

‘Can democracy be safe with infiltrators?’

Oppn raising SIR to keep ‘ghuspathiye’ in electoral rolls: Shah

Central Chronicle News

NEW DELHI: In a stinging attack at the Opposition over its criticism of the SIR, Home Minister Amit Shah on Wednesday said they worried because they can no longer win elections by corrupt practices and claimed that the reason for Congress’ defeat in polls was its leadership and not EVMs or “vote chori”.

Intervening in a debate on election reforms in the Lok Sabha, Shah alleged that the Opposition is raising the issue of Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls to keep “avaidh ghuspathiye (illegal immigrants)” in the voters’ list.

When the opposition MPs walked out later, Shah said no matter how many times the Opposition boycotts, the NDA will continue with its policy of detect, delete and deport ‘ghuspathiye’. The Opposition wants to normalise



Union Home Minister Shah speaks in LS during the Winter session of Parliament.

and formalise the ‘ghuspathiye’ and add them in electoral rolls, he said.

The BJP leader cited three instances of alleged “vote chori” by Jawaharlal Nehru, Indira Gandhi and Sonia Gandhi.

“Post Independence, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel was backed by 28 persons while Jawaharlal Nehru by two persons and yet Nehru became the prime minister, this was vote chori,” he said.

The minister said that the second “vote chori”

‘Nehru, Indira did vote chori’

Union Home Minister Amit Shah’s speech in the Lok Sabha during the debate on electoral reforms saw a fiery face-off between him and Leader of the Opposition Rahul Gandhi. When the Congress MP dared the minister to hold a debate on his press conference about alleged irregularities in voter lists, the BJP leader hit back, saying no one would dictate the order in which he would say things. Attacking the opposition during his speech, Shah said they have been pointing out irregularities in existing voter lists and then also objecting to the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) which, he said, was aimed at updating the rolls and ensuring only eligible voters are part of them.

Shah also took a dig at the Congress and said the reason for its poll losses was its leadership.

“If someone asks a question in a presser he is dubbed as a BJP agent, if they lose a case, they accuse the judge, if they lose an election, they blame EVMs. Now when EVM blame does not hold, they brought up vote chori...still they lost Bhar. Now the reason for your defeat is your leadership and not EVM or voters’ list,” the home minister

Massive fire in Surat



Fire fighters battle a blaze, at Raj Textile Market in Surat

Take part in ‘Your Money, Your Right’ movement: PM

NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday urged people to participate in the ‘Your Money, Your Right’ movement, which has successfully returned Rs 2,000 crore of unclaimed assets to rightful owners in the last two months.

The government launched ‘Your Money, Your Right’ nationwide campaign on October 4 to facilitate the settlement of unclaimed financial assets, including bank deposits, insurance, dividends, shares, mutual funds and pensions, to their legitimate claimants.

“Through the coordinated efforts of all stakeholders, notably the government, regulatory bodies, banks and other financial institutions, nearly Rs 2,000 crore has already been returned to the rightful owners,” Modi said in a social media post.

From October to December 5, 2025, camps were held in 477 districts, with the participation of public representatives, district administrations, and officials from financial institutions.

“But we want to scale up this movement in the coming days,” he said, while urging people to take part in the ‘Your Money, Your Right’ movement!.

Sharing the numbers, he said, Indian banks are holding Rs 78,000 crore of unclaimed money belonging to our own citizens.

Insurance companies have nearly Rs 14,000 crore lying unclaimed, he said, adding that mutual fund companies have around Rs 3,000 crore, and dividends worth Rs 9,000 crore are also unclaimed.

Diwali added to UNESCO’s Intangible Heritage list

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: India’s Deepavali -- the festival of lights -- was on Wednesday inscribed on the UNESCO’s Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, sparking celebrations to mark the earning of the coveted tag. The decision was taken during a key meeting of UNESCO being hosted at the Red Fort in Delhi.

Chants of ‘Jai Hind’, ‘Vande Mataram’ and ‘Bharat Mata ki Jai’ rent the air as UNESCO announced that the celebrated festival has been added to the prestigious list after a discussion by its committee. Artistes dressed in different



UNESCO's Fumiko Ohinata handed the Deepavali heritage certificate to Delhi CM Rekha Gupta and Culture Minister Shekhawat.

PM hails inscription

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday welcomed the addition of Deepavali to the UNESCO’s Intangible Heritage List, saying it will contribute to the festival’s global popularity. “People in India and around the world are thrilled,” Modi said in a post on X, responding to a post from UNESCO listing Deepavali in its Intangible Heritage List.

traditional attire performed in front of the main stage while images of the Deepavali

HIGHLIGHT

- This is the sixteenth element from India to be inscribed on the Representative List of the ICH of Humanity.

festival played on the big screen. Union Culture Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat delivered a statement on behalf of the country right after the inscription was announced during the 20th session of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH).

This is the sixteenth element from India to be inscribed on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.

H1B visa interviews cancelled

NEW DELHI: Pre-scheduled interviews of thousands of H-1B visa applicants slated for later this month in India have been abruptly postponed by several months apparently to scrutinise their social media posts and online profiles. Some of the applicants, whose visa appointments were scheduled next week, have received e-mails from US immigration authorities informing that their interviews are being pushed back as late as May next year. The mass cancellation of scheduled interviews of the H-1B visa applicants in view of the enhanced vetting measures is set to result in significant delays in their return to the US. The rescheduling of the interviews is for all applicants who were previously given appointments from December 15 onwards. Most of them were already in India and are now unable to return to the US.

Four Naxalites surrender in Kanker

Press Trust Of India

KANKER: Four Naxalites, one of them involved in the 2009 Madanwada-Korkoti ambush that claimed the lives of 29 security personnel, surrendered in Kanker district of Chhattisgarh on Wednesday, a senior police official said. The cadres, including two women, collectively carried a reward of Rs 23 lakh,



he said. They turned themselves in before senior police and Border Security Force (BSF) officials here under the “Poona Margem

NUMBER

23

- The cadres, including two women, collectively carried a reward of Rs 23 lakh.

launched by Bastar range police, has been emerging as a transformative initiative for establish-

ing lasting peace, dignity and comprehensive progress in the region comprising seven districts, including Kanker, he said.

Of the surrendered cadres, Kajal alias Rajita Vedada (19), who was active as a member company no. 10 in Gadchiroli (Maharashtra) division of Maoists, carried a reward of Rs 8 lakh, he said.





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State Commission for Protection of Child Rights signed a MoU with six universities of the state for the implementation of the “Rakshak Curriculum”.

Rakshak curriculum launched in Chhattisgarh

Six Universities sign MoU to strengthen Child Rights Education.

Central Chronicle News

RAIPUR: In a landmark step towards strengthening child rights protection education, the Chhattisgarh State Commission for Protection of Child Rights signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with six universities of the state for the implementation of the “Rakshak Curriculum”, a first-of-its-kind postgraduate course in the country.

The agreement was signed at the Chief Minister's residence office in the presence of Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai, who said the initiative

would play a vital role in creating a secure and responsible future for students. Describing the curriculum as a national innovation, the Chief Minister said the course would not only generate employment opportunities for youth but also build specialised expertise in the field of child rights protection.

He emphasized that children often go astray due to innocence or confusion and that society has a collective responsibility to guide them back onto the right path. He added that Chhattisgarh is moving rapidly towards good

FACTFILE

● Course would not only generate employment opportunities for youth but also build specialised expertise.

governance, noting that over 350 administrative reforms have been implemented and the Department of Good Governance and Convergence has been created.

He also highlighted key initiatives such as farmer bonus payments and women-centric welfare schemes undertaken in recent years. Women and Child Development

Minister Laxmi Rajwade said that protecting child rights requires continuous and sensitive efforts, including preventing child begging, rehabilitating abandoned children and addressing complex social issues.

She described the Rakshak Curriculum as a milestone that would help prepare compassionate, alert and service-oriented youth, adding that the programme would give Chhattisgarh national recognition in this sector. Higher Education Minister Tank Ram Verma termed the course historic and a matter of pride for the state.

Youth kidnapped, sexually assaulted

RAIPUR: A shocking case of kidnapping, sexual assault and digital blackmail has surfaced from the state capital, Raipur, where a young man was allegedly abducted, assaulted and threatened through an obscene video. Acting swiftly on the victim's complaint, police arrested the accused and registered a case under multiple serious sections of law. According to the victim's statement, he was travelling from Ramanujanj to Surat, Gujarat, in search of work and had reached Raipur Railway Station to board a train. There, he was reportedly approached by a man identified as Govind alias Govind Dhritlahare, who offered to help him with faster travel arrangements. The accused allegedly took the victim on his motorcycle to a secluded location outside the city and confined him in a room. The victim alleged that he was beaten and threatened, and later sexually assaulted against his will. The accused is also alleged to have recorded the act on his mobile phone. Police said the accused then sent the video to the victim's family and demanded Rs 1.5 lakh, threatening to make the clip viral on social media if the amount was not paid. The victim somehow managed to escape and reached his home in Ramanujanj, after which his family approached the police.

Briefs

BEST OF THE REST

INTER REGION CRICKET TOURNAMENT

Ambikapur retains the Championship title yet again defeating Raipur B



RAIPUR: Ambikapur Region successfully retained the championship title by defeating Raipur B in a thrilling final during the Inter-Region Cricket Tournament organised by the Raipur Zone of Central Bank of India. The tournament was held at Sahil Cricket Academy ground, Nardaha, Raipur, and witnessed enthusiastic participation from five teams – Ambikapur, Bhubaneswar, Sambalpur, Raipur A and Raipur B – as part of the bank's employee engagement and annual Sports Day celebrations. In the closely contested final, Raipur B captain Sunit Rana won the toss and elected to field.

Ambikapur managed to score 64 runs for the loss of 7 wickets in the allotted overs, setting a target of 65 runs. Raipur B fought hard in the chase but could only reach 62 runs, losing 8 wickets and falling short by just 2 runs. Anup Satpathy of Ambikapur was named Man of the Match for scoring 12 runs and taking three crucial wickets. Rishabh of Ambikapur was awarded Best Bowler for taking nine wickets throughout the tournament, while Soumya Ranjan Behera of Raipur B was declared Best Batsman for scoring 41 runs. Rajesh Chauhan received the Best Fieldler/Wicketkeeper award.

180 VILLAGES CONNECTED

Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai launches second phase of Rural Bus Scheme

RAIPUR: In a major boost to rural connectivity, Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai on Wednesday launched the second phase of the Chief Minister's Rural Bus Scheme, virtually flagging off new bus services from the Chief Minister's residence office in Raipur. The initiative has expanded public transport deep into the remote forest and tribal regions of Bastar and Surguja, directly connecting 180 additional villages with regular bus services. Under the second phase, 24 new buses have started operating on 23 routes across 10 districts of the Bastar and Surguja divisions. The launch marked a significant milestone in the state government's efforts to bridge the connectivity gap in some of the most inaccessible areas of Chhattisgarh. Several



villagers who attended the programme travelled to Raipur on buses introduced in the first phase. During their interaction with the Chief Minister, they shared that travel to block headquarters and nearby towns has now become easier, faster and safer. Villagers travelling via the Sukma-Dornapal-Konta route said they covered nearly 110 kilometres by bus to attend the event, a journey that was earlier considered difficult and time-consuming due to lack of reliable transport.

NATIONWIDE RELEASE

Much-awaited Hindi Film ‘Janaki Part-1’ to release nationwide on December 12

RAIPUR: The much-awaited Hindi feature film Janaki Part-1 is all set for a simultaneous nationwide release, including in Chhattisgarh, on December 12, 2025. Produced under the banner of N Mahi Films Production by filmmaker Mohit Sahu, the film promises a blend of entertainment and cultural values, aiming to deliver both cinematic enjoyment and a meaningful social message. The film has been shot across picturesque rural locations of Bitkuli and Khatiapati villages in Balodabazar, Rajnandgaon and Raipur. Considered a dream project of its producer, Janaki Part-1 went through several challenges before reaching the release stage, but has finally overcome delays and hurdles to reach theatres. The film boasts a strong musi-



cal lineup with celebrated playback singers including Kailash Kher, Shaan, Javed Ali, Dev Negi, Nakash Aziz and Monika Verma lending their voices. Voice performances for key characters have been enhanced by renowned dubbing artists Sanket Mahatre, Payal Vishal and Sohail Khan.

UMANG 2025

Vibrant Annual Day celebrated at Shri Gujarati Schools



RAIPUR: The joint annual day celebration “Umang 2025” of Shri Gujarati Bal Mandir, Shri Gujarati Primary School and Shri Gujarati Higher Secondary School, Devendra Nagar, Raipur, was held on Tuesday with great enthusiasm. The event was graced by office-bearers and members of Patron Committee and Executive Committee under the Shri Gujarati Shikshan Sangh. Ramjibhai Patel, President of Patron Committee, attended as Chief Guest, while Narayanbhai Patel, President of Executive Committee, presided over the programme. Among the

distinguished guests were Maganbhai Patel (Vice President), Babubhai Patel, Jayantibhai Patel (former Raipur District BJP President), and several senior committee members. Principal Anis Memon delivered the welcome address and report, while the vote of thanks was proposed by Yogita Taunk. English Medium Principal Dr. Shailesh Sharma, Registrar Ashok Jachak and former Administrator V.K. Mishra were also present on the occasion. The annual cultural showcase featured 25 performances, each reflecting the theme “Umang 2025” with vibrant energy.

| COAL SCAM |

SC grants bail to Navneet Tiwari

Central Chronicle News

SC grants bail to Navneet Tiwari in CG coal scam, probe by ED and EOW continues.



willing to fully cooperate with the ongoing investigation. After considering the submissions, the court ordered his release on bail, subject to strict conditions.

RAIPUR: In a significant development in the Chhattisgarh coal scam case, the Supreme Court has granted bail to Navneet Tiwari, a relative of alleged mastermind Suryakant Tiwari. Navneet Tiwari, who had been lodged in Raipur Central Jail for the past four months, secured relief after the apex court heard his plea.

The bail was granted by a bench headed by the Chief Justice, following arguments by defence counsel Shashank Mishra, who contended that Navneet's arrest was based largely on circumstantial evidence and that he was

According to the Enforcement Directorate and the Economic Offences Wing, Navneet Tiwari was an active member of an alleged illegal coal levy syndicate. Investigators claim that he played a key role in extorting large sums from coal traders and transporters in Raigarh district and routing the proceeds to Raipur. He was named as an accused by the Enforcement Directorate in 2022 and allegedly went underground following heightened enforcement action.

| STATE-LEVEL WORKSHOP |

‘Biomedical management is collective responsibility’

Central Chronicle News

State-level workshop in Nava Raipur focused on strict implementation and awareness of biomedical waste rules.



FACTFILE

● Safe and scientific disposal of biomedical waste is directly linked to public health.

care institutions but a collective responsibility of society as a whole. He emphasised that safe and scientific disposal of biomedical waste is directly linked to public health and urged all health institutions to ensure 100 per cent compliance with prescribed rules. The Minister said the work-

shop was organised to help institutions clearly understand the rules, share practical challenges and work together towards solutions.

He expressed confidence that with dialogue and cooperation, Chhattisgarh could emerge as a model state in biomedical waste management. Secretary of the Housing and Environment Department and Chairman of the Board, Ankit Anand, said that active participation of health institutions is essential for efficient waste management.

| VEHICLE SEIZED |

Road Birthday celebration lands 5 in Police Custody

Central Chronicle News

RAIPUR: Raipur Police took swift action against a group of youths who disrupted traffic by celebrating a birthday in the middle of a public road by bursting firecrackers and cutting a cake near Mahatari Chowk in Gudhiyari around 12:00 a.m. on December 10. The incident caused major inconvenience to commuters and motorists, prompting immediate police intervention.



On receiving information, the Gudhiyari Police registered Case No. 501/25 under Sections 126(2) and 3(5) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) and Sections 122/177 of the Motor

Vehicles Act. Acting on the directions of Senior Superintendent of Police Dr. Lal Umed Singh, the police arrested five accused and produced them before the SDM Court.

During the action, the Maruti car bearing registration number CG04 PV 8880, which was used to block the road, was seized. Preventive proceedings were also initiated under Section 170 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS).

The arrested persons have been identified as Rakesh alias Monu Dogre (30), Sanjay Yadav (23), Karan Singh alias Bunty Meravi (20), Pramod Tandon (25), and Saurabh Singh alias Golu (25), all

residents of areas under Gudhiyari police station limits. Police officials said similar incidents in the past have been dealt with strictly and warned that celebrations involving fireworks, road blockages, and risky stunts on public roads are punishable offences. Raipur Police appealed to youth and citizens not to celebrate birthdays or any occasions on public roads in a manner that endangers lives or disrupts public order.

Cabinet sub-committee formed to review cases against surrendered Naxalites

more than 2,380 Naxalites have surrendered in the state in the last two years.

Central Chronicle News

RAIPUR: The Chhattisgarh government on Wednesday set up a cabinet sub-committee to review criminal cases registered against Naxalites who have surrendered, and recommend eligible cases for withdrawal, officials said. The decision was taken during a cabinet meeting chaired by Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai at his official residence here, a government statement said. According to police, more than 2,380 Naxalites have surrendered in the state in the last two years.

“The cabinet has approved the process for disposing/withdrawing criminal cases registered against surrendered Naxalites. It has given nod to the formation of a cabinet sub-committee to review and examine the cases registered against surrendered Naxalites, which can be withdrawn from the courts. The committee will submit these cases before the cabinet after examination for final decision,” the release said.

The decision has been taken in accordance with provisions of the Chhattisgarh Naxalite Surrender/Victim Relief and Rehabilitation Policy-2025, which provides for considering the disposal of cases registered against surrendered cadres, taking into



Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai chairing meeting of Chhattisgarh cabinet held at CM House in Civil Line here.

FASTFACTS

- The cabinet has approved the process for disposing/withdrawing criminal cases registered against surrendered Naxalites.
- The decision has been taken in accordance with provisions of the Chhattisgarh Naxalite Surrender/Victim Relief and Rehabilitation Policy-2025.

account their good conduct and contribution to the elimination of Naxalism, the release said.

A district-level committee will first examine each surrendered cadre's pending criminal cases and submit its report to the police headquarters, which will forward the proposal along with its opinion.

The government will obtain the opinion of the law department and

then submit the cases to the cabinet sub-committee, which will send it recommendations to the cabinet for a final call, the release said.

For offences lodged under central laws and related to the Union government, mandatory approval from the Centre will be sought, while other cases will be sent to district magistrates for withdrawal through public prosecutors, it added.

Draft of Chhattisgarh Jan Vishwas (Amendment of Provisions) (second) Bill, 2025 approved

In another key decision, the cabinet approved the draft of the Chhattisgarh Jan Vishwas (Amendment of Provisions) (second) Bill, 2025, aimed at updating and simplifying provisions of 14 state Acts to make them more citizen-friendly, the release said.

The government noted that violation of several Acts currently has provision for fines or imprisonment, leading to prolonged judicial processes and unnecessary inconvenience for people and businesses. To promote ease of doing business and ease of living, the simplification of these provisions is mandatory, it said. Earlier, the Chhattisgarh Jan Vishwas (Amendment of Provisions) Act, 2025, was notified by the state government, amending 163 provisions across 8 Acts. Now, this second edition of the bill will be introduced to further simplify and make more effective 116 provisions across 14 Acts of 11 departments, it said. The fresh bill provides for administrative penalties for minor violations, which will lead to faster resolution of cases,

Mandatory e-office system in all tribal department bodies from Jan 1, 2026

RAIPUR: The Tribal Affairs Department of Chhattisgarh has announced the mandatory adoption of an e-office system across all its subordinate commissions, boards, and corporations starting January 1, 2026. This decision was confirmed by Principal Secretary Sonmani Bora during a comprehensive review meeting held at Mahanadi Bhavan. The meeting assessed the functioning and development plans of various bodies under the department, including the State Scheduled Tribes Commission, Backward Classes Commission, Scheduled Castes Commission, Minority Commission, Backward Classes Welfare Commission, and multiple development boards such as the Oil Mill Workers, Leather Artisans, Washermen, and Tanner Development Boards. Bora emphasized that, in line with Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai's vision, the e-office system will enhance administrative transparency, tighten procedural discipline, reduce unnecessary delays, and curb red tape. He directed that preparations for the implementation of this system at all commissions, boards, and corporations be completed in a timely manner.

