

National News

Ganesh Utsav begins across the country with traditional gaiety

Agency
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The ten day long festival of Ganesh Utsav begins today with great devotion today. The festival marks the birth of Lord Ganesh, who is a symbol of wisdom, prosperity and good fortune. People place clay idols of Lord Ganesh in their home and worship them.

Ganesh Chaturthi is a major attraction in Maharashtra, where people celebrate it with great zeal. On the first day of the festival, devotees are welcoming the idols of Lord Ganesh to their homes and at public pandals in various parts of the state.

AIR correspondent reports that amid chanting of Ganapati Bappa Morya, people in Mumbai and rest of the state are giving a warm welcome to their favourite God, Lord Ganesh at their homes and public pandals. People from all age group are seen participating in the festivities adorning traditional attires. Chanting of hymns and prayers can be heard from different localities in the metropolis. The aroma of Modak, laddoo and delicacies

specially offered to Lord Ganesh has filled the atmosphere. Keeping in mind the environmental concerns, devotees this year too have shown preference to eco-friendly idols of Lord Ganesh. With devotees thronging several famous Ganesh Pandals, police have kept a close vigil and have heightened security across the city, especially on the seacoast.

AIR Panaji correspondent reports, in Goa, families from across the country and abroad travel to the state to celebrate the festival with devotion and enthusiasm. The preparations for Ganesh festival in Goa had begun a month in advance. Today Ganesh idols are ceremonially installed in homes. Families have decorated Maatoli that is a wooden canopy before idol and it is adorned with flowers, seasonal vegetables and fruits. Programmes in Sarvajnik Ganesh festivals will continue for the next 11 days. Goa police has made elaborate security arrangements during Ganesh festival and immersion procession. Despite the

intense monsoon spell on for last 2 days, the enthusiasm of Goans is not dampened and cheerful mood is spread across the state. Goa Governor Dr Mridula Sinha and Chief Minister Dr Pramod Sawant has greeted Goans on the occasion of Ganesh Chaturthi. In Tamilnadu, the annual festival of the famous hill top Ganesh temple in Trichy, popularly known as the Malaikottai (Hill Fort), also begins today. The main attraction of the festival is various decorations that will be exhibited during the festival. These include the unique Dancing Ganesh and Teaching Ganesh decorations. A huge sweet preparation, weighing 150 kilograms, will be offered to the idol.

Vinayagar Chaturthi (Ganesh Chaturthi) is being celebrated with religious fervour and enthusiasm in the union territory of Puducherry today. People are standing in long queue in front of the famous Manakkula Vinayagar temple and having Darshan of the deity at the Special Pooja held to mark the celebration. The main deity at the temple gives Darshan to the devotees

adorned with a golden Kavacham (Shield) studded with American Diamonds.

A 21-feet tall idol of Lord Vinayagar was installed at the Saram Avvai Thidal here by the Vinayaga Chaturthi celebration committee. Small clay idols of Vinayagar are being worshipped in almost all houses and the idols would be immersed in the Bay of Bengal after week-long celebrations. Puducherry Lt Governor Kiran Bedi and Chief Minister V Narayanasamy among others greeted the people on the occasion.

President Ram Nath Kovind and Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu have greeted the people on the occasion. In their messages, Mr Kovind and Mr Naidu said, the festival of Ganesh Chaturthi represent values and goals that we must imbibe to achieve national development and welfare for all sections of society. Prime Minister Narendra Modi also greeted the people on the occasion of Ganesh Chaturthi. In a tweet, Mr Modi extended his greetings to all the countrymen for the holy festival.

COP14 to UN Convention to Combat Desertification begins in Greater Noida

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The 14th Conference of Parties, COP14, to the UN Convention to Combat Desertification will get underway in Greater Noida today. The Conference will focus on desertification and degradation of land and will go on till 13th of this month. Union Minister for Environment, Forest and

Climate Change, Prakash Javadekar had earlier this week highlighted India's resolve to combat desertification. Mr Javadekar asserted that India will lead from the front to combat desertification and move the world in a positive direction. AIR correspondent reports the main objective of the convention is to combat desertification and mitigate the effects of drought in

countries experiencing serious drought or desertification. India will host over 3000 participants and take the responsibility of leading 196 nations towards Sustainable Development for the next two years in COP14. This Conference will provide framework for countries to restore the land and protect human health. It will present sustainable solutions for

better land management. The Conference is expected to agree on about 30 decisions to ramp up and elaborate further actions needed on the ground. Different industries will showcase their latest products, and innovations associated with reduction of land degradation. Land is the lifeline for all living beings, and the impact of land degradation is ultimately on human health and well-being.

