



### BRIEF



Family of slain sub-inspector Deepak Sharma during a wreath laying ceremony, in Samba district, Wednesday.

### Permission

**Chandigarh:** Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann has written to the Tihar jail administration seeking permission to meet his Delhi counterpart and AAP supreme Arvind Kejriwal, party sources said on Wednesday. The letter was sent by the Chief Minister's Office (CMO), they said.

### Solidarity

**New Delhi:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday expressed anguish at the loss of lives in an earthquake in Taiwan, conveying India's solidarity with the "resilient" people of the country. He said on X, "Deeply saddened by the loss of lives due to earthquakes in Taiwan today. Our heartfelt condolences to the bereaved families and wishes for a speedy recovery to the injured. We stand in solidarity with the resilient people of Taiwan as they endure the aftermath and recover from it."

### Prayer

**Mathura:** Bharatiya Janata Party MP and third-time candidate from Mathura Hema Malini prayed here at Vishram Ghat on the bank of Yamuna river on Wednesday, a day before she files her nomination papers. After the prayer, the veteran Hindi film actress told reporters that she would leave no stone unturned in ensuring that the Yamuna is cleaned.

### Fast

**New Delhi:** The Aam Aadmi Party on Wednesday gave a call for a nationwide collective fast on April 7 at Jantar Mantar against the arrest of Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, party leader Gopal Rai said on Wednesday. Addressing a press conference, Rai, who is also the Delhi state convener of AAP, said the party has decided that on April 7, a nationwide collective fast will be observed to garner maximum support from the public for Kejriwal's fight.

### Arrested

**Jamshedpur:** Six people from Bihar have been arrested and 53 kg of ganja has been seized from their possession in Jamshedpur city of Jharkhand, police said on Wednesday. Acting on a tip-off, police nabbed a person hailing from Bihar's Vaishali district at Mango Bus Stand in Jamshedpur and seized 7 kg of cannabis from his possession on Tuesday, Superintendent of Police (City) Mukesh Kumar Lunayat told reporters.

## Mahant's 'confront Modi' remark triggers row

Raipur, Apr 03:



Modi", he said.

Senior Congress leader Charan Das Mahant has triggered a controversy with his criticism of Prime Minister Narendra Modi at a poll rally while underlining the need to "confront him".

He was speaking at the rally on Tuesday held at Rajnandgaon in support of former chief minister Bhupesh Baghel, the party's Lok Sabha candidate.

Mahant, the Leader of the Opposition in the state assembly, called for support for Baghel's victory in the Rajnandgaon Lok Sabha seat, hailing him as a champion of women and farmers. During his speech in the local dialect, Mahant urged the public to ensure Baghel's success for their future well-being.

"We need a protector who can stand up against Narendra Modi, and your MP (referring to Baghel) is that person. We want someone who can hold a stick and confront Narendra

These remarks stirred controversy, drawing a swift response from the ruling BJP, which condemned Mahant's statements, predicting that the people of Chhattisgarh would rebuke the Congress in the upcoming Lok Sabha elections. Mahant, a former Union minister, also trained his guns on the BJP, saying that if people bring the party to

power, there may not be polls in the future. "This fight is neither Baghel's fight nor mine nor of any other Congress candidates... This is your fight for your children and their future," he said.

Mahant also attempted to woo the audience with a song: "Hum toh tere aashiq hain sadiyo purane... chahe tu maane chahe na maane."

### 'Cheap and indecent'

In a sharp reaction, BJP's state in-charge Nitin Nabin criticised Mahant's comments as "cheap and indecent", asserting that the electorate would respond to such behaviour through their votes. Nabin challenged Congress to first engage with him directly rather than resorting to such rhetoric. "The people of Chhattisgarh will not tolerate such disrespectful remarks, and this will reflect in the elections. History has shown that derogatory comments against leaders like Modi have only backfired, and the people have responded fittingly," he said.

### 'If you have the courage, hit me first'

Mahant's comments drew a sharp reaction from Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai, who posted on X, "The Congress mindset thinks of hitting Prime Minister Narendra Modi with a stick. I am telling you, I am Modi's family (parivar). If you have the courage, hit me first."



### 'BJP twisting comments'

Defending Mahant, Chhattisgarh Congress communications wing head Sushil Anand Shukla said, "Mahant ji did not talk about attacking Modi ji but to fight Modi ji politically with the same strength. But BJP has no issues left... So they are twisting comments..."

## EC reviews law and order, security situation

### For Lok Sabha polls

New Delhi, Apr 03 (PTI):

The Election Commission (EC) on Wednesday directed the chief secretaries and directors general of police of all states as well as the heads of central agencies to ensure peaceful and inducement-free Lok Sabha polls and take preemptive measures to address communal tensions based on past experiences.

Recent violence and turmoil in Manipur and its ramifications for the conduct of a peaceful election were also addressed, with the EC urging for swift action to assist internally-dis-



CEC Rajiv Kumar with ECs Gyanesh Kumar and SS Sandhu during a meeting with CSs, Director Generals of Police, MHA, MoD and heads of CAPF ahead of Lok Sabha polls, at Nirvachan Sadan, in New Delhi, Wednesday.

placed persons and ensure their participation in the electoral process, the poll panel said. In his remarks, Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar said it is the "most

important and crucial" meeting that takes place every five years of the election cycle. Kumar told the officials that the EC seeks to deliver "absolutely spotless elections".

## Cong takes disciplinary action against Sanjay Nirupam

### After he targets Thackeray

Mumbai, Apr 03 (PTI):

The Congress on Wednesday said it has initiated disciplinary action against former MP Sanjay Nirupam for his remarks against the party leadership amid seat-sharing talks with ally Shiv Sena (UBT), and a decision about him will be taken in a day or two.

The Congress has dropped Nirupam's name from the list of star campaigners, Maharashtra



Congress president Nana Patole told reporters after attending a meeting of the party's campaign committee in Mumbai. Nirupam, however, remained defiant, and said he would declare his stand on Thursday.

Taking a dig, he asked Congress not to waste "stationary" as it is facing a financial crisis. "It should

"Don't waste stationary" Nirupam, remained defiant, and said he would declare his stand on Thursday. Taking a dig, he asked Congress not to waste "stationary" as it is facing a financial crisis. "It should utilise the stationary and energy to save itself, as the party is experiencing a serious financial crisis. The time frame I had given to the party ends today. I will spell out my next course of action on Thursday," he tweeted.

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### EXCISE SCAM

## HC reserves order on Kejriwal's arrest

New Delhi, Apr 03 (PTI):

The Delhi High Court on Wednesday reserved its verdict on a petition by Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal challenging his arrest by the Enforcement Directorate in a money-laundering case linked to the alleged excise policy scam.

"I am going to reserve judgement," said Justice Swarnan Kanta Sharma after hearing the senior counsel appearing for the AAP leader as well as the agency.

The AAP national convener, who arrested by the ED on March 21, ques-

**'Provide electric kettle, table, chair to Kejriwal'** A Delhi court on Wednesday directed Tihar jail authorities to provide an electric kettle to Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal in view of his "medical condition" and a table and a chair for reading books. Special judge Kaveri Baweja passed the directions on an application moved by Kejriwal's lawyer, who claimed the Aam Aadmi Party convener required an electric kettle for heating water and for having tea. "However, the jail provides tea in accordance with the Jail Rules only," the application said.

tioned the "timing" of his arrest and said it was in contravention of the basic structure of the Constitution, including free and fair elections and level playing field.

Kejriwal, currently in judicial custody, was represented by senior advocate Abhishek Singhvi.

The agency, represented by Additional Solicitor General S V Raju, opposed the petition and said the offence of money laundering was prima facie made out in this case and at present, the investigation against the petitioner was at a nascent stage.

## Manmohan Singh ends innings in Parl

New Delhi, Apr 03 (PTI)

Soft spoken, erudite and modest, Manmohan Singh has exited public life with his retirement from the Rajya Sabha - the former prime minister and architect of India's economic reforms slipping out of politics as quietly and without ceremony perhaps as he entered it 33 years ago.



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## Blast after fire at pharma plant

### Five killed, over 10 injured

Hyderabad, Apr 03:

At least five people have died and 10 others have been injured after the reactor in a chemical factory in Telangana's Sangareddy district exploded.

Several others are still trapped, officials said, meaning the number of dead could increase, perhaps drastically. Local reports suggest 50 men were in the building at the time of the explosion.

Disturbing visuals from the scene showed the magnitude of the blast; one photo showed a smouldering pile of wreckage with smoke rising from the debris and the setting sun, a fiery ball of orange, providing a poignant backdrop. Others showed the body of some of the men who died.

One of the men who died is believed to be the factory manager.

Local media have said there is concern another reactor in the building could explode next, and authorities have begun

evacuating people from surrounding areas.

The injured have been shifted to a government hospital. The blast, which occurred around 5 pm, triggered a fire. "The reactor exploded at the pharma company and people around it were thrown away in its impact... So far four people have died...10-15 people sustained injuries. They have been shifted to a hospital and are undergoing treatment," a senior police official told PTI.

Relief operations were underway, the official added.

### STRONGEST EARTHQUAKE

## Quake kills 9 in Taiwan, sparks tsunami fears

### 70 workers trapped in quarries

Hualien, Apr 03 (AP):

The strongest earthquake in a quarter-century rocked Taiwan during the morning rush hour Wednesday, killing nine people, trapping dozens in quarries and sending some residents scrambling out the windows of damaged buildings.

A tsunami warning was triggered but later lifted.

The quake, which also injured hundreds, was centred off the coast of rural, mountainous Hualien County, where some buildings leaned at



In this photo released by the National Fire Agency, members of a search and rescue team prepare to enter a leaning building in the aftermath of an earthquake in Hualien, eastern Taiwan on Wednesday.

severe angles, their ground floors crushed.

Just over 150 kilometres away in the capital of Taipei, tiles fell from older buildings, and schools evacuated their students to sports fields, equipping them with yellow safety helmets.

Some children covered themselves with textbooks to guard against falling objects as aftershocks continued.

Television images showed neighbours and rescue workers lifting residents, including a toddler, through windows and onto the street, after doors fused shut in the shaking. All appeared mobile, in shock but without serious injuries.

Taiwan is regularly jolted by quakes and its population is among the best prepared for them, but authorities said they had expected a relatively mild earthquake and accordingly did not send out alerts.

The eventual temblor was strong enough to scare even people who are used to such shaking.

"I've grown accustomed to (earthquakes). But today was the first time I was scared to tears by an earthquake," said Hsienhsuen Keng, a resident who lives in a fifth-floor apartment in Taipei. "I was awakened by the earthquake. I had never felt such intense shaking before."

### NATURE'S GIFT



Tulips in bloom at Tulip Garden at the foothills of Zabarwan mountains, on the banks of Dal Lake, in Srinagar, Wednesday.

## 'Continuous efforts necessary to generate awareness'

### For better heatwave management

New Delhi, Apr 03 (PTI)

Continuous efforts towards generating awareness is necessary for better management of heat waves, Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya said on Wednesday and added effective addressing leads to effective management.

Mandaviya, who chaired a meeting to review public health preparedness for the management of heat-related illnesses, highlighted the im-



Mansukh Mandaviya

measures will hugely support in reducing the severe impact of such heat waves," he said.

Highlighting the lack of accurate data from the ground, Mandaviya noted the importance of creating a central database with inputs from states to share field-level information on heat waves, including deaths and cases, so that a realistic assessment of the situation can be made.

He also advised senior officials to meet with states for better coordination and understanding, highlighting the importance of collaborative ef-

forts in the efficient management of heat-related illnesses.

Union Minister of State for Health Bharati Pravin Pawar stressed on the formation of state- and district-level committees for information and awareness campaigns.

She also highlighted the importance of equipping Ayushman Arogya Mandirs with water coolers, ice packs and other basic necessities.

She emphasised the need for states to accelerate field-level implementation of state action plans for addressing the effects of heat waves.

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## Inter district border meeting held to enhance coordination



Bhilai, Apr 03:

In view of the Lok Sabha elections, IGs of Durg Range and Rajnandgaon Range conducted a virtual meeting of the police officers of various districts on Wednesday. The Inter District Border Meeting was chaired by Inspector General of Police (Durg Range) Ramgopal Garg

and Inspector General of Police (Rajnandgaon Range) Deepak Jha. DIG Kanker KL Dhruv, Superintendent of Police of Kanker, Balod and Mohla-Manpur-Ambagarh Chowki and Commandant of ITBP were present. The main objective of the meeting was to make the upcoming Lok Sabha elections free and fair, to in-

crease mutual coordination with the border districts, to strengthen the mutual information system and to seal the borders. In view of the Lok Sabha elections, the border districts of Balod including Kanker and Mohla-Manpur-Ambagarh Chowki are considered as sensitive areas. In the meeting, discussions were

held on increasing mutual coordination and curbing illegal activities. It was decided to take joint action on various issues.

Senior Superintendent of Police (Kanker) IK Elesela, Superintendent of Police (Balod) SR Bhagat, Superintendent of Police (Manpur/Mohla/Ambagarh Chowki) YP Singh along with ITBP 27th Battalion (Manpur) Commandant Vivek Kumar Pandey, Mukesh Kumar Dashmana (Commandant, 44th Battalion, Mohla), Siddharth Kumar (Commandant, 38th Battalion ITBP, Churiya) and other senior gazetted officers were present. IGP's Steno Srinivas Rao and PRO (Durg) Prashant Shukla handled the technical aspects of this virtual meeting.

## INTUC reiterates demand of respectful designation for employees

Bhilai, Apr 03:

Steel Employees Union (INTUC) submitted a memorandum to the Director Personal of SAIL demanding immediate change of designations in SAIL including Bhilai and replacing it with respectful designations.

A delegation of Steel Employees Union on Wednesday submitted a memorandum addressed to the Director Personal of SAIL through IR General Manager JN Thakur. INTUC leaders said that the employees of SAIL including Bhilai have been given such designations which are not at all respectful. They are not even in line with the work of employees. For a long time, INTUC union has been demanding from the management to provide



respectable designations to the employees. Many meetings were held between the SAIL management and the unions regarding this issue, but till now no decision has been taken in this direction. In view of the increasing anger among the employees, this issue should be resolved as soon as possi-

ble by convening a meeting with the trade union for change of designation. This would help in keeping the morale of the employees high.

Deputy General Manager Vikas Chandra, Senior Manager V Nivesh, INTUC General Secretary Vansh Bahadur Singh, Executive

President Puran Verma, Additional General Secretary Shekhar Kumar Sharma, Dhanesh Prasad, Animesh Pasine, Jayant Barate, Shiv Shankar Singh, Rajkumar, Resham Rathore, Gurudev Sahu, Jasveer Singh, Vincent Perera, Suresh Kumar and others were present.

## Face Biometric Attendance Monitoring System for Contractual Workers inaugurated

Bhilai, Apr 03:

Face Recognition-based Biometric Attendance Monitoring Systems, to ensure optimal security and accuracy in attendance records of Contractual Workers engaged in SAIL-Bhilai Steel Plant were inaugurated at Steel Melting Shop-3 Department (SMS-III), on April 01, 2024. BSP is the first among all the units of SAIL to install these Biometric Attendance Systems for its Contractual Workers to regulate their attendance, overtime, and daily work timings. Anjani Kumar, ED (Works) and Pawan Kumar, ED (P&A) inaugurated the Biometric Attendance Monitoring Systems in the presence of Tapas Dasgupta, CGM I/c (Iron), Asit Saha, CGM I/c (M&U), Sandeep Mathur, CGM

(Pers), AB Srinivas GM (SMS-III), Sheeja P Mathew, GM (Pers-Works), Ravi Shankar, GM (A&D), Pushpa Ambrose, GM (SMS-III), B Jangpangi, GM (A&D), Yatendra Kumar, GM (SMS-III), MP Singh, GM (A&D), Tribhuvan Baitha, GM (SMS-III), D. Vijith, GM (SMS-III), PK Singh, GM (SMS-III) JN Thakur, GM (P-IR&CLC), H Shekhar, GM (ED P&A Secretariat), P Satapathy GM (SMS-III), Vikash Chandra, DGM (P-IR&CLC), Ajay Kumar, DGM (Pers), Rohit Harit, Sr Mgr (Pers IR&CLC), Nivesh Vijayan, Sr Mgr (Pers IR&CLC), Akhilesh Mishra, Sr Mgr (A&D), departmental employees and Contractual Workers in large numbers. Anjani Kumar, ED (Works) in his address stated that this one-of-a-kind initiative has



been possible with the collective efforts of all the concerned departments and is indeed a matter of pride for the BSP Collective. Its main purpose is to make the workplace more disciplined and systematic. Besides being highly efficient and prompt in recording attendance, these Biometric systems will help in regulating the working of personnel in the Plant, Kumar said.

Pawan Kumar, ED (P&A) in his address stated that Bhilai Steel Plant remains upfront not only in production but also in incorporating such unique innovations for the welfare of its employees from time to time. Soon, these Face Recognition-based Biometric Attendance Monitoring Systems will be installed at other departments of the Plant for regular employees as well,

Kumar said. Pawan Kumar, ED (P&A) also inaugurated similar Face Recognition-based Biometric Attendance Monitoring Systems at the HRD Centre in the presence of Nisha Soni, CGM (HRD&BE), Suraj Kumar Soni, GM (Pers NW & Mines), Anuradha Singh, GM (Pers), Amulya Priyadarshi, GM (HRD), departmental employees, and Contractual Workers.

It is noteworthy that the Face Recognition-based Biometric Attendance Monitoring System uses high-quality sensors that authenticate the face of the individual within a second and capture attendance, marking time, and geolocation. The touchless method is a successful preventive measure, especially during infective conditions like the COVID-19 pandemic.

## Firecracker laden truck catches fire

Bhilai, Apr 03:

A truck loaded with fire crackers caught fire after coming in contact with high tension power lines in Nagpura area of Durg on Wednesday. The entire truck was destroyed in the blaze. Fortunately, there were no casualties as the incident occurred in the outskirts of the village.

According to information, the firecracker-laden truck was en route from Sivakasi (Tamil Nadu) to the godown of Sathi Fireworks (trader) located in village Borai. The retail shop of Sathi Fire Works is located in Mohan Nagar, Durg. The truck reached Nagpura around 11:30 hrs and was heading towards the godown in Borai. About 100 meters before the godown, the vehicle came in contact with the HT



lines and caught fire. The truck driver and employees of Sathi Fireworks jumped out of the vehicle and moved to a safe distance. Soon the entire vehicle was engulfed in flames. The flames spread to the nearby agricultural fields also.

Fire Tenders from Durg reached the spot and launched fire fighting operations. They prevented the fire from spreading further and doused the flames. According to information, a huge quantity of fire crackers is stored in the godown also.

## HYU: National Education Policy to be implemented from new academic session

Bhilai, Apr 03:

According to the decision taken by the Higher Education Department, Government of Chhattisgarh, National Education Policy 2020 is going to be implemented in the entire Chhattisgarh state. In compliance with the government order, the National Education Policy 2020 is to be implemented in Hemchandra Yadav University, Durg from the new academic session. Giving this information, the Dean of Student Welfare, Dr Prashant Srivastava informed that the Vice Chancellor of the University, Dr Aruna Palta is continuously taking meetings of the concerned officials and giv-

ing necessary directions. Here it needs a mention that the Vice Chancellor of the University Dr Aruna Palta; Registrar, Bhupendra Kuldeep; Dean Student Welfare, Dr Prashant Srivastava and Assistant Registrar, Dr Sumit Agarwal have been included in the committees formed by state government.