Additionally, updated annual reports for 2022-23, 2023-24, and 2024-25 were reviewed, with instructions to upload these reports as e-books on the department's website, accompanied by quality photographs.

RMC seals 18 large defaulters' commercial complexes over pending dues



Central Chronicle News

RAIPUR: In a strict action against defaulters, the Revenue Department of Raipur Municipal Corporation's Zone 8 has sealed 18 major commercial complexes for non-payment of pending dues amounting to over Rs 1.06 crore. Despite repeated demand bills, notices, and final warnings issued over several years, these defaulters failed to clear their outstanding amounts, prompting immediate lockdown measures.

The enforcement drive was carried out under the orders of Raipur Municipal Commissioner Vishvadeep, with Deputy Revenue Officer Jagruti Sahu, Zone 8 Commissioner Rajeshwari Patel, and Assistant Revenue Officer Mahadev Rakssel leading the operation. Along with the revenue inspectors, the team conducted the sealing of properties within Vir Savarkar Nagar Ward No. 1.

Among the defaulters, amounts ranged from Rs 1.31 lakh to

FASTFACTS

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over Rs 40 lakh. Notable defaulters include Harvansh Singh, Mahendra Singh, Surjeet Kaur (Rs 40.4 lakh), Sameer Chandrakar (Rs 19.3 lakh), Ashutosh Chandrakar (Rs 21 lakh), and others with dues spanning Rs 1.06 crore collectively.

Zones 8 officials emphasized that sealing was a necessary step to enforce collection of dues and ensure compliance. The municipal corporation has repeatedly given ample opportunity for payment, and this decisive action reflects their commitment to maintaining revenue discipline.

NEWSLINE

AIIMS-R WINS AWARD

AIIMS-R team wins best poster award at ESMO ASIA 2025 Singapore



RAIPUR: AIIMS Raipur has brought international acclaim to India after its Department of Radiation Oncology won the Best Poster Award at the prestigious European Society of Medical Oncology (ESMO) Asia Congress held from 5-7 December 2025 at the Suntec Convention & Exhibition Centre, Singapore. The award-winning study was presented on 5 December by Dr. Swaroopa Madhuri Rath, Postgraduate Junior Resident, under the mentorship of Prof. Siddhartha Nanda, Head of the Department, with Dr. Papuji Meher, Associate Professor, as co-author. AIIMS Raipur Executive Director & CEO, Lt Gen Ashok Jindal (Retd), congratulated the entire team and commended their commitment to high-quality cancer research that directly enhances patient care.

The study addressed a critical issue faced by patients undergoing radiation therapy for oral cavity cancers—painful mucositis, which leads to mouth ulcers, difficulty in swallowing, and weight loss.

MUSICAL FOUNTAIN

Mayor's anger triggers action against agency for defunct musical fountain

RAIPUR: Following strong displeasure expressed by Raipur Municipal Corporation Mayor Meenal Choubey, Raipur Smart City Limited (RSCL) has issued a stern notice to the agency responsible for operating the musical fountain at Budhatalab (Swami Vivekananda Sarovar), citing a breach of contract and public dissatisfaction. The action was initiated after Mayor Choubey inspected the site on December 5, 2025, and found the prominent musical fountain to be non-functional, leading to intense public discontent. The contract for the supply, installation, operation, and maintenance of the musical fountain was awarded to M/s MMR Innovations Private Limited of Jubilee Hills, Hyderabad, Telangana.

The notice, issued by RSCL Chief Operating Officer Richa Chandrakar under the directions of Mayor Meenal Choubey and Municipal Commissioner (and RSCL Managing Director) Vishwadeep, highlights that the continued closure of the fountain constitutes a violation of the contractual clause requiring regular operation and maintenance.

Khalsa Cricket Club Jammu suffers massive 166-run defeat

Central Chronicle News

RAIPUR: The 17th SPL Cricket Tournament, organized by the Shaheed Bhai Taru Singh Foundation, witnessed two exciting matches, including a crushing defeat for Khalsa Cricket Club Jammu. The tournament kicked off with a close contest between Delhi Khalsa Warriors and Chandigarh Singhs. Batting first, the Delhi side posted a competitive total of 165 runs for the loss of 5 wickets in their allotted 20 overs. Top Scorers for Delhi: Sing Deol led the charge with a quick-fire 31 runs off 19 balls, including 3 massive sixes. He was well supported by Ganga Singh (44 runs), Jaskaranveer Singh (29 runs), and Prabhu Preet (27 runs). Key Bowlers for Chandigarh: Gurbej Singh was the most effective bowler, taking 3 wickets for 38 runs, while Sahib and NS Lochan claimed one wicket each. In response, Chandigarh Singhs fought



FASTFACTS

- The tournament kicked off with a close contest between Delhi Khalsa Warriors and Chandigarh Singhs.

hard but fell short, finishing at 158 for 8 wickets, losing the match by a narrow 7-run margin. Top Scorers for Chandigarh: NS Lochan played a brilliant half-century, scoring 54 runs off 41 balls. Zorawar Singh (37 runs) and Maninder (13 runs) also contributed, aided by 24 extra runs.

Player of the Match: Jaskaranveer Singh from Delhi delivered a match-winning spell, taking 5 wickets for just 12 runs in his four overs. Inderpreet Ladi (2 wick-

ets) and Sing Deol (1 wicket) provided support. Singh-e-Punjab Patiala Crush Khalsa Cricket Club Jammu by 166 Runs The second match of the day saw Singh-e-Punjab Patiala hand a massive 166-run defeat to Khalsa Cricket Club Jammu, thanks to a monumental individual performance.

Patiala's Dominance: Patiala posted a huge score of 233 for 4 wickets. The highlight was the blistering innings by Inderpreet Singh, who smashed 133 runs off just 52 balls. He was unstoppable, hitting 14 boundaries and 9 towering sixes all around the ground. Kumay Ambala (31 runs), Jaspreet (20 runs), and Jiwanjot (18 runs) helped build the daunting total.

NIT Raipur hosts ICDSINC 2025 conference on data science

Central Chronicle News

Over 100 research papers submitted for the inaugural international conference.

RAIPUR: National Institute of Technology Raipur's Department of Computer Science and Engineering organized the Inaugural Ceremony of the 1st IEEE International Conference on Data Science and Intelligent Network Computing (ICDSINC 2025) on Tuesday. Distinguished dignitaries graced the occasion, including Chief Guests Dr. G. S. Tomar, Chairperson, IEEE MP Section, and Dr. Somitra Sanadhya, Director, C3IHUB, IIT Kanpur; along with Guest of Honour Prof. NV Ramana Rao, Director, NIT Raipur. After the lamp-lighting ceremony and the welcome of the dignitaries, Dr. Aakanksha Sharaf, in her welcome



address, greeted all the guests and participants. She highlighted the growing role of AI-driven autonomous systems and acknowledged the international participation received from both India and abroad.

Dr. Pradeep Singh extended gratitude on behalf of the organizing committee and spoke about the unprecedented scale of data generation in the modern era. Emphasizing the importance of metadata and the multimodal data, he shared that the conference received more than

100 high-quality research paper submissions.

Prof. Naresh Nagwani expressed hope for the successful conduct of the event and encouraged young researchers to work on fundamental research questions and make meaningful use of this platform. Dr. Narendra D. Londhe described digital technologies as “disruptive,” stating that with rapid digitization, AI has now become the centre of modern engineering advancements. He stressed that such events are essential to enhance awareness and collabo-

| AMBEDKAR HOSPITAL SERVICES |

Ambedkar Hospital eliminates sonography waiting time

Central Chronicle News

RAIPUR: The Radiodiagnosis Department at Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar Memorial Hospital has successfully eliminated waiting times for sonography examinations. Except for antenatal and anomaly scans for pregnant women—scheduled according to their gestation period under gynecologists' advice—all sonography tests are now conducted on the same day of the patient's visit. According to department sources, out of five sonog-



raphy machines installed at the hospital, four are fully operational while one is undergoing repair. No patient is given a waiting date for their sonography, ensuring that nearly all tests are completed promptly. The department has also ramped up its daily testing capacity—from

approximately 130 sonographies a day previously to over 200 currently. On Tuesday alone, more than 248 patients received same-day sonography tests.

To maintain this efficiency, department head Dr. Vivek Patre closely monitors all examinations, aiming for smooth indi-

The hospital management is fully committed to providing patients with prompt, transparent, and high-quality diagnostic services

Dr Santosh Sonkar

Hospital Superintendent

not being referred outside the hospital for these services. Emergency patients continue to receive timely sonography, CT scan, and X-ray tests within the hospital premises.

The hospital management emphasized its commitment to providing patients with fast, transparent, and high-quality diagnostic services. Regular maintenance and prompt repairs of medical equipment remain a top priority to ensure timely testing and better treatment outcomes for every patient.

“One Nation, One Election” signature campaign concludes at Columbia College of Institutions

Central Chronicle News

RAIPUR: A massive signature campaign in support of “One Nation, One Election” was organized today at Columbia College of Institutions. The chief guest of the event was the Verma, President of the Yuva Morcha. Special guests included the village head and Mandal President, Harishankar Verma, program coordinator, Yogesh Sahu, and Columbia Institute Secretary, Hurjeet Singh Hura, along with numerous aca-



demics and youth activists. Those present at the event discussed in detail the far-reaching national benefits of “One Nation, One Election.” Considerable positive discussions centered on several key points: The country's financial burden will be reduced, as the enormous

expense of holding frequent elections will be avoided. Pressure on the administrative machinery will be reduced, and development work will not be hampered. A uniform election process across the country will enhance transparency and stability.



“Guidelines issued to strengthen the birth and death registration system across the district.”

Abhijeet Singh
(Collector, Durg)

Farmers benefiting from horticulture crop

A large number of farmers are shifting towards horticulture crop cultivation



Farmers involved in horticulture crops production.

Central Chronicle News

BHILAI: A significant number of farmers in Durg district are increasingly gravitating towards horticulture crop cultivation. This shift is being supported by grants provided under various Central and State Government schemes, allowing farmers to benefit greatly from their produce. Under the National Mission on Edible Oil-Palm (NMEO-OP) scheme, planting has been completed on 95.04 hectares for 47 farmers against the target for the year 2025-26. Last year, the depart-

FASTFACTS

- Farmers increasingly adopting Oil Palm plantation.
- 50 hectares area expansion for flower cultivation.

ment supported oil palm planting on 74.61 hectares for 37 farmers. Impressively, Yogesh Sahu, a farmer from Temri village in Dhamdha block, successfully planted oil palm on eight acres with departmental grants. He harvests every one and a half to two months, producing Oil Palm FFB (Fresh Fruit

Flower and grafted vegetable success

71 farmers in the district are generating good yields by cultivating Marigold on 50 hectares, with Arun Kumar from Malpurikala earning well from his two-hectare plot. Moreover, 46 farmers under the National Agriculture Development Scheme are achieving high incomes by producing grafted brinjal and tomato, showcasing the efficacy of departmental guidance and grants.

Bunches) and earning an income of Rs 1.5 to Rs 2 lakh per harvest season. Inspired by his success, other farmers in the district are also beginning to adopt oil palm cultivation. Furthermore, under the Integrated Horticulture Development Mission,

99 farmers are benefiting from the expansion of crops like banana, papaya, and dragon fruit across 152 hectares. Similarly, 58 farmers have been benefited by expanding vegetable cultivation—tomato, brinjal, and onion—over 64 hectares.

Guidelines issued to strengthen system

BHILAI: In compliance with directives issued at the recent National Conference chaired by the Registrar General and Census Commissioner of India, Collector Abhijeet Singh has issued essential guidelines to strengthen the birth and death registration system across the Durg district. The instructions have been directed to key officials, including Commissioners/Registrars of Municipal Corporations (Durg, Bhilai, Risali, etc.), Civil Surgeons, CMOs, and Registrars of various hospitals and local governing bodies across the blocks. A primary focus is ensuring that all government hospitals mandatorily provide the birth certificate to the mother of a newborn before her discharge from the hospital, after completing the registration. Private hospital in-charges within the jurisdiction of all registration units have been strictly instructed to report all birth and death incidents to the concerned Registrar without delay. This ensures that the registration and certificate issuance can be completed within the stipulated 21 days of the event. To monitor this process, the achievement of registration within 21 days will now be included as a compulsory agenda item in the annual meeting of the District Level Coordination Committee (DLCC).

Shrimant wins silver at Asian Para Armwrestling Cup



Central Chronicle News

BHILAI: India's ace para armwrestler Shrimant Jha has once again brought pride to the nation by winning the silver medal in the -85 kg category at the Asian Para Armwrestling Cup 2025, held in Sharjah from December 4 to 10. Demonstrating exceptional strength, technique and determination, Jha fought his way to the finals and secured the silver after a spirited contest.

Following his victory, Jha dedicated the medal to India's martyrs, stating that every triumph of his is inspired by the sacrifice of soldiers who laid down their lives for the country. "This silver medal belongs to all those brave men who gave everything for our security," he said, adding that his next goal is to win gold at

upcoming international tournaments to further elevate India's name. Jha is ranked World No 3 and Asia's No 1 in para armwrestling. With 61 international medals already to his credit, his latest achievement strengthens his position as one of the sport's most decorated athletes.

The People's Arm Wrestling Federation of India President Preeti Jhinhniani, Chhattisgarh Arm Wrestling Association President G Suresh Babe, Chairman Brij Mohan Singh, Secretary Shrikant Krishna Sahu and Coach Raju Sahu congratulated Jha on his remarkable success. Sending a message to youth, Jha urged them to pursue their dreams with dedication and perseverance, reminding them that hard work and faith in one's goals are the true keys to success.

Durg Mayor inspects major pipeline leakage near Cemetery



Central Chronicle News

BHILAI: A major leakage in the primary drinking water supply pipeline near Ganjpara Cemetery in Durg Municipal Corporation limits prompted immediate inspection by Mayor Alka Baghmar on Wednesday.

She was accompanied by Water Department in-charge Leena Dinesh Devangan, MIC member Shiv Nayak, Councillors Pratibha Suresh Gupta and Pratibha Patil, Executive Engineer Girish Diwan, Vinod Manjhi,

and Water Inspector Narayan Thakur.

During the inspection, the Mayor issued clear directions to officials, noting that the leakage was obstructing the required flow of raw water to the filter plant, thereby disrupting the city's water supply system. Stressing the urgency of the matter, she instructed that repair work be completed without delay, emphasizing that unnecessary interruptions in water distribution cause inconvenience to citizens and must be avoided.

Funds sanctioned for road

BHILAI: Collector Abhijeet Singh has sanctioned Rs 12.60 lakh for two CC road construction projects in Dhamdha block under the Ahivara Assembly Constituency Development Scheme. The approved funds include Rs 2.60 lakh for a CC road in Gram Panchayat Khapri and Rs 10 lakh for a CC road in Gram Panchayat Semariya.

Funds for rural development

BHILAI: Under the CM's Comprehensive Rural Development Scheme, Rs 10.40 lakh has been sanctioned for infrastructure development works (the construction of four CC roads in Kataro village) in the Durg Janpad Panchayat area for the year 2025-26.

Modern Tandula Division and Sub-Division offices inaugurated

Central Chronicle News

New complex to centralize water management and irrigation services for 1.27 lakh hectares.

BHILAI: School Education Minister Gajendra Yadav inaugurated the new Tandula Divisional Office and Sub-Divisional Buildings of the Water Resources Department, Durg. The ceremony was presided over by Ahiwara MLA Domanlal Korsewada, with Durg Rural MLA Lalit Chandrakar and Telghani Vikas Board Chairman Jitendra Kumar Sahu attending as special guests.

Minister Yadav hailed the building as a prime example of high efficiency, transparency, and technical progress in water resource management



Dignitaries performing rituals during inauguration.

FASTFACTS

- Rs 336.67 Lakh project to replace century-old dilapidated structure.

- School Education Minister Gajendra Yadav inaugurated the buildings.

and farmer welfare. He noted that the state-of-the-art complex replaces a severely dilapidated structure built in 1912, which had long hindered departmental work and public

services. The reconstruction, costing Rs 336.67 lakh, was undertaken with a forward-looking vision and adherence to durable technical standards. The new premises will play a central role in managing irrigation schemes, water conservation, and maintenance for 1.27 lakh hectares of agricultural land in Durg district, alongside operating a digitized records system. Yadav emphasized the critical role of the canal network in recharging all types of water resources.

The modern building incorporates advanced technical features, including long-term stability, fly ash brick-based eco-friendly construction, natural ventilation and lighting, energy-efficient systems, a secured record room, and a digitized e-Office infrastructure.

Ahiwara MLA Korsewada advocated for the deepening and beautification of all reservoirs and raised concern over industrial pollution directly entering water bodies. Durg Rural MLA Chandrakar stressed the importance of water conservation in an agricultural country like India. He highlighted the extensive construction of soak pits in the district, an initiative that recently earned the district a special award, and urged every family to build soak pits to mitigate water scarcity.

NEWSLINE

ABSCONDING

Two thieves surrender



BHILAI: Two absconding accused involved in the theft of copper cable from the store of BBB Infra Private Limited, Rasmada, have surrendered to the court following sustained pressure from the police. The case was registered at Pulgaon Police Station after the company reported the theft of approximately 100 meters of Asian Copper KEC cable, valued at Rs 6 lakh on November 1. Investigation led to the earlier arrest of seven accused, from whom stolen property worth Rs 12,00,000 was recovered and they were sent to judicial custody. However, two primary suspects, Loman Dhankar (28) and Narayan Dhimer (25), both residents of Newai, Durg, had been evading arrest.

APPREHENSION

Robber nabbed after five years



BHILAI: An accused who had been absconding for five years after committing a robbery in 2020 has been arrested by Durg Police in Chhindwara. Fearing arrest, the accused had fled the city and settled in Chhindwara. The incident occurred on September 24, 2020, near Mahamara College in the Pulgaon police station area, where four individuals traveling in an auto assaulted an elderly complainant grazing his goats and robbed him of two goats before escaping. Immediately after the incident, three accused – Salim Khan alias Sonu, Asif Ali, and Santosh Kumar Sahu – were arrested, the stolen goats were recovered, and they were sent to jail. However, one accused, Arman Khan, escaped with the auto and remained at large.

OBITUARY

Urmila Devi Mishra



BHILAI: Urmila Devi Mishra (81), a resident of Dayanagar, passed away on December 10. She was the wife of Ramnath Mishra and mother of Virendra Kumar Mishra, Satyaprakash Mishra and Shashi Tripathi. She was the mother-in-law of Lata Mishra and Lokmani Tripathi. The final journey will commence on December 11 at 11:00 AM, proceeding from her residence at 613/54, Street 21 C, Dayanagar, towards Risali Muktidham.

| BRINGING CREATIVITY AND HOPE |

Sculptor Ankush provides free art training

Central Chronicle News

BHILAI: In the deeply Naxal-affected region of Gram Salhe, Bhanupratappur, District Kanker, renowned sculptor Dr Ankush Devangan conducted a free art training session for school-children, bringing creativity and hope to an area long associated with violence. With increasing numbers of Naxal surrenders, the atmosphere in these valleys is gradually returning to normalcy, and the event drew remarkable enthusiasm among children eager to

witness Devangan's miniature sculptures—considered the smallest in the world—and the painting exhibition of noted modern artist DS Vidyarthi.

