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Electric poles in middle of roads Safety concerns over overgrown grass near DPs

NASHIK: Residents of New Nashik have expressed concerns over the unchecked growth of Congress grass and creepers near Maharashtra State Electricity Distribution Company Ltd (MSEDCL) distribution points (DPs) in many areas. If left unattended, this vegetation could lead to potential accidents, especially during the monsoon season.

Currently, large patches of Congress grass and other wild plants have grown around DPs in various areas, posing risks to both MSEDCL employees and the general public. The grass and creepers are usually removed before the onset

of the monsoon, and residents are urging the authorities to take timely action within the next four months. Early removal would make repair and maintenance work easier for MSEDCL workers and help prevent any untoward incidents during monsoon. One of the major concerns raised by residents is the presence of reptiles and other creatures in the dense grass. Overgrown vegetation near electrical infrastructure increases the risk of workers encountering snakes and other harmful animals while carrying out repairs. This not only endangers the safety of MSEDCL employees but could also

lead to service disruptions if work is delayed due to these hazards. In addition to the vegetation problem, several DPs in the area are reportedly left exposed, without protective covers. Residents fear that accidental contact with these electrical points could result in severe injuries or even fatalities. They have urged the administration to install proper covers to ensure public safety.

Locals are calling for immediate intervention from the authorities, emphasizing that proactive maintenance can prevent accidents and ensure the smooth functioning of electricity services in the area.

Teachers are pillars of education system: Minister Bhuse

NASHIK: A one-day educational quality development workshop was held at Regenta Place, Igatpuri, on Saturday, with State School Education Minister Dadaji Bhuse and a group of ideal teachers from across Maharashtra in attendance. It focused on discussions about reforms and innovations in the education sector.

The workshop began with Minister Bhuse lighting the traditional lamp. Six groups of exemplary teachers shared insights into the transformative changes they have introduced in their schools, including innovative teaching methods and infrastructure improvements. Bhuse commended their efforts, emphasizing that teachers are the true pillars of the education

system. "Teachers should share their knowledge and successful initiatives



with other districts to revolutionize education and secure a brighter future for students," Bhuse stated. He assured that school visits would be conducted across the state, not to find faults but to identify areas for improvement.

Speaking about the future of education, Bhuse highlighted the upcoming implementation of the National

Education Policy. He stressed that students are the foundation of the education system, and efforts should be focused on their holistic development. The minister also acknowledged teachers' challenges and pledged to reduce their non-teaching workload by 50%.

Bhuse expressed confidence that with quality education, Marathi schools could attract students from English-medium institutions.

He assured that the education department would fully support dedicated teachers and work towards strengthening Marathi schools.

He further added that if experimental approaches prove effective, the education department would take them into serious consideration.

Focusing on tribal students' welfare

NASHIK: To assess the facilities available for Scheduled Tribe students in government ashramshalas and understand their challenges, the 'Samvad Chimukalyanshi' (Interaction with Children) campaign was launched under the initiative of Tribal Development Minister and Guardian Minister of Chandrapur district, Dr. Ashok Uike. As part of this campaign, officials stayed overnight at various government ashramshalas on Friday (Feb 7) to engage with students and gain firsthand insights into their concerns.

Dr. Uike stayed at ashramshala in Botoni, Maregaon tehsil of Yavatmal

Leena Bansod, Managing Director of the Tribal Development Corpora-



district, while Tribal Development Commissioner Nayana Gunde stayed at Dolhare government ashramshala in Surgana tehsil of Nashik district.

tion, interacted with the students at the ashramshala in Shenwad village, Nashik taluka. Several officials from the ministry, tribal development com-

missionerate, and project offices participated in the campaign.

During the visits, officials interacted with students through outdoor games and shared meals with them. Later in the evening, ministers and officials held detailed discussions with the students to understand their academic and infrastructural challenges.

Minister Dr. Uike also conducted a virtual meeting with MPs, MLAs, and officials who stayed at different ashramshalas across the state from the Botoni ashramshala.