Dr Srivastava said that as per the intention of the state government, many workshops and seminars will be organized online at the university level, division level, district level and college level so that all the professors, assistant professors and students associated with the university have clear idea of various points related to National Education Policy 2020.

At the meeting with the officials, Dr Palta described the National Education Policy 2020 as extremely beneficial in the interest of students. Palta said that in this, the student has the facility to choose the subject as per his interest and he will also get the opportunity for valuable education and skill development. Presently the state government is preparing to create graduate level curriculum in accordance with the National Education Policy 2020 which will be approved after discussion in the Central Study Board.

According to Dr Palta, there is also a facility in the National Education Policy 2020 that if a student for some reason stops studying after one

year, he will still be provided a certificate. In case of interruption in studies after two years of study, the student will receive a diploma certificate. Apart from this, a four-year course will also be conducted at the graduate level. Information related to research work will be provided in the last year of this course.

Dr Palta said that many senior professors from Hemchandra Yadav University, Durg have also been included in the subject-wise curriculum development committees formed by the state government. Dr Palta said that she will soon hold a meeting of principals and provide them information regarding the National Education Policy 2020.

## Saryuparin Brahman Samaj women play holi of flowers

Bhilai, Apr 03:

The women cell of Saryuparin Brahman Samaj celebrated the festival of holi in an eco-friendly manner at Brahma Prakash Bhawan in Smriti Nagar. The program commenced with offering prayers to Lord Shri Krishna and Lord Shri Brahma. Prabha Choube (Poet, Senior Social Worker) and Kusum Mishra (Retired Principal of Government Higher Secondary School, Baghera), Bhavana Pandey (Senior Journalist), Aarti Shukla, Veena Dubey (Journalist), Sweetie Kaushik (President BJP Mahila Morcha, Bhilai) were the chief guests. Saloni Pandey presented Lord Shri Ganesh vandana while Lalima Tiwari presented the welcome song. Preeti Rahul Dubey delivered the presidential ad-



dress. Secretary Kiran Dubey co-chaired the programme. Narayani Pandey, adorned as Lord Shri Krishna presented an attractive dance. Members of the women's cell along with the chief guests danced and played a grand Holi of flowers. An atmosphere of enthusiasm was created at the venue. While addressing the programme, Prabha Choube said that the Holi together programme elimi-

nates the differences and promotes brotherhood and love. Holi Milan programme gives us the message of living together with unity. Senior journalist Bhavana Pandey also addressed the gathering and appreciated the organisers. Journalist Veena Dubey, Kusum Mishra, Aarti Shukla, Sweetie Kaushik and Preeti Rahul Dubey also addressed the programme. On this occasion, all the members of

the women's cell danced and played Holi. Pramila Dubey, former councilor, women's cell in-charge, also participated in the program. Shashi Prabha Mishra, President, Preeti Rahul Dubey, Vice Presidents Rukhmani Mishra, Lalima Tiwari, Rita Sharma, Swaroop Lata Pandey, Reena Dubey, Ekta Mishra, Secretary Kiran Dubey, Treasurer Anju Tiwari, Co-Treasurer Pratima Tiwari, Working Committee Members, Meena Tripathi, Rekha Sharma, Anima Pandey, Mamta Mishra, social media in-charge Veena Dubey, cultural secretaries Manju Pandey, Rashmi Dubey were present. At the end of the programme, women's cell in-charge Shashi Prabha Mishra proposed the vote of thanks, informed Women's cell president Preeti Rahul Dubey.

## Live Colposcopy workshop organised at JLN Hospital & Research Centre

Bhilai, Apr 03:

The Department of Obstetrics & Gynecology and Reproductive Health conducted a live colposcopy workshop at SAIL-Bhilai Steel Plant's Jawaharlal Nehru Hospital and Research Centre, under the guidance of Dr Ravindranath M, CMO I/c (M&HS), on March 31, 2024. Renowned colposcopy expert Dr Asha Jain, Director SMSA Hospital Raipur FOGSI Recognized Training Centre for USG & Colposcopy, ISCCP Colposcopy Trainer was an external Faculty, while Dr Leena Bire from Nagpur was the second external Faculty at the workshop.

Dr Pramod Binayake, CMO (M&HS) inaugurated the Workshop with the lighting of Ceremonial Lamp, in presence of the guests and dignitaries, followed by the lectures by Guest Faculties. Dr Vineeta Dwivedi and Dr Kaushalendra Thakur, CMOs of M & HS Department were also present on this occasion, along with, Dr Sangeeta Kamra, ACMO & HOD Obstetrics & Gynecology & I/c (RCH), ACMOs of M & HS Department, Senior Consultants, DNB Students, and Para-Medical Staff in large numbers.

The objective of this CSR-RCH initiative was to enrich the DNB students and Consultants in the Obstetrics & Gynecology Department from the de-



liberations and also the practical demonstration of the procedure. As many as 27 women were examined during the workshop in the Gynecology OPD, which was transmitted live to

the Hospital Conference Hall. Colposcopy is an examination done to visualize the microscopic structure of the mouth of the uterus which is a common site for cancer. Dr Asha Jain shared

valuable insights on all practical aspects of cervical pathology, while Dr Leena Bire spoke about Colposcopy in all dimensions, the pathological basis of colposcopic findings, and the role of

Colposcopy in the management of Cervical intra-epithelial Neoplasia. Dr Pramod Binayake also shared insights on the topic of the Workshop. At the outset, Dr Sangeeta

Kamra delivered the Welcome Address on this occasion.

It is noteworthy that if the pre-cancer stage is identified with timely examination using a colposcope, the progress of the disease can be prevented by appropriate intervention. Cancer of the cervix is a leading cause of death in women in India. Worldwide almost 6.6 Lac women are diagnosed with cancer cervix every year; out of which 1.5 Lac women are from India. As many as 65 thousand deaths occur every year due to Cervical Cancer. It is only cancer that is 100 percent preventable by vaccine, and screening to detect early and timely treatment. The World Health

Organisation has set a target of 90-70-90 by the year 2030. This means 90 percent of adolescent girls should be immunized by the age of 15. At least 70 percent of women should be screened by age 35, and 90 percent of women should be treated appropriately by 2030. Colposcopy is one of the tools to screen women for early detection of cancer. Periodic Gynecological Examination, PAP smear and Colposcopy when indicated go a long way in preventing death from cancer.

The workshop was completed by Dr Prabhdeep Kaur and Dr Himani Gupta, while Dr Roshan Hussain ACMO & Head of O&G Unit-II proposed the Vote of Thanks.

## CATTLE MENACE



The city's main chowk is cattle menace during peak of the traffic hours and speaks of concern on part of the municipal authorities in taking action against stray cattle.

# People will teach Cong a lesson for objectionable remarks against Modi: Sai

● Asks MVY beneficiaries to check their accounts to know transfer of 2nd installment

Pawani/Bilaigarh, Apr 03:

Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai today asked the beneficiaries of Mahatari Vandan Yojana (MVY) to check their accounts to know the transfer of second installment of the MVY. The second installment of Rs 655 crore under Mahatari Vandan Yojana has been released, he said. Each MVY beneficiary is getting Rs 1000 every month. Sai gave good news about release of second installment of MVY in the Jan Ashirwad rally or-



ganized in Pawni, Sarangarh. Sai also hit back at Chhattisgarh Assembly opposition leader and Congress leader Dr Charan Das Mahant for his remarks against Prime Minister Modi.

Modi's guarantees are being fulfilled day by day whereas Congressmen are

making inappropriate comments as Congress is being rejected by the people, Sai said. Congressmen have made indecent remarks against Modi ji in the past by calling him 'chowkidar chor' and 'Mout Ka Soudagar', but the people gave a befitting reply and made Congress sit in the

opposition, Sai said and added that people will once again give a befitting reply to Charandas Mahant for his inappropriate statement against Prime Minister. Speaking in praise of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, he said that Modi ji could be elected Prime Minister for the

third time in this election. Modi ji worries about 140 crore Indians day and night, works for the countrymen for 18 hours in 24 hours, he said. He called upon people to vote for sister Kamlesh Jangle and make her MP. Let Modi ji win all 11 out of 11 seats in the state, he said.

He said that Congress had made 36 big promises, but did not fulfill any of them. Chhattisgarh was made a den of crime and corruption in Congress government, he said, adding that former Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel did not even spare God for corruption. First, by swearing on Ganga water, he made false promises and defamed Mother Ganga, he said. In the same way, Mahadev was also not left out, he added.

## BJP, Cong candidates file nominations

● For 2nd phase seats

Raipur, Apr 03:

**Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP):** candidate Rupkumari Choudhary and Congress nominee Bires Thakur on Wednesday filed their nominations from Mahasamund and Kanker Lok Sabha seats, respectively, in Chhattisgarh.

Wednesday was the fourth day of filing nominations for the second phase of elections covering three seats and so far a

total of 35 candidates have submitted their papers, a poll official here said.

Elections to the 11 Lok Sabha seats in the state will be held in three phases on April 19, April 26 and May 7 and votes will be counted on June 4.

Polling in Rajnandgaon, Mahasamund and Kanker (Scheduled Tribe reserved) seats will be held in the second phase on April 26.

So far, 13 candidates each have filed nominations from Rajnandgaon, Mahasamund and nine from Kanker, the official

said. Former chief minister Bhupesh Baghel is the Congress candidate from Rajnandgaon.

The last date of filing nominations for the second phase is April 4.

BJP candidate Choudhary was accompanied by Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai when she filed nomination at the Mahasamund collectorate.

The ruling BJP has dropped its sitting MP Chunnilal Sahu in Mahasamund and fielded Choudhary, a former MLA. The opposition Congress has fielded for-

mer state home minister Tamradhwaj Sahu from Mahasamund.

Thakur, accompanied by state Congress chief Deepak Baij, filed his nomination at Kanker collectorate.

The BJP has denied ticket to its sitting Kanker MP Mohan Mandavi and fielded Bhojraj Nag, a former MLA, from the ST-reserved seat.

Eleven candidates are in the fray for the first phase of polls to be held on April 19 in only one parliamentary constituency in the state - Bastar:

## BJP launches campaign against Mahant over his remark on PM

● DCM Sharma seeks apology

Central Chronicle News

**Raipur, Apr 03:** Chhattisgarh Deputy Chief Minister Vijay Sharma has strongly reacted to the remarks made by Leader of Opposition Charandas Mahant on Prime Minister Narendra Modi, saying, 'I am also Modi's family and Congress leaders should hit me with the baton first.'

BJP leaders and party workers have opened protest against the Leader of Opposition in VS Dr Charandas Mahant on the remarks made by him and took out a foot-march to gherao his residence from Bhagat Singh Chowk and raised slogans in protest. The BJP leaders later submitted a memorandum at the Civil Lines police station for filing of FIR against him.

Sharma while addressing a press conference here on Wednesday said that the Bharatiya Janata Party will reach out to the public on the issue of 'I am also Modi's family, hit me with sticks first' and the public will punish those who make such indecent statements.

Sharma said that this



type of rhetoric in the context of the Prime Minister of the country is condemnable. Especially from a person who has maintained parliamentary tradition, this is a statement that we condemn, he added. He further said that all the BJP workers would say that 'I am Modi's family, hit me first with the stick.' Sharma said that today this word is in everyone's mind. This is the form of mass movement. Charandas Mahant should apologize to Prime Minister Narendra Modi for this statement. By saying such things in the context of the country's Prime Minister, former Assembly Speaker Charan Das Mahant has inspired people to commit violence. This is wrong, this should not have been done. This is also a violation of the code of conduct. Sharma has urged the Election

Commission that action should be taken against Charandas Mahant for his statement.

He said that whenever such words have been used for Prime Minister Modi, whether he has been mocked by calling him a tea seller, whether he has been called a lowly politician, whether he has been called a cut or shot person and today it is being said that the intention is to break his head. There have never been any allegations on his personal life, he has no family. Whenever this has been said about Prime Minister Narendra Modi, it has always been backfired on the Congressmen. Sharma said that we never interfere with democratic processes, hence this matter will be opposed with democratic dignity. We will also move forward because if you have ex-

**Mahant claims his statement wrongly quoted**

**Raipur:** Under attack from the BJP over his public statement, the senior Congress leader Dr Charandas Mahant said that his statement has been distorted in the section of media who are not away with the Chhattisgarhi dialogue in his own style whereas his statement has been wrongly presented. He said that he has used the Chhattisgarhi dialogue in his own style whereas his statement has been wrongly presented. He said that he knows the constitutional system and respects the post of Prime Minister and has personal terms with him. He further said that his statement is being politically twisted to gain mileage during the Lok Sabha elections.

pressed your desire to break the head with a stick then we all are Modi's family. You beat us with sticks. Despite the indecent comments made towards Modi, his personality has further emerged in front of the public. The love and blessings of the public have increased further towards him.

## GRP seizes addictive tablets in Raipur railway station, two arrested



**Raipur, Apr 03:** GRP has arrested two persons with a large quantity of addictive drugs near the auto stand of the railway station. According to the information received, GRP arrested 31-year-old Sahdev Benwa, son of Bhaiyalal Benwa and Abhiram Bagh (29), son of Late. Buddu Bagh. Both are residents of Shri Nagar Oriya Basti, Ward No. 15 Gudhiyari

(Chhattisgarh). In compliance with the instructions received to take maximum action to prevent illegal transportation of drugs in trains in view of the upcoming Lok Sabha elections the Anti Crime Unit GRP Raipur is continuously checking the train and station area and conducting a campaign to prevent illegal drug peddling.

## BJP tried to distort Mahant's statement: PCC Chief

Central Chronicle News

**Raipur, Apr 03:** Coming out in defence of senior Congress leader Dr Charandas Mahant who is being attacked by BJP for his remarks against Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the Pradesh Congress Communication head Sushil Anand Shukla said that BJP tried to do low level politics by distorting the statement of Leader of Opposition Dr Charandas Mahant. The Leader of Opposition has issued his statement in this regard, Shukla said while talking to the re-

porters here today. Mahant did not talk about attacking Narendra Modi, he talked about standing in front of him with the same strength to compete politically and used Chhattisgarhi idiom 'Hana', he said. BJP leaders' attempt to make fun of the Leader of Opposition for using the Chhattisgarhi idiom reflects BJP's attitude towards Chhattisgarhi language and culture, he said, adding that BJP should apologize to the people of Chhattisgarh and Dr. Charandas Mahant of simple, easy-going nature for this.

## ACB/EOW issue notices to more than 15 coal businessmen

Central Chronicle News

**Raipur, Apr 03:** The coal businessmen and traders involved in the Coal Levy scam have come under purview of ACB-EOW, as the later have prepared list of more than 50 coal businessmen and are calling them to office by sending them notices.

As per the media reports, so far more than 15 coal traders have been sent notices and they are coming to EOW office to

register their statements. The notice by ACB and EOW is reaching the coal lifter and businessmen related to delivery order. ACB in its inquiry has found many irregularities on large scale in the coal lifting and delivery orders over the last few years and it is on this basis, the coal traders and businessmen have been called to ACB office.

Meanwhile the inquiry by the ACB and

EOW with the accused IAS officers and others undergoing imprisonment for their involvement in the famous Mahadev Satta betting book and coal levy and liquor scam has been completed. The team held talks with the accused in the Central Jail for the last four days.

It is after cross-questioning these officers and persons related to high-profile coal scam, the officers of ACB are

trying to link the different statements made and sources informed that ACB/EOW has prepared 70 pages report from it.

But the sources informed that the officers and other persons in jail have not extended much of help to the ACB/EOW team in the interrogation process and after which there are plans to take them on remand and for which an application will be put up in the special court by ACB soon.

## Vivan, Varad into Asian Tour Tennis semi-final

Central Chronicle News

**Raipur, Apr 03:** Vivan Mirdha defeated the No. 1 rank player Pradnesh Shelke with the score of 7-5, 1-6, 6-0 to enter into the semi-final of the Chhattisgarh Asian Junior Tour in boys category match here on Wednesday.

Similarly, Varad Unde, Vivan Bidasaroya and Arsh Valke also won their matches to advance into the semis of Under 14 boys championship.

In the Boys double semi-final match, the pair of Vivan Mirdha and Pranjay Shivach defeated the pair of Ishan Badagi and Sudarshan to enter into the final of the tournament whereas Vivan Bidasariya and Abhiuday Singh also won their match to enter into the



## SPORTS ROUND-UP

final of the tournament. In the Girls singles quarter final match, top seeded Shrinith Choudhary defeated Jahanavi by 6-4, 6-0 to enter into the semi-final whereas Praniti, Shruti and Harsha also won their matches to enter into the semi-final. In the Girls double semi-final match, the pair of Yashita and Shusti defeated the pair of Sanvi and Mayara with the score of 6-1, 6-2 to advance into the final whereas the pair of Shrinith and Jahanavi also won their semi-final match to advance into the final.

## Chh'garh Masters TT team announced for National meet

Central Chronicle News

**Raipur, Apr 03:** Chhattisgarh Olympic Association (COA) Vice President Sharad Shukla has released team for the 30th National Masters Table Tennis tournament to be organized under the aegis of TTFI at Hyderabad. Pradeep Joshi is the Team Coach whereas Arvind Kumar Sharma is the Team Manager.

Namit Kotari and Ritesh Jindal from Raipur are in the Boys 40 years category whereas Divya Amade, Dr Swati Bhandia and Sikha



Khade are part of the female category. Similarly, Sanjay Dubey, Giriraj Bagdi, Sanjay Laheka, Rajesh Lunia and Rajsekhar Sharma would represent 50 plus A team

whereas Honey Arora, Arvind Kumar Sharma, Rajesh Agrawal, Suresh Sadija, Ritesh Malhotra are in B team and Kishore Jadvani, Vijay Kejriwal and Shailesh Golecha are

in Team C. Pramila Thakur would be representing Women 50 years category. Shane Stefan, Pawan Shadija and Lokendra Singh are in 60 years category for the tournament. Ravishanaker Kaja, PN Majumdar, Ajit Banerjee, Ram Sawle, Pradip Janwade, RN Kelkar, Tarun Rathore and Tapwn Kumar Dey would be part of team in 65 plus category. Ira Pant from Raipur as well as Shabri Moitra and Gauri Dey form Bilaspur would be in Women 65 plus category.

## Bilaspur division exceeds freight loading target

For FY 2023-24



Bilaspur, Apr 03:

In a remarkable feat of efficiency and dedication, the Bilaspur Division of the Indian Railways has surpassed its freight loading target for the financial year 2023-24, achieving a record-breaking 172 million tonnes of freight traffic. This achievement places Bilaspur Division second among all divisions of the Indian Railways. The loading

target of 169.5 million tonnes, set for the financial year 2023-24, was surpassed on March 30, 2024, underscoring the division's commitment to excellence in freight transportation. This remarkable accomplishment marks a significant increase from the 159.54 million tonnes of loading achieved in the previous financial year 2021-22. The success in exceeding the loading target can be attributed to the combined

and disciplined efforts of the dedicated railway employees, who have worked tirelessly even in adverse conditions to ensure the smooth functioning of freight operations. Goods loaded include coal, clinker, iron ore, cement, steel, food grains, chemical fertilizers, minerals, and oil, among others.

Divisional Railway Manager Praveen Pandey, in recognition of the extraordinary efforts of railway workers, dedicated this achievement to their unwavering commitment and hard work. In celebration of this milestone, Pandey and other branch officers gathered to express their happiness, cutting a cake to commemorate the occasion.

Pandey extended his heartfelt congratulations to all employees and officers for their exceptional performance and encouraged them to continue striving for excellence. He emphasized that the true heroes behind this achievement are the railway employees stationed in remote coal mine areas, who sacrifice their family life to ensure the efficient operation of freight transportation.

