

1,600 students receive degrees at MANIT convocation

Five gold medals awarded to CSE topper Suhani Batra

Bhopal: The 22nd convocation of Maulana Azad National Institute of Technology (MANIT), Bhopal, was held on Saturday, celebrating the academic achievements of 1,600 graduating students. This included the conferment of 72 PhD degrees across various disciplines. Among the standout achievers was Computer Science and Engineering (CSE) student Suhani Batra, who topped her department with an impressive 9.75 CGPA. Hailing from Jagdalpur, Chhattisgarh, Suhani received five gold medals. She shared that she has been working as a data engineer at Texas Instruments for the past three months.



The 22nd convocation of MANIT was held on Saturday. Photo by Ashraf Ali.

Center of Public Safety to be established

The ceremony's special guest, Director General of Police and MANIT alumnus Kailash Makwana, announced the establishment of a Center of Public Safety at the institute. The center will focus on research and projects related to public safety. He also urged students to stay away from drugs.

The President of India Gold Medal for the 2024-25 session was awarded to Amber Tripathi of Electronics and Commu-

nication Engineering, who achieved a 9.87 CGPA.

Gold medals were presented to top performers in various branches, including Sanskar Gupta (Civil), Rohit Sen (Mechanical), Shishir Mishra (Electrical), Suhani Batra (CSE), Sushobhit Malik (Chemical), Tulsi Kumari (Metallurgical), Yusuf Saifi (Architecture), and Gajendra Lodhi (Planning).

The highest number of B.Tech degrees, 230, were awarded in Computer Science and Engineering. Mechanical Engineering followed with 199, Electronics and Communication with 166, Electrical Engineering with 131, and Civil Engineering with 107. Degrees were also awarded across Architecture, Planning, MCA, MBA, M.Tech, M.Plan, and MSc programmes.

'New labour codes will push workers into era of insecurity'

By Special Correspondent Bhopal: The All Department Outsourced Temporary Employees Joint Front, Madhya Pradesh, has expressed deep concern over the Central Government's new labour codes, alleging that the reforms weaken long-fought labour rights and legitimise an era of insecurity for India's workforce.



Fixed Term Contracts Institutionalised

Vasudev Sharma, president of the Joint Front, said the four new labour codes—created by merging 29 existing labour laws—are not meant to promote "Ease of Doing Business", but rather to push workers into instability and exploitation. "These codes directly attack rights earned through decades of struggle and effectively legalise a 'hire and fire' regime," he said.

According to the union, the new codes erode job security, limit the power of trade unions and make collective bargaining significantly more difficult. Strict limitations on strikes, including punitive action even for peaceful protests, will render industrial action "almost impossible".

Sharma noted that permanent jobs are being replaced by Fixed Term Contracts, enabling companies to hire workers for short durations and dismiss them immediately after the contract ends. This, he said, has strengthened the contractor system and accelerated informalisation within the manufacturing sector. While manufacturing employment has slipped from 12.9% to 12.1%, the proportion of contract workers has jumped from 15.5% to 27.9%.

Fixed-term employees, he added, earn less than perma-

nent staff, receive no retrenchment compensation and face instant unemployment once their contracts expire.

Weakened Social Security, Widening Exclusion

The union highlighted that the threshold for employee permission for layoffs has been raised from 100 to 300 workers, giving companies greater freedom to terminate staff. Nearly 93% of India's 610 million-strong workforce—most employed in the unorganised sector—will remain outside the protection of the labour codes.

Gig workers, domestic workers and employees of small establishments are also excluded. The union criticised diluted provisions on Provident Fund, gratuity and employer responsibility in cases where contractors fail to provide statutory benefits.

Calling the new framework "anti-worker", the Joint Front has demanded that the Centre withdraw the labour codes in the interest of India's workforce.



WCR holds Family Seminar in Guna to support running staff

Bhopal: West Central Railway (WCR) successfully organized a Family Seminar for its Running Staff and their families in Guna. This was the eighth such seminar across the division, conducted under the guidance of Senior Divisional Electrical Engineer (TRO), Sachin R. Sharma.

The event focused on the crucial role families play in supporting the demanding duties of railway staff. Principal Chief Loco Inspector Vivek Dobi detailed the importance of the running staff's responsibilities and the supportive role of their families.

