

Naveen meets public

Bhubaneswar(KCN): Minister two days ago had sought the views of individuals, voluntary organiza-

parties-CPI(M) and Forward Bloc, Naveen said the State Government was

water dispute with Chhattisgarh which has been constructing projects on the

also expressed its views.

Representatives of voluntary or-

that he does not bother what the opposition Congress and BJP says. He



Patnaik today silenced opposition who often allege that the State Government did not take public opinion on the sensitive River Mahanadi water dispute issue.

Though he rejected the all-party meeting on River Mahanadi issue convened by the Leader of Opposition Narsingha Mishra, the Chief

tions and political parties. BJD Supremo preferred to sideline the two main opposition parties like Congress and BJP and took his own route to take public opinion on the River Mahanadi issue ahead of the tripartite meeting convened by the Centre on 17 September.

After meeting about 16 organiza-

"committed" to fight for the interests of the people of Odisha.

"The Mahanadi is the lifeline of Odisha and steps are being taken to protect the rights of the people over the river," the Chief Minister told the representatives.

"We have given our suggestions and advocated for setting up a tribunal to resolve the Mahanadi

upstream of the river," CPI(M) State Secretary Ali Kishore Patnaik said.

Senior CPI(M) leaders Janardan Pati and Suresh Panigrahi also gave their suggestions to the Chief Minister.

Forward Bloc, represented by its State Convener PC Padhi and Joint Co-ordinator Jyoti Ranjan Mohapatra,

organizations, including those working for water and river conservation also met the chief minister.

Mr.Patnaik will continue meeting people on the issue tomorrow, a release issued by the Chief Minister's Office said. By meeting the voluntary organizations and left parties, Chief Minister has given a clear signal

also made it clear that public does not mean only Congress and BJP. The Chief Minister in his own style will face the River Mahanadi dispute without any help from the Congress and BJP. ACS To CM Upendra Nath Behera and Principal Secretary Water Resources Pradeep Kumar Jena were present during the talks.

Uma Gets Naveen Pat

Bhubaneswar (KCN): Firebrand Lawmaker Uma Samantaray received a great relief today.

Governing BJD President and Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik has revoked the expulsion order of the Lawmaker from Satyabadi constituency of Puri Umakanta Samantaray.

Mr.Samantaray was expelled from the party on April 1 in 2014 for allegedly indulging in anti-party activities and defying party directive.

Mr.Samantaray had filed his nomination as an independent after the party denied him a ticket.

Notably, he was fielded by BJD in the 2009 Assembly polls in place of former MLA Rama Ranjan Baliarsingh. But he lost to Congress' Prasad Harichandan.

In 2014 Assembly Poll, Mr. Samantaray who at the last minute was refused the BJD ticket contested the polls as an Independent, giving nightmares to the BJD nominee Ramar-anjan Baliarsingh.

Mr.Samantaray, who was expelled from the BJD, could

upset the BJD Applegart, as he was highly popular in the Assembly and Mr.Baliarsingh, who was hopeful of riding Naveen Patnaik's popularity wave bite the dust.

Uma has been highly active in Assembly and used to participate in various crucial issues and present his positive opinion.

He is one of the best parliamentarians of the State, said a colleague in BJD.

After BJD Supremo revoked the expulsion order, Mr.Samantaray ex-



pressed his gratefulness and said as Mr.Patnaik has reposed faith on him, he is grateful.

With such an action BJD Boss has empowered the Uma Brigade to help in strengthening the base of Regional Party in Puri just before the Three Tier Rural Polls, feel political analysts.

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Connect the unconnect

Bhubaneswar(KCN): Chief Secretary Aditya Prasad Padhi has directed to focus on Mapping of the requirements for connecting the unconnected villages and habitations in priority basis.

The All Secretaries meeting held here today deliberated on various aspects of the identification of unconnected villages and habitations.

Principal Secretary Rural Development Madhu Sudan Padhi presented a Road Map on prioritizing infrastructure sector funding.

Mr.Padhi urged for preparation of a Master Data Base of villages and hamlets, so that planning and execution can be taken up in an orga-

nized manner.

ORSAC Chief Executive Sandeep Tripathy made a Power Point Presentation on Connect the Unconnected.

It was decided to follow both the methods of space technology with GIS mapping and ground level survey for the purpose. A committee was formed under the chairmanship of Development Commissioner R Balakrishnan with Principal Secretaries and Secretaries of the Departments of Rural Development, Forest & Environment, ST & SC Development, Chief Executive Officer, Odisha Space Application Center to have close monitoring of the progress.

Commissioner Mr. Balakrishnan said that the district level committees under the respective collectors would look in to the ground truthing of the data availed through remote sensing and would determine the nature of the gap in connectivity.

The meeting deliberated on the connectivity from the view points of approach road and service delivery. Chief Secretary Mr.Padhi directed to focus on road connectivity in the first phase and complete the identification of the unconnected villages within 2 to 3 months.

Development Commissioner Mr. Balakrishnan added that the degree and sharpness of slope

top the unconnected habitations in hilly tracks with its terrain features should also be taken to consideration while identifying these villages so that appropriate method can be adopted for establishing road connectivity.

Disposal of the applications received through e-abhijog online system also figured in the meeting.

Special Secretary General Administration, Ashok Kumar Meena apprised that so far a total number of 34,613 grievances have been received through various departments out of which more than 60% have been disposed and relief has been provided.

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Salman Khan to romance Amy Jackson in 'Dabangg 3'?



MUMBAI: Amy Jackson and Salman Khan might just be coming together for the upcoming film 'Dabangg 3'. The

two, who were in talks to share screen space in the 2014 blockbuster 'Kick', might just be seen together if rumours

doing the rounds turn out to be true. According to online reports, Amy is keen to work with Salman and considers him a 'legend'. In an interview with an online portal, the actress said that it was 'unfortunate' that 'Kick' didn't happen as she was shooting for the South Indian film 'T'. However, she admits that she has no regrets as the film helped develop her for her Bollywood career.

Aditi Rao Hydari succeeds Mila Kunis as the face of a global campaign

MUMBAI: While Priyanka Chopra and Deepika Padukone are gearing up for their big

looking westwards. Aditi Rao Hydari will succeed Mila Kunis, star of Oscar and

a grandmother-granddaughter relationship. Often seen at public gatherings in delicate silhouettes and accessories that accentuate her elegant frame, Aditi reveals that her style is a mix of feminine and vintage but she doesn't shy away from experimenting with jewels. "I am extremely attached to some of the jewellery my grandparents gave me. There's this one piece I'm really fond of which my grandfather gave me on my 12th birthday. It's an old, uncut diamond piece with Basra pearls. It actually belonged to my great-grandmother. She was also 12 when she got it. I wear it every now and then," Aditi informed Mirror.



Hollywood debuts and Sonam Kapoor recently signed a deal with Hollywood talent agency, UTA, which represents big names like Johnny Depp, Angelina Jolie and Benedict Cumberbatch, another Bollywood actress is

Golden Globe-nominated Black Swan and comedy hits like Ted and Forgetting Sarah Marshall, as the face of a global campaign for a jewellery brand. The 29-year-old actress flew to London to film for a special video which portrays

Dad's the way for Sunny Deol!



MUMBAI: Sunny Deol had revealed to Mirror that he may be producing and directing films now but he's open to acting offers as they don't require more than 50-70 days. He also doesn't have to sit in for scripting or editing. "There are a couple of films I may accept. I am hungry for good scripts and characters I've never played before," he'd added. Now, we hear that the 59-year-old actor has greenlit Ashwini Chaudhary's next, an emotional drama which will roll by the year-end. "Sunny fell in love with the story. The final script is currently under development. It's the story of a beautiful father-son relationship with Sunny as the father," informs a source close to the development, adding that the entire film will be shot in India but won't see the

Ghayal Once Again actor engage in maardhaad. Ashwini whose last directorial was the Bipasha Basu and R Madhavanstarrer Jodi Breakers in 2012, is currently on the lookout for an actor to essay the son's part. "He should be able to lock that cast in a week," adds the

source. Sunny's onscreen avatar coincides with him directing elder son, Karan. "The script is almost ready. It's a love story but will have action too, like Betaab," he had told Mirror (Nov 7), adding that he will launch younger son Rajvir two years after Karan.