## MoU signed between NITRRFIE and PITEF for Co-Incubation

Raipur, Apr 03:

National Institute of Technology (NIT) Raipur has always been committed to support innovation, entrepreneurship and startups. On the same lines, the institute has established a not-for-profit Technology Business Incubator Company named 'NIT Raipur Foundation for Innovation and Entrepreneurship' (NITRRFIE) to support and mentor the startups under the National Initiative for Developing and Harnessing Innovations (NIDHI) - Technology Business Incubator (TBI) program of Department of Science and Technology (DST). Pt. Ravishankar Shukla University, Raipur has also established a Not-for-profit Company governed by Section-8 of Companies Act 2013 in the name of 'PRSU Innovation Technology and Entrepreneurship Foundation (PITEF)' to promote



Innovation, Entrepreneurship Development, Startup Incubation, Training and Skill Development, Intellectual Property Management, Industry Collaboration and Networking. NITRRFIE signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with PITEF on 02-April-2024 with the primary objective to identify and support incubation related activities and technology driven startups by providing co-incubation, infrastructure and mentorship etc. Under the terms & conditions of the executed MoU, both the incubation centres have agreed to foster cooperation in the areas of research, innovation, en-

trepreneurship and incubation activities through exchange of information, joint organisation of seminars, conferences, workshops for start-up companies /Entrepreneurs on subjects of mutual interest. The signing of MoU reflects the commitment of both these institutions to promote excellence in innovation, entrepreneurship, research and industry collaboration. This strategic partnership will undoubtedly contribute to the growth and development of both incubation centres and benefiting the startups, incubatees, students, faculties and the industry at large. The MoU was signed by the Hon'ble Director NIT

Raipur, Prof. N.V. Ramana Rao, and the Hon'ble Vice Chancellor Pt. Ravishankar Shukla University Raipur, Prof. Sachchidanand Shukla. The MoU was signed in the presence of Dr. Samir Bajpai, Head, Career Development Centre (CDC), Dr. Anuj K. Shukla, Faculty In-Charge, Incubation Cell & Interim CEO of NITRRFIE and Mr. Pawan Kataria, Assistant Registrar, NIT Raipur & Interim Manager of NITRRFIE, along with Dr. Kavita Thakur, Professor, PRSU & Director PITEF, Dr. Amber Vyas, Associate Professor PRSU & Member PITEF and Dr. Deependra Singh, Associate Professor PRSU & Member PITEF.

## 13 Maoists including dead bodies of 3 woman found



Gangalur, Apr 03:

Action of security forces on the intelligence of presence of PLGA Company No. 2 Commander Vella of banned CPI Maoists, Gangalur Area Committee Secretary Dinesh Modiyam and other 70-100 armed Maoists in the forest of Korcholi-Lendra.

As part of the anti-Maoist operation being conducted in the district, on 01/04/2024, a joint team of DRG, Bastar Fighter, STF, Cobra 210, 205, 202 and CRPF 222 went on an anti-Maoist operation based on the intelligence of the presence of banned CPI Maoist organization PLGA Company No. 02 Commander Vella, Gangalur Area



Committee Secretary Dinesh Modiyam and other 70-100 armed Maoists in the forests of Korcholi-Lendra under Gangalur Police Station area.

During the search operation, an encounter took place between the police and the Maoists in the forests of Korcholi-Lendra at 06.00 am on 02/04/2024. After the encounter

ended, during the search operation on the spot, bodies of 13 Maoists including 3 women were recovered. Weapons-1 piece 7.62 LMG-58 rounds, 1 piece 303 rifle-39 rounds, 1 piece 12 bore single shot, 3 pieces BGL launcher-17 cells, 2 pieces air gun, explosives- hand grenade-1, UBGL cell-1, 7 pieces tiffin bomb, gelatin stick cardex wire, safety fuse, detona-

- After encounter search in Korcholi-Lendra
- 8 weapons including 7.62 LMG, 303 rifle, 12 bore gun, 03 BGL launcher, huge amount of explosives, medicines, Maoist uniform, Maoist literature and other daily use items recovered from the spot.

tor, electric wire, equipment- laptop, DVD writer, walkie-talkie, other Maoist uniform, pitthu, solar plate, propaganda material of banned Maoist organization and Maoist literature and other material of daily use.

Panchnama and other legal proceedings of the Maoists killed in the encounter is being done.

## ARO NK Thakur inspects polling stations



Raipur, Apr 03:

Under the Lok Sabha Elections 2024, on the instructions of Collector and District Election Officer Dr. Gaurav Singh, ARO of West Assembly, Naveen Kumar Thakur inspected the polling sta-

- And issues necessary instructions

tions. He inspected polling booth numbers 128, 129, 148, 149, Government Gokulram Verma Primary School, Ramnagar, polling booth numbers 38, 39, National Institute of Technology (NIT) Raipur, polling booth numbers - 132, 133, Government New

Pre-Secondary School, Ramnagar. He gave instructions to provide basic facilities. He said that arrangements for drinking water, electricity, toilets and ramps should be made in the polling booth. Since the voting is in the month of May during the time of high temperature, keeping in mind the summer season, make arrangements for pandals for shade. Additional Tehsildar Rakesh Dewangan and other revenue officials were present on this occasion.

## Criminal activities increasing in Bijapur due to arrival of outsiders: Telami

- SAS demands strict action against minor girl suicidal case

Bijapur, Apr 03:

On Sunday, the body of a minor girl was found hanging on a tree near ITI college on the way to Tumnar Road. The family members have termed the girl's suicide as suspicious and have demanded a high-level investigation through Sarv Adivasi Samaj (SAS) and strict action against the culprits. District President of Sarv Adivasi Samaj, Jaggu Ram Telami said that a delegation of Sarv Adivasi Samaj reached the deceased's house and



participated in the funeral program and information about the incident has been collected.

Telami further said that the deceased (17 years) is a resident of Chinnakodepal and lived with her aunt in Bijapur. According to the family members, she left the

house after talking to someone on the phone on Saturday and disconnected the phone after talking to her friend at around 1 o'clock. After which her phone was switched off. On Sunday, the family members got information that the body was hanging near

Kokda Para on Tumnar Road. Jaggu Ram Telami said that due to the increasing number of strange dweller in Bijapur, criminal incidents have increased in the district. Incidents like entrapping tribal girls in love trap, playing with their dignity and taking over their lands by giving false promises of marriage are on the rise. Moreover he said that Sarva Adivasi Samaj demands strict action against the culprits by taking immediate action in the suicide case of 17-year-old tribal girl along with investigation of the people who have become owners of tribal lands here in the past years.

- Students and faculty unite to champion the spirit of democracy

Raipur, Apr 03:

In a spirited effort to bolster voter awareness, Government Bed College Raipur orchestrated a dynamic "Bike Rally" led by Dr. Lata Mishra, Assistant Nodal Officer of SVEEP in collaboration with Principal Pushpa Kispotta. The rally, brimming with enthusiasm, traversed the streets of Raipur, culminating in a captivating street play at "Sardar Bhagat Singh" Chowk.

Under the guidance of academic stalwart Yogeshwari Mahadik, students and faculty alike fer-



vently championed the cause of democracy. College Student Union President, Smriti Dubey, rallied voters with an inspiring song "Jaago-Jaago Re Voter, Vidhaata Bano Bharat Ke", urging citizens to exercise their franchise diligently.

Dr. Gopa Sharma, an M.Ed trainee, underscored the paramount impor-

tance of voting, stressing, "Leave all your work and vote first..." Fellow trainee Seema Sharma echoed the sentiment, urging voters to cast their ballots fearlessly, transcending any semblance of greed or discrimination.

As the rally progressed, the fervour only intensified. B.Ed student teacher Hemdhar Sahu serenaded

the crowd with a captivating voter awareness song, while Poonam Das Kurre, Amit Kashyap, Ashis Shukla, Dinesh Baghel, Lavkush Banjare, Sanjay Lanjhe, Lalit Lahere, and Deepak Dewangan, alongside other student teachers, implored everyone to participate wholeheartedly in the celebration of democracy.

### OBITUARY

#### Flora Lakra



Raipur: Mrs Flora Lakra (82) passed away on Wednesday morning at Dr B R A m b e d k a r Memorial Hospital, Raipur. She was mother of Dr D P Lakra Head of Department of Medicine, Dr B R A m b e d k a r Memorial Hospital, Raipur.

## Mahila Morcha asked to propagate Central-schemes



Central Chronicle News

Raipur, Apr 03: Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) Mahila Morcha members from three Legislative Assembly segments under the Raipur Lok Sabha constituency, were asked to propagate the works of last 10 years of Narendra Modi government during the Parliamentary polls. Raipur Lok Sabha member Sunil Soni said that a strong government under the leadership of Modi

- Raipur segment's Election committee meet held

would ensure speedy development of nation, for which victory in all the 11 Lok Sabha segments of Chhattisgarh is essential. Raipur Lok Sabha in-charge Sandeep Sharma said that women voters would play significant role to ensure victory of BJP in the Lok Sabha polls and added that centre-sponsored schemes for women

has ensured benefits to society. Raipur Lok Sabha Convenor Ashok Bajaj said that awareness among women should be created towards the achievement of Central government under the leadership of Modi and also to expose the anti-women policies of Congress. Mahila Morcha members Meenal Choubey, Amika Yadu, Dr Kiran Baghel and other office-bearers were present during the Election Committee meeting.

## Samrath elected president

Raipur, Apr 02: Narendra Samrath was elected president of Vijitha Complex Government Residential Colony, New Rajendra Nagar, Raipur. Alok Nigam, RD Verma, Ashutosh Sharma, CS Maravi, Rakesh Nair, Rai, Vinod Tirkey, Mehra, Shailendra Somvanshi, Goswami, OP Yadu, Kori, Ram Swaroop Meena, Bharti, Kushwaha, OP Paikra, Shailendra Kathe, Khare, Uike, Shukla of Vijitha Complex and all the residents congratulated him on his election. Earlier farewell was accorded to the outgoing president Sunil Narayan.

## SAGES students conduct voter awareness drive



Raipur/Abhanpur, Apr 03:

On 2nd April 2024 Swami Atmanand Government Excellence School, (SAGES) Khorpa block Abhanpur, Raipur organised various voting awareness compelling events at school.

Incharge principal Mrs Soma Banik administered the voter awareness oath to the teachers of English and Hindi Medium staff. They pledged to uphold the democratic traditions of country. Students wrote an urging letter to their

parents to cast their votes and exercise their rights and powers. With the help of theatrical expression (street play) they emphasized the significance of election day which will help the nation to get more awakened citizens.

## 'Criminals in UP are now scared of going to jails'

Lucknow, Apr 03 (PTI):

Slamming the previous Uttar Pradesh governments over law and order, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Wednesday said the criminals are now scared even to enter the state's jails. The BJP leader said unlike the Congress and the Samajwadi Party (SP)-led governments in the state, his government follows a "zero tolerance" policy towards crime. "You stop indulging in criminal activities or be prepared to pay the price," he said, addressing a "Jan Chaupal" at Fatehpur Sikri in Agra.

Adityanath referred again to his government's claim that the criminals were earlier getting their bail cancelled so that they could stay safe in jails. "Now they are saying don't even send us to jail. We are afraid to go there too," he said, according to a statement issued here. His remark comes days after jailed gangster-politician Mukhtar



Yogi Adityanath

Ansari died of cardiac arrest in Banda's Rani Durgawati Medical College. The five-time MLA had been behind bars in Uttar Pradesh and Punjab since 2005 and had over 60 criminal cases against him. A post-mortem report confirmed that he died of cardiac arrest. However, a magisterial inquiry was ordered as the opposition parties raised questions over Ansari's death amid allegations by his family that he died due to "slow poisoning" in the Banda jail. "Before 2017, the police stations in

most areas in the state would stop functioning after sunset. The criminals thought that our government would also operate like this but we follow a zero-tolerance policy towards crime," Adityanath said. He also alleged that Uttar Pradesh suffered due to "riot-curfew policy" of the previous government. "If there is no fear of law in the mafia and the criminals, they will make life difficult for the general public. Earlier, there used to be riots every other day in UP. The state has suffered a lot due

to the riot-curfew policy of the Congress and the SP but now there are no riot-curfews. This state will no longer tolerate disturbance but will participate in traditional celebrations," Adityanath said, and added, "Utsav Pradesh" believes in Modi's guarantee.

He also attacked the INDIA bloc saying they do not have candidates to field in the Lok Sabha elections because "their parties are meeting but not hearts". "In West Bengal, the Trinamool Congress has fielded candidates on all the seats leaving no seat for the Congress but they are in alliance. In Kerala, the communists did not ally with the Congress but they are also a part of the alliance. Same is the situation in Maharashtra and other states. They (INDIA bloc) are not getting candidates to contest the elections," Adityanath said. In UP, the INDIA bloc is trying every trick to woo the voters who will shower their blessings on Prime Minister Narendra Modi, he added.

## PRAYERS FOR DALAI LAMA



People gather to welcome Tibetan spiritual leader the Dalai Lama ahead of a prayer for his long life, in Dharamshala, Wednesday.

## National Poker Series India 2024 breaks records

New Delhi, Apr 03:

National Poker Series India 2024, India's biggest Poker event hosted on PokerBaazi, recorded participation of 2.3 Lac players competing for a prize pool of Rs 62.5 crore. The conclusion ceremony of the series, Night of Glory, held in Delhi was attended by acclaimed Indian cricketer Yuvraj Singh who felicitated the talented winners.

PokerBaazi also surprised attendees by announcing the 2024 edition of its flagship tournament G.O.A.T., India's single biggest Poker tournament, offering a mammoth of Rs 25 crore guaranteed prize amount. G.O.A.T will be hosted in October 2024 to celebrate the company's 10th anniversary.

And to continue the momentum of Poker after the commencement of National Poker Series India 2024, the platform also flagged off its MoneyMaker series from April 1st with Rs 1 crore prize pool everyday for the entire month.

At the 4th edition of National Poker Series, the battle for podium spots intensified where Deepak Singh from Delhi emerged triumphant and crowned as the gold medalist securing 3 Gold, 1 Silver and 1 Bronze medal.

Abhishek Sonu from Bihar was the Silver medalist of the series, clinching rank two at the podium and Samay Modi from Maharashtra bagged the Bronze medal securing rank third in the National Poker Series India 2024.



Players from Maharashtra emerged as the frontrunners in the state medal tally with 100+ medals, while Delhi took second place with 81 medals. Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, and Karnataka secured the

third, fourth, and fifth spots respectively, showcasing the strong growth and acceptance of Poker as a mind-sport beyond tier-I cities.

Players from tier-II cities like Imphal, Una, Chamba, and Agra among others also showcased a growing talent pool with impressive performances. The Night of Glory stands as the pinnacle event in the Indian Poker community and saw performances from renowned comedian Abhishek Upmanyu and celebrated Bollywood DJ NYK this year.

## Special arrangements made by Nandankanan Zoo

### To protect animals from heatwave

Bhubaneswar, Apr 03 (PTI):

In view of the prevailing heatwave condition in Odisha, the Nandankanan Zoo authority has made special arrangements to protect the animals in the zoo from the scorching summer.

Special arrangements like— air coolers, sprinklers, and fruits—have been made in the zoo to provide relief to the animals from the intense heatwave conditions, officials said on Wednesday.

Special arrangements in the form of water sprinklers in their enclosures have been made for

elephants, sambar and deers while coolers have been provided for the chimpanzees and gibbons. Besides, ice water has been provided to bears for bathing.

Watermelons, super fruits like sugarcane and anti-heat medicines are being given to the animals as per veterinary doctors' advice, said Nandankanan Zoo director Manoj V Nair. "We are also ensuring 24-hour drinking water supply in every enclosure of the zoo. We are also ensuring water supply in the pools so that animals could take baths to beat

the heat," he said. The enclosures are covered with bamboo thatch and reed screens to protect the animals from the intense heat. Water sprinkling is being done on the bamboo thatch at regular intervals, zoo officials said. The zoo has 14 drinking water kiosks at different places for tourists. Arrangements are being made to install some new kiosks, they said.

## ECoR achieves 256 MT of freight loading

In 2023-24

Bhubaneswar, Apr 03:

In 2023-24 financial year, i.e. from 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024, East Coast Railway has loaded 256.22 million tons of originating freight which is 14.72 million ton more and registered a growth of 6.1% than 2022-23 fiscal.

East Coast Railway has surpassed all records of Indian Railways in Freight Loading, this financial year. ECoR has also become the 1st Zone to cross the Milestone of 200 Million Tons of freight loading for 5th time in a row.

The three Railway Divisions of ECoR have contributed greatly to the stupendous feat achieved by it. East Coast Railway was the Second Railway Zone after the undivided South Eastern Railway to load 200 MT in the financial year 2019-20. Today, it has become the first zone to cross 250 MT of freight.

During the financial year 2023-24, East Coast



Railway has loaded 152.95 MT of Coal, 13.29MT of Raw Materials to Steel Plants, 20.77 MT of Steel & Slag, 31.26 MT of Iron Ore, 1.24 MT of Cement, 3.24 MT of Food Grains, 6.46 MT of Fertilizers, 3.10 MT of Mineral Oil, 23.91 MT of freight in Containers and other goods. This is 6.1% more than the corresponding period of last year.

Khurda Road Division of ECoR has contributed 159.94 million ton followed by 76.48 million ton by Waltair Division and 19.80

million ton by Sambalpur Division. All the three Railway Divisions have performed better than previous year and surpassed their last year loading figure.

The coalfields of MCL at Talcher, five ports in ECoR jurisdiction, i.e. Paradeep, Dhamara, Vizag, Gangavaram & Gopalpur; iron ore mines in Bailadila in Chhattisgarh, Major Steel & Aluminium Companies, iron ore mines in Keonjhar District are the major contributors

in this achievement.

This remarkable loading has been achieved despite various challenges by remarkable performance of ECoR with proper planning and coordination with Govt Sectors and Industries apart from motivating its workforce. The stellar achievement of East Coast Railway is propelled by its core elements: proper planning, a positive work environment, a motivated workforce, and the dedicated hard work of its employees.

## Over 2,500 houses, schools, govt buildings damaged in storm

Aizawl, Apr 03 (PTI):

More than 2,500 houses, schools and government buildings were damaged and a woman was killed in thunderstorm that hit Mizoram in the past three days, officials said on Wednesday. A powerful storm and hailstorm accompanied by heavy rain lashed several parts of Mizoram between Sunday and Tuesday, wreaking havoc in the state, they said. Officials also said that a 45-year-old woman died when a tree uprooted by a strong wind fell upon her on Monday.

According to state disaster management and rehabilitation department officials 15 churches in five districts, 17 schools in five districts, 11 relief camps in Champhai and Saitual districts, which housed Myanmar refugees and internally displaced people

from Manipur, 11 Anganwadi centres in Kolasib and Serchhip districts, and several government buildings were among over 2,500 houses damaged by thunderstorm and hailstorm. North Mizoram's Kolasib district, which borders Assam, was the hardest hit as over 800 structures, including 795 dwelling houses, seven schools, 6 churches, 8 Anganwadi centre and 11 staff quarters have were destroyed, followed by Aizawl district, which suffered a damage to 632 dwelling houses, it said. State Disaster Management and Rehabilitation Minister K Sapdanga said that the government will provide assistance to the affected people

as permissible under the existing laws despite the election model code of conduct being in place. He said that the state government has sought permission from the Election Commission and Chief Minister Lalduhoma has also informed the poll panel about the disaster and the need to provide assistance to people.

