



BRIEF



Chief of Defence Staff General Anil Chauhan with Royal Thai Navy Commander-in-Chief Admiral Aduong Pan-lam at a meeting, in New Delhi, Monday.

Boat capsizes

Guwahati: A four-year-old child died and two persons were reported missing after a boat capsized in the Brahmaputra in South Salmara-Mankachar district, amid heavy rain and hailstorm across Assam, a senior official said on Monday. Union Home Minister Amit Shah dialled Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma to enquire about the situation in the state, and assured of all assistance, he said.

Arrested

Gurugram: The Gurugram cyber police has arrested an employee of the RBL Bank for his alleged involvement in cyber fraud. The accused allegedly used to provide bank account details to cyber thugs by taking Rs 15,000 to Rs 20,000, said the police. According to the police, the arrested accused is identified as Amit Kumar, a resident of Sangam Vihar in Delhi. He was arrested from Delhi on March 28 and the police took him on four-day remand after producing him in a city court.

Security review

Jammu: A security review meeting on Monday discussed strategy to ensure a conducive and secure environment for voters to exercise their franchise in Jammu Lok Sabha constituency without fear or intimidation, a police spokesman said. The Jammu parliamentary seat is going to polls in the second phase on April 26.

Arrested

Thane: A police inspector was arrested on Monday in connection with a Rs 2 crore dacoity in Navi Mumbai, an official said. Six persons posing as policemen had looted the amount from a businessman near Palm Beach Road in Vashi on March 29 and a probe zeroed in on Inspector Nitin Bhikaji Vijaykar (55) of the security branch of Thane rural police, he said.

Bail

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Monday confirmed its interim order of granting bail to Rajendra Bihari Lal, vice chancellor of Uttar Pradesh's Sam Higginbottom University of Agriculture, Technology and Sciences (SHUATS), in connection with two criminal cases pertaining to offences including that of alleged illegal religious conversions.

Weather
High 39 Low 24

MARKET
NIFTY 22,462.00
SENSEX 74,014.55

BULLION
GOLD 68,300
SILVER 75,517

SC refuses to stop Hindu prayers at Gyanvapi

New Delhi, Apr 01 (PTI):

The Supreme Court on Monday refused to stay the Hindu prayers in the southern cellar of the Gyanvapi mosque in Varanasi even as it ordered a "status quo" on the religious observances by both the Hindu and Muslim sides inside the mosque premises.

The court was hearing a fresh plea of the Gyanvapi mosque management committee against an Allahabad High Court decision upholding a lower court's order allowing Hindu prayers in the southern cellar of the mosque.

The top court noted that both the Muslim and Hindu sides have been conducting their respective religious observances "unhindered" inside the mosque premises and, therefore, a status quo would serve the ends of justice for now. A bench headed by Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud also



sought the response of priest Shailendra Kumar Pathak Vyas by April 30 on the plea of the mosque committee.

"Bearing in mind the fact that the namaz is offered by the Muslim community unhindered after the orders dated January 17, 2024 and January 31, 2024, and the offering of pooja by Hindu priest is confined to the area of tehkhana, it is appropriate to maintain status quo so as to enable both the communities to offer worship in the above terms.

"The religious observances by the Hindus shall be in terms of directions

contained in the order dated January 31, 2024... Status quo as obtained from the above terms shall not be disturbed without obtaining the previous sanction and leave of this court," the bench, also comprising justices J B Pardiwala and Manoj Misra, said.

The apex court, after seeing the Google Earth images of the structures, noted that the entry to the cellar is from the southern side while the entry to the mosque for the purposes of offering namaz is from the steps on the northern side.

At the outset, senior advocate Huzefa Ahmadi, appearing for Anjuman Intezamia Masjid Committee, sought a stay on the civil court's order and submitted that puja was being allowed to take place within the mosque premises. Ahmadi said this will only fester some discord. "History has taught us some other lessons where violence has happened despite assur-

ances. This is an egregious order. Communities have lived peacefully. Why this insistence on having this now? For 30 years the situation has been very normal," he submitted.

Ahmadi alleged that Hindu parties filing multiple applications for different reliefs and and there is serious apprehension that bit by bit the Muslim side will lose out the whole mosque.

Referring to the Ram Janmabhoomi-Babri Masjid dispute, Ahmadi said, "We are in your hands and we know what happened at Ayodhya and despite of interim orders the mosque Babri Masjid could not be protected. This is what history taught us."

Senior advocate Shyam Divan, representing the Hindu parties, submitted that the orders do not warrant any intervention by the apex court at this stage as there are detailed reasons in the trial court and the high court orders.

SC refuses to stay 'scientific survey'

New Delhi, Apr 01 (PTI): The Supreme Court on Monday refused to stay a "scientific survey" of Bhojshala, a medieval-era structure in Madhya Pradesh's Dhar district which both Hindus and Muslims claim as their own, but said no action should be taken without its permission on the outcome of the exercise.

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Kejriwal taken to Tihar jail

New Delhi, Apr 01 (PTI):

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal was brought to Tihar Jail here on Monday after a city court sent him to judicial custody till April 15, officials said. Kejriwal was arrested on March 21 by the Enforcement Directorate in connection with an excise policy-linked money laundering case.

"He was brought to Tihar jail and will be lodged in Jail number 2. He was taken for a medical examination. He will be kept in a separate cell," a jail official said. AAP



Arvind Kejriwal being taken to the Tihar Jail.

leader Sanjay Singh, who was arrested in October last year in the same case, is lodged in jail number 1, while BRS leader K Kavitha is in Jail number 6 of the women's jail.

SETBACK TO CONG

Cong mayor from Chhindwara joins BJP

Bhopal: In another setback to the Congress ahead of the Lok Sabha polls, its leader and Chhindwara mayor joined the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in Madhya Pradesh on Monday morning.

Vikram Ahake, the mayor of Chhindwara, joined the BJP in the presence of MP Chief Minister Mohan Yadav and state party chief VD Sharma in state capital Bhopal.

Last week, Kamlesh Shah, the Congress legislator from Amarwada in Chhindwara district and a close associate of party stalwart Kamal Nath, had joined the BJP.

Naxalite killed in encounter with security personnel



Sukma, Apr 01:

A Naxalite was killed in an encounter with security personnel in Sukma district on Monday morning, a police official said.

The gunfight took place in a forest under Kistaram police station area when a joint team of security personnel was out

About the incident...

The gunfight took place in a forest under Kistaram police station area when a joint team of security personnel was out on an anti-Naxal operation, Sukma Superintendent of Police Kiran G Chavan told PTI. Personnel belonging to the District Reserve Guard and Commando Battalion for Resolute Action (CoBRA- an elite unit of the Central Reserve Police Force) were involved in the operation, he said.

on an anti-Naxal operation, Sukma Superintendent of Police Kiran G Chavan told PTI. Personnel belonging to the District Reserve Guard and Commando Battalion for Resolute Action (CoBRA- an elite unit of the Central Reserve Police Force) were involved in the operation, he said.

'No coercive action over Rs 3,500 cr demand'

New Delhi, Apr 01 (PTI):

In a relief for the Congress, the Income Tax department on Monday told the Supreme Court that it will not take any coercive action against the opposition party for tax demand notices of Rs 3500 crore approximately in view of Lok Sabha elections. A bench of justices BV Nagarathna and Augustine George Masih recorded the statement of Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, representing the IT department, that no precipitative action will be taken in the prevailing circumstances till the final adjudication of the matter.

I-T BREATHERS FOR CONG

"At the commencement of the hearing on this application, the solicitor general appearing for the respondent department, submitted that there is no dispute that on several dates in the month of March 2024, demands have been raised as against the appellant herein totalling approximately Rs 3500 crore," the bench noted.

It further recorded, "It is further submitted (by SG Tushar Mehta) that issues which arise in these appeals are yet to be adjudicated upon but having regard to the situations now, the department does not wish to precipitate the matter as much as no coercive

steps shall be taken by the respondent department with regard to the aforesaid demand of Rs 3500 crore approximately."

The bench posted the Congress' plea against different tax demand notices for hearing on July 24, 2024. Senior advocate Abhishek Singhvi, appearing for the Congress party, appreciated the gesture terming it "gracious" and said that all demand notices were issued in February and March for different years totalling Rs 3500 crore approximately.

"I am very rarely rendered speechless. By my learned friend's intervention, I have been rendered

speechless. Kindly have it in July," he said. At the outset, Mehta said, "To balance the equity. The petitioner is a political party. Based upon the 2016 judgement, which is under challenge, we have raised the demand of Rs 1700 crore. Since the election is going on, we would not like any problem to arise for any party and therefore, till the matter is heard after the election, we will not take any action for recovery of Rs 1700 crore." He said that the impugned judgement of the Delhi high court is of March 23, 2016, and based upon the parameters set by it, a tax demand was raised against the party in 2021.

PILGRIMAGE SERVICES



Pilgrims pose for photos after the launch of helicopter services to the peaks of Adi Kailash and Om Parvat, in Pithoragarh, Monday.

Oppn cites 2015 RTI reply, jabs govt over 'change in stance' on Katchatheevu island

New Delhi, Apr 01 (PTI):

Hitting back at the Centre over the Katchatheevu island issue, opposition leaders on Monday cited a 2015 RTI reply, which stated that the agreements in 1974 and 1976 did not involve either acquiring or ceding of territory belonging to India, and asked whether the "change" in Modi government's stance was for "election politics".

