Agrawal, DGM & DSO (RED), Malini Parganiha, AGM (RED) and Philomina Ekka, Mgr (RED) were present on this

occasion, along with other departmental personnel and Women Contractual Workers.

Shalini Chaurasiya, Asst Mgr (Personnel, SZ-1) provided detailed information on Sexual Harassment at the Workplace, while Chaitram Sahu, ALWO gave information regarding salary, Labour Welfare Schemes, and facilities to Women Contractual Workers. Necessary information on Rights & Duties, responsibilities,

and Health and safety norms were also provided to the Women Contractual Workers.

The programme was compered by Dr Upendra Kumar Sharma, Junior Officer.

'Nayee Chetna' is aimed at sensitizing women contractual workers to the risks and hazards at the workplace and making them aware of their statutory rights, welfare facilities, safety, health, cleanliness and sexual harassment at the workplace.

Collector imposes restrictions on leave of employees

Bhilai, Mar 18:

Lok Sabha Election 2024 was announced by the Election Commission of India, New Delhi on 16 March 2024 after which the Model Code of Conduct has become effective in the district. Collector and District Magistrate Richa Prakash Chaudhary has imposed restrictions on the leave and leaving the headquarters of all officers / employees posted in the district with immediate effect in order to ensure immediate execution of the duties of officers / employees for election related work. In case of urgent need, the head of the office will examine the application and submit it along with recommendations to the Collector and District Magistrate through the nodal officer. As per the orders of the District Magistrate, instructions have been given to immediately relieve the officers / employees who have been assigned duty in

election expenditure monitoring, MCMC, Control Room, C-Vigil and other branches for conducting election work. In this regard, correspondence regarding cancellation of duty order merely citing official work will not be valid. It will be the responsibility of the concerned officer / department head to serve the order to the employees who are being deployed on duty to conduct the election work. Offices will remain open even on holidays for election duty. The application for exemption from election duty will be submitted by the Nodal Officer through the formation of a voting team along with the necessary documents (medical board report in case of health problem) along with the recommendation of the head of the office. No officer / employee will submit an application directly to the office of Collector or District Magistrate for release from leave or election duty.

Prohibition of use of loudspeakers

Raipur, Mar 17:

With the aim of maintaining a noise-free environment during the Lok Sabha Elections-2024, Collector and District Returning Officer Dr Gaurav Singh has issued an order prohibiting the use of loudspeakers without permission in Raipur district till the completion of the Lok Sabha Elections 2024. According to him the loud-

speaker for election campaigning and public meeting campaign, procession vehicles etc., can be used only after obtaining written permission from the concerned competent authority of the area, in the period from 6 am to 10 pm. Additional District Magistrate, Raipur has been appointed as the competent authority for the entire assembly constituency falling under Raipur district.

Election expenditure monitoring enforcement agencies meeting on Mar 19

Bhilai, Mar 18: A meeting has been organised in the District Collector's office on March 19, 2024 at 12 noon to provide necessary guidelines regarding proper audit of expenditure accounts to the candidates contesting for the Lok Sabha elections 2024. Necessary guidelines will be given by Ranjani Sreekumar, Income Tax Officer and District Nodal Officer, Lok Sabha Election Expenditure Monitoring, 2024, appointed by the Government of India. In the said meeting, all the enforcement agencies like Excise / SGST / Police / GRP / RPF / EEM will be present. They have been asked to prepare a PPT of the preparations done by all the officers / employees engaged and the work done so far.

International Conference 'Technologia: ICRAMEN 2024' concludes at CCET

Bhilai, Mar 18:

The Christian College of Engineering & Technology, in collaboration with the Research Association of Masters of Engineering, India, hosted a two-day International Conference "TECHNOLOGIA" on Recent Advances in Mechanical Engineering and Nanomaterials i.e. "TECHNOLOGIA: ICRAMEN 2024" in Virtual Mode on March 16 and 17, 2024. The primary objective of this conference was to offer a platform for researchers and innovators to share their latest research findings, innovative ideas, and applications within the scope of Mechanical Engineering and Nanomaterials on an international level, engaging both academia and industry professionals. The inaugural ceremony was graced by Fr Dr PS Varghese, Executive Vice Chairman of CCET, who emphasized the significance of multidisciplinary research and its alignment with the new education policy in his address. Dr Dipali Soren, the Conference Chair and Professor from the International Islamic University, Malaysia, delivered a lecture on "Numerical and experimental study of passive control in the form of ribs

Man strangled and bludgeoned to death

Bhilai, Mar 18: A 30-year-old man was strangled and thereafter bludgeoned to death allegedly by his friends during a liquor party in Potiya area of Durg late evening on Sunday. Police have rounded up four suspects and investigations are on. According to information, the deceased was identified as Top Singh (30) a resident of Potiya Basti. His body was found lying on the ground behind a petrol pump in Potiya. He worked as a labourer. On Sunday, Top Singh was seen with his four friends at the Potiya Liquor

Shop. They purchased liquor and moved to the lonely ground behind Manish Petrol Pump in Potiya. It is suspected that some dispute occurred between the friends after consuming liquor after which Top Singh was initially strangled and thereafter hit on head with a heavy stone. A team of Padmanabpur Police Station conducted the crime scene investigation and the body was sent for autopsy after preparing an inquest. Police have rounded up four suspects in connection with this blind murder.

Truck helper run over by SUV in road rage; two nabbed

Bhilai, Mar 18:

A truck helper was killed in a road rage which occurred after an accident late evening on Sunday in Dhamdha Police Station limits. The truck helper had come down from the vehicle after a SUV dashed their truck. After an altercation, two men moving in the SUV crushed him to death and escaped from the spot. Police have arrested both the accused and investigations are on.

Dhamdha Police Station received a complaint from the truck driver Balkar Singh (48) son of Avtar Singh a resident of Panchpaoli, Nagpur (Maharashtra). Balkar Singh accompanied by his helper Ganesh Dubey were carrying TMT bars on their truck (MH40-BL-5734) from Bilaspur vis Simga and Bemetra. Around 22:30 hrs



near Thelka Dhaba, a Bolero SUV (CG 07 AT 3002) collided with their truck. Balkar Singh stopped his truck after which his helper Tidhi alias Ganesh Dubey got down from the truck. The two occupants in the SUV started arguing with Ganesh. Suddenly, the SUV driver, with the intention of murder, crushed Ganesh to death with his vehicle and escaped from the spot. Police lodged an FIR under

section 302, 34 of Indian Penal Code against the driver of vehicle Bolero (CG 07 AT 3002) and others. A special investigation team was formed under the direction of Superintendent of Police Jitendra Shukla and Additional Superintendent of Police Vedvrat Sirmaur, Abhishek Jha and Deputy Superintendent of Police (Crime against Children) Sanjay Punthir. The

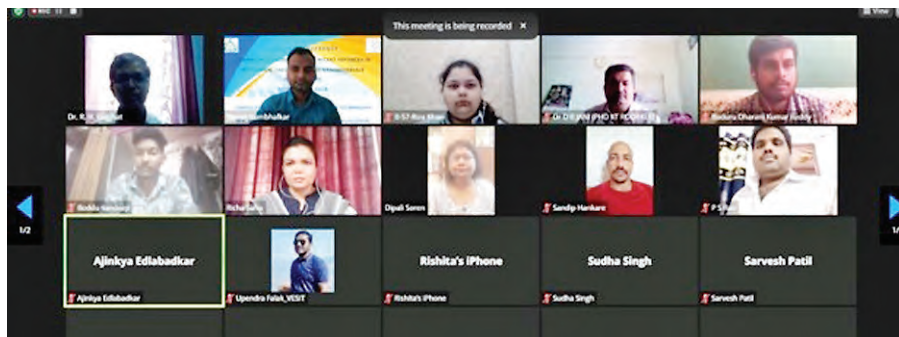
police team received a tip off that the accused were sitting in 'Thelka Dhaba'. Police team reached there and the accused were arrested.

The accused were identified as Vivek Kumar Janghel alias Vicky (23) son of Dwarika Ram Janghel, a resident of village Dhap, district Bemetera and Jaswant Janghel (18) son of Puran Lal Janghel, a resident of village Dhap, District Bemetera. They were produced before the court and sent to jail on judicial remand.

Dhamdha SHO Trainee DSP Ajay Kumar Singh, SHO Nandini Inspector Rajesh Sahu, ASI Narendra Singh Rajput, Head Constable Anupam Sharma, Constables Vimal Sahu, Alok Jaina, Ramsingh Paikra, Dinesh Dahriya and Prashant Sahu played a vital role in arresting the accused.

New Power substation established in Civic Centre Area

Bhilai, Mar 18: The HT and LT group under Town Engineering Electrical Department (TEED) operating under Town Services Department of SAIL - Bhilai Steel Plant has established a new 315 KVA power substation at New Civic Centre area. This step has been taken by BSP in view of the risk of breakdown and cable burnout of 500 KVA power substation located near the Income Tax Office, that is presently fully loaded. The Work of installing and commissioning of the substation was done in 3 months. This project was executed by a joint team consisting of JP Pandey AGM (TSD), Ranbir Punn, AGM, PS Sidra, SM, Nand Kishore, DM, Dinesh Verma, SM, EV Sunil Chargeman Cum Master Technician, BS Thakur Senior Technician, Mohammed Mustaqin, Senior Technician, Subramani Senior Technician, along with the contractual workforce. The transfer PDB and all other infrastructural materials were BSPs own material.



Professor, provided a concise overview of the conference, while Richa Sahu, the Co-convenor & Assistant Professor, moderated the sessions and extended the vote of thanks. On the first day, Dr SA Khan, a Keynote Speaker and Professor from the International Islamic University, Malaysia, delivered a lecture on "Failure Analysis of Suspension Spring of Railway Vehicle," explaining variational causes of failures and their analysis, highlighting

their practical implications for the Indian Railways. Dr DB Jani, Associate Professor at Government Engineering College, Dahod, Gujarat, served as the Session Chair for both technical sessions, demonstrating patience and diligence in evaluating all presentations. Out of 55 papers received from across India and abroad, 25 were registered for presentations. All accepted papers have been recommended for publication in Scopus, Web of Science, UGC Care indexed/listed journals, including those of Trans Tech Publication Ltd, Switzerland, and other referred journals.

During the valedictory session, Fr Dr Varghese congratulated the Best Paper winners and commended all participants for their outstanding re-

search presentations. Dr Kumbhalkar announced the recipients of the Best Paper Awards and provided information regarding the publication of papers in various refereed journals. ZerouliMarzak from University Mouloud MAMMERI Tizi Quzou, Algeria, Amol Patil from Ajeenkya DY Patil School of Engineering, Pune, and Mahek Hotchandani from Vivekanand Education Society's Institute of Technology, Mumbai were honoured with the Best Paper Awards. Dr Soren expressed appreciation to the organizing team for the successful completion of the conference, while Dr Gajghat proposed the vote of thanks. His Grace Alexios Mar Eusebius, Chairman of CCET, conveyed his blessings and best wishes to the organizers and participants.

CEO holds meeting with representatives of political parties



Information given about model code of conduct, election expenditure and guidelines of Election Commission of India for Lok Sabha general elections

Raipur, Mar 18: Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) Reena Babasaheb Kangale on Monday held a meeting of representatives of recognized political parties of the state. He gave detailed information to the representatives of political parties in the meeting regarding model code of conduct and election expenditure monitoring.

In the meeting held in the office of the Chief Electoral Officer, detailed information was provided regarding the process of filing nomination papers by the candidates during the Lok Sabha general elections.

It was told in the meeting that with the an-

tepected or infected with Covid-19 should also submit their application through the prescribed format to the concerned Returning Officer within 5 days of the date of notification of the election. They can also submit application, so that they will be able to vote from home through postal ballot.

In the meeting, information about the limit of expenditure by political parties and candidates during elections and the instructions of the Commission regarding maintenance of expenditure accounts was given to the representatives of political parties. In the meeting, representatives of political parties were also informed about the process of permission for vehicles and rallies during the election period and the guidelines of the Election Commission of India in this regard.

It was told in the meeting that voter friends will be present in all the polling centers to provide necessary support to the elderly and disabled voters.

As per the instructions of the Election Commission of India, elderly people above 85 years of age, disabled people with 40 percent or more disability and voters sus-

Service to humanity is service to God: Vishwabhusan Harichandan



Governor gave certificates to the trainees in the program organized by Red Cross

Raipur, Mar 18: Governor Vishwabhusan Harichandan presented certificates to 29 MBBS doctors from different districts of the state after completing lay-lecturer training in a program organized by the Indian Red Cross Society, Chhattisgarh branch at Raj Bhavan on Monday. Lay-lecturer training for state practitioners was conducted for the first time by the state branch in which they were given training in first aid and emergency treat-

ment. This training was conducted from March 11 to 17. On this occasion, Governor Harichandan said that Service to humanity is service to God, doctors work for this purpose. He said that doctors have an important role in the society. During the COVID-19 pandemic, doctors, nurses, health workers all served as front line warriors. He said that the Red Cross provides immediate services during times of war, natural disaster and crisis, which is commendable. He called upon the doctors to always be ready to help the deprived sections and serve the society and the nation. The Governor congratulated and encouraged all the doctors who completed the

training.

CEO of Red Cross Society Chhattisgarh, MK Raut said that for the first time in the state, MBBS doctors were given lay-lecturer training for first aid. These doctors will go to the districts and provide training to the volunteers of Junior Red Cross and Youth Red Cross. He said that Red Cross plans to give first aid training to some people in all the panchayats. Mr. Raut said that all the trainees have taken the training diligently. In future they will be trained as master trainers. Red Cross Chairman Mr. Ashok Agarwal gave the welcome address in the program. Vote of thanks was given by Secretary Red Cross Dr. Rupal Purohit. On this occasion, Secretary to the Governor Mr. Yashwant Kumar, Legal Advisor Mr. Rajesh Srivastava, Master Trainer Mr. Naresh Govil, Mr. Yashwant Chandrakar and all the trainee doctors were present.

Alok Chandravanshi, NK Shukla appointed SIC
Raipur, Mar 18: Bringing into use the power envisaged under sub-section (3) of the section 15 of Right to Information Act 2005 (2005 No.22), the Governor of the state has appointed Alok Chandravanshi and Narendra Kumar Shukla as State Information Commissioner (SIC) in Chhattisgarh State Information Commission. The above appointment is as per the gazette notification dated 24/10/2019 Right to Information (Central Information Commission, Central Information Commissioner, Information Commission, state information Commission term of office, salary, recruitment and other terms & conditions of service) Act 2019.

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EOI No. 03/PA/2024 Date: 19.03.2024

This Notice is in compliance with MoEF&CC Gazette Notification dated 31.12.2021 on Pond ash Utilization for the agencies engaged in construction activities such as road laying, road and flyover embankments, shoreline protection structures in coastal districts and dams within 300 kms radius from NTPC KORBA.

Interested Ash Users within 300 kms radius requiring ash for construction activities like Road Project / Mine backfilling and OB Mixing / Shoreline Protection etc. may submit their requirement of ash supply. NTPC Korba shall supply the ash 'on free of cost' and 'as is where is' basis and shall bear the Transportation cost.

Pond Ash Quantity offered is mentioned in 'General Information' for this Notice along with Contact Details and e-mail addresses.

How to Apply

Interested Ash Users are requested to submit their requirement(s) in the specified standard format to the e-mail addresses as given in 'General Information'.

'General Information' and 'Standard format for application' for Expression of Interest have been uploaded on <https://nptcender.ntpc.co.in/>

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Leading the Power Sector

CHB to take into possession Queen's Club

Raipur, Mar 18: The Raipur Police has taken a major action in context of firing during lockdown in the Queen's Club in a birthday party and the agreement of the Director Harbaksh Singh Batra has been cancelled. It was on disclosure by one of the private news channel that the Chhattisgarh Housing Board (CHB) took this action. Chhattisgarh Housing Board (CHB) has now cancelled the agreement of Raipur Queen's Club with Eminent Infrastructure Private Limited (EIPL) and now CHB would take the Club in its possession. It is worthwhile to mention here that during the lockdown the Club has violated the liquor party rules and regulations. The Club was handed over to the third party going against the rules. The other party has not responded even after giving time for submission of reply and so now the CHB would take into possession the Queen's Club building and infrastructure in its hand.

It is worthwhile to mention here that on 27 Sept 2022 night, some persons attended a birthday party of a girl at Queen's Club located on VIP Road. During this one of the person's Hitesh Patel fired a shot and after which the accused Hitesh was taken into arrest by the police.

GST conducts raid against Sun Shine Caterers and two-wheeler parking

At the Raipur Railway station
Raipur, Mar 18: The Central GST has conducted raid against Sun Shine Caterers and Two-wheeler Parking at the Raipur Railway station here on Monday. The investigation at both these places is going on by the officers. There are reports that the team has also raided the establishment of Sun Shine Caterers in Durg as well. As per information in this regard, a case of depositing of licence fees for stall of Sun Shine Caterers at the Raipur Railway Station has come to fore.

The GST number of this firm, taken way back in 2017 is closed and if the sources are to be believed, the Company is not having any bank account. Apart from this firm, about a dozen other firms of the family are existing in Durg and other parts of the country. But since they are having strong dominance of works in the Railways and due to which the entire Railway department is flourishing under their shadow and it is for this reason that no inquiry was done till date. Sources informed that this firm was issued notice by GST earlier, but no response was given.

Action to be taken against those involved in scams: Brijmohan



Central Chronicle News

Raipur, Mar 18: Cabinet Minister and BJP candidate from Raipur Lok Sabha constituency Brijmohan Agrawal said that creating a hue and cry over the case being filed against former Chief Minister and Congress candidate from Rajnandgaon Lok Sabha constituency Bhupesh Baghel will not be able to save him from defeat. Due to fear of severe defeat, Bhupesh is trying to play the victim card which will not give him any benefit, he said while addressing the press conference at BJP office in Ekatma Parisar here today. As far as the issue of Mahadev App is concerned, its investigation

process has started from the time of Congress government, Agrawal said. Now Baghel who himself got trapped in his own web is talking big on the issue, Agrawal said, adding that Baghel should tell about his links with all the officers who have been arrested and whose names have surfaced in this case.