Focus on Safety and Well-being: The seminar included a solemn two-minute silence in memory of

Loco Pilot Vidhadhar, who recently died while on duty in the Bilaspur Zone. Senior DEE Sharma urged families to ensure their Loco Pilots receive complete rest and a stress-free environment at home so they can maintain full focus on duty and safety. Railway Doctor Dr. Gaurav Pratap also advised staff to manage stress, limit mobile phone usage, and ensure adequate sleep.

Staff concerns were heard, and quick resolution was promised. The event concluded with the honoring of retiring Mail Loco Pilot Kailash Singh Yadav for his excellent railway service, followed by a distribution of gifts to all attending family members.

Car hits bike, youth dies

Two others seriously injured

Bhopal: On Friday night, a car hit a motorcycle from the front in Chhola Mandir area. Three young men were riding the motorcycle at the time of the accident. The incident occurred around 8 p.m. Friday night. One of the seriously injured youths died during treatment early Saturday morning, while two others are in critical condition.

According to police, Aman Lodhi, son of Khanaram Lodhi (26), was a resident of Raisen district. He was traveling from Bhopal to Raisen on a motorcycle with his cousins. On the way, their motorcycle was hit from the front by a car on Lalkothi Road. The accused driver fled the scene. Aman Lodhi suffered serious head injuries in the accident and died during treatment. A post-mortem examination was conducted on Saturday afternoon and the body was handed over to the family.

Aman was father of a one-and-a-half-year-old daughter: Aman was married three years ago. He has a one-and-a-half-year-old daughter. He had come from his village to Bhopal on Friday morning to inspect a site. He worked as a farmer and also as a centering contractor. Police are examining CCTV footage from the scene of the incident to identify the accused driver.

Massive protest by contract workers puts spotlight on pending demands



Over 2.5 lakh employees represented; forum warns of larger agitation if issues remain unresolved

Bhopal: In a major show of strength, thousands of contract employees gathered in the city on Saturday to press for their long-pending demands, including regularization and service security. The protest, held under the banner of the Madhya Pradesh Contract Joint Struggle Forum, saw employees staging a sit-in at Ambedkar Park on Link Road No. 2. The demonstrators warned that if the government does not respond positively, they will intensify their agitation in the coming days.

Forum state convener Dinesh Singh Tomar stated that employees have been raising their issues for years, but no concrete steps have been taken by the government. Their nine-point charter includes regularization, pension benefits, removal of pay disparities, and equal pay for equal work. Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh state general secretary Kuldeep Singh also cautioned that a much larger movement would be launched if their demands continue to be ignored. Leaders including DK

Upadhyay, Sajal Bhargava, Gulab Singh Ahirwar, Amar Singh Jataw, Abhay Vajpayee, and Virendra Singh Dhakad addressed the gathering, representing nearly 2.5 lakh contract employees across the state. A memorandum was submitted to the Chief Minister following the protest.

Contract Policy 2023 is not being implemented properly

The workers alleged that the Contract Policy 2023 is not being implemented properly. They also claimed they are being denied dearness allowance similar to regular employees and are instead given consumer-indexed wages. Forum leaders stressed that the agitation is a struggle for their rights, dignity, and security.

Key demands include the implementation of DA on par with regular staff, earned and medical leave provisions, strict compliance with the 2023 Contract Policy, regularization of long-serving employees, cadre revision, group insurance of Rs 20 lakh, and childcare leave for women employees. Protesters reiterated that the government must act promptly to address these persistent issues.

BHEL removes illegal encroachment



By BHEL Correspondent

Bhopal: In a coordinated operation, Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL), Bhopal, on Friday carried out the demolition of an illegal structure erected on its land near the 80-foot DRM Road adjoining Padmanabh Nagar in Barkheda F Sector. The action was undertaken under the

supervision of General Manager (HR) T.U. Singh and Additional General Manager (Town Administration) Prashant Pathak, following directives issued by Estate Officer Ramesh Chandra.

The unauthorised shed, spread across nearly 5,000 square feet, had been constructed through encroachment on BHEL-owned property. BHEL's eviction team, supported by security personnel, dismantled the structure as part of its ongoing drive to protect company land from unlawful occupation.

Present during the operation were Deputy General Manager (Town Administration) Vinod Kumar Pradhan, Eviction Officer Shri Abhinav Sharma, Chandrakant Vishwakarma, Eviction In-charge Praveen Patil, Estate Inspector Devendra Pratap Singh, Naseem M. Tanekhan, Jitendra Pal Singh, Rameshwar Savle, Prakash Binwani and Satya Narayan Batham. Officials from the Madhya Pradesh Police also assisted in maintaining order throughout the proceedings.