For nearly 35 years, Devangan has been visiting such remote and volatile regions to train children in painting and sculpture, aiming to divert them from the path of violence and nurture their creative potential. Born in Dalli Rajhara, he recalls observing in his childhood that youngsters engaged in making idols and art-



works during Ganesh and Durga festivals never turned towards extremist activities. This realization inspired him to begin free art training in surrounding villages, gradually expand-

ing his reach to distant rural areas. Even after joining Bhilai Steel Plant, he devoted his holidays to this mission, believing that if even one child is saved from violence, both their

art and life are blessed.

At Gram Salhe, children enjoyed his live demonstrations, applauding as he recreated lifelike paintings within minutes. Addressing the gathering, Devangan urged children to stay away from violence and addiction, focus on education, and contribute positively to national development. Following the exhibition and training, a rally was organized in the village, appealing to all residents to renounce violence and embrace art as a path of peace and progress.

Land dispute resolved in 24 hours

Central Chronicle News

BHILAI: A pre-litigation case concerning a land dispute was successfully resolved within a mere 24 hours at the Mediation Centre located in the Durg District Court premises. The land dispute, which had been ongoing between the two parties for a significant duration, was amicably settled through a mutual compromise agreement. Throughout the successful mediation process, both parties demon-

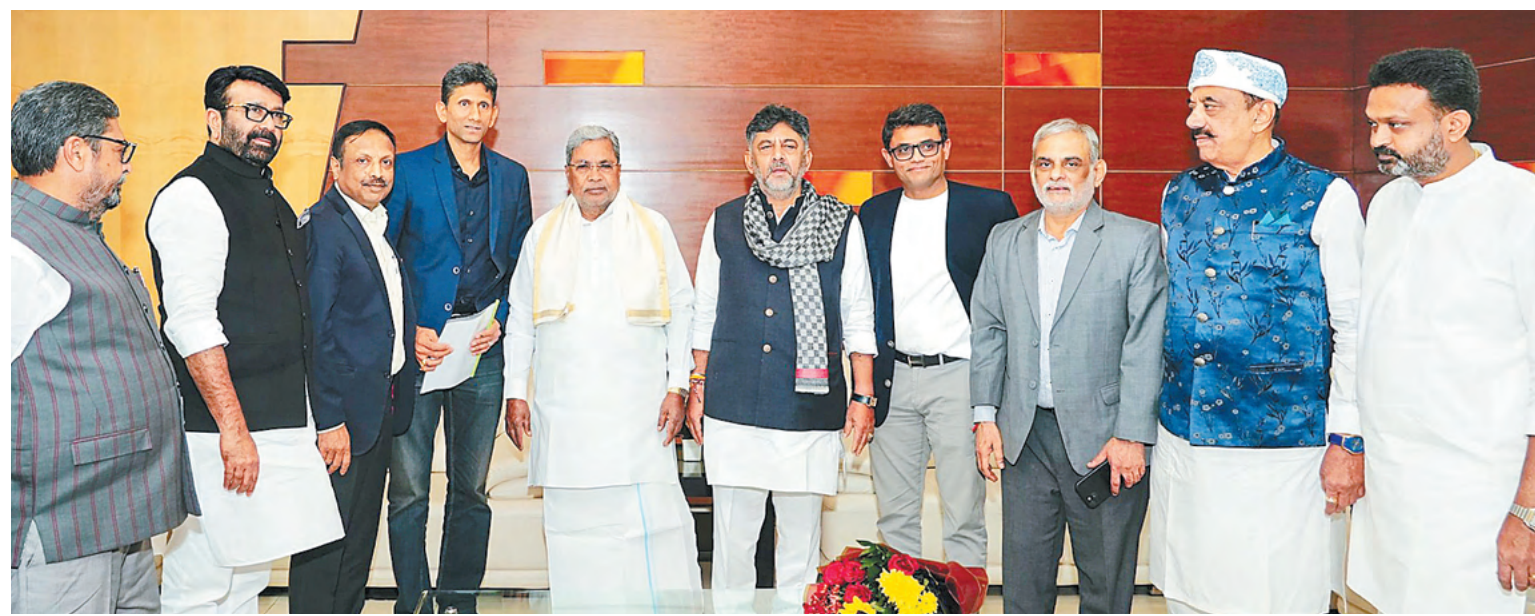
strated cooperation and consensus, eliminating the need to file a formal suit in the court. This not only resulted in substantial savings of time and money but also maintained cordial relations between the disputing parties. The credit for this achievement goes to the collaborative efforts of the District Legal Services Authority (DLSA), the mediator, and the entire mediation team, whose guidance and continuous efforts led to a swift resolution of the case.



“It has been decided to conduct Census 2027 through digital means. It is planned to collect data through Mobile Apps.”

Nityanand Rai
Union Minister of State for Home Affairs

K'taka CM and deputy meet KSCA's newly-elected members



Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, Deputy CM DK Shivakumar, greet the newly elected President of the Karnataka State Cricket Association Venkatesh Prasad, Secretary Santosh Menon, and others, in Belagavi, Karnataka.

Odisha forms all-party committee to resolve Mahanadi water dispute

On Wednesday, Odisha's government formed a high-level all-party committee with neighbor Chhattisgarh.

Press Trust Of India

BHUBANESWAR: The Odisha government on Wednesday constituted an eight-member all-party high-level committee to seek an amicable resolution to the long-standing Mahanadi water dispute with neighboring Chhattisgarh. The committee, formed under the direction of Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi, will be headed by Deputy Chief Minister KV Singh Deo. The high-level body includes members from key parties, ensuring a unified political approach to the complex

and sensitive issue. The members are:

- Chairman: Deputy Chief Minister Kanak Vardhan Singh Deo
 - Ministers: Suresh Pujari (Revenue), Prithviraj Harichandan (Law and Works), Sampada Chandra Swain (Industries)
 - Government Chief Whip: Saroj Kumar Pradhan
 - Party Representatives: Jayanarayan Mishra (senior BJP MLA), Niranjana Pujari (BJD MLA), and Sofia Firdous (Congress MLA)
- Objective and Context of the Dispute**
The matter is currently

HIGHLIGHT

● This committee has been formed to resolve the Mahanadi water dispute.

under the consideration of the Mahanadi Water Disputes Tribunal since 2018. Odisha lodged the complaint alleging that Chhattisgarh, located in the upper catchment area, had blocked the natural flow of the Mahanadi river downstream by constructing several barrages. Given that the Tribunal proceedings have yet to yield a resolution, the new Mohan Charan Majhi government

is prioritizing a settlement through negotiation. The CMO stated that the committee will examine all relevant aspects related to the Mahanadi water and provide necessary policy guidance to the ongoing technical and administrative efforts. Senior BJP MLA Jayanarayan Mishra previously argued that the dispute should be resolved through political discussion rather than litigation.

Ongoing Diplomatic and Legal Efforts
Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi, who oversees the Water Resources department, had stated on December 4th that Odisha

would soon secure its rights over the Mahanadi waters through a legal and amicable solution.

The government has been striving for a resolution for the past one-and-a-half years through both legal proceedings and negotiations. Parliamentary Affairs Minister Mukesh Mahaling confirmed recent diplomatic engagements, including:

- Informal discussions between CM Majhi and his Chhattisgarh counterpart, Vishnu Deo Sai.
- Discussions held during the Eastern Zonal Conference, chaired by Union Home Minister Amit Shah.

Family members damage Pune hospital after patient's death

PUNE: Relatives of a patient pelted stones and damaged the glass facade of Sahyadri Hospital in Pune's Hadapsar area on Wednesday, following the patient's death during treatment. The angry mob turned violent, alleging medical negligence. The patient's son told the media that his father, who had undergone an ulcer operation, was recovering until hospital staff allegedly made him sit in a wheelchair, causing his stitches to snap. His condition then rapidly deteriorated, leading to his death on Tuesday night. Police personnel quickly arrived at the scene to control the situation and are in the process of detaining those involved in the property damage. The hospital's official version regarding the patient's death and the resulting violence is awaited.

Shringla calls for urgent policy intervention for Darjeeling tea crisis

Press Trust Of India

During the zero hour in the winter session of Rajya Sabha, Harsh Vardhan Shringla discussed the declining state of Darjeeling tea.

NEW DELHI: BJP-nominated Rajya Sabha member and former foreign secretary, Harsh Vardhan Shringla, utilized the Zero Hour on Wednesday to voice serious concerns regarding the declining fortunes of the Darjeeling tea industry. Shringla emphasized that Darjeeling tea, which holds a Geographical Indication (GI) tag and is a globally recognized quality Indian brand, is a vital part of India's culture and heri-



tage, supporting over 10 lakh workers and more than 60 lakh families.

Multiple Challenges Hitting the Industry
Shringla highlighted that the industry is facing a combination of severe challenges:

- Surge in Low-Quality Imports: Imports, particularly from African countries and Nepal, have surged by nearly 45 per cent in the first half of 2025 alone.

This influx is diluting the value of genuine Indian teas. He stated that low-quality foreign teas are being deceitfully sold under the "Darjeeling" name, causing immense harm to the reputation of the authentic product.

- Climate Stress and Production Drop: Production of Darjeeling tea has dropped drastically from 14.1 million kg in

FACTFILE

● Shringla asked the government to make an urgent policy intervention for the tea.

- the 1970s to a mere 5.1 million kg in 2024. This decline is attributed to ecological distress, including rapid thinning of forest cover and drying soil, forcing growers to rely heavily on artificial irrigation.
- Financial and Social Unviability: Many tea estates are struggling with financial unviability, leaving laborers facing an uncertain future. Unresolved issues related to land leases and ownership rights further compound the economic and social challenges.

| GOA NIGHTCLUB FIRE |

Goa nightclub fire co-owner Ajay Gupta claims 'I am only a partner'

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: Ajay Gupta, a co-owner of Goa's 'Birch by Romeo Lane' nightclub, was detained in Delhi on Wednesday in connection with the December 6th blaze in Arpora, North Goa, that tragically killed 25 people. Gupta, who claimed to be "only a partner," was brought to the Crime Branch office and sub-

sequently taken to LNJP Hospital for medical tests before being moved to Saket court for a transit remand to Goa.

Sources indicate that Gupta had been evading investigators since the incident. A Look Out Circular (LOC) was issued after Goa Police failed to locate him during their initial search. He was later found at a private hospital in Lajpat Nagar,

"A Look Out Circular (LOC) had been issued against him after Goa Police failed to find him in Delhi during their first search."

Sources

where he had reportedly admitted himself



for spine-related issues. Following medical clearance, he was detained.

Gupta is expected to be formally arrested once the Goa Police complete the transit remand formalities. He will face

detailed questioning in Goa regarding the club's management, operational responsibilities, and crucial fire-safety compliance. Meanwhile, Goa Police have already arrested five staff members: chief general manager Rajiv Modak, general manager Vivek Singh, bar manager Rajiv Singhania, gate manager Riyanshu Thakur, and employee Bharat Kohli.

Briefs

BEST OF THE REST

VAISHNAW'S CLAIM FOR TRAIN TICKETS

Vaishnaw claims train tickets are most affordable in India



NEW DELHI: Railways Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw stated in the Lok Sabha on Wednesday that rail ticket prices in India are exceptionally affordable compared to neighboring and developed countries.

Replying to a question from Congress member M K Vishnu Prasad regarding the possible restoration of rail ticket discounts for senior citizens, which were discontinued during the COVID-19 pandemic, Minister Vaishnaw asserted that Indian ticket prices are only about five to ten per cent of the prices found in developed nations. He emphasized that even compared to

neighboring countries, India provides the most affordable transportation to its citizens.

To maintain these low fares, the Indian Railways provided a substantial subsidy of approximately Rs.60,000 crore last year. This significant subsidy demonstrates the government's ongoing commitment to ensuring passenger transport remains accessible and affordable for the general public. The Minister's statement underscored the financial measures taken by the Indian Railways to maintain ticket affordability, even while facing operational and infrastructural costs. **PTI**

ARRESTED

Woman arrested for stealing Rs. 27 lakh from deceased man's account

THANE: Police in Maharashtra's Thane district have registered a case against a woman for allegedly siphoning off Rs.27 lakh from a man's bank account following his death and misappropriating his office property.

The accused, a resident of Tirunelveli, Tamil Nadu, reportedly had long-standing business relations with the deceased man's family, which allegedly allowed her to gain access to the family's assets and documents.

In a complaint filed with the Kalyan police, the man's widow stated that the accused took advantage of the situation following her husband's passing. The complaint alleges that the woman misappropriated various items of office equipment, including expensive cameras, and illegally siphoned a total of Rs.27 lakh from the man's bank account. An official from Khadakpada police station confirmed that a case has been registered. "We are currently examining the financial trail and other evidence related to the misappropriation of funds and property." **PTI**

DECLINE

Shashi Tharoor declines Veer Savarkar Award and will not attend ceremony



THIRUVANANTHAPURAM: Congress MP Shashi Tharoor categorically stated on Wednesday that he would not accept the "Veer Savarkar Award" nor attend the related event, citing a lack of clarity regarding the award's nature and the organization presenting it. Tharoor, who was named a recipient of the inaugural Veer Savarkar International Impact Award 2025 by the Highrange Rural Development Society (HRDS) India, called it "irresponsible" for the organizers to announce his name without his prior consent. The issue became a matter of internal party debate when senior Congress colleague K Muraliedharan publicly warned that no party member should accept an honor named after Savarkar, whom he claimed had "bowed before the British," asserting that accepting the award would embarrass the party. **PTI**

PRASAD'S TAKE ON BALLOT PAPER

BJP's Prasad says return to ballot paper will lead to booth capturing

NEW DELHI: Senior BJP leader and former Union Law Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad strongly defended the use of Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) during the Lok Sabha debate on 'election reforms,' categorically rejecting the opposition's push to revert to the old ballot paper system. Prasad argued that returning to ballot papers would signify a relapse into the days of booth capturing.

Prasad emphasized the legal and operational validity of the EVMs, noting that at least two dozen Supreme Court and High Court judgments have upheld their use. He recalled that the Election Commission had previously challenged political parties to hack the EVMs in their presence, a challenge which went unmet, despite the opposition currently raising concerns.

To boost voter confidence, the government mandates the verification of Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT) slips in five randomly-selected polling stations per assembly constituency. Citing the recent Bihar elections, Prasad highlighted that no



discrepancy was found between the VVPAT slips and the EVM count, further validating the machines' accuracy. Furthermore, no pleas were received to check the EVMs' micro-controllers after the Bihar polls.

Prasad concluded by stating that the government has consistently ruled out returning to the ballot paper system, as EVMs have made the electoral process significantly faster and safer. He pointed out that the EVMs crossed a major milestone in the 2024 Lok Sabha polls, having been used successfully in five consecutive parliamentary elections since 2004. **PTI**

There should be complete transparency and time-bound purchase in all paddy procurement centres and ensure that farmers get timely benefit.

DK Dhruv
Collector Sukma



Chhattisgarh

Collector scrutinizes paddy procurement

On Tuesday, Collector Mrs. Chandan Tripathi made a detailed assessment of the paddy procurement centers in Korea.

Central Chronicle News

KOREA: The paddy procurement process in the district, which commenced on November 15th and is scheduled to continue until January 31st, is being rigorously overseen by Collector Mrs. Chandan Tripathi. In a concerted effort to ensure the process remains effective, transparent, and systematic, the Collector is holding frequent review meetings with nodal officers and related departments. A recent meeting held on Tuesday saw the issuance of several critical instructions aimed at streamlining operations and resolving specific bottlenecks.

A primary focus of the meeting was the timely payment to porters. Collector Tripathi gave a clear directive that there should be absolutely no delay in payments. She mandated that the concerned committees must immediately disburse the funds allocated for portage wages. To track compliance, she demanded specific data from Cooperative Department officials regarding the amount disbursed

FACTFILE

● She instructed the officials to not delay the payment of the porters.

to committees, the total paid to porters, and a list of committees with pending payments. Furthermore, she stressed the importance of resolving all pending payment cases immediately. While reiterating that farmers must not be subjected to forced portage, she affirmed that any farmer who voluntarily cooperates in the portage process must be duly paid their wages.

To strengthen both monitoring and transparency across the entire procurement chain, a critical instruction was given regarding the Satak App. All nodal officers were directed to make the regular uploading of photos mandatory. These visual records must capture farmers selling paddy, the transportation vehicles, and every significant step of the procurement process.

The Collector also advised the field staff to actively encourage farm-

Physical verification to proceed during holidays

Collector Mrs. Chandan Tripathi emphasized the need for continuous vigilance in the paddy procurement process, mandating that physical verification (PV) of fields must be conducted even on holidays, including Saturdays and Sundays. This instruction ensures sustained monitoring and verification activity throughout the week.

Furthermore, she issued strict guidelines regarding quality control at the procurement centers. The Collector stated unequivocally that paddy must be measured using moisture machines to confirm it falls within the prescribed limits. Procurement must strictly adhere to the prescribed quality standards.

The Collector concluded by clarifying the administration's overarching goal: to guarantee a paddy procurement process that is transparent, safe, fair, and farmer-friendly, ensuring producers receive a just transaction for their harvest.

ers to surrender their acreage once they have completed selling their paddy. While the district has already achieved the surrender of over 40 hectares of acreage, the Collector emphasized that this number needs to be significantly increased.

Maintaining vigilance and strict monitoring at the procurement centers remains paramount. Mrs. Tripathi gathered detailed information on the status of all centers. She specifically instructed that authori-

ties must be immediately informed if any center holds paddy in excess of the designated buffer limit. She stressed that all necessary facilities must be ensured at the centers so that farmers face no difficulties during the selling process. Given the potential for misuse, the Collector directed that acreage verification must be conducted at centers with large procurement areas, with special attention paid to eliminating the possibility of bogus paddy transactions.

Immediate rights granted to deposits in dormant accounts

MCB: The LDM Cell is organizing a special DEAF Claim Settlement Camp on December 12th, 2025, at the District Panchayat meeting hall to address years of dormant bank accounts and unclaimed deposits, following guidelines from the Department of Financial Services, Government of India.

This one-day event, running from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., offers a historic opportunity for citizens to resolve stuck funds. Services provided include the reactivation of dormant accounts, settlement of forgotten deposits, and prompt, on-the-spot resolution of pending claims.

190 kattis of paddy seized in Hardi Bazaar tehsil crackdown

KORBA: Following direct instructions from Collector Mr. Ajit Vasant, a successful raid was conducted on Monday evening in Namera village, Hardi Bazaar Tehsil, targeting illegal paddy transportation. The operation, executed around 8:30 pm by Section Officer Pali, Mr. Rohit Singh, Deputy Tehsildar Pali, and the Halka Patwari team, resulted in a significant seizure.

Briefs

BEST OF THE REST

ULLAS MAHAPARIKSHA FOR ODGI DEVELOPMENT BLOCK

Ullas Mahapariksha celebration boosts literacy in Odgi block



ODGI: The Ullas Mahapariksha (United States), a highly organized and successful nationwide basic literacy and numeracy test, was recently conducted in Chandni Biharpur, Odgi development block. This mega-examination aimed at significantly increasing literacy rates in rural areas. A total of 85 examination centers were established to facilitate the test, with each center appointing a center head and a supervisor to ensure a transparent

and smooth examination process.

The primary objective of the Ullas Mahapariksha is profound: to instill basic literacy, numeracy, and life skills among illiterate men and women in villages. By fostering their interest in reading and writing, this initiative enables citizens to easily access government schemes and actively join the mainstream of society, ultimately playing a crucial role in the educational upliftment of rural communities.

