

### BRIEF



Women travel in a mini-truck, near Behror, Sunday.

### Fire

**New Delhi:** A fire broke out at a factory-cum-godown in east Delhi's Gandhi Nagar area on Sunday evening, officials said. The fire officials said they received information about the blaze around 4:40 pm, following which five fire tenders were rushed to the spot. No reports of anyone being injured have been received so far, they said, adding that the firefighting operation is underway.

### Mishap

**Gorakhpur:** One kanwariya died and 12 were injured when the tractor-trolley in which they were travelling was hit by a speeding truck here, police said on Sunday. The incident took place at the Dharamshala overbridge around 2 am on Saturday night, they said. A group of kanwariyas were going to Moteswari Mahadev temple in Pipraich after collecting water from the Saryu river. When they reached the Dharamshala overbridge, a speeding truck hit the tractor-trolley in which they were travelling, killing one of them and injuring 12, police said.

### Derail

**Jabalpur:** A goods train derailed between Narsinghpur and Kareli stations in Madhya Pradesh, disrupting rail traffic on the route, an official said on Sunday. No one was injured in the incident which took place at around 11:30 pm on Saturday in Narsinghpur district, West Central Railway's chief public relations officer Rahul Shrivastava told PTI over phone. Traffic on the Jabalpur-Itarsi up line was affected due to the derailment.

### Sworn in

**Ahmedabad:** Justice Sunita Agarwal was on Sunday sworn in as the 29th Chief Justice of Gujarat High Court. She is the second woman CJ of the Gujarat High Court. Governor Acharya Devvrat administered the oath of office at a ceremony at Raj Bhavan in Gandhinagar, which was attended by Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel, Speaker of Gujarat Assembly Shankar Chaudhary, and Minister of Law and Justice Rushikesh Patel.

### Revamp

**Thane:** The work on the remodelling of the historic Thane railway station, which is slated to be a two-storey building, will begin soon, Shiv Sena (UBT) MP Ranjan Vichare said on Sunday. Speaking to reporters after inaugurating a waiting hall for commuters at Thane station, Vichare said the Railways has approved the remodelling of the station and provided Rs 1,100 crore for the first phase of the project.

**Weather**  
High 31 Low 25

# Singhdeo backs Baghel as Chh'garh CM if Cong wins

New Delhi, Jul 23 (PTI):

Chhattisgarh Deputy Chief Minister TS Singhdeo on Sunday said the Congress would fight the assembly polls under a "collective leadership" helmed by Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel and if the party wins, Baghel would be "first in line" to be considered for the CM's post.

In an interview with PTI, Singhdeo said if an incumbent chief minister has not been removed, it means the party maintains its belief in that person being able to lead the team to victory and after the win "why should the captain be changed".

He also predicted the Congress was likely to bag another resounding mandate in the 90-member assembly, saying some are projecting 75-plus seats for his party but his estimate



TS Singhdeo

is anywhere between 60 to 75-plus. The Congress had won 68 seats in the 2018 assembly polls.

Asked if tensions between Baghel and him are a thing of the past after he was made the deputy chief minister last month, Singhdeo said, "There was no real bitterness or enmity, we (Baghel and him) were working together. There was this issue of time sharing, two-and-a-half years, I think that was weighing on our

minds as well as on the minds of everybody associated with the two of us. That time has gone by. Even when those matters were in discussion, we were still performing to the best of our ability."

On whether he felt a sense of betrayal for not getting two-and-a-half years as the chief minister, he said, "I don't see it as a betrayal. I see it as a decision which the high command takes, it is their call. I cannot become the chief minister, it is the high command, on the feedback it has, that gives designated roles to all of us."

"There is no betrayal as it is the call which the high command has to take and we abide by it," Singhdeo added.

Asked whether he being made the deputy CM was a climb down from an earlier position or a progres-

sion, Singhdeo said he was, on protocol, already the number two in the cabinet.

"We have these official protocols. So the CM had given me the protocol after him. He was number one and I was number 2 and Tamradhwaj Sahu ji was number 3 etc. There were 13 of us including the chief minister. I am still number 2 with an added designation. I am the Deputy CM, so I am sure a lot of people would be seeing it as a step up," he said.

"I was one of the ministers in the cabinet. Now I am one of the ministers who is also designated Deputy CM. I am grateful to the party, very grateful to the party high command and Bhupesh bhai because with the consent and blessings of all, it would have happened," he told PTI over phone.

### Bandh observed

Ahmedabad, Jul 23 (PTI):

A shutdown was observed in tribal dominated regions of Gujarat on Sunday to protest against the failure of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) government in Manipur to control the ethnic strife there. Several market places in Tapi, Valsad, Dahod, Panchmahal, Narmada and Chhota Udepur among 14 districts with sizable tribal population were deserted as shops remained shuttered and groups of people observed sit-in dharna as part of the 'bandh'. The shutdown call was given by various tribal organisations and was supported by the opposition Congress, Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) and Bharatiya Tribal Party (BTP). Speaking to the media, AAP's working president and MLA Chaitar Vasava said the violence in Manipur had shaken the entire nation. "A total of 52 talukas in 14 Gujarat districts responded to the bandh call and remained closed. Many people, including those representing farmer, social, religious and business organisations, supported the bandh. We hope the government will stop the violence in Manipur," Vasava said.

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## Cong to field Chandy's family member from Puthuppalli

Kochi, Jul 23 (PTI):

Hours after speculation began on who would replace late Congress stalwart Oommen Chandy as the party candidate from the Puthuppally constituency he represented for 53 years, KPCC chief K Sudhakaran on Sunday said it would be someone from the veteran leader's family. Kerala Pradesh Congress Committee (KPCC) president and MP, Sudhakaran said that un-

officially discussions have begun on who should be the candidate and officially it would start a couple of days later.

However, there was no doubt that it would be someone from Chandy's family, he said while speaking to reporters in Kochi.

At the same time, the KPCC chief also said that the decision on who it should be would be decided by the family and not the party.

## 'Oppenheimer' scene involving Gita sparks row

New Delhi, Jul 23 (PTI):

A scene in "Oppenheimer", in which the titular character appears to have sex as he reads out verses from an ancient Sanskrit scripture, has irked a section of social media users, who claimed the lines are from the Bhagavad Gita and demanded the removal of the sequence from Christopher Nolan's latest film.

"Oppenheimer", a 180 minute-long sprawling biographical drama on the titular American theoretical physicist, opened in India on Friday to positive reviews and has reportedly amassed close to Rs 30 crore at the box office in two days.

Uday Mahurkar, Information Commissioner, Government of India, wrote an open letter to Nolan, terming the scene a "disturbing attack on Hinduism" and appealed to the director to remove the scene worldwide. "We urge, on behalf of billion Hindus and timeless tradition of lives being transformed by revered Geeta,



to do all that is needed to uphold dignity of their revered book and remove this scene from your film across world.

Should you choose to ignore this appeal it would be deemed as a deliberate assault on Indian civilisation. Eagerly await needful action (sic)" Mahurkar, founder of Save Culture Save India Foundation, wrote. J. Robert Oppenheimer, regarded as 'the father of the atom bomb', had learnt Sanskrit and was said to be influenced by the Bhagavad Gita.

## Cong sets up Pradesh Election Committee for poll-bound Chh'garh

New Delhi, Jul 23 (PTI):

The Congress on Sunday set up a 22-member Pradesh Election Committee for poll-bound Chhattisgarh with state unit chief Deepak Bajaj as its chairman.

Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel, Deputy CM T S Singhdeo, besides ministers in the state government Tamradhwaj Sahu and Mohan Markam, as well as Speaker of Chhattisgarh Legislative Assembly Charan Das Mahant are among its members.

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge has approved the proposal for the constitution of

**22 member committee....**  
Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel, Deputy CM T S Singhdeo, besides ministers in the state government Tamradhwaj Sahu and Mohan Markam, as well as Speaker of Chhattisgarh Legislative Assembly Charan Das Mahant are among its members. Ravindra Chaubey, Mohammad Akbar, Shivkumar Daharia, Anila Bhendiya, Jai Singh Agrawal, Guru Rudra Kumar, Dhanendra Sahu, Satyanarayan Sharma, Amitesh Shukla, Vikas Upadhyay, Rajesh Tiwari and Paras Chopra, are also part of the panel. President, Pradesh Mahila Congress; president, Pradesh Youth Congress; president, State NSUI and chief organiser, State Seva Dal, will also be part of the panel.

Pradesh Election Committee for ensuing Assembly Elections in Chhattisgarh-2023, a statement issued by the party said. Ravindra Chaubey, Mohammad Akbar, Shivkumar Daharia, Anila Bhendiya, Jai Singh Agrawal, Guru Rudra Kumar, Dhanendra Sahu,

Satyanarayan Sharma, Amitesh Shukla, Vikas Upadhyay, Rajesh Tiwari and Paras Chopra, are also part of the panel.

President, Pradesh Mahila Congress; president, Pradesh Youth Congress; president, State NSUI and chief organiser, State Seva Dal, will also be

part of the panel. The committee has been set up just days after the Pradesh Election Committees were formed in Rajasthan and Telangana last week.

On June 28, top leaders of the Congress had discussed the party's strategy and poll preparedness in Chhattisgarh, where assembly elections are due later this year.

The meeting, held at the AICC headquarters here, had been chaired by Congress president Kharge.

Kharge said the party members will work together to keep bringing change in the lives of the people of Chhattisgarh.

### RAMALINGAM MURDER CASE

## NIA carries out raids in TN, announces cash reward

New Delhi, Jul 23 (PTI):

The National Investigation Agency Sunday raided 21 locations in Tamil Nadu in a 2019 Popular Front of India (PFI) conspiracy case linked to the killing of a person allegedly for protesting against forcible conversions, an official said.

Ramalingam was brutally killed on February 5, 2019 in Paku Vinayakam Thoppu, Thanjavur, allegedly by members and office-bearers of the PFI, which conspired the at-

tack. The raids were conducted on the homes and residential premises of five absconding Proclaimed Offenders (POs) and suspected functionaries of the banned outfit including Nellai Mubarak, who is also the state president of the SDPI.

Others whose houses were raided included absconding accused Mohammed Ali Jinna, Abdul Majith, Bhurkhanudeen, Shahul Hameed and Nafeel Hassan, an NIA spokesperson said.

### IN SEARCH OF SAFE PLACE



Residents shift to a safer place from the flooded Karhera area during monsoon season, in Ghaziabad, Sunday.

### Toddler who fell into borewell rescued

Nalanda, Jul 23:

A three-year-old boy, who fell into a 40-ft borewell in Kul village in Bihar's Nalanda district on Sunday, was pulled out alive by National Disaster Response Force personnel. Teams from the NDRF, which were deployed at the site, led the rescue mission that lasted a few hours. "The boy has been rescued and is doing fine. He was rushed to a hospital. It took us about 5 hours to pull him out alive," Ranjeet Kumar, an NDRF officer, said. Officials informed further that the rescued 3-year-old was identified as Shivam Kumar. Further, according to officials, a farmer dug the borewell and left it uncovered, resulting in the incident. The children, who were playing with little Shivam before he fell into the borewell, informed his parents after which the rescue operation was launched.

### 'Households in COVID-19 vulnerable districts bought more gold during pandemic'

Ahmedabad, Jul 23 (PTI):

Households in India's COVID-19 vulnerable districts allocated more gold to their savings portfolio during the pandemic compared to households in other districts, as per a study conducted by the Indian Institute of Management Ahmedabad (IIMA). The shift towards gold is accompanied by a shift away from other financial assets and cash, as per the IIMA working paper titled 'Gold in household portfolios during a pandemic: Evidence from an emerging economy'. The study, published on IIMA's website on June 30, captured the variation in the intensity of the crisis

using two main indicators: COVID-19 cases per 1,000 population, and satellite-based night-time lights intensity. The survey covered 142 districts across 21 states.

India is the second-largest consumer of gold (in the form of jewellery) in the world and an average Indian household invests 11 per cent of its overall holdings in the precious metal, as per the study paper. It said addressing geographical inequalities in the availability of health facilities would assuage the panic among the public and could result in a reduced flight to safe assets such as gold. Furthermore, a better access to financial instru-

ments and institutions can reduce the preference to hoard gold during times of crisis, it observed.

"We find evidence that the portfolio allocation of households in COVID-19 vulnerable districts (CVD), the top-third of districts by COVID-19 cases per 1,000 population, is tilted towards gold during the pandemic compared to households in other districts," the paper said.

As per the study, the share of gold in household savings portfolios in the CVD districts is significantly higher by 6.9 percentage points compared to other districts, and is accompanied by a shift away from financial asset holdings by 4.1 percentage points.

### BRIBES FOR SURGERY

## CBI slaps case against Safdarjung neurosurgeon for amassing illicit assets

**Extorted crores from patients**

New Delhi, Jul 23 (PTI):

The CBI has filed a fresh FIR against Safdarjung Hospital neurosurgeon Manish Rawat, who was arrested in March in a bribery case, for allegedly amassing Rs 2.40 crore worth of illicit assets, officials said.

His wife Khushbu Rawat is also named in the FIR as an accused in the case, they said.

Officials said the doctor along with four of his confidants, including Deepak Khattar, proprietor of



Manish Rawat

Kanishka Surgical in New Delhi; and middlemen Avnesh Patel, Manish Sharma, and Kuldeep; was arrested in March for allegedly compelling patients to procure surgical equipment from a

**What CBI FIR revealed.....**  
The couple had Rs 3.39 crore, and their expenditure was Rs 1.16 crore, a CBI probe revealed. Jewellery worth Rs 69 lakh was also found in a locker. "During the course of the investigation, he (Manish Rawat) acquired assets worth Rs 4.63 crore, which includes five immovable properties worth Rs 3.47 crore in Noida (UP) and Haldwani (Uttarakhand), investments of about Rs 48 lakh in companies and firms in which Khushboo Rawat is one of the directors and partners, and he has invested Rs 17.5 lakh in insurance policies," the FIR alleged.

Jangpura shop at inflated prices in exchange for expedited surgery dates.



# Police conducts surprise checking at Vambay Awas Colony

# Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh celebrates 68th foundation day

- More than 13 suspects including habitual thieves, bootleggers, warrantees, goons and miscreants arrested
- Four stolen vehicles recovered



Central Chronicle News

**Bhilai, Jul 23:** Durg District Unit of Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh celebrated its 68th foundation day on Sunday. District President Mithlesh Vishwakarma and other office bearers and members gathered at BMS office in Akashganga Supela. They offered floral tributes at portraits of Maa Bharti and Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh founder Dattapant Thengadi.

On this occasion, BMS Durg district in-charge SM Pandey said that Bhartiya Mazdoor Sangh is the only organization which always fights for its demands with nationalist ideology. Former District President Vishnu Chandrakar said that the



Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh is a symbol of sacrifice, austerity and sacrifice. Autonomous State General Secretary Sharad Dubey said that BMS was established 68 years ago in 1955, which raised its voice against capitalism and today it is the biggest labour organization in the country.

Bhartiya Mazdoor Sangh Durg District Secretary Anjani Kumar Dwivedi shared his views

regarding the importance and dedication of the organization. Bhilai Ispat Mazdoor Sangh President Indramani Mishra, Rambriksha Yadav, Valmiki Singh of Contract Labour Union, Krishna Deshmukh, Vivek Ranganath and Maniraj Singh were present. District Secretary Anjani Kumar Dwivedi conducted the programme while Rambriksha Yadav proposed the vote of thanks.

Central Chronicle News

**Bhilai, Jul 23:** On Sunday, Police conducted surprise checking at Vambay Awas Colony in Urla, Durg after receiving regular complaints about the presence of suspicious people and criminal activities in the colony. Under the guidance of Superintendent of Police (Durg) Shalabh Kumar Sinha, and under the leadership of Additional Superintendent of Police (City) Sanjay

Kumar Dhruv, the surprise checking of houses was conducted by a team of over 275 officers / jawans of Durg Police.

Around 04:00 hrs on Sunday, eight gazetted officers, 18 police station in-charges and more than 250 jawans reached Vambay Awas Colony in Urla of Mohan Nagar Police Station limits. The police teams checked each and every house and questioned the residents.

Police caught more than 13 suspects including eight habitual thieves, three bootleggers, warrantees, goons and miscreants. Further investigation is being done by Mohan Nagar Police Station and other suspects are being arrested and brought to Mohan Nagar Police Station.

During the checking drive, many abandoned and unclaimed vehicles were found. Six unclaimed

vehicles have also been seized and brought to the police station. Later, police discovered that four of them were stolen vehicles.

During the surprise checking, the absconding accused of Section 307 of Police Station Mohan Nagar was also arrested from Vambay Awas Colony. Another absconding accused of Section 354 was also caught in this surprise checking.

City Superintendent of

Police Ashish Banchore, DSP (Crime) Rajeev Sharma, Deputy Superintendent of Police (IUCAW) Shilpa Sahu, Deputy Superintendent of Police Sanjay Pundhir, DSP Vinod Minj, DSP (Head Quarters) Mani Shankar Chandra, Reserve Inspector Ramesh Kumar Chandra and other station in-charges more than 250 police personnel conducted the surprise checking campaign.

# KHM School organises workshop on 'Happy Classroom'

# Youth of Durga Mandir Ward and Chhawani join Congress

Central Chronicle News

**Bhilai, Jul 23:** A workshop on "Happy Classroom" was organized for teachers under the 'Capacity Building Programme' at KH Memorial School. Vice Principal Maya Mishra of KPS Sunder Nagar and PGT VS Chitra of KPS Nehru Nagar were present as resource persons. 46 teachers from CBSE schools participated in the workshop. The students welcomed all the teachers with a welcome song.

School Principal and CBSE District Coordinator Vibha Jha said that this is a golden opportunity for all of us as the teachers will learn many things. Sharing her personal experience, she



said that students are not weak but they have some or the other skills. The responsibility of developing their capacity rests with the teachers. Everything remains under the control of the teachers. She asked all the teachers to try their best in this workshop. She also

thanked CBSE for giving her this opportunity. Resource Person Maya Mishra explained about new methods of teaching and said that first of all the atmosphere of the classroom should be pleasant. If the students and teachers are happy then the class can be taught

well and the students can also learn better. Every lesson should be taught in a creative way. Resource Person VS Chitra said that the feeling of fear in the minds of the students towards the teachers should be removed and the teachers must listen to the students carefully. Games were also organized during the workshop. The resource persons explained how we can teach the children in an entertaining manner.

In the end, Principal Vibha Jha, Director Nishchay Jha and Academic Director Srishti Jha thanked the visiting resource persons for giving such good information and motivated the teachers to teach with the new educational system.

Central Chronicle News

**Bhilai, Jul 23:** Influenced by the public welfare schemes of the Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel and the work of Bhilai Nagar MLA Devendra Yadav, hundreds of active members of BJP and youths of Ward 46 Durga Mandir Ward and Chhawani have joined Congress.

In the youth team of Durga Mandir Ward includes Sandeep Sahu, Surya Chowdhary, Prashant Kumar, Rajiv Singh, Shankar Chowdhary, Rakesh Verma, Suraj Mhate, Vikash Chowdhary, Chanchal Chowdhary (Gemini), Ravi Krishna, Adi Kanolja, Shubham Kanjoiya, Uday, Srinu, Vanish, Ashin Ali, Lalit



Kumar and others. Apart from this, on the occasion of Hareli festival, BJP members and office bearers left the BJP and joined Congress. 40 members of BJP from Ward 40 who have been actively participating in the party activities for years have

now joined the Congress. Those who joined Congress are Roopchandra Hirwani, Nutan Baghel, Laxman Sahu, Vicky Soni, Lal Singh Sahu, Vikas Sahni, Raju Vishwakarma, Vikram Verma, Rahul Dewangan, Sunil Jaina, Vijay Pathak, Puran

Prajapati, Gajendra Sahu and others. Women including Chandrakala Verma, Asha Sahu Yogeshwari Sahu, Sulochana Yadav, Usha Tamarkar, Lata Sahu, Saraswati Dewangan, Kusum Sahu, Chameli, Lalita, Shyama Sahu, also joined Congress during the Hareli festival organized in Ward 40/41 Chhawani Shramik Nagar. MLA Devendra Yadav made them join the Congress family and welcomed them with flower bouquets.