Agrawal said that the extent to which the hard-earned money of the people of Chhattisgarh was looted and its share reached was also revealed from the video of the accused. Much of this has already appeared in the news, he said.

According to him ED's investigation had clearly revealed that Rs 5.39 crore which was recov-

ered by ED from the possession of a person named Asimdas, was to be delivered to Bhupesh Baghel and this was also said by Asimdas. Similarly, in the video of Shubham Soni which was released from Dubai, it was also revealed that he had given crores of rupees to Bhupesh Baghel, he said.

According to him Bhupesh Baghel ji never said a word about the veracity of the investigation that has been done so far and the names that have come up in the investigation, the statements given by the arrested accused; rather he only said that everything is a lie. Why has Bhupesh Baghel not given a factual statement till date? If anyone is guilty of embezzling the money of 10 lakh youth of Chhattisgarh by involving them in betting on Mahadev App, then it is Bhupesh Baghel and the Congress Party, Agrawal said. Raipur MP Sunil Soni, State BJP Vice President Lakshmi Verma, State General Secretary Ramji Bharti, State Media In-charge Amit Chimnani, Media co-in-charge Anurag Agrawal were present in the press conference.

Grab the chance before it goes away.
File your updated return today!

Last date to file updated return for A.Y. 2021-22 : 31st March 2024



You can also file updated return for A.Y. 2022-23 and A.Y. 2023-24

An updated return can be filed in the following cases;

- If original return has not been filed
- If belated return deadline has been missed
- To modify original return, if Income was not declared correctly
- If wrong head of income was chosen or tax was paid at wrong rate
- If reduction in carried forward loss or unabsorbed depreciation is required
- If reduction of MAT/AMT credit is required
- If you have received notice u/s 133(6) of the Income - tax Act, 1961 for certain information about claim of deductions/exemptions regarding which suitable explanation/evidence is not available with you
- If you have claimed wrongful deductions/exemptions

If you file ITR-U till 31.03.2024	Amount of additional tax payable
For AY 2021-22	50% of aggregate of tax & interest payable
For AY 2022-23 & AY 2023-24	25% of aggregate of tax & interest payable

For more information, please refer to section 139(8A) & 140B (3) of Income Tax Act, 1961
Don't Delay, File Today.



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Income Tax Department
Central Board of Direct Taxes

For more information, please visit www.incometax.gov.in

Youth must script new narratives with fresh ideas : Prof. Chakrawal

Two-day GGV Ideathon inaugurated in CU

Bilaspur, Mar 18:

Guru Ghasidas Vishwavidyalaya (Central University) is hosting a two-day GGV Ideathon 2024, funded by the Department of Science and Technology, Government of India, through the Technology Enabling Centre (TEC) on March 18-19. The inaugural program was held on March 18 in the Rajat Jayanti Auditorium.

Dr. Prem Sagar Mishra, Chairman and Managing Director of South-East Coalfields Limited, Bilaspur, the chief guest at the inauguration, inspired the youth, saying that necessity is the mother of invention. Setting a goal is difficult without a purpose and at the same time, love for the goal is essential for any innovation and creation.

Addressing the inaugu-

ral session, Vice-Chancellor Prof. Chakrawal, presiding over the session, said that the youth are the carriers of fresh ideas through which they can script new narratives. The youth of this country is filled with endless possibilities, which will play a significant role in the development of Viksit Bharat by 2047. GGV Ideathon 2024 will definitely play a vital role in providing energy to new ideas.

Prof. Chakrawal further added that every possible effort is being made at Guru Ghasidas Vishwavidyalaya to materialize the new ideas of the youth so that they can expand their span and establish the standard of innovations connected with human concerns on the national and international stage with entrepreneurship.

Special guest Mr. S.S. Bajaj, Director-General, Chhattisgarh Science and



Technology Council, Raipur, said that the nation will be built through new discoveries and experiments. CG COST is always ready to support and coordinate with the participants and researchers of GGV Ideathon 2024.

Before this, at the start, floral tributes were paid before the statues of Maa Saraswati and Baba Guru Ghasidas Ji. Subsequently, the guests were welcomed with floral bouquets. The Saraswati Vandana and university anthem were presented by the university musical group, Tarang. The welcome address was delivered by the co-ordinator of the welcome ceremony, Dr. Amit Kumar Khaskalam. On this occasion, the Coordinator of the event, Prof. Alok Kumar Singh Kushwaha gave information about GGV Ideathon 2024.

The guests were honored with shawls, shreepahal, mementos, and herbal colors made by university students. Finally, the vote of thanks was proposed by the Registrar of the university, Prof. Manish Shrivastava, and the event was conducted by Dr. Princy Matlani. The event witnessed the presence of

Four-day workshop on bamboo craft inaugurated

Bilaspur: Vice-Chancellor of the Guru Ghasidas Vishwavidyalaya, Professor Alok Kumar Chakrawal was the chief guest of the inauguration program of the workshop and Principal Chief Conservator of Forests Mr. Raju Agassimani was the special guest at the four-day workshop on bamboo craft. The workshop has been organized for the skill development of students. 100 students of the university are participating in this workshop. On this occasion, the Vice-Chancellor of the University, Prof. Alok Kumar Chakrawal, while extending best wishes to everyone, said that the Forestry Department is establishing new landmarks every

day. All of you should harness your inner energy similarly in positive and artistic works. Sharing his views, Raju Agassimani said that it is necessary for us to move towards sustainable development. The government is running many schemes on behalf of the Forest Department. He mentioned several such schemes and explained their benefits in detail. The coordinators of the workshop are Dr. Bhavana Dixit and Dr. Gunjan Patil. Before this, the welcome address was given by the Dean of the School of Natural Resources, Prof. S.C. Tiwari and in the end, the vote of thanks was given by the Head of the Department, Prof. K.K. Chandra.

over 150 participants from various parts of the country, including the Chief Manager of Smart City Bilaspur, Captain Y. Srinivas, Mr. Vishnu Vaibhav Dwivedi, CEO,

Innovation and Technology IIT Bhilai, as well as deans of various Schools, department heads, teachers, officials, and research scholars, and students.

Sao, Kashyap shout 'Har Har Mahadev' on social media

After FIR against Baghel

Raipur, Mar 18:



Just before the Lok Sabha elections, EOW has registered an FIR against former Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel. With this BJP leaders have started targeting former Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel through social media. Deputy Chief Minister Arun Sao and Minister Kedar Kashyap have raised slogans of 'Har Har Mahadev' on social media while targeting the former Chief Minister Baghel.

Deputy Chief Minister Sao wrote in social media site X- "How could Mahadev tolerate the insult to his name? Here and everywhere... Mahadev! Everywhere Shiva".

When this matter came to light, Deputy Chief Minister Arun Sao was then holding the position as state BJP chief, and his sharp statements and social media posts used to go viral.

EOW has registered an

FIR against former Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel in the controversial Mahadev Satta App case of Chhattisgarh. Former CM Baghel has been accused under various sections related to fraud, criminal conspiracy, breach of trust and forgery and sections 7 and 11 of the Prevention of Corruption Act.

Meanwhile Minister Kedar Kashyap also took a dig at former Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel and said that when he opened his third eye, the earth shook and the heaven also shook, FIR was registered, wrath of Mahadev, Har Har Mahadev.

Postal Life Insurance Awareness Camp organised

By the Postal Department

Raipur, Mar 18:

A two-day Postal Life Insurance Awareness Camp was organized on March 13th and 14th by the team of Indian Postal Department Raipur Division under the guidance of Senior Superintendent of Post Office, Raipur at Health Directorate Complex, Naya Raipur. Through this camp, information about small savings schemes of the post office including postal life insurance was made available to the employees of the health department. In these two days, more than 150 officers and employees reached the camp site and inquired about various schemes of the Postal Department. During this



period, forms were made available for opening 50 lakh insurance amount, postal life insurance and savings accounts including MIS, senior citizen account. Special support was received from Director Health Services and Deputy Director Dr. Mahendra Singh for organizing this camp. On be-

half of the Postal Department, KK Sharma, Development Officer Raipur Division, Regional Officer, SN Pradhan and Postal Life Insurance Agent Shailesh Kumar were present in this camp. Through this camp, the Postal Department has the possibility of good PLI business in future.

Narayan Seva Sansthan's effort to empower physically and socially disabled exemplary: Dy CM Sharma

1500 disabled people from across the state came to the artificial limb camp

Raipur, Mar 18:

A special event was held at Dadabari under the guidance of Narayan Seva Sansthan, Udaipur. This event included free check-ups for operations and measurements for artificial limbs and callipers. Speaking after inaugurating the camp Deputy Chief Minister Vijay Kumar Sharma, mentioned that the institute



provides free operations for artificial limbs and arranges food for 5,000 people every day. Additionally, a free school called Narayan Children Academy is also being run for

the children of 600 economically challenged laborers, he said. The institute also has a Gurukul for promoting Vedic education, he said. Moreover, it offers training in computer

skills, mobile repair, sewing, and mehndi to hundreds of disabled people for their self reliance, he added.

Sharma expressed his happiness about these service projects and praised Narayan Seva Sansthan for empowering disabled individuals physically, socially, economically, and intellectually. He assured that the government would offer every possible help for the welfare of disabled people in Chhattisgarh. He extended his congratulations to Founder Kailash Manav and President Prashant Aggarwal and

thanked them for their efforts. More than 150 members of the institute and people from Raipur participated in the camp. Camp coordinator, Rohit Tiwari, shared a report about the camp and said that over 1500 disabled individuals attended the camp today. The institute's P&O team worked diligently, measuring 530 people for fitting the Narayan artificial limb and 250 people for fitting callipers. Additionally, they selected over 100 disabled patients for surgery. These patients will be taken to Udaipur for free operations.

'Those committing fraud using Mahadev's name have to face his wrath'

Munat's reaction on FIR against Baghel in Mahadev App case

Raipur, Mar 18:

Politics has heated up in the state after EOW has registered an FIR against former Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel and Rajnandgaon Lok Sabha candidate Bhuwesh Baghel in the Mahadev Satta App case. Just before the Lok Sabha elections, FIR has been registered against Bhuwesh Baghel along with 21 other people in Mahadev Satta App case.

Taking a dig at Baghel the former minister and MLA Rajesh Munat said that good governance had returned in the state. Mahadev's wrath is certain to be showered upon those who commit fraud in the name of God, he said, adding that the public has already taught Bhuwesh Baghel a lesson in the elections.

"With the fall of Congress in Chhattisgarh, good governance has returned, the law is also doing its job. It is certain that Mahadev's wrath will be showered on the "bagulabagants" who commit fraud, criminal con-

Ch'garh State NITI Aayog launches citizen portal

For suggestions on 'Amritkal: Chhattisgarh Vision @2047'

Raipur, Mar 18:

Chhattisgarh will play a pivotal role in realizing the vision of 'Viksit Bharat' by the year 2047. To ensure rapid development across all sectors in Chhattisgarh by 2047, the State NITI Aayog is diligently preparing a vision document titled "Amritkal: Chhattisgarh Vision @2047".

During the Assembly session, Chhattisgarh Finance Minister Shri OP Choudhary announced that

the state government plans to unveil this vision document on November 1 this year on the occasion of State Foundation Day. The State NITI Aayog has introduced a portal aimed at gathering suggestions from citizens of the state regarding the aforementioned document. The URL for this portal is https://sdgspc.cg.gov.in/viksitcg/#/home. Through the "Mor Sapna, Mor Vikas Chhattisgarh" portal, residents of Chhattisgarh have the opportunity to submit their suggestions, thereby playing a part in contributing towards the inclusive development of the state.

Municipal Commissioner inspects BT work in Telibandha Road

Raipur, Mar 18:

Municipal Corporation Commissioner Abinash Mishra inspected the asphalt work being done on the main road from Ambedkar Chowk to Telibandha. He asked the concerned engineer and work agency to complete the remaining BT work expeditiously.

During the inspection, Mishra also checked the quality of the completed work. Asphaltizing is currently being done by the Municipal Corporation from Telibandha to Ambedkar Chowk. BT work



has been completed in one direction and work is in progress in the other direction. Mishra also gave instructions to complete the

ongoing work expeditiously. The work agency and Engineer Sanjay Verma were present during the inspection.

BJP's cartoon war targets Cong LS candidates

Tikeshwar Patel

Raipur, Mar 18:

The ruling BJP in Chhattisgarh has come up with a set of cartoons on social media to target the opposition Congress' Lok Sabha poll candidates, including former chief minister Bhuwesh Baghel, over politics of appeasement and other issues.

While the BJP said it has only portrayed some incidents which happened during the previous Congress regime through the cartoons which are not meant to hurt anyone, the grand old party accused it of releasing such illustrations out of frustration.

The 11 Lok Sabha seats in Chhattisgarh will see polling in three phases on April 19, April 26 and May 7 as per the schedule announced by the Election Commission of India.

The cartoon posters were released over the last one week. One such poster targeting former CM Baghel, who has been fielded by the Congress from Rajnandgaon Lok Sabha seat, was posted with the

comment "Rajnandgaon or Jhadsaga...selection is yours".

The post shows a caricature of Baghel leading a queue, holding a green flag with "jihadi giroh" written on it, towards a milestone of Rajnandgaon and followed by cartoons of Raipur Mayor Aijaz Dhebar and former minister Mohammad Akbar holding weapons.

Baghel is seen saying Bhaijan agla number Rajnandgaon ka hai' (brother next number is of Rajnandgaon).

BJP's state general secretary Sanjay Shrivastav told PTI, "It has been a tradition in the country to use different mediums of communication to send messages among the masses. Through the cartoon posters, the BJP has just portrayed the incidents which have happened (in the previous Congress government). The cartoon posters are not meant to hurt anyone."

Senior BJP MLA Dharamlal Kaushik said his party is trying to portray the failures of the previous Congress government

through the satire art and it has been receiving good response from people.

A cartoon of former minister Shivkumar Dahariya, the Congress' nominee in Janjgir-Champa Lok Sabha seat, was posted along with the comment "people of Janjgir-Champa should remain alert as former kabjabaaj' (encroacher) minister is now eyeing on your land".

Dahariya is depicted holding a big sack with avaidh kabja sargana' (illegal encroachment syndicate) written on it and heading towards Janjgir-Champa. The cartoon is shown as saying "have heard that there is a lot of land in Janjgir-Champa, let's encroach it."

Similarly, a cartoon depicting Jyotsana Mahant, the incumbent Congress MP from Korba Lok Sabha seat who has been re-nominated by the party, was posted with "an appeal to residents of Korba, this time don't choose an inactive, but an active MP".

The poster showed two persons asking "who are you", and the woman is

seen holding a poster with "mai apki lapata sansad" (I am your missing MP) written on it.

Another cartoon poster of former MLA Vikas Upadhyay, who has been fielded from Raipur Lok Sabha seat, asked residents of Raipur to be alert, saying "vinash" (destruction) comes with this "Vikas".

In another cartoon poster of former home minister Tamradhwaj Sahu, who is the Congress' nominee from Mahasamund Lok Sabha seat, the BJP took a swipe at him over communal violence at Biranpur village in Bemetara district in April last year in which 22-year-old Bhuneshwar Sahu was killed.

The man's father, Ishwar Sahu, was later elected as the BJP MLA in the state assembly polls held in November 2023. The BJP has fielded its incumbent state minister Brijmohan Agrawal in Raipur, sitting MP Santosh Pandey in Rajnandgaon, senior woman leader Saroj Pandey in Korba, former MLA Rupkumari Choudhary in Mahasamund and Kamlesh

Jangde, a fresh face, in Janjgir-Champa.

Chhattisgarh Congress communication wing head Sushil Anand Shukla claimed the BJP has been releasing the cartoon posters with "baseless" statements as it is afraid that his party candidates will win by huge margins.

Since the Congress has declared its Lok Sabha poll candidates in the state, the BJP has become frustrated as it is anticipating defeat, he said.

"They are talking about 'Modi ki guarantee' in elections but the central government led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi has failed on all fronts in the last 10 years, the Congress leader claimed.

Modi had promised to contain inflation in 100 days, giving employment to youth, doubling income of farmers, better returns for farm produce, depositing 15 lakh in bank accounts of each person but none of them were fulfilled, Shukla said. People no longer have trust in Modi and they will teach him a lesson in the Lok Sabha polls, he claimed.

OBITUARY

Gagandeep Kaur

Raipur: Sardani Gagandeep Kaur R/o Gurananak Nagar, (Shyam Nagar), breathed her last here on Monday. She was 38. The final journey will leave from her residence on March 19 at 11:00 am to Rajendra Nagar crematorium. She was W/o Vikramjeet Singh (Nikke).



Deadline for ration card renewal extended

Raipur, Mar 18: Chhattisgarh Government has extended the deadline to renew the ration cards until April 30, 2024. This decision was made so that everyone who is eligible can renew their cards without any rush. In accordance with the instructions of Chief Minister Shri Vishnu Deo Sai, Food and civil supplies Minister issued directives to extend the deadline for on-line renewal application until April 13, 2024. Director of Food and Civil Supplies Jitendra Shukla, has issued directives to all district collectors regarding this matter. A new mobile app has been developed by the department for ration card renewal. This app can be downloaded from the Play Store. Citizens can also download the app from the Food Department's website, http://khadya.cg.nic.in. Ration cardholders can electronically submit renewal applications through this app on their mobile phones. For those without Android phones or where mobile connectivity is unavailable, arrangements are being made to facilitate electronic application submission for ration card renewal at fair price shops.

Classifieds

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CELEBRATION TIME



Students play Holi at the end of their exams, at a school in Patiala, Monday.

Rs 100 cr contributed to revolutionize cancer care in India

New Delhi, Mar 18:

Axis Bank, has pledged to contribute Rs. 100 crores to the National Cancer Grid (NCG), which is a large network of 300+ cancer centres in India working to improve the standard of cancer care in the country. The network is coordinated by the Tata Memorial Hospital (TMH), a constituent unit of the Tata Memorial Centre (TMC).