INSTRUCTIONS

Strict instructions issued on development progress in weekly meeting

BIJAPUR: Collector Mr. Sambit Mishra convened a detailed weekly time-limit meeting to review all development works and ongoing departmental progress, stressing the need to accelerate their completion. He conducted a special intensive review of key projects and issued necessary guidelines.

Preparations and Coordination

In view of the upcoming divisional level Bastar Olympics, the Collector directed that transportation, accommodation, and food arrangements for the selected athletes must be completely safe and organized. He emphasized constant coordination with the divisional nodal officers.

Assembly Session Directives

Given the Assembly session scheduled for December 14, all departments were mandated to provide answers to Assembly questions within the stipulated timeframe. A strict prohibition was enforced against any officer taking leave or leaving the headquarters without prior permission.

Procurement and Projects

Reviewing the paddy procurement system, the Collector inquired about the availability of gunny bags, token distribution, and the status of procurement centers, directing the process to be kept smooth.

PLACEMENT CAMP

Placement camp scheduled for Dec. 15th at district office employment branch

BIJAPUR: The District Employment and Self-Employment Guidance Center in Bijapur is organizing a Mega Placement Camp to recruit qualified applicants for employment in private sector institutions. This is a significant opportunity for job seekers aged 18 years and above.

A total of 250 positions across various private sector institutions will be filled through this camp. This opportunity is available to both male and female candidates who possess a minimum qualification of 12th grade or an ITI Diploma.

Interested and eligible candidates are advised to attend the placement camp on the scheduled date with all their necessary documents, including copies of educational certificates, identity proof, and resumes.

For More Information

For further information or assistance, applicants can:

- Call mobile number: 8200899441
- Visit the official website: <https://bijapur.gov.in>
- Join the District Employment Office, Bijapur, Chhattisgarh's Telegram group via the link: https://t.me/mplyment_office_bijapur_cg

45-year-old farmer expresses confidence in government support

KOREA: Mr. Devprasad Sahu, a 45-year-old farmer from Chhindad village with a registered acreage of 1.4660 hectares, successfully sold his paddy at the Chhindad Committee today. Utilizing the streamlined system, he easily obtained a token and completed the sale of 76 quintals of paddy. The use of technological facilities in the procurement process has made the transaction transparent and time-efficient, benefiting many farmers. Mr. Sahu plans to use the proceeds for farming investments, daily needs, and loan repayments. Expressing confidence in the state leadership, Mr. Sahu stated that the Vishnu Deo Sai government is taking crucial decisions in farmers' interest. He highlighted the fact that the Chhattisgarh government is purchasing paddy at the highest price in the country, calling it a source of pride and confidence for farmers.

HEALTH DEPARTMENT'S INITIATIVES FOR VILLAGERS

Health department team braves rivers and streams to reach remote village

Central Chronicle News

SUKMA: The administration's unwavering commitment to delivering healthcare services, particularly in the most vulnerable and remote areas of Sukma district, was clearly demonstrated during the 13th phase of the Malaria-Free Chhattisgarh campaign.

District Chief Medical and Health Officer (CMHO) Dr. R.K. Singh led this exemplary effort. He personally spearheaded an inspection, showing remarkable dedication by crossing a river and walking approximately 2 km with his team to reach underserved villages. The team specifically visited high-risk areas including Miriwada in Sector Gadiras, and Keralapal, Atpal, and Damapara in Phoolbagdi to assess the ground situation of the campaign.



Health Education and Prevention

A key focus of the visit was health education. The team engaged with school and ashram children, emphasizing the crucial importance of health and hygiene. Children were strongly encouraged to use mosquito nets regularly and adhere to all prescribed precautions to prevent malaria. They were also instructed to immediately inform a health worker or visit the nearest health center upon noticing any

symptoms of illness. Immediate Care for Malnutrition

During the inspection of Anganwadi centers, instructions were given for the immediate admission of malnourished children to the National Register of Children's Reproductive Health Centers (NRC). This measure is intended to ensure these vulnerable children receive timely, comprehensive treatment and essential nutrition to improve their health outcomes.

FACTFILE

● This initiative was undertaken for the 13th phase of Malaria-Free Chhattisgarh campaign.

On-the-Spot Medical Intervention

A clear illustration of the administration's proactiveness and responsibility occurred when a child tested positive for malaria during the inspection. CMHO Dr. Singh personally examined the child's health and administered the first dose of medicine immediately. This hands-on approach underscores the commitment to quick action and patient care. The sheer effort of crossing rivers and reaching villages on foot in the face of difficult geographical conditions highlights the administration's relentless mission to bring health services to every household in the district.

DISABLED PERSON BECOMES SELF-RELIANT

Free tricycle transforms life of disabled Ram Bharos Verma

Central Chronicle News

MCB: The free assistive device distribution scheme run by the Social Welfare Department has brought significant hope and momentum to the life of Ram Bharos Verma, a resident of Kanchan Safai, Khongapani, Manendragarh Development Block. Despite being disabled since birth, Ram Bharos maintained strong goals, confidence, and a hard-

working attitude, viewing every life challenge as an opportunity to move forward.

His primary need was mobility. In his search for a solution, he learned about the Social Welfare Department's (MCB) provision of free tricycles to eligible disabled individuals—information that proved to be a turning point for him.

Ram Bharos Verma actively engaged with department officials, fol-



lowed the prescribed procedures, and successfully received the free tricycle. The moment he received the device, his face lit up

“Now, he is not only able to commute easily but also complete his daily tasks independently.”
Sources

with clear joy and confidence. Now, he can not only commute easily but also complete his daily tasks independently. The tricycle has done more than just provide

mobility; it has opened a new and important path toward self-reliance for him.

This initiative by the Social Welfare Department serves as a powerful inspiration for many differently-abled people like Ram Bharos who are striving to fulfill their life's dreams. The free assistive device provides convenience and acts as a powerful medium to connect them with the mainstream of society.

CITIZENS' HONORS CEREMONY HELD

Senior citizens' honors ceremony recognizes pensioners



MUNGELI: A Senior Citizens' Honors Ceremony was organized on Friday, led by Vikas Kumar, Branch Manager of the State Bank of India. The event saw the branch manager present shawls, bouquets, and coconuts to the senior citizens, seeking their blessings. Vikas Kumar stated that the elderly are invaluable, calling them “like gods on this earth” and emphasizing that respecting them is akin to worshipping God. He highlighted that senior citizens are a crucial repository of experience and knowledge from which society draws constant direction.

A total of approximately 85 senior citizens were honored at the ceremony. Notable individuals included Piladas Patle, Badri Prasad Verma, and Jeevan Ram Singh Kshatriya from Patharia, along with Syed Khan, the

President of the Pensioners' Welfare Association from Mungeli. Other esteemed honorees included State Bank official Dilip Kumar Paj, poet Rakesh Gupta, and many others such as Prahlad Pandey, Om Korale, Shankar Singh Rajput, and HR Maskar.

During the program, several individuals were granted membership in the organization, including former Block Education Officer of Patharia, PS Bedi, Ganga Singh Rajput of Hathini Kala, and Badi Singh Rajput of Charhaan. The ceremony concluded with all members paying tribute to Ganpat Sahu, a resident of Kuagaon. President Syed Khan announced that a provincial-level function will be organized in Baloda Bazar on December 17th to mark Pensioner Day, where Mungeli pensioners will also participate.

Gidhwa-Parasada to become top bird hub: Kedar Kashyap

On Tuesday, Minister Kedar Kashyap inaugurated the Bird Interpretation Center.

Central Chronicle News

BEMETARA: Chhattisgarh's renowned migratory bird sanctuary, the Gidhwa-Parasada area, achieved a historic milestone on Tuesday with the inauguration of the Bird Interpretation Center and the launch of the Bird Safari by Forest and Climate Change Minister, Mr. Kedar Kashyap. Minister Kashyap affirmed that Gidhwa-Parasada is set to establish a new national record in the field of bird conservation, protection, and eco-tourism, significantly enhancing Chhattisgarh's prestige on the international map.

Safe Haven and Scientific Study

The Minister highlighted that the area serves as a safe natural habitat for over 270 species of exotic and indigenous birds, including those migrating from Siberia, Europe, and Central Asia. This consistent migration has immensely enriched the local biodiversity. The newly established Bird Interpretation Center will allow tourists and researchers to study the birds' life, behavior, migration cycle, and the area's biodiversity from a scientific perspective. Mr. Kashyap credited the sensitivity and emotional



FASTFACTS

● He stated that Gidhwa-Parasada will soon become a major bird hub.

connection of the local residents for transforming the area into a unique wetland, predicting that it will soon become India's largest bird-watching hub.

Economic and Cultural Significance

The launch of the Bird Safari is expected to significantly boost tourism and local employment. It will generate numerous job opportunities for local youth through homestays,

India's growing international bird-watching circuit

The Gidhwa-Parasada Wetland, rich in natural reservoirs and a serene environment, is an ideal habitat for migratory birds, hosting 270 species between September and March, including the Bar-headed Goose and Sarus Crane. The state government is pushing to recognize Gidhwa-Parasada as a national bird-watching site and secure its inclusion in the international bird-watching circuit. The process to propose the area as a Ramsar site is being expedited.

Development plans include a Bird Watching Tower, Interpretation Gallery, Nature Study Center, and Digital Monitoring System.

guiding, boating, eco-tourism services, local product sales, and transport. To further enhance the wetland, the government plans to expand facilities,

including solar lighting, bird watching towers, information and biodiversity study centers, parking lots, and other essential tourist amenities.

Eligible and ineligible list released for manager recruitment at forest produce cooperatives

MAHASAMUND: Applications for vacant Manager positions at Primary Forest Produce Cooperative Societies in Singhrupali, Chirko, Mungaser, Garhfuljhar, Jeevra, and Amakoni were invited until September 19, 2025. The Managing Director of the District Forest Produce Cooperative Union Limited, Mahasamund, announced that the screened list of eligible and ineligible applicants has been released. This list is posted on the notice boards of the respective committee offices and the Mahasamund Forest Division.

Chhattisgarh Mukti Morcha supports farmers' demand to cancel industry and public hearing

RAJNANDGAON: Chhattisgarh Mukti Morcha Vice President Meghdas Vaishnav and farmer representatives have issued a joint statement opposing the government's proposal to establish cement plants in the Chhuikhadan area villages like Sandi Pandariya, Bundeli, and Bicharpur. This region, encompassing Khairagarh, Gandai, and Chhuikhadan, is a fertile agricultural area supporting three crops. Farmers fear that factory pollution will severely affect the environment, climate, water sources, and agricultural land in 30-40 surrounding villages, potentially making the fertile land barren.

Grand welcome for newly elected district Sahu Sangh President Praveen Sahu in Fingeshwar



Central Chronicle News

FINGESHWAR: In a closely contested District Sahu Sangh election on December 5th, Praveen Sahu secured the presidency, defeating his rival by just three votes. Following his victory, he and Women's Vice President Pushpa Sahu visited temples for blessings before making their first official visit to Fingeshwar.

The city organized a grand and dignified welcome, featuring an impressive elephant garland and filling the old bus stand with cheers

and enthusiasm, symbolizing strong social unity. The welcome was led by City Sahu Samaj President Umashankar Sahu and other key officials. Praveen Sahu and Pushpa Sahu expressed gratitude for the reception and pledged to lead the District Sahu Association with renewed energy and transparency. They announced plans to implement various schemes soon for social upliftment, education, culture, and youth organization, marking a new era of solidarity and enthusiasm for the community.

Agniveer Kishore Yadav receives grand welcome

CHHURA: An atmosphere of joy and pride filled Raveli village, Gram Panchayat Jargaon, on Sunday as the village's promising Agniveer Kishore Yadav returned home after successfully completing a rigorous seven-month training. The villagers organized a special welcome and felicitation ceremony in his honor. Youth leaders Punitram Thakur and Thakeshwar

Chandrakar attended and encouraged him for a bright future. Kishore Yadav completed his intensive training in Bangalore and has been subsequently posted to Mathura, where he will join his duty in 20 days. His hard work, dedication, and determination have brought great glory not only to his village Raveli but also to the entire Yadav community and the region.

'Martyr Veer Narayan Singh's sacrifice is symbol of self-respect, struggle'



Central Chronicle News

KATGI: Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai participated in a tribute program held on December 10th at Sonakhan, the birthplace and workplace of Martyr Veer Narayan Singh, on the occasion of his martyrdom day. He honoured the descendants of Martyr Veer Narayan Singh and inaugurated and laid the foundation stone for 119 development projects worth Rs. 101 crore 44 lakh 53 thousand. CM Sai said that Martyr Veer Narayan

Singh fought for self-respect, against injustice, and for self-reliance. He fought for the rights and justice of the poor. During the famine, he distributed grain to the poor. The British government hanged Martyr Veer Narayan Singh on December 10th. The Chief Minister announced the commencement of bus services in Sonakhan, the construction of a new primary health center building at a cost of Rs. 75 lakh, Rs. 50 lakh for the construction of a community hall.

Kiran Jagat selected as Police constable



KATGI: Kiran Jagat, a resident of Tiprunga village in the Katgi area, has brought honor to her village. Kiran has secured a place on the selection list after successfully passing the physical and written examinations for the Police Constable (General Duty) recruitment 2023. The results were declared on Tuesday. Kiran prepared for the physical efficiency test in her village and later went to Bilaspur to prepare for the written examination. Her parents have congratulated her on this achievement. Her father, Ramkumar Jagat, has expressed his pride in his daughter's success. Kiran's friends and villagers have also congratulated her and wished her a bright future.

Mahanadi Academy hosts three-day annual sports meet

Central Chronicle News

On Sunday, Mahanadi Academy's three-day annual sports meet concluded with a lot of fanfare.

NAGARI SIHAVA: The three-day Annual Sports Meet 2025-26 of Mahanadi Academy, Nagri, held from December 5th to 7th, 2025, concluded successfully, marked by tremendous enthusiasm, discipline, and passion for sports. The mega event featured extraordinary participation from students, teachers, and parents alike.

Grand Inauguration
The event was inaugurated with a vibrant Opening Ceremony attended by Chief Guests: Mr. Shailendra Pandey (A.P.S.), Assistant Superintendent of Police, Dhamtari; Mr. Vinip Rangare, SDOP Nagri; and Mr. J. P. Dev, Assistant Sports Officer,



EASTFACTS

● Students, teachers and parents showed some excellent performances during the sports meet.

Dhamtari District. The ceremony commenced with a disciplined march past, followed by the lighting of the sports flame, symbolizing courage and sportsmanship. The Chairman delivered an

inspiring address emphasizing the importance of sports and a disciplined lifestyle. The presence of the entire management team, including Mr. Mohan Hata and Mr. Ajay Chhajed, filled the students with confidence and energy.

Action-Packed Competitions
Throughout the three days, the ground was alive with cheering as stu-

dents competed fiercely in several events, showcasing physical fitness, team spirit, and dedication. Competitions included:

- Track & Field: Sprint Races (100m, 200m), Long Jump, High Jump, Relay Races, Shot Put, and Javelin Throw.
- Fun Races: Sack Race, Spoon Balance Race, and Obstacle Race.

Corporation's meeting delay stalls city projects, financial crisis- Pillay

Central Chronicle News

RAJNANDGAON: Municipal Corporation Leader of the Opposition, Santosh Pillay, expressed strong displeasure over the corporation's failure to hold a general meeting for the past ten months, which he attributes to the BJP assuming power. He stated this lapse has severely deteriorated the corporation's financial situation, stalling city development projects and

impacting citizens' basic amenities like electricity, water, and sanitation. Crucially, the new year's sanitation contract has not yet been awarded. Pillay accused the "Triple Engine government" of withholding funds, claiming the corporation hasn't received toll tax money for months, and council funds allocated by the previous Congress government to all councilors have been similarly held back, preventing any development work.

NEWSLINE

MEETING

Large meeting today for Triveni Sangam river cleanup with public representatives



RAJIM: Expressing deep concern over the existence and escalating pollution of the Triveni Sangam River—the life-giving river of the Rajim region—Rajim MLA Rohit Sahu has launched a crucial cleanliness drive. This significant waterway spans three districts: Gariaband, Dhamtari, and Raipur.

To coordinate a unified action plan, MLA Sahu has taken the initiative to involve public representatives from all three concerned districts. In this connection, a large meeting of all public representatives from Gariaband, Dhamtari, and Raipur has been organized.

PLANTATION DRIVE

Village Arjuni sets example in tree plantation program



KHARORA: Responding to the issue of soaring summer temperatures, often recorded as the highest in Chhattisgarh, the Bharat Mata Seva Trust has launched a dedicated green initiative in Arjuni village. Recently, 700 saplings were planted on vacant land near the Nava pond, with young people vowing daily care and commitment to nurturing them.

The effort builds on past success: 75 trees planted near the Lalbandha and Khambaria ponds in 2022 during the Amrit Mahotsav have now grown, becoming a source of oxygen and a haven for wildlife.

CYCLING

Cycling for environment and Fit India promotes tree plantation with committee



PANDARIA: The Pedal to Plant Campaign 2025 is underway, featuring four dedicated cyclists on a massive 4000-kilometer journey from Arunachal Pradesh to Gujarat to promote environmental protection and good health. The team includes coach Nilesh Barot, Mount Everest conquerors Nisha Kumari and Anjana Yadav, and Nixa Barot. Notably, the team of four includes two women, one male, and an approximately eight-year-old girl. They travel about 110 to 150 kilometers daily.

The team reached the city's Gandhi Chowk via Mungeli on Monday night, having left Raipur that morning, and were warmly welcomed by senior citizens.

| BENEFICIARY RECEIVES BENEFITS OF PMAY |

Amba Bai of Sankara receives benefits under PMAY

Central Chronicle News

SANKARA: Amba Bai and her husband Narayan, a laborer from Sankara village, lived a difficult life in a fragile, mud-roofed house. Their biggest hardship was the annual monsoon, which brought relentless leaking, flooding, and the constant fear of snakes, forcing them to stay awake all night. The dream of a permanent, dignified roof seemed unattainable.

A Ray of Hope

A ray of hope arrived when Amba Bai learned about the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Rural) [PMAY(G)] from the Gram Panchayat. With the Sarpanch and Secretary's help, she applied and was eventually included in the beneficiary list. In the 2024-25 financial year, she received Rs.1.20 lakh under PMAY(G) and 90 man-days of wages under MGNREGS (Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme).



Dream Home Becomes Reality

Using the scheme's installments and Narayan's hard work, they began constructing their new perma-

“This pucca house is not just four walls; it is the result of our hard work and government support, which has given a poor family the opportunity to live with dignity.”

Amba Bai & Narayan Beneficiaries

nent house next to their old mud dwelling. The construction, in which Amba Bai also participated, resulted in a strong, pucca house that permanently eliminated their fear of the rains and ensured a clean and respectable life. The addition of a toilet further improved sanitation. Upon completion, Amba Bai and Narayan performed the Griha Pravesh ceremony, marking the most memorable day of their lives.

Business



Govt working on India Post's business process reengineering.
Jyotiraditya Scindia
Union Communications Minister

MoU between the Ministry of Labour and Microsoft



Union Minister Mansukh Mandaviya, right, with Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella after signing an MoU between the Ministry of Labour & Employment and Microsoft on December 10, Wednesday in New Delhi.

ADB sharply revises upward India's GDP growth to 7.2pc

Asian Development Bank upgrades India growth outlook as tax cuts boost demand, manufacturing and services strengthen, inflation eases and Asia growth outlook improves.