The opposition's response came after External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Monday claimed that prime ministers from the Congress displayed indifference about

Katchatheevu island and gave away Indian fishermen's rights despite legal views to the contrary.

Jaishankar's remarks at a press conference were made a day after Prime Minister Narendra Modi cited a media report to assert that new facts reveal that the Congress "callously" gave away Katchatheevu island to Sri Lanka.

Senior Congress leader P Chidambaram hit out at the government over the issue. "Tit for tat is old. Tweet for tweet is the new weapon. Will Foreign Minister Mr. Jaishankar please refer to the RTI reply dated 27-1-2015..The

Reply justified the circumstances under which India acknowledged that a small island belonged to Sri Lanka," Chidambaram said. Why is the Foreign Minister and his ministry doing a somersault now, he asked.

"How quickly can people change colours. From a suave liberal Foreign Service officer to a smart Foreign Secretary to a mouthpiece of the RSS-BJP, life and times of Mr Jaishankar will be recorded in the annals of acrobatic sports," Chidambaram said "It is true that fishermen were detained in the last 50 years.

Summer heat to add to election fever, warns IMD

New Delhi, Apr 01 (PTI):

India is set to experience extreme heat during the April to June period, with the central and the western peninsular parts expected to face the worst impact, the IMD said on Monday as the country prepares for the seven-phase general elections starting April 19.

Addressing a press conference, Union Minister for Earth Sciences Kiren Rijiju said India is anticipated to experience extreme weather conditions in the upcoming two-and-a-half months and this coincides with the general elections in which around a billion people are expected to exercise their franchise.



File Photo

"It is going to be very challenging for all of us. Since we are the most populous country in the world and face extreme weather conditions, it makes it absolutely necessary for India to prepare in advance," he said. India Meteorological Department (IMD)

Director General Mrutyunjay Mohapatra said the anticipated increase in outdoor activities during the 2024 general elections could heighten public vulnerability to heat waves. With greater exposure, there's an elevated risk of heatwave-related health issues among the

electorate and election staff, he said. The IMD chief said above-normal maximum temperatures are likely over most parts of the country during the April-June period, with a high probability over central and western peninsular India. Normal to below-normal maximum temperatures are likely over some parts of the western Himalayan region, north-eastern states and north Odisha, he said.

Above-normal heatwave days are likely over most parts in the plains during April-June. Ten to 20 days of heat wave are expected in different parts of the country against a normal of four to eight days, he added.

Cong assures justice for women, youth, labourers: Baij

If voted to power, women to get Rs 8333 per month

Central Chronicle News

Raipur, Apr 01: PCC Chief Deepak Baij said that Congress is going to provide many guarantees for the forthcoming Lok Sabha polls and added that Congress strongly believes that in order to bring it the women, youth, farmers and labourers to mainstream of development, they need to be given legal protection and for this Congress has promised 'Kissan Nyay', 'Yuwa Nyay', 'Nari Nyay', 'Shramik Nyay' and 'Hissedari Nyay'.

Addressing a press conference at Rajiv Bhavan on Monday, Deepak Baij said that Congress make a promise that with formation of its government at the Centre, they would introduce 'Mahalaxmi Yojana' for women and under this every woman will get Rs 1 lakh i.e Rs 8333 per month. The Chhattisgarh government in the state is only paying Rs 1000 per month and this will come to Rs 12000 only. But the Congress government is going to pay 8 times of this to every



woman. On formation of Congress government, half of the recruitment in the central government jobs will be kept reserved for women. The honorarium of the Asha workers, Anganbadi workers and Mid-way meal workers will get just the double of it. For legal rights of women, there will be an appointment of legal assistant in every Panchayat and women's hostel will be constructed in every district headquarter's for the working women.

Speaking further Deepak Baij Congress will be providing five guarantees for the peace and prosperity of farmers. On formation of Congress government, MSP will be given the legal status and for his a special bill will be passed in the Parliament. As per the formula of Dr MS Swaminathan, MSP will be finalized. To waive off loans of the farmers and for waiver of special

loans, permanent 'Krishi Rin Mafi Aayog' will be formed.

In case of damage to crops of farmers and subsequent loss, the guaranteed amount will be directly transferred into farmer's account within 30 days and for this PM Fasal Beema Yojana will be redesigned. For agriculture producers, Congress will formulate import-export policy and would introduce it, so that the interest and concerns of farmers are safeguarded and it remains priority of the government. It will be based upon temporary and permanent situations and would be in favour of the farmers. Farmers will be made GST-free and all equipments used in agriculture will also tax rebate and for this GST system will be amended, he added.

Similarly Baiji informed that under Shramik Nyay, it was the UPA government which

introduced MNREGA law to provide legal rights to labourers and in turn provided legal rights to every labourer to get minimum of 150 working days of labour.

On formation of Congress government, the minimum labour charges for each labourer will be increased from Rs 200 to Rs 400 and this will solve the financial problems being faced by the labourers and would raise their standard of living. Promising health right, the government would provide free of cost essential diagnostic medicines, treatment, surgery, rehabilitation and palliative health care facilities. In urban areas, Rojgar Guarantee Yojana will be implemented and labourers from unorganized sector will be provided life and accidental insurance. Contract system in the government works will be stopped, he added.

School timings changed from 7:30 am to 11:30 am

Raipur, Apr 01: In view of the rise in temperature, the school timings all over the state has been changed. The School Education department as per instructions from the government has issued orders to all the Education officers of all the districts to run the Schools as per the new timings and issue orders to Principals of private and government schools.

As per the order issued, now the school timings will be from 7:30 am to 11:30 am. In view of this there will not be any change in the examination timings and the exams will be conducted in the same timing as scheduled earlier.

SUMMER SAFETY



With start of April month, the girls have started taking all precautions in order to avoid any problems due to high temperature.

Forms for admission to nursing courses to be filled by April 7th



Entrance exam to be held on June 13, Candidates will be able to apply online on Vyapam's website till 7th April

Central Chronicle News

Raipur, Apr 01: The last date to apply for admission to undergraduate nursing course in government and private colleges in Chhattisgarh for the year 2024-25 academic session has been fixed as April 07, 2024. Candidates

wishing to take admission in B.Sc Nursing course can fill their applications online on the website of Professional Examination Board, vyapam.cgstate.gov.in and vyapamaar.cgstate.gov.in / till April 07. B.Sc Nursing entrance exam will be held on June 13, 2024.

According to the information received from J Singh, Joint Controller of Professional Examination Board, no online examination fee will be charged from the candidates for admission to B.Sc Nursing courses.

After filling the online application, the candidates will also have the facility of error correction from April 08th to 10th.

The scrutiny and admission process will be done under the provisions of Chhattisgarh Nursing Course Admission Rules 2019 and Amendment Rules 2022.

Detailed information regarding this, counselling, allotment etc. is available on the website of Chhattisgarh Professional Examination Board.

Complaints received through C-Vigil resolved

Central Chronicle News

Raipur, Apr 01: Under Lok Sabha Elections - 2024, rapid action is being taken on the complaints received from the people on the C-Vigil App (Citizen Vigil App) of the Election Commission of India. As of April 1, 2024, all 197 complaints received through C-Vigil have been resolved.

It is noteworthy that complaints of violation of code of conduct are being received from common citizens through C-Vigil. To resolve the complaints received on C-Vigil, a separate control room has been set up in the office of the Chief Electoral Officer. Chief Electoral Officer Reena Babasaheb Kangale herself was monitoring the action taken on the complaints received daily.

Every possible effort is being made to ensure adherence to the Model Code

of Conduct in the state during the Lok Sabha Elections - 2024. The C-Vigil application created by the Election Commission of India has been further strengthened to increase citizen participation and speedy redressal of complaints in cases of violation of code of conduct. Now common citizens will be able to complain about code of conduct violation cases through live photographs and videos as well as audio clips. If any citizen witnesses any incident of code of conduct violation in the state, he can make a complaint through the application by taking a photo or making a 2-minute video or audio clipping of the incident using the C-Vigil application.

The complaint can be made anonymously or can be made by registering in the app. If the complaint is made as a registered user,

the user will also be informed about the same after the complaint is resolved. This application is available for common citizens on both Android/iOS. In normal cases, the action on complaints will be completed within 100 minutes and the complainant will be informed about it.

Using the CVigil app, citizens can lodge online complaints regarding violation of the Model Code of Conduct during the election period without visiting the office of the Returning Officer. C-Vigil is a simple app that is user friendly and easy to use.

This application connects the alert citizen with the District Control Room, Returning Officer and Field Verification Units (flying squads/static surveillance teams) thereby creating a fast and accurate reporting, action and monitoring system.

Experts will inform about 50 plus career options, 12th class student will get a cheque of Rs 20 thousand

Central Chronicle News

Raipur, Apr 01: For the first time in the state of Chhattisgarh, such a unique program is going to take place, where experts will provide free career guidance to the students of 12th class of CBSE and ICSE board. Renowned subject experts of the country will give information to children about more than 50 courses and career options and satisfy their curiosities. This program is being organized on April 7 at 12 noon at the Medical College Auditorium located near Ambedkar Hospital, Raipur.

Students of CBSE and

Shiksha Utsav to be held in Raipur on April 7th



ICSE boards of the state, who have given the 12th board exam this year, can participate in this educational fest i.e. Shiksha Utsav organized by Tilak Bharat Foundation. To participate in the program, students can register

for free by clicking on the link bit.ly/cgedufest. Students can also get free registration by sending their name, stream, school name to WhatsApp number 88789 10118.