Understanding (MoU) signing ceremony was graced by the presence of Rajiv Anand, Deputy Managing Director, Axis Bank, and other dignitaries—Dr.Sudeep Gupta, Director, TMC; Dr.C.S. Pramesh, Director, TMH and Convenor, NCG; Dr. Manju Sengar, Professor and Head of Medical Oncology, TMH; Dr. Nikesh R. Shah, CEO, National Cancer Grid-Koita Centre for Digital Oncology (NCG-KCDO); Rizwan Koita, Director, Koita Foundation; Ms. Sunita Rao, General Manager, Fundraising, TMH and MsSurabhi Goel, COO, Koita Foundation.

The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signing ceremony was graced by the presence of Rajiv Anand, Deputy Managing Director, Axis Bank, and other dignitaries—Dr.Sudeep Gupta, Director, TMC; Dr.C.S. Pramesh, Director, TMH and Convenor, NCG; Dr. Manju Sengar, Professor and Head of Medical Oncology, TMH; Dr. Nikesh R. Shah, CEO, National Cancer Grid-Koita Centre for Digital Oncology (NCG-KCDO); Rizwan Koita, Director, Koita Foundation; Ms. Sunita Rao, General Manager, Fundraising, TMH and MsSurabhi Goel, COO, Koita Foundation.

CRPF lauded for free medicare facilities

In last hamlet of J-K's Bhadarwah

Bhaderwah/Jammu, Mar 18 (PTI): As part of its civic action programme, the CRPF on Monday organised a free specialised medical camp at Thanahala the last panchayat of Jammu and Kashmir bordering Chamba district of Himachal Pradesh, officials said.

The day-long camp was held at Dina Nagar hamlet of Thanahala, mostly inhabited by families belonging to the below poverty line (BPL), in the foothills of Ashapati Glacier on Bhadarwah-Chamba interstate road, they said.

CRPF's Chief Medical Officer Dr Jaishree Singh said though the role of the paramilitary force is to give internal security, it is always there to provide assistance to the public during elections or natural calamities like earthquakes and landslides.

"A team of special doctors from CRPF and sub-district hospital Bhaderwah provided free treatment and medicines to the patients who availed the facility at their doorstep," she said.

Former sarpanch, Thanahala Shakoor Ahmed, thanked the 33 battalion CRPF for organising the camp and providing assistance to the locals. "The CRPF is also informing us about government schemes meant to uplift the poor," he said.

A resident, Aijaz Hussain Hamdan, also appreciated the work of the CRPF and said his sick mother was treated by the lady doctors, providing lot of relief to the family. "The (government) medical centre is very far from here, so this camp is of great help to poor people like us in this far flung area," he said.

ELECTION MATERIAL SHOP



A vendor sells party symbols and other election material ahead of Lok Sabha elections, in Bengaluru, Monday.

Table with 6 columns: S.No, Name of the party, Date of purchase, Amount, Name of the vendor, and Remarks. It lists various political parties and their election material purchases.

'NEP breaks language barriers, boosts local dialects'

New Delhi, Mar 18:

From ancient times, India has been renowned for its cultural diversity. Across its regions, various languages have flourished both in speech and script, epitomizing the nation's rich linguistic fabric. This multilingual essence stands as India's defining characteristic, fostering a reservoir of languages and dialects essential for intercommunication.

Despite profound linguistic diversity, it serves as a unifying force, binding the nation together. Moreover, this multilingual facet significantly aids in the dissemination of knowledge throughout the country. The recently implemented National

Education Policy-2020 underscores the pivotal role of India's multilingual nature in its socio-cultural, economic and educational progress. Emphasizing the utilization of this linguistic diversity for national development, the policy pitches for the promotion of multilingualism at all educational levels.

This entails ensuring ample opportunities for students to learn in their native languages along with the availability of educational materials in all Indian languages. Such measures not only enrich the multilingual



Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan visits Maa Kamakhya Temple, in Guwahati, Assam.

Union Ministry of Education has undertaken a significant initiative aimed at furnishing teaching materials to students in their mother tongues, affording them the opportunity to commence their educational journey in their respective native languages.

To facilitate this, 52 primers have been crafted in local languages, ensuring that children can seamlessly transition into formal education while building upon their foundational linguistic skills. These primers, presented in the form of textbooks and reading materials, not only aim to cultivate language proficiency, but also to nurture creativity and critical thinking among young learners.

SC refuses to entertain bail middleman Christian Michel James

New Delhi, Mar 18 (PTI):

The Supreme Court on Monday refused to entertain a fresh bail plea of Christian Michel James, an alleged middleman who is being probed by the CBI and the ED in the alleged Rs 3,600-cr AgustaWestland chopper scam cases relating to the purchase of 12 VVIP helicopters.

It was argued that James cannot be charged under any other offences apart from those mentioned in the extradition decree and he be granted the benefit of the doctrine of speciality. He was arrested in December 2018 after being extradited from Dubai.

Justice D Y Chandrachud and justices J B Pardiwala and Manoj Misra.

Dealing with the submission that James cannot be charged for other offences which were not part of the extradition decree, the bench said this has been dealt by it earlier also and it cannot go "ad nauseum" (repeating the

same thing until it becomes boring and annoying). The counsel for the extradited accused said he has been in jail for the last five years and this can be the maximum sentence that can be awarded to him in case of conviction.

Justice had sought bail

under section 436A of Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC) which says a person can be released on bail if he has completed half of the maximum sentence prescribed for the offence.

The accused had then challenged the Delhi High Court order dated March 11, 2022 by which his bail pleas were dismissed in both the CBI and ED cases.

Dismissing the bail pleas in both the CBI and ED cases in 2021, a trial court had said considering the overall facts and circumstances, the serious nature of the accusations, the gravity of the offence and the conduct of

the accused, it did not consider it a fit case for bail.

The CBI, in its charge sheet, has alleged an estimated loss of 398.21 million euros (about Rs 2,666 crore) to the exchequer due to the deal that was signed on February 8, 2010 for the supply of 12 VVIP helicopters worth 556.262 million euros (around Rs 3,600 crore).

The ED, in its charge sheet filed in June 2016, had alleged that James received 30 million euros (about Rs 225 crore) from AgustaWestland. He is among the three alleged middlemen being probed in the case. The other two are Guido Haschke and Carlo Gerosa.

'Wife's complaint against husband' must be scrutinised to determine truth'

New Delhi, Mar 18 (PTI):

The Delhi High Court has said that the courts must scrutinise a wife's complaint or FIR against her husband or his family to determine whether the allegations carry elements of truth or are merely an instance of "clever drafting".

The high court said though the court is not expected to conduct a mini-trial, it also cannot be a mere spectator and refuse to exercise the power of quashing a criminal case where it finds that continuing with the proceedings would defeat the ends of the justice and amount to insurmountable harassment, agony, and pain to the accused. This would be an abuse of the criminal process, it said.

Justice Navin Chawla said where the wife is set to implicate the entire family of the husband in a criminal case, it is to be expected that she would get a complaint properly drafted through her lawyer making specific allegations against each one of them. The high court said it would defeat the ends of justice if only on the basis of such averment, the family members of the husband were to face the agony of trial.

"In my opinion, therefore, the court must scrutinise the complaint/FIR to determine whether the allegations are a case of clever drafting or have at least some element of truth in the same" Justice Chawla said.

Public notices including 'NAME CHANGE' for SHAHA JANAN and 'PUBLIC NOTICE' regarding property sale and mortgage.

Aadhar Housing Finance Ltd. advertisement for property sale under provisions of SARFAESI Act, 2002 through private treaty. Includes details of the secured asset and contact information.

Sahu assures farmers of finding amicable solution

Over non-payment of difference amount of MSP to farmers taking crop on other's land

Fingeshwar, Mar 18:

Farmers of many villages have taken up Khariff crop on the agriculture land belonging to the temple trust, schools, and other institutions for last many years by taking it on seasonal lease and as per the rules they have sold the crop on MSP. But the same farmers are not being paid the difference amount of MSP of their time i.e. Rs 917 per quintal by the BJP government as promised.

On asking the Co-operative banks it was informed that as per instructions from the state government, such farmers who



are taking the crop from land of temple trust, schools and others are not to be paid the difference amount of MSP. This particular rule has led to lot of resentment among hundreds of farmers of the region and they are ready to hold massive protest against the anti-farmer policy of the BJP government.

In this regard, when the farmers of the region met

MLA Rajim Rohit Sahu and urged him to get the sanction of difference amount of MSP from the state government. Sahu gave a patient hearing to the grievance of the farmers and said that though the land belongs to the trust or institutions, but it the farmers who have spent their money for taking up crop and therefore they should get the amount of hard work put

in by the farmers through their source of income. Sahu assured the farmers that he would meet the CM and agriculture Minister in this regard. Sahu understood the pain of farmers and met CM along with their delegation and apprised the CM about their problem being faced by the farmers. Sahu said that CM has heard the grievances of the farmers and assured get the rules investigated and later holding talks with the agriculture Minister and officers he would take decision in favour of the farmers soon. The farmers expressed happiness towards MLA Rohit Sahu for taking up their problem before CM Sai and tried to find out amicable solution to it and hoped that they too would get the benefit of Krishi Unnati Yojana.

Revenue deptt officers, employees obtains stay

Mungeli, Mar 18: The three month old BJP government in the state has issued a long list of transfers of officers and employees from different government departments just before the Lok Sabha (LS) polls. On the other hand, the officials from the Revenue department have brought a stay from the Court and they seems to have challenged this particular decision of the state government. The transfer orders of officers and employees in large number just before the LS polls has created unrest among them and the tehsildar, Asst. Land-Superintendent and Nayab Tehsildar of Revenue department by bringing stay from the Court have got their old posting intact. It is notable here that in view of the LS polls, the BJP government in the state has issued transfer orders of many officers and employees and there are all sorts of speculations about the same and it has become centre of discussions among the group at the chowk & chourahas.

People informed about five guarantees of Cong

In district-level press conference by DCC District President

Fingeshwar, Mar 18:

Congress holding district-level press conference gave information about different Guarantees of Congress for the Lok Sabha (LS) polls 2024 including Kissan Nyay Guarantee; 'Nari Nyay Guarantee', & 'Yuwa Nyay Guarantee' and made an appeal to all the voters to ensure victory to Congress candidate from Mahasamund LS seat Tamradhwaj Sahu.

DCC district president Bhavsingh Thakur addressing a press conference informed that the Congress after the youths, have taken five guarantees in favour of women and farmers. Giving information about guarantee to women, Bhavsingh informed that the Congress



party give guarantee of Rs 1.0 lakh i.e Rs 8333 per month by implementing Mahalaxmi Yojana to women and this amount is 8 times more than Rs 1000 being paid by BJP. Similarly in the employment, half the jobs will be kept reserved for women. Apart from this the Asha workers, Anganbadi and Mid-day meal workers to get double the central assistance; Legal assistant in Panchayats and women's hostel will be constructed in all the district headquarters.

Sahu also gave information in detailed about

'Kissan Nyay Yojana' and 'Yuwa Nyay Yojana'. He said that there is lot of enthusiasm among Congress workers for LS polls and with fielding of former HM Tamradhwaj Sahu as LS candidate from Mahasamund Lok Sabha seat, we would all ensure his victory with huge majority.

On this occasion Anil Chandrakar, Karim Khan, Natthu Kashyap, Gaidinal Yadav, Dongar Markam, Atul Shrivastava, Chandramani Chandrakar and other Congress workers were present.

Youth offer prayers at Jaikhambh and presented 'palo'

At Livelihood College in Gram Jamkhor

Mungeli, Mar 18:

The youths from Yuwa Samiti Jamkor and social workers performed prayers and offered 'palo', on the premises of Livelihood College in Gram Jamkor one of the rituals before Jaikhambh, which is the symbol of truth for entire Satnami Samaj and symbol that of faith, truth, peace to the mankind i.e. Baba Gurughasidas.

The recital of messages and preaching by Baba Guru Ghasidas was done by state spokesman Satnami Samaj Chhattisgarh IFSO Khuman Bhaskar. He asked to follow the messages and preaching of Baba Guru Ghasidas in day-to-day life.

On this occasion apart from Khuman Bhaskar, state work-



ing committee Treasurer Bhim Regiment Ch'garh Premchand Kurre, District working committee President Bhim Regiment Kuldeep Jangde; District V-P Chandrabhan Rai, Jamakor Yuwa amiti and social-worker Yuvraj Dhritlahare, Sagar Kumar, Manisih Patre, Shenwatson Patre, Lucky Sahu, Pintu Cherkar and others were present.

Residents fear water crisis as summer approaches

Concerns mount over insufficient drinking water supply

Mungeli, Mar 18:

With the arrival of scorching temperatures since the last week of February, residents of Mungeli are bracing themselves for another summer marked by water scarcity concerns. In certain areas of the city, the flow of tap water has noticeably diminished, foreshadowing potential challenges in accessing drinking water as the heat intensifies.

As temperatures rise, the looming specter of a water crisis looms larger, with fears that the municipal administration may once again grapple with fulfilling the city's water needs. The onset of summer heralds a period of heightened temperatures, expected to peak in the months of May and June, exacerbating existing water scarcity woes in many parts of the city.

Despite the city's reliance on approximately 84 power



pumps, three water tanks, and a handful of tankers to supply water, essential infrastructure upgrades promised under the tap water scheme remain incomplete. Plans to expand existing tanks and construct new ones have languished, leaving the city vulnerable to recurring water shortages.

Year after year, residents in the district's 22 wards endure the ordeal of inadequate drinking water supply during the summer months, prompting frustration and disillusionment with municipal authorities and elected representatives. Promises of relief have fallen short, with public demonstrations and protests becoming a recurring feature as residents demand lasting solutions to the perennial water crisis.

Regardless of political affiliation, successive administrations have struggled to address the city's water woes effectively, leaving residents to contend with the same predicament each summer. The failure to devise concrete plans to mitigate water scarcity has left the populace disillusioned, with promises of resolution proving hollow.

operational inefficiencies and mismanagement persist, resulting in wastage of water and unnecessary electricity expenditure.

In light of the municipality's inability to harness the benefits of new water augmentation schemes, concerns mount over the sustainability of current water supply practices. The municipality's dependence on outdated infrastructure and its failure to address operational challenges cast a shadow over efforts to ensure reliable access to drinking water for Mungeli's residents.

Keeping in mind the problem of drinking water during summer, necessary preparations have been made. Arrangements will be made to deal with the problem of drinking water. If needed, necessary materials will be purchased immediately.

Antubhav Singh, Chief Municipal Officer, Mungeli

Concerns mount as newly constructed road deteriorates

Masturi, Mar 18:

Despite significant investments and efforts, the condition of a recently constructed road, built at a cost of Rs 4 crore 26 lakh under the Pradhan Mantri Gramin Sadak Yojana, has rapidly deteriorated, sparking concerns among local communities.

Just 5 kilometers from the township, a toll Plaza on the National Highway has inadvertently led to a troubling trend. Heavy vehicles, aiming to bypass toll tax, opt for over-loaded routes through Masturi's normal roads, exposing them to potential accidents. This perilous practice has not only compromised road safety but has also exacerbated the strain on infrastructure.

The toll point's presence has inadvertently diverted heavy vehicle traffic onto smaller, rural roads, notably impacting the recently constructed stretch from Tikari to Chauha,



Dodki, and Risda. Initially hailed as a testament to progress, this road got completed within a span of 2 years, now languishes under the weight of overloaded vehicles ferrying ash from the Wardha plant in Janjgir district. The reckless passage of overloaded carts has taken a toll on the road's integrity, provoking ire among nearby villagers and public representatives. Despite the road's completion in 2022, its rapid deterioration underscores the urgent need for remedial action and strategic planning to ensure safe and sustainable transportation routes for the region's populace.

Postal department empowers Health Directorate employees

Pithora, Mar 18:

In a collaborative effort aimed at fostering financial literacy and inclusion, the Indian Postal Department, Raipur Division, organized a two-day Postal Life Insurance Awareness Camp at the premises of the Health Directorate in Naya Raipur.

Under the guidance of Senior Superintendent of Post Office Raipur, the camp facilitated discussions and provided comprehensive information about various small savings schemes offered by the postal department, including Postal Life Insurance, to employees of the health department.



Over the course of two days, the camp witnessed an enthusiastic response, with more than 150 officers and employees engaging with representatives from the Postal Department to explore and inquire about the avail-

able schemes. Attendees were also provided with forms for opening insurance accounts and various savings schemes, such as MIS and senior citizen accounts.

Acknowledging the importance of financial secu-

urity and accessibility, Director of Health Services and Deputy Director Dr. Mahendra Singh extended valuable support in organizing the camp, emphasizing the significance of such initiatives in promoting financial awareness and empowerment among employees.

Representatives from the Postal Department, including KK Sharma, Development Officer Raipur Division, Regional Officer SN Pradhan, and Postal Life Insurance Agent Shailesh Kumar, actively participated in the camp, facilitating discussions and addressing queries from attendees.

Dr. Daharia engages in community engagements

Warm welcomes and participation in community events

Lavan, Janjgir-Champa, Mar 18:

In a flurry of community engagements, Congress candidate for the Lok Sabha constituency, Dr. Shivkumar Daharia, embarked on an intensive tour on March 15, receiving warm welcomes and participating in various events across the region.

Dr. Daharia commenced his tour with a grand welcome at his residence in Palari, setting the tone for a day filled with interactions and festivities. The first stop on his itinerary was village Vatgan, where members of the Satnami community organized a bhandara for devotees en route to Girodhpuri



Dham, the revered birthplace of Baba Guru Ghasidas. Amidst the vibrant atmosphere, Dr. Daharia actively participated in the bhandara program, engaging with members of the community under the guidance of Sukhmandan Baghel.

Continuing his journey, Dr. Daharia joined the Satnam Bhandara, extending his greetings to the gathered attendees, including those from the Satnami community and beyond. In village

Kailashgarh, Kalash Maheshwari and other community members extended a warm welcome to Dr. Daharia, highlighting the spirit of inclusivity and camaraderie that characterized the event.