## NAME CHANGE

It is informed to the general public that I, Kuldeep Garg, S/o Thandi Ram Garg, resident of D - 93, Devendra Nagar, Sector - 4, Raipur (C.G.). Have changed my Daughter old name MAHI GARG, D/o Kuldeep Garg. So in future I should be recognized by my Daughter new name that is MAABI GARG, D/o Kuldeep Garg in all Government and other documents.

KULDEEP GARG  
D - 93, Devendra Nagar,  
Sector - 4, Raipur (C.G.)

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Zonal Manager, Bhopal

## Twelve newly elected RS MPs take oath

New Delhi, Apr 03 (PTI):

Rajya Sabha Chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar on Wednesday administered oath to 12 newly elected members of the Upper House of Parliament. The oath was administered in Parliament House, where Rajya Sabha Deputy Chairman Harivansh and Secretary General P K Mody were present.

Those who were administered oath are Dharmshila Gupta, Manoj Kumar Jha, Sanjay Yadav, Govindbhai Laljibhai Dholakia, Subhash Chander, Harsh Mahajan, G C Chandrashekar, L Murugan, Ashok Singh,

Chandrakant Handore, Sadhna Singh. Their tenure starts from April 3.

**बैंक ऑफ बरोडा** BANK OF BARODA, BERLA BRANCH  
Branch Address: Bank of Baroda, Main Bazar Road, Berla, Dist. Betameta, PIN - 491332  
Tel No.: 07825-287619, E-mail: [dbberl@bankofbaroda.co.in](mailto:dbberl@bankofbaroda.co.in)

**NOTICE TO ALL LOCKER HOLDERS**  
SHIFTING OF BERLA BRANCH PREMISES

This is for the information to our customers, who have taken lockers on rent at our Bank of Baroda, Berla Branch that our branch is proposed to be shifted on 06th May, 2024 (Monday), to new premises at: Berla, Ward No. -11, Berla Road, (Near Ration Shop), Pin- 491332. The lockers will be shifted to the new premises and operational from date 06th May, 2024 (Monday).

Locker Holders may visit branch for further information / Change / Closure of Locker facility.

Date: 04.04.2024 Place: Berla Branch Head Bank of Baroda, Berla

**DAV MUKHYAMANTRI PUBLIC SCHOOL, KUDKAI**  
PENDRA, GAURELLA-PENDRA-MARWAHI, CHHATTISGARH  
Contact No.: 7999721202, 7999523420, Mail Id: [davmps.kudkai@gmail.com](mailto:davmps.kudkai@gmail.com), website: [www.davmpskudkai.in](http://www.davmpskudkai.in)

Managed by: DAV College Managing Committee, New Delhi-55)

Session: 2024-25

Applications are invited from 05 April, 2024 to 15 April, 2024 from DAV CBT qualified candidates with Provisional Eligibility Card for the following posts:

Post 1: PGT: Physics, Biology, Economics, Maths, English, Physical Education & Computer Science. Eligibility: Post Graduate with minimum 50% Marks and B. Ed.

Post 2: TGT: English, Mathematics, Science, Sanskrit, Computer science. Science. Eligibility: Post Graduate/Graduate with minimum 50% B. Ed. & CTET/STET/CGTET.

Post 3: PRT: English, Hindi, Science, Social Studies, Computer Science, Sports/Physical Education, Music. Eligibility: Graduate with minimum 50% B. Ed. & CTET/STET/CGTET.

Post 4: NTE: Graduate with minimum 50% & B. Ed./D.Ed./D.El.Ed./NTT.

Post 5: UDC/LDC: Eligibility: Commerce graduate with 50% & knowledge of Tally Accounting, Computer & drafting having relevant experience.

Final selection will be made on the basis of Demonstration & Subject Panel Interview to be held at the respective schools, subject to verification of P.E.C.

Candidates having relevant experience, fluency in English language and good communication skill will be preferred.

Salary/Employment: As per recommendations of VII Pay Commission & DAV CMC norms with EPF, Gratuity, EDLI & Leave Encashment on Regular Appointment. Salary is not a constraint for the right and deserving candidates.

Candidates having DAV CBT qualified Certificate (PEC) can submit their application with a copy of PEC and Testimonials within a period of 10 days from the date of advertisement by Speed Post/Mail Id as given above.

Date and Venue of Interview will be informed to the candidates by Mail/Phone Call

PRINCIPAL

**केनरा बैंक Canara Bank**  
Canara Bank, Specialised ARM Branch, Plot no. 4, PSP Area, Near AIIMS, Saket Nagar Bhopal Tel.: 8989014648

**E-AUCTION (SALE NOTICE)**

Appendix-IV-A (See proviso to rule 8(6) & 6(2))  
**SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF MOVABLE & IMMMOVABLE PROPERTIES**  
E-auction Sale Notice For Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with provision to Rules 8(6) & 6(2) of The Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002.  
Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) & Guarantor (s) that the below described Immovable properties mortgaged / charged to the secured creditor, the Possession of which has been taken by the authorised officer the Canara Bank (secured creditor) will be sold on "AS IS WHERE IS BASIS, AS IS WHAT IS BASIS" & WHAT EVER THERE IS" on 29-04-2024, for recovery of bank dues to the Canara Bank (secured creditor)

Name and address of the Borrower & Guarantors	Description of Property	Demand Notice Dt. Possession Dt. Outstanding Amt.	Reserve Price EMD Amt. Bid Increment Amt.
Borrower : M/s Bhilai Bricks Prop Shanti Pandey Village Dhor P.C. No 24, Teh Patan Dist-Durg CG-490020 Mrs Shanti Pandey W/o Late Shri Shyam Charan Pandey Mr. Ajay kumar Pandey S/o Late Shri Shyam Charan Pandey Mr Sachin Kumar Pandey S/o Late Shri Shyam Charan Pandey Smt Pooja Pandey D/o Late Shri Shyam Charan Pandey	Plant and Machinery at PH no. 11 Kh no. 782/2, Village Dhor Teh, Patan Dist Durg-CG.	27-04-2021 23-08-2021 as on 28/03/2024 ₹ 14,24,708.43/-	₹ 11.22 Lakhs ₹ 1.20 Lakhs ₹ 10000/-
SYMBOLIC POSSESSION * Interest & charges			

Last date for submission of online bids is on or before 26/04/2024 upto 5.00 p.m.  
Date and Time of e-auction : 29/04/2024, 12:00 PM to 1:00 PM (With unlimited extension of 5 minutes duration each)

Account Detail for EMD Submission : Demand draft in favour of Authorized Officer, Canara Bank, SPLSD ARM Branch (6816) Bhopal OR shall be deposited through RTGS/NEFT/Fund Transfer to credit of account of Canara Bank, ARM Branch, A/c No 209227434 IFSC Code: CNRB0006816  
For sale proceeds of Rs. 50,00,000 (Rupees Fifty lacs) and above, the successful bidder will have to deduct TDS at the rate 1% on the Sale proceeds and submit the original receipt of TDS certificate to the Bank.  
For detailed terms and conditions of the sale please refer the link "E-Auction" provided in Canara Bank's website (<https://www.canarabank.com>) or may contact Mr. Ranjan Kumar Pani, Chief Manager, SPLSD ARM Bhopal, Canara Bank, Plot no. 4, PSP Area, Near AIIMS, Saket Nagar Bhopal. Contact no. 8989014648 / 9993000127 / 8449087876 / 9137453982 during office hours on any working day.  
Place: Bhopal, Date: 02/04/2024

AUTHORISED OFFICER, CANARA BANK

## SECR achieves milestone in environmental protection and fuel saving

**Over 40 lakh liters of diesel saved through innovative HOG system**

Bilaspur, April 03:

The South East Central Railway (SECR) has made significant strides in environmental protection and fuel conservation with the implementation of the Head on Generation (HOG) system. This year alone, SECR has saved more than 40 lakh liters of diesel, marking a monumental shift towards sustainable railway operations. The HOG system, a cutting-edge technology, allows trains to draw power directly from the grid through Over Head Equipment (OHE), eliminating the need for diesel fuel consumption. With this innovative approach, 22 trains under SECR have transitioned into eco-friendly 'green trains', contributing to reduced air pollution and increased



operational efficiency.

Explaining the mechanism behind the HOG system, it involves supplying electricity to coaches for lighting and air conditioning directly from the electric traction power cable, thereby replacing traditional diesel generators. This transition not only reduces diesel consumption but also mitigates

noise pollution and enhances passenger comfort during travel.

The benefits of the HOG system are manifold. Apart from substantial diesel savings, it facilitates a shift towards electric transportation systems, fostering cleaner air and quieter train journeys. Moreover, the space previously occupied by bulky

diesel generators can now accommodate additional seating, enhancing passenger capacity and comfort.

The introduction of HOG technology in SECR trains signifies a commendable initiative towards cleaner, quieter, and more convenient rail transport in India. As SECR continues to lead by example, other railway zones are encouraged to adopt similar sustainable practices for a greener future. The SECR trains now operating on the HOG system include prominent routes such as Bilaspur-Chennai Express, Bilaspur-Pune Express, and Bilaspur-Ernakulam Express, among others. With each journey, these trains exemplify SECR's commitment to environmental stewardship and operational excellence.

## Sarpanch husband frauds government in lakhs

Navapara-Rajim, April 03:



S/o late Kanhaiya Lal Sahu demanded a photocopy of the Panchayat proposal regarding the operation of the fair price ration shop operated in the village and the proposal for the appointment of a salesman, the information provided by the Public Information Officer of the Panchayat exposed Hemu Sahu's corruption. As per

information, the first independent Panchayat fair price ration shop opened in Chipridih 442002096 has been opened without passing the resolution in the Panchayat and also, no proposal has been passed regarding the appointment of the salesman appointed here, whereas by rules ration shops are regularly allotted to either co-

operative societies or self-help groups and if a shop is opened in the name of Gram Panchayat, then allotment can be done only after giving the signatures of the Sarpanch and the Secretary and providing ID and address proof.

Same way Murrum from a nearby pond was sold without proposal to embezzle funds in the first term and some villagers Pritam Sahu, Asant Sahu, Devnath Sahu, Minesh Sahu, Pukhram, Lalak Ram; they told that the Sarpanch, Sarpanch Representative Hemu Sahu and Deputy Sarpanch Vimal Sahu in mutual connivance had decided to postpone the date till June 2023. Meanwhile both the Sarpanch and her husband were tried to be contacted in the number 7974594571, but the calls went unanswered.

## Mahila Congress takes out Save Democracy Rally



Rajim, Apr 03:

On the directions of National Mahila Congress President Alka Lamba and State President Phulo Devi Netam, Mahila Congress workers took out a Save Democracy rally under the leadership of Gariaband District Mahila Congress President Padma Dubey. In the rally, women were made aware of their rights and it was told how democracy is being murdered during the BJP rule. It was al-

leged that in the BJP rule, women are not safe and how the Chief Ministers of two states have been put in jail and how central government institutions are being misused. A large number of women including Khemin Dewangan, Durga Soni, Manisha Sharma, Sangeeta, Vimala, Dhaneshwari, Hema, Kavita, Kajal, Daupiti Sonkar, Deepa, Surekha, were present along with District Mahila Congress President Smt. Padma Dubey.

## Modi govt is necessary for developed India: Singh

Khairagarh, Apr 03:



State BJP Working Committee member and Rajnandgaon District Panchayat Vice President Vikrant Singh is continuously appealing to the workers to work continuously at the booth level by holding meetings in rural areas in favor of Lok Sabha candidate Santosh Pandey.

In this series, in areas Ataria, Bhimpuri, Keshala, Bhorampur, Joratarai and Maroda, which fall under Khairagarh rural division, Singh reached the Shakti Kendra meeting, where while addressing the BJP officials and workers, he said that it is because of the achievements of Prime Minister Modi during his 10 years of tenure that today India

stands in the category of good governance and developed nation.

Singh also said that during his 10 years of impeccable tenure, national servant PM Modi has fulfilled the vision of good governance and development, completed public welfare schemes and created a history of development work

in the entire country and state and the people of Chhattisgarh state have expressed confidence in the guarantee given by PM Modi and have given mandate in support of BJP.

Singh said that the BJP government of the state has fulfilled its promises in a very short period of

100 days and has proved that there is no difference between the words and deeds of the BJP government and the BJP government will help the villages, poor and laborers.

Describing booth management by the workers and the work done at the Shakti Kendra level as the basic mantra to win the elections, he said that our resolve is to get maximum votes for BJP at every booth and it has been our responsibility earlier also to maintain constant public relations with the citizens including the beneficiaries benefited from the schemes of the Central and State Government of BJP. BJP leaders including Vikesh Gupta, Harprasad Verma, Keshav Chandel, Devkumar Sen, Ganesh Verma were present during the meeting.

## Ketan Nishad secures Navodaya selection



Anwari, Apr 03:

Ketan Kumar Nishad, a diligent student from Aryavart Vidya Niketan School in Semra (B), has achieved a significant milestone by securing admission to Navodaya.

Joined by Parent Committee Chairman

Mithilesh Sarva, School Director Yogendra Markande, Principal Mati Tandon, and the dedicated teaching staff, the school community is brimming with pride and joy. They extend heartfelt congratulations to Ketan for his outstanding academic achievement.

## BJP Mahila Morcha celebrates Rang Panchami festival



Kurud, Apr 03:

BJP Mahila Morcha Kurud, following the yearly traditions, organized Holi Milan program at BJP office Kurud on the occasion of Rang Panchami. Besides, playing games like balloon inflating competition, Antakshari etc., and displaying other art skills also made the event enjoyable. Leaders and members of Mahila Morcha fed Holi sweets to each other

in which women workers of Kurud, Bhakhara, Sirri and Megha Mandal participated.

Congratulating the workers of Mahila Morcha of Kurud assembly constituency and sharing the happiness of Holi, Pratibha Ajay Chandrakar, as the chief guest, while congratulating all the women, said that for the first time in Mahasamund Lok Sabha, Bharatiya Janata Party has given ticket to a

woman candidate, therefore, we should provide our support, blessings and efforts to make them victorious.

Also presiding over the program, BJP District Vice President - Mahila Morcha, Kurud assembly in-charge, Jyoti Chandrakar, while addressing the sisters of Mahila Morcha in the event, said that the time has come to bring us again those who have brought Lord Ram this time. She

also said that the country's leader PM Narendra Modi, state chief Vishnu Dev Sai and area MLA Ajay Chandrakar are continuously serving everyone by taking the schemes to the last person and to maintain its continuity we have to hand over leadership to BJP.

On the occasion of Rang Panchami festival, BJP Mahila Morcha officials Mandal President Rashmi Sahu, Giteshwari Sahu, Mahila Morcha officials Nandini Sahu, Durga Sahu, Sandhya Sahu, Bhumiika Sinha, Lakshmi Reddy, Bharti Bais and a large number of Mahila Morcha workers including Lalita Dhruv, Heera Dhruv, Ratna Sarathi, Devkumari Sahu, Komeshwari Chandrakar, Ramesha Sahu, Pinky Yadav, Lata Sahu were present.

## Ch'garh Kahara Samaj executive meeting concludes

Katagi, Apr 03:



Chhattisgarh Kahra Samaj Mahasabha and Executive Meeting was concluded here with the aim to throw light on social activities while carrying out its social customs and traditions. In this context, this meeting was held in Baloda Nagar in the presence of regional presidents of 8 zones, former officials, Samajik Margdarshak Mandal and Chhattisgarh Kahra Samaj State Executive Officers, in which applications were invited from each centre president for organizing the General Assembly. A demand was made by submitting an application from Kharod area by Shivrinarayan Nagar and

after discussion, the order for organizing the Mahasabha was passed unanimously accepting the application of Shivrinarayan Nagar and on the same day, after inspecting the site, Paddy Market venue was proposed for organizing the General Assembly. On this

occasion, State President of Chhattisgarh Kahra Samaj Mr. Mukesh Kumar Rakesh, General Secretary Harihar Aditya, Vice President Gendral Katkwar, Jeedhan Aditya, Secretary Ashok Aditya, Treasurer Kamal Jaltare, Joint Secretary Khilavan Aditya, Youth

Organization Treasurer Lalmani Rakesh, Lakshmi Aditya, Social friends including Humesh Aditya, Devnarayan Aditya, Ravi Katkwar, Puniram, Guharam Aditya, Laxman Aditya, Center President L a k s h m i n a r a y a n, Amarnath Kahra and many others were present.

## Villagers cautioned against misuse of water

Kurud, Apr 03:

On the misuse of drinking water found in 50-70 houses in village Bagdehi and Dandesara, Public Health Engineering Sub-Division of Kurud, on the orders of Collector and instructions of Tehsildar, EEPHI, Naib Tehsildar, PHE engineers, and employees conducted investigation in various houses of village Bagdehi along with Panchayat Sarpanch etc., as reportedly misuse of water through big tanks was done by installing Tullu pumps in 50 houses. The villagers were cautioned against misuse of water and on being found, they were cautioned of action. It is known that the important scheme of the Central Government is to provide pure drinking water to the



people under tap water in every house, but people

are constantly receiving other types of complaints ranging from water not reaching their homes or water reaching it in less quantity, due to pumps installed in some particular houses. Therefore, in the supervision of Naib Tehsildar Vinod Kumar Banjare, Deputy Tehsildar of Kurud Gram Panchayat Bagdehi Development Block, Kurud Sub-Division, Public Health Engineering, a Joint inspection has been done with Engineer Manoj Kumar Pankra, Assistant Engineer PS Gajendra, Site Assistant Pkend Patel, Store Watchman Shankar Yadav and Gram Panchayat Sarpanch Ramchandra Sahu, Deputy Sarpanch Narsingh Sahu, and Tap Water Operator Rekhrum.

## Likita selected for Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya



Dongargaon, Apr 03:

The result of Jawahar Navodaya Entrance Examination has been declared, in which Kumari Likita, a student of Primary School Gungeri Navagaon Sankul Maneri, has been successfully selected. The student has been smart and brilliant since her primary classes and has been a studious student. On this occasion, School Development Committee, Parents and Gram Panchayat

Sarpanch Bhelendra Netam, Deputy Sarpanch Devendra Dewangan, Ashok Yadav, Dr. Khemudas Sahu, Chhannu Patel, Kirti Sahu, Seema Patel, Sagwan Bai Principal Chhatrapati Guru, Teachers Harishankar Dewangan and others have congratulated her and wished her good luck for her future education. Likita gave credit to her teachers and parents for her selection and has inspired other children to study diligently.

## Two nabbed for playing online 'satta'

Raigarh, Apr 03:



The police action against online betting on cricket is continuing and in this context two youth from city were nabbed while playing online 'satta' on Delhi-Chennai's IPL cricket match. On Sunday the cyber cell and Kotwali police nabbed three persons playing online 'satta' on mobile phones and laptops.

The combined team of Cyber Cell and Kotwali police, on getting tip from an informer nabbed two persons from Dimrapur chowk playing online 'satta' for Delhi-Chennai IPL match and cash of Rs 15000 and total materials and items including mobile phones and others worth Rs 42000 was recovered from

their possession. The other accused was nabbed with cash of Rs 20000 and mobile phones and other gadgets worth Rs 1.30 lakh. Both these accused were found using mobile phones for online betting for cricket match and the police also

got the link in their WhatsApp for online 'satta'. Both the accused were booked under section 7 of Chhattisgarh Gamble Prohibition Act and the police seized total cash and materials worth Rs 2.07 lakh from their possession.