Saurabh Kumar of Tilak Bharat Foundation

said, our aim is to motivate students for higher education.

For this purpose, a cheque of Rs 20,000 will be given to the 12th class students of CBSE and ICSE board participating in the program. One and

a half thousand students will benefit from this initiative. With the help of this cheque, students will be able to take help in further admission.

All the children participating in the program will also be given a cheque of Rs 20,000 for higher education and graduation, so that there is no hindrance in their studies. In the program, students will get a chance to win an iPad for technical support in their studies. Experts have been invited from the metropolitan cities of the country in the program, who will inform students what kind of courses the students they should study and what they should not do according to the changes coming in the country's economy and industry in the next five years.

Along with students, their parents can also participate in the program. Entry will be free for all.

RUSH FOR BOOKS, COPIES



With the opening of Schools today, the rush of parents to book stalls has increased and each had to wait for long to get the books and uniforms for their wards.

Ghingra elected CGSOWA President unanimously



Raipur, Apr 01: Retired Chief Engineer of Public Health Engineering (PHE) HS Ghingra has been unanimously elected new President of Chhattisgarh Sikh Officers Welfare Association (CGSOWA) at the annual meeting held here recently.

Convener of the Association GS Bhambra proposed the name of TS Jabbal for the post of Advisor and Retired Professor BS Chhabra as Working President, Retired

Insurance Officer BS Saluja as Secretary, Executive Engineer of Raipur Development Authority (RDA) Tejpal Singh Hanspal as Joint Secretary and Vikram Singh as Treasurer which was unanimously approved by the members present on the occasion.

Apart from them, Dr Kuldeep Singh Chhabra and Professor BS Chhabra have been unanimously elected Chairman of Medical Committee and Education Committee respectively.

Arsh creates upset defeating No. 2 player in Asian Tennis championship

Central Chronicle News

Raipur, Apr 01: Pradnyesh Shalke, Riskhikesh Mane, Sumit Undre, Vivan Mirdha, Varad Undre, Ranbeer Singh Sandhu, Manan Rai, Rohit Kondoria, Pranjay, Madhav Dadhich, Ishan Sudarshan, Uday Reddy, Yash Kumar and Arsh Valke won their matches to advance into next round of the Under 14 Asian Tennis Tournament being organised under the aegis of Chhattisgarh State Tennis Association (CSTA) here on Monday.

Similarly, Anushka Mandalwar, Anvesha Dhar, Parinita Kutty, Udaya Chaurasia, Jahanavi



Choudhary, Shruti Bandupalli, Kaniska Gohil, Pradmapriya and Harsha ARungati won their matches to enter into round 2 of the championship.

Touching farewell given to HC peon on his retirement

Chief Justice Ramesh Sinha honoured him by gifting him 'shawl' and 'shreefal'

Central Chronicle News

Raipur, Apr 01: On the occasion of the retirement of High Court 'Ardali' Anant



Ram Gautam, Chief Justice of Chhattisgarh High Court, Bilaspur, Ramesh Sinha honored him by pre-

senting memento, shawl and 'shreefal' for his devotion, dedication and excellent service and extended best wishes for his future healthy life.

'Ardali' Gautam was given an emotional farewell in a program organized in the High Court on his retirement on March 31. It is noteworthy that Gautam started

his service from the Indore bench of M.P. High Court in the year 1995 and after division of the state, he was serving in the Chhattisgarh High Court. Joint Registrar cum PPS, M.V.L.N Subramaniam and Protocol Officer, R.S. Negi, officials and employees of the High Court were present on the occasion.

State INTUC advocates for workers' rights

Proposal highlights for better worker welfare

Raipur, Apr 01:

In a landmark move aimed at championing the rights of both organized and unorganized workers, the executive meeting of Chhattisgarh State INTUC witnessed the passage of a pivotal proposal advocating for increased salaries, enhanced facilities, and improved pensions.

Under the stewardship of Dr. Sanjay Kumar Singh, National General Secretary of INTUC and President of Chhattisgarh Pradesh Inter, and with fervent support from various labor unions including the Steel Contract Workers Union INTUC Bhilai, the 44th Executive meeting convened at SNG Vidyapeeth Sector 4 today. Sanjay Kumar Sahu, President of the Steel Contract Labor Union INTUC, emphasized the



critical need to safeguard the interests of workers amidst evolving industrial landscapes.

The resolution underscored several key demands, including the call for the expansion of the contract system within industries, equal opportunities for contract workers, and the regularization of those engaged in permanent nature work. Moreover, echoing the recent Supreme Court decision that led to the regularization of contract workers in Mahanadi Coalfield, the meeting stressed the imperative of extending similar rights to contract workers in public sector undertak-

ings.

In a resolute stand against anti-labor policies, the meeting voiced opposition to the withdrawal of four labor laws without consultation with labor organizations. To ensure a dignified livelihood for retired workers, the minimum pension under EPS 95 should be substantially raised to Rs 9000 per month, coupled with a provision for linkage with dearness allowance. Upholding the integrity of public sector undertakings, the proposal stands firm against disinvestment and privatization initiatives. Moreover, a concerted

effort is advocated for the strengthening of MNREGA, aiming to guarantee 200 days of employment per person annually, accompanied by a fixed wage of Rs 600 per day. Additionally, the resolution calls for the elimination of the ceiling on bonuses in both public sector undertakings and private industries, emphasizing the imperative of providing workers with a rightful share in profits. The minimum wage in all industries should be increased to Rs 26,000 per month.

Furthermore, the meeting highlighted the necessity of

abolishing the contract system, new unions should be formed for the unorganized sector like Asha workers Anganwadi, mid-day meal workers Gig Works etc. and they should be organized under the flag of INTUC.

Amidst unanimous support for these resolutions, the executive members also expressed concern over salary delays in SAIL and pledged to address pending issues effectively. The meeting concluded with a commitment to fortify the organization and intensify efforts to amplify the voice of workers across various sectors. In attendance were esteemed representatives, including MLA Rajendra Pargania, who stood as a beacon of support from the legislative front. With unwavering determination and a collective spirit of solidarity, Chhattisgarh State INTUC reaffirmed its dedication to advancing the welfare and rights of workers, heralding a new era of empowerment and prosperity.

WIRING NETWORK



The wiring in majority of the city areas is still very complicated and poses risk specially during summer season and need to be sorted out immediately.

JR Dani School conducts voter awareness campaign



Rangoli and poster chart competition engage students in electoral education

Raipur, Apr 01:

In a fervent endeavour to cultivate a culture of robust electoral participation, a vibrant voter awareness campaign unfolded at J.R. Dani Government Girls Excellent Higher Secondary School in Raipur. Spearheaded by Raipur Collector and District Election Officer Dr. Gaurav Kumar Singh and under the astute leadership of Vishwadeep Chief Executive Officer and District Nodal Officer-

SVEEP, the event showcased innovative approaches to engage the community.

Under the overarching theme of "Voter Awareness," a series of engaging activities were orchestrated. Rangoli painting and poster chart-making competitions took center stage at Sankul Kalibari, under the diligent direction of Principal Hitesh Kumar Dewan. Principal Dewan reiterated the solemn duty of voting as a cornerstone of democratic strength, administering the pledge to all participants.

Dr. Kamini Bawankar inspired attendees to embrace the upcoming elec-

tions as a celebration of democracy. With the rallying cry of "Festival of Elections - Pride of the Nation," she encouraged a commitment to achieving 100% voter turnout.

A unique highlight of the event was the captivating rendition of the Chhattisgarhi song "Main Bharat Hav..." that captivated the audience's attention. Under the tutelage of B.Ed student teacher Hemdhar Sahu, the students of JR Dani School employed a medley of rhythmic spoons, claps, wooden gutkas, and drums to create a resonating call for voter participation. This innovative initiative, inspired by the traditional Chhag Band tune, was conceptualized by Dr. Kamini Bawankar and showcased the fusion of tradition with contemporary civic engagement.

CAC Aarti Sharma, Principal Kranti Chandrakar, along with the dedicated faculty and enthusiastic students, graced the occasion, amplifying the impact of the SVEEP program through their enthusiastic participation.

Aditya Raje receives India Excellence Award' 24



Raipur, Apr 01:

10-year-old Aditya Raje Singh (PhD Environment & Yoga) received India Excellence Award'24 held at Goa Villagio Resort, South Goa on 31st March 2024.

This award was presented to him by Adileela Foundation (REGD) in association with Media House at Goa for his outstanding achievements and marvellous support to the mankind in the field of Environment and Yoga.

Also this award was felicitated to 15 Most merito-

rious and aspiring people of India amongst which Aditya Raje was the youngest.

He has also recently received his PhD Doctorate degree in the field of Environment & Yoga from the Maryland State University, USA.

He shared with us that it was a great feeling to receive this award and he feels glad to represent his state and make everyone proud through his continuous achievements. He also aims to make his country proud and green, clean and healthy to live in.

IndiGo commences operations from Jagdalpur

Raipur, Apr 01:

IndiGo, India's preferred carrier, has commenced operations from Jagdalpur, making it its 87th domestic and 120th destination overall, to join the extensive 6E network. The airline has started operating flights to Hyderabad from March 31, 2024, and to Raipur from April 01, 2024. This strategic launch will enhance interstate accessibility and foster economic growth in the region, providing enhanced flight options to travellers during the upcoming summer

season.