The momentum of Dr. Daharia's tour persisted as he participated in the Dashgatra program near Baba Guru Ghasidas Satnam Bhawan in Lavan, Kasdol Assembly, where he received an enthusiastic reception from locals. Along the route, a group of

women near Marda Road greeted Dr. Daharia, showcasing the broad support he enjoys across various demographics.

In Kasdol, Dr. Daharia continued to engage with constituents, attending a Satnam Bhandara alongside Vinod Chelak, where devotees warmly received him. Subsequently, he proceeded to Pangarh, where he participated in the assembly-level Congress conference of Akaltara, reaffirming his commitment to grassroots engagement and community-driven initiatives.

Dr. Daharia's extensive tour not only underscored his dedication to connecting with constituents but also highlighted the vibrant tapestry of community life within the constituency.

All promises of Modi-ki-Guarantee will be fulfilled: Dewangan

Minister in-charge accorded huge welcome

Mungeli, Mar 18:

The members of Dewangan Samaj accorded warm welcome to Minister for Commerce & Labour and Industries and in-charge of the District Lakhnanil Dewangan last on March 15. During this the members of Samaj under leadership of District President Anand Dewangan accorded huge welcome at city's Mata Parmeshwari Chowk amidst drum beats and bursting of fire crackers. On this occasion MLA Mungeli Punnulal Mohale, corporator Vivekanand ward Gyatri Anand



Dewangan, state working committee member Amarnath Dewangan, Ajay Vishnu, Durgesh Jagdish, Sudama, Anil, Jalesh, and media in-charge of the Samaj Komal Dewangan were present. Minister in-charge

Dewangan expressed gratitude towards all the members of the Samaj and said that there is 100% guarantee on completion of promises made under 'Modi-ki-Guarantee'. It is just 3 months of formation of the government in the state and sanction has

been granted for construction of 18 lakh houses under PMAY; payment of Rs 1000 to women and girl under Mahatari Vandan Yojana i.e. Rs 12000 per year; purchase of paddy on MSP of Rs 3100 per quintal from farmers and payment of bonus amount to farmers in one go. During this he said that the Dewangan Samaj is moving ahead in the field of health, education and politics and other fields and it is bringing laurels to the state and country. People from Dewangan samaj work hard and earns livelihood. Minister in-Charge said that Tokhan Sahu has got the LS ticket from Bilaspur Lok Sabha seat and urged all present to ensure his victory in the forthcoming

LS polls. He said that being the Minister in-charge he would now be visiting quite often and spoke about carrying out development in the district by forming a well chalked out plan. During this MLA Punnulal Mohale also greeted people from Dewangan Samaj and expressed gratitude towards them. District President Anand Dewangan informed that it was with tiring efforts of corporator Gyatri Anand Dewangan from Vivekanand ward, an amount of Rs 48.32 lakh has been sanctioned for beautification of crematorium and for which he expressed gratitude towards all from Dewangan Samaj.

Swami Atmanand school students inspires voter awareness drive

Innovative music album garners public engagement

Rajim, Mar 18:

In a commendable initiative under the SVEEP program, Government Ram Vishal Pandey Excellent English Medium School (Swami Atmanand) Rajim has embarked on a dedicated voter awareness campaign, spearheaded by SDM and Sub-Divisional Election Officer Fingeshwar Dhananjay Netam, under the directives of Collector and District Election Officer Gariaband Deepak Agarwal IAS.

With a fervent commitment to achieving 100% voter turnout, school principal Sanjay Ekka, along with teachers and students, is leading a



strategic "Voter Awareness Campaign" aimed at instilling civic responsibility and promoting electoral participation among citizens.

As part of this campaign, a vibrant rally was organized through the city streets, echoing with slogans urging citizens to exercise their voting rights. Guided by Principal Sanjay Ekka, the rally was led by the school's sports officer Shikha Mahadik and teacher Anju Markandey, with enthusiastic participation from teachers

M.L. Sen, Madhu Gupta, R.K. Yadav, and Electricity School Principal Puralal Sahu.

Innovatively, the school has also released a music album titled "Mera Vote Mera Adhikar" composed by Principal Sanjay Ekka, garnering significant public engagement. The spirited performances by school children, accompanied by catchy tunes, convey a powerful message urging citizens to fulfill their civic duty by casting their votes.

Putin declared winner of a presidential race

Moscow, Mar 18 (AP)


Russian President Vladimir Putin speaks on a visit to his campaign headquarters after a presidential election in Moscow, Monday.

President Vladimir Putin basked in an election victory that was never in doubt, as officials said Monday that he had won his fifth term with a record number of votes, underlining the Russian leader's total control of the country's political system.

After facing only token challengers and harshly suppressing opposition voices, Putin was set to extend his nearly quarter-century rule for six more years. Even with little margin for protest, Russians crowded outside polling stations at noon on Sunday, the last day of the election, apparently heeding an opposition call to express their displeasure with the president.

Putin has led Russia as president or prime minister since December 1999, a tenure marked by international military aggression and an increasing intolerance for dissent.

Early Monday, Putin hailed overwhelming preliminary results as an in-

dications of "trust" and "hope" in him while critics saw them as another reflection of the preordained nature of the election.

"Of course, we have lots of tasks ahead. But I want to make it clear for everyone: When we were consolidated, no one has ever managed to frighten us, to suppress our will and our self-consciousness. They failed in the past and they will fail in the future," Putin said at a meeting with volunteers after polls closed.

Any public criticism of Putin or his war in Ukraine has been stifled. Independent media have been crippled. His fiercest political foe, Alexei Navalny, died in an Arctic prison last month, and other critics are either in jail or in exile.

Beyond the fact that voters had virtually no choice, independent monitoring of the election was extremely limited.

Russia's Central Election Commission said Monday that with nearly 100% of all precincts

counted, Putin got 87.29% of the vote. Central Election Commission chief Ella Pamfilova said that nearly 76 million voters cast their ballots for Putin, his highest vote tally ever.

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un and the presidents of Honduras, Nicaragua and Venezuela quickly congratulated Putin on his victory, as did the leaders of the ex-Soviet Central Asian nations of Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, while the West dismissed the vote as a sham.

British Foreign Secretary David Cameron wrote on X, formerly known as Twitter: "This is not what free and fair elections look like."

In the tightly controlled environment, Navalny's associates urged those unhappy with Putin or the war to go to the polls at noon on Sunday and lines outside a number of polling stations both inside Russia and at its embassies around the world appeared to swell at that time.

BALLOON BASKET


A police officer walks past a trailer with a hot-air balloon basket on it after the discovery of a man's body at Yarra Bend Park in Melbourne, Monday.

Eight terrorists 'sent to hell': Pak Army

Islamabad, Mar 18 (PTI)

The Pakistan Army on Monday said eight militants, including a wanted terrorist commander, were "sent to hell" by the forces in an operation in a tribal district in the restive Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. The statement came hours after Afghan authorities claimed that Pakistan carried out airstrikes inside its territory and killed eight persons.

The Army said in a statement that on the night of March 17-18, the security forces conducted an intelligence-based operation in North Waziristan District on the reported presence of terrorists.

"During the conduct of the operation, after intense fire exchange, eight terrorists including HVT (high-value target) Terrorist commander Sehra @Janan were sent

to hell," it said. "He was involved in orchestrating the terrorist attack on Security Forces' Post in Mir Ali on March 16 and was highly wanted by the law enforcement agencies."

It said that sanitisation operations are being conducted to eliminate any other terrorists found in the area as the security forces remain determined to wipe out the menace of terrorism from the country.

The statement came as Zabihullah Mujahid, the spokesperson of the government, alleged in a statement that Pakistani aircraft carried out the airstrikes on Afghan soil, adding that the Afghanistan provinces of Paktika and Khost along the Pakistan border were hit by airstrikes, which killed eight persons.

Alleging that "houses of common people were targeted", he said three

women and as many children were killed in Paktika, and a house collapsed while two women were killed in Khost, where a house was destroyed as well.

The strikes came a day after Pakistan buried two officers and five soldiers who were killed in a terrorist attack in the Mir Ali area of North Waziristan on Saturday.

Pakistani Taliban leader Hafiz Gul Bahadur's group claimed responsibility for the attack. It is one of the strongest militant groups in North Waziristan. Earlier, he fled to Afghanistan following Operation Zarb-e-Azb in 2014.

President Asif Ali Zardari said after offering funeral prayers of the two officers that action would be taken against those attacking Pakistani forces.

3 people killed after SUV slams into bus shelter

San Francisco, Mar 18 (AP)

Three people were killed and an infant was hospitalized in critical condition after an SUV crashed into a bus shelter in San Francisco, authorities said Sunday.

Two victims, including a child, died at the scene of the crash Saturday afternoon in the city's West Portal neighborhood, police said. Three others were taken to hospitals.

The third victim, a woman, later died at a hospital, police said.

The infant was being treated for life-threatening injuries, police said. The driver of the white Mercedes SUV was among those hospitalized, according to

the San Francisco Chronicle.

The San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency said Saturday it was investigating the cause of the crash in collaboration with the San Francisco Police Department.

San Francisco Mayor London Breed said on X, formerly Twitter, that she had visited the scene of the collision on Saturday. She called the incident "heart-breaking."

Residents left flowers at a growing memorial where the crash occurred, the Chronicle reported. The advocacy group Walk San Francisco planned a vigil Monday evening at the site.

Nepal's former speaker arrested for alleged involvement in gold smuggling case

Kathmandu, Mar 18 (PTI)

Former Speaker of Nepal's House of Representatives and a senior member of the ruling party Krishna Bahadur Mahara has been arrested and brought to Kathmandu for investigation into his alleged involvement in a major gold smuggling case, a media report said on Monday.

Mahara, vice-president of Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal Prachanda's ruling Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist Centre), was arrested from Pakadi of Kapilvastu district earlier in the day and brought to the capital from the Bhairahawa airport, The Kathmandu Post newspaper reported.

Upon arrival in the capital, the 65-year-old was swiftly taken to the

Central Investigation Bureau of the Nepal Police in Lazimpat, The Himalayan Times newspaper reported.

CIB spokesperson Hobindra Bogati said a case against the former speaker will be prepared and forwarded to the Attorney General's Office. Mahara will be produced in the court to extend his remand, he added.

Nepal's Deputy Prime Minister and Home Minister Rabi Lamichhane on Sunday had ordered police to implement a report of the inquiry commission on large-scale gold smuggling that pointed to Mahara's "involvement" in the case, the report said.

The commission, headed by a former High Court chief judge that submitted its report on Thursday, ac-

cused the CIB of making deliberate efforts not to investigate Mahara and former Nepal Police chief and Communist Part of Nepal (UML) leader Sarbendra Khanal in the gold scam.

After receiving the report, Home Minister Lamichhane submitted it to Prime Minister Prachanda following which the Cabinet on Friday decided to implement the recommendations of the inquiry commission.

The commission submitted its report after studying the lapses in police investigation into the smuggling of 60 kg of gold, which was hidden inside motorcycle brake shoes last year, and 9 kg of gold concealed inside e-cigarettes in December 2022, the report said.

Ballot boxes for Maldives' elections to be placed in India, Sri Lanka & Malaysia

Male, Mar 17 (PTI)

The ballot boxes for Maldives' upcoming parliamentary elections will be placed in India, Sri Lanka and Malaysia, after around 11,000 Maldivians submitted re-registration requests to relocate their polling stations, the country's election commission announced on Sunday.

The six-day window for people to relocate their

voting stations for the April 21 parliamentary elections expired on Saturday, media reports said, citing an Elections Commission notification.

The top electoral body said that ballot boxes for the island nation's elections will also be placed in Trivandrum (Thiruvananthapuram), the capital of Kerala, Sri Lanka's Colombo and Malaysia's Kuala Lumpur

after at least 150 people re-register to vote in each of the three countries.

"As previously, enough people registered in Sri Lanka and Malaysia. And since 150 people had registered in Trivandrum, India, we have decided to set up a ballot box there,"

web portal adadhu.com quoted EC's secretary-general Hassan Zakariyya as saying. The top polls body received 11,169 application

forms requesting re-registration at different voting stations during this period. It rejected 1,141 forms, taking the total re-registrations to 10,028, the edition.mv news portal reported. Pointing out that the number of people who re-registered this year is low compared to past elections, Zakariyya said that voting will not be held in the UK, UAE and Thailand.

Former ISI chief Lt. Gen Faiz Hamid's brother arrested on corruption charges

Lahore, Mar 18 (PTI)

Former ISI chief Lt. Gen Faiz Hamid's brother has been arrested on charges of corruption in Pakistan's Punjab province, anti-graft authorities said on Monday, as the new government appears to take revenge against those who targeted the Sharif family under Imran Khan's regime.

"Revenue officer Najaf Hamid, brother of former ISI head Faiz Hamid, was arrested on Monday in Chakwal (about 350 kilo-

metres from Lahore) on the charges of corruption and misuse of authority," an Anti-Corruption Establishment (ACE) spokesperson said.

He said the suspect would be presented before a magistrate for his physical remand. Chakwal is the hometown of Hamid.

Najaf's arrest has come against the backdrop of the ruling Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz's (PML-N) crackdown against those responsible for the ouster of Nawaz Sharif from power in 2017.

Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz was more categorical in her demand to bring former army chief Gen (Retd.) Qamar Javed Bajwa, Faiz Hamid and former chief justice of Pakistan Saqib Nisar to justice "for their crime to institute fake cases against the Sharif family and sending them to jail".

"Action against Faiz Hamid's brother shows that the PML-N government is in no mood to spare those instrumental in the ouster of Nawaz Sharif. Maryam Nawaz

and her father have more anger against Faiz Hamid than others as being the ISI chief, he had grinded the Sharifs. Now it is payback time," an official of the Punjab government told PTI.

He said in the coming days, the government will further tighten the noose against jailed former prime minister Imran Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf leaders and the elements in the establishment that had backed the cricketer-turned-politician.

Nepal's tourism capital

Pokhara to remain open round the clock

Kathmandu, Mar 17 (PTI)

Nepal's government on Sunday declared Pokhara, a picturesque city in the Gandaki province as the tourism capital of the Himalayan nation.

The formal declaration was made during a special ceremony organised at the Barahi Ghat, located on the shores of picturesque Phewa Lake.

Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal Prachanda presided over the special programme which fea-

tured musical performances by veteran and popular singers. Despite being recognised as a tourism hub for quite some time now, Pokhara was designated as the tourism capital only after fulfilling all essential criteria.

According to Pokhara Mayor Dhanaraj Acharya, declaring Pokhara as the tourism capital will help establish it as a recognisable 'brand' on the international stage. Meanwhile, it was also announced that business activities

including discos, nightclubs, and live music venues in Pokhara will remain open all night with effect from Sunday.

Chief Minister of Gandaki Province, Surendra Raj Pandey said that bars, restaurants, spas, grocery stores, and snack shops in areas like Lakeside, Prithvi Chowk, Mahendrapul, and Chipledhunga in Pokhara will operate without interruption until 1 a.m., following certain standards to be implemented from Sunday night.

6 killed in roof collapse

Peshawar, Mar 18 (PTI)

At least six persons of a family, including two children, were killed after the roof of their room collapsed in northwest Pakistan on Monday, officials said. The tragic incident occurred in the Raghzai area in the South Waziristan tribal district of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. At least 10 persons were injured in the incident, and they have been shifted to the district headquarters hospital, police said, adding that the condition of those injured is stated to be critical. Chief Minister of the province, Ali Amin Gandapur, has expressed grief and sorrow over the death of six persons in a house collapse incident in Waziristan.

UK PM Rishi Sunak attempts optimistic reset

● 'Economy is turning a corner'

London, Mar 18 (PTI)

British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak on Monday attempted an optimistic reset amid reports of growing unrest within his own Conservative Party ranks as he unveiled a new package of reforms for small businesses and insisted the UK "economy is turning a corner". The British Indian leader referenced his family-run pharmacy in the southern England port city of Southampton, where he was born and helped out as a schoolboy, as an example of his first-hand small business experience. In an indirect message for the rebels, he

stressed that it was important to stick with the plan for the economy that was working after a tough couple of years.

"There is now a real sense that the economy is turning a corner with all the economic indicators pointing in the right direction," Sunak said during a Business Connect event in Warwickshire, in the Midlands region of England. "This year, 2024, will be the year Britain bounces back inflation has more than halved and is falling fast, growth is higher than anyone expected, debt is on track to fall; we are not there yet but we are absolutely moving in the right direction. So, let's stick to the plan and build a better, brighter future together," he said. Under the

new package of measures, the UK government will fully fund apprenticeships in small businesses from April 1 by paying the full cost of training for anyone up to the age of 21 reducing costs for businesses and delivering more opportunities for young people to kick start careers. The move is underpinned by an additional GBP 60 million of new government funding for next year to support apprenticeships and also cut red tape. "Growing up in my mum's pharmacy, I know first-hand how important small businesses are. Not just for the economy, but as a driver for innovation and aspiration, and as the key to building a society where hard work is always recognised and rewarded," said Sunak.

SOUTH EAST CENTRAL RAILWAY TENDER NOTICE

(1) Tender Notice No. E-R-T-11-24-25
Date: 14.03.2024

Name of Work : Augmentation of Running Rooms at RSD & Durg under the jurisdiction of Sr. DEN//Raipur. Tender Value: ₹ 1,20,05,303/-, EMD: ₹ 2,10,000/-

(2) Tender Notice No. E-R-T-12-24-25
Date: 14.03.2024

Name of Work : Improvement of Goods Shed of Doodhapara (DPH). Tender Value: ₹ 5,35,26,826/-, EMD: ₹ 4,17,600/-

(3) Tender Notice No. E-R-T-13-24-25
Date: 14.03.2024

Name of Work : Reconditioning of worn out points and crossings, SEJ and tongue rails under the jurisdiction of Sr. DEN//Raipur. Tender Value: ₹ 13,18,846/-, EMD: ₹ 26,400/-

Submission of Tender: upto 11.00 Hrs. on 10.04.2024, Opening of Tender: 11.00 Hrs. on 10.04.2024.