# Imran Khan's lawyer asks court to disregard Azam Khan's testimony

Islamabad, Apr 03 (PTI):

Pakistan's jailed former prime minister Imran Khan's counsel has urged a top court here to discard the testimony of his ex-aid Azam Khan in the cipher case as it was ostensibly obtained under dubious circumstances.

Barrister Salman Safdar made the argument before an Islamabad High Court (IHC) division bench comprising Chief Justice Aamer Farooq and Justice Miangul Hassan Aurangzeb on Tuesday that Azam Khan, once a close confidant of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder and an accused in the case, went missing in June 2023.



Then instead of recording his confession, the former principal secretary to Imran Khan testified against him before an investigation officer and

magistrate. The IHC was on Tuesday hearing appeals filed by 71-year-old Khan and former foreign minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi against their conviction under the Official Secrets Act, 1923, for misusing a cipher (secret diplomatic communication) to the detriment of national interests, Dawn News reported.

Just two weeks before the ouster of the PTI government in April 2022 through a vote of no-confidence, Khan had brandished a piece of paper allegedly a copy of a diplomatic cipher at a public rally in Islamabad, claiming it as proof of a conspiracy against his government by a foreign

power. Safdar said the case's first information report was registered on August 15 last year and Khan recorded his statement the next day.

The IHC bench perused the record and found that Azam Khan went missing on June 15 and re-emerged on July 20, recording his statement a month later.

Safdar raised doubts about the ex-bureaucrat's testimony and argued that it was recorded under dubious circumstances.

He urged the court not to give any credence to Azam Khan's testimony, arguing that the magistrate recorded his statement without issuing prior notice to other accused persons.

## BAPS HINDU MANDIR OF UAE



Devotees at BAPS Hindu Mandir, in Abu Dhabi, UAE.

## At SCO meet, Doval flags concerns over cross-border terrorism; mentions LeT, JeM

Astana, Apr 03 (PTI):

Perpetrators of terrorism should be effectively and expeditiously dealt with including those involved in cross-border terrorism, NSA Ajit Doval said on Wednesday, calling for shunning double standards in combating the menace. In an address at a security conclave of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) here in the Kazakh capital, he also underlined the need for holding accountable the sponsors, financiers and facilitators of terrorism, in remarks that came amid Pakistan's continuing support to various terror groups.

Doval raised the issue of the continued threat posed by various terror groups in the SCO region, including those designated by the UN Security Council such as Lashkar-e-Taiba, Jaish-e-Muhammad, Al Qaeda and its affiliates and ISIS, sources said.

He said India is committed



Doval conveyed to Russian NSA Patrushev, India's solidarity with the government and the people of Russia to address the threat from terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.

He pointed out that any act of terror including cross-border terrorism committed by whomsoever, wherever and for whatever motives is not justified, according to the sources. Perpetrators of terrorism should be effectively and expeditiously dealt with including those involved in cross-border terrorism, he said.

Doval emphasised the need to counter the use of technology by terrorists including drones for cross-border weapons smuggling of weapons and drugs.

India supports the creation of an effective mechanism for cooperation within RATS-SCO for countering terror financing and supports its further strengthening, he said.

ted to enhancing transit trade and connectivity asserting that such initiatives must be fully respectful of sovereignty and territorial integrity of SCO member states.

The comments came in the face of China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) facing increasing criticism over lack of transparency and disregard for the sovereignty of nations.

The National Security Advisor strongly condemned the barbaric terrorist attack at Crocus City Hall in Moscow on March 22 and expressed condolences to the families who have lost their loved ones.

## Indonesian president-elect vows to further strengthen ties with Japan

Tokyo, Apr 03 (AP):

Indonesian President-elect Prabowo Subianto said he wants to "further strengthen" relations with Japan as he met with Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida on Wednesday on the heels of a visit to China.

Subianto, who's currently defence minister, told Kishida that the two countries are longtime friends who have built a cooperative relationship, and that he hoped to further strengthen the relationship.

Japan has been seeking closer ties with Southeast Asian countries, especially in maritime security and defence, in the face of China's increasingly assertive military presence.

Subianto, who will succeed Joko Widodo in October, chose Beijing for his first official overseas trip after his February election victory in a bid to emphasise steady ties

with China amid rising tensions in the South China Sea, where China and the Philippines have had repeated high-seas confrontations. In his meeting with Chinese President Xi Jinping, Subianto pledged a continued friendly policy toward China.

China is Indonesia's largest trading partner, with Beijing investing in major infrastructure projects, and Indonesia has maintained a relatively neutral stance amid rising tensions between China and the Philippines over rival territorial claims in the South China Sea.

Kishida welcomed Subianto's early visit to Tokyo, telling his future counterpart that the two countries are longtime friends that share basic values and principles, and that Japan hoped to further strengthen cooperation in regional and global issues as "comprehensive and strategic partners".

## Attack on judiciary's independence won't be tolerated, says Chief Justice of Pakistan

Islamabad, Apr 03 (PTI):

Chief Justice of Pakistan Qazi Faez Isa on Wednesday vowed to thwart any attack on the judiciary's independence as he indicated that a full court would hear the case about alleged interference in the judicial affairs by the powerful intelligence agencies.

The move came after former chief justice of Pakistan Tassaduq Hussain Jillani recused himself from heading a one-man inquiry commission formed by the government to investigate the claims by six Islamabad High Court (IHC) judges about alleged interference by the intelligence agencies. A seven-member bench of the apex court, presided by Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Isa, is hearing suo motu notice taken on the letter written by the six judges.

During the hearing, Attorney General Mansoor Awan said that

the government in all sincerity had formed a commission to probe the matter but it came under attack on social media and from the lawyers who wanted the court to hear the matter.

The chief justice said that he was committed to upholding the independence of his institution.

"Judges must be sure that they are not in danger," CJP Isa said.

"If there is any kind of attack on the judiciary's independence, I would be at the frontline [in defending judiciary] and for sure, my fellow judges would be standing with me in this. And we never accept interference," he said.

"If someone has another agenda to do so and so, then they may become the Supreme Court Bar president or the chief justice and enact his will. We will not tolerate pressure of this kind," he added.

The hearing was adjourned till April 29, with CJP Isa saying, "It is possi-

ble that we may form a full court at the next hearing. We will hear the case on a daily basis."

He also stated that only seven judges were present in Islamabad and they were included in the panel to hear the case but it may be possible to include more judges in future hearings so that all 15 members of the apex court may sit as a full court to hear the case.

Last week, six Islamabad High Court (IHC) judges — out of a total strength of eight — wrote a startling letter to the Supreme Judicial Council (SJC) members, related to attempts to pressure judges through the abduction and torture of their relatives as well as secret surveillance inside their homes.

A day later, calls emerged from various quarters for a probe into the investigation, amid which CJP Isa summoned a full court meeting of the SC judges.

## Biden and Trump win presidential primaries in four more states

Washington, Apr 03 (PTI):

US President Joe Biden and his Republican rival and predecessor Donald Trump have easily won their presidential primaries in four more states as they are set for a 2020 rematch in November.

On Tuesday, hundreds of delegates were up for grabs in Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York and the crucial battleground state of Wisconsin.

Multiple names remained on the presidential ballots in the four states, though neither Trump, 77, nor Biden, 81, faced any major challenger. In all the four states where the primaries were held Tuesday, Trump bagged more than 75 per cent of the votes, while Biden, a Democrat,



received more than 80 per cent of the votes.

Trump with four wins now has 1,860 delegates. Biden has so far won 3,030 delegates as against the minimum requirement of 1,968 delegates.

Biden and Trump have already amassed enough delegates to win their respective nominations. But the turnout could provide

more clues about the election on November 5.

Their rematch is expected to mirror the 2020 campaign, though Trump will run this time under the spectre of 91 felony charges.

Their nominations will be confirmed at the Republican National Convention in Milwaukee in July and the

Democratic National Convention in Chicago in August.

Connecticut and Rhode Island allowed voters to vote "uncommitted" in the primary, while Wisconsin offered a similar option of "uninstructed delegation".

There was an effort in Wisconsin on Tuesday by anti-Biden protesters to encourage people in the Democratic primary to pick the "uninstructed" option in opposition to Biden's policies on the Israel-Hamas war.

Pressure has been growing on Biden especially, to push harder for a ceasefire in Gaza, with some states, including Michigan, fostering similar campaigns for residents to submit "uncommitted votes" for the president.

The international lender

## About 10 million people at risk of slipping into poverty in Pakistan: World Bank

Islamabad, Apr 03 (PTI):

The World Bank has painted a grim economic picture of Pakistan in its biannual report, cautioning that over 10 million more people are at risk of descending into poverty in the cash-strapped country.

The Washington-based lender's apprehension comes from a sluggish economic growth rate of 1.8 per cent coupled with soaring inflation, a staggering 26 per cent in the current fiscal year.

The World Bank's biannual Pakistan Development Outlook report indicated that the country is set to miss almost all major macroeconomic targets.

The report underlined

said the country is anticipated to fall short of its primary budget target, remaining in deficit for three consecutive years, contrary to the International Monetary Fund's stipulations mandating a surplus.

Sayed Murtaza Muzaffari, lead author of the report, said despite a board-based yet nascent economic recovery, poverty alleviation efforts remain insufficient.

The economic growth is projected to stagnate at a paltry 1.8 per cent while maintaining the poverty rate at around 40 per cent, with approximately 98 million Pakistanis already grappling with poverty, the World Bank report said.

The report underlined

the vulnerability of those hovering just above the poverty line, with 10 million individuals at risk of slipping into poverty.

The report said that the poor and vulnerable are likely to have benefited from the windfall gain in agricultural output but these gains were offset by continued high inflation and limited wage growth in other sectors that employ many of the poor, such as construction, trade, and transportation.

The wages of daily labourers increased only five per cent in nominal terms during the first quarter of this fiscal year when the inflation was above 30 per cent, it said. The persisting cost-of-

living crisis could with rising transportation costs could potentially lead to an increase in out-of-school children and delayed medical treatments, particularly for worse-off families, warned the World Bank.

At the same time, it added that food security remains a concern in parts of the country.

Among 43 rural districts across Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Sindh, and Balochistan, many of which were impacted by the 2022 floods, the prevalence of acute food insecurity is also projected to increase from 29 per cent to 32 per cent in the third quarter of this fiscal year, the report said.

## With famine looming, aid group halts food delivery in Gaza

Deir Al-Balah, Apr 03 (AP):

Some of Israel's closest allies, including the United States, on Tuesday condemned the deaths of seven aid workers who were killed by airstrikes in Gaza — a loss that prompted multiple charities to suspend food deliveries to Palestinians on the brink of starvation.

The deaths of the World Central Kitchen workers threatened to set back efforts by the US and other countries to open a maritime corridor for aid from Cyprus to help ease the desperate conditions in northern Gaza. President Joe

Biden issued an unusually blunt criticism of Israel by its closest ally, suggesting that the incident demonstrated that Israel was not doing enough to protect civilians. "Israel has not done enough to protect aid workers trying to deliver desperately needed help to civilians," he said, adding he was "outraged and heartbroken" by their killings.

"Incidents like yesterday's simply should not happen," he added. "The United States has repeatedly urged Israel to deconflict their military operations against Hamas with humanitarian operations, in order to avoid

civilian casualties."

Ships still laden with some 240 tonnes of aid from the charitable group turned back from Gaza just a day after arriving, according to Cyprus. Other humanitarian aid organisations also suspended operations in Gaza, saying it was too dangerous to offer help. Israel has allowed only a trickle of food and supplies into Gaza's devastated north, where experts say famine is imminent. The dead from Monday night's strikes included three British citizens, Polish and Australian nationals, a Canadian-American dual national and a Palestinian.

Port-au-Prince, Apr 03 (AP):

More than 53,000 people have fled Haiti's capital in less than three weeks, the vast majority to escape unrelenting gang violence, according to a United Nations report released Tuesday.

More than 60 per cent are headed to Haiti's rural southern region, which worries UN officials.

"Our humanitarian colleagues emphasised that these departments do not have sufficient infrastructure, and host

communities do not have sufficient resources, to cope with the large number of people fleeing Port-au-Prince," said UN spokesman Stephane Dujarric.

The southern region already hosts more than 116,000 Haitians who previously left Port-au-Prince, according to the report by the UN's International Organisation for Migration.

The exodus from the capital of some 3 million people began shortly after powerful gangs

launched a series of attacks on government institutions at the end of February. Gunmen have burned police stations, opened fire on the main international airport that remains closed and stormed Haiti's two biggest prisons, releasing more than 4,000 inmates.

More than 1,500 people have been reported killed up to March 22, and another 17,000 have been left homeless, according to the UN.

Among the rare travellers trying to head north instead of south

from the capital were Marjorie Michelle-Jean, a 42-year-old street vendor, and her two children, ages 4 and 7.

"I want to see them alive," she said, explaining that stray bullets keep hitting the tin roof of their home. Last week, they tried twice to travel to her hometown of Mirebalais in central Haiti but were forced to turn back because of roadblocks.

"I will definitely try again," she said. "It's absolutely not safe in Port-au-Prince."

SOUTH EAST CENTRAL RAILWAY	
TENDER NOTICE	
(1) Tender Notice No. E-R-15-24-25	Date: 27.03.2024
Name of Work : Goods shed Development Tilda- Neora (TLD)	Tender Value: ₹ 6,49,63,384/-
	EMD: ₹ 4,74,800/-
(2) Tender Notice No. E-R-16-24-25	Date: 27.03.2024
Name of Work : Facilities at Siliyari (SLH) Goods shed	Tender Value: ₹ 2,98,00,056/-
	EMD: ₹ 2,99,000/-
(3) Tender Notice No. E-R-17-24-25	Date: 27.03.2024
Name of Work : Improvement of Goods Shed WGR (WRS Goods Shed Complex)	Tender Value: ₹ 6,05,29,696/-
	EMD: ₹ 4,52,700/-
Submission of Tender: upto 11.00 Hrs. on 15.05.2024, Opening of Tender: 11.00 Hrs. on 15.05.2024.	
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.lreps.gov.in.	
Sr. Divl. Engineer-I	
PR/R/Engg./AN/02 S.E.C.R., Raipur	
South East Central Railway [S] [E] [S] [R]	



# CENTRAL Chronicle

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## Combatting Cyber Fraud

### International Cooperation must

A troubling trend has emerged in recent months, shedding light on the plight of thousands of Indians ensnared in cyber fraud operations in Myanmar and Cambodia. These individuals, lured under false pretenses by organised crime rings, find themselves coerced into perpetrating online scams and deception. The Ministry of External Affairs has undertaken commendable efforts to rescue some of these victims, yet the pervasive nature of the problem demands a concerted global response. Interpol's revelation, as articulated by Jurgen Stock, underscores the gravity of the situation. Organised crime groups, leveraging the vulnerabilities exposed by the Covid-19 pandemic, have expanded their illicit operations into a global network. With cyber scam centres proliferating and yielding staggering profits estimated at up to \$3 trillion annually, the threat posed by these criminal syndicates transcends geographical boundaries. The implications of this nefarious activity extend far beyond Southeast Asia. Reports suggest that similar operations are underway in Malaysia and the Philippines, with alleged ties to certain Chinese entities. The scale and sophistication of these schemes underscore the urgent need for collaborative efforts to combat cyber fraud and protect vulnerable populations from exploitation. India, with its longstanding ties to ASEAN nations, occupies a pivotal role in this endeavour. Enhanced cooperation between governments, facilitated by regular exchange of intelligence and coordinated action, is paramount to disrupting the operations of fraudulent call centres and dismantling the networks fueling cybercrime. Moreover, widespread dissemination of advisories on online and phone scams can empower individuals to recognize and report suspicious activities, thereby bolstering prevention efforts. However, addressing the root causes of this phenomenon requires a multifaceted approach. The willingness of Indian nationals to seek employment opportunities abroad, despite the risks of exploitation, underscores the pressing need for comprehensive reforms in India's employment landscape. Sustainable initiatives aimed at generating employment and fostering economic opportunities at home are imperative to mitigate the vulnerability of young, skilled individuals to predatory schemes. In essence, combatting cyber fraud demands a unified response grounded in international cooperation and proactive measures to address underlying socioeconomic challenges. As India continues to strengthen its diplomatic ties and engagement with ASEAN nations, it must prioritize the protection of its citizens from exploitation and advocate for robust mechanisms to safeguard against cybercrime.

## Reservation versus nepotism

Sujit De

When Dalit and OBC students demand caste reservation in proportion to their respective population in a private university, some people have criticised it by raising the flags of merit and Indian brotherhood. Every Indian state has its quota of Lok Sabha constituencies, for example 29 Lok Sabha seats have been earmarked for Madhya Pradesh on the basis of its population. This is absolutely necessary for the existence of a federal structure. Similarly, reservation for SC, ST and OBC in proportion to their respective population is needed to ensure social justice. Without reservation in the parliamentary seats on the basis of the population of a state, the regional balance of power would greatly be damaged. In that case, many states of India may not have representation in the Parliament because nepotism and regional favouritism in disguise of meritocracy would throw a challenge to proportional representation. Then the Parliament would look like the Indian cricket team where players only from a few states get a chance to represent the whole country. Though there is regional quota for selectors to minimise regional favouritism but more often than not selectors face charges even from those who are against caste reservation that a player of his state has become a victim of nepotism. Just like the state quota for Lok Sabha constituencies is a must to safeguard the interests of all Indian states, the caste reservation is also a necessity for democratic distribution of power among all communities and castes in India. Caste is a reality in India. One in four Indians (27 percent respondents across India) said that the practice of untouchability had been followed in her or his daily life (the 2011-12 India Human Development Survey - IHDS-2). According to the Studies conducted by the National Council of Applied Economic Research in 2016, only about 5% of marriages in India are inter-caste marriages. Caste identity cannot be changed with the change of class. One in four Indians who practices untouchability will not touch even a well-off Dalit. Whereas 95 among 100 Indians avoid marrying even rich Dalits. Higher castes dominate powerful positions in our country. Now, how could a higher caste selector, who practices untouchability, appoint a candidate from a backward caste in his college or company? The vulnerability of backward castes in our society demands positive discrimination like reservation in their favour in proportion to their population just like footpaths should be reserved for vulnerable pedestrians. It is necessary to create a level playing field for the marginalised castes through reservation. Untouchability, which taunts the rhetoric of 'We are at first Indians' has to take a backseat when marginalised castes get academic and political power. As a matter of fact, more and more people are realising the necessity of reservation policy in our country. It has been decided that 33 percent seats in the Lok Sabha and state assemblies would be reserved for women after the next census. Interestingly, some persons who are against caste reservation, support state quota for parliamentary seats, gender reservation, reservation of seats for senior citizens in buses and trains. They protest when reserved part of a street (footpaths) is occupied, forcing vulnerable pedestrians walk on the street. This underlines that there are misgivings about capabilities of backward castes. When Aryans came to India, they saw for the first time in their lives excellent urban planning and civilisation. Our Dalit brothers and sisters carry more DNA in their body of those town planners and engineers than their higher caste counterparts. Dalits have systematically been exploited for centuries and forced to forget who they really are.

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.

## DPS LAKE TURNS REDDISH PINK



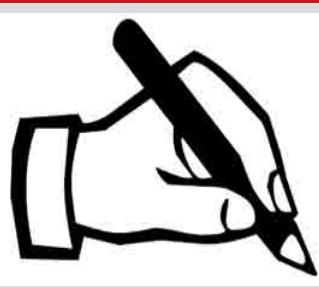
Flamingos seen on the water of DPS Lake as it has started turning reddish pink due to algae bloom, at Nerul in Navi Mumbai.