Here is Amole Gupte's 8-year-old

MUMBAI: Mirror had earlier reported that Amole Gupte, the director of Hawa Hawai and Stanley Ka Dabba, is gearing up for a one-of-its-kind kids action film which revolves around a spy-in-the-making. We have now learnt that the film is titled Sniff and the director has found his wonder boy in eight-yearold Khushmeet Gill who began shooting for the film last Monday. "We started off on Ganesh Chaturthi with a



Ganesh Aarti sung by Shankar Mahadevan. It was shot in a pandal in Virar with kids and senior citizens from a local hous-

ing society. It's a beautiful number; we couldn't have asked for a better start," Amole informed Mirror, adding that popular Qawwali singer Aziz Naza's sons, Mujtaba and Munir, make their debut as composers with the film, the first one to roll out of Eros's Trinity Pictures.

Reducing stress could help increase chances of conception suggests new research: study

Reducing stress could help increase chances of conception suggests new research. Carried out by a team of researchers from the University of Louisville, the study looked at 400 sexually active women aged 40 or younger, following the women for up to 20 cycles or until they became pregnant. The women were asked to keep diaries reporting on their menstrual cycles, intercourse, contraception, alcohol, caffeine and smoking, and reported on their daily stress levels using a scale of one to four, with four being the highest. To look at the effect of stress levels on conception the team then calculated the mean stress levels during each phase of the menstrual cycle. Day 14 was the estimated time of ovulation, when an egg is released from the ovaries to the fallopian tubes, ready for fertilization. The results showed that stress had a negative effect on fer-

tility only during the ovulatory window, with women who reported higher levels of stress during this window approximately 40% less likely to conceive that month when compared to other less stressful months. The team also found that the results still held true even after taking into account other factors such as age, body mass index, alcohol use and frequency of intercourse. In addition, women who were more stressed were also 45% less likely to conceive than women who were less stressed. The researchers also observed that women reported higher stress levels at the end of the month in which they became pregnant, possibly as a result of learning they were pregnant, or possibly due to changes in pregnancy-related hormones which also caused changes in stress levels. Commenting on the significance of the findings, and what the results could mean

for those trying to conceive, epidemiologist and one of the study's authors Kira Taylor commented, "Some individuals are skeptical that emotional and psychological attributes may be instrumental in affecting fertility. I hope the results of this study serve a wake-up call for both physicians and the general public that psychological health and well-being is just as important as other more commonly accepted risk factors such as smoking, drinking alcohol, or obesity when trying to conceive." Taylor also advised that women trying to conceive could take steps to reduce their stress levels and therefore increase their chances of pregnancy by exercising, taking part in a stress management program, or by seeking advice from their doctor or health professional. The results of the study can be found online published in the journal Annals of Epidemiol-

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Nitin Fails To Read Naveen Livestock Vaccine Jumps 40PC

Bhubaneswar: Veteran Saffron Leader and Union Minister Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari is surprised over Naveen Patnaik's Charisma.

Mr. Gadkari is on Odisha Tour to spread Success Stories on NDA Government's Two Year Completion.

He expressed surprise how the BJD gets elected time and again even though the State Government is not responsive.

"I do not under-

stand how the Gov-



ernment is operating in the state with so many lacunae," he said.

Claiming that the

BJD Government can "neither see nor move despite having eyes and legs", Mr. Gadkari lamented.

"It is really surprising that the party is winning elections despite being utterly ineffective", rued the former BJP President.

While the Government does not know what it is doing, people also fail to assess its functioning.

Development of the State cannot be possible as long as

such a dispensation exists, he claimed.

"Ministers in BJD regime do not know what their officers are doing. People also do not know what the ministers have been doing," Mr. Gadkari alleged.

"The situation in Odisha is akin to 'Andheri raat mein diya tere hath mein', he quipped while hitting out at the BJD Government, which has been in power in the state since 2000.

Bhubaneswar: Odisha livestock vaccine production jumps 40 percent.

The production of vaccines for livestock has jumped 40 percent to 2.36 crore doses, an all time high in Odisha in 2015-2016 from the previous year, officials said here on Friday.

Inaugurating a seminar at the Veterinary Officers' Training Institute on good manufacturing practices for vaccine production, Fisheries

and Animal Resource Development Secre-



tary Bisnupada Sethi said it will benefit the poor farmers of the State.

Congratulating all staff of Odisha

Biological Product Institute (OBPI) for

achieving the feat Mr. Sethi said he is hopeful about achieving higher production in the current year after completion of the newly constructed GMP (Good Manufacturing Practice) compatible laboratory by December.

He also felt that production of quality vaccine should be ultimately used to vaccinate all the livestock and poultry birds in the State.

Experts and senior officials of the OBPI and the animal husbandry and Veterinary services department participated in the seminar.

All 84 staffs of OBPI were felicitated by Mr. Sethi for their sincere effort to create a positive environment to work in a team spirit for achieving all time record production of the vaccines.

seeking to improve the transportation scenario in the financial capital. The query was filed by RTI activist Anil Galgali, who had sought information about the salaries drawn by officers and staff of the Corporation for the month of March 2016. Ganesh Ghule, the company's Deputy Accountant and Public Information Officer, provided Galgali with a list of 119 officials and employees and their salaries.

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Agarwal Slaps Repair Order

Puri: District Magistrate of Puri Arvind Agarwal today directed National Highway Authority of India (NHAI) officials to complete the repair of the railway over bridge at Samajajpur.

The DM's directive came after he inspected the dilapidated over bridge in the company of the Puri SP and NHAI Manager (Technical) Sanjay Channa this morning.

Mr. Agarwal also directed NHAI to construct a makeshift road for

commuters till the over bridge is fully repaired. Sources said the alternative road would be thrown open for commuters tomorrow. The National Highway Authority (NHAI) had written to the district administration apprising it of the unsafe condition of the bridge.

"There has been some structural problem in the ROB and it has become unsafe for the use of traffic and needs to be repaired at the earliest. Till the repair is completed, traffic is re-

quired to be stopped on the ROB and be diverted from the existing level crossing as use of ROB at this juncture may cause any mis-happening at any moment", the letter read.

After receiving the letter, the District Administration has discussed the matter with NHAI authorities and asked for the speedy redressal of the problem.

"The slab is collapsing gradually. We have discussed with NHAI authorities and asked them to ex-

amine the condition to see whether it could be managed till Ratha Jatra. This bridge is a crucial link for vehicle mobilization.

As the Ratha Jatra is getting nearer, our mobility plan will be seriously affected, if the communication is halted on it. We have asked them to repair it within 15 days. They may repair the bridge temporarily for two and light four wheelers and construct a by-pass road under the bridge for diversion", Puri DM Mr. Agarwal had said earlier.

On the other hand, Nabakalebar Infrastructure Development Committee Chairman Maheswar Mohanty has expressed doubt over the completion of the work within a fortnight.

"The assurance to finish the work within 15 days seems unrealistic. We have told them to examine the condition whether it can be managed till Rath Jatra. Otherwise, they should construct the by-pass road under the bridge on which the heavy vehicles would ply. The NHAI authorities should temporarily repair the bridge for

plying of light vehicles. If they (NHAI authorities) want, the repair should be completed by June 30", said Mr. Mohanty.

Meanwhile, the Department of Works has assured timely completion of repair work. "The NHAI is looking after the construction of the bridge. It has collapsed as soil is used under it instead of concrete. So, it will be replaced by concrete soon. The work will be started very soon and completed by June 30", said Principal Secretary Works, Nalini Kanta Pradhan.