Vinay Malhotra, Head of Global Sales, IndiGo, said, "We are pleased to commence operations from the vibrant city of Jagdalpur. These new routes, connecting Jagdalpur to the commercial and cultural hubs of Hyderabad and Raipur, will bolster tourism, trade, and provide increased accessibility to the rest of the nation. Customers can now travel to their favourite destinations within the country and also explore international hotspots, via Hyderabad. As India's

leading carrier, we remain committed to providing our customers with seamless connectivity through the 6E network and delivering on our promise of providing affordable, on-time, courteous, and hassle-free travel experiences."

Jagdalpur, located in the Bastar district of Chhattisgarh, is a picturesque city known for its natural beauty and rich cultural heritage. It is home to several waterfalls, wildlife sanctuaries, and ancient temples, making it a popular tourist destination.



SPORTS ROUND UP

Grace filled Easter celebration held At St. Joseph Parish Bachel



Bachel, Apr 01:

Easter marks the Resurrection of Jesus, three days after his death by crucifixion. The devotees of St. Joseph Parish

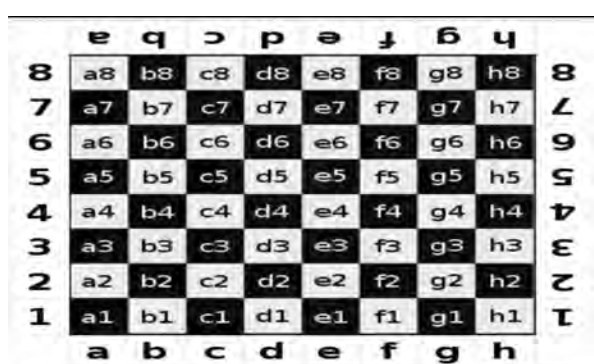
with the devotees recreated and remembered the pious day with great hope and faith.

In his sermon Rev. Fr. Joseph well quoted the examples of one Bishop Mar Francis and his utter faith in the supreme Lord and how he had chosen Jesus Christ rather than his position or rank. He also said that, one should have staunch faith in their own beliefs and remain in faith, hope and love as the resurrected Lord shows the way.

He asked to stay in peace and unity so that positivity prevails everywhere. The Holy Mass ended with a procession and veneration towards the risen Lord. Easter egg was distributed to all by the priests. The moment was really blissful to witness.

Bachel too celebrated this joyful, the day of hope and love with much devotion. The Parish priest Rev. Fr. Thomas, the main celebrant priest, Rev. Fr. Joseph, Rev. Sisters along

Chess selection trials on April 6-7



Central Chronicle News

Raipur, Apr 01: Raipur District Chess Association (RDCA) is organizing Under 17 Chess selection tournament on April 6 and 7 at Anand Samaj Library. Providing the above information in a statement issued here, the RDCA Secretary Navin Shukla

said that the tournament would be held to select 2 Boys and 2 Girls to represent Raipur in the State-level Chess tournament to be held at Durg. More than 100 players are likely to participate in the above tournament. He further said that the above selection tournament is an exercise to promote chess among youth.

Vishal, Surabhi win Monthly TT League titles

Central Chronicle News

Raipur, Apr 01: Vishal Decate defeated Andrew T Williams with the score of 2-0 to win the 9th Raipur District Monthly League Table Tennis tournament being organized under the aegis of Rajdhani Table Tennis Association at Sapre School-based TT Hall here. Providing the above information in a statement issued here, the RTTA Secretary Vinay Baiswade said that Arjun Malhotra secured third position in senior category.

Similarly, Surabhi Modi defeated Ahana Singh with the score of 2-0 to win the senior Women' championship.

Shreshth Mishra defeated Kavis Kala to win the Cadet Under 13 championship whereas Samya Pandey defeated Vedi Kachwaha by 2-1 to win



the girls championship title. All the winners were provided Trophies at the end of the Monthly League season. Chhattisgarh Olympic Association (COA) Vice President Sharad Shukla was chief guest of the prize distribution ceremony during which CSTA senior Vice President Kishore Jadwani presided over the function. Pradeep Janwade, Vinay Baiswade and Pranay Nand Majumdar were also present on the occasion, informs a press release issued here.

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Parents seek redress for failed students

30 children who did not write anything in answer sheet were failed : Principal

Jadalpur, Apr 01:

In the wake of uproar among parents at Kendriya Vidyalaya, Jagdalpur, over the failure of 30 students in recent examinations,

Principal RK Aslani has shed light on the situation, offering transparency and resolution.

The commotion arose after parents raised objections, alleging deliberate failure of their children in three subjects. However, Principal Aslani clarified that the failed students, totaling 30, had left their answer sheets blank, resulting in



their failing grades. Dismissing accusations against the teacher as baseless, Principal Aslani assured that the school's actions were in accordance with fair assessment practices.

In response to parental concerns, Principal Aslani has extended an offer to publicly disclose the answer sheets of the failed students, emphasizing

ing the school's commitment to transparency and accountability.

Reports indicate that the students, enrolled in the commerce stream of Class 11 at Kendriya Vidyalaya, were dismayed to discover the examination results, with 30 students failing and an additional 10 awaiting supplementary exams. Amidst the unprecedented num-

ber of failures, parental agitation ensued, with allegations leveled against Teacher Rajesh Kumar for unfair treatment.

This incident follows prior complaints against Teacher Rajesh Kumar, alleging mistreatment of students. Despite these grievances, no statement has been issued by Teacher Rajesh Kumar regarding the matter.

BJP offered me Rs 25 cr to join party: AAP MLA

New Delhi, Apr 01 (PTI):

AAP MLA Rituraj Jha on Monday alleged in the Delhi Assembly that he was approached by the BJP to join them with an offer of Rs 25 crore to break away from the party and bring 10 MLAs along with him. Speaking in the Delhi Assembly, the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader accused the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) of "wanting to crush the Delhi government". "Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal is the only leader who has defeated Prime Minister Narendra Modi four times in Delhi - 2013, 2015, 2020 Assembly elections and

2022 MCD polls. They have started a cheap trick once again," he said. Jha said that he was approached with an offer to join the BJP on Sunday. "Yesterday, I went to Bawana's Dairyapur to attend a wedding after the INDIA maharally. There were some people who were trying to approach me over phone for the last three to four days," Jha said. "When I reached there at 9.15 pm, three-four people took me to one side and said 'see if you will not agree, you will not get anything. President's rule will be imposed. You bring 10 MLAs and we will give Rs 25 crore to each one of you. You will be made a minister in the BJP government'," he added. Asserting the AAP MLAs will not leave the party, Jha escalating his attack on the BJP said that Operation Lotus has begun again. BJP MLA Vijender Gupta asked Jha whether he filed a police



Rituraj Jha

complaint after receiving a call for joining the saffron party. "The AAP MLAs have alleged a dozen times before that money was offered to them. Saying anything using sanctity of the House is not done. How long will you speak lies?" he said. AAP legislator Somnath Bharti, while speaking in the House, said it was duty of the Election Commission "to ensure free and fair elections but it kept mum even as the convener of a national party was sent to jail ahead of the Lok Sabha polls". "A sitting chief minister was arrested on the statement of such a person who in his previous six statements said nothing against him. I

will tounsure my head and go door to door telling people how (Prime Minister Narendra) Modi and the BJP have murdered democracy if President's rule is imposed in Delhi," he said. He charged that the BJP wanted Kejriwal to resign. "But Kejriwal had already asked entire Delhi what should he do if the BJP got him arrested. Entire Delhi is saying that Kejriwal should not resign from the chief minister's post," Bharti said. "If anyone can save democracy in the country, it is only Kejriwal. The BJP is ruining the country and destroying the democracy and the Constitution," he charged.

DAWAT-E- IFTAR



Congress leader Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury with Muslim devotees at 'Dawat-e-iftar' during the holy month of Ramzan, at Rangamati Chandpara village in Murshidabad district, Monday.

PPL DAV School celebrated 37th Annual Day 'AARAV'



Paradip, Apr 01:

DAV Public School, PPL, Paradip celebrated its Annual Day 2023-24 'AARAV' amidst great zest, enthusiasm and jubilation with a distinct spark given to the occasion to mark its glorious journey for 37 years. P.L.Haranadh, Chairman, Paradip Port Authority was the Chief Guest and Sanjay Negi, DIG, Indian Coast Guard, Paradip Port was the Guest of Honour on the occasion. The function started with the note of our cul-

ture Lighting of the Lamp and DAV song. Jagannath Khuntia, CGM(HR), PPL, Paradeep delivered the welcome address that encompassed the entire embodiments of love while Principal Sanjeeb Kumar Sahu presented the Annual Report that echoed with the glorious achievements of the students in different spheres highlighting the splendid trajectory of the school from its humble beginning to its majestic presence till date. In his address to the gathering, the Chief Guest Shri Haranadh commend-

ed the steady growth of the school in all areas of academic brilliance and laid importance on the role played by the school for preparing students in Sports and other Co-curricular activities. The Guest of Honour emphasised on the important role played by school in general and DAV institutions in particular in providing quality education to students and for their upliftment in all spheres of excellence. On this occasion, the Chief Guest and other dignitaries felicitated the Scholarship Awardees of the Odia Medium, the staff members who have completed 25 years of service in school.

The guest unveiled the Annual School Magazine 'Abhilasha' for the session 2023-24 with a musical release to mark the memorable moment. The cadence went along to felicitate the Alumnus Major Prabhjanj Padhy by the Chief Guest and Guest of Honour for achieving the rare and historic award of becoming the first Odia army officer to receive the prestigious Gallantry Award of Sena Medal.