## Bollywood Vs Mollywood

# A Shift in the Indian Film Industry Landscape



PROF. VASISHT



In the vast tapestry of Indian cinema, two prominent threads weave their stories across the silver screen: Bollywood and Mollywood. These two film industries, representing the Hindi and Malayalam languages respectively, have long stood as bastions of creativity, culture, and entertainment. However, recent trends indicate a notable shift in the dynamics of the Indian film industry, with Mollywood gradually bridging the gap that once separated it from its Bollywood counterpart.

Spanning across the sprawling Hindi belt, Bollywood reigns supreme as the epicenter of Indian cinema. With approximately 57 crore Hindi speakers globally, Bollywood commands a vast audience base and wields considerable influence both domestically and internationally. In contrast, Mollywood, centered in the southern state of Kerala, caters to a more localized audience, with around 3.70 crore Malayalam speakers worldwide.

Historically, Bollywood has been synonymous with Indian cinema on the global stage, often overshadowing regional industries like

Mollywood. The box office success of Bollywood blockbusters such as "Dangal," which grossed a staggering 1924 crore worldwide, exemplifies its dominance in the realm of Indian cinema. Meanwhile, Mollywood's highest-grossing film, "Manjummel Boys," made 225 crore, showcasing its regional significance but falling short of Bollywood's towering figures.

However, the winds of change are palpable, with recent box office data signaling a narrowing gap between Bollywood and Mollywood. While Bollywood continues to produce successful films like "Fighter" and "Shaitaan," with global earnings reaching 337 crore and 197.5 crore respectively, Mollywood's "Manjummel Boys" emerged as a formidable competitor, raking in 220 crore worldwide. This trend underscores Mollywood's growing prowess and challenges Bollywood's traditional dominance.

In South India, Mollywood has often been perceived as the "weakest film industry" compared to its Telugu, Kannada, and Tamil counterparts. Yet, recent successes like "Premalu" and "Aadujeevitham" have propelled Mollywood into the

limelight, defying conventional notions of its limitations. While Bollywood grapples with a dearth of innovative content and technical excellence, regional industries like Mollywood are flourishing, offering fresh narratives and cinematic experiences to audiences.

The rise of Mollywood presents a formidable challenge to Bollywood, forcing the latter to reevaluate its approach in an increasingly competitive landscape. The emergence of South Indian directors like Atlee and Sandeep Reddy Vanga in Bollywood underscores the industry's recognition of regional talent and narratives. However, Bollywood's response to this shifting paradigm remains uncertain, as it grapples with the need to innovate and adapt to changing audience preferences.

Since the watershed moment of "Lagaan" in 2001, Bollywood has struggled to replicate its past successes, while Mollywood has surged ahead with bold storytelling and innovative filmmaking. The success of films like "Lucifer," "Pulimurugan," and "Premalu" showcases Mollywood's ability to captivate audiences and transcend linguistic barriers. As Mollywood continues to assert its presence on the global stage, Bollywood faces a pivotal moment of introspection and reinvention.

As the global landscape of cinema continues to evolve, the importance of regional industries like Mollywood cannot be overstated. With a rich tapestry of narratives and cultural nuances, Mollywood offers a unique perspective that resonates with audiences worldwide. The success of films like "Manjummel Boys" and

"Aadujeevitham" underscores Mollywood's growing influence and underscores the need for Bollywood to adapt to changing audience preferences.

Furthermore, Mollywood's rise challenges the traditional hegemony of Bollywood, prompting a reevaluation of the industry's priorities and practices. While Bollywood has long been synonymous with Indian cinema on the global stage, Mollywood's emergence highlights the diversity and vibrancy of India's cinematic landscape. As audiences seek out fresh narratives and experiences, Bollywood must embrace innovation and diversity to remain relevant in an increasingly competitive market.

The success of Mollywood also speaks to the power of regional cinema in representing diverse cultural identities and narratives. With its focus on authentic storytelling and local experiences, Mollywood has carved out a niche for itself in the global film industry. This success underscores the importance of supporting and promoting regional industries, ensuring that diverse voices continue to be heard and celebrated on the global stage.

In conclusion, the rivalry between Bollywood and Mollywood represents more than just a battle for box office supremacy—it is a reflection of the evolving landscape of Indian cinema. As Mollywood continues to rise in prominence, Bollywood must adapt and innovate to remain relevant in an increasingly competitive market. By embracing diversity and supporting regional industries, the Indian film industry can continue to thrive and captivate audiences worldwide.

## Small Island, Big Prestige

# Unraveling the Katchatheevu Conundrum



Yash Pal Ralhan

In the midst of election fervour, the mention of Katchatheevu Island by Prime Minister Modi has reignited a long-standing debate that transcends mere political discourse. Tucked away 25 kilometers from the shores of Tamil Nadu, this diminutive islet holds significance far beyond its size. Its history, marked by a controversial transfer to Sri Lanka in 1974 under the leadership of then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, has now resurfaced as a

point of contention, casting a shadow over the political landscape of the region.

The recent discourse surrounding Katchatheevu Island underscores a historical lack of foresight, where decisions made decades ago continue to reverberate in the present. The transfer of this island, which once served as a vital transit base for Indian fishermen, symbolizes a broader narrative of diplomatic oversight and regional complexities. While the move may have been intended to redraw maritime boundaries between India and Sri Lanka, its repercussions have been felt most acutely by the fishermen whose livelihoods depend on these waters.

The prevailing sentiment, particularly in Tamil Nadu, is one of disillusionment with past decisions that have left Indian fishermen vulnerable to harassment and arrests by Sri Lankan authorities. The failure to address these longstanding grievances reflects a disconnect between the perspectives emanating from Chennai and New Delhi, further exacerbating tensions surrounding Katchatheevu.

The decision to cede

Katchatheevu Island, made without parliamentary oversight, stands as a stark reminder of the need for transparent and accountable governance. While attempts to revisit this issue may offer a semblance of closure, the reality remains that the island's fate is now enmeshed in the fabric of international relations, beyond the reach of unilateral action.

As political parties in Tamil Nadu gear up for the upcoming Lok Sabha elections, Katchatheevu has emerged as a focal point in the electoral discourse. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), in its bid to make inroads into Tamil Nadu politics, has seized upon this issue to challenge the ruling Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) government. Yet, the true test lies in whether Katchatheevu will resonate with voters beyond the realm of political posturing.

The significance of Katchatheevu extends far beyond its geographical confines, embodying a legacy of unresolved tensions and diplomatic intricacies. Its reemergence onto the political stage serves as a poignant reminder of the complexities in-

herent in India's regional dynamics and the enduring impact of decisions made in the corridors of power.

As the debate surrounding Katchatheevu Island continues to unfold, it prompts a broader reflection on the intersection of politics, diplomacy, and the aspirations of the common man. In this small island lies a microcosm of larger geopolitical realities, where the quest for prestige and power intersects with the everyday struggles of those whose lives are intertwined with its shores.

In the pursuit of electoral victory, let us not lose sight of the human dimension of this issue, where the livelihoods of fishermen hang in the balance and the aspirations of a nation are intertwined with the fate of a tiny island in the vast expanse of the Indian Ocean. As we navigate the choppy waters of politics and diplomacy, may we strive to chart a course that upholds the principles of justice, transparency, and respect for the dignity of all.

This resurgence of interest in Katchatheevu Island presents an opportune moment for introspection and dialogue, where stake-

holders from all sides can come together to address the lingering grievances and chart a path forward that ensures the welfare of all involved. Let us not allow this issue to be reduced to mere political rhetoric, but rather seize the opportunity to engage in a meaningful discourse that honors the complexities of history and the aspirations of the future. Only then can we truly begin to unravel the Katchatheevu conundrum and pave the way for a more equitable and peaceful coexistence in the region.

As we stand at this crossroads, let us remember that the true measure of our progress lies not in the pursuit of power or prestige, but in our ability to forge bonds of understanding and cooperation that transcend borders and divisions. In the case of Katchatheevu Island, let us strive to uphold the principles of justice and fairness that form the bedrock of our democracy, ensuring that the voices of the marginalized and vulnerable are heard and respected. Only then can we truly claim to have achieved the lofty ideals of freedom and equality that lie at the heart of our nation's identity.



## LETTERS

TO THE EDITOR

### Empty Gestures

China's attempt to rename places in Arunachal Pradesh is futile, akin to changing a nameplate to claim ownership. External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar's steadfast stance reaffirms India's sovereignty over Arunachal Pradesh. Renaming doesn't alter its integral status in India. China's move can't erase the rich history and cultural ties binding Arunachal with India. It's time the world sees this posturing for what it is: meaningless gestures unable to alter geographical realities or national sovereignty.

MK Nair, Raipur

### Fair Play

It's heartening that the Centre has assured the Supreme Court it won't take coercive measures to recover Congress' tax dues, totaling over Rs 3,500 crore, until July. The development brings relief to the grand old party. Freezing a party's accounts could severely impact its financial standing and hamper its ability to campaign during elections, which require substantial funding. Targeting the primary opposition party ahead of the General Election would undermine fairness. Ensuring a level playing field is imperative for upholding democratic principles.

Shivkumar Mishra, Raipur

### Opposition's Failings

The INDIA bloc's protest against the ruling party's misuse of Central agencies stems from the targeted scrutiny of Opposition leaders. The alliance rightly perceives a lack of fairness, endangering our democracy. Since the UPA government's displacement by the NDA, public trust has steadily declined. However, the Opposition shares blame for this decline. Despite pressing issues like unemployment and economic disparity, they've failed to present viable solutions. It's imperative for both sides to prioritize national interests over political agendas and work towards restoring public confidence in governance.

Nawal Kishore, Durg

### India's Diplomatic Role

India's involvement in resolving the Ukraine conflict diplomatically holds immense significance. Amid escalating tensions, India's dedication to dialogue and mediation is vital for de-escalation. As a neutral party with established diplomatic relations with Ukraine and Russia, India can serve as a mediator between the two nations. It's imperative for New Delhi to seize this opportunity and assert its diplomatic leadership globally. The international community should support India's efforts to foster peace in Ukraine and the wider region.

Krishna Kumar Nair, Kollam



**BRIEF**

**Elevation announced**



**New Delhi:** Auto components major Bharat Forge on Wednesday announced the elevation of Amit Kalyani, son of its Chairman and MD Babasaheb N Kalyani, as Vice-Chairman and Joint Managing Director of the company. The board of directors of the company in its meeting held on April 3, 2024, approved the re-appointment of Amit Kalyani as a whole-time director designated as "Vice-Chairman and Joint Managing Director" for a further term of five years commencing from May 11, 2024 till May 10, 2029, Bharat Forge said in a regulatory filing.

**Budget brands**

**Mumbai:** US-based Wyndham Hotels & Resorts is looking at introducing economy and budget brands in its next phase of growth in India and aims to have 150 properties in the country by the end of 2025, a top company official has said. For Wyndham Hotels & Resorts, India plays a very important role in the growth of the company's business going forward. In its next phase of growth the company will look at opportunities to introduce three budget and economy brands that will be in line with the development of the country.

**Coal output**



**New Delhi:** Captive and commercial coal blocks produced 147 million tonne coal in financial year 2023-24, registering a year-on-year growth of 27 per cent, Union Minister Pralhad Joshi said on Wednesday. The mines had produced 116 MT coal during 2022-23. Out of 147.2 MT, power sector captive mines produced around 121.3 MT, non-power sector mines produced 8.4 MT and the production from commercial mines was 17.5 MT, Joshi said in a post on X.

## RBI's rate-setting panel starts discussion on monetary policy; decision on Friday

Mumbai, Apr 03:

The Reserve Bank's rate-setting panel on Wednesday started its three-day deliberations on the next set of monetary policy amid expectations that the central bank would once again keep the key interest rate unchanged and focus more on inflation control as concerns over economic growth is abating. The decision taken at the meeting of the Reserve Bank Governor Shaktikanta Das-headed Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) will be announced on Friday (April 5). It is the first bi-monthly monetary policy of 2024-25. A total of six MPC meetings are scheduled for the fiscal year beginning April 1, 2024. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) last hiked the



repo rate to 6.5 per cent in February 2023 and since then it has held the rate at the same level in its last six bi-monthly policies. Experts said the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) may take cues from the central banks of some major economies, such as the US and the UK, which are apparently in wait-and-watch mode on interest rate cuts. Switzerland has become the first major

economy to cut interest rates, while Japan, the world's third-largest economy, ended its eight-year period of negative interest rates regime. "We believe the (monetary policy) stance should continue to be withdrawal of accommodation," said research report of the country's largest lender State Bank of India (SBI).

It further said there is strong evidence of central

banks in emerging economies rate actions are predicated by such actions by central banks in advanced economies. "India is an exception. First RBI (rate) cut in Q3FY25," it added. On expectations from the RBI, Group CEO of Housing.com Dhruv Agarwala said the central bank is likely to maintain a status quo on key policy rate in its April 5 policy amid strong economic growth. "Even though the year-long downward trend in core inflation is encouraging, inflation is still close to the upper band of the apex bank's 2-6 per cent target, leaving little room for any rate cut during this policy cycle," he said, adding considering interest rates are likely to remain stable, the demand for housing in the country would continue to get a boost.

## Indian mkts commanding high valuations on fgn investors' optimism, trust in India growth story: Buch

Mumbai, Apr 03:

Indian capital markets are commanding high valuations as foreign investors are bullish about the country's economic growth on the back of strong domestic macroeconomic data, according to Sebi Chairperson Madhabi Puri Buch. Speaking at a CII event on corporate governance here on Tuesday, Buch said she meets foreign investors regularly as part of her mandate and has seen an increased interest among them for India, because of the velocity the country's economy has got after years of high-speed growth. They (foreign investors) are encouraged by data suggesting the strength of the economy as is visible in the growth in GST collections month-on-month, advance tax payouts and power & energy consumption, she said. According to official figures, GST collections in March grew 11.5 per cent to Rs 1.78 lakh



crore on higher domestic sales. The net direct tax collection grew 19.88 per cent to over Rs 18.90 lakh crore till March 17, on higher advance tax mop-up. Foreign investors' interest has led to the overall market capitalisation in equities reaching over Rs 378 lakh crore at the end of FY24, from Rs 74 lakh crore a decade ago, Buch said, adding that the market capitalisation is at the level of the overall GDP now. She said Indian entities raised a total of Rs 10.5 lakh crore from markets by way of equity and bond issuances in FY24, which includes over Rs 8 lakh crore through the bond route.

## Indirect tax collection for FY24 exceeds RE by handsome margin: CBIC chief

New Delhi, Apr 03:

The indirect tax collection for FY24 has exceeded the revised estimates (RE) of Rs 14.84 lakh crore by "a handsome margin", helped by a record GST mop-up, a top government official said. Lauding the efforts of tax officials, CBIC chairman Sanjay Kumar Agarwal, in a letter to field officials, said, "I am happy to inform that the indirect tax collections for the Financial Year 2023-24, including Customs and Union Excise Duty have exceeded the Revised Estimates by a handsome margin". This achievement not only reflects professionalism but also underscores the strength of teamwork and perseverance within the CBIC community, he said, adding that "your relentless efforts



have not gone unnoticed, and I extend my heartfelt appreciation to each and every member for their invaluable contributions throughout the year". The gross GST mop up for 2023-24 also marks a milestone with the collection of Rs 20.18 lakh crore - comprising state GST, Central GST, integrated GST and compensation cess - exceeding the previous year's collec-

## India to build first commercial crude oil strategic storage

New Delhi, Apr 03:

India, the world's third biggest oil consumer and importer, plans to build its first commercial crude oil strategic storage as part of efforts to shore up stockpiles as insurance against any supply disruption. Indian Strategic Petroleum Reserves Ltd (ISPRL), a special purpose vehicle created by the government for building and operating strategic petroleum reserves in the country, has invited bids for constructing 2.5 million tonnes of underground storage at Padur in Karnataka, according to the tender document. ISPRL had in the first phase built a strategic petroleum reserve in underground unlined rock caverns for storage of 5.33 million tonnes of crude oil at three locations: Visakhapatnam (1.33 million tonnes) in Andhra

Pradesh and Mangalore (1.5 million tonnes) and Padur (2.5 million tonnes) in Karnataka. Under Phase-II, it intends to build a commercial cum strategic petroleum reserve in underground unlined rock caverns along with associated above ground facilities, including dedicated SPM and associated pipelines (off-shore and on-shore) for storage of 2.5 million tonnes of crude oil at Padur-II at a cost of Rs 5,514 crore.

The Phase-I storages were built at government expense. In the tender, ISPRL said the Padur-II will be constructed in a PPP (public-private partnership) model where private parties will design, build, finance, and operate the storage. Bidders have been asked to quote the financial grant they require for the building of the reserves or the premium/fee

they want to offer to the authority. The project will be awarded to entities that offer the highest premium. Where no bidder is offering a premium, it would go to the one seeking the lowest grant, the tender document said. "Maximum quantum of grant to be quoted for the project shall be capped to Rs 3,308 crore," ISPRL said.

"A bidder who seeks a grant cannot offer any premium." The operator of Padur-II will lease out the storage to any oil company wishing to store oil and charge a fee. The companies storing oil can sell it to domestic refiners. But in case of an emergency, India will hold the first right on oil usage. Bids are due by April 22 and the tender is to be awarded by June 27, the document said. ISPRL is acquiring about 215 acres of land for Padur-II.

## Markets end lower amid profit-booking, mixed global cues

Mumbai, Apr 03:

Equity benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty settled lower for the second straight session on Wednesday due to profit-booking in select banking and auto stocks amid mixed trends from the global markets and outflow of foreign funds. The 30-share BSE Sensex declined by 27.09 points or 0.04 per cent to settle at 73,876.82. During the day, the index oscillated between the high of 74,151.21 and the low of 73,757.23. The broader NSE Nifty declined 18.65 points or 0.08 per cent to 22,434.65, with 30 components of the 50-share benchmark ending with losses. "Nifty remained volatile throughout the day after an initial weak start



due to negative global cues," said Rupak De, Senior Technical Analyst, LKP Securities. He further said that the index may trend towards 22,650. "Support is positioned at 22,350 on the lower end." Among the Sensex constituents, as many as 16 stocks closed with losses with Nestle India, Kotak Mahindra Bank, IndusInd Bank, Bajaj Finserv, Titan and JSW Steel being the major laggards.

## Mango output to see 14 pc rise this year, heat wave unlikely to impact yields: ICAR-CISH Director

New Delhi, Apr 03:

India's overall mango production may increase by about 14 per cent to 24 million tonnes this year, ICAR-Central Institute for Subtropical Horticulture Director T Damodaran said on Wednesday. The India Meteorological Department's forecast of a heat wave in April-May period may not have a significant impact on the mango yield, provided farmers take care of irrigation during May to reduce excessive fruit dropping, he said. In its latest summer forecast, India Meteorological Department (IMD) has predicted harsher spells of heat waves that could last between 10-20 days instead of the usual two to four days.



Above normal heatwave days are likely to occur over most parts of the south peninsula, central India, east India and plains of northwest India. "The mango flowering process is a crucial part of the fruit setting process. Thanks to conducive weather, mango flowering is almost over. The pollination is normal and fruit setting has begun. Normal heat waves may not impact yields but will indirectly help the crop," Damodaran told PTI. The prospects of mango crop are good as of now. Total production could increase to 24 million tonnes in the 2023-24 crop year (July-June), as against 21 million tonnes in 2022-23, he said. The mango output is seen to be bumper in South India, which contributes 50 per cent of the total country's production. Last year, Southern states

correctly help the crop," Damodaran told PTI. The prospects of mango crop are good as of now. Total production could increase to 24 million tonnes in the 2023-24 crop year (July-June), as against 21 million tonnes in 2022-23, he said. The mango output is seen to be bumper in South India, which contributes 50 per cent of the total country's production. Last year, Southern states

faced 15 per cent loss due to weather aberrations. However, the situation is better this year, he added. Mango is an important fruit crop in India and popularly called the 'King of Fruits'. India is a major mango growing country, contributing nearly 42 per cent of the world's production. According to Damodaran, climate plays a role in flowering and fruit setting.