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25,000 tribal children in Odisha get a KISS of life and opportunity

New Delhi: Mostly drawn from backward districts of Odisha, more than 25,000 children from 62 impoverished tribal communities are getting a kiss of life, education and opportunity at no cost to their parents at the residential Kalinga Institute of Social Science (KISS) in Bhubaneswar.

KISS was started in 1992 with just 12 tribal students by Achyuta Samanta, who at the age of four in 1973 lost his father and saw his mother and eldest brother sweat it out to feed a family of seven.

He did not take the easy option of a begging bowl then. In 1992 too, he did not run to the government for financial assistance like most NGOs.

He had a unique experiment in mind. Over the last quarter of a century, he has executed it with finesse.

Samanta started the Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology (KIIT), which today enrolls over 25,000 students. Ten per cent of the fee paid by KIIT students goes for man-

aging the 25,000 KISS students. All employees, including faculty, contribute 3% of their salary for KISS, which runs up a daily expense bill of over Rs 50 lakh.

The completely mechanised and carbon footprint-conscious KISS kitchen is an eye-opener. Every day, it consumes 7,500 kg of rice, 2,200 kg of dal, 7,200 kg of vegetables and potato, 25,000 eggs, 2,800 kg of fish to provide lunch and dinner to 25,000 children. The breakfast is mostly pounded rice, cornflakes, curd and milk.

The kitchen uses solar power and recycles the waste as fertiliser for its gardens. It recycles treated water, used for washing hands and utensils, as well as water that flows out of bathrooms, to irrigate its plants.

The children take time to overcome the cultural gap they experience in the state capital after travelling miles from their remote tribal hamlets. But good food, proper environment, coaching and opportu-

nity makes them shed their inhibitions and unveil their potential.

One such example, the rugby team comprising tribal children, defeated teams from Zambia, Romania, Switzerland and Kenya before beating South Africa in the final to clinch the Under-14 World Rugby championships in 2007.

Many have excelled in different fields. But their potential in sports remains the bright spot.

Manjula, a girl from the 'Lanji Saura' tribe, has played netball up to Commonwealth Games level, while a 'Sabara' tribe girl, Bhagyashree, is the pride of KISS having represented India at the Asian Games six years ago in China. It is a story of getting inspired to inspire others.

Samanta is modest about his single-handed contribution to society, specially the poor and underprivileged tribals. He remembers his difficult days as a child and the 1990s when he was giving shape to KIIT and KISS literally brick by brick.

A very good and

commendable job is being done by Shri Achyuta Samanta. His contribution to society for providing free education including food and residence to tribal students is an eye opener for th... Read More.

"Many large-hearted persons extended help to me in my childhood and those initial difficult days of KISS. I am just contributing back to society. It gives me immense inner satisfaction to find so many children from tribal households getting proper education and motivation to be able to open the windows of opportunity all by themselves. What delights me most is that many of these children after completing their education from KISS or KIIT are going back to their villages to spread education," Samanta told TOI. Samanta plans to open KISS in every tribal district of Odisha and other states. "It will be difficult to sustain the KIIT and KISS model in other states. We will need funds through corporate social responsibility," he said.

THE KALINGA CHRONICLE

Editorial

Promise versus performance

It is far from easy to live up to one's promise and potential. The Aam Aadmi Party was founded on a belief in the possibility of changing the system, working outside of it. But over the last couple of years, the party and its maverick leader Arvind Kejriwal have shown themselves unable to deliver on their promise or rise to their potential. From the selection of candidates to the process of decision-making in the party, the AAP is now seen running counter to its own stated philosophy of transparency and accountability in public life. In Punjab, the party appears to have lost the political plot with Mr. Kejriwal unwilling to allow an independent regional leadership to emerge. Sucha Singh Chhotepur, who was sacked as the State convener over allegations of bribery, has demonstrated that he is no pushover by winning the support of a huge section of the AAP. Navjot Singh Sidhu, the cricketer-turned-politician who quit the BJP recently, chose to float an alternative platform, Awaaz-e-Punjab, rather than join with the AAP. Delhi was only a stepping stone for Mr. Kejriwal, who wants to project himself as an alternative to Prime Minister Narendra Modi. From his choice of Lok Sabha seat in the 2014 election — he chose to take on Mr. Modi in Varanasi — to his frequent Twitter barbs aimed at the Prime Minister, it is clear that he fancies himself as a national level leader. Delhi was no more than a launch pad for his political career; Punjab, the only State where the AAP performed well in the Lok Sabha election, is the next logical step. Whether it is Mr. Chhotepur or Mr. Sidhu, it is clear no one will be allowed to share the leadership space with Mr. Kejriwal in the AAP's Punjab unit.

But Punjab is not the only cause of problems in the party. In recent months, some of its ministers and MLAs have been caught on the wrong side of the law. The party did defend some of them, alleging, and perhaps not entirely falsely, that the Centre was using the Delhi Police to target the party and its prominent members. Indeed, this became another issue in the AAP's battle to bring law and order in the national capital region under the State government's purview. In the latest controversy involving its Women and Child Welfare Minister Sandeep Kumar, the AAP took the high moral ground, and sacked him soon after a video recording of him with a woman in a sexual act was released by a media house. Mr. Kumar was removed from the party as well, as it became clear he had known of the presence of the camera. Evidently, there was more to lose than gain from defending Mr. Kumar, who alleged he was targeted as he was a Dalit. Mr. Kejriwal seems to have set his sights high, but Punjab will judge him by what he did in Delhi as well. The AAP needs to recover its purpose as a catalyst for political and social change if it is to grow beyond Delhi.

Letters

It cannot be denied that the poorest of the poor experienced hope because of Mother Teresa's healing touch and compassion ("A journey to sainthood", Sept.3). It was absolute faith which drove her to take up formidable challenges. The frail nun was selfless beyond description and the celebration of her life and her entry into sainthood are perfectly in order.

C.G. Kuriakose, Kothamangalam, Kerala

Despite the blind glorification of Mother Teresa, her followers and her organisation have a lot to answer to. Besides the allegations of opaque financial transactions, one cannot ignore her extreme views on abortion. There were also allegations of conversion behind the service to the poor and the downtrodden. Unless these allegations are investigated, the "journey to sainthood" has no meaning.

V.S. Thakur, Rajgarh, Himachal Pradesh

A voice like no other

For a man who's been dead for 25 years, its odd how Freddie Mercury's name keeps popping up in the news.

A few weeks back it was Donald Trump's grand entrance at the Republican National Convention, to Freddie Mercury's, "We Are The Champions". The unauthorised use of that song and Queen's statement disassociating the band with Trump's "unsavoury campaign" became news over the next couple of days.

A month before that it was a notebook that Freddie Mercury had used to pen lyrics for the songs he wrote, that went up for auction, that made headlines across the world.

But to me the news item that would explain why Freddie Mercury has still not faded from public memory 25 years after his death was a research paper published by a group of Austrian, Czech, and Swedish researchers in April titled

"Freddie Mercury - Acoustic Analysis of Speaking, Fundamental Frequency, Vibrato and Subharmonics."



Science stories don't make international headlines unless it's something very significant like the discovery of a new sub-atomic particle or a star, or the Nobel prize being announced. So it was very odd indeed that a research paper on a

rock stars vocal chords would make international news - from CNN to Fox News to Time Maga-

technique used by Mongolian throat singers and most human beings never speak or sing with their ventricular folds.

Perhaps this explains why Freddie Mercury's voice was like no other. He could be low and throaty, fragile and tender, and reach a pristine, high, operatic coloratura - all in the same song. But Freddie was not only a great singer, he was also a brilliant songwriter and an accomplished piano player.

In an interview to the BBC, Spanish Opera soprano Montserrat Caballé says - "People think of Freddie only as a rock singer, but he was a great musician. At his home one night I told him I loved Chopin's 'Impromptu'. He just sat at the piano and played it to me. We were there until 6 o'clock in the morning."