When parents send their children to an ashramshala, they should feel assured that quality education and adequate facilities are provided. Superintendents and teachers must take special efforts in teaching and student welfare. Our goal is to offer higher education opportunities within ashramshalas and make the tribal development department a model for delivering the best facilities to Scheduled Tribe students and citizens.

- Dr. Ashok Uike, Tribal Development Minister

Women protest water shortage

NASHIK: Frustrated by the ongoing water shortage in Ward No. 31 of Pathardi for the past year, women residents staged a sit-in protest at the Nashik Municipal Corporation's (NMC) New Nashik divisional office on Thursday (Feb. 6). They refused to leave the water supply officer's office until their concerns were addressed.

Residents of Damodar Nagar, Yashwant Nagar Survey No. 298, Narhari Nagar, Nisarg Colony, Krishna Nagar, and nearby areas have been struggling with erratic water supply, with some receiving water for just 15 to 20 minutes and others facing a complete lack of sup-

ply. Despite repeated complaints, the issue was only

temporarily resolved, recurring within days. On Thursday, the women gathered at the water supply department to demand a permanent solution. After water supply officer Vilas Lone assured them that a survey would be conducted to address



the problem, they withdrew their protest.

BJP's Eknath Navale, along with Vaishali Pawar, Sonali Sahane, Gauri Bhoi, Manisha Badavkar, and other women from the affected areas took part in the protest. A statement regarding the issue was also submitted to Lone.

Maharashtra Malkhamb team Sakshi Garge appointed coach

NASHIK: A national-level Mallakhamb competition will be held in Uttarakhand from February 11 to 13, with Maharashtra's boys' and girls' teams set to participate. Ahead of the event, a training camp for the state team was conducted at the Sports Academy in Dervan, Chiplun, from January 27 to February 7.



Sakshi Garge, a national-level Mallakhamb player from Yashwant Vyayamshala, Nashik, has been appointed as the coach for the Maharashtra team. A decorated athlete, Sakshi has won multiple medals in national com-

petitions and currently serves as a coach at Yashwant Vyayamshala.

Expressing confidence in the team's performance, Sakshi stated, "The players have trained rigorously in the Dervan camp. I am confident that both the men's and women's teams will bring gold medals for Maharashtra at the national competition."

Sakshi was congratulated by Deepak Patil, president of Yashwant Vyayamshala and Nashik District Mallakhamb Association, along with coach Yashwant Jadhav, Anand Khare, and other office bearers.

Students visit Kanetkar garden

NASHIK: Budding young scientists from The Nalanda Academy embarked on an exciting field trip to Vasant Kanetkar garden, immersing themselves in the wonders of nature and discovering artistic representations of India's rich animal life. The children explored the vibrant colours and fragrant scents of various flowers, learned about different types of plants, spotted some friendly insects, and marvelled at the impressive animal sculptures scattered throughout the garden.

This hands-on learning experience allowed the students to connect their science and general knowledge lessons in a fun and engaging way. They were thrilled to observe the life cycle of plants, from tiny seeds to blossoming flowers, and discover the important role insects play in the garden ecosystem.

Adding to the excitement, the children encountered captiv-

sculptures of animals native to India, including a majestic Indian elephant, a powerful tiger, a graceful deer, a playful monkey, a sturdy camel, a



towering giraffe, and a playful hippopotamus. They learned about the characteristics of these animals, their habitats, and their importance in the Indian ecosystem.

For example, the children discussed how the elephant uses its

trunk, the tiger's role as an apex predator, the deer's agility, the monkey's social behaviour, and the peacock's vibrant plumage.

They also discussed the symbolic meaning of some of the sculptures, such as the lion representing strength and courage, and the elephant symbolizing wisdom and gentleness.

This field trip was a fantastic opportunity for students to experience the natural world first-hand and appreciate art inspired by India's diverse wildlife.