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: The Asian Development Bank (ADB) on Wednesday upped India's growth forecast for FY26 to 7.2 per cent from 6.5 per cent driven primarily by robust domestic consumption supported by recent tax cuts. The sharp upgrade of 0.7 percentage points of the Indian economy will help Asia to grow at a faster pace of 5.1 per cent as compared to earlier projection of 4.8 per

cent for 2025. India's 2025 growth projection is raised to 7.2 per cent, reflecting stronger second-quarter expansion as tax cuts supported consumption, ADB's Asian Development Outlook, December 2025 said. During the second quarter ended September, India logged a six-quarter high GDP growth of 8.2 per cent as compared to 7.8 per cent recorded in the first quarter. As a result, India has achieved 8 per cent growth rate in the

NUMBER

5.1

● Strong domestic demand, tax cuts and services sector growth drive India's upgraded economic outlook.

first half of the current financial year. The strong growth is attributable to robust expansion of the manufacturing and services sectors on the supply side and consump-

tion and investment on the demand side, it said. The report from Manila-based multilateral development bank, however, retained FY27 forecast at 6.5 per cent. "Following stronger-than-anticipated growth in Q3, India's 2025 growth projection is upgraded by 0.7 percentage points to 7.2 per cent, driven primarily by robust domestic consumption supported by recent tax cuts," it said. Earlier this month, the Reserve Bank raised the GDP growth

projection to 7.3 per cent for the current fiscal from its earlier estimate of 6.8 per cent following robust economic performance in the July-September quarter. However, RBI expects moderation in the next half as it has pegged real GDP growth at 7.3 per cent, with Q3 at 7 per cent; and Q4 at 6.5 per cent. Growth is expected to moderate in the second half as the central government's capital spending eases amid fiscal consolidation.

FTA talks with Oman, New Zealand in final stage: Goyal

Press Trust Of India

India nearing conclusion of free trade agreements with Oman and New Zealand after intense negotiations.

JAIPUR: Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal on Wednesday said negotiations for free trade agreements with Oman and New Zealand are in their last phase, and both are expected to be concluded soon. He also indicated that negotiations for a trade pact with South American nation Chile will also be concluded soon. The talks for a pact with Oman are in the last leg, he said, adding that New Zealand Trade Minister Todd McClay is visiting New Delhi on Friday for FTA negotiations, as that are also reaching the last phase. Meanwhile, the



Commerce ministry in a statement said after three rounds of intensive negotiations (November 2023-March 2024), both sides reached an agreement on all CEPA (comprehensive economic partnership agreement) components, including text and market access offers. A Cabinet proposal submitted in March 2024 was deferred, prompting further renegotiations, it said. The fourth round (September 2024) and fifth round (13-14 January 2025) focused on revised offers. "Following approval of the competent authority, the Draft Cabinet Note for signing and ratification was circulated to relevant ministries.

Kia unveils new Seltos in a Global Premiere from India

Press Trust Of India

Engineered for a new generation of SUV buyers, the all-new Seltos elevates design, space, safety and technology to redefine the benchmark in the midsize SUV category.

NEW DELHI: Keeping up with its commitment of delivering a striking product that redefines SUV leadership with bigger dimensions, enhanced safety and cutting-edge innovation, Kia India today premiered the All-New Kia Seltos, marking the return of the segment's benchmark-setter. One of India's most loved SUVs, it features bold new styling, premium interiors, along with versatile trims and powertrains to suit varied customer needs. Bookings will



FACTFILE

● Price announcement of All-New Kia Seltos on January 02, 2026.

open nationwide from midnight on December 11th, enabling customers to reserve their preferred favorite SUV with an initial amount of Rs 25,000.

Speaking on the occasion, Mr. Gwanggu Lee - Managing Director & CEO, Kia India, said, "The all-new Kia Seltos is more than a generation change; it's a statement of Kia's intent to redefine the segment. A category-defining SUV since its debut in India, the new Seltos pushes boundaries with

bolder design, advanced safety and segment-leading technology that reset benchmarks."

As part of Kia's most advanced and premium variants, the GTX(A) and X Line(A) trims come packed with an elevated set of features, as highlighted below. Kia India will announce the prices of the All-New Seltos on 02nd January 2026, bringing customers one step closer to owning the latest evolution of the brand's flagship SUV and set the stage for a strong debut in the new year.

And to complement this bold new design, the All-New Kia Seltos will be available in 10 mono-tone colour options - including two striking new shades in Kia India lineup Morning Haze and Magma Red - giving customers more ways to express their individuality.

POCO launches C85 5G in sub Rs 12K segment

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: POCO, one of India's leading consumer technology brands, is set to disrupt the budget smartphone segment yet again with its latest launch, POCO C85 5G. Designed for India's dynamic youth who demand unstoppable reliability on the go, this smartphone redefines value in the sub-Rs 12K segment with unmatched endurance and style. Equipped for the best battery experience, the POCO C85 5G packs a 6000mAh battery that delivers over two days of power. With 33W Fast Charging, you can get 50% charge in just about 28 minutes, ensuring you're never slowed down, while 10W Wired

Reverse Charging allows the device to double as a portable power bank for mobiles, TWS earbuds, smartwatches, and other accessories. India's



always on the move lifestyle. The smartphone brings effortless style you can flaunt, featuring a sleek, modern design with a quad-curved back, a slim 7.99mm profile, and a premium dual-tone finish available in Mystic Purple, Spring Green, and Power Black. With segment's largest 6.9-inch HD+ display with a 120Hz adaptive refresh rate

delivers buttery-smooth scrolling, immersive gaming, and vivid visuals. Powered by the MediaTek Dimensity 6300 (up to 450K+ AnTuTu score) and up to 16GB Turbo RAM. Running HyperOS 2.2 on Android 15 out of the box, it boasts IP64 dust and water resistance, a 50MP AI dual rear camera, and 8MP selfie shooter for sharp shots in any light.

BizBriefs

BEST OF THE REST

HOW THE MARKET'S BEHAVE TODAY?

Sensex, Nifty extend losses for 3rd day as fog-end selloff erases gains

BSE SENSEX	TOP GAINERS	December 10, 2025
%		POINTS
+1.00	Tata Steel	162.20
+0.57	Sun Pharma	1786.25
+0.58	ITC	403.10
+0.53	NTPC	321.50
+0.47	HCL Tech	1655.55
+0.43	Reliance	1535.30
+0.35	Asian Paints	2804.65

BSE SENSEX	TOP LOSERS	December 10, 2025
%		POINTS
-2.86	Eternal	283.35
-1.69	Trent	4018.00
-1.00	Bharti Airtel	2094.70
-0.92	Infosys	1564.05
-0.89	UltraTech Cement	11318.40
-0.79	ICICI Bank	1094.15
-0.72	Tech Mahindra	1550.75

MUMBAI: Benchmark stock indices Sensex and Nifty declined for the third straight day on Wednesday to close at a nearly month's low, dragged by a last-hour selloff in consumer durables, private banks and IT shares. In a volatile session, the 30-share BSE Sensex dropped by 275.01 points, or 0.32 per cent, to settle at 84,391.27, a level not seen since November 11. During the day, it hit an intraday high of 85,020.34 and a low of 84,313.62. The 50-share NSE Nifty fell by 81.65 points, or 0.32 per cent, to close at a month's low of 25,758. In the intraday session, it hit a high of 25,947.65 and a low of 25,734.55. Among the Sensex constituents, Eternal, Trent, Bharti Airtel, Infosys, Tech Mahindra, UltraTech Cement, ICICI Bank, HDFC Bank, Bajaj Finance, Tata Consultancy Services, Bharat Electronics Ltd, Larsen & Tou-

bro and Tata Motors Passenger Vehicles were the laggards.

However, Tata Steel, Sun Pharmaceuticals, ITC, NTPC, Reliance Industries, HCL Technologies, PowerGrid, and Asian Paints were among the gainers. "Indian markets mirrored global caution, weighed down by persistent FII outflows, INR weakness, and uncertainty surrounding US-India trade negotiations despite ongoing discussions. In the near term, market direction will be influenced by central bank cues and clarity on trade developments," Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Investments Ltd, said. In Asian markets, Shanghai's SSE Composite index, Japan's Nikkei 225, and South Korea's KOSPI settled lower while Hong Kong's Hang Seng finished in the green territory.

MORE FLIGHTS

SpiceJet plans to add 100 more daily flights to meet winter demand

MUMBAI: Domestic carrier SpiceJet on Wednesday said it is planning to introduce up to 100 additional daily flights during the current winter schedule. The airline said it is looking to ramp up its flight operations amid the growing demand across key routes this winter, and also to ensure adequate capacity in the market.

The statement came a day after the government announced a 10 per cent cut in IndiGo's winter schedule in a bid to help the crisis-hit airline stabilise its operations and lead to reduced cancellations following the large-scale disruptions that started on December 1. "As part of this (ramping up operations) effort, we plan to introduce up to 100 additional daily flights during the current winter schedule, subject to regulatory approvals," SpiceJet said in a statement.

Under the current winter schedule, SpiceJet has been allowed to operate 1,568 flights per week or 224 per day, which was 20.89 per cent higher compared to 1,297 flights per week, operated by the carrier during the last winter.

UNCLAIMED ASSETS

Take part in 'Your Money, Your Right' movement: PM Modi

NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday urged people to participate in the 'Your Money, Your Right' movement, which has successfully returned Rs 2,000 crore of unclaimed assets to rightful owners in the last two months. The government launched 'Your Money, Your Right' nationwide campaign on October 4 to facilitate the settlement of unclaimed financial assets, including bank deposits, insurance, dividends, shares, mutual funds and pensions, to their legitimate claimants. "Through the coordinated efforts of all stakeholders, notably the government, regulatory bodies, banks and other financial institutions, nearly Rs 2,000 crore has already been returned to the rightful owners," Modi said in a social media post. From October to December 5, 2025, camps were held in 477 districts, with the participation of public representatives, district administrations, and officials from financial institutions.



FOURTH EDITION OF HDFC TECH INNOVATORS

HDFC Bank Group successfully concludes Tech Innovators 2025

MUMBAI: HDFC Bank Group concluded the fourth edition of HDFC Tech Innovators - 2025, announcing 10 winners across six sectors and two special recognition awards for emerging women founders. HDFC Tech Innovators 2025 was jointly organised by HDFC Bank, HDFC Capital and HDFC AMC with support from the other Group companies—HDFC Life, HDFC Ergo, HDFC Securities, and HDBFinancial Services, to support India's fast-growing startup ecosystem. This edition witnessed applications from 1,600+ startups from over 290 cities of the country. Conceived to support the startup ecosystem, HDFC Tech Innovators provides a recognition platform for startups and enables HDFC Bank Group companies to engage with and explore joint development of products and solutions. The initiative recognises early-stage startups that create innovative solutions to give a filip to entrepreneurial journeys. QNu Labs was recognised at HDFC Tech Innovators 2024. HDFC Bank also supports startups through its CSR programme Parivartan, working with leading incubators across the country. Ashish Parthasarthy,



Group Head - Branch Banking, Payments, Treasury, Liability Products, Marketing, Virtual Channels and Infrastructure, HDFC Bank said, "It is a privilege for us to be here today to recognise startups and support them in their journey to become the next generation corporations of India.

Central Chronicle

Classifieds

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QUOTE FROM THE QUOTABLE

“Those who can make you believe absurdities can make you commit atrocities.”

[Voltaire]

| OUR VIEW |


Echoes from the Pulpit, Answered by the Bench

The Supreme Court’s cognizance of the complaint against storyteller Aniruddhacharya marks a defining moment in India’s struggle to balance faith, free speech, and accountability. His remarks about women—delivered in a public discourse—were not merely careless words. They carried the weight of authority, amplified by the reverence of thousands who follow him. When spiritual leaders cross the line into derogatory generalisations, the damage is not confined to rhetoric; it corrodes dignity, normalises prejudice, and undermines the very values they claim to uphold. The Court’s decision to hear the matter on January 1, 2026, is significant. It signals that no voice, however cloaked in religious authority, is beyond scrutiny. In a democracy, reverence cannot be a shield against responsibility. The judiciary’s intervention is not an attack on faith but a defence of constitutional morality. Equally telling is Aniruddhacharya’s reaction to the Court’s earlier dismissal of a plea regarding idol reconstruction at Khajuraho. His retort—questioning why judges sit on the bench if “everything is to be done by God”—reveals a troubling disdain for institutional authority. Such rhetoric risks deepening divides between spiritual populism and civic governance. The larger issue, however, is not one man’s words. It is the growing trend of unchecked commentary by public figures who wield influence without accountability. In an age of mass communication, a single statement can ripple across communities, shaping perceptions and fuelling discord. The responsibility to speak with care is greater than ever. This case offers the government and judiciary a chance to reaffirm that India’s democracy is not hostage to charisma or populism. The victim here is not merely the woman demeaned in a sermon, but the citizen whose faith in institutions is shaken when authority appears powerless. The path forward must be clear: respect for tradition cannot mean tolerance of prejudice. Faith leaders must be reminded that their words carry civic consequences. And the State must ensure that constitutional values remain the ultimate arbiter of public discourse.

| GUEST VIEW |

The Unacceptable Cost Of Negligence In Goa

The tragic fire at a North Goa nightclub, which recently claimed 25 lives, is a devastating consequence of operational failures and inadequate oversight, not a mere accident. The initial findings—the use of unauthorised “electric firecrackers,” the complete absence of emergency exit doors, and the club operating without any requisite licenses—point to a profound systemic breakdown. While four arrests have been made and three officials suspended, accountability must extend beyond immediate personnel. This catastrophe highlights significant lapses in the regulatory framework and the enforcement mechanisms designed to ensure public safety. A Way Forward Demands: Immediate Audits: A non-negotiable, state-wide inspection of all high-occupancy establishments.Zero-Tolerance Enforcement: Swift closure of all non-compliant venues and comprehensive prosecution for all parties responsible.Digital Transparency: Implementation of a public, digitised to system for safety certifications to improve procedural integrity. The memory of the 25 lost lives must forge a new, uncompromising covenant between the authorities and the society, establishing a regulatory environment where public safety is sacrosanct and accountability is absolute. Such a comprehensive commitment is essential to ensure that preventable tragedies are relegated to the relics of a failed past.



Ananth Padmanabhan

Comment

How Indian Handicrafts Are Shaping a Modern Design Identity

During a recent visit to an artisan cluster in rural Assam, a simple scene revealed a profound transformation underway in India’s handicraft ecosystem. Several craftspeople were weaving dry water hyacinth, not into the traditional baskets their community had made for centuries, but into sleek office folders designed for corporate boardrooms. Their hands moved with the same practiced rhythm, following age-old techniques. Yet, the product and its purpose had transformed entirely.

As we celebrate National Handicrafts Week from 8th to 14th December 2025, this scene becomes emblematic of the quiet revolution sweeping through India’s handicraft landscape. Our living traditions are undergoing a metamorphosis—extending into new spaces, new markets, and new futures. The motifs remain authentic while the mediums and forms evolve in ways scarcely imagined a decade ago.

Handicrafts as Living Knowledge Systems

India’s handicrafts have never been mere objects of beauty. They are living knowledge systems deeply embedded in cultural identity and community traditions. In Madhubani, paintings were traditionally created by women using rice paste on freshly plastered mud walls during festivals, weddings, and rites of passage. The fish symbolised fertility, the peacock represented love, and the iconography was collective rather than individual.

For the Gond community, painting is tied to animistic beliefs, natural forces, and protective

spirits believed to inhabit forests. Their art is not merely aesthetic but a ritualistic cosmology rooted in oral tradition. Function has always shaped form. In Assam, water hyacinth—an invasive aquatic weed—was dried and woven into utilitarian baskets. In Karnataka, Channapatna’s lacquer-turned wooden toys served as simple playthings, crafted on lathes passed down through generations. Medium, form, and motif were inseparable, locked into ceremonial and functional contexts.

Tradition Expanding into Contemporary Expression

What is unfolding today is not a break from tradition but an expansion of it. Motifs and techniques remain recognisable, yet their applications have become strikingly contemporary. The Madhubani fish, once part of a fertility narrative, now appears on cushions, tote bags, and phone cases. Gond animals and plants, with bold colours and geometry, are admired even outside their mythological context.

The biggest transition is in the medium. Water hyacinth today forms corporate folders and designer handbags. Madhubani has moved from mud walls to furniture, garments, and leather accessories. Channapatna craft, once limited to toys, now appears in chandeliers, décor, and designer furniture. The lacquer remains unchanged, but the forms are thoroughly contemporary. This is adaptation, not dilution.

Indian craft-based fashion has also become a fixture on global runways, with traditional embroidery showcased at Paris Haute Couture Week. Museums such as the National Gallery of

Pabitra Margherita, Minister of State for Textiles and External Affairs

Victoria’s Transforming Worlds now feature Gond, Madhubani, and their modern adaptations within contemporary art dialogues rather than merely ethnographic contexts.

Leadership and Government Interventions Driving Transformation

This transformation has received crucial support from national leadership and strategic government interventions. The Hon’ble Prime Minister’s repeated call for Vocal for Local and Local to Global reflects his deep affection for artisans. He urges citizens to buy local, noting that “when we do that, we don’t just buy goods; we bring home hope to a family, honour the hard work of an artisan, and give wings to the dreams of a young entrepreneur.” In his latest Mann Ki Baat address, he shared how he consciously presents handcrafted Indian products during meetings with world leaders, ensuring India’s rich craft heritage travels with him wherever he goes.

Government initiatives are equally vital. The Ministry of Textiles, through the Development Commissioner (Handicrafts), provides artisans with skill development, cluster-based training, marketing, infrastructure, technology, and credit support under the National Handicraft Development Programme (NHDP). The National Institute of Fashion Technology (NIFT), through its 19 campuses, has built bridges between artisans and contemporary designers, creating smoother paths for innovation rooted in tradition. The Geographical Indications Registry has protected over 366 handicrafts, safeguarding community

knowledge and ensuring rightful recognition.

In Assam, several traditional handicrafts have received overdue recognition through recent GI registrations, including Sarthebari Metal Craft, Majuli Mask, Bihu Dhol, Jaapi, Pani Meteka, Asharikandi Terracotta, and handicrafts from the Bodo community. Each registration reflects how diverse corners of Assam and India are finding renewed places on the national platform after decades of being overlooked.

A Dynamic, Evolving Heritage for Viksit Bharat

The greatest lesson from India’s handicraft evolution is this: tradition is not static. It adapts, absorbs, and advances. The journey of water hyacinth from household baskets to global accessories symbolises the resilience and creativity of artisan communities. As India moves toward its vision of Viksit Bharat by 2047, the handicraft sector stands at a powerful intersection of heritage and innovation, rural livelihood and global aspiration, identity and modernity.

As this movement gathers strength, it becomes our shared duty to ensure that every artisan is empowered and every tradition continues to thrive. India’s handicraft heritage must not survive only as memory, but flourish as a living expression of identity. Each time a household chooses local, each time a designer partners with a handicraft cluster, we advance the spirit of Aatmanirbhar Bharat. And it is these very hands—steadfast, creative, and rooted in centuries of wisdom—that will illuminate India’s path for generations to come.

Mountains: The Water Towers of the World

Mountains play a critical role in providing freshwater for the planet, are home to diverse ecosystems, and can even be formed by volcanic eruptions

Vinod Chandrashekhar Dixit, Ahmedabad

The theme for International Mountain Day 2025 is “Glaciers matter for water, food and livelihoods in mountains and beyond,” aligning with the UN’s declaration of 2025 as the International Year of Glaciers’ Preservation. high-lighting glaciers’ crucial role in water security, food, clean energy, and cultural identity, and the urgent need for their protection. International Mountain Day is an international observance day whose goal is to raise awareness about the role that mountainous regions play in the lives of people and their importance to our planet. Mountains are home to 15% of the world’s population and host nearly half of the world’s biodiversity hotspots.