Freddie's first formal piano lessons were not in glitzy

London but in St. Peter's boarding school in sleepy Panchgani, a hill station close to Pune. At the time there was no Freddie Mercury either - he was known as Farrokh Bulsara, the name given to him by his Parsi parents. While at school he got his first taste of Rock n Roll playing piano in the school band at the age of 12.

Mercury's love of western classical made Queen's music a bit different from the regular rock music of the time. One of my favorite Queen songs, "The Show Must Go On", is about Mercury continuing to perform despite being terminally ill. When the song was being recorded the other band members were concerned whether Mercury would be physically capable of singing the song as he could hardly walk. As Brian May recalls, "I said, 'Fred, I don't know if this is going to be possible to sing.' And he went, 'I'll f---ing do it, darling' — vodka down — and went in and killed it, completely lacerated that vocal."

Towards the end of his life he was increasingly captivated by opera and in 1987 he recorded an album with Montserrat Caballé called 'Barcelona', the title song of which went on to become one of Mercury's biggest hits. Caballé performed the song live at the 1992 Olympics, a year after Mercury's death.

Freddie Mercury would've turned 70 today. If AIDS hadn't got him at the age of 45 it could've been very possible that Freddie Mercury the rock star could've evolved into Freddie Mercury the opera singer. Whether he would've made a great opera singer or not we will never know.

But what millions of his fans knew decades ago, scientific research has just revealed - that there never was or ever will be another voice like Freddie Mercury's.

Salute to the selfie

Ever since phone manufacturers decided to fit a camera to the front of a device, self-obsession and selfie obsession have grown hand in hand. As smartphone cameras have improved so has the quality of the selfie, to the point where the front camera is occasionally given a higher billing than its rear-facing sibling. We saw a couple of selfie-focused phones from Sony, and Oppo made a swiveling camera on the N1 and recently launched the selfie specialised F1s. Now Gionee has joined the party with the S6s, which rocks an 8 MP front camera with a flash to give it company.

But first we need to talk design, and the S6s has decent fashion sense. It is long, with squared-off edges that are Xperia like, though the fingerprint sensor is rear-mounted, placed between a shiny Gionee sticker and the 13 MP rear camera. The phone is made of metal, giving it a premium feel,

though it comes with a transparent case in case you feel the need for extra protection. The display is a 5.5 inch IPS affair, and it is quite impressive. Colours are punchy and brightness levels high. The phone also has dual-SIM capability, which is now standard in its segment. The SIM tray features a micro-SIM slot and a secondary slot that can hold either a nano-SIM or a memory card.

The S6s is powered by an octa-core 1.3 Ghz Mediatek processor with a Mali T720MP3 GPU. It comes with a healthy 3 GB of RAM and 32 GB of inbuilt storage, which can be expanded to 128 GB by sacrificing dual SIM functionality. The phone is a 4G and VoLTE capable, meaning it is ready to go if you are in the market for VoLTE calling from the likes of Reliance Jio. The 3,150 mAh battery still uses microUSB 2.0 to charge. This is a negative in terms of future-proofing, but the battery does charge quickly and

the S6s lasts ridiculously long on standby so moderate users will love the endurance offered by the device. The fingerprint sensor can



unlock the device straight from sleep, and while it does take a second, it is among the faster implementations we have tested.

The S6s runs the company's Amigo OS based on Android 6.0, and comes with a bunch of pre-installed apps, from file-sharing tools like Xender and productivity assistants such as Truecaller and Swiftkey to a bunch of games like Asphalt Nitro and Bubble Dash. Thankfully, these can be uninstalled, though the same cannot be said for Gionee's own apps like User Feed-

back. The lack of an app drawer means everything you download clutters up the home screen, though Gionee have included options to align avail-

able icons to top or bottom of the screen, and added a desktop management tool called 'Smart Arrange', which automatically groups apps into category-wise folders. It works reasonably well and cleans up the home screen, which is a small comfort.

The S6s isn't much for keeping stock Android's clean approach. A swipe up on the homescreen reveals some desktop management options and a useful universal search tool, while a swipe up from the very bottom edge reveals a control center with quick toggles.

All this added functionality is a mixed bag. On the one hand, the Super Screenshot, which allows regular, multi-page or partial page screenshots is a handy tool, the Fake Call (which is one of the default toggles available in the Control Center, and gives you a fake call from an unknown number to fool people and get away from unwanted conversations) is borderline hilarious.

The camera on the S6s is one of the better ones in the segment. The 13 MP sensor produces slightly soft images with some noise in anything but bright environments, but the camera app is loaded with features. HDR and manual mode (dubbed professional mode here) are present, as are a variety of filters, text recognition, and barcode scanning facilities. The front camera does not let down all the branding, and produces very detailed, natural-looking shots, with a beauty mode thrown in to even out the imper-

fections of your face and make it social media ready.

The Gionee S6s is hard to slot into a particular bracket. This is not a phone for the purists, who want stock Android, a familiar layout and rapid updates. It is not quite for the power user who wants a ton of additional software features, and the latest in silicon muscle, though some of Gionee's add-ons are rather useful. It is however, a great match for the growing user base of people who don't want to spend a bomb but want a great-looking, well-built phone that can handle their daily tasks. The added selfie-power definitely does not hurt.

The Gionee S6s is available in Mocha Gold and Latte Gold at Rs. 17,999 at brick and mortar stores and on Amazon.

Pros: Solid build Great screen and front camera

Feature-rich camera app

Cons: UI not the best in class No USB Type-C

Nitish Kumar likely to Sharad Yadav as party president



New Delhi: Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar is likely to replace Sharad Yadav as the Janata Dal (United)'s president today after the party's national executive meeting here. JDU's secretary-general and spokesperson KC Tyagi said that everyone in the party wanted Nitish to lead the party. "Consensus is building around Nitish Kumar. There is no other candidate in the fray for the position. All the party cadres want Nitish to become the president," he said. Tyagi informed that Sharad,

Family dispute leads Paderu: Two persons including a child were murdered in Gadugupalli village of Pedabayalu mandal in Visakha agency on Tuesday. The deceased were identified as Korra Vinay Kumar (5) and his uncle Korra Matsya Raju (30).

Sources said Vinay, son of Korra Kothaiah, was playing with children of Korra Matsya Raju near his house. Following an argument, Vinay beat up Matsya Raju's children. Enraged by the act, Matsya Raju slit Vinay's throat with a sharp edged weapon.

in his capacity as president, had last week called a meeting of the national council to deliberate on a replacement. In the meeting, Sharad had refused to make any more amendment in the party's constitution to allow him another re-election as the party president. Sharad was elected party president for a third term in 2013 after the JD(U) constitution, which till then had a provision for only two terms for the president's position, was amended. Nitish had in 2006 played a key role in

getting Sharad anointed as the party chief. At that time, Sharad had replaced Nitish's erstwhile mentor Fernandes, who had in 2003 become the first president of the JD(U) when it was formed following the merger of the Sharad-led faction of the Janata Dal and Fernandes's Samata Party. The change of guard in JD(U) will indicate the changes in its internal dynamics at a time when Nitish is being seen to be preparing the party for the 2019 Lok Sabha polls along with

election strategist Prashant Kishor, who has emerged as his most dependable ally after playing a vital role in the party's rout of BJP in 2015 Bihar assembly polls. Apart from making Nitish the party president, the national executive committee will also discuss the party's merger with Ajit Singh's Rashtriya Lok Dal (RLD) and Babulal Marandi's Jharkhand Vikas Morcha-Prajatantrik (JVM-P). Under Sharad's third tenure soon after it began in April 2013, JD(U) broke up with BJP after Nitish made clear his strong reservations on Narendra Modi, who was then tipped to be the saffron party's prime ministerial candidate. JD(U) suffered a humiliating loss in 2014 Lok Sabha elections but bounced back in the 2015 Assembly polls after striking a new alliance with Lalu Prasad Yadav-led RJD and Congress

TNA demands probe over 'illegal occupation'

COLOMBO: The Tamil National Alliance was responding to accusations that on April 16, a group of party legislators led by the main opposition leader R Sampanthan had forcibly entered a military installation at Paravippan area in the northern Kilinochchi district.