MLA Yadav said that the aim of all of us is to work for the welfare and development of the people of the state. Public interest schemes of the government have reached the public.

# B Ed students of St Thomas College excel in university result

# One-day Family Planning Health Awareness Workshop organised

# Bhilai Steel Plant organises free Medical camp at Village Kamkasur



**Bhilai, Jul 23:** Students of B Ed (SEM-IV) Session 2022-23 came out with flying colours in the results declared recently by Hemchandra Yadav University, Durg. 92 students secured first division out of the 94 appeared and 25 students passed with distinction. Sneha B Mathew stood first in college by securing 80.8% followed by Merina Elizer and Priyanka Yadu with 80.6% in the second position. Madhusmita Sahu secured third position with 78.8%. Manisha stood fourth with 78.4%. Milcah George and Soumya secured fifth position with 78.2%. Jyoti

Chandrakar stood sixth with 78%, Sushma Mishra secured seventh position with 77.8%, Babisha P John and Madhulika secured eighth position with 77.4%. Ananya Tiwari and Vijay secured ninth position with 76.8%. Manjeet Kujur, Renuka Xalxo and Shruti Upadaya secured tenth position with 76.6%. Merina Elizer secured the top position in the B Ed Batch 2021-23 with 80.35%. Administrator of the college Fr Dr Joshi Varghese, Principal Dr MG Roymon, Head of the department Dr Sheeja Thomas and all faculty members congratulated the students for their commendable performance in University examination.

Central Chronicle News

**Bhilai, Jul 23:** In consonance with the World Population Day 2023 on July 11, 2023, the 'Population Stabilization Fortnight' is being observed by the Government of India's National Family Welfare Scheme throughout the country from July 11 to July 24, 2023.

SAIL-Bhilai Steel Plant's Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Department, in association with Jawaharlal Nehru Hospital & Research Centre (JLNHRC), Bhilai, organized a one-day 'Family Planning Health Awareness Workshop' on July 21, 2023 at the 'Kaushal Vikas Kendra', CSR Department Complex, Sector-5, Bhilai. Dr Prabhdeep Kaur, ACO (M&HS)



and Dr Alka Tripathi were the Special Guests and Keynote speakers of the workshop. Shivrajan Nair, GM (CSR) was also present on this occasion along with CSR Departmental staff. The workshop was initiated with lighting of the ceremonial

lamp. As many as 60 women, including housewives and working-women from Bhilai and adjoining areas attended the workshop and were benefited by it. Addressing the gathering Dr Prabhdeep Kaur, spoke on population awareness and motivated

the women attendees to adopt family planning in their lives. Dr Kaur and Dr Alka Tripathi also shared their valuable insights on women's health.

At the outset, welcome address was delivered by Shivrajan Nair, GM (CSR), while Rajni Rajak, CSR Assistant completed the programme. The entire CSR staff including Sushil Kamde, Sr Mgr (CSR) and Vivek Mishra, Asst Mgr., played a significant role in organising the one-day 'Family Planning Health Awareness Workshop' successfully along with, V Lakshmi, Sita Sinha, Anjani Dwivedi, Budhelal, Ashutosh Soni, Saramma, Dharmendra Anju, Maya Verma, and Parvinder Kaur.

Central Chronicle News

**Bhilai, Jul 23:** SAIL- Bhilai Steel Plant, conducts several public welfare activities as part of its organizational social responsibility towards the community in and around its areas of operations. The Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Department of the Plant organized a one-day free Health Camp, near Dulki Mines at Village Kamkasur, on July 21, 2023. A total of 35 villagers from village Kamkasur, including 12 men, 08 women and 15 Children, availed free health services at the day long Health Camp and free medicines were distributed to them.

The Medical Team from CSR department, volunteered their services by conducting health check-up along with Blood Pressure and Blood Sugar diagnosis of the villagers present during the one-day Health Camp at village Kamkasur. It is noteworthy that Health Camp is one of the prime initiatives, through which BSP's CSR Department has contributed substantially towards Public Health & Medicine. The CSR Department of Bhilai Steel Plant, conducts health camps on a regular basis in the adjoining areas or mines, with the aim of ensuring adequate Medical & Health facilities to the communities within which it works.

# SSV-X bags 1st Prize in Inter-School Quiz Competition

# Satyawan Nayak stands first in the Narakas level competition

Central Chronicle News

**Bhilai, Jul 23:** Sri Sankara Vidyalaya Sector-X Bhilai has yet again proved its mettle in the field of academics & GK by clinching the coveted 1st Prize in the prestigious Inter-School Quiz Competition held at Delhi Public School, Maroda Sector Bhilai.

The competition, which witnessed participation from numerous schools of Bhilai & Durg, was conducted in a gripping format with two rounds - preliminary elimination and a thrilling final round, further divided into four segments: Foundation, Echoes, Windows, and Rapid Fire.

The enthusiasm and intellectual prowess exhibited by the students of Sri Sankara Vidyalaya were



commendable throughout the event, showcasing their dedication towards knowledge and learning.

The winning team, comprising of two brilliant young minds, Suyash Kapse from Class XI and Parth Jangde from Class X, demonstrated exceptional

teamwork, critical thinking, and quick reflexes. Their comprehensive knowledge across various subjects helped them secure the 1st position in this highly competitive quiz competition.

Bipin Deshmukh, the Principal of Sri Sankara

Vidyalaya, expressed his immense pleasure in the students' achievement, stating, "We are elated to witness the triumph of our students at the Inter-School Quiz Competition. This victory is a testament to their hard work, determination, and thirst for knowledge.

We believe in fostering a holistic educational environment that nurtures students' potential, and this achievement validates our commitment to academic excellence."

The Secretary of Sri Sankara Educational Society S Swaminathan and entire management members of SSES rejoiced this remarkable accomplishment and wished gratitude to the entire School Family.

Central Chronicle News

**Bhilai, Jul 23:** Under the aegis of Bhilai Durg Official Language Implementation Committee, UCO Bank organised Narakas level picture description competition under Amrit Mahotsav of Independence. In which more than 50 institutions of Durg Bhilai participated. In this competition, a picture related to the Amrit Mahotsav of Independence was given, looking at this picture, the participant was asked to write an article describing the subject shown in the picture.

Satyawan Nayak, former senior manager of public relations department of SAIL Bhilai Steel Plant and senior litterateur, has brought laurels to Bhilai Steel Plant by winning the



Satyawan Nayak

first position at Narakas level by presenting an excellent article in the picture description competition. The award was presented at a function organized at Sector-1 branch of UCO Bank.

It is to be known that Satyawan Nayak, rich in versatility, has won more than 700 awards so far. This includes many interna-

tional, national, and state level awards. His works have been published in prestigious magazines and newspapers of the country. His compositions and articles have also been broadcast by Doordarshan and All India Radio.

Two technical books written by Nayak on Safety in Steel Industry and Environment in Steel Industry have been awarded by the Ministry of Steel, Government of India. Apart from this, Nayak has been invited to deliver training and lectures on various subjects in more than 30 prestigious companies and institutions in the country. Nayak has been honoured by the Prime Minister, Chief Ministers, Governors, and various Central and State Ministers.

## OBITUARY

### Deepak Kumar Sarkar



**Bhilai:** Retired BSP executive Deepak Kumar Sarkar left for heavenly abode at the age of 80 years on Sunday. Funeral procession was taken out from his residence situated at Quarter no 1A, Street 32, Sector 01 and last rites of the mortal remains were performed at Ramnagar Muktidham. He was the father of Saumen Sarkar, Sauren Sarkar and father-in-law of Tapsi Sarkar and Madhumita Sarkar.



## Baghel calls upon youth to enter politics



**Raipur, Jul 23:** Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel today participated in a 'Bhet-Mulakat' program with the youth at the Indoor Stadium, Budhapara Raipur. At the beginning of the program, youth Someshwar Ganjir from Dhamtari spoke enthusiastically on the topic of 'Sapno ka Chhattisgarh' with verses from Rigveda. Baghel was so pleased with the rousing speech that he called Someshwar near him, hugged him and blessed him. The Chief Minister applauded Someshwar in a stadium packed with youth.

Engineering student Shagun Srivastava asked the Chief Minister 'what efforts your government is making to bring youth into politics'. On this, the Chief Minister said 'the more the youth of the state enter politics, the more people will get the leadership of the educated youth and our state will move forward'. The Chief Minister called upon the youth to enter politics. Bhujesh Kumar of Dhamtari asked the Chief Minister about the problems he faced during his studies. The Chief

Minister told in detail that in his childhood he used to see the problems of roads, electricity and drains in the village. 'I used to think that only the MLA solves this problem. It also crossed my mind that one day I would also become an MLA. After continuous struggle I have reached this position today. I try my best that people don't have any kind of problem', said the Chief Minister.

The Chief Minister directly interacted with a large number of youths who had come from different areas of Raipur division. Youth raised their points in front of the Chief Minister. The Chief Minister not only listened to them but also made many important announcements on the demand of the youth on the spot.

On the demand of the youth, the Chief Minister announced posting of dentists in rural areas for two years, starting PG course in Government Girls College Dhamtari, appointment of physiotherapists in health centers, provision of hostels in physiotherapy college and recruitment of teachers in Chhattisgarhi language.

Youth presented their thoughts, poems and speeches on 'Mere Sapno Ka Chhattisgarh'



(Chhattisgarh of my dreams) before the Chief Minister. Pranav Kumar, a student preparing for PSC, talked about releasing the mark sheet of preliminary examination and taking appropriate measures for transparency. The Chief Minister assured to implement it. Dharmesh Nayak said that he did tattoo art course. He demanded that Mahadev Ghat be declared as an art center to encourage tattoo artists. On this the Chief Minister talked about taking action after considering this suggestion. Bhojraj Dhangar, a student of Indira Kala Sangeet Vishwavidyalaya, urged to appoint trained art teachers at the school level. According to Baghel



now colleges affiliated to the Music University are being opened, after that it will definitely be imple-

Sankutala Sahu, Mrs. Anita Yogesh Sharma Mineral Development Corporation Chairman

### CM promises free bus travel

Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel Sunday promised free bus travel for students if the Congress is voted back to power in the upcoming Assembly elections. During the 'Bhet Mulakat' interactive session with the youth at Balbir Singh Juneja Indoor Stadium in Raipur, a student named Devendra Satnami from Kasdol requested free bus travel for college students. Baghel replied that it was a good suggestion and would definitely include it in the Congress manifesto for the Assembly elections later this year. Around 11,000 students from the Raipur region, including the Dhamtari, Gariaband, Raipur, Balodabazar-Bhatpara and Mahasamund districts, participated in the session. Such interactions will also take place in the Bastar, Surguja, Durg and Bilaspur regions, covering 28 districts.

mented at the school level as well. Chhattisgarhi folk singer Sushri Aaru Sahu, Rishi Walia's band Indian Rollers and Rahul Nayak's band performed in the program.

Also present on the occasion were Tribal Department Minister Mohan Markam, Parliamentary Secretary Vikas Upadhyay, MLA and Chairman of Chhattisgarh Housing Board Kuldeep Juneja, , MLA Dr Laxmi Dhruv, Ms.

Gerish Dewangan, President of Building Construction Workers Board Sunny Agrawal, Chief Secretary Amitabh Jain, Additional Chief Secretary Subrat Sahoo, Secretary to Chief Minister Siddharth Komal Pardeshi, Secretary for Sports and Youth Welfare NN Ekka, Raipur Commissioner Sanjay Alang, Collector Dr Narendra Sarveshwar Bhure and other public representatives.

### SELFIE AT KHARUN



With heavy rainfalls over the last few days, the devotees of Lord Shiva through the banks of Kharun River on Sunday for a selfie.

## Amit Shah reviews BJP's poll preparations in Raipur

**Raipur, Jul 23:** Union Home Minister Amit Shah arrived here on Saturday evening for reviewing the Bharatiya Janata Party's poll preparations, a party leader said. Shah held a meeting with BJP leaders for two and a half hours on late Saturday night. Several sections of people met Shah on Sunday morning at the Kushabhau Thackeray complex. People thanked the Home Minister for including 12 castes in the tribe and returning the money of Sahara India family.



Chhattisgarh BJP State BJP chief Arun Sao and other party MLAs and leaders greeted him at the airport.

It has been learnt that Shah gave victory mantra to party leaders and workers. Local leaders had dinner in the presence of Amit Shah and then came out one by one. Shah is learnt to have closed-door meeting with Arun Sao, former CM Dr Raman

Singh, Chhattisgarh BJP in-charge Om Mathur, co-in charge Nitin Nabin and leader of opposition Narayan Chandel.

State BJP president Arun Sao has announced the opening of two Sahara Sahayata Kendras in each district of the state in the presence of Shah. According to him, these centers will help the Sahara victims to get their amount. Shah fine tuned the party's preparations for the assembly elections which are due by year-end, he added. This was Shah's fourth visit to the Congress-ruled Chhattisgarh this year. After being in power for 15 years, the BJP suffered a massive defeat in the 2018 assembly elections at the hands of Congress.

## E-KYC of all members of ration card till 31st July

**Raipur, Jul 23:** Under the "One Nation, One Ration Card Scheme" 100 percent e-KYC process for the beneficiaries of the National Food Security Act will be done by July 31, 2023 on the instructions of the Government of India. For the full implementation of 'One Nation, One Ration Card Scheme', it is necessary to authenticate the Aadhaar information of all the members of the ration card. Problem cropped up in food grain distribution due to incorrect registration of Aadhaar details of the beneficiaries in the ration cards and non-authentication of Aadhaar

information. Authentication of Aadhaar information is being done for e-KYC of beneficiaries whose Aadhaar is registered in the departmental database. Officials of the Food Department said that e-KYC facility is available in the e-pos equipment provided to government fair price shops operating in the state. The process of e-KYC is completely free. For the action of e-KYC, the head of the ration card holder and all the members registered in the ration card will reach the government fair price shop with their respective Aadhaar numbers.

## NAAC team returns after evaluating Pt RSU

● University to get grade in August

Central Chronicle News

**Raipur, Jul 23:** The National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) team evaluated at Pt Ravi Shankar Shukla University for three days and returned after filing its report. On the last day, the team members saw the Gyan Sarovar in the morning and planted saplings there. The team members visited hostels and schools of studies for evaluation.

According to university officials the response of the NAAC team seemed to be positive. The university management is expecting A+ grading this time.



For three days, the team evaluated on the basis of its parameters. The members of the NAAC team have met professors, staff, students, parents, alumni and gathered their feedbacks as well.

Information was collected about the facilities being provided to the students. There is a shortage of staff in the university. To enhance the quality of education, there should

be sufficient regular staff, which the university does not have. Apart from this, the university is also behind in the field of research.

The university management recently received a grant of Rs 10 crore for research, but this grant has not been included in the evaluation. On this basis, the university has received only Rs 5 crore in five years only for research. Apart from this, the NAAC team has described the infrastructure of the university as very good.

Pt Ravi Shankar University was assessed by NAAC six years back in 2016. At that time the university got A grade. The NAAC grade of the university was over in

2020, but the NAAC evaluation could not be done due to COVID pandemic. Currently the university does not have any grades.

Which grade the university will get will be decided in August. The university management was preparing for the last several months for good NAAC grading. To test their preparations, mock drill was also done twice.

The university management had tested its preparations by calling the professor of Lucknow University, who had achieved NAAC's best grading A++. Suggestions were also sought from him to get good grading. Based on the suggestions, the schools of studies had prepared their presentation.

## Girl student cheated of Rs 72000

**Raipur, Jul 23:** Unidentified fraud cheated a girl student of Rs 72000 under the pretext of selling cameras on Facebook. Telibandha police registered offence on the complaint of the girl.

Mansi Yadav (21), who lives near Krishak Nagar Sheelta Mandir of village Jora, told police that on July 2, she saw an advertisement for the sale of old cameras on Facebook and she talked about buying by sending a WhatsApp message to the mobile number given in it.

The mobile holder told his name as Bablu Kumar, resident of Nagpur, Maharashtra. He told the price of the camera to be sixty thousand rupees. On this she agreed to buy. Bablu first asked Rs 500 for the courier and then sent his Paytm scanner. The girl

sent him the money. Next day he called again and asked for Rs 5,500 more, promising delivery through courier in one hour.

Mansi told that she also sent the remaining money. After this, a young man called as a courier and told that the delivery has left and delivery charges will be Rs 12,500. This payment was also done through phone-pay. After this, Rs 8,100 was taken in the name of GST and insurance. After some time she was told that bill was being prepared.

She was told that bill went wrong as she made a lump sum payment of Rs 8,100, for which she will have to pay another Rs 16,500 to correct it. Mansi told that she also sent this amount. After this neither the courier came nor did she get her money back.

## STTP in NIT on 'Emerging Trends and Challenges in Biomechanics and Biomaterials'

Central Chronicle News

**Raipur, Jul 23:** National Institute of Technology (NIT) Raipur's Department of Biomedical Engineering is organizing a Short-Term Training Program (STTP) entitled 'Emerging Trends and Challenges in Biomechanics and Biomaterials' in virtual mode from 25th to 30th July 2023. Dr. N. V. Ramana Rao, Director, NIT Raipur is the Chief Patron with Dr. Prabhat Diwan, Dean (Research & Consultancy) and Dr. Subhojit Ghosh, Professor In-charge, Continuing Education Cell as Patrons. Dr. Bikesh Kumar Singh, Head of Department, Biomedical Engineering will be supervising the program as the Chairman. Dr. Nishant Kumar Singh, Assistant Professor, Biomedical Engineering and Dr. M. Marieswaran, Assistant Professor, Biomedical

Engineering are the program coordinators.

This program aims to explore the cutting-edge advancements in the synthesis, surface modification, processing, treatment, characterization and tribological aspects of Biomaterials, and highlighting the advancements in the field of Biomechanics; with the objective of imparting knowledge and providing comprehensive training to a diverse group of participants. Renowned experts from various organizations are set to deliver lectures during the program.

It will also include the accurate simulation of physiological phenomena occurring in the human musculoskeletal, cardiovascular, and dental systems using advanced computational tools.

Several vital and relevant topics like Bio-Tribology, Bio-Polymers, Bio-Corrosion, Dental Biomechanics, Solid

Modelling and FEA, and Sports Biomechanics are to be covered in this program.

Hands-on sessions & demonstrations on Reverse Engineering: 3D Modelling and Optimization, Assembling and FEA of Implants, Additive Manufacturing-FDM 3D Printing, and Material Characterizations using Universal Testing Machine will also be conducted.

Upon the conclusion of the program, the participants shall be able to develop the skills necessary to synthesize and characterize biomaterials, design, and develop 3D models, and perform computational analyses for biomechanical and fluidic behaviour of implants and scaffolds.

This STTP is targeted for the undergraduates, postgraduates, Ph.D. students, young faculty members/researchers from academia and industry.

## CM pays tribute to Bisahu Das Mahant

● On his death anniversary

**Raipur, Jul 23:** Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel paid tribute to the former Minister of undivided Madhya Pradesh, the late Bisahu Das Mahant, on his death anniversary at his residential office today. The Chief Minister said that Mahantji's entire life was dedicated to public service. Mahantji has contributed to the development of the state as a legislator and minister in undivided Madhya Pradesh. He accomplished the work directed towards the betterment of people through agriculture, irrigation, and the construction of roads.

Baghel said that Bisahu Das Mahant has significantly helped in bestowing global fame on Kosa and weaving art famous in the state. In view of this valuable contribution, the Chhattisgarh government has decided



to award the best weavers of the state every year in the name of the late Bisahu Das Mahant. The state government has renamed the Government Medical College Korba the Late Bisahu Das Mahant Memorial Medical College Korba in honor of Mahant ji. Baghel said that the state government is moving forward in the direction of giving a new dimension to the legacy of development left behind by our forefathers. Gerish Dewangan, Chairman, State Mineral Development Corporation, was also present on this occasion.

## Light to medium showers lash capital city



● Weather to remain like this; heavy showers after 25th

**Raipur, Jul 23:** The weather change in Chhattisgarh is witnessing drastic changes as sometimes there is open Sun and few minutes later the dark clouds hovering on the top and it starts raining all of sudden. With sudden change in weather from hot sun to sultry weather condition, it is posing lots of problems to denizens. In some places it is raining heavily and on Sunday also it kept raining in intervals and by afternoon it started rain-

ing heavily all over the city. Many a low lying areas in city were inundated with knee-deep water and at many places there was power cut, which again posed problems to denizens.