As of 2003, International Mountain Day has been observed every year on 11 December to create awareness about the importance of mountains to life, to highlight the opportunities and constraints in mountain development and to build alliances that will bring positive change to mountain peoples and environments around. As places of power and heavens on high, mountains serve as abodes of gods and goddesses, often situated at the center of the cosmos, world, or region. Temple or place of worship: Mountains

often appear in the form of temples housing the deities who reside on or within them. Unlike traditional holidays with fixed customs, Mountain Day is more about personal and communal connection to nature. Mountains are more than just tall landforms; some are growing taller due to tectonic activity, while the world’s tallest is actually Mauna Kea, not Everest, when measured from its base underwater. They also play a critical role in providing freshwater for the planet, are home to diverse ecosystems, and can even be

formed by volcanic eruptions. Today, on International Mountain Day 2025, let’s shine a spotlight on the crucial role glaciers play in sustaining life on Earth. Glaciers are more than just frozen landscapes – they’re lifelines for ecosystems and communities, providing freshwater, food, and livelihoods for billions of people. The rapid melting of glaciers poses a significant threat to our planet, impacting agriculture, clean energy, water security, and the lives of vulnerable mountain communities. Glaciers hold around

70% of the world’s freshwater, and their accelerated melting is a stark indicator of the climate crisis. Rising global temperatures are driving glacier retreat, increasing risks like floods, landslides, and erosion, and endangering downstream populations and critical infrastructure. It’s time to take action and prioritize glacier preservation for the health of our planet and its inhabitants.

Economically, sectors like agriculture, hydropower, mountain tourism and transportation feel the strain of glacier changes. For many Indigenous Peoples, glaciers are sacred, and their disappearance signifies a loss of identity and connection to nature. Let us appreciate the beauty, importance, and vulnerability of mountains. Mountains cover about 27% of the Earth’s land area and are home to around 15% of the global population. Let’s work together to preserve the beauty and importance of mountains for future generations and continue to inspire action and awareness about the need to preserve and appreciate mountains worldwide.

YOUR LETTERS

Indigo will it go

The recent chaos faced by Indigo passengers was foreseeable and known to the airline, yet it continued unchecked. The government’s decision to delay action until February is disappointing. Globally, leaders like Lee Kuan Yew and Vladimir Putin have tackled such blackmailing tactics decisively. Here, the real victims are passengers—losing money, time, and commitments. Why not deploy the Indian Air Force to ferry stranded citizens? This is a chance for the government to restore order and public confidence.

Sunil Pradhan, Khariar, Nuapada, Odisha

Indian Armed Forces: Nation’s honour

Since 1949, 7th December is observed as the ‘Armed Forces Flag Day’ across the country to honour the martyrs and uniformed soldiers who have fought and continue to fight bravely on our borders to safeguard the country’s honour. They have always displayed courage, and patriotism and many have made their supreme sacrifice in the service of our motherland. It’s a day to commemorate the sacrifices of service members and raise money for the well-being of military personnel and their families.

Nabnit Panigrahi, Rayagada, Odisha

Send your articles (600-650 words) and letters (70-8 0 words) for this page on: editorialcc007@gmail.com The letters can be edited or rewritten for clarity.

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Phone: (0771) 4911922 Fax : (0771) 4257703 , Postal Regn. No. C.G./RYPD.N./62/2025-27, Regd. No. 26172/74/RNI

Nation



8,000 govt employees received Ladi Bahin benefit

Aditi Tatkare
WCD Minister

BizBriefs
BEST OF THE REST

LANDMARK MOMENT

GLS varsity, Australia's SAE Institute to launch India's first global B. Design (Hons.) programme in animation & VFX and Game development



AHMEDABAD: GLS University has launched its Global B.Design (Hons.) programme in collaboration with Australia's SAE Institute, marking a landmark moment for creative media education in India. This innovative four-year undergraduate programme is the first of its kind in the country, offering globally benchmarked specialisations in Animation & VFX and Game Development.

GLS University, established in 1927 by the Gujarat Law Society (GLS), is one of Gujarat's most revered educational institutions. It is the only institution in India authorized to offer SAE Institute's internationally recognized curriculum and certification.

This collaboration marks SAE Institute's formal entry into India, reinforcing its commitment to nurturing the country's rapidly growing creative industries. SAE Institute, part of the Careers and Industry Division of the Navitas group, has been a global leader in creative media and technology education for 50 years, offering

world-class, project-based learning in Animation, Audio, Computer Science, Design, Film, Games, Information Technology, Music, and VFX & Virtual Production, with 47 campuses across 20 countries.

GLS University is the only institution in India authorised to offer SAE Institute's internationally recognised curriculum and certification. The collaboration also marks SAE Institute's formal entry into India, reinforcing its commitment to nurturing the country's rapidly growing creative industries. SAE Institute is part of the Careers and Industry Division of Navitas group, Australia's largest private educator provider.



MAHATMA GANDHI CENTRAL UNIVERSITY

(A Central University established by an Act of Parliament)
Motihari, East Champaran, Bihar - 845401

Website: www.mgcub.ac.in | Email: osdadmin@mgcub.ac.in

Notification For Ph.D. Admission (2025-26)

Online applications are invited for Ph.D. Programmes (Academic Year 2025-26) through the SAMARTH Portal: <https://mgcubadm.samarth.edu.in>
For eligibility, programme details and guidelines, visit: www.mgcub.ac.in

Last Date for Online Submission:

26th December 2025 (Friday)

CBC 21336/12/0002/2/26



LIC HOUSING FINANCE LTD.

RAIPUR Back Office: Usha Pride, 2nd floor, Vidhan Sabha Road, Mowa, Raipur (C.G.) - 492001.
Phone No. 0771-4075082, Mob: 9301831267, 9834662295, Website: www.lichousing.com

E AUCTION SALE NOTICE

WHEREAS the undersigned being the Authorized Officer of LIC Housing Finance Ltd (LIC HFL), under Securitization & Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 & in exercise of powers conferred under section 13 (2) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 had issued Demand Notice to following Borrowers/Mortgagors/Guarantors calling upon them to repay the outstanding due amount mentioned in the said notices. However The Borrowers/Mortgagors/Guarantors having failed to repay the said due amount, the undersigned has taken Symbolic (S)/ Physical (P) Possession in exercise of powers conferred U/s 13(4) and U/s 14 of the said Act read with the Rule 8.

This notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s)/ Guarantor(s) that the below described immovable property have been mortgaged to the LIC HFL, the possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of LIC HFL will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is", and "Whatever there is" & without any recourse basis on 19-01-2026, as per the brief particulars given here under.

Property 1) Name of Borrower/s- Mr Shashi Bhushan Singh, Anurag Singh & Anita Singh, Loan No. – 8003060000105

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPERTY

"Kh No. 147/12, Old Kh No. 20/32, New P.H. No. 33, Chantidih Indraprath Colony, Dr. Shyamprasad Mukherjee Ward, Ward No. 49, Near by Kurmi Bhawan, Main Road, Seepat Road, Bilaspur, Chhattisgarh - 495001"

Date of Demand Notice: 10/10/2023

ACCOUNT DETAILS

Amr Demanded: Rs. 1,42,68,925.00/- with further Interest, Cost and Expenses.

Date of Possession(S)- 16.12.2023 Beneficiary Name: LIC Housing Finance Ltd.

Reserve Price - Rs. 1,45,00,000/- (One Crore Fourty Five Lakhs Only) Bank: Axis Bank, Centralised Collection Hub

EMD - Rs. 1,45,000/- (One Lakh Fourty Five Thousands Only) Account No: LHRP800306000105

Total Amount payable as on 19/01/2026 - Rs. 1,81,67,080.50/- IFSC Code: UTIB0CCZH274

Website of E-Auction: <https://www.auctionbazaar.com>

Date & time of Inspection of Photocopies of property documents: 12/01/2026 & 1.00 PM to 3.00 PM

Address of property where documents can be inspected: LIC Housing Finance Limited - 2nd Floor, Shyam Market / Square, Gate No 3, Near LIC - DO, Pandri, Raipur 492001

Inspection of the Property: (Time to be fixed as per the Office convenience) 12.01.2026 & From 03:00 PM to 5:00 PM

Contact person: KARAN UPLANCHIWAR Contact Details: 9834662295

ARCA EMART PVT LTD (auctionbazaar.com)
63-1090/1/1, 2nd floor, Part B, Uma Hyderabad House, Rajbhavan Road, Somajiguda, Hyderabad - 500082, Telanagana, India, Abhilash Namdeo, disposal.central@auctionbazaar.com & 7799830999

Contact details of E-Auction from the service provider

Last date of submission of Online Tender / Bid 17/01/2026 & before 5.00 PM

E Auction Date: 19/01/2026 and 12.00 PM to 3.00 PM

Property 2) Name of Borrower/s- Mrs. Lalita Parekh & Mr. Sachin Dev Parakh, Loan No. – 121200001170

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPERTY

Plot no.s- T-1, T-2, T-6, T-7, Sai Naman Residency, Abhanpur, Raipur (CG)

Date of Demand Notice: 10/02/2022

ACCOUNT DETAILS

Amr Demanded: Rs. 24,34,817.11/- with further Interest, Cost and Expenses.

Date of Possession(P)- 26.08.2022 Beneficiary Name: LIC Housing Finance Ltd.

Reserve Price - Rs. 19,50,000/- (Nineteen Lakhs Fifty Thousand Only) Bank: Axis Bank, Centralised Collection Hub

EMD - Rs. 19,500/- (Nineteen Thousand Five Hundred Only) Account No: LHRP121200001170

Total Amount payable as on 19/01/2026 - Rs. 41,12,932.01/- IFSC Code: UTIB0CCZH274

Website of E-Auction: <https://www.auctionbazaar.com>

Date & time of Inspection of Photocopies of property documents: 12/01/2026 & 1.00 PM to 3.00 PM

Address of property where documents can be inspected: LIC Housing Finance Limited - 2nd Floor, Shyam Market / Square, Gate No 3, Near LIC - DO, Pandri, Raipur 492001

Inspection of the Property: (Time to be fixed as per the Office convenience) 12.01.2026 & From 03:00 PM to 5:00 PM

Contact person: KARAN UPLANCHIWAR Contact Details: 9834662295

ARCA EMART PVT LTD (auctionbazaar.com)
63-1090/1/1, 2nd floor, Part B, Uma Hyderabad House, Rajbhavan Road, Somajiguda, Hyderabad - 500082, Telanagana, India, Abhilash Namdeo, disposal.central@auctionbazaar.com & 7799830999

Contact details of E-Auction from the service provider

Last date of submission of Online Tender / Bid 17/01/2026 & before 5.00 PM

E Auction Date: 19/01/2026 and 12.00 PM to 3.00 PM

*All other terms & conditions of the auction are mentioned as Annexure 2 in the Official Website - <https://online.lichousing.com/eauction/>
Date: 11/12/2025
Place: Raipur
Authorised Officer
LIC Housing Finance Ltd

IndiGo crisis

PATNA: Amid IndiGo's nationwide flight cancellation fiasco, the situation at the Jay Prakash Narayan International Airport (JPNI) in Patna is "normal", and all concerns of the affected passengers were addressed, a senior official claimed on Wednesday. Ten flights to and fro Patna have been cancelled on Wednesday, Airport Director Chandra Pratap Dwivedi said, without elaborating whether all these cancelled flights were of IndiGo only.

IndiGo on Wednesday cancelled nearly 220 flights at three major airports, including Delhi and Mumbai, despite Chief Executive Officer Pieter Elbers claiming that the airline's operations were back on track.

"There were a few disruptions; but overall, everything is normal now (in Patna). We have received positive feedback from passengers. They don't have any doubts, and are happy," Dwivedi said.

He said that the Patna airport authorities, along with IndiGo representatives and CISF, have reached out to passengers, and addressed their concerns. The director, however, admitted that a few flights have been affected to and fro the JPNI airport. "Five arrivals and five departures were cancelled on Wednesday," he said. Dwivedi asserted that the situation is likely to be normalised by December 15.

said. "This is an Act which was passed in Parliament. The Supreme Court in its Lal Babu Hussein judgement said that once a voter has been included in the electoral roll, there is a presumption that they are citizens and cannot be removed except by an inquiry into the citizenship of the individual voter and giving them the opportunity of hearing after informing them of the basis on which doubt arose concerning citizen-

the Supreme Court. It is a malafide exercise of power to selectively disenfranchise on the basis of religion," Owaisi claimed. He asserted that the Election Commission of India (ECI) cannot be "bigger" than the Supreme Court and Parliament.

"May I point out that the Representation of the People Act prescribes that the inclusion in the electoral roll will be based on self-declaration of citizenship backed by one of six documents in Form 6," he

HIGHLIGHT

● **SIR is violative of parliamentary legislation.**

● **ECI cannot be "bigger" than the Supreme Court and Parliament.**

right to vote a fundamental right. "I would like to point out at the outset that SIR is violative of parliamentary legislation. It violates the rights prescribed by Parliament and it is contrary to a judgement of



MP Asaduddin Owaisi speaks in the LS during the Winter session of Parliament.

SIR nothing but 'backdoor NRC': Asaduddin Owaisi

Participating in the debate on 'election reforms', Owaisi also called for building a consensus and making the right to vote a fundamental right.

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: AIMIM MP Asaduddin Owaisi on Wednesday alleged in the Lok Sabha that the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls is nothing but "backdoor NRC" and a "malafide exercise" of power to selectively disenfranchise people on the basis of religion.

Participating in the debate on 'election reforms', Owaisi also called for building a consensus and making the

ED raids

NEW DELHI: The Enforcement Directorate on Wednesday conducted searches at multiple locations in Maharashtra as part of a money laundering probe against a dairy and agro company accused of defrauding investors of more than Rs 100 crore, officials said. Two premises in Baramati, one in Indapur (both in Pune district) apart from two in Pune city belonging to Anand Satish Lokhande, promoter of Vidyandand Dairy Pvt. Ltd. and Vidyandand Agro Feed Pvt. Ltd., and some professionals were raided under the provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), they said.

कार्यालय कलेक्टर (खनिज शाखा)

बलौदाबाजार-भाटापारा (छ.ग.)

दूरभाष एवं फैक्स :- 07727-222024, ई-मेल :- miningbalodabazar@gmail.com, mc-balodabazar@gov.in

क्रमांक 2600/बी 3-7/नं. क्र. 01/रत/2023 दिनांक 05 DEC 2025

निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना

सर्वसाधारण की जानकारी के लिये यह प्रकाशित किया जाता है कि कार्यालय कलेक्टर (खनिज शाखा) जिला बलौदाबाजार-भाटापारा, छत्तीसगढ़ के द्वारा छत्तीसगढ़ गौण खनिज साधारण रेत (उत्खनन एवं व्यवसाय) नियम, 2025 के नियम-7 अंतर्गत इलेक्ट्रॉनिक-नीलामी (रिवर्स ऑक्शन) के माध्यम से चतुर्थ चरण में कुल 5 साधारण रेत उत्खनन पट्टा खदान 1. कुशगढ़ तहसील सोनाखान, 2. रीवाडीह-2 तहसील पलारी 3. तुस्मा-2 तहसील लवन 4. तुस्मा-3 तहसील लवन 5. दतान (ख)-2 तहसील पलारी का आबंटन किया जाना है। जिस हेतु आर्हता प्राप्त बोलीदार इलेक्ट्रानिक नीलामी (रिवर्स ऑक्शन) में भाग ले सकता है।

इलेक्ट्रानिक नीलामी (रिवर्स ऑक्शन) तकनीकी एवं वित्तीय बोली 07 दिवस दिनांक 26.12.2025 से 01.01.2026 (सायं 5.30 बजे तक) बोली केवल एमएसटीसी के ऑनलाइन पोर्टल <https://www.mstcecommerce.com>. के माध्यम से स्वीकार की जावेगी। निविदा के नियम एवं शर्तों की विस्तृत जानकारी एमएसटीसी के वेबसाइट व जिले के वेबसाइट <https://balodabazar.gov.in> तथा कार्यालय कलेक्टर (खनिज शाखा) बलौदाबाजार, संबंधित ग्राम/जनपद/ जिला पंचायत भवन के सूचना पटल से प्राप्त कर सकता है।

कलेक्टर

जिला बलौदाबाजार-भाटापारा (छ.ग.)

G-252605341/2

कार्यालय मुख्य अभियंता, लो.नि.वि., राष्ट्रीय राजमार्ग परिक्षेत्र, रायपुर (छ.ग.)

दिनांक : 08.12.2025

सखम श्रेणी में पंजीकृत ठेकेदारों से निम्नलिखित निर्माण कार्य हेतु ऑनलाईन (Online) निविदा आमंत्रित की जाती है:-

क्र.	नि.आ.सू.क्र. दिनांक	सिस्टम आई.डी. क्र.	कार्य का नाम	कार्य की अनुमानित लागत जी.एस.टी. सहित
1.	118/CE/NH/TC/44-91/2025 (1st Call)	2025 MoRTH_888702_1	Strengthening of Road from Km 4.325 To 10.000 (MMI Hospital Chowk to Sadani Darbar) Of N.H.-30 in the State of Chhattisgarh through EPC Basis.	Rs. 19.03 Cr.
2.	119/CE/NH/TC/44-92/2025 (1st Call)	2025 MoRTH_888704_1	ONE TIME IMPROVEMENT OF EXISTING ROAD ALONGWITH RAISING OF CERTAIN SUBMERSIBLE LOCATION IN MONSOON SEASON IN AMBIKAPUR TOWN (FROM KM 375.600 TO KM 385.700) AND IN SITAPUR TOWN (FROM CH. KM 433.850 TO KM 437.670) SECTION OF NH-43 ON EPC MODE IN THE STATE OF Chhattisgarh under EPC Mode.	Rs. 41.99 Cr.

निविदा डाउनलोड करने की अंतिम तिथि दिनांक 21.01.2026 शाम 11.00 बजे तक है।

2. उपरोक्त निर्माण कार्यों की निविदा की सामान्य शर्तें, धरोहर राशि, विस्तृत निविदा विज्ञापित, निविदा दस्तावेज व अन्य जानकारी सड़क परिवहन एवं राजमार्ग मंत्रालय (MORT&H) के ई-प्रोक्योरमेंट वेब पोर्टल <https://eprocure.gov.in/eprocure/app> से डाउनलोड की जा सकती है।

मुख्य अभियंता
लो.नि.वि., राष्ट्रीय राजमार्ग परिक्षेत्र,
रायपुर (छ.ग.)

G-252605327/2

GOVERNMENT OF CHHATTISGARH, WATER RESOURCES DEPARTMENT OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ENGINEER GODAWARI BASIN, JAGDALPUR (CHHATTISGARH)

e-PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTICE

eProcurement Portal: <https://eproc.cgstate.gov.in>
(Third Call)

System Tender No. 181200/ NIT No.: 15/SAC/25-26
Dated: 08.12.2025

Online Tenders are invited for the following work up to 26.12.2025 at 17.30 Hours.

Name of work - Renovation work of "F" type quarter, Renovation work of "G" type quarter (1, 2, 6, 7, 8 & 9), Construction work of "G" type quarter, Renovation work of "H" type quarter, Pump House and Construction of Main Boundary Wall in Block Kondagaon, District Kondagaon.

Probable Amount of Contract: Rs. 289.50 Lakhs

(As per S.O.R dated 01.08.2010 and amended upto dated 22.08.2022).

The details can be viewed and downloaded online directly from the Government of Chhattisgarh Integrated e-Procurement Portal (<https://eproc.cgstate.gov.in>) from Date 15.12.2025, at 17.31 Hours. (IST) onwards.

NOTE: - All eligible/intrested contractors/bidders are mandated to get enrolled on the Integrated e-procurement portal (<https://eproc.cgstate.gov.in>) and get approval on specific vendor class from PWD under Centralized Contractor/Supplier Registration in order to download the tender documents and participate in the subsequent bidding process. Prequalification Certificates issued by Water Resources Department whose validity is upto 30.09.2026 is applicable in this tender.