"There is no camp there so there was no illegal entry. The military was occupying civilian lands so we went for an inspection," MA Sumanthiran, a senior TNA legislator told reporters on Wednesday. He said some 84

families had been displaced when the army occupied the area in the Tamil-majority Northern Province.

Mr. Sampanthan also met the Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe in the morning to complain about the incident.

Mr. Wickremesinghe has asked the army to verify the ownership of the land, TNA spokesperson said.

The alleged illegal entry by the Tamil politicians to a military installation drew fire by the opposition groups and

majority Sinhala nationalists who urged the President Maithripala Sirisena to arrest Mr. Sampanthan.

The incident comes in the backdrop of last week's resolution in the TNA controlled northern provincial council to set up a federal Tamil government in the north.

Mr. Sumanthiran said the Northern Council had not advocated a separate Tamil unit by passing the resolution.

He also said the Sinhalese and Muslims displaced from the north were welcome to return back.

All Time Looser Eyes RS

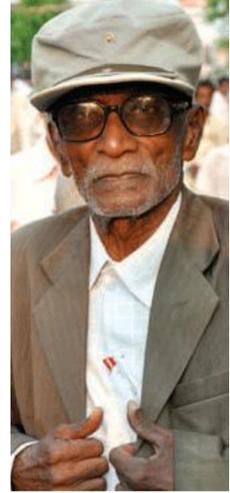
Bhubaneswar: For K Shyam Babu Subudhi, losing elections is just a temporary hurdle.

The Octogenarian who has contested every Lok Sabha elections since 1962 and lost each and every one, has filed his nomination for a Rajya Sabha berth from the State.

Dr. Subudhi, who has already unsuccessfully contested 18 times for Lok Sabha and 10 times for Assembly, will be contesting the Rajya Sabha seat for the third time for which election is scheduled to be held on June 11.

Dr Subudhi, a Homeopathy practitioner in Berhampur today submitted his

nomination paper before the returning officer in



Odisha Legislative Assembly.

He might have lost his every election. But, he is quite confident that this time he would make to the Upper House with the

support of Congress and BJP.

"I have been assured by Congress and BJP that they would support my candidature and the MLAs of both parties would be my proposer. Since they would not file any candidate in the Rajya Sabha polls this time given their number in the state Assembly, they would support me this time," said Dr. Subudhi.

The man is also confident that he would also get the support of BJD leaders. "I will approach Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik to support me to fight against corruption," said the Octogenarian.

Interestingly, his one-page brochure claims to

fight against chit fund scam in which BJD leaders are involved.

The brochure also has photographs Naveen Patnaik and Pyari Mohan Mohapatra sharing dais with arrested Seashore Group Chairman Prasant Das.

It also claimed that both Naveen Patnaik and Prime Minister Narendra Modi has struck a deal to slow down the ongoing CBI inquiry into the chit fund scam.

For Dr Subudhi, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik's announcement of BJD candidates for Rajya Sabha is not disheartening. He hopes to make it to the Parliament this time.

Defunct Air India's Airbus crashes in Hyderabad

HYDERABAD: In what could be termed as a freak accident, a crane carrying Air India's defunct aircraft has crashed on the boundary wall of a private property abutting Begumpet Airport in Hyderabad on Sunday morning. The crane and the aircraft were damaged but luckily, there were no casualties in the incident. The incident happened at 6.30 am when Air India officials were transporting the defunct Airbus A320 aircraft from the Begumpet Airport hangar to their training academy (Central Training Establishment) nearby. Air India authorities wanted to use the aircraft in training the flight attendants, engineers, pilots and aviation security personnel. As it was first such operation in the country,

to execute it, Air India officials sought permission from the Begumpet Airport authorities and made a gap in the rear boundary wall to allow the



heavy truck carrying the 200 tonne crane holding 70 tonne aircraft in the air to quickly move from the airport to the training establishment. "There is two to three kilometre distance from the airport hangar to the training academy. The aircraft has to be lifted to cer-

tain height and carried in the air to avoid trees and electric poles on the road," North Zone DCP N Prakash Reddy told TOI. The Air India of-

"While the heavy truck was moving slowly towards the Air India's training academy, at around 6.30 am, the arm of the crane snapped due to heavy load and the aircraft crashed on the boundary wall of a private property opposite to the airport premises," the DCP said. After the accident, police blocked the old airport road from Bowenpally to Ferozguda for ordinary traffic. Air India officials began cutting the aircraft into three pieces to carry them separately to the training academy located at Ferozguda. Bowenpally police have made a General Diary (GD) entry of the incident and if any party lodged a complaint, a case is likely to be registered later.

PM reviews progress in rail and road sectors

NEW DELHI: With NDA government's focus on improving infrastructure, Prime Minister Narendra Modi Monday reviewed progress of key infrastructure ministries railways and roads and highways and called for increasing level of ambition and getting more private investment.

Modi stressed upon the need to speed up the redevelopment of Railway Stations, and urged the Railways to substantially raise its level of ambition in this regard. He em-

phasized the need for the Railways to upgrade and diversify the uses of its infrastructure.

He reiterated that railway infrastructure in rural areas could be used for activities such as skill development, and this could also result in an increase in non-fare revenue for the railways. Railway has created a separate non fare revenue directorate to monetize other resources like land, coaches, stations and trains among others.

In the road sector, which under

Nitin Gadkari has reported increase in construction of highways to 25 km per day, Modi stressed on the need to study various models of road development across the country, and adopt the best practices, so that more private investment can be brought into the highway construction sector.

He also stressed the need to decongest critical stretches, and adopt latest technologies for toll collection.

"Centre is working on upgrading rail

infra. In rural areas this will boost skill development and increase non-fare revenue for railways. Progress in commissioning of lines and electrification of lines has been commendable. Discussed speeding up process of redeveloping stations," Modi tweeted after the meeting.

In the roads sector, the Prime Minister was informed that over 6000 kilometres of highways were completed in 2015-16, while contracts for another 10,098 kilometres were

awarded in the same period.

As far as railways is concerned, it was noted that the capital investment in 2015-16 was over Rs 93,000 crore, which represents a massive increase of 65 per cent over the previous year, and is the highest-ever. Similarly, 1780 km of lines have been commissioned, and 1730 kilometres electrified during 2015-16, which represent the best performance on these metrics in railway history.

op Mumbai Metro officers get paid more than their boss: RTI

MUMBAI: Half a dozen senior officers of Mumbai Metro Rail Corporation Ltd (MMRCL), who are on deputation, are drawing higher salaries than the company's Managing Director, according to an RTI query.

MMRCL, a 50:50 joint venture between the Central and Maharashtra Governments, is the implementing agency for the ambitious Mumbai Metro project that seeks to improve the transportation scenario in the financial capital.

The query was

filed by RTI activist Anil Galgali, who had sought information about the salaries drawn by officers and staff of the Corporation for the month of March 2016. Ganesh Ghule, the company's Deputy Accountant and Public Information Officer, provided Galgali with a list of 119 officials and employees and their salaries.

According to the details provided by him, six senior officials - Project Director Subodh Gupta (Rs 2,08,706), System Director Ajay Kumar Bhat (Rs 2,03,346), Execu-

tive Director (Electrical) R K Sharma (Rs 1,92,945), Executive Director R Ramanna (Rs 1,82,688), CFO Indraniel Sarkar (Rs 1,51,936) and GM (Civil) Charuhas Jadhav (Rs 1,51,936) - were drawing higher salaries than their boss Ashwini Bhide (Rs 1,43,051), an IAS officer and Managing Director of MMRCL.

Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis draws a salary of Rs 57,000 per month in his capacity as Chairman of MMRCL, he said.