In the morning hours the showers were light to moderate in capital city, but by afternoon it started raining heavily along with thunder-showers. This led to water-logging at many places in capital city and in last 48 hours, the city witnessed around 3 cm rainfall.

IMD expert HP Chandra informed that at present there is constant change in weather conditions and

this type of condition is going to continue. From July 25, there are chances of a system developing atop the Bay of Bengal and which can lead to good showers. About the next 24 hrs weather predictions, Chandra informed that two monsoon system are existing atop -Jaisalmer-Diya, Ratlam, Betul, Chandrapur, Kondagaon, Gopalpur, and then other one is in the South-East atop North Andaman-Nicobar sea at about 2.1 km above. So this may lead to light to medium showers in many districts in the state and heavy to very-heavy rainfall at one or two places.



## Students' Union formed in Allons Public School



Bemetara, Jul 23:

An Election of students' union was conducted on 22nd July, 2023. The interested representatives filled the nomination forms for the desired posts on 20th July, 2023. It was examined by the members of the election committee and the list was prepared. After which time was given for withdrawal of names on 21st July 2023. Again, the final list of candidates was prepared and they were allotted the election symbols, then the election process started. The candidates tried their best to convince the voters' stu-

dent by making tempting promises to vote in their favours. A day before polling day on 21st July 2023, candidates were instructed to remain calm under the code of conduct.

The contribution of Arun Kumar Pal, KK Mohanty, MK Chauhan, K Thakur, P Nagamani, P. Patle, Balbir Singh, Talina and Umesh Kale in the smooth conduct of the said election process was commendable.

The following students were unanimously elected for the various responsibilities. Rupanshu Kumar Anand - Head Boy (XII Science), Mehul Goswami



- Vice Head Boy (XI Commerce), Niharika Yadu - Head Girl (XII Science), Aditi Sharma - Vice Head Girl (XI Science), Geetanjali Yadav - Discipline Secretary Girl (XII Science), Arun Kumar Parte - Discipline Secretary Boy (XII Science), Samant Nishad - Sports Captain Boy (XII Commerce), Anjali Singh - Sports Captain Girl (XI Science), Reman Lal - Cultural Secretary Boy (XII Commerce), Ragini Sonkar - Cultural Secretary Girl (XII Commerce), Harshit Chhabra - Mess Secretary Boy (XII Commerce),

Pratima Thakur - Mess Secretary Girl (XII Science), Akash Verma - Hospitality Secretary Boy (XII Science) and Sweta Gaikward - Hospitality Secretary Girl (XII Science).

The most popular nominated leaders were the head boy named Rupanshu Anand and the head girl named Niharika Yadu by the choice of the students and teachers. The most popular elected leader was Aditi Sharma who defeated her counterpart with more than 50% votes. The head boy and the head girl expressed their faiths in other students. The election was

based on the students and national ideologies. Dr. Satyajit Hota, Principal congratulated the elected students and other students for participating in this election. He said that the election will develop the democratic feelings among the students. It will develop the quality of statesmanship in their future life. He also advised the students to fulfill their duties with Unity, Integrity & Fraternity.

The elected students were congratulated by Kamaljeet Arora - Chairman, Pushkal Arora - Director, Sunil Sharma - Director and teachers.

## 100 hospitals of Ch'garh gets NQAS certificate

Health services get better

Raipur, Jul 23:

In the last five years, 100 hospitals of Chhattisgarh got National Quality Assurance Standard Certificate. The quality of health services is continuously improving in government hospitals. National Quality Assurance Standard Certificate has been awarded by the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare to 100 hospitals of the state for providing excellent health-care and better treatment to the patients. These include district hospitals, community health centers, primary health centers and sub-health centers from Balrampur to Sukma. Many urban primary health centers of the state have also been awarded quality certificates. As of April 1, 2018, there was not a single hospital in Chhattisgarh that had received the National Quality Assurance Standard Certificate. For the first time in the year



2018-19, six hospitals of the state were awarded the National Quality Assurance Standard Certificate by the Union Health Ministry. After this, certification of 43 hospitals was done in 2021-22 and 36 in 2022-23. Nine hospitals have received this certificate so far in the current financial year 2023-24. Quality certificates have also been issued to four hospitals of the state for excellent health services related to child health under the Muskaan programme. Under the leadership of Deputy Chief Minister and Health and Family Welfare Minister TS Singhdeo, new initiatives are being taken con-

tinuously for the strengthening of health services in the state. Along with strengthening the infrastructure of the hospitals, the availability of medical equipment and adequate medicines is being ensured. Adequate human resources are also being mobilized through continuous recruitment of doctors and other medical staff under the Health Department and the National Health Mission. With these, people are getting quality health facilities in government hospitals. After evaluating the quality of health services, the Union Health Ministry has awarded NQS certificate to 100 hospitals here.

## Principal allegedly molests students

Dongargarh, Jul 23:

The case of molestation of schoolgirls by a teacher of Higher Secondary School located in Gram Panchayat Bhandarpur of Khairagarh development block has reached the police post Mohara. After the statement of the victim girl students, FIR action has to be taken against the accused teacher and according to the information received, the accused teacher was trying to molest the schoolgirls on the pretext of giving lift.



In the statement, two girl students have made serious allegations against Rajesh Thakur, the lecturer and in-charge of the National Service Scheme. Other students in their complaint have also told in their written complaint that there is no facility of sanitary pads along with

shortage of subject teachers. Meanwhile BEO Khairagarh BEO Neelam Rajput said that it has been asked the in-charge principal to get an FIR lodged in the police station. After registering the case, the concerned report will be sent to DPL and further departmental action will be taken from the higher office.

### What officer says:

1. FIR will be processed, says Neelam Rajput, BEO - Khairagarh.
2. Investigation is being done, Mohara Outpost in-charge Peelu Ram Mandavi.
3. The investigation is on; FIR is being registered against the accused teacher Principal Higher Secondary School - Gram Panchayat Bhandarpur

## BJP protest against fake caste certificates and recruitments



**Mungeli, Jul 23:** BJP Workers here burnt the effigy of Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel at the local Daupara Chowk and on this occasion, District President Dr. Shivkumar Banjara said Congress Government did not take action against fake caste certificates and ban on local recruitment. The effigy of Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel was burnt at Baba Guru Ghasidas Chowk in Daupara. On this occasion, District BJP

President Shailesh Pathak told that the Scheduled Caste Morcha was forced to protest by the youth in Raipur against the Bhupesh Baghel's Congress government for not taking any action on the fake caste certificates of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in Chhattisgarh despite the fact that they were found to be fake in the investigation. District President of Aja Morcha, Dr. Shivkumar Banjara attacked the

Congress state government in the matter saying that fake caste certificates, local recruitment and reservation and said that the anti-Scheduled Caste, Anti-Scheduled Tribe face of the present Congress government has been exposed. BJP Yuva Morcha District President Tarun Khandekar said that the Congress government is torturing the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. A large number of workers including L Patre, Tarachand Tandon, Jagmohan Miri, Jitendra Bhaskar, Santosh Jangde, Asif Khokhar, Shesh Narayan Mohle, Praveen, Rajeshwar Tandon, Nanes, and Ashok Khande were present.

## Delegation of 'Atithi Shikshak Vidhya Mitan Sangh' meets CM



Raipur, Jul 23:

A delegation of 'Atithi Shikshak Vidhya Mitan Sangh' met Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel at his assembly office on Saturday. The delegation expressed their gratitude to Chief Minister Baghel for increasing the salary of guest teachers. The delegation said that there is a wave of happiness among the guest teachers across the state.

The state government has increased the salary of guest teachers by Rs.2000 per month. Higher Education Minister Umesh Patel, Chairman of State Mineral Development Corporation Girish Dewangan, President of Atithi Shikshak Vidhya Mitan Sangh Anju Verma, Tulsi Kashyap, Dharmendra Vaishnav, Bhavna Dubey, Rakesh Rai and others were present.

## Dinesh appointed President Rotary Club

Jagdalpur, Jul 23:

The 52nd oath taking ceremony of Rotary Club Jagdalpur was held at Rotary Hall, Jagdalpur. Bastar IG Sunder Raj P was the chief guest of the swearing-in ceremony. Session 2023 -2024 Rotarian Dinesh Kagot was administered oath for the post of Rotary President, Dr. Manoj Thomas as Secretary; for Innerwheel Club Mamta Singh Rana as President; Dr. Sarita Thomas as Secretary, Rotaract Club President Gaurav Iyengar and Secretary Shubham Soni and Interact Club President Aditya Pratap Bose and Tulsi Kashyap as Secretary were sworn in.



of the Club in the programme. Rotarian Secretary Nikhil Dewan gave his post and pin to Secretary Rotarian Dr. Manoj Thomas.

Session 2022-2023 President of Innerwheel Club Usha Gondi handed over the post to the current President Mamta Singh Rana by giving her pin and charter. Dr. Sarita Thomas got the responsibility of the post of secretary.

Praising the work of Rotary Club, chief guest Bastar IG Sunder Raj P said that definitely Rotary Club is playing an important role in the social sector and for which they deserves to be congratulated. Along with this, important issues like distribution of safety material to cataract patients, tree plantation and chess competition were discussed through the platform.

Praising the activities of Innerwheel Club, President said that by doing true service to the society, they have created an important place for themselves.

Rotary Club President Dinesh Kagot expressed his gratitude to all the guests while presenting the welcome speech. Highlighting the activities of the Rotary Club, the Innerwheel Club President

Mamta Singh Rana said that International Innerwheel organization has completed 100 years of service to humanity. 'I am proud to say that this year our Innerwheel Club Jagdalpur District ISO Meet is going to be held in the month of September'. It is a privilege for our club. With our creative works, we will take the pride of Innerwheel Club to new heights.

Secretary Nikhil Dewan gave information about various activities done throughout the year. The programme was conducted by Rotarian Vivek Soni and Gratitude Club Secretary Dr. Manoj Thomas. Apart from the members of Rotary, Innerwheel, Rotaract and Interest Club, dignitaries of Jagdalpur city, journalists were also present in the programme.

## BJP burnt effigy of Narayanpur MLA, Bastar MP

Jagdalpur, Jul 23:

Putting a question mark on the silence of BJP local Congress MLA Chandan Kashyap and Bastar MP Deepak Baj regarding the death of tribal girl Kavita Kashyap of Bhanpuri police station area of the district, effigies of Narayanpur MLA Chandan Kashyap and Congress President Deepak Baj were burnt at Bhanpuri main square today. During this, a large number of BJP leaders and workers were present. BJP's Santosh Baghel said that BJP will fight for the justice of tribal daughters. He said that it is the responsibility of the Congress government, that Bakel of Narayanpur



assembly and other tribal girls of Kongera are also hostage. Free them from the clutches of brokers and hand them over to their relatives. District Panchayat members Nirdesh Dewan and Khitesh Maurya said that the Congress government had given 50 lakh compensation amount of Chhattisgarh's money for

the incidents in Uttar Pradesh. Now how long will the MLA-MP remain silent on the death of local daughters. Maurya said that unless proper compensation is given to the family members and strict action is not taken against the accused, the MLA's residence will be gheraoed and chakka-jam will be done in the coming days.

## Absence of speed limit sign causing accidents



**Rajim, Jul 23:** The road widening work from Amapara to Pitaiband road in the city went on continuously for the last 3 years, and was completed in January 2023 this year, but due to road widening and absence of speed limit signs many accidents are happening. A speed break-

er was made near Basant Kirana Store in front of former MP's residence and a breaker was also built near the Hanuman temple but the PWD department has made breakers, but has not shown interest in installing traffic signs to alert the passers-by. Bikers who are driving

at speed fall prey to the speed breakers height. In the last two months, more than two dozen people have fallen and got injured. It is notable that wherever the department installs speed breakers, they put the sign of speed breaker at some distance in advance, so that people become aware.

It is important to mention that the sub-divisional office of the PWD department is situated at a distance of about one kilometer from the accident spot and this kind of negligence is being done in the city roads itself, due to which people are becoming victims of accidents. The people of the area have demanded the installation of sign boards and symbols at the roads at the earliest.

## Congress refutes BJP's baseless 15 points

**Arang, Jul 23:** In answer to an attempt by BJP members in tarnishing the image of MLA and Cabinet Minister Dr. Shivkumar Dahria a joint memorandum was sent by Block and City Congress Committee Arang and Block Congress Chandkhuri, denying the baseless allegations of the Bharatiya Janata Party. Block Congress office bearers told that under the leadership of Dr. Shivkumar Dahria in Arang assembly constituency, historic development works are being done in the rural areas including the urban areas of Arang. The people of the region have seriously compared the overall development work done in four and a half years of Congress rule as compared to the tenure of 15 years of BJP

rule; there is an atmosphere of Congress coming back to power in the entire region. Therefore, to expose this disgusting and condemnable act of BJP, a memorandum was handed over to the Sub-Divisional Officer, demanding appropriate action as per rules on their false allegations.

Prominent among those who gave the memorandum are Komal Singh Sahu President Block Congress Arang, Bharti Dewangan President City Congress Arang, Dinesh Thakur President Block Congress Chandkhuri, Chandrashekar Chandrakar President Napa Arang, Keshari Sahu District President Rural Women Congress Raipur Rural, Bindu Koshale, Inderkumar Sahu and many others.

## BJP protest against Minister Rudra Guru

Ahiwara, Jul 23:

Accusing the local MLA and Cabinet Minister Rudra Guru of neglecting the problems of public interest in Ahiwara assembly constituency, workers of Bharatiya Janata Party, handed over a memorandum to the District Collector.

Ravi Shankar Singh, the coordinator of the program and member of the state executive committee, told that even after being the minister of the Public Health Engineering Department in the area, the people here are not getting the benefits of the Jal Jeevan Mission. Also in the program Present Chief Speaker, State President of Scheduled Castes, Naveen Markandeya said that



today the condition of roads in Ahiwara Assembly Constituency is very dilapidated whereas former MLA of Ahiwara Assembly Constituency, Rajmahant Sawla Ram Dahare, said that today many villagers do not recognize the MLA of this area, local people are looking for ministers to tell their problems. Ahiwara assembly in-charge Ram

Kumar Sahu, former minister Jageshwar Sahu, Ahiwara Municipality President Natwar Tamarkar, Jamul Municipality President Ishwar Thakur, BJYM State General Secretary Upkar Chandrakar, Ahiwara Mandal President Liman Sahu, along with other BJP workers were present in the program.



## Musra school empowers students with vocational subjects



Musra, Jul 23:

The Government Higher Secondary School in Musra, nestled within the Dongargarh Development Block, has taken a remarkable step by introducing two vocational subjects - Health Care and Media & Entertainment - starting from the academic year 2016-17. Aimed at students from 9th to 12th grade, this initiative allows 40 students each year to enroll in these vocational courses, while excluding

Sanskrit as a subject, thereby enabling them to study a total of six subjects, including five academic and one vocational subject. The Government of India has been keenly focused on enhancing health care awareness among students through vocational education. This progressive move seeks to equip students with essential skills to tackle potential health-related challenges in the future and efficiently offer care and assistance when required. Besides, India currently

grapnels with pressing issues of hunger and unemployment, necessitating the implementation of skill-oriented vocational education. Enrolling in the Health Care course exposes students to a practical approach, comprising 70% of the curriculum, complemented by 30% theoretical aspects. Students engage in practical sessions conducted at guest lectures and primary health centers, providing them with firsthand experience in hospitals and health centers, thus reap-

ing direct benefits. Through these practical encounters, students gain insight into the ethical responsibilities and professional discipline upheld by health care practitioners, nurturing them to become successful General Duty Assistants and Assistant Health Workers in the future. Sanjay Thakur, the esteemed teacher of the Health Care vocational subject, proudly stated that former students who pursued vocational education at Government Higher Secondary School Musra have embarked on successful careers as Veterinary Doctors, Lab Technicians, Pharmacists, B.Sc. Nursing, B.P.Ed, X-Ray Technicians, among others. This resounding success demonstrates the effectiveness and impact of vocational education, equipping students to flourish in their chosen fields and contribute meaningfully to society.

## Farmers outraged over delayed crop insurance notification

**Dongargarh, Jul 23:** The delay in the issuance of the notification for the Prime Minister's Crop Insurance Scheme for this year's Kharif crop has ignited fury among farmers throughout the state. Shashikant Dwivedi, the Pradesh Coordinator of Bharatiya Janata Party's Cooperative Department, has accused the state government of being anti-farmer for failing to release the vital notification in a timely manner. While the Central government has been implementing farmer-friendly policies, the state government's lack of action is resulting in substantial losses for the farming community. In an official press release, Dwivedi expressed grave concern over the absence of the announcement for the Prime Minister's Crop Insurance Scheme, which has proven to be a crucial and beneficial initiative for farmers. In previous years, the notification was issued before July 1st, and farmers had until July 15th to deposit the pre-

mium, both for those who were indebted and non-indebted. However, this year, the notification remains pending, causing distress and apprehension among farmers who fear significant financial losses due to this delay. Dwivedi further emphasized that in the past, the assessment of the Prime Minister's Crop Insurance Scheme was conducted at the tehsil level. However, under the Modi government, the assessment is now done at the village level, ensuring adequate compensation in the event of crop damages caused by natural calamities. Additionally, provisions for compensation have been established to cover losses incurred by insured crops. Urging the state government to promptly issue the notification, Mr. Dwivedi warned that farmers are prepared to launch protests across the entire state to fight for their rights and demand timely assistance in times of agricultural crises.

## Rudrabhishek puja held at Lal Talab Shiv Mandir

Baremkela, Jul 23:

As the holy month of Sawan commenced on July 4th, this year's Sawan month is graced with the occurrence of Adhikmas or Malmas, leading to the celebration of eight Mondays. The sacred month of Sawan holds immense significance, and one of its revered rituals is the Rudrabhishek, a ceremonial offering where the Shivaling is anointed with holy Ganga water, milk, curd, and other sacred substances. This propitiatory act is believed to bestow prosperity, serenity, and abundance upon the devotees, along with the blessings of Lord Shiva. In commemoration of the auspicious Shrawani Purushottam month, the Lal Talab Shiv Mandir in



Baremkela, situated on Ram Darbar Main Road, is organizing the Rudrabhishek Puja from July 18th to August 16th. The morning ceremony will encompass Parthiv Shiv Puja and Rudrabhishek, held between 8:00 AM to 11:00 AM, while the evening program will feature melodious Shiv Mahapuran

## Mobile van launched to educate voters on EVM and VVPAT usage

Mahasamund, Jul 23:

In a bid to enhance awareness and understanding of Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) and Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT) machines, the Collector and District Election Officer, Prabhat Malik, commenced a mobile demonstration van from the Collectorate premises. This initiative aims to educate citizens about the proper usage of EVMs and VVPAT machines, ensuring informed voting during the forthcoming Vidhan Sabha General Elections 2023.

The mobile van, adorned with a green flag symbolizing voter awareness, will traverse the entire district as part of the election campaign. It will visit various locations, including polling centers, markets, schools, and colleges, where citizens will have the opportunity to witness live demonstra-



tions and gain insights into the functioning of EVMs and VVPAT machines. Trained personnel will accompany the mobile van and provide comprehensive information about the voting process using EVMs and VVPAT machines. The objective is to facilitate an inclusive, transparent, and participative electoral process. The van will be equipped with EVMs and VVPAT machines to allow voters to experience the voting procedure firsthand.



### Ahead of Vidhan Sabha elections

Inaugurating the program, Collector Prabhat Malik underscored the significance of familiarizing voters with the technology to enable them to exercise their voting rights effectively. He urged citizens to actively participate in the voter awareness drive, ensuring that every vote is cast with confidence and accuracy. Deputy District Election Officer, Misha Kosle, shed light on the SWEEP campaign's purpose, emphasizing its goal of educating citizens about the proper use of EVMs and VVPAT ma-

chines. The VVPAT system, in particular, generates a paper record verifying the voter's choice, displaying the candidate's name and symbol for verification in seven seconds on the screen before the printed slip is securely stored in the VVPAT box. The launch event witnessed the presence of Deputy District Election Officer, Misha Kosle, Trainer A.D. Kurre, and other officials and staff from the Election Office. This mobile demonstration van is poised to play a vital role in enhancing voter awareness and ensuring a smooth and credible electoral process during the upcoming elections.