Executive Engineer

Water Resources Division, Kondagaon
For, Chief Engineer, Godawari Basin
Jagdalpur (C.G.)

G-252605321/1

भारत सरकार
कारपोरेट कार्य मंत्रालय
त्वरित कॉर्पोरेट समापन प्रसंस्करण केंद्र (सी-पेस),
आई.आई.सी.ए. बिल्डिंग, 7वीं मंजिल,
प्लॉट P-6,7,8, से.-5, आई. एम्.टी. मानेसर, गुडगाँव,
हरियाणा - 122050.
Email: roc.cpace@mca.gov.in



Government of India
Ministry of Corporate Affairs
Centre for Processing Accelerated
Corporate Exit (C-PACE)
IICA Building, 7th Floor,
Plot P-6,7,8, Sector-5, IMT Manesar,
Gurgaon, Haryana - 122050.
Email: roc.cpace@mca.gov.in

FORM No. STK -6
PUBLIC NOTICE

[Pursuant to sub-section (2) and sub-section (4) of section 248 (2) of the Companies Act, 2013 and rule 7 of the Companies (Removal of Names of Companies from the Register of Companies) Rules, 2016]

Public Notice:ROC/C-PACE/STK-2/248(2)/2025-26/1485

Date: - 25/11/2025

Reference:

In the matter of striking off or removal of names of (5) companies in the state of Chhattisgarh under section 248 (2) of the Companies Act, 2013 in respect of:

S No.	Work Item	CIN	Company Name
1	AB8696147	U46529CT2023OPC014932	AVNIMEET RENEWABLE ENERGY (OPC) PRIVATE LIMITED
2	AB8700258	U46529CT2023OPC014966	UNIQUEWAY ASSOCIATES (OPC) PRIVATE LIMITED
3	AB8969234	U72501CT2018OPC008821	ELITETWAVE TECHNOLOGIES (OPC) PRIVATE LIMITED
4	AB8877996	U01462CT2024PTC016303	ESHVAN BREEDERS PRIVATE LIMITED
5	AB8922068	U35105CT2025PTC018182	SKY SOLAR PROJECT PRIVATE LIMITED

2.

Notice is hereby given that the Registrar of Companies had received applications from the above-mentioned companies under section 248(2) of the Companies Act, 2013 for removal of its/their name (s) from the register of companies either on the ground that they have failed to commence business within one year of their incorporation or on the ground that the company(ies) is/are not carrying on any business or operation for a period of two immediately preceding financial years and has/have not made any application (s) within such period for obtaining the status of a dormant company under section 455 of the Companies Act, 2013 or the company(ies) have obtained the status of dormant company/subscribers to the memorandum have not paid the subscription which they had undertaken to pay at the time of incorporation of a company and a declaration to this effect has not been filed within one hundred and eighty days of its incorporation under subsection (1) of section 10A have not been carrying on any business or operations, as revealed after the physical verification carried out under sub-section (9) of section 12, but it/they do not wish to continue its/their registration as companies and have, therefore, requested for removal/strike off of its/their names from the register of companies.

3.

Accordingly, the Registrar of Companies proposes to remove or strike off the names of the above-mentioned companies from the Register of Companies.

4.

Any person objecting to the proposed removal or striking off name of the companies from the register of companies may send his or her objection to the office address mentioned here above within thirty days from the date of publication of this notice.

CBC 07123/11/0476/2526

Centre for Processing Accelerated Corporate Exit

Raunak Agrawal
Deputy Registrar

Women's era

Women of Impact to celebrate India's Trailblazing Changemakers

The event will be held on December 12 at the National Stock Exchange (NSE), BKC, Mumbai.

Water Mother of India, Mrs. Amala Ruia, will be the chief guest.

Dr. Rani Bang, who has redefined healthcare in Gadchiroli, will receive the Lifetime Achievement Award.

Rajiv Poddar, Managing Director of Poddar Enterprises, will be the special guest.

1. Dr. Rani Bang: A Force Redefining Tribal Healthcare

Public health pioneer Dr. Rani Bang, along with her husband Dr. Abhay Bang, founded SEARCH (Society for Education, Action and Research in Community Health) in Gadchiroli, Maharashtra, in 1985—an institution that has since revolutionized healthcare in some of India's most underserved tribal regions.

Born in Chandrapur in 1951, Dr. Bang excelled academically, completing her MBBS and MD in Gynecology from Nagpur University, where she was a gold medalist. She later earned a Master's degree in Public Health from the prestigious Johns Hopkins University.

A tragic death of an infant in a remote tribal village became a turning point, compelling her and Dr. Abhay Bang to commit their lives to grassroots healthcare. Their work produced remarkable outcomes—the district's infant mortality rate dropped dramatically from 121 per 1,000 to 30, marking one of India's most impactful public health transformations.

Dr. Bang's research brought attention to the hidden health struggles of rural women and helped influence global health discussions at the 1994 Cairo Conference, shifting global priorities from population control to women's reproductive health and rights.

Her groundbreaking home-based newborn care model, which trains village women to recognize and treat neonatal and respiratory complications, has been adopted by both the Government of India and the World Health Organization, setting a global benchmark for low-resource healthcare interventions.

Her contributions have been recognized with some of India's highest honors, including the Padma Shri, Maharashtra Bhushan, Jamanalal Bajaj Award (2006), and the National Women's Development Award (2008). She also holds an honorary doctorate from SNTD University, and The Lancet has acknowledged her as a trailblazer in rural health leadership. Most recently, she received the Sri Sathya Sai Health Excellence Award.

This year, the Women of Impact Lifetime Achievement Award honors her extraordinary legacy—an inspiring testament to how one woman's resolve can transform communities, empower generations, and reshape the future of public health in India.



Women of Impact

Women of Impact stands at the forefront of driving women's leadership, entrepreneurship, and social transformation. The organization delivers targeted financial literacy, specialized entrepreneurship training, brand-building guidance, and high-value networking opportunities—equipping women to become self-reliant change-makers.

Beyond celebrating success stories, Women of Impact builds a powerful collaborative ecosystem where women exchange knowledge, share experiences, and strengthen one another. The annual ceremony serves as a decisive platform to acknowledge excellence, motivate women, and reinforce their growing influence in society.

This year, the

organization will confer its prestigious Lifetime Achievement Award upon Dr. Rani Bang, whose groundbreaking work in tribal healthcare has redefined public health in Gadchiroli. By training local women in essential healthcare practices, she has revolutionized newborn care, maternal health, and community well-being. Her home-based newborn care model has been adopted across India and recognized globally.

Dr. Rani's distinguished honors—including the Padma Shri and Maharashtra Bhushan—reflect her extraordinary impact. Alongside her, Neelima Chaturvedi, founder of Korea Mahila Griha Udyog, and Rasika Kulkarni, a leader in sports management education, will be recognized for their influential contributions to women's empowerment and social progress.



2. Neelima Chaturvedi: Transforming Rural India Through Women's Collective Power

The remarkable journey of Neelima Chaturvedi from Chhattisgarh stands as a commanding example of resilience, leadership, and transformative social change. Her unwavering determination not only reshaped her own life but empowered more than a lakh women across rural India.

Born in a small village in the Surguja region, Neelima was married at the age of 15 and faced severe hardships, including domestic violence. Refusing to allow adversity to define her future, she continued her education and completed her graduation and M.A.—a bold act of defiance in itself.

Her real awakening came in 1992 when she began working as an Anganwadi worker, gaining firsthand insight into the struggles faced by women at the grassroots. Determined to uplift them, she founded Swasthya Samooh in 1999 with just ten women and Rs 15,000. What began as a small initiative has grown into a powerhouse movement that today provides employment, skill development, and financial independence to over 1.5 lakh women.

Through Korea Mahila Griha Udyog, Neelima built a vast network of nearly 15,000 self-help groups, producing papad, spices, pickles, and poha under the popular "Korea" brand. Her model has become a blueprint for rural women's economic empowerment across India.

Her extraordinary work has earned national acclaim, including the Women Transforming India Award 2018 by NITI Aayog and the Mini Mata Samman, presented by former President Pranab Mukherjee.

Neelima Chaturvedi's story is not just one of survival—it is a proclamation of courage, collective strength, and the unstoppable power of women leading change in India's villages.

where she led major productions for Zee TV, including iconic shows like Antakshari and Sa Re Ga Ma Pa. She later managed large-scale concerts for legendary artists such as Asha Bhosle and Ustad Zakir Hussain, along with high-profile corporate events for SBI Life, the Maharashtra Government, and Axis Bank.

Today, Rasika also serves as Managing Director of NSE Events and Director of Yashvir Events Pvt. Ltd., while contributing her expertise as an advisory board member of Responsible Netism.

IISM's excellence has been nationally recognized with the National Sports Promotion Award (2020). The institute proudly upholds a 100% internship and placement record, with students securing roles in prestigious organizations including BCCI, IPL, Star Sports, Dream11, and Decathlon.

At a time when India's sports ecosystem once relied heavily on foreign professionals—especially during the early IPL years—Rasika Kulkarni has played a pivotal role in building a skilled, confident, homegrown sports workforce. Her vision continues to redefine India's sports education and expand opportunities for future generations.

3. Rasika Kulkarni Redefining Sports Education and Leadership in India

Rasika Kulkarni—sports educator, event management specialist, and Co-founder and Managing Director of the International Institute of Sports Management (IISM)—has emerged as one of India's most influential voices in modern sports education. Her journey from high-energy event arenas to shaping a new generation of sports professionals marks a bold transformation in India's sporting landscape.

Rasika trains students in sports marketing, journalism, data analytics, and athlete management, equipping young Indians with the skills needed to thrive in a rapidly expanding global sports industry. Her efforts have opened pathways that were once inaccessible to aspiring sports professionals in the country.

With over two decades of experience, Rasika and her husband—former Indian cricketer Nilesh Kulkarni—founded India's first professional sports management institute in 2010. In partnership with the University of Mumbai, IISM offers comprehensive undergraduate and postgraduate programs in sports management and sports science, anchoring sports as a serious academic and professional discipline.

Her illustrious career began in the events industry,



Women’s era

A life dedicated to showcasing the art of anonymous women

Now, I am using the strength of everything I learned over the years in the corporate world to bring long-overdue recognition to women’s art.

Good packaging, marketing, and branding create the true identity of any product: Yogesh Joshi

(The country’s most senior corporate communications expert and former Head of Group Communications at the Tata Group shares his experience of joining Women of Impact.)

Celebrating women’s success is essential: Rachna Lachke Bagwe

The phrase “Woman of Impact” instantly evokes the name Rachna Lachke Bagwe, a dynamic entrepreneur and visionary who has redefined how women’s stories are told and honored in India. Founder of Women of Impact, Rachna has created a platform that empowers women to become leaders, changemakers, and entrepreneurs—women who transform their communities quietly yet profoundly.

Rachna, who also heads RAC Media (Rachna Arts & Creations), is the co-founder of the Marathi business daily Arthasanket. Her extraordinary initiative, “365 Days, 365 Stories,” set a world record by posting an inspiring story every single day on YouTube for a full year. Speaking to Central Chronicle, she says, “I have always connected with people, interviewed them, and shared their positive journeys with the world. That experience sparked the idea for Women of Impact. I wanted to create a platform that recognizes women excelling in diverse fields and inspires thousands of others to follow their passion.”

Her belief is clear and powerful: “Women are an integral part of society. Their success must be celebrated.”

Armed with an MA in Management and Rural Development and a BMS from Sydenham College, Rachna commands millions of followers on Instagram. She has dedicated her life to elevating women—guiding self-help groups, small businesses, and entrepreneurs in branding, marketing, and digital growth. Through her numerous business seminars and award platforms across Maharashtra, she has honored exceptional brands and spotlighted women-led success stories that often remain unseen.

Her commitment to financial literacy, entrepreneurship, and social upliftment has touched thousands of lives. Rachna Lachke Bagwe stands today not just as a creator or influencer, but as a catalyst—a woman turning everyday heroines into celebrated icons.

Key Achievements

World Record: Shared 365 inspirational stories on YouTube over 365 consecutive days. Women’s Empowerment: Trained self-help groups in branding and digital marketing; organized business seminars and award programs across Maharashtra.



Priyanka Gandhi: Connecting rural flavors to the metropolitan market

Developed a business model while keeping Konkan culture alive

Owner of Konkan Katta Restaurant and a successful woman entrepreneur

Priyanka Gandhi, owner of Konkan Katta Restaurant, stands today as one of the most inspiring women entrepreneurs who have transformed Mumbai’s culinary landscape. With unwavering passion, she introduced the rich, authentic flavours of Maharashtra’s Konkan region to the bustling metropolis—proving that tradition, when paired with courage, can become a powerful business model. Through her journey, she continues to inspire countless women from Konkan, showing them that dreams rooted in culture can indeed be turned into reality.

Konkan Katta quickly became a favourite among food lovers by offering signature dishes such as Konkan fish curry, Solkadhi, and the much-loved Konkani thali—each presented with a thoughtful modern twist. But her path to success was far from easy. Priyanka recalls her early struggles, especially during festival seasons when managing staff became a major challenge. There were days when the hotel was short-handed because the entire staff went on leave. Yet, she persevered—with resilience, a dedicated team, and her mother’s teachings guiding every step.

Her deep love for Konkan and her determination to preserve its culinary heritage shaped a unique business model that blends self-reliance with cultural pride. Thanks to her commitment, Konkan Katta has earned extraordinary customer reviews, viral visibility on social media, and a loyal community of followers. Priyanka shares her entrepreneurial learnings widely on Instagram, including at events like Maja Pink’s Being Woman, where she revealed the story behind Konkan Katta’s growing success.

Today, Priyanka Gandhi is celebrated not just as a successful restaurateur but as a cultural ambassador—bringing rural flavours to an urban audience with authenticity and heart. Her selection for the 2025 Women of Impact Award is a proud recognition of her remarkable contribution to women’s empowerment, entrepreneurship, and the preservation of Konkan’s culinary legacy.



Central Chronicle, Raipur/Mumbai.

Yogesh Joshi, one of India’s most respected corporate communications leaders and former Head of Group Communications at the Tata Group, has now dedicated his expertise to women’s empowerment. An authority in advertising, branding, and management, Joshi says, “Branding is my strength. I felt it should be used to help women who create exceptional work but lack the knowledge of packaging, marketing, and brand positioning. With the right branding, their talent can be recognized globally—and they can earn what they truly deserve for their art and effort.”

In an exclusive conversation with Central Chronicle, Joshi—who now serves as Chairman of the Women of Impact Award Selection Committee—explains, “I joined Women of Impact with this very purpose. The idea originated with ‘Rachana Lachke Bagwe’ and I deeply admire it. We believe that true achievers should not need to apply for awards; society should identify them.

A Mission to Inspire Society

Joshi stresses, “Our aim is to give visibility to women who quietly make life easier for others without seeking publicity. If their stories reach the world, millions of women will feel inspired and empowered. Their standard of living will rise.”

Citing examples, he says, “Last year, we honored Dr. Sonali Sarnobat from Karnataka. She built a 35,000-member women’s self-help group. Along with skill development, they learned entrepreneurship, banking, and essential financial practices. Her cooperative credit society has zero NPAs—an extraordinary achievement.”

Bringing Global Recognition to Warli Art

Joshi recalls his pioneering work with Warli artists: “I would see tribal women selling Warli paintings on Mumbai’s streets for just Rs 30-40. I bought 200 paintings—Rs 300 for the small ones and Rs 500 for large ones—prices they had never imagined. I framed them and showed them to my Managing Director, who turned them into corporate gifts. Foreign visitors loved them. Demand grew every year—from 600 paintings the next year to 10,000 in five years.”

This effort also helped elevate Warli art internationally, contributing to the recognition of Jivya Soma Mashe, the ‘Father of Warli Art,’ who later received the Padma Shri.

He adds, “We also trained women in Jamshedpur who made chalk and incense sticks. With canework skills, their daily income rose from Rs 10 to Rs 300-600. Many became independent entrepreneurs.”

Through vision, branding, and heartfelt commitment, Yogesh Joshi continues to transform anonymous women artists into celebrated creators—and silent workers into empowered leaders.

We work with precision: first, we gather profiles of 100-200 exceptional women, thoroughly vet them, verify details independently, and only then finalize the award list.”

My Role Model: Ratan Tata

Speaking about his greatest inspiration, he says, “My role model is Sir Ratan Tata. From him, I learned the true meaning

of humanity. He always reminded us that whatever we receive from society must be given back to society in equal measure.” Reflecting on Indigo fare controversy, he adds, “Ratan Tata was never an opportunist. Had he been here today, passengers would never have been exploited. He would never have allowed such arbitrary decisions.”

Cultural ties through Indo Soviet ties

The reverence for the motherland is deeply embedded in both Indian and Russian culture. In Delhi, Bharat Mata embodies India’s spiritual and cultural identity, while in Moscow, the sculpture of Mother Russia reflects similar patriotic pride. Both nations have historically connected their citizens’ sense of duty and protection to the land itself. From the valor of Indian warriors defending their soil to the Soviet defense of Stalingrad, the emotional bond with the homeland has shaped history. This shared cultural instinct, rooted in centuries of tradition and art, explains why India and Russia often find common ground, transcending diplomacy.

MASTERPIECE

Inside the extravagant life of hotel cat Lilibet



Lilibet, a Siberian cat, enjoys a life of unparalleled luxury at a 5-star London hotel. Wearing a handcrafted gold collar with the hotel’s sigil, she roams the lobby, entertains guests, and even lounges on plush sofas and the grand piano. Cared for by a dedicated team, Lilibet occasionally indulges in caviar and has become the hotel’s unofficial social media star. Guests flock to meet her, showering her with treats, gifts, and attention. With a cocktail named after her, Lilibet has firmly established herself as the charming, green-eyed ambassador of the property, turning her opulent feline lifestyle into a global fascination.

The Land of Poets: Chile’s Literary Legacy

Chile, often called the “Land of Poets,” has long been celebrated for its rich literary heritage and global contributions to poetry.

Home to iconic poets and two Nobel laureates, the country’s verse explores themes of love, nature, identity, and human experience, resonating across generations. Poetry is woven into daily life, visible on city walls, in public spaces, and through annual literary festivals that attract writers and enthusiasts worldwide. Museums dedicated to legendary poets offer intimate glimpses into their creative worlds, while vibrant urban culture keeps poetic expression alive. In Chile, literature is not just read—it is lived and celebrated.



UK stone circles: Where nature and spirit meet

In Cornwall, ancient stone circles like Boscawen-Un are attracting people looking for a spiritual experience. Visitors, often nature lovers or cultural pagans, explore the sites to reflect, meditate, and feel connected to history. The stones, built thousands of years ago, align with the sun, moon, and seasons, adding to their mystery. Today, these circles offer a peaceful place for quiet walks, community gatherings, and a deeper appreciation of the UK’s ancient heritage.



Delve into the famed December serendipity art festival

Central Chronicle News

HIGHLIGHT

● The Serendipity Arts Festival invites audiences to explore Goa’s rich, layered cultural landscape.

ber 12 to 21, the festival transforms the site into an evolving museum of ideas. A key exhibition delves into Goa’s oceanic past, colonial encounters, and the influences that have shaped the region’s layered identity. Through installations and multimedia works, it highlights how migration, trade, and cultural exchange continue to define Goan life.



A glimpse of Goa’s culture brought alive this December.

Across the 10-day event, more than 250 programs curated by specialists from varied disciplines highlight both local traditions and wider artistic conversations. The opening day features performances celebrating clay percussion instruments, capturing rhythms deeply rooted in regional craft and folklore. Another immersive project recreates the warmth of old Goan taverns through food, sound, and atmosphere, while a researched exhibition reflects on the fading aromas of coastal kitchens and their cultural memory.