However, in the event of an above normal heat wave, farmers are required to take precaution and address the soil moisture stress by ensuring mild irrigation, thereby reducing fruit dropping, he said. He also advised farmers to be cautious about invasive pest attack, especially thrips insect in mango growing areas of northern plains.

## BELL RINGING CEREMONY



Actor Juhi Chawla at the bell ringing ceremony of NGO Routes 2 Roots as it is registered on NSE's Social Stock Exchange (SSE), in Mumbai, Wednesday, April 3, 2024.

## Ola Electric records all-time high registrations of over 53,000 units in March

Bengaluru, Apr 03:

Ola Electric on Tuesday announced that it recorded over 53,000 registrations (as per VAHAN Portal) in the month of March, posting its highest ever monthly volumes yet again for the fifth consecutive month. The company achieved a Y-o-Y growth of 115% in FY24 over FY23 with 328,785 units registered as against 1,52,741 units in FY23. With its outstanding performance in March, the company continued to maintain its leading market share during the month and grew by 42% Q-o-Q with 119,310 units registered during Q4 FY24 compared to 84,133



units in the previous quarter. Anshul Khandelwal, Chief Marketing Officer, Ola Electric Technologies Private Limited, said: "There couldn't have been a better year end for us to FY24 with our registrations zooming past the 53,000 mark in March. The past

year has been a momentous one for us as well as the EV industry, and we have been the market leader for the full financial year recording consistent growth in both volumes and market share. The fact that we recorded almost 1.20 lakh registrations in Q4 FY24 alone speaks volumes of our robust scooter portfolio, and we aim to continue the growth trajectory and contribute further to India's electrification journey." Ola Electric has recently announced a series of initiatives spanning products, services, charging networks and battery warranty in an effort to break all barriers to the adoption of EVs.

## Air India launches revamped customer reward programme with added features

Mumbai, Apr 03:

Private carrier Air India on Wednesday launched a revamped loyalty programme with a simplified structure, offering more rewards and added benefits to its customers. In its first overhaul in more than a decade, the revamped loyalty programme - Flying Returns - moves away from the legacy model of miles-based collection of points to a fairer, more equitable spend-based approach, Air India said in a statement. Members of the programme will now be able to avail the benefits and collect points based on the new structure, starting Wednesday, it said



without divulging the number of the existing members. Some of the features of the revamped programme include no expiry of points for active members, no blackout dates, same tier privileges, collection and redemption across Star Alliance partner airlines worldwide and new customer-friendly digital interface to provide a one-stop platform for transactions, among others, it said.

## World Bank projects Indian economy to grow at 7.5% in 2024

Washington, Apr 03:

The Indian economy is projected to grow at 7.5 per cent in 2024, the World Bank has said, revising its earlier projections for the same period by 1.2 per cent. Overall, growth in South Asia is expected to be strong at 6.0 per cent in 2024, driven mainly by robust growth in India and recoveries in Pakistan and Sri Lanka, the World Bank said in its latest South Asia Development Update on Tuesday. According to the report, South Asia is expected to remain the fastest-growing region in the world for

the next two years, with growth projected to be 6.1% in 2025. "In India, which accounts for the bulk of the region's economy, output growth is expected to reach 7.5% in FY23/24 before returning to 6.6% over the medium term, with activity in services and industry expected to remain robust," the bank said in its report. In Bangladesh, output is expected to rise by 5.7% in FY24/25, with high inflation and restrictions on trade and foreign exchange constraining economic activity. Following the contraction in FY22/23, Pakistan's economy is expected to grow by

2.3% in FY24/25 as business confidence improves. In Sri Lanka, output growth is expected to strengthen to 2.5% in 2025, with modest recoveries in reserves, remittances, and tourism. "South Asia's growth prospects remain bright in the short run, but fragile fiscal positions and increasing climate shocks are dark clouds on the horizon," said Martin Raiser, World Bank Vice President for South Asia. "To make growth more resilient, countries need to adopt policies to boost private investment and strengthen employment growth," he said.

## Sarpanch and deputy sell village pond through illegal digging

Central Chronicle News

**Navapara Rajim, Apr 03:** The village of Chipridih emerged as an independent Panchayat, ushering in an era of hope and development. With the election of First Sarpanch Kamita Sahu and Deputy Sarpanch Vimal Sahu, villagers anticipated a bright future. However, recent events have cast a shadow over these aspirations.



### Agricultural access restricted

Reports obtained through the Right to Information Act reveal a troubling pattern of arbitrary decision-making by the Panchayat leadership. Instead of following due process, many projects proceeded without proper approval, sparking anger and frustration among residents.

Activist Domesh Kumar Sahu has highlighted the atmosphere of fear created by the Panchayat's authoritarian tactics. A particularly egregious incident came to light in June 2023, when the Danganiya pond was illegally excavated, with its entire mud and mureem sold off.

This reckless action, which deepened the pond by over 10 feet and compromised the integrity of its banks, now threatens the existence of over 50 fruit trees in the vicinity. The imminent risk of these trees being washed

away during rainy seasons has raised alarm among conservationists and locals alike.

### Exploitative practices exposed

Illegal recovery of Rs 200 each has been made from laborers who were promised employment under MNREGA. Initially hired to prepare the road for excavation, they were later coerced into paying additional fees for the use of arranging vehicles. Those who refused faced threats of reduced wages or withheld payments. Such exploitative tactics not only violate labor rights but also undermine the integrity of essential government schemes.

### Neither proposal in Panchayat nor permission from Mineral Department

The entire mureem was sold illegally without proper authorization, as neither a resolution was passed in the Panchayat nor permission was obtained from the Mineral Department for such deep digging. RTI activist Domesh Kumar Sahu took action by seeking information from the Panchayat under the Right to Information Act. However, the response revealed a glaring absence of any proposal or approval from relevant authorities. Despite complaints filed with SDM Abhanpur and Collector Mineral Branch Raipur based on documented evidence, no action has been taken to address the issue. Village Deputy Sarpanch Vimal Sahu acknowledged collecting money from laborers under the pretext of covering vehicle expenses. This revelation raises further questions about the transparency and legality of the entire operation.

## KCPS Kurud extends warm welcome to new students

### Enthusiastic reception for young learners in Pre-Primary

Central Chronicle News

**Kurud, Apr 03:** The Kaliram Chandrakar Public School (KCPS) in Kurud kicked off the new academic session 2024-25 with a heartwarming welcome for its students on Monday.

In the pre-primary department create a special atmosphere for the young learners. The classrooms were adorned with vibrant decorations, and each child was greeted with a traditional Tilak and sweets, symbolizing the auspicious beginning of their educational journey. Smiles lit up the faces of the children as they entered, their excitement evident in every small step they took.

Even the older students were not immune to the infectious enthusiasm of the day. In the assembly hall, Principal K. Manjita Thakur extended a warm welcome to all, urging



them to approach the new session with renewed energy and positive attitudes. Emphasizing the importance of dedication and hard work, she encouraged the students to strive for excellence in all endeavors, assuring them of a bright future filled with success.

Department heads, in-

cluding senior department head Amar Singh, echoed these sentiments, stressing the importance of discipline and commitment to achieving goals. Teachers across all departments motivated their students to excel in their studies and pursue their passions with dedication.

## Crackdown on illegal gambling, police Nab 5

### Seizure of cash and cards in Khujji raid

Central Chronicle News

**Dongargaon, Apr 03:** Under the vigilant eye of top officials in Dongargaon Police, concerted efforts are underway to combat criminal activities like gambling, betting, and illicit liquor sales across the city and its rural outskirts. In an operation on April 1, Dongargaon police received a tip-off regarding illicit gambling activities taking place in a small mango garden in Khujji village.

Acting promptly, a team led by Municipal Inspector Upendra Shah conducted a raid at the reported location. During the raid, authorities apprehended five individuals red-



handedly engaged in gambling. The seized evidence included a sum of Rs 13,780 in cash, 52 playing cards, and a white-colored plastic bag.

The arrested individuals were identified as Dinesh Singh Parihar from Rajput Paravillage, Sheshnarayan Thakur

from Khujji village, Govind Kumar from Sambalpur, Vinay Devangan from Khujji, and Akshay Kumar Dewangan from Khujji. The accused have been charged under Section 3(2) of the Gambling Prohibition Act 2022 and are being dealt with accordingly.

## Accident claims lives of two girls en route to exam

### Due to scarf getting stuck in the tyre, the bike went out of control and fell on the state highway

Central Chronicle News

**Khairagarh, Apr 03:** Two young students, filled with hopes and aspirations, tragically lost their lives in a road accident while on their way to appear for their MA examination at Rani Rashmi Devi College.

The unfortunate accident occurred when four individuals, including the two girls, were travelling on a motorcycle, HF Deluxe, with registration number CG 08 AW 5416. Among them was Kailash Verma, a 22-year-old from Shikaritol, who was steering the bike.

Kailash's day began with noble intentions as he embarked on his journey to take his MA examination. Alongside, he was also ensuring the safe transit of Lilavati Verma, his sister's daughter, aged 16, to her relative's house in K o d e g a o n Khairagarh.

Victoria Pal and Reshmi Verma, both students eagerly waiting for transportation to their exam center, found themselves in need of a lift. Recognizing them as acquaintances, Kailash kindly offered them a ride, and all four set off towards Khairagarh from Thekadih. However, tragedy struck



when Reshmi's scarf became entangled in the bike's rear wheel, causing the vehicle to lose control. The bike veered off the road near Pendrikala village, just 3 kilometers before their destination. Despite desperate efforts,

Reshmi tragically lost her life at the scene of the accident.

Both Victoria and Kailash sustained serious injuries and were swiftly transported to Civil Hospital Khairagarh with the assistance of

Sanjeevani 108. Despite the best efforts of medical personnel, Victoria succumbed to her injuries during treatment. Reshmi's body was laid to rest after post-mortem, while Kailash was referred to Rajnandgaon Medical College for further treatment.

Miraculously, Lilavati, the fourth passenger on the bike, emerged from the accident unscathed, spared from serious injury.

The devastating news has cast a pall of mourning over the area, with family members and the community grappling with profound grief. It's a sobering reminder of the dangers that lurk on our roads, particularly in areas like Pendri, where accidents have claimed lives before.

## Authorities crack down on sand mafia

### Joint operation seizes illegal equipment

Central Chronicle News

**Navapara-Rajim, Apr 03:** In a significant victory against the sand mafia, authorities conducted a successful joint operation, seizing illegal equipment used in rampant sand excavation along the Mahanadi riverbank. For months, the mafia had brazenly flouted environmental regulations, causing substantial losses in government revenue.

Today, a team comprising officials from the Mineral and Revenue Departments of Gariaband and Raipur districts visited illegal mining sites in

Parsada Joshi and Champan Mahanadi bank, where they confiscated and sealed six chain mountain machines. Prior to the operation, authorities received intelligence about the illegal sand filling activities, resulting in an estimated daily revenue loss of Rs 25,00,000.

However, despite attempts by the sand mafia to conceal their equipment, the joint team successfully uncovered and seized the machines. Villagers have alleged the involvement of political leaders in facilitating the illicit sand business.

Notably, numerous complaints from villagers



prompted action against sand extraction near Parsada Joshi and Champan. Earlier, authorities had shut down two illegal sand mines in Hathkhaj, exacerbating challenges faced by approved mine owners. The same mafia reportedly shifted operations to

Parsada Joshi following the crackdown in Hathkhaj.

The Mineral Department informed the Collector about their intention to take action. However, upon attempted enforcement, vehicles would flee towards Champan. Responding

swiftly, the Collector directed officials from both the Mineral and Revenue Departments of the districts to collaborate and form a joint team.

The decisive action against illegal sand mines, coupled with enforcement against overloaded vehicles without permits, signals a potential end to the sand mining business.

The community eagerly awaits continued efforts to curb mafia activities and restore environmental integrity. Sub-divisional officer Rajim Arpita Pathak, Mining Officer Fagual Nagesh, Mining Inspector Subhash Sahu, Tehsildar Rajim, and the police department collaborated in today's successful operation.

## Police apprehends young man transporting illicit liquor

Central Chronicle News

**Anwari, Apr 03:** The efforts of Bhakhara police led to the apprehension of a young man caught in the act of illegally selling and transporting liquor, effectively curbing the illicit trade in the area.

During a routine patrol from the city to the village, Bhakhara police received a tip-off from an informant regarding suspicious activity near Bhendasar turn. Acting swiftly on the information, the police team conducted a targeted raid, resulting in the arrest of Chovaram Sahu, who was found in possession of illicit liquor. Upon searching the



young man, the police discovered a plastic bag containing 50 quarter bottles of illicit liquor, valued at Rs 4500. The red-colored Pulsar bike bearing registration

number CG 05 AQ 2616, used in the transportation of the contraband, was seized on the spot. Legal action has been initiated against the offender under Excise Act 34/2.

## BPS student Shailu selected for Navodaya

Central Chronicle News

**Dongargaon, Apr 03:** Shailu Sahu, a fifth-grade student at Bharatiya Public School, operated by the Human Social Welfare and Education Committee,

has been selected to study at Navodaya Vidyalaya Dongargarh.

Principal Sunil Kumar Pandey shared the exciting news, highlighting Shailu's exceptional dedication to academic pursuits. Hailing from the rural village of Diwanbhed, Shailu's journey to Navodaya is not only a testament to her own hard work but also a source of pride for the entire



Shailu Sahu

village. Despite facing challenges typical of rural life, Shailu's commitment to self-study has propelled her towards this remarkable opportunity. Her father's employment in the PWD department underscores the family's perseverance and support for

education.

The news of Shailu's selection was met with widespread joy and commendation from community leaders and school officials. Shailu's mother, President of the Human Social Welfare and Teaching Committee Dongargaon, along with Santosh Sagar Sharma and Santosh Kumar Vaishnav, members of the committee, expressed their heartfelt congratulations.

Acknowledging the pivotal role played by the school in nurturing Shailu's talents, Principal P.L. Baya and Damini Yadu along with class teacher Narottam Sahu joined in extending best wishes for her future endeavors.

## District Collector urges officials for people's welfare

Central Chronicle News

**Korea, Apr 03:** In a forward-thinking move to address villagers concerns, District Collector Vinay Kumar Langeh convened a deadline meeting at the Collectorate Hall today, urging officials to prioritize inspections and resolutions in key public facilities across the district.

Emphasizing the importance of proactive governance, Langeh directed officials to conduct thorough inspections of hospitals, health centers, schools, Anganwadis, hostels, and ration shops. He stressed the need to swiftly address any identified issues by coordinating with relevant departments.



In light of the upcoming Lok Sabha elections in 2024, Langeh reminded officials of their duty to address the concerns of farmers and villagers alongside election-related tasks. Revenue officers were specifically instructed to expedite the resolution of cases related to land apportionment, demarcation, and diversion within specified timeframes. With the onset of

summer, Public Health Engineering and Municipal Council officials were tasked with ensuring a reliable drinking water supply to residents. Additionally, Langeh appealed to the public to refrain from activities like smoking or lighting fires in forests to prevent incidents of arson, while also instructing forest officials to remain vigilant. In efforts to maintain environ-

mental cleanliness, Langeh directed Municipal Council officials and the Chief Medical Officer to ensure that no waste, particularly from hospitals, is disposed of at drinking water points, ponds, or rivers. He emphasized the importance of systematic waste management and regular cleanliness practices to uphold community hygiene standards.

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**Chronicle**

## Punjab Kings batters to face different challenge against Gujarat Titans



Ahmedabad, Apr 03 (PTI):

Bruised by Mayank Yadav's scorching pace, Punjab Kings' batters will face an altogether different challenge when Gujarat Titans' bowling unit tries to take the pace off deliveries on a slightly tricky Motera track in

their IPL match here on Thursday.

The Kings have lost their last two away games and another slip-up against Titans will lead to further loss of momentum which tends to shift very quickly due to lack of turnaround time.

Titans, on the other

hand, are brimming with confidence after beating Sunrisers Hyderabad comprehensively by seven wickets in their last game.

In the previous match, Kings were completely undone by Mayank's speed and most of their top-order batters looked ill-equipped to face the fast

bowler, who was regularly clocking 150 clicks and more importantly, aiming to bowl into the body of the batters.

However, the scenario will be completely different when veteran Mohit Sharma comes calling at the back-end, presenting a palate of variations.

Mohit uses knuckle balls, slow bouncers and wide yorkers to good effect and this year's IPL trend has shown that save Mayank, all speedsters, who have been able to take pace off their deliveries, have been more successful. It will pose a different kind of challenge for the likes of Shikhar Dhawan, Jonny Bairstow and Jitesh Sharma, all of whom like the ball to come on to the bat.

If Liam Livingstone is unavailable for Thursday's match after sustaining a hamstring niggle in the last game, it will spell doom for Punjab as they would then happen to lose their key enforcer during the death overs.

Rabada hugely impressed with Mayank's raw pace and accuracy



New Delhi, Apr 03 (PTI):

Immensely impressed by Mayank Yadav's raw speed and accuracy, South Africa and Punjab Kings pace spearhead Kagiso Rabada sees the fast bowling sensation as a "potential pick" in India's squad for the T20 World Cup.

The 21-year-old from Delhi has been pushing the speed barrier with every game and on Tuesday night, bowled a 156.7 kmph thunderbolt against Royal Challengers Bengaluru. It was his second straight man of the match performance in his debut season, leading Lucknow Super Giants to a convincing win.

## Clinical Lanka sweep Test series against Bangladesh



Chattogram, Apr 03 (AP):

Fast bowler Lahiru Kumara claimed four wickets for 50 runs as Sri Lanka swept the two-test series against Bangladesh with a 192-run victory in the second match on Wednesday.

Sri Lanka won the first test by 328 runs and with the series sweep maintained its record of not losing a test in Bangladesh.

It won the earlier three-match T20 series 2-1 before losing the ODI series by same margin.

Resuming Day 5 at 268-7 and needing 243 runs for an unlikely victory,

Bangladesh was bowled out for 318 with Mehidy Hasan Miraz staying unbeaten on 81. Occasional bowler Kamindu Mendis, who took 3-32, got the breakthrough for the visitors in the fourth over of the day when he dismissed Taijul Islam, caught by Nishan Madushka at gully. But Mehidy raised his sixth test 50 off 62 balls, hitting Kamindu for a boundary. He batted aggressively to raise the prospect of his only second century but Hasan Mahmud and Syed Khaled Ahmed failed to give him support.

Both of the batters were dismissed by Kumara, leav-

ing Mehidy 19 runs short of his century. He played 110 balls for his 81, including 14 fours.

Sri Lanka posted 531 in its first innings with six batters getting past half-century marks, making it the highest total without any batters scoring a century.

It then dismissed Bangladesh for 178 runs, and took a 353-run lead but the visitors decided against the follow-on. Despite a batting collapse in the second innings, Sri Lanka was able to leave Bangladesh a record chase of 511 after declaring on 157-7.

## Could have been handled Pandya's matter better: Shastri

New Delhi, Apr 03 (PTI):

Former India coach Ravi Shastri feels the fan backlash towards Hardik Pandya could have been avoided had Mumbai Indians shown "clarity in communication" while announcing him as captain.