## Gang involved in selling Tiger skin caught

Bijapur, Jul 23:

The Chhattisgarh Forest Department has taken the biggest action so far by forming a joint team in the case of wildlife poaching and smuggling of its skin from Indravati Tiger Reserve, Bijapur. Nine accused involved in tiger skin smuggling from Rudraram village were arrested along with tiger skin and nine accused were sent to jail on 03.07.2023 under Wildlife Protection Act 1972. Later on the trail of the accused, other accused was also caught. As on date 18/7/2023, a total of 39 accused have been arrested and sent to judicial custody. The main accused in the case are Tulsiram, Ramkumar, Omprakash, Ganesh Yalam and Manoj



Kursam, Amit Kumar Jha, Aarti Das Gandharva, Putul Burman (female accused), Pitambar Sahu, Sudhakar Hatwar, Shyamrao Shivankar, Shaligram Markam, Ashok Khotale, Jageshwar Sahu, Dharmarao Chaple, Shrawan Jhadi, Ranjit

Kuldeep, Ali Baksh Khan, Kishore Dasharia etc. There has been involvement in the sale and purchase of skins of tigers, leopards, tortoises and other wildlife. **Total 39 in this episode so far:** The accused have been

sent to judicial custody and currently 7 accused related to the case are absconding. Due to the association of the accused with the smuggling gang of Maharashtra, the joint team arrested 14 accused from Bhandara, Gondia and Chandrapur districts of Maharashtra on the charges of electrocuting a tiger in village Kosatola, Saleksa and smuggling and sent them to jail in judicial custody. Skin, 2 nos. Deer horns and tiger bones, Leopard skin, Kotri horn-2 nos, Kotri skull-1 no's, Owl skull, Owl claw-2 no's, Sambar horn-2 no's, Bear nail-4 no's, Car, Motorcycle, Mobile phone, G.I.wire, noose etc. material has been recovered. Deputy Director of Indravati Tiger Reserve,

Dhammasheel Ganveer told that this entire operation has been jointly formed by a team in which Varun Jain, Deputy Director of Udanti Sitanadi Tiger Reserve, Forest Divisional Officer Durg Shashi Kumar, Shashiganandan Forest Divisional Officer West Bhanupratappur and the team of the concerned Forest Division has succeeded in arresting this big smuggler gang. In this action, Superintendent of Police Jagdalpur Mr. Jitendra Meena, Superintendent of Police Durg Shalabh Sinha and Superintendent of Police Gariaband Amit Kamle have contributed significantly in the joint action.

## Raavat Nath Mahotsav scholarship offers generous rewards

Bilaspur, Jul 23:

The Raavat Nath Mahotsav Samiti has announced an exciting opportunity for eligible Yadav boys and girls students to avail themselves of cash scholarships. Students who have excelled in the Chhattisgarh Board's Higher Secondary General Curriculum (12th) and High School (10th) examinations have a chance to receive financial aid for their academic achievements. The scholarship programme is open to students from various regions, including Korba, Janjgir-Champa, Lormi, Pandariya, Mungeli, Kota, andendra in the Bilaspur district. Under this programme, meritorious students will be awarded separate cash scholarships of either five thousand or three thousand rupees, depending on

their academic performance. Additionally, the 'Raavat Naach Gol' will bestow scholarships upon talented students hailing from affiliated families. Five male and five female students will each receive a substantial cash amount of 38,000 rupees through this initiative. The application process for the Raavat Nath Mahotsav Scholarship is now open for eligible Yadav students who appeared in the 2022-23 academic year board examinations. Interested students can apply directly or have their parents submit a properly filled application form, along with a photocopy of their marksheets and two passport-sized photographs. The completed applications must reach Dr. Kalicharan Yadav at the address: "Raavat Nath Mahotsav Samiti,"

Baniyapara, Juna Bilaspur, Bilaspur (Chhattisgarh), by 31st August 2023. The scholarship selection committee, headed by Dr. Ramgopal Yadav, former librarian of DP Vipra Mahavidyalaya, and coordinated by Dr. Kalicharan Yadav, will review all received applications and make the final decisions. This prestigious scholarship, which is in its 25th year, will provide cash rewards of approximately 76,000 rupees to a total of 20 students from both scholarship categories. The selected students from the Chhattisgarh state, falling within the Bilaspur district's boundaries, who excelled in the Higher Secondary and High School exams, will be felicitated with cash rewards of 5,000 and 3,000 rupees, respectively, along with a shawl, shreefal, and a certificate.

## Naxalite killed in encounter with security personnel

Bijapur, Jul 23:

A Naxalite was killed in an encounter with security personnel in Bijapur district on Saturday, a police official said. Arms, ammunition and Maoist-related materials were recovered from the encounter site at a forested hill, he said. Blood stains found at the spot suggest that 3-4 Naxalites were either killed or injured in the gunfight but their colleagues managed to drag them inside the forest, the official said, adding that the search operation was underway in the area. The gunfight took place at around 7 am at a forested hill near Kesamundi village under the Bhairamgarh police

### About the incident

The gunfight took place at around 7 am at a forested hill near Kesamundi village under the Bhairamgarh police station limits when a joint team of security personnel was out on an anti-Naxalite operation. Acting on specific inputs about the presence of 10-15 armed Maoists of the Bhairamgarh area committee in forests of Potenar-Kesamundi villages, personnel belonging to District Reserve Guard (DRG), Bastar Fighters and CRPF's 222nd battalion launched the operation on Friday night. When the patrolling team was cordoning off the area on Saturday morning, an exchange of fire broke out between the two sides that lasted for about half an hour. After the fire exchange stopped, the body of a Naxalite was found at the spot. Security personnel also recovered a pistol, bullets, gelatin sticks, wires and other Maoist-related materials from the spot.

ing to District Reserve Guard (DRG), Bastar Fighters and CRPF's 222nd battalion launched the operation on Friday night, he said. When the patrolling team was cordoning off the area on Saturday morning, an exchange of fire broke out between the two sides that lasted for about half an hour,

the official said. After the fire exchange stopped, the body of a Naxalite was found at the spot. Security personnel also recovered a pistol, bullets, gelatin sticks, wires and other Maoist-related materials from the spot. The identity of the killed Naxalite was yet to be ascertained, he added.

## Collector flags off mobile demonstration van

For the promotion of EVM and VVPAT machine



**Bijapur, Jul 23:** Collector and District Election Officer Rajendra Kumar Katara flagged off the mobile demonstration Van from the district office premises for the promotion of EVM and VVPAT machines in the district. A mobile demonstration Van has been prepared keeping in view the Vidhan Sabha election 2023. Information about EVMs and VVPAT

machines will be given to voters through vans in all polling stations, 'haat bazaars', schools and colleges. The date-wise programme has been prepared by the District Election Office including all the polling stations. Under the guidance of Collector Katara, voter awareness programmes are being organized to ensure 100 percent exercise

of franchise by the voters in the upcoming assembly elections 2023. Voters are being informed about

EVM and VVPAT machines and voting process in polling booths. Electronic Voting Machine demonstration center has been set up in the Collectorate Office. In the Electronic Voting Machine Demonstration Center, voters are being made to cast their vote by pressing the button of the voting machine. During this, election nodal officer Mr. Geet Kumar Sinha and officers and employees were present.

**बैंक ऑफ इंडिया Bank of India BOI** Bhilai Branch: Civic Center, Bhilai

**NOTICE**

On 23.07.2023, our branch had published the possession notice of Aditi Brothers Gharana Foods Pvt Ltd in Dainik Bhaskar and Central Chronicle, in which possession date has been erroneously published as 23.07.2023, which should be corrected to read **Possession Date as 18.07.2023.**

Authorised Officer, Bank Of India



## Rare pink Dolphin spotted in Louisiana waters

Last week, a rare pink dolphin was sighted swimming in the waters off Louisiana. Thurman Gustin, an experienced fisherman of over 20 years, captured a video of not one but two pink dolphins in Cameron Parish near the Gulf of Mexico on July 12. He shared the remarkable footage on Facebook, which quickly went viral. Mr. Gustin expressed his astonishment, saying this encounter surpassed even his most extraordinary wildlife experiences, such as witnessing a bobcat swimming in Texas.

The video shows one pink dolphin gracefully surfacing before diving back under the water. Mr. Gustin considers himself lucky, as such sightings are exceptionally rare. He emphasized the event was unforgettable and that even long-time Louisiana residents had never seen anything like it.



Experts suggest that the pink dolphin might not be the species known as the pink river dolphin found in South America but instead could be a bot-

tlentose dolphin displaying rare coloration, potentially related to albinism. Unfortunately, unique creatures like this often attract human attention,

leading to concerns about their capture and captivity.

The dolphin spotted by Gustin might be Pinky, a renowned dolphin known

for its albino-like features, including reddish eyes and visible blood vessels, first sighted in 2007 in the Calcasieu River, as reported by USA Today.

## Massive Snake Found in Bathroom

A nerve-wracking incident unfolded in a home in North Carolina, USA, when a massive snake slithered into the bathroom, surprising the homeowners. The Graham Police Department responded to a trespassing call, only to find the "slippery suspect" coiled up in the bathroom. A photo posted on the department's Facebook page shows an officer holding the long, black snake with an extendable trash grabber.

After clearing the residence, Sgt. Way successfully apprehended the snake following a brief standoff. The reptile was removed and relocated without any trouble. The police haven't disclosed the snake's species or how it gained entry into the house.

In response to the Facebook post, people praised Sgt. Way's bravery, calling him a true hero for handling the daunting situation. The officer received accolades for his courage and swift action in dealing with the



intimidating reptile.

A similar incident occurred in Queensland, Australia, where a man sitting on the toilet was startled to see a massive coastal carpet python perched on top of his shower screen. In a panic, he called local snake

catchers from Hudson Snake Catching to handle the situation. These incidents serve as reminders of the unpredictability of wildlife encounters and the importance of professional assistance when dealing with potentially dangerous animals.

## Bengaluru man's tax rant strikes a chord with netizens



Sanchit Goyal, a category manager at Flipkart, sparked a heated discussion on Twitter with his candid rant about the burden of taxes in India. Venting his frustration, he revealed that after earning Rs 5,000, he had to hand over 30% of it as income tax to the government. Even when he tried to indulge in some caffeinated beverages, a significant 28% tax was slapped on his purchase, leaving him feeling overburdened.

Mr. Goyal went on to break down the taxes imposed on basic products, using a Rs 20 choco-bar as an example. His calculations revealed that the gov-

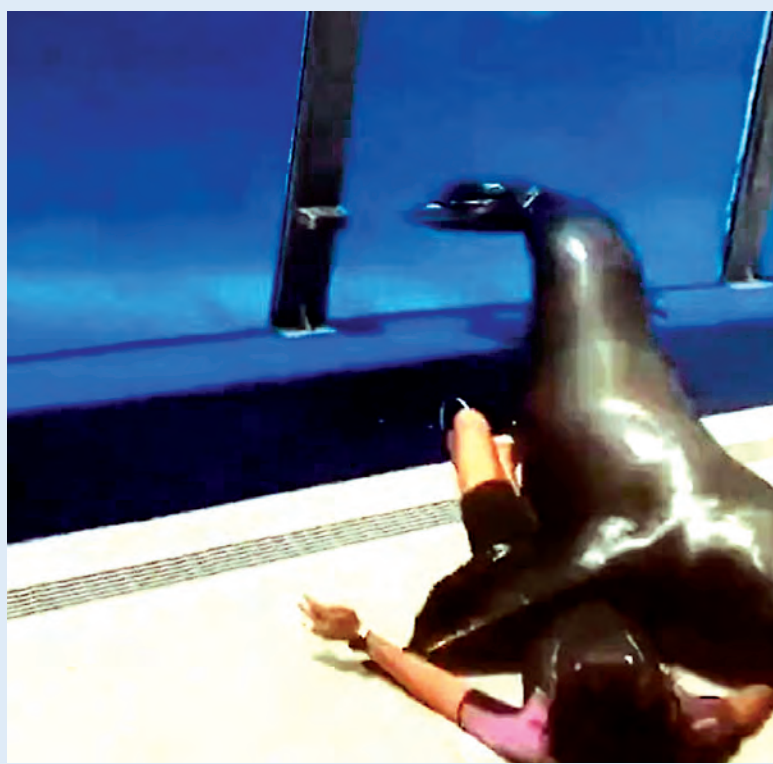
ernment earned nearly 27.5% of the final cost through various taxes like GST on sugar, cocoa, condensed milk, and cream.

The tweet struck a chord with numerous users on Twitter, with many sharing their own experiences and opinions on the matter. Some pointed out the additional taxes applied to various stages of production and transportation, making the tax burden even more significant.

Criticism was also directed towards the Goods and Services Tax (GST), which was hailed by the government but has been criticized by citizens who bear the brunt of its impact. Many users echoed Mr. Goyal's sentiments, stating that taxes seemed to eat into a significant portion of their hard-earned income, making it difficult to enjoy even simple pleasures like ice cream without facing the burden of GST.

The tweets shed light on the concerns faced by the middle-class salaried individuals who feel that they work tirelessly only to see a significant portion of their income go towards taxes.

## Giant sea lion mishap at Spain's aquarium



A shocking video from Spain has gone viral, showing a harrowing moment at Marineland, an aquarium in Mallorca, where a giant sea lion nearly crushed an employee. The video was recorded by 20-year-old influencer Micah Diaz, visiting the aquarium from Florida.

In the footage, a massive 750-

pound sea lion is seen attempting to escape its enclosure, ultimately dropping on top of a female employee with its full weight. Despite her efforts to gently push the animal back into the water, the sea lion managed to breach the enclosure and landed on the employee, sending them both to the ground.

Micah Diaz, who is no stranger to

marine animals due to his background as a surfer and numerous visits to aquariums, expressed his shock about the incident. "I have never seen an accident like this," he said when interviewed by Media Drum World.

After the unfortunate incident, the employee stood up and checked on the sea lion, surprisingly seen petting the massive creature.

Marineland is known for its marine amusement park that offers various experiences with sea animals. However, the alarming video has raised concerns about the safety protocols in place at such facilities.

The video has been widely shared on social media platforms, garnering different reactions from users. Some speculated that the sea lion might have simply wanted a hug, while others joked about it wanting to be "kissed by a rose." However, the incident also prompted questions about the safety measures for both animals and employees in such environments.

Authorities at Marineland are likely to review the incident and assess any necessary improvements to ensure the well-being and safety of their staff and marine inhabitants. As the video continues to circulate online, it serves as a reminder of the unpredictable nature of wild animals and the importance of maintaining strict safety standards in animal parks and aquariums.

## Memory Storage: Insights from Neural Network Theory

How useful a memory is in helping us understand the world determines where in our brain it resides, according to new research aiming to provide a better explanation of memory storage in brain.

Under the classical view of systems consolidation, over time, all memories are known to move from their initial storage location of the hippocampus to the neocortex.

However, research has shown that certain memories continue to reside in the hippocampus despite passage of time.

This research from Howard Hughes Medical Institute, US, in collaboration with the University College, London, UK, puts forward a mathematical neural network theory, according to which a memory consolidates to the neocortex, the permanent residence, only if it improves generalisation. It is published in the journal Nature Neuroscience.

Generalisation is constructed from the reliable and predictable aspects of a memory that enable us to

apply them to other situations and help us make sense of the world. For example, a canyon is seen to predict the presence of water. This is different from episodic memories, which are detailed recollections of the past having unique features, such as an individual memory of hiking to a particular canyon and stumbling upon a body of water. Under this theory, consolidation involves creating a new memory generalised from previous memories, rather than just copying memories from one part of the brain to another. How much material that memory provides for generalisation determines if it gets to be consolidated or continues to stay in the hippocampus, and not its age, the study found using neural networks.

Following up this theoretical proposition with experimental studies is the next step for this research, including testing the authors' models of how the brain might distinguish between predictable and unpredictable aspects of memories while regulating consolidation.

## Pioneering Breakthroughs in Healthcare

Dr. Krishna Kumar Vepakomma

With its versatility, synthetic biology stands as an incredibly adaptable field that holds the potential to become the next revolutionary discipline, bringing transformative advancements to a wide range of sectors. It involves the creation of novel biological components and finds applications in diverse areas such as medicine, food production, and renewable energy. By combining principles from engineering, computer science, and molecular biology, synthetic biology aims to design and construct new biological systems and components that do not exist naturally.

The primary objective of synthetic biology is to enhance the predictability and control of biological engineering, with broad applications in medicine, agriculture, and biotechnology. For example, genetically engineered vectors can produce vaccines and therapeutics more efficiently, with higher expression levels and reduced side effects and risks of resistance. In agriculture, synthetic biology can harness agricultural waste to pro-



duce bio-surfactants, contributing to the emerging field of Green Chemistry. By optimizing the genes encoding enzymes in microbial strains, the production of antibiotics, vitamins, enzymes, and organic acids can be improved. Additionally, synthetic biology enables the production of environmentally friendly bioplastics, such as PHA, through engineered bacteria that can be naturally degraded by microbes in soil and water environments.

Synthetic biology also holds promise in facilitating the transi-

tion to a low-carbon economy by modulating the carbon cycle and mitigating climate change. The integration of artificial intelligence and genetic engineering allows for leveraging gene-editing, synthetic biology, and geo-engineering to achieve targeted outcomes. For instance, engineered cyanobacteria, microalgae, or algae species can utilize CO2 and sunlight to produce valuable chemicals, while methanotrophic bacteria can convert natural gas into fuels.

In the field of healthcare, genetic engineering and synthetic biology are set to revolutionize the industry in the coming years. Through DNA editing and the design of biological systems, these disciplines offer potential for eradicating deadly diseases, addressing emerging health issues, developing efficient diagnostic tools, and combating microbial resistance. Researchers globally are harnessing synthetic biology to explore novel diagnostic methods, drugs, therapies, and treatments. Synthetic DNA, as highlighted by Ashwin Jainarayanan from Oxford University, allows for the collection of DNA fragments from var-

ious organisms, which can be cloned and introduced into an organism to achieve specific functions. Such approaches hold immense promise for future disease treatments.

The field of synthetic biology has attracted significant interest and investment from biologists worldwide. Synthetic DNA finds applications in therapeutics and expands our understanding of biology. For instance, synthetic DNA, such as antagomirs, can be utilized to suppress disease-causing microRNAs, opening up potential therapeutic avenues. While India is currently focused on research, other countries are advancing in clinical trials, and synthetic biology is expected to provide treatments for conditions like diabetes and cancer.

The potential of synthetic biology extends beyond medical science, as it offers solutions to agricultural and environmental challenges. Experts widely regard synthetic biology as the future of science and technology, capable of addressing urgent global issues.

(Writer is Professor & Principal (Retd.)

## Bankers and Doctors

Vinod Chandrashekar Dixit

Banks are a powerful partner for better health. Doctors are known for their exemplary dedication and focus when it comes to their profession. They spend years studying, acquiring knowledge and mastering their profession. Doctors and Health Care sector have emerged as the most essential and an indispensable sector in the social fabric worldwide. Doctors have been rendering yeoman service to humanity since ages. Today, Doctors need capital for to set up their own practice or purchase, equipment while also considering other financial goals like purchasing a house or a car and providing for their child's future. Bank Loans for Doctors are forms of financial relief extended towards medical professionals like doctors. Such loans allow doctors to avail funds for capital requirements, expand their clinic or practice, and meet other business needs. Doctors need an investment strategy to preserve wealth after crossing the age of 60 instead of taking aggressive investment decisions.