Sports News

India beat Argentina 4-2 to win bronze in Men's Jr WC

India claim bronze medal after registering a 4-2 win over Argentina in FIH Men's Junior World Cup.

By Saumojyoti S Choudhury

The Indians started brightly after the change of ends and secured four back-to-back penalty corners.

CHENNAI: India produced a brave-heart performance, nullifying a two-goal deficit to beat Argentina 4-2 and clinch the bronze medal in the FIH Men's Junior World Cup here on Wednesday. India, who won the title in 2016 in Lucknow, failed to finish on the podium on the last two occasions, ending fourth in 2021 in Bhubaneswar, and two years later in Kuala Lumpur.

India produced a valiant fightback with Ankit Pal (49th minute), Manmeet Singh (52nd) and Anmol Ekka (58th) converting penalty corners, while Sharda Nand Tiwari finding the net from the spot in the 57th minute.

Argentina were the better side on display at least in the first two quarters, scoring through Nicolas Rodriguez (3rd minute) and Santiago Fernandez (44th). The Argentines controlled the possession of the match in the first quarter as India struggled to



India's players celebrate after winning the FIH Junior Men's Hockey World Cup bronze medal match between India and Argentina, at Mayor Radhakrishnan Hockey Stadium, in Chennai, Tamil Nadu, Wednesday.

get a foothold. Argentina secured their first chance in the third minute in the form of a penalty stroke following a foul by Anmol Ekka and Rodriguez made no mistake to hand his side the lead.

The Indians were guilty of giving away the ball too easily, which put paid to their chances in

the first 15 minutes. India had their best shot at the goal in the 20th minute but Dilraj Singh's shot from top of the circle was finely saved by Argentina goalkeeper Joaquin Ruiz.

The Indians started brightly after the change of ends and secured four back-to-back penalty cor-

ners in the 31st minute but failed to execute a single one with Anmol Ekka flicking the final one over the post.

Argentina kept up the pressure on the Indian defence and secured their first penalty corner in the 37th minute but Indian goalkeeper Princedeep Singh made a bril-

liant double save to keep the hosts in the hunt.

Argentina secured two more short corners in the 40th minute but failed to get past the Indian defence.

The visitors secured their fourth penalty corner in the 41st minute but Rodriguez flick was off target.

9 Russian and Belarusian skiers get neutral status in Olympics qualifying

GENEVA: Three skiers from Russia and six from Belarus including former Olympic and world champions were approved Wednesday to compete in qualifying events for the 2026 Milan Cortina Winter Games in February.

Their return after exclusion during the full military invasion of Ukraine could be within days at Davos in Switzerland. Former world junior cross-country ski champion Savellii Korostelev posted "debut this weekend" on his social media channels.

The International Ski and Snowboard Federation (FIS) said it cleared the applications of the nine to get neutral athlete status and return to competitions for the first time since February 2022.

FIS did not state if it rejected some applications, or how many, though the Russian ski federation told state news agency TASS six of its athletes had asked for neutral status.

A further level of International Olympic Committee vetting must be passed before any qualified athlete can be invited to the Winter Games that open Feb. 6. IOC guidelines to sports bodies have kept Russian athletes excluded

FASTFACTS

● The eventual group of Russian athletes competing in Italy in February is likely to be fewer than 20 – a steep drop from more than 200 that went to the Beijing Winter Games, where they won 32 medals including five gold.

from team events in a system enforced for the Paris Summer Games last year.

Athletes who want to compete as neutral individuals without any symbols of national identity must not have publicly supported the war and not have ties to military or state security agencies.

Title-winning athleteFreestyle skier Hanna Huskova took gold in women's aerials for Belarus at the 2018 Pyeongchang Olympics and silver four years later in Beijing.

Anastasia Tatalina was a Big Air world champion for Russia in 2021, and was fourth in freeski slopestyle at the 2022 Beijing Olympics. She also competed in Pyeongchang.

Russian cross-country skiers Korostelev and Dariya Nepryaeva also got neutral status

ahead of World Cup races this weekend at Davos.

Both won world junior titles on Feb. 25, 2022 – one day after the war started – racing in Norway. Days earlier, Nepryaeva's older sister Natalya left the Beijing Winter Games with gold, silver and bronze medals in cross-country skiing.

Court ruling cleared Russian pathThe Russian ski federation and athletes won a ruling last week at the Court of Arbitration for Sport forcing FIS to start processing applications for neutral status

Russian athletes and team officials could face challenges getting visas to enter some countries that host qualifying events on the World Cup circuits in Alpine, cross-country and freestyle skiing, and snowboarding.

FIS said the approved athletes can compete "provided that they formally accept the conditions associated with the AIN status," citing the IOC's French acronym for Individual Neutral Athlete.

The ski and snowboard governing body said more decisions on neutral athletes will be made in "upcoming days and weeks."

| T20 INTERNATIONAL |

Pressure mounts on Gill as India look to press advantage

By Bharat Sharma

India steamrolled SA in the series opener but the middling returns from Gill remains a talking point.



MULLANPUR: Yet to stamp his authority in the shortest format, Shubman Gill would be eying major gains on home soil when a well-rounded India look to extend their dominance over South Africa in the second T20 International here on Thursday. With only a travel day separating the first two games of the five-match series, Gill won't mind getting straight into the middle

in search of a substantial knock. Following an impressive debut as Test captain in the UK, Gill was brought back into the T20 setup. Even though Sanju Samson and his Punjab teammate Abhishek Sharma were doing the job at the top of the order, the team management showed immense faith in Gill's abilities as a T20 opener. The batter from Kerala was displaced and

FASTFACTS

● The venue would be hosting its first ever T20 International after hosting two women's ODIs back in September.

he has since then struggled to find a place in the playing eleven. The Test and ODI captain can seamlessly perform the role that Virat Kohli performed for India till the T20 World Cup last year but the team, with batting options till number eight, has doubled down on its fearless approach since the triumph in Barbados, leaving little room for an anchor.

KMSC offers fast new route for 49th K1000

BENGALURU: Karnataka Motor Sports Club (KMSC) will host the iconic 49th Karnataka 1000 Rally (K1000), the third oldest running rally in the world, from December 12 to 14 in Tumakuru. It is the fourth round of the Blueband FMSCI INRC 2025. The rally originated as a Time-Speed-Distance event spanning 1000 miles across multiple states, transitioning to a special stage format by 1996. This year's route, prepared by Clerk of the Course and KMSC Vice-President Bhaskar Gupta, who also has designed K1000 stages for over 25 years, features two physical stages: Hatyalu (10.5km) and Thirtharama (27km).

IOA, Italy's CONI sign MoU to strengthen sports cooperation

Press Trust Of India

The signing ceremony was attended by Italy's Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Antonio Tajani and Union Minister for Youth Affairs and Sports Mansukh Mandaviya.

NEW DELHI: The Indian Olympic Association (IOA) and the Italian National Olympic Committee (CONI) on Wednesday signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to strengthen bilateral cooperation in sports



(IOA) President P T Usha and Italian National Olympic Committee (CONI) President Luciano Buonfiglio sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to strengthen bilateral cooperation in sports with a focus on training, infrastructure sharing and sports science collaboration, in New Delhi.

with a focus on training, infrastructure sharing and sports science collaboration. The agreement provides a "structured framework for joint

promotion of sports, exchange of expertise and mutual access to each nation's elite sporting infrastructure and high-performance centres

for athletes, coaches and sports science professionals". "Today marks a proud moment for the Indian Olympic movement. This partnership with CONI opens new horizons for our athletes to train, learn, and excel within one of the world's most respected sporting systems," PT Usha, IOA President, said in a release. "The exchange of knowledge, expertise, and infrastructure will play a pivotal role in elevating India's global sporting performance. We look forward to a long and inspiring collaboration with our Italian counterparts."

| CRICKET |

Prasad vows to bring cricket back to Chinnaswamy

Press Trust of India

BENGALURU: Newly-elected Karnataka State Cricket Association president Venkatesh Prasad called upon the Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar in Bengaluru on Wednesday.

Prasad described the meeting with the two leaders as "extremely positive", saying the aim is to bring back international cricket and IPL to the M Chinnaswamy Stadium in Bengaluru.

The stadium hasn't hosted top-tier matches since a stampede outside the ground claimed 11 lives during the Royal Challengers Bengaluru's



Newly-elected President of the Karnataka State Cricket Association (KSCA) Venkatesh Prasad with other members during a visit to the stadium, in Hubballi, Dharwad district, Karnataka, Wednesday.

IPL title celebrations on June 4. The domestic matches

Duleep Trophy and 'A' series between India and South Africa were shifted to BCCI's Centre

of Excellence. The ICC Women's ODI World Cup matches, including the final, were moved out of the stadium after KSCA functioned without a treasurer and a secretary, who had resigned on moral grounds following the stampede.

"It was an extremely positive, extremely fruitful meeting we had with the CM and DCM. They have assured us that they

are going to discuss this in tomorrow's cabinet, in the assembly and they are going to take a very positive decision in making these two things, international cricket and the IPL to come back to Chinnaswamy Stadium, which has been an

iconic stadium for the last five decades, and bring back cricket so that our, you know, our fans would start appreciating and enjoying the whole game," Prasad told ANI.

Prasad was elected as the president of the KSCA on Sunday. Former India batter Sujith Somasunder, head of education at the BCCI's Centre of Excellence, was elected vice-president of the KSCA.

Prasad won the election after receiving unanimous backing from former teammates Anil Kumble and Javagal Srinath, among others, defeating his rival, K N Shanth Kumar, by a 749-558 margin.

NZ bowls out the West Indies for 205 in the 2nd test

Press Trust of India

WELLINGTON: New Zealand fast bowler Blair Tickner was helped from the field with a shoulder injury after taking 4-32 on the first day of the second test against the West Indies on Wednesday in the latest cruel blow in a career flecked with tragedy.

Tickner fell heavily while fielding a ball at fine leg in his first test in more than two years and only the fourth of his career. Tickner bowled well in tandem with Michael Rae who took 3-65 on debut as New Zealand bowled out the West Indies for 205 in 75 overs. Devon Conway and Tom Latham were tested in the last

FASTFACTS

● Three wickets fell quickly at the start of the last session and the West Indies slipped to 184-7 before Tickner's injury.

40 minutes but saw New Zealand to stumps at 24 without loss.

The West Indies came into the match on a high after their superb effort to draw the first test. After New Zealand had set them 531 to win, the West Indies batted more than 12 hours and finished 457-6. Justin Greaves made an unbeaten 202 and Kemar Roach batted four and a half hours for 58. "The guys are very confident

coming into this game," captain Roston Chase said at the toss.

The confidence showed, even after the West Indies lost the toss. John Campbell and Brandon King put on 66 for the first wicket, the best opening stand for the West Indies in 21 innings.

At lunch the West Indies were 92-2 and at tea 175-4, still on top. But as the pitch hardened, Tickner and Rae came into their own. The ball came off the pitch more quickly and began to deviate a little off the seam. Three wickets fell quickly at the start of the last session and the West Indies slipped to 184-7 before Tickner's injury.



Ukraine can hold elections within months if security is ensured.
Volodymyr Zelenskyy
President of Ukraine

Santa Claus is coming to town



Employees wearing Santa Claus costumes perform during a parade for celebrating Christmas at Lotte World Adventure in Seoul, South Korea. AP/PTI

European nations set to discuss tightening of migration rules

European leaders across the political spectrum are uniting to call for tougher migration policies.

Press Trust Of India

BRUSSELS: European leaders will call for a toughening of migration policies on Wednesday in a move critics say bends to pressure from far-right groups and harms basic human rights protections for vulnerable people. Ministers from 27 EU member nations

are meeting in Brussels to discuss countering migrant smuggling, with a keynote speech by European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen. In Strasbourg, France, representatives from the Council of Europe – 46 countries from Iceland to Azerbaijan – are expected to debate making deporting

HIGHLIGHT

● The push for stricter rules includes debating measures to make deporting migrants easier for signatories of key treaties.

migrants easier for signatories to key treaties. Denmark was part of a nine-nation attempt last

year to curtail the power of the European Court of Human Rights, the independent legal arm of the Council of Europe. Austria, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland argued that the court's interpretation of rights obligations prevented them from expelling migrants

who commit crimes. That effort ultimately failed, but support for its basic tenets has since grown. The European Court of Human Rights handles complaints against the Council of Europe, under the European Convention on Human Rights, including many cases involving migrants and asylum-seekers.

Morocco: 19 Dead in Building Collapse

FES(MOROCCO): Two four-story buildings collapsed overnight in the Moroccan city of Fes, killing 19 people in the second fatal collapse there this year, authorities said on Wednesday. Morocco's state news agency reported the two residential buildings housed eight families. Sixteen people were injured in the collapse and sent for treatment at a nearby hospital. Authorities said the neighbourhood had been evacuated and search and rescue efforts were ongoing. It was unclear what caused the collapse or how many people were unaccounted for on Wednesday morning. Fes is Morocco's second-largest city and one of the hosts of this month's Africa Cup of Nations and the 2030 FIFA World Cup. It is best known for its walled city packed with medieval souks and tanneries.

Critics of army rule in Myanmar stage silent strike against election

Press Trust Of India

BANGKOK: Opponents of military rule in Myanmar staged a joint protest on Wednesday calling on people to stay indoors to show they are boycotting elections scheduled for late this month. They defied harsh legal penalties for attempting to disrupt the polls. The military government has announced charges against 10 pro-democracy activists who staged a rare street protest last week in Mandalay, the country's second biggest city. Critics say the Dec 28 polls will be neither free nor fair and are an effort by the military to legitimise its rule after seizing power from the elected government



A high-angle view of a busy road with famous Inya Lake in the background in Yangon, Myanmar, Wednesday, Dec. 10, 2025. (AP Photo) Critics of army rule in Myanmar stage silent strike against upcoming election.

of Aung San Suu Kyi in February 2021. The General Strike Coordination Body, the leading non-violent organization opposing army rule, had urged people to join a "silent strike" on Wednesday. It called on the public to stay inside homes or workplaces from 10 am to 3 pm on International Human Rights Day. The tactic

FACTFILE

● The military government responded to the dissent by announcing charges against 10 pro-democracy activists who staged a rare street protest, seeking their arrest under a new election law that carries a maximum penalty of 10 years in prison for disrupting the electoral process.

law that carries a maximum penalty of 10 years in prison for disrupting the electoral process. They are charged with allegedly misleading the public by distributing leaflets against the election around a crowded morning market in Mandalay on Dec 3.

NIGERIA ABDUCTION |

Nigerian abductees reunited with parents

Press Trust Of India

PAPIRI: Several parents welcomed the return on late Tuesday night of their children, who were abducted last month when gunmen stormed their school.

"It has not been easy for me... But today, in fact, I have a little bit of joy, especially because there is still one abducted. But I am now



happy with this one that I have gotten," Luka Illaya, one of the parents in the

remains with the abductors. His son, who hugged him tightly, is one of the 100 students released over the weekend after they were abducted from a Nigerian Catholic school on November 21. The Papiri school abductions, where more than 300 students and staff were taken, were the latest in a string of mass abductions that have

rocked Nigeria in the past decade. Days earlier, 25 students were also abducted in nearby Kebbi state. The government did not release any details about the released Papiri students and the fate of at least 150 other children and staff who remain in captivity. Fifty of the students escaped in the hours following the abductions.

Briefs

BEST OF THE REST

NOBEL PEACE MACHADO

Machado's daughter accepts Nobel Peace Prize in Venezuelan opposition leader's absence



OSLO: Venezuelan opposition leader Maria Corina Machado's daughter accepted the Nobel Peace Prize on her mother's behalf Wednesday, hours after officials said Machado would miss the ceremony. Machado has been in hiding and has not been seen in public since Jan. 9, when she was briefly detained after joining supporters in a protest in Caracas, Venezuela's capital. Jorgen Watne Frydnes, chair of the Norwegian Nobel committee, told the award ceremony that "Maria Corina Machado has done everything in her power to be able to attend the ceremony here today – a journey in a situation of extreme danger." "Although she will not be able to reach this ceremony and today's events, we are profoundly happy to confirm that she is safe, and that she will be with us

here in Oslo," he said to applause. The director of the Norwegian Nobel Institute and Machado's spokesperson said earlier Wednesday that she wouldn't be able to attend the ceremony. Her daughter Ana Corina Sosa did instead. Maria Corina Machado said in an audio recording of a phone call published on the Nobel website that many people had "risked their lives" for her to arrive in Oslo. "I am very grateful to them, and this is a measure of what this recognition means to the Venezuelan people," she said before indicating she was about to board a plane. "I know that there are hundreds of Venezuelans from different parts of the world who were able to reach your city that are right now in Oslo, family, my team, so many colleagues," Machado added.

UN ITALY COOKING Italian cooking and its rituals get UN designation as world heritage

ROME: Italian food is known and loved around the world for its fresh ingredients and palate-pleasing tastes, but on Wednesday, the UN's cultural agency gave foodies another reason to celebrate their pizza, pasta and tiramisu by listing Italian cooking as part of the world's "intangible" cultural heritage. UNESCO added the rituals surrounding Italian food preparation and consumption to its list of the world's traditional practices and expressions. It's a designation celebrated alongside the more well-known UNESCO list of world heritage sites, on which Italy is well represented with locations like Rome's Colosseum and the ancient city of Pompeii. The citation didn't mention specific dishes, recipes or regional specialities, but highlighted the cultural importance Italians place on the rituals of cooking and eating: the Sunday family lunch, the tradition of grandmothers teaching grandchildren how to fold tortellini dough just so, even the act of coming together to share a meal. "Cooking is a gesture of love, a way in which we tell something about ourselves to others and how we take care of others," said Pier Luigi Petrillo, a member of the Italian UNESCO campaign.

SUDAN PLANE CRASH Sudanese military plane crashes, killing all crew members

CAIRO: A Sudanese military aircraft crashed while attempting to land in the east of the country, killing all the crew, military officials said on Wednesday, in the latest plane crash in the war-torn African nation. The Ilyushin Il-76 cargo plane experienced technical failure while attempting to land on Tuesday in the Osman Digna Air Base in the coastal city of Port Sudan, two officials said. They said the crew were killed but didn't disclose how many personnel were on board. The officials spoke on condition of anonymity because they weren't authorised to brief the media. Among the dead was military pilot Omran Mirghani, according to his uncle, prominent Sudanese journalist Osman Mirghani, who mourned his nephew's death on social media. The military didn't comment on the crash. Plane crashes are not uncommon in Sudan, which has a poor aviation safety record. In February, at least 46 people, including women and children, were killed when a military aircraft crashed in a densely populated area in Omdurman, the sister city of the capital, Khartoum.

THAILAND CAMBODIA CONFLICT

Renewed Thailand-Cambodia border fighting displaces hundreds of thousands



SURIN: Renewed border fighting between Thailand and Cambodia showed no signs of abating Wednesday, leaving hundreds of thousands of displaced people in both countries living in strained conditions as more flooded into temporary shelters. About 400,000 people have been evacuated from affected areas in Thailand and around 700 schools closed while fighting was ongoing in four border provinces, Thai military spokesperson Rear Adm. Surasant Kongsiri said Wednesday. Cambodia evacuated more than 127,000 villagers and hundreds of schools closed, the defense ministry

said. Thailand's military announced that casualties this week include five soldiers killed and dozens wounded. Cambodia said seven civilians died and 20 others were wounded, though it did not update those figures on Wednesday. There is not yet a clear path to peace as Thailand's Prime Minister Anutin Charnvirakul vowed to continue to fight and Cambodia's powerful Senate President Hun Sen promised a fierce response. A knock-on effect of the fighting and bad blood between the nations was Cambodia's withdrawal of its entire team from the 33rd Southeast Asian Games, which began Tuesday in Thailand.