BJP holds Lajja Divas over State Govt's various failures

Bhubaneswar, (KCN): Opposition BJP is observing Lajja Divas on Wednesday raising many issues including children's death due to malnutrition in Jajpur district's Nagada village, incident of Dana Majhi carrying his wife's body in Kalahandi district and issues pertaining to education, health and law and order. Hundreds of BJP leaders and workers are sitting on the Mahatma Gandhi Road in the lower PMG area here raising slogans against various failures of the Naveen Patnaik-led State Government. "The Government has failed to fulfill basic needs of the people. Children's deaths in Jajpur's Nagada village, the incident of Dana Majhi carrying his wife's body due to denial of ambulance by Bhawanipatna hospital authorities, Athmallik bus accident, drinking water problem and worsening law and order situation and debilitating education and healthcare sys-

tems are the naked examples of failures of the State Government," said BJP vice-president Sameer Mohanty. In response to a question on the Union Government's full support to Polavaram project, which is likely to affect thousands of acres of agriculture filed and submerge many villagers, Mohanty said, "The Modi Government will not do anything that would harm Odisha's interest. But the Naveen Patnaik Government is unnecessarily politicising the Polavaram and Mahanadi water dispute issues and are trying to give emotional touch to the issues for political gain." The party also held a signature campaign to collect signatures from general public who supported the Lajja Divas. Many senior leaders, including BJP State president Basanta Panda and former Minister Bishwabhusan Harichandan, were present.

Curfew in Soro, Section 144 in Rourkela, Pattamundai following communal tension

Bhubaneswar, (KCN): Curfew, Section 144 in three Odisha towns following communal tension. These three towns are Soro (curfew), Rourkela (Section 144) and Pattamundai (Section 144) in Kendrapada. Curfew imposed again in Soro town of Balasore district, to remain in force till tomorrow 6 am Odisha. Peace Committee decides to immerse remaining Ganesh idols between 9-11 am tomorrow in low profile manner. Earlier in the morning when there was no report of violence, Baleswar SP Niti Sekhar had announced that the dusk-to-dawn cur-

few would continue until further orders. procession at the Old Station road



Due to the Eid festival on the day, there was a relaxation in prohibitory orders under Section 144 of CrPC between 8 am and 2 pm. Prohibitory orders under Section 144 of CrPC were clamped in Rourkela on Tuesday after two groups clashed during a Ganesh idol immer-

tion procession at the Old Station road to avoid any untoward incident, informed the Rourkela Sub-Collector. Due to security reasons, the place for Namaaz prayer on the account of Eid-ul-Zuha was changed from the Idgah Ground to the Jama Masjid. Prohibitory orders under Section 144 of CrPC were clamped in Pattamundai since Tuesday morning. Procession, meetings, and congregation have been restricted in the municipality area.

MCL Contributes almost 99% of total corporate Tax collection in Sambalpur

Bhubaneswar, (KCN): In a letter address to Sri Praising the manage-



Anil Kumar Jha, CMD, MCL, Sri A K Satpathy, IRS, Pr. Commissioner of Income Tax, Sambalpur thanked MCL for contributing a sum of Rs. 2065 Crores in the form of advance tax out of total of 2091 crores collected under the administrative jurisdiction of the Pr. CIT, Sambalpur in the ment of MCL for its sincere involvement in the process of nation building by payment of substantial corporate tax. Sri Satpathy, expected that, the tax would increase by 20% in the current financial year 2016-17. MCL would play a major role as the highest contribute advance tax.

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Vijay Mallya's Kingfisher Villa on the block for Rs 85 crore

NEW DELHI: Vijay Mallya's fabled Kingfisher Villa in Goa has been put on the block by State Bank of India for Rs 85 crore. The auction of the beachside property will take place on October 19. The Villa, which is the most publicised of Mallya's properties, could be attached by banks only in May 2016 - five months after the former liquor baron celebrated his 60th birthday there. This was because United Breweries had stymied attachment proceedings claiming tenancy rights on the bungalow. The property, a landmark on Candolim Beach, has

an area of 12,350 square meters. The Villa itself comprises of three big bedrooms and a huge living room containing hand-crafted teakwood furniture has been designed in Goan style by Dean D'Cruz a famous architect from the state. SBICAP Trustee Company, which has been appointed by the banks to conduct the auction said in its notice that the property will be available for inspection between 26th and 27th September and between 5th and 6th October. The bungalow was attached following a default by Kingfisher Airlines, which owed 17 banks

Rs 6,963 crore as on April 2014. Mallya had provided a personal guarantee for the Kingfisher Airlines loan along with co-guarantor United Breweries. The auction comes at a time when the bank's attempt to sell other Mallya properties had failed. Bank's have not found any buyers for Kingfisher Airlines' erstwhile headquarters - Kingfisher House near Mumbai Airport although the price was lowered from Rs 150 crore to Rs 135 crore in a second auction. Brokers say that the price is still higher than market rates considering height restrictions due to its proximity to

the airport. There were also no takers for the Kingfisher brands, which the banks tried to sell for Rs 366 crore. United Breweries had contested the sale stating that it had rights to the Kingfisher bird logo. But even as banks struggle to recover their assets, Mallya's woes have mounted with the enforcement directorate attaching property worth Rs 6,630 crore. Mallya himself has been staying in UK since early March 2016 fearing arrest. Mallya left India after a deal with British liquor giant Diageo on February 25 where he would get \$75 million and step down

from the board of United Spirits even as banks moved courts seeking to restrain him from leaving the country. Although it has been three years since Kingfisher Airlines defaulted on its loans, concerted action by lenders picked up after former Reserve Bank of India governor strongly criticised the wilful nature of the default. "If you flaunt your birthday bashes even while owing the system a lot of money, it does seem to suggest to the public that you don't care. I think that is the wrong message to send. If you are in trouble, you should be cutting down your expenses," said Rajan.

LinkedIn launches new product to help small businesses in India

BENGALURU: LinkedIn expects to take what it calls 'Made in India, for India' products to other markets in the world, the CEO of the professional social networking company said. "There's a lot of learning from what we are going to do here that we think can be extended elsewhere beyond India," Jeff Weiner told ET in an exclusive interview. "That certainly holds true for LinkedIn Lite that we are rolling out in India for the first time. That's going to make sense in other markets where you see

very similar restrictions where you see restrictions in storage and bandwidth," he said. LinkedIn, which was acquired by Microsoft in June for \$26.2 billion, on Monday unveiled three products a stripped down mobile site called LinkedIn Lite; a product aimed at the college placements market called LinkedIn Placements, and a LinkedIn Starter Pack aimed at startups and small businesses. All of them were entirely developed by its 250-person-strong R&D outfit in Bengaluru. India is home to LinkedIn's sec-

ond-largest user base with 37 million members, only behind the US, which has over 130 million users. Also, the fact that LinkedIn has chosen to build customised products for the country underlines India's importance, said Weiner. "We have done this in China before. So far, these are the only two markets (China and India), outside the US, where we do global development for that particular country," said Weiner. He also gave an emphatic thumbs-up to the Indian government's digital push.

Implementation of GST to attract more FDI: Survey

NEW DELHI: Implementation of Goods & Service Tax will lead to increased tax compliance and attract more foreign direct investments across sectors due to tax transparency and ease of doing business, says a survey. According to a survey of corporate India by Feedback Business Consulting Services, which covered 67 companies from various sectors, GST rollout will be positive for the economy. Around 72 per cent respondents felt investments will rise across sectors and a significant portion of this will come in the form of

FDI especially in heavy engineering and automotive sectors. Some of the other major benefits of GST implementation include, reduced logistics cost, supply chain efficiency, reduction in costs for tax & regulatory compliance, better penetration of markets and export effectiveness. However, companies are concerned about the timing of implementation of GST and fixing of rate at which tax will be charged, the survey said. "There might be some heartburns like inflation in the early days of implementation but GST will improve GDP of the country in

the long run," it added. The report mentioned that states where the goods and services are consumed will benefit more as GST is consumption-based tax and not production-based. "This may be a cause for concern for unorganised states," it said. The survey was initiated immediately after the passage of GST Bill in parliament and the response were collated by 31st August. The response were later analysed through Statistical Package for the Social Sciences, a software package used in statistical analysis of data, to draw inferences.