In the changing economic scenario, BOI Bank has observed a growing need for healthcare equipment financing. BOI has created holistic banking solutions to care for Doctors

finances so that they can focus on the wellbeing of their patients. Bank of India has introduced various schemes to assist them in establishing and expanding their reach, thereby enabling them to serve the needy in a better way. Bank of India salutes the real heroes who are hard-working doctors of the nation. Therefore, to support them in their quest of making a healthier country, we have something special - Star BOI Star Doctor Plus Scheme. BOI Star Doctor Plus scheme is for all the lifesavers out there for their selfless service to mankind which is designed specially for Medical & Healthcare Professionals. There is no doubt that BOI has always been a front runner in addressing the credit needs of various sections of the society in general and that of the Doctors and health sector in particular. To provide enhanced support to the healthcare sector amid the pandemic, the BOI has also launched the BOI Star Aarogyam Scheme. For acquiring premises on ownership basis or purchase of plot & construction thereof, for the purchase of establishing/running clinics, nursing homes, pathological labs, hospitals subject to compliance with license/ registration require-



ments under laws of State / Central Govt. as the case may be OR

For setting up/ running clinics, nursing homes, pathological labs, hospitals on rented premises subject to compliance with license/ registration requirements under laws of State / Central Govt. as the case may be. Lease period should not be less than term loan repayment period.

It provides customized banking as well as value-added services for every doctor, beginning from a medical student to an owner of a hospital or a clinic. This loan helps doctors and medical practitioners get funds for personal needs including wedding expenses, medical expenses, education expenses, travel expenses, purchase of consumer durables, etc. They can also avail this scheme to pay off their high-interest credit card debts and loans, hence consolidating their debts.



## Pak FM Ishaq Dar's name likely to be pitched for interim PM

Islamabad, Jul 23 (PTI):

The ruling Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz party is considering proposing the name of Finance Minister Ishaq Dar as the caretaker prime minister of the cash-strapped country once the term of the current National Assembly ends next month, a media report said on Sunday.



The tenure of Pakistan's current government will end on August 14 and the Election Commission will announce the date for the next general election, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has said. The Pakistani media has reported that the current federal government led by Prime Minister Sharif may dissolve the National Assembly on August 8, days ahead of the expiry of its term. Dar's name came into focus as the Shehbaz Sharif-led government

mulled changes in the Elections Act 2017 to empower the upcoming caretaker set-up to take decisions beyond its constitutional mandate, with a view to ensure continuity of the recently rolled out economic plan and expedite the process aimed at receiving foreign investment in state-owned entities, reported The Express Tribune newspaper.

The Pakistan Muslim League-N (PML-N) was considering proposing the name of Dar, 73, for the

caretaker prime minister as part of a broader plan to ensure the implementation of the economic policies, sources were quoted as saying by the newspaper. Under the Constitution, if the National Assembly completes its term, polls are to be held within 60 days. But if the assembly is dissolved prematurely, even by a day, it would give the government 90 days to conduct elections. The caretaker prime minister will administer the country til

a new government is formed after the general elections.

However, the final decision about the candidature of Dar will be taken next week in consultation with the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) - one of the two main coalition partners.

The PML-N sources said that the government was considering amending Section 230 of the Elections Act 2017, empowering the caretaker set-up to take economic decisions and the amendments might be introduced in the National Assembly next week to allow the caretaker government to take decisions necessary to revive the economy. Pakistan's economy is passing through a phase where the matters cannot be left for three months on just day-to-day decision-making, a senior cabinet member said on the condition of anonymity.

## FLOOD DEVASTATION



A man wearing chest waders walks past cars abandoned in floodwaters in a mall parking lot following a major rain event in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada.

## 5 dead, 2 missing after seasonal floods hit village in eastern China



Beijing, Jul 23 (AP):

Five people died and two others were missing after floods caused by heavy rain hit a village in eastern China, state media reported on Sunday.

China National Radio said the massive floods swept through the village in the Fuyang district of the city of Hangzhou, engulfing

many villagers' houses on Saturday afternoon. Authorities were conducting rescue operations and relocating affected residents.

Every year, seasonal flooding hits large parts of China, particularly in the semitropical south. However, some northern regions this year have reported the worst floods in 50

years. The torrents have been affecting different parts of the country this month and have caused casualties. Earlier this month, at least 15 people were killed by floods in the southwestern region of Chongqing. According to CCTV on Sunday, torrential rain also turned many streets in Liaoning, a northeastern province, into rivers, forcing 5,590 people to be evacuated. About 30 houses and 54 hectares of crops were damaged, it added. In the central province of Hubei, some residents affected by rainstorms were trapped in their vehicles and homes. By Saturday night, authorities had rescued or evacuated some 220 residents in Xianning city, state media People's Daily reported.

## Two Indian-origin men plead guilty to drug trafficking in US

New York, Jul 23 (PTI):

Two Indian-origin men have pleaded guilty to drug and firearms charges arising from a drug trafficking venture run out of a motel in the US. Kamal Bhula, 44, of Albuquerque, and Pragneshkumar "Pete" Patel, 36, of Montgomery, Alabama are among the three charged for maintaining a drug-involved premise at a motel in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Both Bhula and Patel have pleaded guilty to one count each of maintaining a drug-involved premise, the Attorney's Office of New Mexico said in a statement on Monday.

The third accused, Jonathan Craft, 36, of Albuquerque, pleaded

guilty to conspiracy and being a prohibited person in possession of a firearm or ammunition. The release dated July 17 said that Bhula and Craft will remain in custody pending sentencing, which has not been scheduled. A federal grand jury indicted Bhula and Craft on June 20, 2019. Patel was indicted on November 5, 2019. According to court records, Patel owned the Best Choice Inn at 7640 Central Avenue SE and was the on-site manager from September 2017 to March 2018, when Bhula leased the property from Patel and took over as the on-site manager. Craft lived and worked at Best Choice Inn, claiming to be in charge when Bhula was away.

## Barbie mania sweeps Latin America

Mexico City, Jul 23 (AP):

Latin America is taking Barbie mania to an extreme, with everything from pink-coloured tacos and pastries, commercial planes bearing the Barbie logo, political ads and even Barbie-themed protests.

But it's not all high heels and pom-poms: Barbie mania in the region has taken on a darker, macabre tone.

In Peru, anti-government demonstrators this week dressed up two women in pink and put them in giant Barbie boxes in the main square of Lima, the capital, to protest current President Dina Boluarte, under whose administration police have often clashed

with protesters. One actress, whose box was labeled "Barbie Dictator," held a pink gun. The doll, according to the box legend, "includes tear gas and dum-dum bullets." Another protester's box was labeled "Genocidal Barbie."

Meanwhile, stores, street vendors and restaurants throughout Latin America are offering up all sorts of Barbie-themed goodies.

In Mexico, there are Barbie tortillas (the corn dough is colored pink with beet juice, with some imprinted with an edible-dye pony-tailed Barbie silhouette); Barbie pastries and Barbie tacos (marinated pork meat served in pink

tortillas and accompanied by a strawberry milkshake).

An entire Barbie-themed restaurant opened this week in Guayaquil, Ecuador; it is of course built to resemble Barbie's house.

Volaris, a Mexican airline, has painted one of its jets with a Barbie logo and, according to a promotional video, the plane will be piloted by Barbie, not Ken.

The pink craze in the region is such that Barbie mania has now spread into politics.

In Guatemala, presidential candidate Sandra Torres shared a musical TikTok video pitching her as a Barbie who "wants prosperity for all."

## 9 die and three dozen wounded in a building collapse

**Yaounde (Cameroon), Jul 23 (AP):** At least nine people were killed and nearly three dozen wounded in a building collapse, Cameroonian authorities said on Sunday. A four-story building collapsed onto a smaller one early Sunday morning in Douala, the country's economic centre and largest city, 130 miles (210 km) west of the capital, Yaounde.

"The casualty figures may be higher. Rescue workers, assisted by Cameroon government troops, are still digging the wreckage to see if more bodies can be recovered," said Samuel Dieudonne Ivaha Diboua, governor of Cameroon's Littoral region. The military's fire

brigade has been ordered to join the country's Red Cross and other rescue services in searching for survivors trapped under the rubble.

Residents living in the Ndogbon neighbourhood where the incident took place said they are in shock. "We heard people screaming and struggled to help some out of the wreckage, but could not do it with our spades and (garden) hoes," said Gaspard Ndoppo, who lives near the collapsed buildings.

Building collapses happen often in Douala, sometimes due to natural disasters such as landslides and other times because of poor construction, locals say.

## Netanyahu undergoes pacemaker implantation surgery

Jerusalem, Jul 23 (PTI):

Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Sunday underwent a successful pacemaker implantation procedure, a surgery scheduled just days before the Knesset is set to vote on a controversial judicial reform bill that has paralysed the whole country. Last week, Netanyahu, 73, was hospitalised from Saturday to Sunday after he complained of dizziness following a trip Friday to the Sea of Galilee, where he acknowledged spending several hours in the sun and in scorching heat "without a hat, without water."

Sheba Medical Center in Ramat Gan then said that the doctors had completed a series of examinations and



found that the Prime Minister's heart "is completely normal," and that "at no point was any heart arrhythmia found." However, doctors "decided to use a subcutaneous Holter", a device that monitors one's heart and warns if there are irregularities. The pacemaker implantation procedure took place early Sunday morning at Sheba Medical Center in Ramat Gan. The Prime Minister's Office said

the operation was completed successfully, that he was feeling good and that he was expected to be discharged Sunday. In a video message shortly before 1 am Netanyahu said that "a week ago they put a monitoring device. That device beeped this evening and said I need to receive a pacemaker." "I need to do this already tonight. I'm feeling excellent, but I'm listening to my doctors," he stressed. In an earlier statement, the Prime Minister's Office while informing about the procedure also quoted Netanyahu as saying that "the efforts to reach a wide agreement are continuing" on a divisive first bill of the government's highly contentious judicial overhaul that has paralysed the country.

## Spanish Election: Right-Wing resurgence looms

Madrid, Jul 23 (AP):

Spanish voters go to the polls in a general election on Sunday that could make Spain the latest European Union member to swing to the right. Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez called the early election after his Spanish Socialist Workers' Party and its far-left partner, Unidas Podemos, took a beating in local and regional elections in May. Sanchez has been premier since 2018. Most opinion polls for Sunday's voting have put the ring-wing Popular Party, which won the May vote, ahead of the Socialists but likely needing the support of the extreme right Vox party if they want to form a government. Such a coalition would return a far-right force to the Spanish government for the first time since the country transitioned to democracy in the late 1970s following the nearly 40-year rule of dictator Francisco Franco.

Opposing them are the Socialists and a new movement called Sumar that brings together 15 small leftist parties for the first time ever. With no party expected to garner an absolute majority, the choice is basically between another leftist coalition and a partnership of the right and the far right.

Sanchez's government has steered Spain through the COVID-19 pandemic and dealt with an inflation-driven economic downturn made worse by Russia's invasion of Ukraine. But his dependency on fringe parties to his minority coalition afloat, including separatist forces from Catalonia and the Basque Country, and his passing of a slew of

liberal-minded laws may cost him his job.

The right-wing parties dislike everything about Sanchez, saying he has betrayed and ruined Spain.

They vow to roll back dozens of his laws, many which have benefited millions of citizens and thousands of companies. The election takes place at the height of summer, with millions of voters likely to be vacationing away from their regular polling places. But postal voting requests have soared, and officials have estimated a 70 per cent election turnout. Coming on the tail of a month of heat waves, temperatures are expected to average above 35 degrees Celsius (95 degrees Fahrenheit) and to rise between 5 and 10 degrees Celsius above normal in many parts of the country Sunday.

## DEVASTATION IN ODESA



Church personnel inspect damages inside the Odesa Transfiguration Cathedral in Odesa, Ukraine, Sunday, July 23 following Russian missile attacks.

## Greek Island of Rhodes evacuated amid wildfire

Athens, Jul 23 (AP):

A large wildfire burning on the Greek island of Rhodes for a fifth day has forced authorities to order an evacuation of four locations, including two seaside resorts.

About 2,000 people, including tourists, were evacuated by sea, fire department spokesman Yannis Artopios said Saturday evening.

He added that the hotels and rented homes evacuated "represent less than 10 per cent of the island's tourist accommodations." He added that all visitors had been evacuated without incident. Three coast guard ves-

sels, an army lifeboat, a special forces inflatable craft and 30 private sailboats helped with the evacuation.

Private passenger shipping company Blue Star has offered one of its ships to accommodate some of the evacuees, Artopios said.

"Care has been taken to accommodate all those that needed to be taken away from the stricken areas," he added.

In previous days, the wildfire was confined to the island's mountainous center, but aided by winds, very high temperatures and dry conditions, it spread Saturday toward the coast on the is-

land's central-eastern side. Local media reported the fires had reached three hotels, whose clients had already been evacuated.

Earlier Saturday, Artopios had said that the residents of four localities were sent SMS messages to evacuate in two localities they were told to move to the northeast and, in two others, to the southwest. In those first two localities, the intensity of the blaze had abated, he said later.

Artopios said that more than 200 firefighters and 40 fire engines were operating on the ground, assisted by three planes and five helicopters.

## Drone hits Crimean ammunition depot

**Kyiv, Jul 23 (AP):** A Ukrainian drone strike on Saturday caused a massive explosion at an ammunition depot in Russia-annexed Crimea, forcing the evacuation of nearby homes in the latest attack since Moscow cancelled a landmark grain deal amid Kyiv's grinding efforts to retake its occupied territories.

The attack on the depot in central Crimea sent huge plumes of black smoke skyward and came five days after Ukraine struck a key bridge that links Russia to the peninsula it illegally annexed in 2014 and after Moscow suspended a wartime deal that allowed Ukraine to safely export its grain through the Black Sea. Sergey Aksyonov, the Kremlin-appointed head of Crimea, said in a Telegram post that there were no immediate reports of

casualties from the strike, but that authorities were evacuating civilians within a 5-kilometer (3-mile) radius of the blast site. The Ukrainian military took credit for the strike, saying it destroyed an oil depot and Russian military warehouses in Oktyabrsk, in the Krasnodarskiye region of Crimea, though without specifying which weapons it used. A Crimean news channel posted videos Saturday showing plumes of smoke billowing above rooftops and fields near Oktyabrsk, a small settlement next to an oil depot and a small military airport, as loud explosions rumbled in the background. In one video, a man can be heard saying the smoke and blast noises seemed to be coming from the direction of the airport.





## CENTRAL Chronicle

Established 1974 Volume 48 No. 288

### Quality Assurance in Higher Education

In a bid to overhaul the higher education system and put an end to institutions functioning as mere 'teaching shops' offering deceptive degrees, the United Kingdom is gearing up for significant reforms. Prime Minister Rishi Sunak's announcement to crackdown on such practices has sparked debate among critics and proponents alike. While some question the move, it is poised to bring substantial benefits to Indian students who have been flocking to the UK with hopes of receiving world-class education and enhancing their career prospects. The proposed changes promise to bring clarity about the true value of courses on offer, offering relief to students burdened with heavy education loans and uncertain job prospects after graduation. As per the data from 2020-21, Indians form the second-largest cohort of international students in the UK after the Chinese. Sunak's compelling argument centers on protecting prospective students from being sold false dreams. He cites eye-opening statistics, revealing that approximately 30% of graduates fail to secure highly skilled jobs or pursue further study within 15 months after completing their degrees. This calls for careful scrutiny of the rankings of British colleges, enabling aspiring students to distinguish between mediocre and below-average institutions from the reputable ones. A recent viral post on social media by an Indian student in the UK further emphasizes the urgency of this situation. Her frustration at being unable to secure a suitable job after graduation resonated with numerous global graduates and postgraduates, who shared their heart-rending experiences. This sobering reality highlights the importance of making informed decisions when selecting a college abroad - basing choices on the likelihood of viable work opportunities that a course can lead to. While some critics may argue that such reforms could stifle innovation or restrict educational options, it is essential to remember that the primary aim is to safeguard students' futures. Investing in higher education is a significant decision, both in terms of time and financial resources. Therefore, ensuring that students receive quality education and gain access to promising career paths is paramount. Moreover, these reforms are likely to strengthen the reputation of the UK's higher education system and cement its position as a preferred destination for international students. By weeding out subpar institutions, the UK will enhance its competitiveness and attractiveness, attracting bright minds from all over the world. This influx of talent can contribute to a dynamic and diverse academic environment, benefitting both students and the broader society. To achieve the desired outcome, collaboration among stakeholders is crucial. Educational institutions, policymakers, employers, and students must come together to develop effective strategies that promote transparency and accountability. Regular evaluation of colleges and courses, along with transparent reporting of post-graduation outcomes, can provide valuable insights to prospective students and assist them in making well-informed choices.

#### Jan Vishwas Act 2022

### A Progressive Leap towards Justice and Efficiency

Yash Pal Ralhan

In a momentous stride towards promoting justice, efficiency, and restoring public trust, the government is set to introduce the Jan Vishwas (Revitalization) Act in the upcoming parliamentary session. This landmark legislation aims to decriminalize a multitude of minor offenses, some dating back to the British era, in order to foster an environment of ease and simplicity for citizens and businesses alike. With the Union Cabinet endorsing numerous amendments proposed by the joint parliamentary committee, the bill is poised to usher in a new era of legal reform and public welfare. The Jan Vishwas Act seeks to redefine the contours of criminality by removing imprisonment as a punitive measure for non-heinous crimes, and instead, introducing more effective monetary penalties to deter potential offenders. By addressing the archaic provisions of 183 laws administered by 19 ministries, this comprehensive legislation promises to enhance the ease of living and doing business, thereby propelling economic growth while bolstering public confidence in the functioning of government institutions. The rationale behind the Jan Vishwas Act is rooted in the principle of providing streamlined and citizen-friendly services. Governments have long recognized the importance of establishing a single-window system to ensure efficient service delivery to the public. In line with this, the central government has issued guidelines to make all procedures more public-friendly, making significant strides in improving governance. By minimizing bureaucratic hurdles and eliminating the specter of imprisonment for trivial infractions, this legislation aims to empower individuals to pursue their endeavors without the fear of undue harassment or corruption. One noteworthy recommendation put forth by the joint parliamentary committee is the retrospective amendment of legislative provisions. This proactive measure not only addresses the backlog of pending cases but also serves as a catalyst for reducing the burden on the judicial system. Embracing the committee's suggestions, state governments would be well-advised to follow suit and introduce similar modifications, paving the way for a more efficient and expeditious legal process. The Jan Vishwas Act encompasses a wide array of sectors, including food, agriculture, finance, commerce, information technology, pharmacy, transport, roads, housing, and environment. Notably, the proposed amendments impact approximately 113 imprisonment clauses across various legislation, primarily concerning environmental protection, air pollution, housing regulations, and money laundering. Furthermore, the legislation advocates for imposing penalties retrospectively, thereby abating pending legal proceedings associated with decriminalized offenses. This approach not only curtails unnecessary litigation but also emphasizes the importance of timely justice delivery. To further fortify environmental protection, the Jan Vishwas Act establishes an Environmental Protection Fund dedicated to education, awareness, and research in this vital domain. While the intention behind this fund is commendable, its necessity remains somewhat unclear, given the existence of similar funds operated by the Central and State Pollution Control Boards. Ensuring effective coordination and synergy between these entities will be crucial for maximizing the impact of such initiatives. In the spirit of modernization, the Jan Vishwas Act also proposes amendments to the High Denomination Bank Notes Act of 1978. However, the relevance of amending punishments under this act after 45 years may be debatable, as its original purpose, which involved the removal of high-value banknotes as legal tender, has long since been fulfilled. While certain aspects of the legislation, such as counterfeiting grade designation marks, warrant revision, it is important to maintain a balanced perspective when considering the necessity of retrospective amendments. The Jan Vishwas (Revitalization) Act 2022 represents a crucial milestone in India's legal landscape. By decriminalizing minor offenses, introducing retrospective amendments, and fostering a more business-friendly environment, this legislation aims to strike a harmonious balance between justice, efficiency, and public confidence. As the bill enters parliamentary discourse, it is imperative for lawmakers to ensure thorough deliberation, addressing concerns and upholding the principles of fairness and equity. The Jan Vishwas Act has the potential to reshape the nation's legal framework, and it is our collective responsibility to ensure that it is executed with utmost diligence and foresight, heralding a new era of progress and prosperity.

(The views expressed above are the author's own. They do not necessarily reflect the views of Central Chronicle.)