Tandoori chicken, scuffle, ATM: Life of Kashmir leaders in detention at hotel-jail

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To say there is curiosity about the political detainees in Kashmir is an understatement. There is an unabashed interest in knowing what the leaders—the mainstream politicians and the separatists—are up to in their heavily-sequestered residences or at the plush Centaur hotel overlooking the Dal Lake where they are being held since the state lost its special status and was divided into two.

In the wake of a communication blockade and filtered news flow, most Kashmiris are having to make do with whatever nuggets of information come their way. While the common man's sentiment for the political detainees ranges from sympathy to absolute apathy, the appetite to know how they are being treated as "sarkari mehamaan" (government guests) is insatiable. During a visit last week to the Centaur jail, as it is now colloquially called; my colleague Rezaul Laskar and I had an encounter with a man who claimed to be an employee of the hotel and who was bursting with inside information.

While we could not independently verify his claims, the employee knew by heart the room numbers of as many as 37 detainees holed up in the hotel-jail since August 5, when the reorganisation of Jammu and Kashmir was announced; their food preferences, exercise routines and even their little quibbles. "Sajjad Lone (chairman of the Jammu and Kashmir People's Conference) likes to order Tandoori Chicken... he really likes his food. He spends Rs. 1000 a day, because here you have to foot the bill in cash for the extra food you order," he rattled off details.

In case you were wondering where a political detainee gets money from, the hotel-jail has an ATM. Apart from Lone, National Conference leader Ali Mohammed Sagar, and former minister Imran Reza Ansari have been allotted separate rooms along with their personal help, we were duly informed. Eid lunch was not as elaborate as is traditionally, but inmates had to remain content with Daniya-korma, a meat dish ordered for the rest by one of the detainees.

Our friendly informer also gave details about how the



prisoners have been forbidden from meeting each other, except at meal times, which are fixed. No lazy brunch or delayed dinner for these detainees; its breakfast at 8.15 am; lunch at 1 pm and dinner at 9 pm. There is enough security to keep them apart; which comes in handy when tempers flare as they often do.

"One day there was jhadap (scuffle), there was blood too, so now the security is more alert," was his parting shot before he rushed off to buy provisions or perhaps to brief anyone willing to lend an ear. Earlier, news of how former Chief Ministers and political adversaries, Mehbooba Mufti and Omar Abdullah had to be moved to separate locations for detention following a spat over politics was lapped up. Mehbooba is now in cosy

cottage in the picturesque Chashme Shahi and Abdullah finds himself detained in the grander Hari Palace, which earned notoriety for being a torture centre during peak terrorism in the Valley. These tidbits of information have gained more currency ever since the court stepped in to allow detainees to meet their friends and family as per the jail norms.

Since Centaur has been converted into a prison, the deputy superintendent of police in charge of security in the Valley has been designated as superintendent of the subsidiary jail. It is outside this 'magnificent jail' with plush amenities and a view, where people queue up to meet leaders that stories about the detainees are exchanged and sometimes spun.

Sports News

Meiraba, Crasto-Bhatnagar go down fighting in finals of Yonex Sunrise India Junior International Grand Prix

By a Correspondent
Pune, September 2,

India's hopes of securing twin titles at home were dashed when boys' singles second seed Meiraba Luwang and the mixed doubles pair of Tanisha Crasto and Ishaan Bhatnagar both went down fighting in their respective finals at the Yonex Sunrise India Junior International Grand Prix 2019, held in memory of Sushant Chiplakkatti at the PE Society's Modern PDMBA Sports Complex, here today.

The Russian Junior White Nights champion Meiraba Luwang, placed at the 15th spot in the World Junior Rankings, was the unanimous favourite for the boys' singles crown against the 49th Ken Yon Ong. However, the Malaysians refused to let the huge gulf in the rankings matter when he overturned a slow start to secure a stunning 13-21, 21-19, 23-21 victory over the Manipur shuttler.