Shastri also advised Pandya to stay calm and weather the storm with solid performances.

"This is not the Indian cricket team that's playing. This is franchise cricket. They have paid top dollar. They are the bosses. It's their entitlement as to who they want as captain. Okay, where I think this could have been handled better with more clarity in communication," Shastri said told Star Sports' Cricket Live Show.

"If you wanted Hardik Pandya as captain, then say that we are looking at



the future. We are looking to build. Rohit has done a fabulous job, as everyone knows, and we want him to help out Hardik in these next three years as the team progresses.

"That communication, that clarity should have come out a little more for all this to die down. So it's not a case of you saying, 'No, we don't want Rohit Sharma,' or 'He was treated badly,' and all the things that are coming out in social media," he added.

## Cristiano Ronaldo nets another hat trick in Saudi Arabia

Abha, Apr 03 (AP):

Cristiano Ronaldo notched his second hat trick in the space of 72 hours as Al-Nassr routed Abha 8-0 in the Saudi Pro League on Tuesday.

The five-time Ballon D'Or winner scored three goals and recorded two assists in the first half for the nine-time Saudi Arabian champions.

The hat trick was his third of the league season following his treble in Saturday's 5-1 win over Al-Tai. The Portugal star leads the league with 29 goals.

Ronaldo's first two goals Tuesday came from free-kicks. With 11 minutes on the clock, he opened the scoring with a low shot from a central position just outside the area. The



second came 10 minutes later when he curled the ball around the wall from the left side. Ronaldo then

assisted Sadio Mané for Al-Nassr's third just after the half-hour, pulling the ball back from the left for

the former Liverpool forward to score. Three minutes before the break, Ronaldo then completed the hat trick with a beautiful chip from outside the area as he ran toward goal. There was still enough time in the first-half for Ronaldo to slip the ball to his right for Abdulmajeed Al-Sulayhim to score into an open goal from close range. The star was taken off at the break though Al-Nassr continued to find the target. Saudi Arabian international Abdulrahman Ghareeb added a sixth soon after the restart and substitute Abdulaziz Al-Aliwi scored two more.

Despite the win, Al-Nassr is still in second, 12 points behind runaway leader Al-Hilal with eight games remaining.

## Shuttler Anmol Kharb enters pre-quarters of Kazakhstan Challenge



Astana, Apr 03 (PTI):

Young Indian shuttler Anmol Kharb overcame a strong challenge from country-mate and top seed Malvika Bansod to enter the women's singles pre-quarters of the Kazakhstan International Challenge here on Wednesday.

The 17-year-old Anmol, winner of the Badminton Asia Team Championships gold and the reigning national champion, overcame Malvika's challenge 21-13 22-20 in 59 minutes.

The world No. 333 will take on Indonesia's 21-year-old shutter Nurani Ratu Azzahra in the last-16 round. Earlier in the two qualification rounds, Anmol got a walkover from Kamila Smagulova of Kazakhstan before beating Cassey Rynn Rompong of Malaysia 21-9 21-9 to secure a place in the main draw.

In other pre-quarters of women's singles, Anupama Upadhyaya defeated qualifier Harshita

Rout 21-13 21-13, while Tanya Hemant got the better of qualifier Aishani Tiwari 21-19 21-10.

Keyura Mopati overcame Vanessa Mariela Garcia of Mexico 21-18 21-13, while qualifier Aneri Kotak got a walkover from Wiktorija Dabczynska of Poland.

In mixed doubles pre-quarters, India's Dhanraj Srivatsa and Maneesha K beat Kazakh pair of Makhmut Tajibullayev and Romualda Batyrova 21-5 21-12, while the duo of Rohan Kapoor and Ruthvika Shivani defeated Uzbekistan's Biloliddin Kuchkarboev and Diana Garamova 21-16 21-11. There was more success in mixed doubles with the duo of Abhyuday Chauchary and Vaishnavi Khadkekar crushing Kazakhstan's Arnur Tapishev and Alissa Kuleshova 21-5 21-9, while Ayush Raj Gupta and Sruti Swain beat Kazakhstan's Otabek Kamilov and Amaliya Ormanova 21-11 21-11.

## Nikhat, Manika, Sreeshankar's request accepted

■ For TOPS funding to train abroad cleared by sports ministry

New Delhi, Apr 03 (PTI):

Several top athletes, including the Olympic-bound trio of boxer Nikhat Zareen, long jumper Murali Sreeshankar, and table tennis player Manika Batra's request for financial assistance to train



abroad was on Wednesday cleared by the Sports Ministry following a meeting here. Boxers Nikhat, Preeti Pawar, Parveen Hooda and Lovlina Borgohain will travel to Turkey for a foreign training camp along with their coaches and a physio, the ministry said in a statement. Wrestlers Sujet (65kg), Deepak Punia (86kg) and Naveen (74kg) will head to Russia along with their sparring part-

ners, a coach and physiotherapists to train ahead of the Asian Olympic Qualification Tournament later this month.

All the assistance is being provided under the ministry's Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS).

Shotgun shooter Bhowneesh Mendiratta's Mendiratta, who has secured a Paris quota place for the country, will travel to Italy to train with personal coach Daniele Di

Spigno for the ISSF World Cup in Baku.

Asian Games and Commonwealth Games medallist Sreeshankar's proposal for competing in the Diamond League in Suzhou and Doha was also cleared.

TOPS will cover Sreeshankar's coach and psychologist's airfare, boarding/lodging cost, out-of-pocket allowance, visa fees and medical insurance cost, among other expenses.

### T20I series vs Pak

## Bracewell appointed New Zealand skipper for first time

Auckland, Apr 03 (PTI):

With a host of top players competing in the IPL, New Zealand will be led for the first time by all-rounder Michael Bracewell in a five-match away T20I series against Pakistan later this month.

The likes of Trent Boult, Devon Conway, Lockie Ferguson, Matt Henry, Daryl Mitchell, Glenn Phillips, Rachin Ravindra, Mitch Santner and Kane Williamson are playing in the IPL, while Tim Southee, the team's leading T20 wicket-taker since the last T20 World Cup, has not been considered following a busy playing schedule across formats.

Bracewell, 33, who was sidelined since March last year due to a ruptured Achilles followed by a broken finger, got his T20I cap only two years back and has played just 16 matches in the shortest format. Bracewell will be in charge of a side that

has seven members from the previous T20 World Cup squads, along with two newly-selected players in batter Tim Robinson and pacer Will O'Rourke. O'Rourke has already made his Test and ODI debut. "Michael (Bracewell) has faced a long period on the sideline and it's exciting to see him back playing cricket again," said New Zealand Cricket (NZC) selector Sam Wells. "The fact he's back playing at a high level after an Achilles rupture is testament to his hard work and application," he added. "He's a well-respected leader and has captaincy experience for Wellington (in domestic cricket) along with New Zealand A and New Zealand XI teams, which we believe holds him in good stead to lead the group in Pakistan." Bracewell has scored 113 runs in 16 T20Is, including an unbeaten half-century. He has also played eight Tests and 19 ODIs.

## Ishant bhai told me that I should never compromise on speed for extra skills: Mayank



Bengaluru, Apr 03 (PTI):

Talented fast bowlers are often told to trade-off pace for more variations but Mayank Yadav, at the very onset, received golden advice from his illustrious Delhi senior Ishant Sharma - never compro-

mise on speed to acquire other skills.

Having already bowled this IPL season's fastest delivery (156.7 kmph) against Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB), India's newest pace sensation, during his conversation, with 'Jio Cinema' spoke about the tips he got from Ishant, a veteran of 100-plus Tests and another senior pacer Navdeep Saini.

"All the bowlers I spoke to in Delhi, Ishant bhai and Saini bhai, they all told me that even if I wanted to try anything new, I should play around my speed.

"If I want to add a new skill, it should be around my speed and that I don't need to add any skills that could compromise my speed," said Mayank

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## 'No Muslim living in India will lose citizenship'

● Oppn creating confusion

Ghaziabad, Apr 03 (PTI):

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Wednesday said no Muslim living in India will lose his or her citizenship and accused the opposition parties of creating confusion in the community about the Citizenship (Amendment) Act.

Addressing an election rally in support of the party's Lok Sabha candidate Atul Garg in Ghaziabad, he said the BJP does not engage in politics on the basis of caste, creed and religion but stands for nation-building. "We said that if our government is formed, we will make a citizenship law. And I want to tell you that after becoming the Home Minister (in 2014), I started this process by talking to the prime minis-



Defence Minister Rajnath Singh being garlanded by BJP workers during a public meeting in support of BJP candidate Atul Garg ahead of upcoming Lok Sabha elections, in Ghaziabad, Wednesday.

ter but due to a lack of clear majority in the Rajya Sabha, that bill could not be passed there whereas it was passed in the Lok Sabha," Singh said. Later, when Amit Shah became the Home Minister, he took this responsibility on his shoulders and the bill was passed with full majority

Muslim migrants from Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan who came to India before December 31, 2014.

"Now the opposition people try to create this illusion among our Muslim brothers that now you will be thrown out of the country. I want to tell my Muslim brothers that rest assured we believe in the concept of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam', i.e., the whole world is our family. No matter what caste or creed one is born in or a follower of any religion or sect, we consider everyone as a member of our family," Singh said.

"Sisters and brothers, anyone who is a Muslim living in India is not going to lose their citizenship. This kind of confusion is being created by our opponents. You go and tell our Muslim sisters and brothers about this," the BJP leader told the gathering.

## RELIGIOUS RITUAL



Jain monks with devotees perform 'Abhishekam' ritual on Rishabhdev Jayanti, in Prayagraj, Wednesday.

## 'Combination of methods of water storage needed to address water crisis'

Hyderabad, Apr 03 (PTI)

A combination of different methods of water resource management, including water storage is needed to address the problem of water shortage as currently being witnessed in Bengaluru, a senior World Bank official said on Wednesday.

Water resource management is absolutely critical in times of global warming and climate change, World Bank Executive Director Parameswaran Iyer said. He cited the Centre's 'Jal Shakti Abhiyan' as an example.

He was delivering a lecture titled "Implementing At-scale Transformational Programs" at the Administrative Staff College of India (ASCI) here.

Asked about a broader solution to problems like water shortage in Bengaluru now and possi-

ble in other major cities in the country, he said many of the issues of water resource management and water availability are getting exacerbated.

Iyer, who spoke about various aspects of the issue, said a combination of different methods of better water resource management at a city level is important.

Floods, droughts and water pollution is part of the challenge. The challenges are different in urban and rural areas, he said. Urbanisation and rise in population are part of the problem in cities, he noted. "So, a combination of different methods of better water resource management at a city level is important. So, you can do water storage. The Prime Minister started a programme called Jal Shakti Abhiyan. Every year, before the monsoon, simple ways in which you can

improve and increase water storage, whether it is in rural or urban areas," he said. While the big dams have their own challenges, water storage which traditionally has been practised, sometimes, gets neglected with urbanisation, encroachments and others, he said. Observing that better utility management is also needed, he stressed on effective management of 'non-revenue water' (water pumped and then unaccounted for).

In many cities around the world, non-revenue water is anywhere from 30 to 50 per cent, but it is less than 15 per cent in cities like Jerusalem.

He added that the union government, state governments, local bodies, the municipal corporations are all working to address the problem of water supply and there are different ways of dealing with this.

in both the Houses of Parliament, he said.

The rules for the implementation of the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019, were notified in March this year, four years after the contentious law was passed by Parliament to fast-track citizenship for undocumented non-

## PM TO BJP WORKERS 'Will not stop taking action against corruption'

Kolkata, Apr 03 (PTI)

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday said he remains committed to taking action against corruption, emphasising that those engaged in corruption have two options: jail or bail.

Modi, while virtually interacting with BJP workers from West Bengal through NaMo app, said the entire country has witnessed how the Trinamool Congress (TMC) has resorted to violence to stop BJP workers, but the saffron workers' fearlessly stood their ground.

"The corrupt have come together and have formed an alliance and keep abusing Modi. But let me make it clear that Modi will not stop taking action against corruption. For corrupts, only two options are left: jail or bail," he said.

Referring to poll vio-

lence, Modi said electoral violence is the biggest challenge in Bengal.

"The biggest challenge in West Bengal elections is electoral violence, but the Election Commission has made arrangements for the security and safety of the people. We all also monitor the events that unfold in West Bengal. We have to reach every voter's house and encourage them to vote fearlessly," he said.

Modi claimed that before every election, the TMC tries to stop the BJP workers by hook or by crook.

"The country has seen how BJP karyakartas have worked despite the threats. The TMC tries to stop the BJP by resorting to violence. The country has also seen how BJP workers fearlessly stood in their booths. We are confident of winning more seats this time," he said.

## 'Extra fees for driving licence renewal, registration certificate post due date not penalty'

Mumbai, Apr 03 (PTI)

HC RULING

The Bombay High Court has ruled that levying additional fees to renew driving licence and to issue registration certificate for motorcycles beyond the prescribed time limit was not a penalty or deterrent.

A division bench of the HC on Tuesday upheld the rules framed under the Central Motor Vehicles Act which provided for levy of additional fees for renewal of driving license for which an application is made after the grace period, renewal of registration certificate for motorcycles and for delay in submission of a no objection certificate (NOC) for transfer of ownership of vehicles.

The bench of Chief Justice D K Upadhyaya and Justice Arif Doctor dismissed petitions filed by two transport sector related trusts — K Savakash Autorickshaw

Sangha and Mumbai Bus Malak Sangathana — challenging the validity of the rules.

"We have no hesitation to hold that the levy of additional fee in this case, is in no manner a penalty, either directly or in disguise," the HC noted.

The petitioners claimed the provisions levying additional charges are, in fact, a penalty in the guise of fee and that no additional service is being provided.

The bench, in its order, noted that as per provision of the Act, the government was empowered to levy additional fees.

"The central and state governments have been empowered to levy fees for certain acts such as processing of applications, amendment of documents, issue of certificates, licences, permits, tests and so on," the court

said. The HC emphasised that renewal of driving licence on a delayed application or reissue of a vehicle registration certificate will have to be construed as service.

The additional fee charged is to process delayed applications and, in our opinion, such acts are regulatory in nature, the bench maintained.

"It is well-known that penalty is a deterrent. In this case, levy of additional fee as prescribed under the Rules cannot be said to be any kind of deterrent," the court said.

The provision, in fact, grants a chance to owners to seek renewal of registration of their vehicles and driving licence beyond the prescribed time limit, the bench noted.

"Charge of additional fee, thus, not being a deterrent on any count, in our opinion, cannot be said to be a penalty," the HC said.

## Coastal security exercise 'Sagar Kavach' conducted

New Delhi, Apr 03 (PTI)

A two-day exercise involving all maritime security agencies of the country was conducted off the Lakshadweep Islands from April 1-2, officials said on Wednesday.

During the exercise, validation of the effectiveness of coastal security mechanisms while deal-

ing with asymmetric threats emanating from the sea was undertaken, they said.

Assets of the Indian Navy, Coast Guard, Marine Police, fisheries, customs and other security agencies were engaged in the coastal security exercise -- Sagar Kavach 01/24.

"Validation of effective-

ness of coastal security mechanism while dealing with asymmetric threat emanating from the sea were undertaken," a senior official said.

The exercise witnessed enhanced preparedness, response mechanism, surveillance capabilities and coordination between the coastal security stakeholders, the officials said.

## Boxer Vijender Singh joins BJP

New Delhi, Apr 03 (PTI)

Vijender Singh, India's first Olympic medalist in boxing who took a plunge in politics in April 2019 by joining the Congress, switched to the BJP on Wednesday.

Addressing a joint press conference with BJP leaders at the party headquarters here, Singh praised Prime Minister Narendra Modi and said that the respect for Indian sports persons has increased in the country and abroad since the BJP came to power at the Centre.

"I am the same old Vijender. Whatever I would feel wrong, I would call it



Boxer and former Congress leader Vijender Singh during joining BJP ahead of Lok Sabha elections, at BJP HQ in New Delhi, Wednesday.

wrong. I will call it right if I feel it is right," said Singh who had been a vocal critic of the BJP and had come out in support of farmers'

protests and wrestlers' stir, often expressing his views on social media.

A number of leaders have switched their parties

ahead of Lok Sabha elections though Singh's entry into the BJP is among those that may have surprised many.

Singh joined the BJP in the presence of party national general secretary Vinod Tawde and other senior leaders of the party at its headquarters here.

"I am joining the BJP today under the leadership of Prime Minister Modi, Home Minister Amit Shah and party president JP Nadda. In a way it is my 'ghar wapas' (homecoming)," he said, adding "There is a saying in English- 'Good to be back'. I am feeling very good".

## Israeli national embraces Sankardeva's Vaishnav faith

Nagaon, Apr 03 (PTI): A 47-year-old Israeli national has embraced the Vaishnav faith founded by Assam's greatest socio-cultural-religious reformer Srimanta Sankardeva and was formally initiated at a 'sattr'a', a seat of Vaishnavite learning, in Kaliabor. A professor in Thailand's International Buddhist College, Edgar Faingor, took the initiation, the first of its kind by a foreign national, to Vaishnavite 'Ek Charan Naam Dharma' at Balisatra, noted Sankardeva scholar Dr Sanjib Borkakoti said.

The initiation ceremony was carried out by the Satradhikar of Bagharghaon Satra Hiru Prasad Mahanta and Faingor was renamed as Krishna Charan Bhakot on Tuesday, he said.

## GUDI PADWA PREPARATIONS



Women seen making small 'Gudi' as part of celebrations ahead of 'Gudi Padwa', a Hindu festival in Maharashtra and Goa, that marks the New Year for Marathi and Konkani Hindu community, in Thane, Wednesday.

## Sufi singer vs Punjabi actor: Punjab's Faridkot set to witness keen contest

Chandigarh, Apr 03 (PTI)

The Faridkot Lok Sabha constituency in Punjab is set to see an interesting contest with the BJP fielding a prominent Sufi singer and AAP naming a well-known Punjabi actor and singer for the upcoming electoral fray.

Polling for the 13 Lok Sabha seats in Punjab will be held on June 1.

The Aam Aadmi Party has fielded Karamjit Anmol, while the BJP has named North West Delhi MP Hans Raj Hans from Faridkot, a reserved par-

liamentary constituency. Currently, the seat is held by Congress MP Mohammad Sadique, a noted Punjabi folk singer.

The Congress is yet to announce its candidate from the constituency.

Hans, who has been into politics for the last 15 years, and is a sitting MP from North West Delhi constituency, will be trying his luck from his home state this time.

Asked how he sees AAP nominee Karamjit Anmol as a contestant against him, Hans said, "Anmol is my younger brother.

Wherever he meets me, he respects me."

On Congress MP Sadique, Hans said he was like a father figure to him.

"Whenever I meet him, I touch his feet. In Parliament, we meet each other. He is a legend and I respect him a lot," said the BJP candidate.

"I will speak about what I did there (Delhi) and what I will do here," Hans told PTI.

Hans, 62, also praised Prime Minister Narendra Modi, saying he has done a lot for the Sikh commu-

nity and cited the opening of the Kartarpur corridor as one of his achievements.

The corridor links Gurdwara Darbar Sahib in Pakistan, the final resting place of Sikhism founder Guru Nanak Dev, to Dera Baba Nanak shrine in Gurdaspur district.

Hans, born in Shafipur village in Jalandhar district, entered politics by joining the Shiromani Akali Dal in 2009 and unsuccessfully contested from the Jalandhar Lok Sabha seat.

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