Paradip Port becomes numero uno among Indian major ports



In cargo

Paradip, Apr 01:

PPA's remarkable journey has reached new heights with the recent record-breaking achievement of clocking incredible 145.38 MMT cargo throughput in FY 2023-24 and thus by nudged passed Deendayal Port, Kandla to emerge as the highest cargo handling major port of the country.

For the first time in the 56 years history of operation, PPA has surpassed previous records, set by Deendayal Port. Paradip Port has also recorded growth of 10.02 million metric tonnes (7.4%) of traffic on YoY basis. During the financial year the Port has achieved highest ever coastal shipping traffic of 59.19 million metric tonnes, with a growth of 0.76 million metric tonnes i.e. 1.30% over the previous year. The thermal coal coastal shipping has reached 43.97 million metric tonnes i.e. 4.02% over the previous year cargo handling. Thus, the Paradip Port is emerging as a hub for coastal shipping in the country. Paradip Port has been able to improve its berth productivity to 33014 MT from 31050 MT of previous financial year, thus registering 6.33% growth. The berth productivity achieved by Paradip Port is the highest among all the ports of

the country. During the financial year, the Port has handled 21,665 numbers of rakes, registering a growth of 7.65% over the previous financial year. During the financial year, the Port has handled 2710 ships, registering an increase of 13.82% over the previous financial year.

NAME CHANGE

It is informed to the general public that I, Fakhra Khan w/o Sardar Ahmed Khan resident of Byron Bazar, District Raipur, Pin 492001 (CG) have changed my old name Fakhra. So in future I should be recognised by my new name that is Fakhra Khan w/o Sardar Ahmed Khan in all government and other documents. Fakhra Khan H No. 48/259, Byron Bazar, I/F Choti Masjid, Raipur, Chhattisgarh - 492001

Advertisement for HIRA and GODAWARI POWER AND ISPAT LIMITED. Includes notice of Extra-Ordinary General Meeting and details of company information.

ADITYA BIRLA HOUSING FINANCE LIMITED advertisement. Includes details about branch offices, contact information, and a notice for the sale of immovable property.

LIC HOUSING FINANCE LTD. advertisement. Includes details about the company, its services, and a notice for the sale of immovable property.

Bank of Baroda advertisement. Includes details about regional and nagar branches, contact information, and a notice regarding the possession of property.

Aadhar Housing Finance Ltd. advertisement. Includes details about the company, its services, and a notice for the sale of property under provisions of the SARFAESI Act, 2002 through private treaty.

CENTRUM Home Loans advertisement. Includes details about the company, its services, and a notice for the sale of property.

Pak court suspends 14-year jail term of Imran Khan and his wife

In Toshakhana corruption case

Islamabad, Apr 01 (PTI):

In a major relief to jailed former Pakistan prime minister Imran Khan, a high court on Monday suspended the 14-year sentence given to him and his wife Bushra Bibi in the Toshakhana corruption case.

The two were sentenced to 14 years in jail each by an accountability court on January 31 for alleged corruption in state gifts they got from the state depository, days before the general elections.

They challenged the conviction in the Islamabad High Court where a two-member bench headed by IHC Chief Justice Aamer Farooq heard the case.

On Monday, the Islamabad High Court (IHC) gave temporary relief to the couple in the



case by suspending their sentences and granting them bail in the case.

However, the court announced that their appeals against the conviction would be heard after the Eid festival next month.

But Khan may not be released as he is convicted in other cases and cannot be released until absolved from charges in other cases. Similarly, Bushra is also convicted in another case and may not be released after her sentence

has been suspended.

In the Toshakhana corruption case, the 71-year-old former cricketer-turned-politician is accused of retaining expensive state gifts they received during his tenure as Pakistan's premier.

Under the rules governing Toshakhana - a Persian word meaning "treasure house" - government officials can keep gifts by paying a price for them but first the gift should be deposited. Khan

and his wife either failed to deposit the gift or got it for a low price by allegedly using their authority.

The conviction of Khan in the Toshakhana case had come a day after he was awarded 10 years in jail in the cipher case on January 30.

Earlier, he was also convicted in a different Toshakhana case in August 2023, leading to his arrest.

The latest conviction was based on the charges of misusing his authority as prime minister to retain gifts he or his spouse got during his tenure. It was filed by the National Accountability Bureau.

The previous Toshakhana graft case was filed by the Election Commission of Pakistan in the charges of hiring the sale of state gifts.

Khan so far has been convicted in four different cases losing power in April 2022. He has got bail in both Toshakhana cases.

ERDOGANS RALLY SUPPORTERS



Turkish President and leader of the Justice and Development Party, or AKP, Recep Tayyip, left, and his wife Emine Erdogan gesture to supporters at his party headquarters in Ankara, Turkey, early Monday, April 1.

Overseas Friends of BJP in US organises car rallies in 20 American cities



Members and supporters of the Overseas Friends of BJP take part in a car rally in support of Prime Minister Narendra Modi ahead of upcoming Lok Sabha elections in India, in USA.

Overseas Friends of BJP in US organises car rallies in 20 American cities

Washington, Apr 01 (PTI):

The Overseas Friends of BJP in the US has held car rallies in 20 different American cities to express their support for a third term for Prime Minister Narendra Modi and urge the people of India to give a decisive mandate of 400 plus seats to the BJP-led NDA alliance in the general elections.

"Indian American community is extremely enthusiastic and motivated to see the Modi-led BJP and NDA cross 400 seats," said Adapa Prasad, president of OFBJP-USA. Indian Americans want the NDA to achieve "Ab ki Baar 400 Paar" in the Lok Sabha Elections.

He said he had never seen such enthusiasm among the Indian-American diaspora.

Vasudev Patel, national general secretary of OFBJP-USA said, "The community has participated enthusiastically in the OFBJP organised car rallies from east coast to west coast and north to south in

about 20 cities in a coordinated fashion."

In the Washington DC metro area, rallies were conducted in Virginia and Maryland. In New Jersey, about 200 cars participated in a carnival atmosphere.

In Silicon Valley, a caravan of solidarity embarked from Fremont Warm Springs/South Fremont BART Station to the Indian Community Center (ICC) in Milpitas, covering significant ground literally and metaphorically in the heart of the San Francisco Bay Area. The rally saw an overwhelming turnout with about 200 cars and 300 participants from various parts of the Bay Area, signalling a strong wave of support for the Modi government and its bid for reelection in 2024, a media release said.

The participants, showcasing an array of banners, flags, and slogans, created a vibrant spectacle that drew attention and admiration from onlookers, emphasising the deep-rooted enthusiasm and commitment of the Indian diaspora towards India's progress and leadership on the global stage.

In Atlanta, Georgia, about 150 cars have participated.

Pakistan witnessed 245 terror attacks, counter-terror operations in first quarter of 2024

Islamabad, Apr 01 (PTI):

Pakistan witnessed as many as 245 incidents of terror attacks and counter-terror operations during the first quarter of 2024, resulting in 432 fatalities and 370 injuries among civilians, security personnel and rebels, according to a think tank report.

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and Balochistan provinces, both bordering Afghanistan, accounted for over 92 per cent of all fatalities and 86 per cent of attacks (including incidents of terrorism and security forces operations) during this period. Individually, the former suffered 51 per cent and the latter 41 per cent of all fatalities in the first quarter of 2024, according to the security report issued by the Centre for Research and Security Studies (CRSS).

The data indicates that the remaining regions were relatively peaceful, suffering less than 8 per cent of all fatalities.

Interestingly, militant organisations claimed responsibility for less than 20 per cent of the total casualties attributed to terrorism in the first quarter

of 2024.

A new militant group named Jabhat Ansar al-Mahdi Khorasan (JAMK), affiliated with the Gul Bahadur group, has emerged.

In addition to the casualties of terrorism and counter-terrorism, there were 64 incidents of sabotage in the country targeting properties of the government, politicians, and private and security properties.

In the first quarter, Balochistan recorded a staggering 96 per cent surge in violence, with fatalities jumping to 178 from 91 in the last quarter of 2023. Sindh saw a nearly 47 per cent rise in violence, though the number of fatalities was very low. However, the regions of KP, Punjab, and Gilgit-Baltistan (GB) recorded encouraging decreases in violence by 24 per cent, 85 per cent, and 65 per cent, respectively. Despite a notable decrease in violence observed in GB during the period under review, the GB home minister issued a terror threat alert on March 31, 2024, on the possibility of attacks by the banned Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP).

France presses China on trade and Ukraine ahead of upcoming Xi Jinping visit

Beijing, Apr 01 (AP):

The French foreign minister pressed China on trade issues and the war in Ukraine on Monday ahead of a planned visit to France by Chinese leader Xi Jinping later this spring.

Stéphane Séjourné, in talks with his counterpart Wang Yi in the Chinese capital, largely echoed positions that have been laid out by European leaders, including Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte on a visit to Beijing last week.

"The rebalancing of our economic partnership is a priority, as it is for our European partners," Séjourné said at a joint news conference with Wang. "The European Union is a very open market, the most open in the world. But the current deficits with a certain number of countries, including China, are not sustainable for us."

European officials have expressed concern that a flood of low-priced Chinese-made electric vehicles could disrupt production and displace jobs in Europe. The EU is investigating whether Chinese government subsidies for EVs give an unfair advantage to Chinese



Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi, right, shakes hands with French Foreign Minister Stéphane Séjourné, left, after a joint press conference at the Diaoyutai State Guesthouse in Beijing, China, Monday, April 1.

auto exporters. European companies operating in China are complaining that recent changes to national security laws have made it riskier to invest and do business in the country.