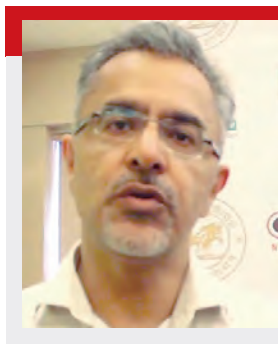
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### SACRED OFFERING

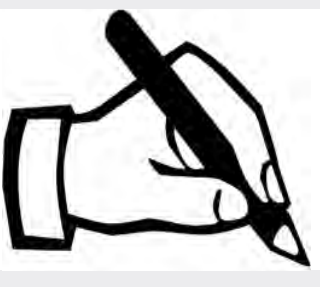


Devotees carry pots filled with holy water of the Ganga river to offer it to Lord Shiva during the month of 'Adhik Maas', in Prayagraj, Sunday, July 23.

## Fuelling the rural economy and empowering farmers through a resurgent sugar sector



SANJEEV CHOPRA



Government of India has recently announced the Fair and Remunerative Price (FRP) of Rs 315/quintal for sugarcane for Sugar Season 2023-24 with more than 100% margin over Paid out cost + imputed value of family labour (A2+FL cost). This is amongst the highest margin in crops thereby assuring high returns for farmers. This decision will benefit about 5 crore sugarcane farmers including their dependents. The new FRP aims to address the aspirations of the farmers while ensuring competitiveness of the Indian sugar industry. The FRP is the benchmark price below which no sugar factory can purchase sugarcane. Therefore, it is like Minimum Support Price but here procurement is carried out by the sugar factories, and not by the Government. The sugar industry in India has had a chequered history and emerging as a robust sector only in the recent years. In 8 years leading up to 2020-21, Government of India extended financial assistance of more than Rs 18,000 crores to bring sugar sector out of financial crises so that farmers' payments could be released by mills promptly. In recent years, targeted interventions from the Central Government, acumen of the sugar industry and propitious global factors have led to a turnaround of the sugar sector. The health of sugar sector can be gauged from the fact that since

2021-22, no budgetary support has been given to sugar mills except under interest subvention scheme for ethanol projects (under which Rs 494 crores have been disbursed till 30th June 2023). Enhanced levels of capital expenditure in the sector for modernisation and diversification have led to additional investment of more than Rs 30,000 crore in the sector in the last 6 years and generation of more than 50,000 direct and indirect employment opportunities for rural youth. Trends in stock prices of listed companies are a reliable indicator of not only the present health of the sector but also of its future prospects. It is seen that market capitalisation of the top 10 listed sugar companies (based on their sugarcane crushing capacity) has more than doubled in last 4 years.

The turnaround of the sugar sector can be credited to three broad set of factors. The flagship initiative which has contributed the most to revival of the sugar sector, has been the National Biofuel Policy 2018 which promotes blending of ethanol with petrol. Although Ethanol Blending with Petrol (EBP) Programme has been under implementation since 2003, announcement of the National Biofuel Policy can be termed as the watershed event leading to a resurgence in the sector. Since then, a slew of policy initiatives have simplified the procedures of establishing ethanol plants and offered remun-

erative prices for ethanol produced from molasses. Central Government also introduced Interest Subvention Scheme for ethanol projects under which 6% interest per annum or 50% of interest, whichever is lower is reimbursed for 5 years to project proponents to incentivize enhancement of ethanol production capacity in the country. More than 1200 projects with a projected capacity of 4,400 crore litres have been given in-principle approval by Central Govt under the scheme since 2018. In just over two years, ethanol blending percentage has doubled and about 434 crore litres of ethanol was blended during Ethanol Supply Year (Dec-Nov) 2021-22 surpassing the target of 10%. The EBP Programme is now on track to achieve the target of 20% ethanol blending by 2025 which would make India the third largest ethanol producer in the world. Ethanol Blending Programme has resulted in additional revenue of more than 51,000 crores for sugar-based distilleries in last 4 years. This year, the distilleries are expected to earn more than Rs 22,000 crores by sale of ethanol to Oil Marketing Companies.

Export of sugar is the second major development which has led to strengthening the fundamentals of sugar mills. From almost zero exports, India has exported 110 lakh tons of sugar in sugar season (Nov-Oct) 2021-22 becoming the second largest exporter of sugar in the world. Exports have, inter alia, enabled the sugar sector to dispose its additional inventory which hitherto used to block funds for sugar mills and delay payments to cane farmers. Indian sugar has now developed a strong foothold in the export market reaping the benefits of higher global prices which have almost doubled in last 3 years.

The third factor relates to diversification of product basket of the sugar mills. Sugar sector today is the torchbearer in the country of a circular economy with minimal impact on the envi-

ronment. The industry is creating additional value with co-gen power, potash based fertilizers and use of press mud to generate Compressed Bio Gas (CBG). Sugar industry has effectively tapped bagasse to generate power not only to meet its own requirements but also to provide surplus electricity to the grid. With a capacity of 9500 MW, sugar sector is generating revenues of about 2 10,000 crore from its green power co-generation infrastructure. Water usage by the sugar mills is declining due to increased use of drip irrigation and efficient use of water in the integrated sugar complexes. The sector is well poised to use all these initiatives to earn and monetise carbon credits. The sector is thus meaningfully contributing in meeting India's targets under COP 26 agreements towards Net Zero Emissions.

The increased profitability of sugar mills has also benefitted the two major stakeholder - farmers and consumers. Improved cash flows of the sugar mills have led to faster clearance of cane dues of farmers. The available data shows that as against 73% of the cane dues having been paid out as on 1st July 2020, 90.8% of the dues have been paid to the farmers by the same date this year. The consumer has also gained on account of stability in domestic sugar prices. Though international sugar prices touched an eleven-year high in April, 2023, domestic retail prices have been stable with nominal inflation of less than 3%. In contrast, retail prices in the neighbouring countries are two to four times of what prevails in India.

With additional revenue streams and transition to a green energy hub, sugar sector has become far more robust and self-reliant. This has been possible due to concerted efforts of the stakeholders aided by the conducive policy ecosystem.

(Writer is Secretary, D/o Food & Public Distribution.)

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

#### Manipur Incident

The recent video depicting the horrifying incident in Manipur demands our attention, but one video alone cannot capture the entire state's situation. Chief Minister's acknowledgment of the possibility of more such videos raises serious concerns about police failures and numerous complaints against them. PM Modi's silence on such matters, be it the farmers' agitation or Ekhlaq's death in Noida, is troubling. Internet restrictions in the state hindered timely exposure of the video, and it was raised during Modi's visit to France, leading to international repercussions. Immediate banning of the video is crucial to avoid further unrest. While condemning the heinous crime, PM's response came too late, as the Manipur situation deteriorated since May 3. The root issues, including the Meitei community's demand for Schedule Tribe status, need focused attention to rebuild trust among communities. A concerted effort involving all stakeholders in open dialogue is necessary to address the deep-rooted problems. A joint delegation of parliament members to the state may create confidence among the masses and pave the way for meaningful resolutions.

Yash Pal Ralhan, Jalandhar

#### Shocking Incident

The distressing visuals from Manipur, where two women were paraded naked, are utterly appalling. This highlights the failure of both the Central and State governments in curbing violence. Despite the BJP's 'Beti Bachao Beti Padhao' campaign, the situation in Manipur contradicts their slogans. It is alarming that the Prime Minister has yet to address this issue. Immediate measures must be taken against the perpetrators. Elected representatives must raise this matter in the ongoing monsoon session of the parliament. The urgency to act and bring justice to the victims is paramount.

Muhammad Hassan, Mumbai.

#### PM Modi's Strategic Outreach

During the NDA meeting, Prime Minister Narendra Modi delivered a speech with hidden messages, acknowledging the support of old coalition partners like RLD's Jayant Chaudhary, Akali Dal's Prakash Singh Badal, JDU's Sharad Yadav, and Balasahab Thackeray. The speech holds political significance as both alliances aim to strengthen their positions ahead of the general elections. The NDA held a meeting with 38 political parties, while the opposition convened with 26 parties. BJP might extend a friendly hand to Jayant Chaudhary, and efforts are underway to reunite with Akali Dal in Punjab. PM Modi's intentions become a subject of speculation.

N. Mateeni, Mumbai.

## Unraveling India's Economic Growth: Addressing Disparities and Disturbances



Prof. Sunil Goyal

India, a country of stark contradictions and growing inequalities, now has third highest number of billionaires in the Forbes list but ranks 130 in the Human Development Index (HDI). Ironically, the government's social spending is gradually going down. However, subsidies to rich corporate houses are on an increasing trend. The HDI is not something that makes headlines in the country, nor does the low social spending. The current debate that dominates the Indian state is about whether the country will be given a member of the elite Nuclear Supply Group or not. The Indian government, that considers itself to be the fastest economy of the world, is pushing through an agenda of growth that opens up all doors for private capital investment - both domestic and forests.

In the country, alike many other economies, GDP rates and foreign direct investments are considered to be the magic mantras of development. The fluctuations in the stock market makes bigger news than suicide of farmers and marginalization of the poor at large. That's the reason one of the greatest droughts, that the country faced this year, had the attention of the government drawn via the Supreme Court. The apex court has asked to go beyond knee-jerk responses and address real issues that haunt the drought affected people and regions of the country, something one would normally expect from a welfare state. Not only in times of natural disasters, but in the course of regular process of governance, the country lacks in protecting and developing the many socially excluded groups and communities. Some are deep rooted problems owing to the social systems that prevail across the country but some are problems created by the economic growth models pursued by governments. The last couple of years has seen very disturbing events in the country where 'hatred' and 'divisive politics' have overshadowed the economic growth. The government has been trying to project a face of growth through numerous high-profile projects such as 'Smart City', 'Bullet Train', 'Interlinking of Rivers' so on and so forth. However, the fact re-

mains that from villages to university campuses, from drought prone areas to flood affected zones; disparities, discrepancies and disturbances are growing in number and spread. The Global Peace Index (GPI) 2016 has placed India at 141 rank out of 163 countries that were ranked. It means India is less peaceful than countries like Burundi and Burkina Faso. The same report says violence costs 13.3 per cent of World GDP, that's a huge 13.6 trillion USD. It boils down to a cost of 1876 USD per person. The recent caste census of Government of India, that is being disclosed in trenches, reveals that about 90 per cent of rural India lives under 2.5 USD a day. This shows, how violence can outpace growth. Peace, that is important for growth to be humane, needs to be pursued by governments. And for a government like India, both historic aspects like 'caste system' and current trends like 'communal hatred' needs to be eliminated if the country is serious about growth. Noted economist Nobel laureate Professor Amartya Sen had recently and so rightly said that caste system in India is anti-national and that all such divisions need to be eliminated if a nation has to progress. At a time when the country commits itself to the Agenda 2030 and attain the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), such records of violence, disturbances and exclusions have every potential to over-

power these commitments. Amartya Sen had once said, 'there can't be famine in a democracy.' In this country, where caste and gender are two conditions that determine the status given by accident of birth, we can't achieve SDGs. Hunger and destitution are at the heart of the nation and we are looking forward to SDG as one of the tools to reduce poverty. However, SDG goals be attained with so many dimensions of disparity and poverty existing in India? The answer is certainly a big NO. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) replaced the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) that were not yet met. It includes 17 Sustainable Development Goals with 169 targets, which were adopted by the UN General Assembly on 25 September 2015. The outcome document describes itself as a transformative plan of action for people, planet and prosperity that all countries and all stakeholders will implement. The SDGs are to be achieved between January 2016 and 2030. India is also a signatory to this SDG framework. People in India are concerned about how this framework will be translated into national development goals. How to ensure that the socially excluded communities, especially the Dalits, Adivasis and Minorities are not left behind and excluded from the new development plans and strategies as has been happening in the past. The concept of so-

cial exclusion is seen as covering a remarkably wide range of social and economic problems. It is much graver than just being in poverty, a definite violation of basic human rights. Social exclusion (or marginalization) is a social disadvantage and relegation to the fringe of society, a social phenomenon by which the minority or sub-group is excluded. In fact, experts and civil society experts involved with us feel that addressing inequality would mean eliminating inequalities. Inequalities that exist in access to public goods that hamper living with dignity should be targeted if we want to attain SDGs. The SDGs as such still have lacunae and would not end such inequality issues just by targeting to end poverty. They neither have a mechanism to deal with the exclusions caused by the market economy, now ensure rights to resources. However, SDGs provide for tools with which we can engage with at various levels to not only help meet the goals in the country but also bring in a dynamic advocacy framework to make them effective and evolve further to include the purview of 'Rights.'

(Author is an Eminent Social Scientist, Columnist, and presently posted as Dean and Registrar at Dr. B. R. Ambedkar University of Social Sciences, Dr. Ambedkar Nagar (MHOW), Madhya Pradesh, Email gasspub@gmail.com)



## BRIEF

### Ramkrishna Forgings

**New Delhi:** Ramkrishna Forgings Ltd on Sunday reported a 63 per cent jump in its net profit at Rs 76.97 crore during the June quarter, on account of higher income. It had clocked Rs 47.26 crore net profit in the April-June period of the preceding 2022-23 fiscal, Ramkrishna Forgings said in a statement. The company's total income also rose to Rs 835.95 crore from Rs 650.75 crore in the year-ago quarter, posting a rise of 28 per cent.

### SJVN

**New Delhi:** State-owned SJVN Ltd on Saturday said it has bagged a contract from Punjab State Power Corporation Ltd (PSPCL) for the development and procurement of 1,200 MW of solar power entailing an investment of Rs 7,000 crore. "SJVN Green Energy Ltd (SGEL), a wholly owned subsidiary of SJVN will develop 1000 MW (solar) project anywhere in the country and balance 200 MW in the state of Punjab," a company statement said.

### AU Bank

**Mumbai:** The Jaipur-based AU Small Finance Bank on Saturday reported a 44 per cent rise in net profit at Rs 387 crore in the June quarter helped by growth in interest income and higher loan sales. Total income rose to Rs 2,773 crore from Rs 1,979 crore, while interest income improved to Rs 2,458 crore from Rs 1,820 crore. Net interest income increased by 28 per cent to Rs 1,246 crore from Rs 976 crore in the same quarter a year ago.

### Kia India

**New Delhi:** Automaker Kia India expects its sales to grow by 8-10 per cent this year as compared with 2022 on the back of improved chip supplies and introduction of the updated Seltos in the market, according to a senior company official. The South Korean carmaker, which sells models like Carens, Sonet and Seltos in the Indian market, sold a total of 3.4 lakh units in the domestic and export markets last year. "So last year our domestic sales were about 2.54 lakh units while exports stood at around 80,000 units. So we did about 3.34 lakh units overall."

## Reliance Retail revamping Trends stores with new-age, tech-enabled features



New Delhi, Jul 23 (PTI):

Reliance Retail said it is revamping Trends fashion stores across the country by adding contemporary and tech-enabled features ranging from self-checkout counters to electronic shelf labels to attract customers of younger generations.

Reliance Retail is revamping around 150 Trends stores pan-India with a new brand identity. The stores will have a new look right from the faade

to fixtures, lighting, ceiling and flooring, becoming more aspirational for shoppers, the retailer said.

Trends, an affordable fashion & lifestyle retailer which operates more than 2,300 stores in over 1,100 towns and cities across India, has opened its first such store with a new brand identity in Surat with several more in the pipeline to be opened shortly.

Now all new Trends stores to be opened by Reliance Retail in the fu-

ture will be based on the new format, which may also have a dedicated space for local artisan to showcase the city's identity.

Reliance Fashion & Lifestyle President & CEO Akhilesh Prasad said consumers nowadays are demanding fresh and unique experiences.

"In our latest Trends store opened at VIP Road, Surat, we have introduced a brand new retail identity by incorporating several new-age tech interventions in the form of self-checkouts, electronic shelf labels, RFID-enablement and dual-sided cash tills," Prasad told PTI.

Moreover, several global best practices have also been adapted for merchandising and product display, leading to quicker product discovery, he added.

## Tata AIA Life launches 'Small Cap Discovery Fund'

Mumbai, Jul 23:

Tata AIA Life Insurance (Tata AIA), one of India's leading life insurers, has launched its first dedicated Small-Cap fund, Tata AIA Small Cap Discovery Fund. The New Fund will offer policyholders the opportunity to generate capital appreciation in the long-term by investing in small-cap market capitalisation stocks. The New Fund Offering (NFO) window will remain open from July 10 to July 24, 2023, at Rs. 10 per unit, applicable only during the NFO period.

Commenting on the launch of the Small-Cap Discovery Fund, Harshad Patil, Executive Vice President and Chief Investment Officer (CIO) of Tata AIA Life Insurance, said, "The

Government is focused on formalising the economy during the Amrit Kaal, which will benefit small businesses immensely. Further, growth in consumption demand, rising disposable income, and support for manufacturing will catalyse several smaller companies to become dominant in their sectors. Given these forces, the Tata AIA Small-Cap Discovery Fund offers our policyholders a great opportunity to maximise their investment by spotting such opportunities early and investing in them over the medium to long term."

Tata AIA Small Cap Discovery Fund will primarily invest (up to 65%) in handpicked small-cap companies offering opportunities for long-term wealth creation.

## Adani's \$1.1 bn copper project to start operations from Mar 2024

New Delhi, Jul 23 (PTI):

Billionaire Gautam Adani-led group's copper-producing factory at Mundra in Gujarat will start operations from March next year, helping cut India's dependence on imports and aiding energy transition, sources said.

Copper is known as the "metal of electrification" as deeper electrification requires wires, which are primarily made from copper. Technologies critical to the energy transition like electric vehicles (EVs), charging infrastructure, solar photovoltaics (PV), wind and batteries, all require copper. Kutch Copper Ltd (KCL), a subsidiary of the group's flagship Adani Enterprises Ltd (AEL), is setting up a greenfield copper refinery project for the

## RAKHI FESTIVAL PREPARATIONS



A vendor arranges 'Rakhis' at a shop ahead of Raksha Bandhan festival at Dharavi, in Mumbai, Sunday, July 23.

production of refined copper with 1 million tonnes per annum in two phases.

For Phase-1, capacity of 0.5 million tonnes per annum, KCL has achieved financial closure through a syndicated club loan, sources with direct knowledge of the matter said.

The first phase is expected to become operational by the end of the current fiscal, they said.

Adani, at the company's AGM a few days back, stated, "Of the several projects underway, two of the key ones include the Navi Mumbai Airport and the Copper Smelter, and both are on schedule".

The Rs 8,783 crore-greenfield project completed a full debt tie-up with a consortium of banks led by SBI earlier this year, they said, adding the entire debt requirement of

Rs 6,071 crore for Phase-1 has been provided by the consortium of banks.

The equity for the project has been invested by the parent Adani Enterprises Ltd. In addition, it has got all the major approvals in place to ensure timely execution.

Copper is the third most used industrial metal after steel and aluminium, and its demand is rising on the back of fast-growing renewable energy, telecom and electric vehicle industries.

India's copper production has been unable to meet this demand, and domestic supply disruptions have led to a higher dependency on imported copper. India's imports have been consistently on the rise for the past five years.

## Truecaller's AI-powered Assistant launches in India

Mumbai, Jul 23:

Truecaller, the world's leading global communications platform, has launched Truecaller Assistant in India. Assistant is an innovation that leverages machine learning and cloud telephony to create the most helpful call-screening solution on the planet.

Truecaller Assistant is a customisable, interactive, digital receptionist that answers your calls for you and helps you avoid unwanted callers. Assistant responds quickly and understands your caller with high accuracy. You can see a live transcription of what the caller is saying, so you know who they are and why they're calling. Then you can decide if you want to take over the call, ask the caller for

more information with just a tap or mark it as spam. "Until now, Truecaller would show you who's calling but now you can let Truecaller Assistant have a conversation with the caller on your behalf," said Rishit Jhunjhunwala, MD India at Truecaller. This is a very exciting next step for us in helping people avoid spam and fraud callers completely. We've rolled this out to a few markets earlier, and we are really happy to offer this to Truecaller fans in India."

Truecaller Assistant is available on a free 14-day trial, after which subscribers can add Assistant as part of Truecaller Premium Assistant plan that starts from INR 149 per month (INR 99 as part of the limited promotional deal).

## REDEVELOPED ITPO COMPLEX



The redeveloped ITPO complex which will host the G20 leaders' meeting in September. Prime Minister Narendra Modi is likely to inaugurate the complex on July 26.