For further details/purchase of tender document, eligibility criteria & the complete details for the above work, please contact office of the Sr. DEN(Co.)/Raipur or refer/download tender document which is available on our website www.reps.gov.in.

Sr. Div. Engineer-I
PR/REngg/JAN/275 S.E.C.R., Raipur

South East Central Railway @seccrail

Putin's Power and Global Security

Vladimir Putin's landslide victory in Russia's election has not only solidified his hold on power but has also reverberated beyond the nation's borders, sparking concerns among global leaders. With a record post-Soviet landslide, Putin captured 87.8% of the vote, sending a clear signal that Russia's leadership remains unchallenged. However, beneath the surface lies a deeper narrative that speaks to the precarious state of global security. Putin's triumph, accompanied by his stark warnings of a potential conflict with the US-led NATO alliance escalating into World War III, underscores the pressing need for concerted international action to safeguard democracy, peace, and stability. His victory speech, centered on bolstering defense capacities and securing borders amidst ongoing tensions in Ukraine, highlights the gravity of the situation. Such rhetoric, coupled with Putin's dismissal of Western criticism and his disparagement of US democracy, reveals a leader intent on projecting strength while disregarding democratic norms and values. Moreover, his response to allegations surrounding the death of opposition leader Alexei Navalny underscores the erosion of political dissent and the rule of law within Russia. The ongoing crisis in Ukraine serves as a stark reminder of the dangers posed by Putin's assertive foreign policy and expansionist ambitions. The invasion of Ukraine in 2022, followed by Putin's recent comments about establishing a "sanitary zone" in Ukrainian territories, underscores the grave threat posed by Russia's militarization of the region. The international community must stand united in condemning Russia's actions and upholding Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity. Putin's warning about the potential for a direct conflict with NATO reflects the escalating tensions between Russia and the West. While diplomacy remains crucial for resolving disputes and preventing armed conflict, Putin's combative rhetoric and disregard for international norms undermine efforts to achieve peace and stability. The looming specter of a third world war underscores the urgent need for decisive action to de-escalate tensions and prevent further aggression. In response, the United States and its allies must present a united front, reaffirming their commitment to collective security and the defense of democratic principles. Diplomatic engagement with Russia should be accompanied by clear messaging on the consequences of further aggression and violations of international law. Sanctions and other punitive measures should be imposed on Russia to hold Putin's regime accountable and deter future aggression. Simultaneously, efforts to support democratic movements and civil society within Russia must be intensified. The international community must stand in solidarity with the Russian people in their pursuit of freedom, democracy, and human rights. Putin's attempts to suppress dissent and stifle opposition must be met with unwavering resistance and condemnation. Putin's consolidation of power and aggressive stance towards the West pose a grave threat to global peace and security. The international community must confront Putin's authoritarian regime with resolve, standing up for democracy, human rights, and the rule of law. Only through collective action can we hope to counter the threat posed by Putin's power play and uphold the values that underpin a free and democratic world order.

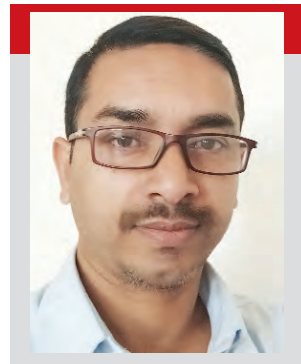
US Criticism of CAA**It is internal matter: India**

The Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) has once again sparked a flurry of debate, this time with the United States weighing in on its implementation. The Biden administration's expressed concerns over the CAA's notification drew swift reactions from India, emphasizing the nation's sovereign right to determine its internal affairs. However, amidst the exchange of diplomatic statements, a deeper examination is warranted to understand the nuances of this discourse. While the CAA remains an internal matter for India, international scrutiny reflects a broader concern for human rights and democratic values. The US, along with other Western nations, has a vested interest in upholding these principles globally. Hence, their engagement with India on issues like religious freedom and equal treatment of communities is not unexpected. However, the manner and timing of such interventions can often be contentious, especially when they coincide with significant domestic events like elections. The CAA's notification ahead of the General Election raises questions about political motivations. While it underscores the Bharatiya Janata Party's (BJP) stance on polarization, it also reignites debates surrounding the National Register of Citizens (NRC). The potential nationwide implementation of the NRC, coupled with the CAA, raises concerns about exclusionary practices and their impact on vulnerable communities, as witnessed in Assam. It is essential to recognize that the CAA's implications extend beyond legal provisions. They intersect with broader societal narratives, shaping perceptions of citizenship, belonging, and identity. Therefore, critiques of the CAA cannot be divorced from discussions on inclusive governance and social cohesion. India's democratic fabric hinges on its ability to navigate these complexities while upholding constitutional values. Moreover, the Supreme Court's upcoming hearing on petitions against the CAA adds another layer of significance to this discourse. As the guardian of the Constitution, the Court's deliberations will influence the trajectory of India's citizenship laws and their compatibility with constitutional principles. It is a moment for judicial scrutiny to ensure that legal frameworks align with India's pluralistic ethos and commitments to equality before the law. In navigating the complexities surrounding the CAA, India and its Western allies must engage in constructive dialogue that acknowledges differing perspectives while upholding shared values. This entails recognizing India's sovereignty while also holding it accountable to international human rights standards. Such engagements should prioritize mutual respect and understanding, fostering partnerships based on principles of reciprocity and cooperation. Ultimately, the CAA debate underscores the delicate balance between domestic sovereignty and international scrutiny. As India grapples with internal challenges and external perceptions, it must demonstrate a commitment to inclusive governance and democratic principles. Likewise, international actors must approach their engagement with India with sensitivity and respect for its democratic processes and constitutional framework. The CAA saga offers an opportunity for introspection and dialogue, both domestically and internationally. By engaging in nuanced discussions and upholding democratic values, India can navigate this contentious issue while reinforcing its standing as the world's largest democracy. Similarly, international partners can contribute constructively by fostering dialogue and cooperation grounded in mutual respect and shared aspirations for a more just and inclusive world.

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.editor@centralchronicle@gmail.com.

HIGH ALTITUDE VIGILANCE

Northern Army commander Lt Gen MV Suchindra Kumar during a visit to review operational preparedness of formations deployed in the Super High Altitude Area of Ladakh.

Why Politicians Fail To Become Leaders Par Excellence**M.R.LALU**

A flash drought! With the national elections vigorously knocking our doors, this may be the term that would accurately narrate the political situation that the Congress is pressed to pass through. Many leaders in the party found it convenient to abandon the party that once remained their runway of political fortunes. There is of course a flaw in its plans. Almost, ever since its political dominance got replaced by the tactics of Narendra Modi, the party keeps trailing consistently irrespective of its plans to give it an overhaul. Consecrating Mallikarjun Kharge at the helm of the party was an indication, probably a calculated move taken to give Rahul Gandhi protective chest armor from being directly brought to focus as the party kept trailing repeatedly and help him stay safe from being held accountable. Behind this, alteration, there must have been a second factor, a sheer realization that keeps giving it a rheumatic sensation, the reality of the Modi dominance and its power of shattering the hopes of the Congress recovery and the season of elections breaking floodgates of defections in the grand old party significantly weakening it. My subject of amusement came with two defections from the Congress to the BJP in the state of Kerala. The first one was Anil Antony, son of Congress veteran and former Chief Minister of Kerala, A.K. Antony. And the second came a few days ago with former Chief Minister of Kerala, K.Karunakaran's daughter Padmaja Venugopal choosing to shift to the BJP camp. These desertions are apparent enough to prove the paradoxes that the

party failed to fix. The question is why many leaders from across the country are leaving the party. The cases mentioned above have a queer element. The BJP, as of now, has a feeble existence in terms of electoral victories or winnability in Kerala. But still leaders from strong political backgrounds decide to vacate the Congress. Why does the Congress leadership fail to address this challenge? The situation is serious and the solution is nowhere to be seen on the horizon. Not even the thinnest glow of positivity is visible.

On the other side, the BJP under Prime Minister Modi is all set to cross its magic tally of 400. He made it clear that his side of the alliance is going to fight the battle against the 'parivar vadis', the group he alleges to have been in politics only to help their families to prospect and flourish. Undoubtedly, everybody, including the regional satraps has forcefully been working on the arithmetic that would at least save them from suffering an ultimate collapse. Trying to convert their lost existence to the stage of a visible revival is the principle that they are struggling to create their momentum for. There is a conscientious attempt to stay significant. Starting from the biggest family dynasty of the Congress, the Gandhis to the Thackerays of the Shivsena, the last ounce of their energy is squeezed to trickle for this single purpose. If the results of 2024 bring a fresh devastation, especially to the Congress for the third consecutive time, the family would face its severest revolt. Its ardent loyalists of today will desperately make attempts to seek asylum on the saffron

tree irrespective of their harshest stand on the Hindutva soil on which the tree stands and expands its branches.

Narendra Modi seems to have taken the whole game on his head. He is the one who openly declares that the national challenge is a picturesque "Modi Vs All". Unlike 2014, the Prime Minister is full of confidence. Putting him on the front the leader in him is displaying not only confidence but also scripting the other side of the narrative. That if the party electorally collapses, he is willing to take the responsibility of its disintegration as well. This confidence cannot be brushed aside as a tainted aspiration of a politician. Not even the "India Shining Campaign" of the Vajpayee regime can be drawn as a parallel here which broke into smithereens when the results were out. Modi has dismantled all narratives that the opposition has been vehemently drafting against him. The key message of Modi's address to the party cadre during the BJP's National Council Meeting on February 18 clearly depicted his government's roadmap. He said the government was strictly futuristic and action oriented. And the factor that comes supportive and advantageous to his audacity is his clean government devoid of corruption, at least at the top. Above all, the popularity of the Prime Minister is not showing any diminishing trend.

With his shrewd thespian oratory Modi knows how to set the stage for the upcoming elections. The RJD patriarch's family taunt on Modi was timely for the Prime Minister as he grabbed the chance to mobilize a new narrative war against the opposition. As he once said, he prefers to be stoned by his opponents, so that he could effectively use them for building beautiful mansions. The same has happened this time as well. With him mobilizing the "Modi ki Parivar" campaign, his colleagues and party men began to popularize it instantly in social media with the slogan "Main hu Modi ka Parivaar (I am Modi's family)". National Elections 2019 also witnessed a similar situation. Rahul Gandhi's idiomatic "Chowkidar Chor He" was faced by millions of Modi supporters filling the social

media with "Main Bhi Chowkidar". The BJP used this Hindi slogan extensively mobilizing the countrymen to emotionally rally behind the Prime Minister.

The most influential part of his personality is his distinctive qualities as a leader. With his reach, acceptance and ability to practically accelerate the ambitions of the people of the country and with his exponentially visible policy decisions and initiatives, it seems the leaders in the opposition alongside their so called secular peers have convincingly though silently began to recognize his posturing as the guardian of India's growth. There appears a visible distinction between him and other politicians. There have been relentless efforts throughout his political career planned and executed in his journey from a politician to a leader. You can have all definitions in the world of politics for a politician but if you want to define a leader, you should definitely have in him those qualities that he has developed through his years of self-sacrifice and commitment. Modi probably fulfills these characteristic requirements of a leader that separate him from a galaxy of politicians giving him the warmth of a leader.

It is obvious that in democracy a meaningful opposition is a decisive factor. But the people who are supposed to contribute to turn their opposition congregation into a meaningful assembly need to grow beyond petty political gimmicks of a crowd. This is a defining growth that transforms a politician into a good leader. Indeed this is the weakest part of their side and the demeaning factor of politicking in India. When politicians fail to discover this transformation changing their perspectives adequately, Modi understands it fully and keeps manipulating his strategies drawing strength from their weaknesses. And the flash drought, the term I used in the beginning to describe the collapse of the principal opposition, is a result of this weakness, the weakness that keeps them mere politicians not leaders. To become a leader par excellence, a politician should grow beyond petty politics.

(Writer is a Freelance Journalist from Pathanamthitta, Kerala)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR**Campaign Rejuvenation**

To secure a third consecutive term, the BJP must bolster its grassroots campaign and expand outreach to every voter. While PM Narendra Modi's charisma holds sway, the party shouldn't rely solely on his leadership. The INDIA bloc shows signs of fragmentation, yet its constituents are gearing up for a formidable challenge. Data from SBI, shared by ECI, underscores the importance of this moment. The impact on the upcoming General Election remains uncertain, but it's evident that a proactive approach to engagement is crucial for the BJP's success.

Krishna Kumar, Kannur**Unity Imperative**

Recognizing the importance of addressing state-specific dynamics, a singular national campaign won't suffice for success. The BJP-led NDA aims for 400-plus Lok Sabha seats, requiring diverse strategies. It's crucial for all members of the INDIA bloc and other opposition parties to unite and fight collectively. India requires not only a robust government at the Centre but also a formidable opposition to ensure accountability.

Paneer Selvam, Chennai**Progress Path**

While the United Nations acknowledges India's strides in HDI, there's ample ground to cover. Lagging behind neighbors like Bhutan, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka, India must focus on improving life expectancy, education, and incomes. Bridging the rich-poor gap is imperative. Progress in reducing gender inequality, with a ranking of 108 on the Gender Inequality Index, is notable yet challenges persist. Investing more in social infrastructure is crucial as India navigates the arduous path ahead.

Visak Tyagarajan, New Delhi**Corruption Unmasked**

The electoral bond data exposes rampant corruption, with most donations seemingly tied to favors. Companies under probe agency scrutiny raise suspicions about their motivations for purchasing electoral bonds. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman's attempts to downplay concerns as 'huge assumptions' fail to address the apparent quid pro quo. Who will halt political leaders from exploiting big firms through purported donations?

Rakesh Gupta, Korba**Critical Inquiry**

Encouraging skepticism within families is crucial. Children often unquestioningly trust parental guidance, leading to susceptibility to religious leaders or charlatans later on. Many accept absurd claims, like the supposed benefits of cow urine, without question. Some even believe myths such as cows being the sole oxygen suppliers or India witnessing the sunrise first. Developing critical thinking skills is imperative. To avoid falling prey to myths and unscientific notions, individuals must cultivate independent thought.

Shiv kumar Mishra, Raipur**Ee Sala Cup Namde: RCB Women Fulfill the Promise****Manoj Kumar KP**

The resounding victory of the Royal Challengers Bangalore (RCB) women's team in the Women's Premier League (WPL) final against the Delhi Capitals wasn't just about lifting a trophy; it was about rewriting history and fulfilling a promise made to fans across the globe. For years, the RCB faithful had waited patiently, enduring heartbreaks and near misses, but on that fateful Sunday, their patience bore fruit as RCB's women's team etched their names in the annals of cricketing glory. The journey to this historic triumph was fraught with challenges and obstacles, but it was the resilience and determination of the players that ultimately led to their crowning moment. With each match, they defied odds, silenced skeptics, and showcased their mettle, laying the groundwork for what would be an unforgettable final showdown against the Delhi Capitals. From the outset, it was clear that this wasn't just another game for RCB's women's team; it was an opportunity to make history and silence the critics once and for all. Led by captain Smriti Mandhana, they entered the field with steely resolve, determined to seize the moment and etch their names in cricketing folklore. Delhi captain Meg



Lanning won the toss and chose to bat, the same decision she made last year when her team lost the final of the inaugural edition to Mumbai Indians. Shafali Verma (44) and Lanning (23) started well with a blistering 64-run opening stand in seven overs before Sophie Molineux (3/20) put the stops on their charge with three wickets in four balls. Sobhana Asha (2/14) and Shreyanka Patil (4/12) then chipped in with wickets at regular intervals to clean up the middle order and tail as Delhi collapsed and were dismissed for 113 in 18.3 overs. Delhi's Shikha Pandey (1/11) and Minnu Mani (1/12) had some success in containing Bangalore's run rate in the

first 12 overs, but Perry and Ghosh regained the momentum in the last five overs, to ensure victory.

"After winning the player of the match award," remarked Sophie Molineux, "I must say, finals are funny games. We knew it was going down to the wire." This sentiment reverberated throughout the Royal Challengers Bangalore camp, especially given the significance of the occasion. Over the last few years, the rallying cry of "Ee Sala Cup Namde" (The Cup is ours this time) has echoed across social media platforms, symbolizing the unyielding faith of the RCB fanbase. Shreyanka Patil, the highest wicket-taker in the

WPL with 13 scalps, expressed her relief and shared in the joy of victory, stating, "They keep saying 'Ee sala cup namde' and we got it. That's it guys, it is for the fans." Elyse Perry, the talismanic figure who topped the run-makers' chart with 347 runs, emphasized the incredible support shown by fans throughout the tournament. "It's been phenomenal and it's been unbelievable," Perry exclaimed, highlighting the collective effort that propelled the team to victory. "Shreyanka is such a young player and she has got the world at her feet," Perry remarked, underscoring the significance of her performance.

Royal Challengers Bangalore skipper Smriti Mandhana acknowledged the solid backing from the management following their failure to clinch the title last year, which played a crucial role in their eventual success. "Last year taught us a lot of things, as a player, as a captain, and as a team," she said, acknowledging the challenges they faced and the growth they experienced. "The feeling has not sunk in yet," she admitted, highlighting the surreal nature of their victory. For RCB's loyal fanbase, who had stood by the team through every high and low, this victory was more than just a celebration; it was a validation of their unwavering support and belief in the team's abilities. The

chants of "Ee Sala Cup Namde" reverberated across stadiums and social media platforms, serving as a rallying cry for fans who had waited patiently for this moment.

Individual performances also stood out in RCB's journey to the title. Shreyanka Patil's stellar bowling display, which saw her emerge as the highest wicket-taker in the tournament, was a testament to her skill and determination. Similarly, Elyse Perry's masterful batting performances had been crucial in guiding RCB to victory in the final. As the celebrations continued and the magnitude of their achievement sunk in, RCB's women's team could take pride in their remarkable journey. They had not only lifted a trophy but also inspired a generation of cricketers and fans with their resilience, determination, and unwavering belief in the power of teamwork. In the grand scheme of things, RCB's triumph in the WPL final wasn't just a victory for the team; it was a victory for women's cricket and a testament to the growing popularity and competitiveness of the sport. As they basked in the glory of their achievement, RCB's women's team knew that they had written a new chapter in the history of the game, one that would be remembered and cherished for years to come.