On the Chinese side, officials have raised concern about a "de-risking" strategy being pursued by the EU to ensure that it is not overly dependent on any one country for vital supplies and minerals. Wang expressed understanding for the European position but said he hopes it doesn't negatively affect business sentiment.

"I believe the facts have proved and will continue to prove that China consti-

auto exporters. European companies operating in Europe, rather than risks," he said. "The two sides are partners not opponents."

He also said that China is willing to import more "high-quality French products and services" and is working to resolve the concerns raised by European companies, including restrictions on the transfer of data overseas.

Séjourné insisted that Europe is not becoming protectionist and remains open to investment, a possible reference to attempts to woo Chinese automakers and other companies to create jobs by building factories in Europe rather than exporting their products from China.

FIRE AT ST. STANISLAUS CHURCH



Firefighters battle a four-alarm fire at St. Stanislaus church, Easter, in the Brooklyn borough of New York. The fire, which broke out on Siegel Street between Bushwick Avenue and White Street, resulted in the collapse of one of the floors of the building.

Pakistani police arrest 12 people over suicide bombing

That killed 5 Chinese workers
Islamabad, Apr 01 (AP): Pakistani counterterrorism police in multiple raids arrested at least 12 suspects in connection with last week's suicide bombing that killed five Chinese workers and their Pakistani driver in the volatile northwest, officials said Monday.

The detainees were not directly involved in the attack but they helped those who orchestrated Tuesday's bombing targeting the Chinese, three police and security officials said.

They said some of the detainees had links with Pakistani militants, adding that the suspects were still being questioned and other raids were ongoing.

The officials spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorised to speak to media on the record. The officials said some of the detained suspects transported an explosive-laden car to Shangla, a district in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, where a suicide bomber rammed it into another vehicle, killing the Chinese workers.

Israeli troops withdraw from Shifa Hospital, Gaza's largest, after 2-week raid

Deir Al-Balah, Apr 01 (AP):

Palestinian residents say the Israeli military has withdrawn from Gaza's main hospital after a two-week raid, leaving behind a vast swath of destruction. Hundreds of people returned to Shifa Hospital and the surrounding area after the withdrawal early Monday, where they found bodies inside and outside of the facility. The mili-

tary has described the raid as one of the most successful operations of the nearly six-month war, saying it killed scores of Hamas and other militants, as well as seizing valuable intelligence.

Mohammed Mahdi, who was among those who returned, described a scene of "total destruction." He said several buildings had been burned down. He counted six bodies in the

area, including two in the hospital courtyard.

Another resident, Yahia Abu Auf, said there were still patients, medical workers and displaced people sheltering inside the medical compound. He said several patients had been taken to the nearby Ahli Hospital. He said army bulldozers had plowed over a makeshift cemetery inside the hospital compound.

2 Pak soldiers killed as armed men open indiscriminate fire

Karachi, Apr 01 (PTI):

Unidentified armed men opened indiscriminate fire on a Pakistan Army bomb disposal team near the port city of Gwadar in the restive Balochistan province, killing two soldiers and injuring four others.

The bomb disposal team of the Pakistan Army was busy clearing landmines in the Ankara Dam area of

Gwadar district when gunmen opened fire on them on Sunday, the Dawn newspaper reported on Monday.

Two security personnel were killed and four others injured in the attack in the Ankara Dam area on Sunday, officials said.

"The firing incident took place some 25km from the port city [Gwadar], which claimed two lives and injured four others," said Gwadar SSP Mohsin

Zohaib, adding that after the incident, the bodies and the injured were shifted to a nearby hospital.

Security forces have launched a sea-rch operation in the area to trace the attackers.

No group has claimed responsibility for the attack.

The separatist Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA) has, in the past, claimed most of the attacks in Gwadar.



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China's Assertive Tactics

The actions by China, including the release of a fourth list of standardized geographical names in Arunachal Pradesh, demand a critical examination of Beijing's assertive stance in the region. Against the backdrop of escalating tensions and diplomatic posturing, it becomes imperative to dissect the implications of these maneuvers on regional stability and India-China relations. China's persistent efforts to rename places in Arunachal Pradesh, under the guise of standardization, represent a calculated move to reinforce its disputed territorial claims. Despite India's steadfast rejection of such attempts and reaffirmation of Arunachal Pradesh's integral status within its sovereign boundaries, Beijing continues to pursue its agenda unabated. The timing of these actions raises eyebrows, particularly in light of recent events such as Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Arunachal Pradesh and the inauguration of the strategically significant Sela Tunnel. The tunnel, designed to bolster all-weather connectivity and enhance military mobility in the frontier region, evidently unsettles China, prompting a flurry of diplomatic protests and assertive rhetoric. External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar's unequivocal dismissal of China's claims as "ludicrous" underscores India's resolute stance on the matter. His remarks, delivered at a prestigious academic forum, reaffirm India's commitment to defending its territorial integrity and resisting external coercion. Moreover, Beijing's dissatisfaction with the United States' recognition of Arunachal Pradesh as Indian territory further complicates the geopolitical landscape. China's swift rebuke of the US statement underscores its sensitivity to external interventions and underscores the intricacies of great power dynamics at play in the region. The Chinese Civil Affairs Ministry's insistence on adhering to standardized translations and regulations governing place names underscores Beijing's meticulous approach to shaping the narrative surrounding Arunachal Pradesh. By exerting control over linguistic representations and cultural narratives, China seeks to bolster its territorial assertions and undermine India's sovereignty claims. However, amidst Beijing's concerted efforts to assert its dominance, India remains undeterred in its defense of Arunachal Pradesh's territorial integrity. The resolute stance adopted by Indian policymakers reflects a commitment to upholding national interests and safeguarding the rights of its citizens in the face of external pressures. As tensions simmer and diplomatic maneuvers intensify, it is essential for stakeholders to exercise restraint and prioritize dialogue over confrontation. The Arunachal Pradesh dispute serves as a litmus test for India-China relations, highlighting the complexities and challenges inherent in managing bilateral ties amidst competing territorial claims and geopolitical ambitions.

Reading for Children's Success

Regardless of Background

Dr. Krishna Kumar Vepakomma



In today's fast-paced digital landscape, where distractions abound, the cultivation of foundational soft skills and social abilities in children is more crucial than ever. Despite the myriad of online resources vying for attention, the timeless practice of reading remains an unparalleled avenue for shaping young minds positively. Regardless of socio-economic backgrounds, instilling a love for reading from an early age is paramount for unlocking children's full potential and paving the way for their future success. India stands proud as the third-largest publisher of books globally, yet a significant gap persists in the reading population, particularly among children. Encouraging reading habits among the youth transcends mere literacy; it is a catalyst for cognitive development, vocabulary enrichment, and critical thinking skills. As we commemorate International Children's Book Day (ICBD) annually on April 2nd, we are reminded of the transformative power of literature in shaping young lives and fostering a lifelong love for learning. This year's ICBD theme, "the small is big in a book," encapsulates the profound impact that literature can have on young minds, regardless of its size or scope. It emphasizes the importance of celebrating the intricate worlds that books unlock, sparking imagination, empathy, and intellectual curiosity in children. Through the magic of storytelling, children embark on adventures, explore new ideas, and develop a deeper understanding of themselves and the world around them. However, creating a reading culture requires a concerted effort from all stakeholders: parents, teachers, and society at large. Parents play a pivotal role in nurturing a love for reading by integrating books into everyday life and serving as role models for their children. Teachers, too, have a significant influence in the classroom, selecting engaging books and fostering interactive learning experiences that ignite students' passion for literature. Moreover, the broader community has a responsibility to support and promote literacy initiatives that make books accessible to all children, regardless of their family situation or financial status. By providing access to libraries, organizing book drives, and supporting literacy programs, communities can create environments that value and prioritize reading as an essential tool for personal and academic growth. Schools, as educational institutions, play a central role in shaping reading habits and cultivating a love for learning among students. By creating vibrant and inclusive reading environments, schools can inspire a lifelong appreciation for literature and equip children with the skills and knowledge they need to thrive in an ever-changing world.

(Author: Professor & Principal (Retd.) and Newspaper Columnist)

VOTER AWARENESS CAMPAIGN



Volunteers create a 'rangoli' during a competition organised to create voter awareness ahead of upcoming Lok Sabha elections, in Chikkamagaluru, Monday, Apr

How science and religion came together to build a 'new Pompeii'

JESSICA HUGHES



The history of how a new city of Pompeii was built in the 19th century is little known, but a new exhibit reveals its story. The exhibition, held in the Catholic shrine of the Blessed Virgin of the Rosary of Pompeii, sheds new light on the relationship between science and religion in the late 19th century. The exhibition tells the story of the Meteorological-Geodynamic-Volcanological Observatory that was set up at the shrine in 1890 to monitor the activity of Mount Vesuvius.

This Pompeii isn't the famous ancient Greco-Roman city, which was destroyed by an eruption of Vesuvius in AD79, but rather the modern city down the road from the excavations. The city centres around the huge Catholic shrine, which was founded in the 1870s by an energetic lawyer called Bartolo Longo, on a plot of land next to the ancient Roman amphitheatre.

During his lifetime, Longo built a "new Pompeii" which attracted pilgrims and visitors from all over Italy and beyond. As

well as the magnificent church with its treasured painting of Our Lady of Pompeii, the city was home to several charitable institutions and pioneering urban projects, including an orphanage for girls, a residential home for the sons of prisoners, an industrial-scale printing press – and the observatory.