In the decider, Meiraba trailed at 13-16 only to claw his way back to level the game at 17-17. In a tight finish, the Indian had a match point at 20-19 which he was unable to convert in the face of the onslaught from the determined Ong, who completed the upset in 1 hour 7 minutes.

Tanisha Crasto and Ishaan Bhatnagar's dream of winning three titles in as many weeks failed to materialize when they went down 12-21, 22-20, 20-22 to second seeds Ratchapol Makkasasithorn and Benyapa



Aimsaard in a gruelling final. Goa's Crasto and Chattisgarh's Bhatnagar's partnership had been working perfectly as they scooped up titles at All India Junior Ranking Tournaments in Panchkula and Bangalore over the last couple of weeks. Even this week in Pune, they kept performing with a lot of confidence to seal upset victories over the top seeds Sirawit Sothon and Pornnicha Suwatnodom and fourth seeds Tsubasa Kawamura and Hinata Suzuki. However, even though they made a strong comeback after losing the first game in the final, they ultimately fell short. In women's singles, top seed Benyapa Aimsaard was crowned the champion after

she managed to stave off a stiff resistance from second seed Riko Gunji. The Asian Junior Championships bronze medalist dropped the middle game and had to dig deep to pull off a 21-19, 18-21, 23-21 win in 61 minutes.

The girls' doubles as well as the boys' doubles sections witnessed a mini upset each. The Japanese third seeds Kaho Osawa and Hinata Suzuki outlasted the Thai top seeds Pornpicha Choieekewong and Pornnicha Suwatnodom 13-21, 21-15, 21-14 to win the girls' doubles title in 50 minutes. In boys' doubles, Malaysian fifth seeds Jhy Dar Ooi and Roy King Yap toppled the Japanese third seeds Takuma Kawamoto and Tsubasa Kawamura 17-21, 21-16, 23-21.

Rishabh Pant beats MS Dhoni to script new milestone in Tests

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Day 3 saw India take firm control over the second Test match in Jamaica. The bowlers mopped up the tail of West Indies as India took a lead of 299 runs, opted to bat again and then set West Indies as target of 468 runs. In response, West Indies had lost two wickets and when the stumps were drawn, the hosts were 45 for 2. Kraigg Brathwaite was dismissed by Ishant Sharma when the right-hander was lured into a false drive outside the off stump and nicked it behind to Rishabh Pant who took an easy catch. With this dismissal, Pant claimed his 50th wicket-keeping dismissal in Tests and in the process, became the fastest Indian 'keeper to reach this milestone (in 11 Tests). He overtook MS Dhoni, who had taken 15 Tests to this feat. (Full scorecard)

Sapping conditions could have forced Virat Kohli not to enforce the follow on and this also allowed KL Rahul to find some



form. However, the right-hander, with his new technique, struggled while he was at the crease. Also, Cheteshwar Pujara, who has not been able to hit his stride this series, did not find any momentum. Ajinkya Rahane and Hanuma Vihari got together after captain Virat Kohli was sent back for a golden duck. The in-form Rahane (64 not out) and Vihari (53 not out) got India's second innings back on track after the top-four were dismissed for 57 runs. The fifth-wicket partnership allowed India to declare at 168 for four, giving their bowlers 13 overs to have a crack on the struggling

West Indies batsmen. Earlier, Ishant Sharma created history on Day 3 of the second Test encounter between India and West Indies as the veteran fast bowler became the most successful Indian pacer outside of Asia. Sharma achieved the feat when he dismissed Jahmar Hamilton for 5 as West Indies were bowled out for 117 in the first innings. Thanks to that dismissal, Sharma surpassed legendary all-rounder Kapil Dev's tally of 155 wickets outside Asia. When it comes to most wickets by an Indian bowler outside Asia, Anil Kumble tops the list with 200 wickets from 50 matches.

India look for test series sweep against West Indies at Kingston

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India have set a massive 468-run target for the West Indies on day three of the second cricket Test at Kingston in

Jamaica. Hanuma Vihari and Ajinkya Rahane have taken India closer to a series sweep with an unbeaten 111-run stand. The hosts are unlikely to get anywhere close to the target,

as they were 45 for two at stumps in their second innings last night. India had decided against enforcing the follow-on despite gaining a 299-run lead by bowling out the West Indies for 117.