Economy round-up: Fuel products may come under GST

NEW DELHI: The government is reportedly set to bring petroleum products under the ambit of the Goods and Services Tax (GST), which is likely to be implemented from the next financial year. Citing government officials it didn't name, The Economic Times reported that petroleum products, including some intermediate crude products, could be 'modestly' taxed under the GST, which will overhaul the indirect tax regime in the country. If this happens, the

only major product category left outside the GST's ambit will be alcoholic beverages. The report, however, cites few details on what the tax rate on petroleum products will be. Meanwhile, the opposition Congress party is set to begin consultations with chief ministers and finance ministers of states it rules to determine the party's proposal on the GST rate, another report in The Economic Times said. The party wants to evolve a consensus among all

the eight states its rules, so as to present a united front during the meetings of the GST Council, which will take a call on this issue. The council, headed by the Union finance minister and comprising his state counterparts as members, is set to meet on 23-24 September for the first time. The Congress has been pitching for an 18% GST rate, saying a higher figure could be inflationary. Meanwhile, a Business Standard report said the weather department may have

got its monsoon predictions wrong once again. While the India Meteorological Department (IMD) had predicted normal to higher than normal rains, the southwest monsoon has been 5% below normal till 13 September. The report, however, said the department has stuck to its original forecast, hoping that rains were likely to revive over northwest and central India during September. Failing this, the IMD will have to revise its estimates. The country has been reel-

ing under the effects of drought-like conditions in the last two years, which have seen agricultural prices soar, leading to retail inflation staying above the 5% mark. A report prepared by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has said that four states—Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu—accounted for more than half the projects funded by banks and financial institutions during 2015-16, leaving the more populous northern states behind.

ICICI Bank to offload another 6% in insurance arm in next 3yrs

MUMBAI: Set to dilute 12 per cent stake in ICICI Prudential Life Insurance through an IPO, country's biggest private sector lender ICICI Bank has said it will offload another 6 per cent in the insurance arm over the next three years. ICICI Prudential Life Insurance, the country's first insurer to launch a public offer, has

fixed IPO price band at Rs 300-334 per equity share to raise around Rs 6,000 crore. The NPAs-saddled ICICI Bank, which will be diluting over 12 per cent of its stake in ICICI Prudential Life Insurance through the IPO, is looking to benefit through non-core asset sale, ICICI Bank Managing Director and CEO

Chanda Kochhar said, adding the lender will continue to offload stakes in subsidiaries. It will offload another 6 per cent in ICICI Prudential over the next three years. The insurer's initial share sale, which will open on September 19 and close on September 21, involves an offer of up to 18,13,41,058 equity

shares of a face value of Rs 10 each by its shareholders including its promoter ICICI Bank through an offer for sale. At the lower price band of Rs 300, the company will garner funds little over Rs 5,400 crore from the IPO, while at the upper price band the amount comes to the tune of over Rs 6,000 crore.

Jio claims over 52 crore call failures from Airtel, Vodafone, Idea

NEW DELHI: Airtel on Tuesday assured Reliance Jio of fresh inter-connect points to address complaints of call failures, but the new entrant hit back at the company and other incumbents, accusing them of "anti-competitive behaviour" that had cost its network over 52 crore call failures across Airtel, Vodafone and

Idea Cellular. The retort from Jio came on a day when Airtel said it was boosting the number of inter-connect points to the company following "bilateral discussions", but added in the same breath that "asymmetric traffic" from the Mukesh Ambani telco could "adversely impact" its network. Idea cellular had assured of a similar

booster on Monday, but had also made a similar charge of heavy call-ins from Jio. On Friday, regulator TRAI had called in all the operators for a meeting, and had instructed the incumbents to address the issue soon so that customers were not inconvenienced. Airtel has complained to TRAI on the

"massive asymmetry in the volume of traffic" between the two networks. "Airtel expressed hope that TRAI will look into the issue of asymmetric traffic on an urgent basis and ensure that massive volumes of free calls terminating on Airtel's network do not adversely impact its network."

Bankers seeking Anil Ambani's personal guarantee on loans to Reliance Defence

MUMBAI: Anil Ambani's ambitious defence plans appear to have hit a speed bump with bankers seeking his personal guarantee on loans to Reliance Defence and Engineering to replace that of former promoter Nikhil Gandhi, said people aware of the matter. The Ambani-run Reliance Group took over Pipavav Defence from Gandhi last year and renamed it Reliance Defence in March. The company asked

bankers led by SBI and IDBI Bank to release personal guarantee furnished by Gandhi and offered a corporate one instead, to which the lenders said they want one from Ambani. There was no reply to an email sent to Reliance Group on Saturday "Unless the stalemate is resolved, lenders may not go ahead in providing additional funding that the company needs for its existing project," said a bank executive who

did not want to be named. Reliance Defence, which has Rs 12,600 in bank debt, has sought another Rs 400 crore in priority loans and a separate non-fundbased limit of Rs 1,000 crore. The first refers to credit that gets paid back on a priority basis and the second is in the nature of bank guarantees, critical in securing defence deals. Reliance Defence is among the few to have been licensed and contracted to build war-



ships, a segment that's just been opened to

the private sector. At a recent high-level

meeting of the company and its bankers, Reliance Defence had proposed a corporate guarantee from group unit Reliance Infrastructure. The lenders were said to be insisting on one from Ambani. Reliance Group acquired 18% of Pipavav Defence in an all-cash deal amounting to Rs 819 crore in March 2015. It bought another 11.2% stake in the company for Rs 545 crore in an open offer. Gandhi's SKIL Infrastructure held a

23.6% stake in the company as of June 2016. The company proposes to raise Rs 1,200 crore through a rights issue in which Reliance Group is expected to raise its stake by buying shares due to Gandhi. At the meeting mentioned above, the company informed lenders that the Reliance Group stake would rise to 36%. In a notice to exchanges, the company has said that proceeds of the issue will enable

Reliance Defence to exit from the corporate debt restructuring process and strengthen its financial position. CDR involves distressed borrowers and lenders agreeing to easier loan terms. Reliance Defence posted a net loss of Rs 134 crore for the June quarter against a loss of Rs 167.2 crore in the year-earlier period. The stock crashed 13.5% to Rs 56.35 on the BSE on Monday.

Serena pens female-power poem for fashion show



NEWYORK : "She turns her disappointment into triumph. Her grief into joy. Her rejections into approvals. If no one believes in her it does not matter. She believes in herself. Nothing stops her. No one can touch her. She is woman." So said Serena Williams via loudspeaker Monday as part of a female-power soundtrack for a runway show of her Serena Williams Signature Statement collection for HSN during New York Fashion Week. Williams interspersed the long-form poem that she wrote and recited on the soundtrack with music from women only, including her buddy Beyonce's

"Lemonade." "I wrote it right after Wimbledon and during the Olympics, and I just was in this moment of I want to empower women," she explained in a backstage interview. "It was right around the time I was asked, 'How do you feel about being the greatest female athlete?' and I was, like, they never ask men that. I wanted to give women strength. I played it for Beyonce and she loved it." The idea, said the tennis great, was to carry that strength and unity into the clothes into her third show. The fall collection of soft faux shearlings, feminine black lace, ivories, touches of soft

stretchy leather and classic wool maxi coats in gray and black was available immediately on HSN as Williams joined the "see now, buy now" push that's become increasingly common during Fashion Week. She paired dainty stovepipe leggings in a soft rose with long, matching vests and cardigans, a velvet and fur-trimmed dress with sexy pumps, and a black lace gown worn over high-waisted shorts. And she included knits in a Merlot and touches of fall green. The sophistication spoke to her years in fashion, along with her sister, Venus, who focuses on athleisure wear for another company. Are

they competitive in fashion as well as tennis?" "It is very competitive spirit, but we're in totally different fields," Serena smiled. "She's into more sportswear and I'm into more ready-to-wear, and more sportswear, too." Her older sis was on hand front row to cheer Williams on. So how does Venus feel about some friendly sisterly competition? "We give each other confidence, so if your sister likes it you know it's going to be OK," Venus said. "Your sister always tells you the truth. We definitely help each other out and give suggestions. And that's the way sisters should be." Williams won Wimbledon this year but lost in the semifinals at the U.S. Open. She tied with Steffi Graf's Grand Slam record of 22. She also tied Graf's record until this week as the No. 1 female player in the world for 186 weeks. Asked if getting back to No. 1 is a top priority, Williams responded: "Right now I'm focused on fashion and then when I'm not I'm focused on Grand Slams. I always love having goals."