The new exhibition is displayed in a room with high ceilings in the shrine archives. A neat display of antique photographs, documents and original scientific instruments tells the story of this important but little-known episode in the history of science.

The development of the new city all started with a miracle. In 1886, Francesco Denza (a Barnabite priest and eminent astronomer, who was the first director of the Vatican's Observatory) recovered from paralysis after praying to Our Lady of Pompeii.

Denza came to Pompeii to give thanks for this healing miracle, and asked what he could do for the shrine in return. Longo proposed setting up an observatory on site, with Denza as director. A tower was constructed above the girls' orphanage, and filled with state-of-the-art modern instruments.

Longo then organised a grand festival of science to coincide with the observatory's inauguration on the Feast of the Ascension on May 15 1890. Reports of the event suggest 20,000 people attended. They listened to speeches in praise of the observatory and the broader

union of the science, faith and charity that it represented.

Longo's own speech contrasted the new Christian Pompeii with the ancient Greco-Roman city next door: It pointed to the bloody slaughter that took place in its amphitheatre, where brutal gladiatorial combats and staged animal hunts had been the favourite forms of entertainment in the ancient city.

The new observatory's significance

The new Pompeii observatory monitored the activity of Mount Vesuvius, keeping track of seismic movements and meteorological changes. Its regular data bulletins – which were dispatched to other observatories around Italy, as well as to individual scientists and shrine benefactors – now constitute a valuable record of geological events in this unique volcanic terrain.

For instance, the bulletin for September 1 1890 records how: "The lava at the base of the main channel of Vesuvius has formed into a horseshoe shape: on the south-south-eastern side the lava is flowing more abundantly ... The crater is emitting occasional flares and a calm jet of projected materials."

Longo saw the observatory as proof of how religion and science could exist in happy union – contrary to the widespread conviction that "science and faith must of necessity be in eternal disagreement" (to cite from his inaugural speech).

That is the driving message of the shrine's current exhibition as

well. I spoke with the curator, Salvatore Sorrentino (himself both a mathematician and member of the Pompeian clergy). He explained that the observatory itself was born from a scientist's act of faith, that is, Denza's prayers to God, through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin.

Sorrentino also drew a comparison with the work of the great Pisan scientist Galileo Galilei (1564-1642), who saw his own experimental methods as a means of asking questions of God, and of discovering the footprint of the creator in the physical world.

The observatory is a landmark in the history of science, that changed the way that the land around Pompeii was understood at the end of the 19th century. There was still room for older religious understandings.

An inscription chiselled into the shrine façade commemorates how Pompeii was delivered from the major eruption of April 1906. The inscription records "for posterity" how the painting of Our Lady was taken out of the church during the eruption, and carried in a procession "in view of the fiery peak".

The surrounding towns "were terrified by the darkness and ruins", but at Pompeii "the sky became calm, and all souls were reassured".

The news bulletin published by the shrine narrates how, by the end of this violent eruption, the new Pompeii had received only the gentlest sprinkling of ashes.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Financial Barrier

The decision of Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman to abstain from the electoral contest due to financial constraints is striking, underscoring the pervasive influence of money in Indian politics. While the BJP could easily fund her candidacy, the incident highlights the necessity to liberate elections from financial dominance. Electoral reforms are imperative to ensure equitable participation, allowing individuals from all walks of life a fair chance at victory. The call to dismantle the grip of money power on elections resonates as a crucial step towards fostering a truly democratic electoral process.

Krishna Kumar Nair, Kollam

Tackling India's Job Crisis

Enhancing job opportunities is vital for uplifting the impoverished. Access to income is essential for meeting fundamental needs such as food, shelter, and healthcare. India's longstanding job crisis, particularly concerning youth unemployment, demands urgent attention. Implementing stimulus packages, investing in burgeoning sectors like technology and healthcare, and bolstering manufacturing and infrastructure development are imperative steps to mitigate this crisis. Such initiatives hold the potential to ameliorate the plight of the jobless and pave the path towards inclusive growth and prosperity.

MK Nair, Raipur

Heed the Warnings

As most part of the country braces for a scorching summer, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) warns of above-normal temperatures and looming heatwaves in coming months. It's crucial for state governments to heed these warnings, prepare for heatwaves, and address long-term climate change impacts. Sustainable solutions like improved water management and increased green cover are essential. Additionally, awareness about heatwave preparedness and access to cooling shelters must be prioritised, especially for vulnerable populations. Beyond discomfort, heatwaves pose significant risks to public health, agriculture, and the economy, exacerbating existing health conditions and straining healthcare systems. To tackle these challenges, proactive climate adaptation and mitigation measures are essential, including investment in sustainable infrastructure and renewable energy sources.

Dr. Vijaykumar H K, Raichur, Karnataka

Exploring India's Political Legacy

Prof. Vasishth

In the labyrinthine corridors of academia, where the pursuit of knowledge often takes precedence, there exists a unique repository that delves into the annals of India's political landscape. Known as "Neta's Gallery," this extraordinary library curated by me stands as a testament to the rich tapestry of political history woven throughout Independent India.

Within the hallowed confines of Neta's Gallery, one discovers a treasure trove of literature dedicated to the stalwarts and statesmen who have shaped the destiny of our nation. From the towering figure of Jawaharlal Nehru, the architect of modern India, to the dynamic leadership of Narendra Modi, each volume encapsulates the ethos and essence of their respective eras.

As the political landscape undergoes seismic shifts with the impending Lok Sabha elections, Neta's Gallery emerges as a beacon of enlightenment, fostering dialogue and discourse on the in-

tricacies of governance and democracy. To this end, I am honored to announce a series of exhibitions to be held across various institutions in Kerala, offering patrons a glimpse into the captivating narratives that define our political heritage.

The inaugural exhibition, held on February 29th and March 1st, 2024, at Providence Women's College, Calicut, marked the commencement of this enlightening journey. It served as a platform for students, scholars, and citizens alike to engage with the myriad narratives encapsulated within the pages of history.

Building upon the success of the inaugural event, the second exhibition is slated to take place at a distinguished library on April 6th and 7th, 2024. This continuation of the series underscores our commitment to fostering a deeper understanding of India's political evolution and the individuals who have shaped its trajectory.

At the heart of Neta's Gallery lies a collection of nearly a hundred books, spanning a panoramic spectrum of political luminaries. From the



visionary leadership of K. Kamaraj to the astute statesmanship of Mallikarjun Kharge, each volume serves as a window into the lives and legacies of these iconic figures.

As custodian of this invaluable repository, my mission is not merely to preserve history but to illuminate minds, inspiring a new generation of scholars and statesmen to uphold the principles of democracy and governance. Neta's Gallery stands as a testament to the enduring power of knowledge and the profound impact of political leadership on the fabric of our nation.

In the pursuit of truth and enlightenment, let us embark on this odyssey through the corridors of power, guided by the wisdom and insights contained within the pages of Neta's Gallery. Together, let us celebrate India's political legacy and honor the indelible contributions of those who have charted its course through the annals of time.

(Writer is a former head of the department, history, Malabar Christian College, Calicut.)

Ajay Jamwal outlines strategy for Lok Sabha elections

Santosh Pandey accuses Bhupesh Baghel of undermining democratic process

Central Chronicle News



Khairagarh, Apr 01: Regional Organization General Secretary Ajay Jamwal convened a crucial meeting of BJP key workers, including members of the core committee and election management committee, at Ram Mandir. In a forward-looking address, Jamwal underscored a significant shift in perspective for the upcoming Lok Sabha elections in Rajnandgaon. He asserted that voters in the constituency are not merely electing Members of Parliament (MPs) but potential ministers for the Modi government. Stressing the weight of responsibility that comes with victory, Jamwal urged party workers to prioritize strengthening their respective polling booths and diligently execute all organizational programs. The meeting was attended by key workers from Khairagarh, Dongargarh, Pandariya, and Kawardha assembly segments. Deputy Chief Minister Vijay Sharma lauded MP Santosh Pandey's relentless efforts towards the constituency's development, highlighting Pandey's active engagement from grassroots to parliamentary levels and initiation of significant projects. Sharma expressed confidence that victory in the Lok Sabha elections would usher in a new era of development, citing upcoming road projects as evidence. In contrast, he accused the Congress of betraying the people of the region. MP and Lok Sabha candidate Santosh Pandey directed criticism at Bhupesh Baghel, accus-

ing the latter of inciting his party workers against the democratic process. Pandey alleged that Baghel was orchestrating the submission of hundreds of nominations by his own party members, only to backtrack out of fear of defeat. Minister for Organization Pawan Sai also addressed the core committee meeting, providing insights into forthcoming action plans. Lok Sabha in-charge Narayan Chandel, convenor Madhusudan Yadav, co-convenor Neelu Sharma, Kawardha MLA Bhavana Bohra, and other party members were present at the meeting.