BRIEF

Appointment



New Delhi: Leading FMCG maker P&G India on Monday announced the appointment of Kumar Venkatasubramanian as CEO, with effect from May 1, 2024. The current CEO, L V Vaidyanathan will leave the company to pursue personal interests after 28 years of service, a statement from P&G India said. Kumar is currently leading the P&G business in Australia and New Zealand as CEO. Before the Australia role, Kumar was leading sales team in P&G India until 2020, it added. Kumar, an alumnus of IIM Calcutta started his journey with P&G in 2000 in sales team in India, straight from the campus.

Direct flight

New Delhi: IndiGo on Monday announced a direct flight between Bengaluru and Agatti starting from March 31, enhancing air connectivity to Lakshadweep. Agatti will be the 88th domestic and 121st overall destination in the IndiGo network. The services between Bengaluru and Agatti will commence from March 31, the airline said in a release. The airline will be using ATR aircraft, having around 78 seats, on the route. IndiGo said Agatti is popular amongst those looking for a bit of deep-sea fishing, scuba diving, sailing, skiing and even kayaking.

Indian startups



New Delhi: Indian startups are expected to raise USD 8-12 billion this year, a top official of venture capital firm Peak XV said on Monday, highlighting that the country's startup ecosystem is the most vibrant in the world. Speaking at StartUp Mahakumbh, Peak XV Managing Director Rajan Anandan said around USD 20 billion of private capital is lying uninvested and is committed for investment in private firms and startups in India.

Commercial operations

New Delhi: NTPC on Monday said it will start commercial operations of second unit of its North Karanpura Super Thermal Power Project on March 20. NTPC's North Karanpura Super Thermal Power (STPP) project is a coal-based power plant located in the Chattra district of Jharkhand. Unit 2 (660 MW) of North Karanpura Super Thermal Power Project (3x660 MW) is declared on commercial operation with effect from 00:00 hours of 20.03.2024, NTPC said in an exchange filing.

India's economic boom feels like 2003-07: Morgan Stanley

New Delhi, Mar 18:



India's current world-beating economic growth rate on the back of an investment boom resembles that of 2003-07 when growth averaged more than 8 per cent, according to economists at Morgan Stanley. In a report 'The Viewpoint: India - Why this feels like 2003-07', Morgan Stanley said after a decade of investment to GDP steadily declining, capex has emerged as a key growth driver in India. "We think the capex cycle has more room to run, therefore the current expansion closely resembles that of 2003-07. The current cycle is driven by investment outperforming consumption, public capex leading initially but private capex rapidly catching up, the urban consumer leading consumption followed by catch-up in rural demand, market share in global exports rising and macro stability

risks kept in check. "We think the defining characteristic of the current expansion is the rise in the investment-to-GDP ratio. Similarly, in the 2003-07 cycle investment to GDP rose from 27 per cent in F2003 (fiscal year ending March 2003) to 39 per cent in F2008, which was close to the peak. "Investment to GDP then hovered around those levels until it peaked in F2011. 2011 to 2021 then registered a decade of decline - but the ratio has now inflected again to 34 per cent of GDP and we expect it to rise further to 36 per cent of GDP in

F2027E," it said. In 2003-07, the capex boom led to an acceleration in productivity, job creation and income growth. As more labour was absorbed into employment by the strengthening economy, savings to GDP also rose from 28 per cent in F2003 to 39 per cent in F2008.

During 2003-07, GDP growth averaged 8.6 per cent and headline CPI inflation averaged 4.8 per cent. The current account balance stayed within the central bank's comfort zone, ranging between 2.8 per cent to -1.4 per cent of GDP on a 4Q trailing sum

basis. Even when oil prices shot up to USD 145 per barrel in July 2008, the current account deficit only widened to 2.4 per cent of GDP the following quarter, the research report said. Gross fixed capital formation (GFCF) growth in India accelerated sharply from 8.2 per cent in 2002 to 17.5 per cent in 2004, and the pace of growth held firm at 16.2 per cent in 2005-07. In that cycle, the fiscal deficit was already consolidated, the banking system's non-performing loan issues were cleaned up and the economy was poised for a capex upswing.

"However, the initial pick-up in private consumption growth was more modest, averaging just 4.8 per cent in 2003-04," it said. In the current cycle, real GFCF growth continued to hold strong at 10.5 per cent in October-December, staying above the pre-Covid 2017-18 average of 9.6 per cent.

Insurance sector attracted Rs 54,000 cr FDI in last 9 years: Vivek Joshi

New Delhi, Mar 18:



The insurance sector has received close to Rs 54,000 crore as foreign direct investment (FDI) in the last 9 years on the back of further liberalisation of overseas capital flow norms by the government, Financial Services Secretary Vivek Joshi has said. The government increased the permissible FDI limit from 26 per cent in 2014 to 49 per cent in 2015 and then to 74 per cent in 2021, he told PTI in an interview. However, he said, the permissible FDI limit for insurance intermediaries was increased to 100 per cent in 2019. As a result, Rs 53,900 crore of FDI was received in insurance companies between December 2014 and January 2024, he said.

During the period, Joshi said, the number of insurance players increased from 53 to 70 as of January 2024. Insurance penetration increased from 3.9 per cent in 2013-14 to 4 per cent in 2022-23 while insurance density rose from USD 52

in 2013-14 to USD 92 in 2022-23, he said. Insurance penetration and density are two metrics, among others, often used to assess the level of development of the insurance sector in a country.

While insurance penetration is measured as the percentage of insurance premium to GDP, insurance density is calculated as the ratio of premium to population (per capita premium). Asset Under Management nearly tripled to Rs 60.04 lakh crore as compared to Rs 21.07 lakh crore in 2013-14, while the total insurance premium more than dou-

bled to Rs 10.4 lakh crore from Rs 3.94 lakh crore at the end of March 2014. The insurance sector was opened for private players in August 2000 with the invitation for application for registrations. Foreign companies were allowed ownership of up to 26 per cent. Since then, many foreign companies have invested in the insurance sector. The latest Zurich Insurance-Kotak General Insurance deal could be one of the major FDI flows in the insurance sector. Last month, Zurich Insurance had said, it proposes to acquire a 70 per cent stake in Kotak Mahindra General Insurance, for Rs 5,560 crore, in a single tranche. In November 2023, Kotak Mahindra Bank had announced the sale of a 51 per cent stake in its general insurance arm to Zurich Insurance for Rs 4,051 crore through a combination of fresh capital infusion and share purchase, followed by a 19 per cent stake sale within a period of three years.

Nihar Shanti Pathshala Funwala changed lives of more than 1.3 lakh students

Mumbai, Mar 18:

As a country, we have made significant progress in making education accessible to all, including rural India. Education is the key driver of progress in any society and as a brand sharing this purpose, Nihar Naturals Shanti Badam Amla has identified education skills as a way to contribute. The brand has partnered with a non-profit organization Leap Forward and launched Nihar Shanti Pathshala Funwala, an English language proficiency program. In this program, phonetics is used to educate teachers in their mother tongue, to enable them to teach English easily. The program is

available on WhatsApp and YouTube to expand its reach across different states of India and make the English language accessible to all. Speaking about the brand's objective of promoting progress through education, Somashree Bose Awasthi, Chief Marketing Officer, Marico Limited, said, "Nihar Naturals Shanti Almond Amla Hair Oil has struck a chord with customers who identify with the brand's objective. In the year 2019, Nihar Shanti Pathshala Funwala was started with the initial objective of developing reading and comprehension ability among students in rural areas. We achieve this objective by offering our unique

English Literacy Programme. It enables teachers to promote literacy in a language that opens doors to better opportunities for higher education. It has been truly gratifying to see the impact it has had on teachers and students.

In 2023 alone, the brand partnered with 1.4 lakh government schools and successfully educated 2 lakh teachers. In this way, more than 10 lakh students in 142 districts in Hindi speaking states of India have been positively affected. With the help of our Nihar Parivar customers across the country, we look forward to making this campaign even better and bigger in the years to come."

LAKMÉ FASHION WEEK



Actor Ananya Panday with designer Rahul Mishra at his fashion show during the Lakmé Fashion Week x FDCI 2024, in Mumbai.

India's new EV policy to help launch many eco-friendly premium-quality SUVs: VinFast Auto

New Delhi, Mar 18:

Vietnam's electric car maker VinFast Auto on Monday said India's new electric vehicle policy that provides import duty concessions for companies setting up manufacturing units in the country with a minimum investment of USD 500 million will allow it to introduce a wide variety of eco-friendly premium-quality SUVs at inclusive prices. The Indian government's new electric vehicle (EV) scheme aims to drive large investments in manufacturing, create competencies and upskilling, set up a robust supply chain and offer consumers world-class, zero-tailpipe emission vehicles. VinFast India CEO Pham Sanh Chau said in a state-



ment. "This forward-looking policy helps us introduce a wide variety of smart, green, premium-quality SUVs, at inclusive prices, along with outstanding aftersales policies," he added. Chau further said, "With a long-term growth commitment in India, we have pledged an expenditure of USD 500 million, which includes the electric

vehicle manufacturing facility in Tamil Nadu." In February this year, VinFast -- a major competitor to American EV had stated that it would invest Rs 4,000 crore over the next five years in the initial phase, which will generate 3,500 jobs in the Tuticorin region. The plant will have a capacity to produce 1.50 lakh vehicles once it becomes operational. Ola Electric Founder and CEO Bhavish Aggarwal in a post on X, also lauded the new EV policy, saying it is a win for the Make in India initiative. "Great to see the Indian government's progressive decision to lower import duties on EVs for companies investing in India. This is a win for the #MakeInIndia initiative &

strengthens our manufacturing ecosystem, propelling India towards a greener future. India will become the global EV hub of manufacturing and technology," he wrote. Commenting on the policy, Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers (SIAM) President Vinod Aggarwal said a holistic view has been taken by the government of India in the best interests of the country.

"The Indian automobile industry and members of SIAM will adapt to this new policy and remain committed to bring new, innovative, and aspirational products and work towards developing a robust EV ecosystem in the country," he added.

Office leasing likely to rise 10-12 pc this year driven by demand from GCCs: Raj Menda

New Delhi, Mar 18:



Demand for office space is likely to rise 10-12 per cent this year across major cities with foreign companies looking to set up Global Capabilities Centres (GCCs) in India, according to realty firm RMZ Group Chairman Raj Menda. Bengaluru-based RMZ Corporation is one of the leading commercial real estate developers in the country. In an interview with PTI, Menda, Chairman of Supervisory Board at RMZ Corporation, said the absorption of office will grow by about 10-12 per cent this year across six major cities. He rued that the demand is still concentrated in these top six

cities. Gross leasing of office space stood at 58.2 million square feet in 2023 calendar year across six major cities namely Bengaluru, Chennai, Delhi-NCR, Hyderabad, Mumbai and Pune, according to a FICCI-Colliers report. Menda, who is also Chairman of FICCI Committee on Urban Development and Real Estate, noted that the de-

mand for bigger spaces, starting from 5 lakh square feet, from foreign firms has tapered down and enquiries are more for 50,000 square feet to 2 lakh square feet office spaces. "In pre-COVID, the bigger companies which were coming in used to commit and pre-lease large office spaces.

So we would, at RMZ, get commitments of 5 lakh square feet to 10 lakh square feet, that has tapered down," Menda said. Now, he said these companies are looking for 1-2 lakh square feet space. "But the good part of the story is... a lot of GCCs are coming in now to start their businesses here," he added.

Passion, not money should drive entrepreneurs looking to start successful ventures: Zomato CEO



New Delhi, Mar 18: Zomato CEO Deepinder Goyal on Monday advised entrepreneurs to be led by passion and drive while building the company of their dreams, and cautioned that starting a venture with the sole desire of making money won't work and may lead to "bad governance calls". Speaking at the Startup Mahakumbh event, Goyal spoke candidly about how his own company prefers to be always paranoid to stay ahead.

Compacency should not kick at any point of time, he asserted. "I see a lot of founders starting a lot of companies, and I ask them why did you start this company, and the answer is 'I want to make a lot of more money'...I don't think that works because that leads to bad governance calls... that's not the purpose with which you should start a company," he said while addressing a packed hall. He advised aspiring and new entrepreneurs, "You should be so passionate about something, you should be willing to risk your life for it, only then you are able to build a company of your dreams." "That's the only piece of advice I have...do it with passion, don't do it for money," he said during a fire-side chat with Info Edge founder Sanjeev Bikhchandani.

Haier celebrates its 20 years of innovating 'In India, For India'

New Delhi, Mar 18:



Haier Appliances India, the No.1 global major appliances brand for 15 consecutive years celebrates the 20th anniversary of its establishment in India. This significant milestone demonstrates Haier's unwavering commitment to customer-inspired innovation and its dedication to 'Make in India' and 'Made for India'. Adding to the celebrations, Haier India expanded its product offerings by launching range of OLED & QLED TVs, Super Heavy-Duty Air conditioner series, Kinouchi Black Air conditioner, Vogue and smart convertible refrigerators, washer and

dryer front load washing machine, commercial refrigeration solutions and commercial air conditioners. Focused on empowering consumers through smart and intuitive products curated for Indian homes, Haier India also unveiled a range of smart innovations including Robo-vacuum cleaners,

smart kitchen appliances, microwaves, water heaters and much more.

Commenting on Haier India's 20th anniversary, Mr. NS Satish, President, Haier Appliances India, said, "Today is a historic moment for Haier India as we celebrate our 20th anniversary in India. We are extremely proud of this milestone as it reflects the support and deep connection we have with our customers, partners, and employees who have played a pivotal role in every step of our success. Throughout this journey, we have been driven by our commitment to customer-inspired innovation, dedication to 'Make in India and Made for India'.

PVR INOX's pocket-friendly passport is now available across India

Mumbai, Mar 18:

PVR INOX Ltd., India's largest multiplex chain, has launched the second edition of its monthly cinema subscription service, Passport, redesigned based on valuable consumer feedback. This iteration of Passport, which is now available across the country, including the South Indian states, is even more user-friendly and is loaded with exciting new features and fewer conditions. Commencing from 18th March, subscribers will have access to watching movies at an affordable price. From Mondays to Thursdays, subscribers can watch up to 4 movies per month for just Rs. 349-. Subscribers also have the option to pur-



chase and redeem tickets for someone else through Passport. If subscribers wish to watch movies on recliners, or in premium & experiential formats, like IMAX, P[XL], ICE, ScreenX, MX4D or 4DX, they can pay an additional fee of Rs. 150 over and above the Passport coupon and have an enjoyable experience.

Bolero crushes truck helper to death in road rage incident

People getting injured after falling in potholes

Central Chronicle News



Dhamdha, Mar 18: After an incident of road rage and subsequent dispute, an uncontrolled Bolero crushed to death the helper of a truck at Thelka Chowk, just 4 kilometers away from the Police station area.

The Helper Ganesh Dubey, S/o Sukhlal Dubey Sakin Kamathi Road, Nagpur was hit by the Bolero driver as soon as he got down and was crushed to death.

According to the police, two accused were caught in which the main accused is Vikesh Kumar Janghel, age 30, father Rajaram Janghel, co-accused Yashwant Janghel, 19, R/o Puran Janghel, R/o Thab

Deokar. Meanwhile main accused Vikesh Kumar Janghel says that 'I was alone in this incident and was under the influence of alcohol and no other accused was with me in this incident'.

When co-accused Yashwant Janghel was asked on this subject, he told that he was not present at the scene of the incident and that he has been made an accused in this incident without any reason.

Same way when Puran Janghel, father of the co-accused, was asked on this subject, he told that his son was not involved in this incident; he has been made an accused without any reason. While the main accused, who is a R/o Pendranav, was released after coming to the police station. He further said that when he talked to police station in-charge Ajay Singh about this matter, he said that you are out right now and would not be able to say anything on this incident.

Of Chaubebandha Sindhuri road

Central Chronicle News



Rajim, Mar 18: Incidents of people getting injured and accidents happening are being reported in Chaubebandha Sindhuri road lately. As per information, the length of Chaubebandha to Sindhuri road is two kilometers and due to the road being extremely narrow in these 2 kilometres, people are facing great difficulty in commuting.

Anyway, villagers have been demanding road widening for years, but till now the government administration has not taken any effective steps in this direction. And this single road is also facing potholes these days, but due to lack of repair, the pit near

Chaubebandha colony has become so big that pedestrians are falling into it and getting injured.

There are many potholes near Baiga Baba Temple also lately two students who were returning home after taking the exam on bike fell into this pit in such a way that their entire clothes got soaked in muddy water and they also got injured. Similarly, information

about potholes has been received at many places and the situation is so due to the lack of drainage and subsequent silted up of drain water. Villagers said that there has been a demand for widening of the road for a long time.

But till now neither the public representatives of the area nor the concerned department have paid attention, due to which the common pedestrians are having

to bear the brunt. Through this route, people of dozens of villages travel in large numbers every day to Rajim city and villages of Dhamtari and Raipur districts and traffic pressure is continuously increasing.

And now this single path has become extremely narrow. The villagers have demanded immediate widening and filling of the pit from MLA Rohit Sahu.

Deported history sheeter from district nabbed

Marriage of six couples with disabilities conducted

Mineral Incharge takes action against illegal sand excavation



It was on this information, the police reached the site and nabbed him and interrogated him. The exiled history-sheets was not having any documents of allowing him to enter Dhamtari district and it comes under violation of section 188 of IPC and was taken into arrest under section 15 of CG Public Security Act 1990 and was produced in the Court.

The above accused was sentenced deportation from the district last on 9/11/2023 prior to the last VS polls. In the above action, TI Arjuni Inspector Rajesh Marai, Cyber Cell in-charge Inspector Sunny Dubey, head constable Vijay Bairagi, constable Khemu Hirwani, Dheeraj, Yogesh, Deepak, Lokesh played an important role.

elections and start of model code of conduct. In this context, it was on tip from an informer, Arjuni thana came to know that an exiled history-sheets Manoj Nagrachi S/o Suresh Nagrachi (20), R/o Mujgahan, has been spotted moving in Mujgahan without seeking permission.