## HDFC Bank expects 17-18 pc credit growth this year

New Delhi, Jul 23 (PTI):

Country's biggest private sector lender HDFC Bank expects 17-18 per cent loan growth during the current financial year as there is enough credit demand. Effective July 1, the parent mortgage firm HDFC Ltd merged with its subsidiary HDFC Bank making it the second biggest lender after State Bank of India. During the first quarter, the total advances of the bank rose by 15.8 per cent to Rs 16.15 lakh crore.

"On an overall basis, we are confident that there is enough credit demand. It is for us to see which one we want and what time we start to build in," HDFC Bank Chief Financial Officer (CFO) Srinivasan Vaidyanathan said in a recent call with



analysts. The bank will be selective in terms of credit and will not participate in certain loans, he said, adding, "if the price is not to our liking, we do not need it."

Meanwhile, vice chairman of now merged entity HDFC Ltd Keki Mistry has become the most valued independent director. The market capitalisation of the listed companies including HDFC Bank on which he is an independent director is over Rs 27 lakh crore. Apart from

HDFC Bank, Mistry is also on the boards of Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), HDF Life, Torrent Power and Flipkart, among others.

He is followed by former SBI chairman O P Bhatt; Chairman, Capacity Building Commission, Adil Zainulbhai; and former Central Vigilance Commissioner K V Chowdhury. On the distribution front, Vaidyanathan said, while the bank added 39 branches in the quarter, 1,482 branches were added over the last 12 months. The total number of branches now stands at 7,860.

With regard to cards, he said, the bank has issued 1.5 million cards in the first quarter and the total card stands at 18.4 million.

## Lexus set to foray into used car biz

Roll out first EV in India by 2025



**New Delhi, Jul 23 (PTI):** Luxury carmaker Lexus from next year is looking to foray into the used car business in India, having now completed six years in the market, according to a top company official.

The Japanese carmaker, which currently sells its product range through 23

touch points, aims to transition some of the sales outlets to also cater to the pre-owned car vertical.

Known for its self-charging hybrid cars, Lexus is now gearing up to roll out its first electric model in the country by 2025. In an interaction with PTI, Lexus India President

Naveen Soni said the automaker is now seriously considering the introduction of a structured pre-owned car programme. He noted that the company will initiate the programme in select outlets after taking into account the business viability of the dealer partner. "So I think very soon, by the third quarter or maybe next year beginning, I should say," he stated when asked about the timeframe the company was looking to get into the used car segment. Soni stated that the automaker is studying the market very keenly. "For us, the starting point would be cities where there is a sizable vehicle park," he added.

## Indian mkt growing at good pace: boAt's Aman Gupta

**New Delhi, Jul 23 (PTI):** The audio and wearables market in India is growing at a good pace, driving incremental revenue and production ramp-up plans for boAt, and the company's international blueprint will be set in motion only from FY25 onwards, its co-founder Aman Gupta has said.

The overseas plans are currently in the making, but for now, the company is determined to cement its position in the smartwatches segment, its biggest focus this year.

"For this year, our focus is not international...we are putting (building) blocks so that by next year, we should start looking at international...This year, we are trying to test the waters with some markets," Gupta told PTI. Overall, boAt is targeting gross sales of about Rs 5,000 crore in FY24.

## Local assembly of EVs in India just a matter of time: BMW

New Delhi, Jul 23 (PTI):

German luxury carmaker BMW will locally produce its electric vehicles in India, and it is just a matter of time as the company's vehicles continue to gain traction in the market, according to a senior company official.

BMW, which saw 9 per cent of its sales in India coming from EVs in the first half of 2023, expects to reach up to 25 per cent by 2025.

"As the volumes grow, as we have done with every other product, we will localise them (EVs), and we will produce them (locally)," BMW Group India President Vikram Pawah told PTI in an interview.

The localisation of EVs in India has two aspects,



"one is the volume here, and the other one is the technology," he noted.

"It is just a matter of time. There has to be some inertia of the volumes and stability. We're seeing good signs now. It's still early days...We have delivered only 500 cars across four models in the first six months, that is still small from that perspective, but it is clearly

growing fast," Pawah said. He was responding to a query on BMW's plans for locally producing its EVs in India.

BMW's electric vehicles comprise models like the i7, iX, i4 and MINI SE.

"We sold over 500 cars in the first half (of 2023), which is 46 per cent more than what we sold in the entire year last year...We are the absolute leaders in

the premium electric vehicles segment because we have over 50 per cent market share," he said, adding the company's iX is the best-selling battery electric vehicle in the Indian market.

On the other aspect of technology, he said it needs to be stabilised as well.

"We, as BMW, are already on a generation five batteries because we started way back in 2013. We are not new to this technology. We have already progressed so far that we are already into generation five of this technology, and we are already working on generation six. So we'll make a decision about what is the right time, which one to localise at which time...It will be soon," Pawah said.



## City roads become home to animals, increased risk of accidents

Unused cattle shed worth Rs 15 lakh raises questions

Central Chronicle News

**Rajim, Jul 23:** City roads in Rajim have turned into impromptu shelters for animals, posing an increased risk of accidents for commuters. From a few to groups of eight, ten, or even fifteen to twenty animals, can be seen occupying the roads at various locations.

The presence of animals on the thoroughfares not only inconveniences commuters but also escalates the potential for accidents, creating an unpredictable and hazardous situation.

Despite the matter being brought to the attention of local authorities, department has not taken measures to address the issue of animal encroachments on the roads. The lack of action raises concerns over the safety of commuters and the possi-



bility of severe accidents. The problem is not confined to the city alone, as rural areas also face similar challenges. The state government's efforts to control the situation have proven ineffective so far. A cattle shed built at a cost of 15 lakh rupees under the supervision of the Nagar Panchayat in Ward No. 15 remains un-

used. The construction of the cattle shed was intended to create a safe and secure space for livestock, yet it has not been put to use as planned. Surprisingly, despite the significant investment, the shed remains open without the walls that were supposed to enclose it.

Rajim, being a revered

holy city, attracts a considerable number of devotees from all corners of the country, visiting for temple rituals, worship, and even immersion of ashes. However, these pilgrims often encounter difficulties and inconveniences in their journeys due to animals obstructing the roads.

The NH-130 C and

Mahasamund Highway roads, in particular, witness alarming situations as vehicles navigate through the herds of animals. The severity of the situation demands immediate attention.

Furthermore, the absence of a bypass road in the city compounds the traffic issues, as vehicles, including trucks for loading and unloading, are compelled to use internal roads. With both sides of these roads filled with mud and water, commuting becomes a challenging task for drivers.

The resulting inconvenience adds to the distress faced by commuters. Bhagwat Sahu, President of the Farmers' Service Committee, and former President Bhole Sahu have urged farmers to take responsibility for their cattle's safety.

## Motivational lecture and weapons exhibition organized

● In GNPGC for awareness among students by 40th ITBP Battalion

Central Chronicle News

**Dongargarh, Jul 22:** On occasion of 'Azadi-Ka-Amrut-Mahotsav', the jawans of 40th ITBP Battalion organised a motivational lecture for students of Govt. Nehru PG College (GNPGC) in Kanhargaoon and also put up an exhibition of weapons and in this 61 boys and 24 girls took part.

The ITBP jawans through exhibition of weapons in this programme gave information to students about the weapons and how it is being operated and with this many students got awareness and rekindled



with feeling of patriotism. Through this programme all the students were motivated about the importance of education and about their responsibilities towards the country and to remain associated with the defence forces of the country in the near future. In addition to this the students were providing counselling for a better future.

Principal EV Rewati hailed the organisation of this programme and pro-

posed vote of thanks towards the officers and jawans of 40th ITBP Battalion and urged to organise such programmes in the near future for the benefits of the students.

This programme was organised under leadership of Commandant 40th ITBP Narayan Dutt and which in view of various social importance was successful an effort on part of ITBP and was very much inspirational for future of the students.

## English Language week held in SAGES



Central Chronicle News

**Dongargarh, Jul 22:** English Language week-2023 was celebrated in Swami Atmanand Excellent Hindi and English Medium School (SAGES) here on Saturday

and on the concluding day, different types of competitions were organised under guidance of Principal YS Rao.

Principal in his talks informed that the objective of holding this English week was to develop better

understanding of students towards English and to include it in their day-to-day usage. In this programme, the students took part in various competitions.

Thereafter the senior teachers of the School, ex-

pressed their views on history of English, its importance and on globalisation of English. To make this programme successful, the teachers of the school played an important role and it was conducted by Lecturer Farha Anjum.

## Rahul Sen expresses gratitude towards LS MP Sao

● For raising the issue of investors refund from Sahara India's in LS

Central Chronicle News

**Rajim, Jul 23:** The BJP leader Rahul Sen has expressed gratitude towards the central government and state BJP chief Arun Sao on starting of the portal by Union Home Minister Amit Sao for refund of the investment worth crore made by the investors in Sahara India.

It was also mentioned that LS MP from Bilaspur Arun Sao put forth the problems of investors and agents of Sahara India in the Lok Sabha. Sao raised this issue under rule 377 in the LS.

In the Lok Sabha Sao mentioned that hard earned funds of investors worth lakhs have been deposited in different schemes of Sahara India, but till date they are wandering door-to-door of Sahara India office in search of its refund.

Sahara has deposited funds worth Rs 24000 cr

into the account of SEBI, but the investors are not getting it back and due to which they are facing many problems and posing problems of livelihood before the Sahara India's agents as well.

Set aside this there is situation of controversy on this issue before thousands of Sahara's agents. Rahul Sen said that it is with efforts of LS MP Arun Sao that path is now clear for the refunds of funds worth crore that of the investors from Sahara India.

Sao assertively put forth

the problems and inconvenience in the Parliament being caused to Sahara's investors and it is due to the same, that the central government in order to refund the amount, has started the refund portal.

With this the investors who have invested their hard-earned money into Sahara would now be able to get it in the coming 45 days. For this procedure, none of the investor has to go to any agents of Sahara India and it is sitting at home or through mobile and computers they can apply for refund.

## 'Smart-Class Lage Le Mor Padhai Ma Ab Bahut Man Lagat Hai'

Central Chronicle News

**Korba, Jul 23:** SECL has installed smart-classes in about 700 government schools of Chhattisgarh-Jharkhand village is located a few kilometers away from SECL's Dipka Mega Project. Gaurav Singh, studying in Class VIII of the Government Pre-Secondary School here, is excited to talk about smart-class installed at his school.

There are many such villages around his village Jharkhand where for the first time, modern techniques of teaching and learning like smart classes have been installed in government schools. He says, "School mein hamla projector le padhaye jathe au smart-



class lage le more padhaani ma ab bahut mann lagta hai. Ekar se padhe maa bahut maza aavat he, jekar se hamla roz school aaye ke man karthey." (We are taught using projectors in our school and since the installation of smart class I am more interested in my studies. Learning in smart-class is fun and I love going to school everyday).

### What is Smart Class?

Traditionally, children in schools have been taught by teachers through the blackboard by verbally explaining things. When education is imparted through electronic devices in the class, then it is called a smart-class or digital classroom. In such a class, instead of black-board or white-board, digital board or interactive board is used. It is connected to the computer with the help of cable and along with this a projector is connected to the computer with the help of VGA cable. A classroom where teaching and learning is done with the help of these electronic devices is called a smart-class.

## 696 smart classes have been made by SECL in schools of Korba and Raigarh districts

Sensing the possibilities of development of educational infrastructure in government schools of Koyalanchal, SECL planned to introduce smart classes in these schools through CSR. Under this, smart classes have been set-up in 500 government schools of Korba district by the company at a cost of about Rs 9 cr through the District Collector Korba. In this mainly projector-based teaching techniques has been adopted. On the other hand, 113 smart classes have been developed at a cost of Rs 4.68 cr through the district administration Raigarh in government schools built within 25 km radius of SECL office in Raigarh district. Along with this, 83 interactive boards/smart-class facilities have been developed in schools in Raigarh, Dharamjaigarh, and Kharsia tehsils of Raigarh district at a cost of Rs 2.75 crore. Smart classes are allowing children to enjoy studying, they are becoming more eager to learn. With the formation of smart-classes, the children of tribal areas studying in government schools are also getting education through modern teaching methods. Due to this, children are becoming more confident and they are more eager to read and learn something new. Speaking in English, Gaurav Dadsena, studying in class 11th at Government Natwar English School, Raigarh, says that the teachers at our school teach us and clear our doubts related to various subjects through smart-classes. He says that with the introduction of smart classes, a different learning environment has been created in the school. In recent years, several steps are being taken in the state of Chhattisgarh to increase the Gross Enrolment Ratio of children from classes I to VIII. According to the Government of India's Economic Survey 2022-23 report, in the year 21-22, the gross enrolment ratio of children from class one to eighth in the state of Chhattisgarh has been around 96%. Initiatives like smart-classes in government schools are making a significant contribution in this direction and are awakening a new interest in children towards studies.

## SECL procurement crosses 346 cr from GeM portal in this financial year

● Ministry of Coal awarded for procurement on GeM portal, SECL contributing actively

Central Chronicle News

**Korba, Jul 23:** SECL has procured goods and services worth more than 346 cr through GeM (Government e-Marketplace) portal. GeM Portal is an online portal created for Government procurement. Launched in 2016, the portal aims to make procurement by the government and its undertakings efficient, transparent, and inclusive.

From April 2023 till now, the company has purchased goods worth more than 172 cr and services worth more than 174 cr through the GeM portal. Broadly speaking, the company has registered a growth of around 13% as compared to



the same period of the previous financial year.

Recently, the Ministry of Coal has been awarded in the "Best Engagement" category and Coal India in the "Rising Star" category for e-procurement through GeM by the Ministry of Commerce. In this achievement of the Ministry of Coal and Coal India, subsidiary companies have contributed significantly, in which SECL has also played an active role.

Products and services related to the coal mining have been purchased by SECL through the GeM portal, ranging from nut-bolts to large

HEMM (Heavy Earth Moving Machinery) machines used in mines such as 240 tonne dumper, 42 cubic meter shovel, dozer, grader etc.

Along with this, the company is purchasing products like weigh bridge and various other products and services related to, electronics and telecommunication, IT, electrical and mechanical, and revenue items through the GeM portal.

For all products and services used by the company in its operations, company is ensuring 100% procurement through GeM. In case of non-availability of any product on the GeM

Portal, the Company is procuring them through custom bidding as per the provisions of the GeM Portal.

Along with this, the company is also issuing high value tenders related to mining services through GeM. In the month of March, a tender worth Rs 2063 crore was issued by the company on GeM portal for coal handling, transport and other mining activities in Gevra mine. This tender was the largest tender issued by any company for Mining Services (Composite Work).

SECL is promoting the use of GeM portal to simplify the process of inviting tenders for procurement of goods and services and to bring in greater transparency in compliance with the guidelines of the Government of India.

In the last financial year, the company procured items worth a record Rs 923 crore through GeM and this year also the company is moving towards a bigger target.

## Education department team raided 13 schools of Bhopalpatnam block

● Five schools found closed, 34 teachers absent  
● DEO advised discipline in the institutions  
● Notice issued to 34 teachers, including Principal, with pay cut action

Central Chronicle News

**Bhopalpatnam, Jul 23:** In a surprise inspection conducted by the education department team in Bijapur district, shocking discrepancies were uncovered in 13 schools of the Bhopalpatnam block. Among the startling findings were five schools found completely closed and a staggering 34 teachers absent from their duties. The inspection, which took



place on Saturday morning, covered schools in Madded, Sanganpalli, Gilgichcha, Kongupalli, Pamgal, Uskaled, and Bhattiguda villages. Locks were discovered hanging on the doors of six schools, raising concerns about the lack of accountability and commitment to education in the region.

District Education Officer, B. R. Baghel, who led the inspection team, expressed grave concern over the situation. He emphasized the need for discipline in the operation of educational institutions to ensure quality education for the students. The team scrutinized

various aspects of school functioning, including classroom operations, teacher diaries, mid-day meal arrangements, time tables, and records. Strict instructions were given to maintain these records diligently in accordance with the rules.

Moreover, the team urged schools to put in extra effort to align teaching with the syllabus, and stressed the importance of maintaining a clean and attractive environment conducive to learning.

In response to the alarming absenteeism, the District Education Officer issued a notice to 34 teachers, including

the in-charge principal, warning them of impending pay cuts for their negligence. Baghel reiterated that regular teaching is fundamental to achieving quality education and called on the Education Department's entire team to carry out inspections promptly to ensure educational standards are met.

As the district sets a target for enhancing education quality in the next three months, such surprise inspections are deemed necessary to rectify the prevailing issues and achieve the desired educational outcomes.



## Satwik-Chirag win fourth title of year at Korea Open

Yeosu (Korea), Jul 23 (PTI):

India's Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty continued their dream run, clinching the men's doubles title at the Korea Open with a gritty three-game win over world number one Fajar Alfian and Muhamad Rian Ardianto in the final here on Sunday.

Playing their fourth final of the year, the world No. 3 Indians rallied their way to a 17-21, 21-13, 21-14 win over the two-time world championships bronze medallists Alfian and Ardianto in a thrilling summit clash of the Super 500 badminton tournament.

"The way we played today in the finals, didn't start off that well but happy that we could win



that second game and keep the momentum until the very end. Yes, extremely happy that we could win consecutive titles after the Indonesia Open," Chirag said after the

match. The reigning Commonwealth Games champions thus extended their winning streak to 10 matches. It was another feather on their cap, following their victo-

ry at the Swiss Open, Asian Championships and Indonesia Open this year.

"It's been pretty good week for us. We played some amazing badminton

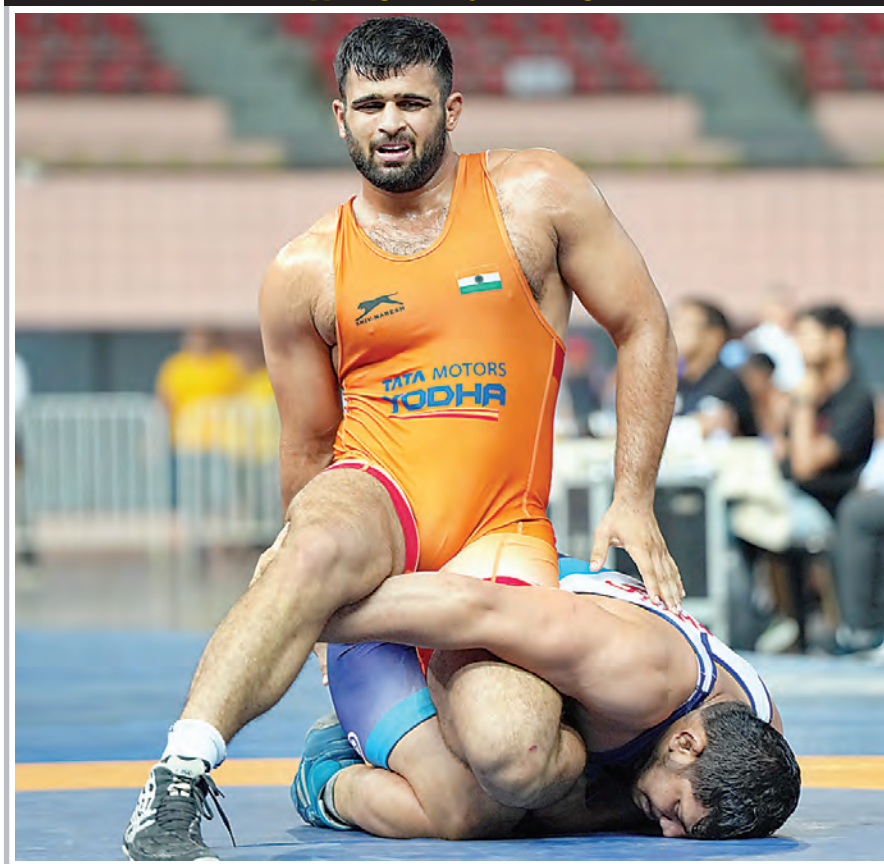
throughout the week here and I am happy with the performance today. We want to continue with the same momentum next week at Japan Open. So, we'll go back now, rest and focus again," Satwik said.

The Indian pair had a 2-2 head-to-head record against Asian Games silver medallists Alfian and Ardianto but they had beaten the Indonesians on last two occasions.

The Indians rallied a little subdued in the beginning as they trailed in the opening game but they recovered in the fog end, narrowing a 10-19 deficit with a six-point burst before falling short.