The students were excited to learn about the different plants and creatures, and it was wonderful to see their curiosity sparked by both the living garden and the beautiful animal sculptures. The sculptures provided a great starting point for discussions about animal characteristics, their place in the Indian ecosystem, and the importance of conservation.

Gram Panchayat elections likely in April

NASHIK: Elections for 193 Gram Panchayats across 13 tehsils in Nashik district, which were delayed due to the Lok Sabha and State Assembly elections, are expected to be held by the end of March or in April. The reservation for the positions of Gram Panchayat Sarpanchs was determined through a lottery draw after the State Assembly elections.

The delay in the election process has occurred due to pending reservation draws for 3 to 4 districts in the state. Once these draws are completed, the voter lists will be updated, and the election process will begin. It is anticipated that the process will start in March, leading to elections by April.

The election process follows a set sequence of steps,

including ward restructuring, reservation, voter lists, and final election procedures. However, the ward restructuring for Panchayat Samiti and block elections has not yet been completed, which could extend the timeline further. As a result, there is a possibility that elections could be postponed until after Diwali.

The Gram Panchayats whose terms have expired are spread across several tehsils. The highest number of expired terms is in Igatpuri tehsil (65), followed by Niphad (32), Baglan (29), Trimbakeshwar (17), Kalwan (14), Malegaon (9), Nandgaon (8), Yeola (8), Nashik (7), and single Panchayats in Chandwad, Dindori, Deola, and Peth tehsils. In total, elections will be held for 193 Gram Panchayats in the district.

State-level Sr Women's Invitation Tourney

Ishwari, Laxmi impress in semi-final

NASHIK: Despite standout performances by Ishwari Savkar and Laxmi Yadav, the Nashik senior women's cricket team fell short in the semi-final of the Maharashtra Cricket Association's State-Level Senior Women's Invitational T-20 Tournament in Pune. Judicial Club secured a seven-wicket victory, ending Nashik's six-match winning streak and advancing to the final.



Ishwari



Laxmi

Batting first, Nashik posted 98/5 in 20 overs, with Ishwari Savkar leading the charge with 47 runs. Chasing 99 for victory, Judicial Club reached the target in 16.3 overs, losing seven wickets along the way. Ayesha Shaikh remained unbeaten on 31, while captain Gautami Naik played an aggressive 26-run knock. Nashik's Laxmi Yadav im-

pressed with her left-arm spin, claiming 3/17.

Throughout the tournament, Ishwari Savkar emerged as Nashik's top scorer with 229 runs in six matches, followed closely by Rasika Shinde with 221 runs. On the bowling front, Priyanka Ghodke led with 11 wickets, while Laxmi Yadav took seven. A proud moment for Nashik came as wicketkeeper Tejaswini Batwal secured the top spot in Maharashtra with 12 dismissals behind the stumps. Captain Priyanka Ghodke also earned second place on the Most Valuable Player (MVP) list.

Nashik District Cricket Association chairman Vinod Shah and secretary Sameer Rakate congratulated the players and coaches for their commendable performance in the tournament.



Students honoured at Adarsh School

NASHIK: On the occasion of Ramabai Ambedkar's birth anniversary, the certificates of the painting competition for elementary and intermediate students were distributed at Adarsh English Medium School, Vani by the chief guest journalist Shamrao Sonawane.

Journalist Shamrao Sonawane and the school's principal Mrs. S.D. Kale,

all the teaching staff and non-teaching staff worshipped the image of Ramabai Ambedkar. Akshada Vaidya, a girl student of Class VII explained the life story of Ramabai Ambedkar. Information was given about how she supported Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar in his social work.

The programme was compered by girl student

Samrudhhi Tonpe. A total of 17 students had appeared for the Elementary examination. Out of them, a single student passed in A grade, two in B grade and 14 in C grade. While 37 students who had given the Intermediate examination, two passed in A grade, 8 in B grade and 27 in C grade. Certificates were distributed to all these students.

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