By Arjuni police

Central Chronicle News

Dhamtari, Mar 18: The Sha Dhamtari Anjaney Varshney has directed all Thana in-charges to keep close eye on the goons and criminals in view of the forthcoming Lok Sabha



Central Chronicle News

Rajim, Mar 18: The marriage program of six couples with disabilities was conducted at Anand Dham Bhawan by Ujjwal Divyang Kalyan Sangh Sankalp Seva Sansthan Rajim. Rajim MLA Rohit Sahu, State Sahu Sangh Vice President Bhuneshwar Sahu, Munna Lal Devdas and

other public representatives participated in the program and gave blessings.

District President of Divyang Sangh Jageshwar Sahu, Sankalp Seva Sansthan Director Sunita Sahu, Sarika Sahu, Nidhi Pathari, Yogesh Thakur, Krishna Sahu, Nutan Lal Sahu and people of the organization helped in conducting the marriage.

Central Chronicle News

Anwari, Mar 18: To control illegal excavation, transportation sub-divisional officer, Naib Tehsildar Jyoti Singh has been appointed as secondary mineral in-charge for sub-division Kurud and she and her team Singh raided and seized illegally collected sand and vehicles used for transportation.



According to the information received, action was taken by minor Mineral Incharge Jyoti Singh on illegal sand transportation and storage in Megha, in which 30 kilos of illegally stored sand, 2 kilos of vehicles and 1 JCB were seized. Action has been taken against illegal transportation

in Araid also, in which legal action has been taken by seizing 20 Haiva vehicles, 1 JCB and 1 tractor used in transporting illegally collected

sand. In this action, minor mineral in-charge Jyoti Singh, Ganesh, Dharmendra, Nagesh, Bhushan, Dhal Kotwar contributed.

Open Campus Drive of pharmaceutical company McLeods in RIT

PT Teacher of SHA Excellent School selected for AICCSMA

Central Chronicle News



Mandir Hasoud, Mar 18: Under the aegis of RIT College of Pharmacy and RIT Engineering, the campus selection of leading pharmaceutical company McLeods was successfully organized. The main objective of this special campus drive was to provide job opportunities to the talented students of Chhattisgarh. 175 students from various colleges and universities of Chhattisgarh enthusiastically participated in this event, who showcased their skills.

A written examination was conducted in the selection process; thereafter the selected students were interviewed one by one. The campus drive provided an excellent platform for the students to explore career opportunities in the pharmaceutical industry: 8 from RIT Pharmacy, 3

from Biotechnology and 3 from Chemical branch were selected on campus. The management of the institution is grateful to McLeods Pharma for their support and providing this

invaluable employment opportunity to our students.

Pharmacy Principal of the institution, Dr. Satyavarta Bhanja and Engineering Principal, Dr. Manish Sakhalecha appreciated the dedication and enthusiasm of the students, during the entire campus. The open campus drive was made possible with the permission of the Secretary, Mahanadi Education Society Raipur; Shaileendra Jain, Principal of the organization Dr. Satyavrat Bhanja, Professor Mr. Chandrashekhar Sahu and Director, Corporate Relations and Training Placement Mr. Neeraj Kumar Nikumbh.

Central Chronicle News

Kharora, Mar 18: Yogendra Tripathi, the exercise teacher of SHA Excellent School, has been selected from Chhattisgarh as a runner in 100 meter race and in triple jump, who will participate in the National All India Civil Service Athletics Competition to be held in Chandigarh from March 19.

Principal of the school, Mati Rajni Minj and Vice Principal Harish Dewangan sent good wishes to Yogendra Tripathi with great joy and encouraged him to bring a medal in the Nationals.



All the staff members were present on this occasion.

Senior Lecturer P. Devangan, Senior Lecturer Mahina Parveen, Senior Lecturer Domar Singh Yadav, Lecturer M.K.Sahu, Shweta Sharma, Sangeeta Nayak, Rajni Tripathi, Sunita Singh, Ritu Rani Verma, Chameli Khare, Tanya Bhattacharya, Jayanti Sahu, Neha Rathore, Alka Minj, Jagdev Banjare, Mogra Sahu, Geetanjali Paan, Shivangi Nishad and all the staff teachers expressed happiness on Yogendra being selected in the National and have sent best wishes.

Two nabbed in gambling with playcards

CU secures consultancy project worth Rs 4 cr

Central Chronicle News



Dhamtari, Mar 18: As per instructions by the senior police officers, the Sihawa Thana patrolling team nabbed 2 accused with pack of cards while gambling along with some cash. When the police reached the site of gambling with playcards, some persons ran away from the place and the police somehow was able to nab two accused viz.

Bhoj Ram Sonendra S/o Paltan Ram Sonendra (40), R/o Sargi, Thana Magarlod, Hall Kohaabahra, Thana Dugali, Dhamtari and other is Shivam Rawate S/o Laxman Rawate (45), R/o Mavali Para Chowki Dudhawa, District Kanker. The police seized a total cash of Rs 5180 along with a pack-of-cards number 52 and one mobile phone and

six motor cycles, 2 Activa Scooters and took them into custody. A case under section 3 (2) of Gambling (Punishable) Act 2022 was filed against the accused in Thana Sihawa. In the above action, TI Sihawa SI

Umakant Tiwari, Tulsi Mithilesh, Laxminath Nirmalkar, head constable Pramod Pandey, Satyaprakash Markam, Tikeswar Sahu, Chandikeshwar Chouhan played an important role.

From the Uttar Pradesh Govt

Central Chronicle News

Bilaspur, Mar 18: Under the capable leadership, skilled guidance, and visionary planning of the honorable Vice-Chancellor, Professor Alok Kumar Chakrwal, Guru Ghasidas Vishwavidyalaya (a Central University) has entered into a memorandum of understanding (MoU) between the Central University's Department of Forestry, Wildlife, and Environmental Sciences and CAMPA of Uttar Pradesh.

On this occasion, Vice-Chancellor Prof. Chakrwal expressed his delight at the MoU, and motivated all departmental faculty members to continue working

diligently towards research, innovation, and entrepreneurial development. He emphasized that such projects bring national recognition to the university.

Guru Ghasidas Vishwavidyalaya has received approval for a consultancy project worth more than four crores from the Uttar Pradesh Forest Department to carry out external observations and evaluations of activities conducted in under Uttar Pradesh CAMPA. This consultancy project aims to evaluate the work carried out in under CAMPA from 2012 to 2022 across all 89 forest divisions of Uttar Pradesh. For this purpose, the Dean of the School of Natural Resources, Professor S.C. Tiwari, and the Chief Conservator of Forests and Head of Forest Department Uttar Pradesh,



Shri Sudhir Kumar Sharma (Indian Forest Service), have signed the MoU.

It is noteworthy that the Department of Forestry, which has been providing high-quality education in forestry since 1989 in central India, has been awarded an A++ grade by the Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education, Government of India.

The Head of the Department of Forestry, Prof. K.K. Chandra, mentioned that the department

has successfully completed numerous consultancy projects not only for the institutions of the state but also for various institutions across the nation such as Chhattisgarh Forest Department, National Thermal Power Corporation, Adani Foundation, Coal India, and National Highways Authority of India.

This project's chief investigators include Dr. Brijendra Pratap Singh, Dr. Chandresh Kumar Singh,

co-investigators Dr. Atul Kumar Bhardwaj and Dr. Chowhani Manpoong, Assistant Professors in the Department of Forestry, Wildlife, and Environmental Sciences.

On this occasion, Mr. Sunil Choudhary, Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (Monitoring and Working Plan), Mr. Ashok Kumar, Additional Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (H.R.D.), Uttar Pradesh Forest Department, Mr. Pinaki Prasad Singh, Additional Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Uttar Pradesh Forest Department and Chief Executive Officer of CAMPA Uttar Pradesh, Mrs. Anuradha Vemuri, Additional Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Uttar Pradesh Forest Projects, and other officials were present.

Hardik on Rohit's role in MI

'He is going to have his hand on my shoulders'

Mumbai, Mar 18 (PTI):

Mumbai Indians skipper Hardik Pandya on Monday said his predecessor Rohit Sharma will continue to be a guiding force for him during the IPL despite the unexpected change of leadership that the franchise announced ahead of the upcoming season, triggering a "backlash" from the fans.



Mumbai Indians captain Hardik Pandya at a press conference in Mumbai, Monday.

what is required. I focus on the controllables and I do not focus on what I cannot control," Pandya said.

"At the same time, we are very grateful to fans. A lot of fame and love comes from them and they have every right and I respect their opinion," he added.

However, Pandya said he has not met Rohit for the last two months or so and would only be chatting with the former skipper once the squad gets into action during the practice game here on Monday.

"Yes and no. He has been travelling and playing," Pandya replied when asked if he has had a chat with Rohit.

"We are professionals, by the time the team comes together...we have been playing cricket...it has only been a couple of months that we have not seen each other. Whenever the IPL starts, which is from today since we have the practice game, once he comes, we will definitely have a chat," he said.

The star all-rounder will be making his comeback to top-level cricket with the IPL, having undergone a lengthy rehabilitation for the ankle injury he suffered in the ODI World Cup at home in October.

Bengaluru, Mar 18 (PTI):

Royal Challengers Bangalore skipper Faf du Plessis says Virat Kohli's infectious energy, which easily rubs off on everyone, is the secret of the brilliant on-field and an equally fulfilling off-field equation he shares with the Indian superstar.

Du Plessis, who took over the team's captaincy after Kohli decided to step down at the end of the 2021 season, said batting with the prolific right-hander is an "unbelievable experience".

"It's unbelievable batting with him. He is one of the favourite guys I like to bat with. He brings out so much energy in me, like sometimes, I feel I am fist bumping my glove though his hand because he gets so passionate being out there in the middle," Du Plessis told 'Star Sports'.

"It's really infectious the way he gives that energy... how this guy is always on and how does he manage it...on the field while catching balls, we both are very competitive and make sure we get those good catches for the team," the stylish right-hander said.

He might not be the skipper anymore but Kohli's inputs and role in lifting the fielding unit's energy is also something that Du Plessis admires.



Royal Challengers Bangalore captain Faf du Plessis during a training session ahead of the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2024 cricket tournament, at M. Chinnaswamy Stadium in Bengaluru, Monday.

"He is really important to me in terms of field (placements) I think. He leads in so many things as far as a team is concerned but fielding is where he sets the tone and energy on the field," the former South African captain said.

Off the field, Du Plessis, called Kohli, "a terrible influence" on him.

"We both love food and we both really into our fashion that another things we spend a lot of time talking about. The way we dress the way we wear style of clothes, we will send each other pictures of outfits. He has been a terrible influence

on me when it comes to watches but he got real passion for watches.

"But with this so many things obviously now its family, he got a daughter and I got two daughters, he got a second child now as well."

Du Plessis also spoke about Glenn Maxwell and how the 'Big Show' has transformed into a more consistent performer for RCB during the past few seasons.

Maxwell scored 513 runs in the 2021 season, followed by 301 and 400 during the past two years. While looking at his numbers, one needs to factor in that he is a designated fin-

Kohli joins RCB training camp



Bengaluru, Mar 18 (PTI): Superstar Virat Kohli on Monday made his first appearance in the training session of his franchise Royal Challengers Bangalore ahead of the IPL beginning March 22. The former India and RCB captain was seen taking rounds of the Chinnaswamy Stadium as part of his warm-up. Skipper Faf du Plessis also attended the session. RCB, who have never won the IPL, begin their campaign against reigning champions Chennai Super Kings in Chennai on Friday. Kohli's performance in the lucrative T20 league will be closely tracked as the event precedes the T20 World Cup in the USA and Caribbean.

'Trying to hasten my recovery during WC led to prolonged rehab'

Mumbai: Hardik Pandya's bid to hasten his comeback towards the business end of last year's ODI World Cup game actually aggravated his ankle injury and in the process delayed his possible return by five months. Pandya had twisted his ankle trying to stop the ball on his follow-through during India's fourth World Cup game against Bangladesh in Pune on October 19. Initially, he had eyed a comeback during home T20s versus Afghanistan but after a prolonged rehabilitation, his comeback vehicle turns out to be upcoming IPL — a cash-rich league that catapulted the colourful Baroda all-rounder into instant stardom around a decade back.

under him and he is going to have his hand on my shoulder throughout the season," he added.

Pandya admitted his move of leaving the Gujarat Titans' captaincy

and replacing Rohit at the helm in Mumbai Indians did upset a section of fans.

"The backlash...To be very honest we respect fans but at the same time, we focus on the sport and

India bag six medals at Polish Grand Prix



Gold medalist India's Akhil Sheoran (C), silver medalist Czech Republic's Patrik Jany (L) and bronze medalist India's Niraj Kumar pose for photographs during the presentation ceremony of the men's 50m rifle 3-positions match 2 at the Grand Prix Wroclawia & Dolnego Slaska shooting competition, in Wroclaw, Poland.

New Delhi, Mar 18 (PTI): Paris Olympics quota winners Akhil Sheoran and Anish Bhanwala won a gold medal each as Indian shooters ended their

Polish Grand Prix campaign with six medals. Sheoran won gold in the men's 50m rifle 3-positions Match 2 with a record score of 468.4. Patrik Jany

● Akhil, Anish win gold

of the Czech Republic was 2.2 points behind at second spot at the Grand Prix Wroclawia & Dolnego Slaska. Both the scores were higher than the existing world record of 466.1, held by Jany's countryman Jiri Privratsky. Bhanwala won gold in the men's 25m rapid-fire pistol at the Jozef Zapędzki Grand Prix held simultaneously. Some members of India's 50m rifle and 25m rapid-fire pistol squad are currently on an exposure tour to Europe to compete in various established international events in the build-up to the Paris Olympics.

IOA dissolves ad-hoc committee for wrestling

WFI to take charge

New Delhi, Mar 18 (PTI): The Indian Olympic Association on Monday dissolved the ad-hoc committee for wrestling, saying "there is no further need" for it to continue after revocation of the suspension on the national federation, which now gets complete administrative control of the sport.

The IOA said that the decision was also guided by the successful conduct of the selection trials for next month's Olympic qualifying tournament for which the panel collaborated with the Wrestling Federation of India (WFI). The ad-hoc committee was formed in December last year after the sports ministry suspended the WFI, which got

a shot in the arm when the suspension imposed on it by the global governing body — United World Wrestling — was lifted in February.

"The decision to dissolve the Adhoc Committee comes in light of the lifting of the ban on the Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) by the United World Wrestling (UWW) and the successful completion of Selection Trials by the Adhoc Committee appointed by the IOA as per the directives of the Hon'ble High Court of Delhi," said the IOA order issued on March 10. WFI chief Sanjay Singh thanked the Indian Olympic Association for giving his elected panel control of the national federation.

Coach Fulton opts to go with almost full list of probables for crucial Australia tour

New Delhi, Mar 18 (PTI):

Drag-flicker Harmanpreet Singh will lead a 27-member strong Indian team in a five-match away hockey Test series against Australia, with chief coach Craig Fulton opting to go with almost the entire core group of probables undergoing training in Bhubaneswar.

India will leave for Australia on April 1 and play their opening game on April 6, followed by matches on April 7, 10, 12 and 13. All the games will be played in Perth. The tour against one of the best hockey-playing na-

tions is significant and the Indian team will aim to fine-tune its preparations ahead of this year's Paris Olympics. The tour will give Fulton the opportunity to have a look at his probable 16-member squad for the quadrennial showpiece event. But having said that, ahead of Paris Olympics the Indians will have another important assignment in the Belgium leg of the Pro League in May, which will give Fulton more options.

"This will be a very important tour for us as it will not only ascertain the level we are at and the areas we want to get better

ishier of the team coming in at Nos 5 or 6.

"Certainly with Maxi, his time at RCB has been very fruitful for him in terms of IPL cricket.

ahead of the Paris Olympics but this is also an important tournament for the players," Fulton said in a Hockey India release. "We chose to go with the almost entire core group so that each player gets enough opportunity to showcase their full potential and also it is a gooe added.

Hockey India had on March 11 named 28 core probable list for the men's national camp and with 27 of them in the Australia-bound squad, it goes well with Fulton's philosophy of giving everyone the opportunity to showcase their potential.

Alcaraz defeats Medvedev to defend his Indian Wells title

● Swiatek beats Sakkari for women's title

Indian Wells, Mar 18 (AP): Carlos Alcaraz arrived at Indian Wells full of doubt about his twisted right ankle. He's leaving as a two-time champion.

He defeated Daniil Medvedev 7-6 (5), 6-1 for the second straight year in the BNP Paribas Open final on Sunday, earning his first title since winning Wimbledon last year.

Iga Swiatek beat Maria Sakkari 6-4, 6-0 in just over an hour to win the women's title, with Swiatek losing just 21 games in six matches dur-



Carlos Alcaraz celebrates after defeating Daniil Medvedev in the final match at the BNP Paribas Open tennis tournament.

ing the 12-day tournament an average of 3.5 games per match.

Alcaraz sprained his ankle at the Rio Open in late February. His first

practice at Indian Wells lasted 30 minutes without any movement. His first practice with his fellow pros "was really tough for me," he said in a Tennis

Channel interview.

Alcaraz outlasted Jannik Sinner in a three-set semifinal after needing three sets to get out of his second-round match.

"After every match I was feeling better," Alcaraz said. "I was getting more confident after every match. Winning a Master 1000 again, a really important tournament to win, gives you motivation to keep going."

Alcaraz became the first man to defend his Indian Wells title since Novak Djokovic won three in a row from 2014-16. He beat Medvedev 6-3, 6-2 last year in the Southern California desert.

Manchester, Mar 18 (AP):

There's still some fight left in Manchester United.

With the season hanging in the balance, Erik ten Hag's team produced one of the most important wins of his tenure to beat Liverpool 4-3 after extra time in a thrilling FA Cup quarterfinal match on Sunday.