Ashmita and Abhishek, the two gymnasts primed to surpass Dipa Karmakar

AGARTALA: It is not a strange coincidence anymore that in Dipa Karmakar's home town of Agartala, gymnastics is more popular than ever before. Since Dipa's leap of faith at the Rio Olympics, almost all the eight major coaching centers of the city are buzzing with excitement. That speaks volumes, considering how Agartala has been the fulcrum of gymnastics' emergence in the country from the 1960s. Fifty years since, courtesy Dipa, it continues to be on the rise. Even if you're slightly aware of the gymnastics scene of the country, chances are you'd be familiar with the Vivekananda Byamagar, the academy that has honed the best the country has offered. Sixty-nine years since its inception, Byamagar - despite not wearing the greatest of outfits - hasn't lost its charm. Every day at 3pm, young students aged 6-18 flock the gate with ambitions of becoming the next Dipa. A

similar vision develops at all other centers, one of which happens to be the Dasaratha Dev Sports Complex, looked after Bisheswar Nandi, Dipa's coach+ and a Dronacharya awardee. Since it is rest period for Dipa, she and her coach are found here every evening, carefully examining the many future gymnasts in the making. The center has appointed eight different coaches, their duties categorized between age group, gender and types of vaults. Set up in 2007, it is second only to Byamagar in terms of churning out the best talents. But unlike Byamagar, which still comprises tattered mats and rusted vaults, equipment here is up-to-date. The property is worth over Rs 50 lakh and has been taken care of by the Sports Authority of India. However, all that money invested towards the sport has nothing to do with the financially-challenged background of these young gymnasts.

Nandi says that in Agartala, one would find two things simultaneously - talent and poverty. Of the many who've had to defy all odds to train here, 15-

year-Ashmita Pal and 17-year-old Abhishek Singha have the most inspiring tales. They are seen as Tripura's most promising gymnasts after Dipa.

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Playing under floodlights is smart decision: Paes

NEWDELHI : India's non-playing captain Anand Amritraj might feel otherwise but Leander Paes has defended the decision to conduct this weekend's Davis Cup tie against Spain under floodlights, saying that the home players "struggle in hot and humid conditions". Amritraj had castigated the DLTA's decision to host matches in the evening, insisting that India had given up on home advantage by not competing against the superior Spaniards in the day time. Paes argued that it's only a myth that players with the calibre of Rafael Nadal and David Ferrer can be worn down by heat as they are the marathoners of world tennis who can slug it out for hours in tough conditions. He also cited the example of the Korea tie in

Chandigarh where both Indian and Korean players struggled to stand on their feet in tor-



turous conditions. "It's a very smart (decision) to play in the evening. You always have to look after your own strengths. During the Korea tie, three of the four singles players were lying on the ground. Facts are facts. In the last two months, Saketh has played two five-setters and in both he had cramps," Paes said after a practice session with the Indian

team. The 43-year-old said Myneni should be praised for managing to win that second rubber

against Yong-Kyu Lim after a bout of severe body cramps. "He did an amazing job in Chandigarh, to come out of that and win, very proud of the fact. But I have always believed you need to look after your players first. To Play Rafa and David Ferrer in middle of the day... they are known marathon men of tennis. The choice of playing under the lights in the

evening is a very good choice," he said. India now are fighting for a place in the elite World Group for the third consecutive year but again they are likely to remain in the Asia/Oceania zone since beating Spain is an uphill task. Asked if it was disappointing to reach this stage but not go forward, Paes said India should celebrate success at Asia level which is no mean task. "It's perspective. You have to be realistic. You have to look at the extended group, whether singles or doubles. In singles we've always had one single player. On the whole we have improved, we are best in Asia, have put a stamp on that. Korea are a tough bunch, Chinese Taipei. Asia is tough," he said choosing not to be harsh on the singles players.

Anil Kumble, Rahul Dravid involvement huge for Indian cricket: John Wright

NEW DELHI: John Wright, the former New Zealand and India coach, has expressed immense satisfaction at the involvement of legendary Indian players from the team he supervised shortly after the turn of the century in Indian cricket today. Speaking to TOI Sports from his home in Christchurch, Wright - who was the coach of the Indian team from 2000 to 2005 - said it was a huge positive for the country that the likes of Anil Kumble, Rahul Dravid, Sachin Tendulkar, Sourav Ganguly and VVS Laxman were actively involved in Indian cricket. "I'm delighted to see the involvement of some of the people I had the pleasure of working with. Anil as coach, then Rahul get-

ting involved with the A team and Under-19 team, Laxman and Tendulkar and Sourav involved in an advisory capacity and in IPL teams. [Javagal] Srinath is a match referee too, and these really are the best guys available to better cricket in India," said Wright, who played 82 Tests and 149 ODIs for New Zealand. "I just worked with an outstanding group of young men and was very fortunate in that regard. From that point of view, to see them getting back into the game in these roles, and giving the knowledge that I know they have as well as the good qualities that made them what they are as players and made them members of the great team that went on and did

some good things, is so valuable for Indian cricket."

Under Wright, India won an unforgettable Test series against Australia at home, drew a Test series in Australia, reached the 2003 World Cup final and won both Test and ODI series in Pakistan. Since he quit the coaching job, Wright has returned to India many times, most prominently as head coach and then talent scout for IPL franchise Mumbai Indians. In his view, the success of T20 cricket is breeding more all-round players. "Twenty20 is the big change in cricket, and the biggest thing is that it's so exciting and vibrant. The IPL is fantastic and I enjoy it passionately... being able to scout talent and meet young cricketers across India, in particular," said Wright. "What's also exciting is that there are quality players coming through who are successful in all formats, foremost being Virat Kohli. Just brilliant. There are some specialists around, mostly in T20 and ODIs, which has been the case for long if you look at one-dayers. But the guys who really make a difference in T20s are also the guys who making hundreds and taking five wickets in Test matches, because they can adapt their skills to different formats." New Zealand, led by Kane Williamson, are currently in India for three Tests and five ODIs. Williamson made his debut in Tests and ODIs not long before Wright took over as New Zealand coach in December 2010, and

during his tenure the 62-year-old watched him from close quarters: in nine Tests, 17 ODIs and six T20Is, to be precise.

"Williamson is a beautiful player, who I first saw when he was in high school. It was pretty obvious to all of that he was a special kid. He's technically outstanding and has a good attitude, he's a smart player," said Wright. "When I was coach, I picked him to go the World Cup [in 2011] and we got to the semi-finals. I batted him at No 7 and people were a little dubious, but he ended up scoring more runs to balls faced [99 runs, strike-rate 107.60, average 49.50 in four games]. His development since then has been tremendous to watch and admire. "You just hope that with the added responsibility of captaincy, he keeps on playing the way he's been doing and enjoying his cricket," said Wright. "The big thing is - when you're creating any team, you don't want to put too much pressure on anyone. There are six batsmen who've all got different styles etc etc and he's just one of six or seven. If you're going to do well in India, you have to get in and then go on. Kane has the advantage of having scored his first Test hundred in India on debut and he's a beautiful player of spin bowling. I'm sure he'll have a great tour and people will love watching him but because people understand cricket in India and love watching good players.

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