Central Chronicle News

Mungeli, Apr 01: Concerns are mounting in Mungeli District as the water levels continue to plummet, exacerbated by a lack of social awareness and administrative action. Despite governmental directives, initiatives to address the impending water crisis remain conspicuously absent, leaving the district vulnerable to severe shortages in the near future. Efforts to implement water harvesting initiatives, both in public and private spaces, have languished due to bureaucratic apathy, relegating essential plans to mere paper exercises. The failure to enforce these measures has led to a steady decline in the district's water reserves, exacerbating concerns for the impending summer months. The municipality's lax oversight and failure to ensure compliance with water harvesting regulations have compounded the issue. While building permits are contingent on water harvesting provisions, inadequate follow-up and record-keeping have rendered these mandates ineffective. The absence of accurate records poses significant challenges in monitoring compliance and holding violators accountable, further exacerbating the crisis. Moreover, the municipal corporation's negligence extends to its employees, who have failed to maintain accurate records or conduct necessary investigations. Despite being entrusted with the responsibility of overseeing water harvesting initiatives, officials have neglected their duties, allowing discrepancies to persist unchecked for years. The consequences of this negligence are dire, with once-abundant wells now dried up and the groundwater table sinking to alarming depths. What was once a thriving network of wells has dwindled, leaving the city reliant on increasingly deep boreholes for water access.

Khairagarh Univ VC appointment unconstitutional, says Yadav
person appointed to the post of Vice-Chancellor will be selected only from the panel of names recommended by the specially constituted selection committee. Yadav also said that according to Article 254 of the Indian Constitution, state rules and central in case of contradiction between the rules, the Central rules will be supreme and valid. Mr. Yadav also told that the writ petition civil of the Supreme Court according to the decision No. 1525 of 2019, due to conflict with the central regulations, the government, the above provision of the rules will not apply.

Kudhurtal and Sawatpur villages embrace SVEEP program



Central Chronicle News

Mungeli, Apr 01: With the Lok Sabha elections 2024 on the horizon, a comprehensive voter awareness campaign has been launched in villages across Mungeli, including Kudhurtal and Sawatpur. Aimed at achieving 100% voter participation, the campaign is part of the Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) program. Emphasizing the importance of every vote, various engaging activities have been organized to mobilize and educate voters. From spirited rallies to vibrant street plays, and from colorful painting sessions to catchy slogans and inspiring songs, the campaign seeks to capture the attention and enthusiasm of citizens of all ages. Furthermore, innovative approaches such as quiz competitions and administering oaths at prominent locations, including MNREGA workplaces, are being employed to instill a sense of responsibility and commitment towards the democratic process.

New SHO takes charge to tackle crime

Central Chronicle News

Mungeli, Apr 01: In a promising development for the residents of Mungeli, Tej Nath Singh has assumed the role of the Station House Officer (SHO) at City Kotwali police station. With a background marked by dedication and service, Tej Nath Singh brings a wealth of experience to his new position, having previously served as the Police Station Officer in Fastpur. Expressing his commitment to upholding law and order, Tej Nath Singh wasted no time in outlining his plans to address prevalent issues plaguing the area. Chief among his priorities is the crackdown on illegal liquor sales, gambling, and betting, which have been persistent concerns in the community.



Tej Nath Singh

Khairagarh Univ VC appointment unconstitutional, says Yadav

Central Chronicle News

Khairagarh, Apr 01: The appointment of Khairagarh University Vice Chancellor Mamta Chandrakar has been termed unconstitutional by BR Yadav retired teacher honored with the President's Award in a press conference organized here. While presenting the facts regarding the appointment of Vice Chancellor Mrs. Chandrakar, Yadav said that the issue issued by Raj Bhavan Raipur As per the advertisement, the person appointed to the post of Vice-Chancellor must be an ac-



Mamta Chandrakar

Blaze devours police officer's parked Creta car

Mystery surrounds arson of newly purchased car

Central Chronicle News



Khairagarh, April 01: In an unfortunate incident, the brand-new Creta belonging to a dedicated police officer was reduced to ashes in Naya Tikrapara of the city over the weekend. The incident, which occurred late on Saturday night around 2 a.m., has left the community in shock. According to sources, Vibhash Singh, a resident of Naya Tikrapara and a member of the KCG District Police, had returned home from Rajnandgaon around 11:30 p.m. on Saturday, parking his Creta car (registered as CG 08 AW 6421) near his residence. After a brief time at home, Singh ventured out for a stroll around 12:30 a.m., leaving his car safely parked. However, at 3 a.m., neighbours alerted Singh and his family that his car was engulfed in flames. Despite their efforts to douse the fire with sand and water, the intensity of the blaze proved insurmountable, leaving the vehicle completely destroyed.

Authorities have launched an investigation into the incident, with suspicions pointing towards potential acts of vandalism by unidentified individuals. A complaint has been lodged at the Khairagarh police station, and authorities are leaving no stone unturned to uncover the truth behind this senseless act. Singh, who had purchased the car through installments in last year April 6, is devastated by the loss. The Khairagarh police have assured the public that every effort will be made to apprehend those responsible for this reprehensible act, and measures will be taken to prevent such incidents in the future.

Three-day state level Ramayana conference concludes

Central Chronicle News

Rajim, Apr 01: Three-day state level Ramayana conference organized in Chaubhandha, concluded here with Yagya under the mentorship of Pandit Gulab Sharma's Yagya Kund in Hanuman Temple courtyard. The oblation was offered with chanting of mantras and the village deities were invoked. Jai Maa Sharde Balika Manas member Sapna Sahu, interpreter of village Marri Mohla Manpur Ambargarh outpost, said that due to the husband, the wife is proud. The way a child remains certain after finding his parents, in the same way, a wife becomes secure after getting her husband. Sharda Manas Sudama



Sen Gatriha of Manas family Amodi Arang said that the work of saving the entire family belongs to all and even one person in the family does a good deed, its results will be beneficial to the entire family. Jai Chandhi Leela Devi Sahu of Mahila Manas Parivar Singdehi Bhakhara said on the occasion of Sunderkand that Surasa kept increasing her form and Hanuman became very small while giving the message of cleverness and it went into his mouth and came back and big talkers get deceived like Sursa. Pragya Suman Manas Family Ratanpur Bilaspur's lecturer Janak Ram Sahu said that a knowledgeable person should not be afraid.

BJP candidate Tokhan Sahu receives warm welcome



Mungeli, Apr 01: The Bharatiya Janata Party's (BJP) Bilaspur Lok Sabha candidate, Tokhan Sahu, continues to garner widespread support through his intensive public relations campaign. Today, Sahu embarked on a bustling tour of the city, accompanied by MLA Purnimal Mohale from the Mungeli assembly constituency. The vibrant streets of Mungeli came alive as workers welcomed BJP candidate Tokhan Sahu with open arms at Daupara Chowk. Commencing their outreach efforts on a spiritual note, Sahu and Mohale offered prayers at the revered Mahamai temple in Daupara, setting the tone for a day of enthusiastic engagement. Traversing through key landmarks of the city, including Pulpura, Old Bus Stand Parshuram Chowk, Sadar Bazaar, Gol Bazaar, and more, the dynamic duo interacted with residents and supporters, sharing their vision for the constituency. The journey culminated at Padav Chowk after traversing through Bashir Khan Ward, Kali Mandir, Ramayan Chowk, and other significant locales.

Viplav Sahu criticizes BJP candidate's performance as MP

Dissatisfaction among BJP workers over Santosh Pandey's tenure

Central Chronicle News



Viplav Sahu

Khairagarh, Apr 01: In a scathing critique, District Panchayat Chairman Viplav Sahu lambasted BJP candidate Santosh Pandey for his lackluster performance during his five-year tenure as a Member of Parliament (MP). Speaking at a program organized in Nawagaon, Sahu highlighted the absence of any significant development initiatives under Pandey's leadership. "Despite a lengthy five-year tenure, MP Santosh Pandey's record remains blank in terms of development," remarked Sahu. He expressed disappointment over the unfulfilled expectations of the public, who had hoped for progress given the BJP's position at the Centre. However, Pandey's tenure failed to deliver even partially

progress and delivery of promises from their representatives, a standard which Pandey failed to meet. The Lok Sabha constituency, historically known for its active and progressive MPs, has witnessed a stark contrast in Pandey's lack of initiative. Sahu revealed dissatisfaction among BJP workers, citing a survey indicating greater popularity for other potential MP candidates within the party. Sahu criticized the selection process that overlooked more popular and proactive leaders in favour of Pandey, who lacked effective public relations and a track record of welfare programs. Consequently, the BJP finds itself trailing behind the Congress in the electoral race due to poor implementation and lack of progress under current MPs.

Emotional tributes pour in following advocate Bhatt's untimely death

Suresh Bhatt remembered as a prominent advocate and community leader

Central Chronicle News



Suresh Bhatt

Khairagarh, Apr 01: The Khairagarh community is reeling from the sudden and tragic passing of Suresh Bhatt, President of the Advocates Association Khairagarh and a respected figure in the district's legal fraternity. Bhatt, aged 53, succumbed to complications arising from paralysis and brain disease on Sunday, March 31. Reports indicate that Bhatt experienced paralysis symptoms on Saturday night, prompting his family to rush him to Rajnandgaon for urgent medical attention. However, medical examinations revealed severe complications, including stroke and brain hemorrhage, leading to his untimely demise while en route to the capital around 1 p.m. on Sunday. The tragic incident occurred near vil-

lage Somni. Following his passing, Bhatt's mortal remains were brought back to Khairagarh, where preparations are underway for his final rites at Ganjipara Muktidham at 10 a.m. on Monday. Suresh Bhatt, known for his humble nature and dedicated service to the legal profession, leaves behind a legacy of integrity and commitment. His sudden departure has left a void in the legal community and the wider district. In recognition of his contributions, the Advocates Association and esteemed citizens of the district have come together to offer heartfelt tributes to Bhatt, honoring his memory and mourning the loss of a beloved leader.

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