With nearly the last kick of the match, substitute Amad sent Old Trafford into raptures, ended Liverpool's bid for a quadruple of trophies and fired United into the semifinals. "Listen to the noise, you can tell what a big game it is, a huge occa-



Manchester United's Bruno Fernandes, centre, celebrates at full time of the FA Cup quarter final soccer match between Manchester United and Liverpool at the Old Trafford stadium.

lation about his position in the face of a troubled campaign and restructuring at the club.

The FA Cup represents his last chance of silverware this season, while Champions League qualification is in doubt with United sixth in the Premier League.

Defeat against the club's fiercest rival Liverpool would likely have seen the pressure on the Dutchman grow. And it was notable that television cameras focused on new director Dave Brailsford as the clock ticked down with Liverpool leading 2-1 as the game approached 90 minutes.

Shreyas Iyer makes low-key T20 return in practice match for KKR

Kolkata, Mar 18 (PTI):

After a gap of over three months, middle-order batter Shreyas Iyer made a rather edgy return to T20 format while playing in an inhouse practice match of Kolkata Knight Riders here on Sunday.

Shreyas, who is set to lead KKR in IPL 2024, hardly looked comfortable in the middle while registering 22 of 19 balls before getting stumped by Phil Salt off a local left-arm spinner. Shreyas, who last played a T20 in December 2023, against Australia in Bengaluru, was beaten



outside the off-stump in the very first ball he faced from pacer Andre Russell.

In the very next ball, he glanced Russell for a four but the right-hander never

really found his bearings during his stint in the middle. Usually comfortable against spinners, Shreyas on this day looked all at sea against leg-spinner Suyansh Sharma who managed to beat him with some sharp turn.

The 29-year-old eventually got out when he tried to shimmy down the track and loft the spinner. He completely missed the ball and Englishman Salt did the rest behind the stumps. The match played was between KKR Team Gold and KKR Team Purple, for whom Shreyas came out to bat.

Rishabh might find it very difficult to get back his fluency at IPL's onset: Gavaskar

New Delhi, Mar 18 (PTI): Rishabh Pant will find it "very difficult" to be at his fluent best at the beginning of the IPL but Sunil Gavaskar expects that his knees will react better once he starts batting more and more in match situations. Having survived a horrific car crash in December, 2022, Pant will make a comeback to competitive cricket after more than 14 months as Delhi Capitals captain after an extensive rehabilitation programme. "It'll be very difficult. But the good thing is he (Pant) has played some cricket. So he has got some practice. To get fluency in batting is a



little tough," Gavaskar told 'Star Sports'. He then explained his point of view. "When you talk of a knee injury, the pivoting that takes place. Wicket-keeping is difficult as well, but even in batting, the knee is quite important. So, maybe, in the beginning, we won't see the real Rishabh Pant that we are used to," the maestro said.

'Lacked self-belief in pressure situations last year'

New Delhi, Mar 18 (PTI):

Smriti Mandhana's self-belief wavered in pressure situations last year but this season she was able to conquer the demons in her mind when pushed against the wall, helping RCB land their first major title in franchise cricket.

Speaking to media after RCB beat Delhi Capitals in a low-scoring WPL final, Mandhana said she has matured as a captain and player since last season. "One thing that I have learned is to believe in yourself. That was something which lacked in me last year when it did go wrong. "I doubted a few things in myself but that



was the real conversation with my mind, I need to keep trusting myself and I think that was the biggest learning for me," said Mandhana on Sunday night. The second season saw Mandhana getting her

hands on the trophy while Harmanpreet Kaur had led Mumbai Indians to the title in the inaugural edition. That only shows the depth of Indian cricket, said Mandhana. "Last year when MI and DC were playing in the final, somewhere deep down I hoped that Harman lifts it because the first edition of WPL and for an Indian captain to win, if not me it has to be Harman. So I was really happy for Harman and whole Mi team," Mandhana said. "Second season I became the second Indian captain to win. That really shows the kind of depth Indian cricket has and it's just the start, we still have a long way to go."



Kejriwal skips ED summons in DJB case

New Delhi, Mar 18 (PTI):

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Monday skipped the Enforcement Directorate summons in a money laundering case linked to alleged irregularities in the Delhi Jal Board, with the Aam Aadmi Party terming the notice "illegal".

The AAP accused the BJP government at the Centre of "using" the Enforcement Directorate (ED) to target Kejriwal and stop him from campaigning in the Lok Sabha polls. "The summons is illegal. The BJP wants to fight the Lok Sabha elections using ED," it alleged.

Delhi BJP president Virendra Sachdeva hit back, saying Kejriwal,

who is also AAP national convener, has lost his "honour" by repeatedly skipping the ED summons and alleged that there was a scam in the Delhi Jal Board (DJB).

The Delhi chief minister was summoned by the ED to appear before it on Monday in a money laundering probe linked to alleged irregularities in the Delhi Jal Board. He is also facing inquiries in the Delhi excise policy-linked money laundering case and has previously disregarded eight summonses in that matter, terming those "illegitimate".

The federal probe agency has issued a ninth summons to Kejriwal to appear for questioning on March 21 in the excise policy-linked money launder-

ing case.

The AAP's Delhi unit convener Gopal Rai, when asked about the summonses to Kejriwal, said, "It is beyond understanding when will the ED stop serving the political agenda of BJP. The ED served notices and the chief minister replied to them saying they were illegal. The ED went to court against him. When the matter is in court, what is the urgency of sending another notice," he asked.

If the BJP wants to arrest Kejriwal, they do not need summons, Rai said, adding, "They can arrest him anytime."

"If you believe in the Constitution and law, wait for the court's decision. We are also waiting. The court will hear the matter on

April 1," the AAP leader said.

Delhi BJP leader and the party's candidate for the New Delhi Lok Sabha seat Bansuri Swaraj said that Kejriwal, by skipping ED summonses, was proving he was a "careless" leader.

"Even today Kejriwal ran away from probe. Different courts... have rejected the bail applications of AAP leaders like Manish Sisodia and Satyendra Jain. Kejriwal is indifferent to the fact that the bail of his party leaders was rejected and he is running away from the probe," she told PTI-Video. The ED has filed two complaints before a magisterial court in Delhi, seeking Kejriwal's prosecution for skipping multi-

Notice 'illegal': AAP

The AAP accused the BJP government at the Centre of "using" the Enforcement Directorate (ED) to target Kejriwal and stop him from campaigning in the Lok Sabha polls. "The summons is illegal. The BJP wants to fight the Lok Sabha elections using ED," it alleged.

ple summonses issued to him in the money laundering case linked to the alleged Delhi excise policy scam. Last Saturday, the court granted him bail in the two complaints.

Delhi Cabinet minister and AAP leader Atishi alleged that the ED was being "used as a political tool".

HOLI PREPARATIONS



Family members of artist Avaz Mohammad prepare 'Gulal Gota', balls made with lac and dry eco-friendly coloured powder, ahead of the Holi festival, in Jaipur, Monday.

BJP makes it final: Chirag in, Paras out in Bihar

● **BJP to contest 17, JD(U) 16, Chirag's LJP 5**

New Delhi, Mar 18 (PTI):

The NDA on Monday announced its seat-sharing formula for Lok Sabha elections in Bihar, giving 17 seats to the BJP, 16 to the JD(U) and five to Chirag Paswan's LJP (Ram Vilas).

Two other NDA allies - Hindustani Awam Morcha (HAM) and Upendra Kushwaha-led Rashtriya Lok Morcha - will contest one seat each, Vinod Tawde, the BJP's in-charge for elections in Bihar, told a press conference at the

BJP headquarters here. "The BJP will contest 17 out of the total 40 seats and the JD(U) will contest 16. The Lok Janshakti Party (Ram Vilas) will contest five seats," Tawde said at the presser jointly addressed by NDA allies from the state.

Bihar LJP (Ram Vilas) chief Raju Tiwari said Chirag Paswan will contest from the Hajipur Lok Sabha seat, which has been given to the party under the seat-sharing pact.

With Union minister Pashupati Paras's LJP faction finding no mention in the seat-sharing deal, Bihar BJP chief Samrat Choudhary said that talks are going on with him.

TEMPERATURE ANALYSIS

'Winters quickly transitioning to summer-like conditions in north India'

New Delhi, Mar 18 (PTI):

An analysis of temperature data since 1970 shows that winters are quickly transitioning to summer-like conditions in north India, shortening the spring season.

Researchers at the US-based Climate Central, an independent group of scientists, conducted this analysis to place India within the context of global warming trends, focusing on the winter months (December-February).

The analysis revealed abrupt changes in temperature occurring in late winter across north India.

The average temperatures in states in north India showed either a cooling trend or slight warming in January, followed by strong warming in February.

This indicates that these regions are now experiencing abrupt transitions from cool winter-like temperatures to much warmer conditions traditionally observed in March, the researchers said. To show this change, the researchers calculated the difference between the warming rates in January and February, expressed as the change in average temperature since 1970.

The most significant jump in warming rates was observed in Rajasthan, where the average temperature in February was 2.6 degrees Celsius higher than in January.

A total of nine states and Union territories, including Rajasthan, Haryana, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Ladakh, Punjab, Jammu and Kashmir, and Uttarakhand, showed a January-February difference of more than 2 degrees Celsius. This supports the reports that it feels like spring has disappeared in many parts of India, the researchers said.

The analysis also suggested that winter overall, is warming across India, with every region showing a net warming trend during winter. Manipur experienced the largest change in average winter (Dec-Feb) temperature since 1970 (2.3 degrees Celsius), while Delhi had the smallest change (0.2 degrees Celsius). "The cooling in the central and northern Indian states during January followed by very strong warming in February creates the potential for a quick jump from winter to spring-like conditions," said Andrew Pershing, VP for Science at Climate Central.

IIM-C inks pact to set up centre of excellence for design thinking

Kolkata, Mar 18 (PTI):

IIM Calcutta has entered into a tripartite agreement with the School of Design Thinking and Mission Samridhhi to incorporate design thinking into its academic curriculum, research, and projects, the premier institute said in a statement on Monday. This collaboration aims to establish India's inaugural 'Centre of Excellence for Design Thinking' in a leading business school, positioning the centre as a focal point for all design thinking endeavours undertaken by IIM-C and its affiliated organisations, it added. Mission Samridhhi will contribute to community-centric social initiatives and projects by leveraging

its community development framework and IIM-C's research expertise, the statement said.

Established in 2016, the School of Design Thinking is committed to promoting awareness of design thinking as a 'human centered' and 'future focused' societal approach.

Mission Samridhhi, a platform dedicated to the holistic development of rural India, brings its expertise to the collaboration, the statement said. The signing ceremony was attended by Professor Saibal Chattopadhyay, director-in-charge of IIM-C, Professor Bhaskar Chakrabarti, dean (academic), and senior officials from Mission Samridhhi and the School of Design Thinking.

SC refuses to stay disqualification of 6 HP Cong MLAs

New graphic novel gives '101 reasons' to vote for PM

New Delhi, Mar 18 (PTI):

The Supreme Court on Monday refused to stay the Himachal Pradesh Assembly Speaker's order disqualifying the six Congress rebels who had crossed-voted in the recent Rajya Sabha polls in the state.

A bench of Justices Sanjiv Khanna and Dipankar Datta issued a notice to the office of Speaker Kuldeep Singh Pathania and sought its response within four weeks on a plea by the six rebels challenging their disqualification from the Assembly.

The bench said that pending adjudication of their plea, these disqualified MLAs will not be allowed to vote or participate in the proceedings of the assembly.

"We can issue notice on the petition, that's fine but there cannot be a stay (on the disqualification order). That will not be permissible for this court. Second, as far as a fresh

election is concerned, this we will have to examine. But we will not allow you to vote or participate in proceedings of the House. On this we are very clear..." Justice Khanna told senior advocate Harish Salve, appearing for the six rebels.

The court posted the matter for hearing on May 6 and gave the petitioners one week to file a rejoinder.

The filing of nominations for the six vacant assembly seats starts on May 7.

During the hearing, Salve said that after the voting in the Rajya Sabha election on February 27, the petitioners were issued a notice to appear before the speaker for their comments on disqualification.

"We appeared as asked and told the speaker that we have not got the copy of petition seeking disqualification," he said, adding if the disqualification order was not stayed, their petition would become infructu-

tuous. "At the end, we should not be told that the election has been held and now someone else has come in," Salve said.

Senior advocate Abhishek Singhvi, appearing for the office of the speaker, said the notification for the election has been issued and various judgments of the court say once an election has been notified, it cannot be stayed.

Justice Khanna told Singhvi that the court is not going to stay the disqualification. "As far as the question of staying the fresh election is concerned, that will have to be examined. Otherwise, their petition will become infructuous," he said.

Justice Datta also pointed out that the petition was filed before the elections were notified.

Senior advocate Satya Pal Jain, also appearing for the disqualified MLAs, said as per the election schedule notified by the

Election Commission, the filing of nominations for the six vacant seats will start from May 7.

Justice Khanna said when this court issues a notice in a matter like this, the fresh election may be delayed by the EC.

The bench then posted the matter for further hearing on May 6 and asked the office of the assembly speaker to file its counter affidavit in four weeks.

The six rebels - Sudhir Sharma, Ravi Thakur, Rajinder Rana, Inder Dutt Lakhnani, Chetanya Sharma and Devinder Kumar Bhutto - were disqualified on February 29, for defying a Congress whip to be present in the House and vote in favour of the Himachal Pradesh government during the cut motion and budget.

Following the disqualification of the rebels, the effective strength of the House has gone down to 62 from 68, while the number of Congress MLAs has shrunk to 34

from 40.

According to the notification issued on March 16 by the poll panel, assembly by-elections are scheduled to be held in the Dharamshala, Sujapur, Lahaul and Spiti, Barsar, Gagret and Kulehar constituencies that fell vacant after the disqualification of the six lawmakers on June 1.

The petitioners have alleged a violation of the principle of natural justice, claiming they did not get adequate opportunity to respond to the disqualification petition.

Announcing the disqualification of the six MLAs at a press conference on February 29, the speaker said they were disqualified under the anti-defection law as they defied the party whip. He ruled that they ceased to be members of the House with immediate effect.

The Himachal Pradesh parliamentary affairs minister filed the petition seeking their disqualification before the Speaker.

New graphic novel gives '101 reasons' to vote for PM

New Delhi, Mar 18 (PTI):

Writer Shantanu Gupta has come up with a new comic, "101 Reasons, Why I Will Vote For Modi" that encourages voters to vote for Prime Minister Narendra Modi in the upcoming Lok Sabha elections, starting on April 19.

Touted to work as a compendium of different comic art styles, the book has used as many as 10 internationally renowned art styles in its making, including semi-realistic style, manga style, Disney style, traditional Indian comic book style and black and white style. It is essentially a conversation between a Modi critic and the author himself, and how the latter during the discussion ends up providing over 100 reasons to the critic to vote for Modi in the 2024 general elections. "I have collected most of the stories after directly talking to the beneficiaries



of the different schemes of the Modi government. Each of the 101 reasons are presented with comparison data of pre 2014 scenario, the human stories involved and an English poetic couplet to capture the impact of that particular scheme of the Modi government," said Gupta, author of another graphic novel "Ajay to Yogi Adityanath", in a statement. According to The Write Order publications, the book, through its innovative art work, talks about the many changes that have come in the life of the common people through PM Modi's pro-

poor policies.

"The book talks about his work in the domain of health care, agriculture, education, armed forces, foreign policy, economy, jobs, infrastructure and PM's work for the 'Cultural Renaissance' of India. It ends with discussing the Narendra Modi factor in #NewIndia's development story," they added.

Gupta's previously authored books include "The Monk Who Became Chief Minister" and "BJP: Past, Present & Future".

The book, priced at Rs 350, is currently available for purchase across online and offline stores.

RAMADAN PRAYERS



Muslims pray at the shrine of peer Dastagir Sahib during the holy month of Ramadan at Khanayar, in Srinagar, Monday.

NCP SPLIT

Ajit Pawar's younger brother criticises him for forsaking Sharad Pawar

Pune, Mar 18 (PTI):

In a video that has gone viral on social media, Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar's younger brother Srinivas Pawar can be heard criticising him for leaving the side of Nationalist Congress Party founder Sharad Pawar. Ajit Pawar in July last year joined the Eknath Shinde government along with eight MLAs, resulting in a split in the NCP. The faction led by him got the party name and 'clock' symbol, while

Sharad Pawar's outfit is now called NCP (Sharadchandra Pawar).

In the video, Srinivas Pawar (60), while talking to residents of Katewadi village in Baramati, said the NCP founder had stood with Ajit Pawar through thick and thin.

Sharad Pawar had backed Ajit Pawar's decisions, made him deputy CM four times and minister for 25 years, and it was "unworthy" of someone to speak ill about such a benefactor's old age, Srinivas Pawar claimed.

"When we (Srinivas and Ajit Pawar) spoke after the split, I told him you continue to contest the Baramati assembly seat and the Lok Sabha elections from here will be contested under (Sharad) Pawar saheb's leadership," Srinivas Pawar can be heard saying. Asserting that he was not ready to leave the NCP founder just because he was 83, Srinivas Pawar said some of his friends advised him to side with Ajit Pawar "as the future lies with him".

कालड़ा बर्न एवं प्लास्टिक कांस्ट्रिक्ट सर्जरी सेंटर कानों की रिशेपिंग



जन्मजात, दुर्घटना या अन्य कारणों से कटे या टेढ़े-मेढ़े कानों की रिशेपिंग

पंचोद्दी नाका, पंचतरी रोड, कटर्स नॉल के पास, चण्डीकोट - 9827143060/8871003060

(NABH से मान्यता प्राप्त) सुयश हॉस्पिटल

स्त्री एवं प्रसूति रोग विभाग

- नॉर्मल डिलीवरी
- सिलेसियन
- हाई रिस्क प्रेनेन्सी
- बच्चेदानी का ऑपरेशन
- बाइपस का ईलाज

24x7 प्रसव सुविधा..

24 Hours Helpline 9926386660

कोटा-गुदियारी रोड, होटल पिकाडिली के पीछे, रायपुर