BHEL authorities emphasised that similar actions will continue to curb encroachments and safeguard public assets.

MECAPS Bhopal distributes educational aid cheques

Bhopal: A successful cheques distribution ceremony was organized at the office of MICAPS Bhopal near Moti Masjid to provide crucial financial assistance to students continuing their education.



Social worker and renowned poet, Advocate Shahid Kamil, graced the event as the Chief Guest. He personally presented academic aid checks to deserving students. The program's primary goal was

on the recipients' academic journeys.

to offer financial support to students, helping them pursue their studies and future aspirations without financial burden.

Advocate Kamil also motivated the students, offering inspirational advice and mantras for success in life, encouraging them to excel in their careers and future endeavors. The checks are expected to make a significant positive impact



Bhopal celebrates 192nd birth anniv of Veerangana Jhalkari Bai

Bhopal The 192nd birth anniversary of the legendary freedom fighter, Veerangana Jhalkari Bai Kori, was celebrated with great fervor at the Zee TV Complex in New Market, Bhopal. The event, organized by the Madhya Pradesh unit of the All India Koli Society, featured Bhopal Mayor Malti Rai as the Chief Guest.

Mayor Rai paid floral tributes at the warrior's life-size statue and addressed the hundreds of community members present. In her address, she highlighted Jhalkari Bai's immense contributions to India's First War of Independence, urging the

community to follow the path of courage and dedication set by the historical figure.

The celebration was attended by key leaders of the All India Koli Society, including State President Balwant Singh Shakya, State President of the Youth Wing and Corporator Arvind Verma, and National Vice President of the Youth Wing, Ganeshram Shakya. The program was successfully conducted by senior social worker Devendra Shakya, underscoring the community's commitment to honoring its heritage.

Constable assault service center employee over Rs 250 repair

Havildar thrashes youth; colleagues stand by without intervention

Bhopal: In a shocking incident, a head constable (Havildar) brutally assaulted a service center employee outside a scooter workshop in Narayan Nagar on Saturday evening. Despite five other policemen being present, none intervened as the constable pinned the youth to the ground, kicked him, and continued beating him.

The incident began around 4:15 pm when service advisor Sachin Kumar Kushwaha was approached by a policeman in uniform, who identified himself as Ram Avtar Dhakad, posted at Bairagarh police station. Dhakad demanded immediate repair of a brake lever costing Rs 250 but refused to pay for it. He insisted the work be done through insurance. When Sachin explained that the insur-



ance claim process would take about a week, the constable grew furious. According to Sachin, Dhakad began abusing him, dragged

him outside the showroom, and attacked him. When colleague Jeevan tried to intervene, he too was assaulted. Dhakad then called additional policemen for support. CCTV footage shows other policemen standing by as Dhakad pushed Sachin to the ground and continued beating him.

After the assault, Dhakad allegedly threatened to kill Sachin if he filed a complaint. Although the service center staff called 112, responding staff reportedly did not take any action against the constable. Meanwhile, the Bagh Sewania police have denied any knowledge of the incident. The incident has raised serious concerns about police misconduct and the lack of accountability among officers present at the scene.

No provision for gratuity or equal pay to outsourced workers: Bhargava

Bhopal: The central government's implementation of four labor codes has triggered widespread dissatisfaction among nearly one crore outsourced employees working in government departments and undertakings across the Madhya Pradesh. While central outsourced workers receive defined minimum wages, others engaged in similar roles have been denied comparable benefits. Additionally, no provision has been made for gratuity for long-serving outsourced workers who have worked for more than a year, leaving many disheartened.

Provincial convener of the All Department Outsourced Joint Struggle Front, Manoj Bhargava, and general secretary Dinesh Sisodiya have appealed to the Union Labour Minister, demanding significant amendments to the labor codes. Bhargava said the new provisions are discriminatory: permanent employees receive gratuity after five years, and Fixed Term Employees (FTI) on company payrolls get gratuity after just one year, yet outsourced workers—many serving for five to fifteen years—remain excluded.

Frequent change of contractors: A key barrier, he noted, is the frequent change of contractors every two years, which disrupts continuity of service required to claim gratuity. Bhargava suggested that gratuity eligibility should instead be based on the total months of service reflected through EPF and ESIC contributions, rather than contractor tenure.