However, they found the momentum in the second game and dominated the proceedings thereafter to come up trumps.

### WRESTLING TRIALS



Vicky of Haryana (in blue) and Sahil of Punjab compete in the men's freestyle 97 kg category event during the Asian Games 2023 wrestling trials, at IG Stadium in New Delhi, Sunday, July 23.

## Alcaraz wins again at Hopman Cup



Nice (France), Jul 23 (AP):

Wimbledon champion Carlos Alcaraz beat No. 15-ranked Borna Coric of Croatia 6-3, 6-7(6) 10-5 in the Hopman Cup.

The top-ranked Spaniard, who beat 23-time Grand Slam winner Novak Djokovic in a five-set Wimbledon thriller last Sunday, had only three aces compared to six for Coric but saved the two break points he faced on

Saturday. It was Alcaraz's second straight victory here after winning against David Goffin of Belgium on Friday. The exhibition event at the Nice Lawn Club in southern France has mixed teams representing their nation in singles and doubles. Alcaraz played doubles alongside Rebeka Masarova but lost to Coric and Donna Vekic 1-6 6-4 14-12. The tournament final is scheduled for Sunday.

## Sumit Nagal wins Tampere Open title

■ Grabs 4th career Challenger trophy

Tampere, Jul 23 (PTI):

Indian tennis player Sumit Nagal beat Dalibor Svrčina of the Czech Republic in straight sets to clinch the Tampere Open title here. Nagal beat Svrčina 6-4 7-5 to emerge victorious.

It happens to be Nagal's fourth ATP Challenger title in five outings, with this being his second crown this year, having won the Garden Open in Rome in April. Nagal was off to a wobbly start to the match, losing his first serve game as Svrčina raced to a 3-0 lead and extended it to 4-1. However,



the Indian immediately regained his composure and broke back successively on three instances to send the Czech onto the backfoot, as the seventh-seeded Indian seized the opening set 6-4, thanks to some great play from the baseline. Having shown composure in the latter stages of the opening set, Nagal

started positively in the following set and broke Svrčina to race to a 4-1 lead. However, the fifth-seeded Czech used his smartness and instantly broke back to have things back on serve.

Regardless, the break wasn't enough to trouble Nagal, as he upped his ante and re-broke Svrčina,

eventually taking a 5-3 lead.

Svrčina was in no mood to go down without a fight, and engaged in some brutal exchange of shots during the Indian's serve and broke back again for a glimmer of hope to take the match to the decider.

But, it appeared to be that kind of day for Svrčina where he put his best, only to be quickly overpowered by Nagal.

At 5-5, Nagal broke Svrčina yet again, leading 6-5. Serving it out for the championship, the Czech engaged in some last-gasp power-hitting and saved three match points. Finally, he fell in the fourth match point, as the Indian closed the contest in an hour and 44 minutes.

## Joshua Da Silva reveals how Virat Kohli made his mother's 'day & year'

Port of Spain, Jul 23 (PTI):

India have the upper hand in the ongoing second and final Test against the West Indies at the Queen's Park Oval, thanks to Virat Kohli's knock of 121. Meanwhile, the 34-year-old Indian also impressed off the field when he met Caribbean wicketkeeper Joshua Da Silva's mother, with the Trinidadian revealing that the meeting made his mom's 'day & year'. In a video posted on social media by the BCCI, Da Silva said that his mother arrived at the venue to meet the Indian talisman rather than her son. "My mom told me two days before the Test match that she will come to



see Virat Kohli, not me. That was kind of funny. It just so happened that he was on the bus. "So, I went and knocked on the window. He came out and met my mom, made her day, made her year probably," he said in the video, where it is shown that Kohli shares a smile with Da Silva's mother, while the latter is also seen hugging him and is visibly excited to meet him in person.

## Ashwin, Siraj keep India's hopes of win alive

Port of Spain, Jul 23 (PTI):

Ravichandran Ashwin produced a peach of a delivery while Mohammed Siraj made the old ball talk as a defensive West Indies crawled their way to 229 for 5 against India on a rain-hit third day of the second Test, here on Saturday.

Only 67 overs were possible on the third day with West Indies batters looking for a draw, adding just 143 runs. They are still 209 runs behind India's first innings score of 438.

However, there was no let-up in intensity in Indian bowling as Ashwin bowled the 'ball of the series' and Siraj delivered a perfect in-cutter to clean up Joshua Da Silva just at



the stroke of rain-break to end the day on an even keel on the flattest of decks. West Indies skipper Kraigg Brathwaite (75 off

235 balls) used his enormous powers of concentration to frustrate the Indian attack on an insipid track before world's

No. 1 Test bowler held the centre stage with a magical moment that brought the smiles back in Indian camp. The track on offer

here is a poor advertisement for Test cricket and if it gets any rating other than "Average" from ICC that will be a real surprise.

If West Indies were indiscreet in their shot selection in the opening Test, the home team batters were over-cautious and a lifeless pitch helped their negative approach and a draw seems an inevitability. Toiling for close to 73 overs on a track which at best can be called "dead", Ashwin (33-10-61-1) bowled a delivery that had flight and required inward drift which was good enough to entice Brathwaite to plonk his front-foot for his umpteenth defensive prod.

But to his horror, the ball turned sharply, an off-spinner's dream delivery

that went between bat and pad to hit the stumps.

A compact defensive player, Brathwaite's only fault was pushing his bat slightly ahead of his pad instead of keeping it close. It allowed the ball to exploit the gap to the fullest.

The dismissal came just when Brathwaite and an equally stodgy Jermaine Blackwood (20 off 92 balls) brought their ultra-defensive "A" game to the fore adding only 40 runs in 21 overs in the post-lunch session. The figures of Ravindra Jadeja at that stage (25-10-37-2) was an indication enough that defending wasn't difficult as he hardly bowled any wicket-taking deliveries during the post-lunch session.

## Amanda Ilestedt's late goal gives Sweden 2-1 win over South Africa

Wellington, Jul 23 (AP):

Amanda Ilestedt scored in the 89th minute to give Sweden a 2-1 win over South Africa in its Group G opener at the on Sunday and deny South Africa the first major upset of the tournament.

South Africa shocked Sweden when Hildad Migala scored in the 48th minute. But Sweden got on the board in the 64th minute with Fridolina Rolfö's equalizer.

Ilestedt then produced a perfect header from a corner with a minute left to help Sweden escape at the end of an unimpressive opening game effort.

Sweden was expected to comfortably win the group and its first match against 54th-ranked South Africa looked to be its easiest. But after a scoreless first half, Sweden came out of the locker room flat and South Africa capitalized with



Sweden's defender #13 Amanda Ilestedt (R) celebrates scoring her team's second goal with teammates during the Australia and New Zealand 2023 Women's World Cup Group G football match between Sweden and South Africa at Wellington Stadium, also known as Sky Stadium, in Wellington on July 23.

the first goal of the match three minutes after the restart. Thembi Kgatlanga dropped behind the defence and struck a high shot that keeper Zecira Musovic could only parry. Migala hurred herself forward with such force she was carried into the goal along with the ball. Sweden failed to take advantage of a dominant first half in which it had 71% of possession, eight corners and five shots on goal, three on target.

Finally urged into action, Sweden pressed forward and equalized when Johanna Kaneryd's sweeping cross from the right side missed the head of Stina Blackstenius but fell at the feet of Rolfö and ended in the net. South Africa played in new all-black uniforms, a departure from its usual green away strip, and the jerseys were a stark contrast to Sweden's all-gold on a gloomy, rainy evening at Wellington Regional Stadium.

## Netherlands shuts down Portugal 1-0

Dunedin, Jul 23 (AP):

Stefanie van der Gragt scored on a header in the 13th minute, leading the Netherlands to a 1-0 win over Portugal at the Women's World Cup on Sunday as the 2019 finalists began their tournament run.

The Dutch defender gathered herself as teammate Sherida Spitse lofted a corner kick her way, then headed the ball across the goal into the far side of the net. An offside review delayed the celebration.

The goal by the 30-year-old van der Gragt, who plans to retire after the Women's World Cup, was the quickest first goal of the tournament. The Dutch controlled the tempo of the game Portugal's first shot of the match didn't come until the 82nd minute.

The meeting with the Netherlands, ranked No. 9 in the world, marked Portugal's first-ever tournament appearance.

On hand were 11,991 spectators, who were sheltered from the rain

inside Dunedin's covered Forsyth Barr Stadium, known as the Glasshouse, which has a capacity of 25,947.

Though most of the crowd appeared to be Dutch fans, a small but mighty group of Portuguese supporters with flags and team apparel banged on drums throughout the game, the beat echoing across the venue.

Van der Gragt's first-half goal gave the Dutch a lead and allowed them to play lockdown defense. Both teams played a physical game, but Portugal was unable to match the Netherlands' technical mastery.

The Dutch victory raises the stakes for their upcoming rematch with two-time defending world champion United States, which defeated the Netherlands 2-0 in that 2019 final. A winner in that match will gain control of Group E and could very well wrap up a berth in the knockout stage. Portugal failed to break through and become the first of the eight newcomers in the Women's World Cup to get a win.



## NDRF ends search operation at Maha landslide site

● Tolls stays at 27

Mumbai, Jul 23 (PTI):

The National Disaster Response Force has finally called off its search-and-rescue operation in Wednesday's landslide in Irshalwadi in Maharashtra's Raigad district, state minister Uday Samant said on Sunday.

Addressing a press conference, Samant, who is guardian minister of Raigad, said the decision was taken in consultation with the district administration and other concerned authorities as well as local residents.



NDRF personnel during a search and rescue operation following a landslide at Irshalwadi village, in Raigad district, Sunday.

So far, 27 bodies have been recovered while 57 are untraceable, officials

said, adding that no body was found from the debris on Sunday.

These include 12 men, 10 women and four children, while one corpse has

not been identified as yet, they added.

At least 17 of 48 houses in the remote tribal village, which is at least an hour away from a motorable road, were fully or partially buried in the landslide that took place around 10:30pm on July 19.

The National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) and other agencies resumed the search and rescue operation for the fourth day on Sunday at Irshalwadi, some 80 kilometres from Mumbai, after calling it off the previous evening due to darkness and inclement weather.

### Athawale to Maha govt

## 'Relocation plan for residents of hilly areas needed'

Thane, Jul 23 (PTI):

Union minister Ramdas Athawale on Sunday suggested the Maharashtra government draft a plan to relocate residents of hilly areas in the state on priority.

He was speaking to reporters after visiting the shelter housing survivors of the Irshalwadi landslide tragedy in Khalapur tehsil in Raigad district.

Athawale also said the state government can explore the possibility of shifting the residents of hilly terrains to foothills to save them from any potential calamity.

"The state government should work out a plan to rehabilitate and relocate such people on priority and appoint a committee," the Union minister said.



He said the permanent relocation and rehabilitation of the people living in hilly regions was the only solution to prevent the Irshalwadi-like incident.

Irshalwadi hamlet, located on the slope of Sahyadri mountain in Khalapur tehsil, was flattened by a massive landslide on Wednesday night. Rescuers have received 27 bodies till Saturday, while at least 81 people remain

untraced.

Athawale was told that residents of Irshalwadi had in fact come down and constructed dwellings but the forest department razed them, due to which they returned to their original location.

"The Forest department is governed by rules and Acts. In such cases, the state and the Centre can resolve issues with the Forest department. The state government can acquire the forest land and in return allocate alternative land," he suggested.

Meanwhile, Raigad Resident Deputy Collector (RDC) Sandesh Shirke said camps are being organised for the last two days to issue various certificates and government cards to the landslide survivors.

New Delhi, Jul 23 (PTI):

The NIA has filed a chargesheet against three "individual terrorists" associated with banned Khalistani outfits BKI and KTF, exposing their international nodes involved in the recruitment and handling of India-based terror operatives, an official said on Sunday.

Six other associates working for the Babbar Khalsa International and Khalistan Tiger Force were also named in the chargesheet filed before a special court on Sunday, also highlighting a complex mechanism of fund raising for the two outfits, a spokesperson of the agency said. The National Investigation Agency (NIA) said it is also investigating the links of 16 other absconding and arrested accused associated with the BKI and KTF.

The spokesperson said the three notorious gang-

sters-turned-terrorists and drug-smugglers

— Harwinder Singh Sandhu alias 'Rinda', Lakhbir Singh Sandhu alias 'Landa' of BKI and Arshdeep Singh alias 'Arsh Dala' of KTF — are based outside the country and have created their own networks of operatives there to carry out terror activities in India.

"Through this complex network of operatives based abroad, they have been recruiting, motivating and handling their associates in India to carry out terrorist activities, extortion and cross-border smuggling of weapons and drugs into India.

"They also have linkages with major gangs operating in north India, including local gangsters, organized criminal syndicates and networks," the spokesperson said.

According to the NIA, Rinda is a very important BKI member and

## PRAYER FOR PEACE



A man holds a candle during a prayer for Manipur organised by CCBI, at Sacred Heart Cathedral in New Delhi, Sunday.

## NIA exposes int'l nodes of Khalistani terror groups, their complex fund raising mechanism

Khalistani operative. "In the year 2018-19, he fled to Pakistan illegally and is currently living there under the patronage of ISI, and is involved in the commission of terrorist activities against India.

"Rinda is involved in various offences like smuggling of arms, ammunition explosives and drugs into Indian territory from Pakistan, recruitment of BKI operatives, murders, raising funds for BKI through extortion in the states of Punjab and Maharashtra," the spokesperson said.

The official said Rinda has been involved in many terrorist activities, including the RPG attack on the Punjab Police Intelligence headquarters in May 2022, and was declared an "individual terrorist" along with Dala and Landa by the centre, the agency said. Moga resident Dala is an infamous gangster who left for Canada sometime

back and came in contact with Hardeep Singh Nijjar who was the chief of proscribed terrorist organization KTF, according to the spokesperson.

The duo engaged in the recruitment of youth and formation of terrorist gangs for carrying out extortion for raising funds for KTF and for carrying out targeted killing of businessmen and leaders of particular communities in Punjab, the spokesperson said.

The official said Landa of Tarn Taran was initially involved in criminal and gangster activities and left for Canada in 2017 where he came in contact with Rinda.

Landa started working for the BKI and emerged as the main accused in a number of terrorist incidents, including the RPG attack on Punjab Police Intelligence headquarters and RPG attack on Sarhali Police station in Tarn

Taran in December, 2022.

He was also the mastermind of the conspiracy to kill Punjab Police Sub Inspector Dilbagh Singh in August last year, the spokesperson said.

The agency said other foreign-based chargesheeted operatives of BKI include Harjot Singh who is currently in the USA, Kashmir Singh Galwadi, who is absconding in the Nabha Jailbreak case and suspected to be presently in Nepal, and Landa's broyher Tarsem Singh, currently in Dubai.

Gurjant Singh, who is hiding in Australia, is amongst the foreign-based nodes of KTF who has been chargesheeted, the spokesperson said, adding other accused chargesheeted are Deepak Ranga and Lucky Khokhar alias 'Denis', who were recruited by foreign-based handlers for carrying out terror activities in India.

## Environmentalists, activists sound alarm over Forest (Conservation) Amendment Bill 2023

New Delhi, Jul 23 (PTI):

As the Lok Sabha prepares for a crucial vote on the Forest (Conservation) Amendment Bill 2023 during the ongoing Monsoon session, environmentalists, activists and other stakeholders across the Himalayas are sounding the alarm over the potential ramifications of the Bill in its current form.

Key amendments proposed to The Forest (Conservation) Act (FCA), 1980 include adding a preamble, renaming the Act to 'Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam', limiting its applicability to lands recorded as forest in government records, and ex-

empting certain categories of land from its purview.

Conservationists argue that limiting the applicability of the FCA to land recorded as forest in government records would effectively invalidate the Supreme Court's 1996 judgment in the TN Godavarman case, which said the Act was applicable to land covered under the "dictionary meaning of forests" or "deemed forests" (forests not officially recorded as forests). The environment ministry says the application of the Act on land covered under dictionary meaning of forests (or deemed forests) has resulted in a "declining tendency in plantations in non-forest

lands owing to the apprehension among individuals, organisations and authorities regarding such plantations being considered forests". "This misapprehension is becoming a hindrance in enhancing green cover to fulfil the Nationally Determined Contribution targets of creating additional carbon sink of 2.5 to 3 billion tonnes of CO2 equivalent," it says. The amendment bill also exempts forest land up to 10 hectares for constructing security-related infrastructure and the area falling within 100 km of international borders, Line of Control (LoC) and Line of Actual Control (LAC) for "strategic and security-related projects of national impor-

ance". Besides, the environment ministry proposes to exempt forest land up to 5 hectares in Left Wing Extremism affected areas from the purview of the FCA for the construction of public utility projects such as schools, water facilities and telecommunication services, to address the challenges faced by the residents of these forested regions. States, including Himachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Sikkim, Tripura, Mizoram and Assam, told a 31-member Joint Parliamentary Committee that reviewed the Bill that such a step could potentially encompass large areas of their forest land and also affect the tribals and other traditional forest dwelling communities.

## 'Rumours, fake news fuelling violence in Manipur'

Imphal, Jul 23 (PTI):

The ethnic violence in Manipur that erupted on May 3 and has left over 160 dead has been largely fuelled by rumours and fake news, according to officials from various security agencies who have been monitoring the situation in the restive north-eastern state.

The despicable May 4 incident in Kangpokpi district, where two women were paraded naked and assaulted by several people, was among the spate of sexual attacks that occurred after a picture of a body wrapped in polythene was circulated in the Imphal valley with a false claim that the victim had been murdered by tribals in Churachandpur.

The picture was later found to be that of a

woman murdered in the national capital but the fire had engulfed the valley by that time, and what was witnessed the next day put humanity to shame, says an official while referring to the video of the Kangpokpi incident that appeared on social media last week and has sparked massive outrage in the country.

On the same day, barely 30 km away, two more women in their 20s were brutally raped and murdered.

The lawlessness because of the fake picture spread like jungle fire and was one of the reasons for the state government to shut down the Internet on May 3, the officials said.

A section of parties and activists have opposed the suspension of the Internet. Refusing to

interfere, the Supreme Court on July 17 asked the Manipur government to raise its grievance before the high court against the HC's earlier order on a limited restoration of the Internet in the state.

Analysis by various security agencies engaged in dousing the fire in Manipur, which has been on the boil since May 3, has led to the conclusion that there is "no control on fake or one-sided news being circulated even by local newspapers".

Citing a recent example, they said one of the prominent dailies had claimed that tribal men, armed with weapons, had planned to attack the members of the majority community at Kwaha village of Chandel district. Alarmed by the news report, Manipur po-

lice swung into action, only to find that the news report was false. The police issued a statement saying that there was no attempt to burn any village as reported in some local dailies and again appealed that only verified information in sensitive cases should be published.

Police have dedicated 'Rumour Free Number' 9233522822 for verifying any information emerging either through social media or word of mouth and checking the spread of disinformation.

Another video showing tribal youths marching in Churachandpur a few days back was circulated in the valley with subtleties claiming that the tribals will snatch women and children from the majority community.

## PADDY PLANTATION



Farmers plant paddy saplings at a field, in Karad, Sunday.

## Autistic woman provides sports kit worth lakhs of rupees

● To differently-abled girl

Bhadrak, Jul 23 (PTI):

An autistic woman has come forward to provide sports kit worth lakhs of rupees to a differently-abled girl in Odisha's Bhadrak district to help her participate in international sporting events. Leela Tanya Choudhury has provided sports kits worth Rs 3.7 lakh to wheelchair-bound fencer Madhusmita Sahu.

Bhadrak District Collector Siddeshwar Baliram Bondar handed over the kit to polio-afflicted Madhusmita Sahu at his office and wished her all suc-

cess in the presence of 22-year-old Tanya and her younger sister Diksha.

"When we read the news in a website about Madhusmita seeking support to participate in an international event, Tanya showed interest to support her. We immediately contacted the news website to find out the details. They helped us connect to Madhusmita and her coach Rakhil Kumar Sethi," said Tanya's mother Joshma Choudhury, a certified counsellor for special children. Tanya's father P Choudhury said they reached out to the Collector of Bhadrak and expressed willingness to

sponsor the kit so that Madhusmita could represent India at international competitions.

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