



PRESIDENT OF INDIA CONFERS BHARAT RATNA UPON SHRI L.K. ADVANI

NEWDELHI, (KCN): The President of India, Smt Droupadi Murmu conferred Bharat Ratna upon Shri L.K. Advani at a ceremony held at his residence in New Delhi today (March 31, 2024). The formal ceremony was attended by the Vice President, Shri Jagdeep Dhankhar, Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, Defence Minister, Shri Rajnath Singh, Home Minister, Shri Amit Shah and the family members of Shri Advani.

Mercury Crosses 40 Degree C In Odisha For First Time In This Year



Bhubaneswar (KCN):

The maximum temperature crossed 40 Degree Celsius in Odisha for the first time in this year today.

Malkangiri recorded the highest maximum temperature of 41 Degree C in Odisha today, said the IMD.

The maximum temperature was 40.5 Degree C at Boudh and Titlagarh, 40.2 Degree C at Balangir and 40 Degree C at Nayagarh,

added the IMD. Five places in Odisha—Jharsuguda, Bhawaniapatna, Sonepur, Paralakhemundi and Nuapada—recorded the maximum temperature in between 38 Degree C and 39 Degree C. The maximum temperature was 37 Degree C at the capital city and 37.6 Degree C at Cuttack, said the IMD.

Nilagiri MLA Sukanta Kumar Nayak, ex-Congress leader Chiranjib Biswal join BJD



Bhubaneswar (KCN): Former Jagatsinghpur MLA and Congress heavyweight Chiranjib Biswal and Nilgiri MLA and former BJP leader Sukanta Kumar Nayak Sunday joined Biju Janata Dal (BJD) at the party headquarters Sankha Bhawan in Bhubaneswar.

On the occasion, Biswal, who resigned from the Congress Saturday, said, "I joined BJD after being impressed by the leadership of Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik and his people-oriented programmes for the last 25 years, especially those aimed at benefitting women, youths, farmers and the poor people residing in villages."

Biswal is the son of late Congress stalwart Basant Kumar Biswal who had also served as the deputy Chief Minister of Odisha from 1995 and 1999. Biswal was elected to the

state assembly from Tirtol and Jagatsinghpur constituencies on Congress ticket in 2004 and 2014 respectively.

Nayak, who had tendered his resignation from the primary membership of the BJP Friday, joined the BJD along with his supporters at party headquarters.

"We have been impressed by the ideology of Biju babu (Biju Patnaik) from the beginning of our career but for some reasons and discontent, we left the party in 2019," Nayak said.

"After winning the election in 2019 on a BJP ticket, I realised that there is a lack of coordination between my associates and the people running the organisation of the BJP. I thank Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik for allowing me and my supporters to make a comeback to the party," Nayak said.

Senior BJD leaders Pratap Keshari Deb and MP Sasmit Patra were present on the occasion. Meanwhile, Patra Sunday mocked the BJP, saying that the latter could not find enough candidates for the 147 assembly constituencies of the state.

Patra said that this is the reason why the party, despite declaring candidates for 21 Lok Sabha seats long back, is yet to announce the list of candidates for assembly constituencies.

Responding to Patra, BJP leader Samir Mohanty said, "Declaration of candidates is an internal matter of the party... BJP doesn't need certificate from anyone. He said the party will field able and competent candidates to ensure the end of an inept government ruling the state for 25 years."

BJD's fort crumbling, says Bhartruhari Mahtab BJP's LS candidate for Cuttack LS seat

BHUBANESWAR, (KCN):

The ruling BJD's fort is crumbling and the party has realised it, said Bhartruhari Mahtab BJP's Lok Sabha candidate for the prestigious Cuttack seat. Bhartruhari on Sunday was accorded a grand welcome at Bhubaneswar airport. He was officially announced as BJP's nominee for the Cuttack Lok Sabha seat.

The six-time Cuttack MP recently quit the

ruling BJD after expressing displeasure over the party's functioning and affairs. "It is time for a change. BJD's fort is crumbling

and the party has realised this. This change will happen in June 2024 and it will be proved by the people," said Bhartruhari after his arrival in Bhubaneswar.

Bhartruhari Mahtab had joined the BJP on Thursday. Along with

Bhartruhari, former BJD MP Siddhant Mohapatra and noted litterateur Padma Shri Damayanti Beshra also joined the BJP at party headquarters in Delhi. The son of Odisha's

Fighting big battle against corrupt, won't be intimidated by attacks: PM at Meerut rally



schedule.

Modi's counter-offensive came as the stalwarts of the INDIA bloc held a rally at the Ramlila Maidan in New Delhi in support of AAP chief Arvind Kejriwal and JMM leader Hemant Soren, arrested on graft charges, and accused the prime minister of adopting dictatorial policies.

The prime minister said some people are rattled

because he is taking action against corruption. "I am fighting a big battle to save my country from the corrupt. That is why they are behind bars today and not getting bail even from the Supreme Court," Modi said.

"The election is a fight between two camps. On one side you have the NDA committed to eradicating corruption, on the other side is the INDIA Alliance focused on

protecting corrupt leaders. You have to decide whether corruption should be removed or not," he said at the rally in Meerut. "Corrupt people should listen... No matter how many attacks you make on Modi, this is Modi, he is not going to stop. No matter how big the corrupt person is, action will definitely be taken. The one who has looted the country will have to give it back. This is Modi's guarantee," he said.

Raising the Katchaheevu island issue, Modi accused the Congress and the opposition alliance of trying to harm the country's unity and sovereignty.

2024



Rajyasabha MP Neeraj dangi addressing a public meeting at Reodar in support of Loksabha candidate Baibhav Gehlot in the presence of Former Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot & other congress leaders

Odisha Crime Branch busts racket involved in Rs1.04 cr fraud

Bhubaneswar (KCN): The Cyber Crime Unit of Odisha Crime Branch has busted a racket allegedly involved in misappropriation of money to the tune of more than Rs1.04 crores deposited in the ICICI Bank, Dhenkanal Branch during 2021-22, said a CB official Sunday.

The Crime Branch (CB) has so far arrested three persons including a couple. The accused were identified as Swagatika Swain (28), her husband Manoj Kumar Sahoo (29), and their associate, Prasant Kumar Sahoo.

Swagatika was posted at the Dhenkanal branch of the private bank as the relationship manager while accused Prasant, works as the Deputy Bank Manager.

The fraud came to fore when some customers of the bank's Dhenkanal branch complained to the bank authorities about some suspicious unauthorised transactions from their ICICI bank accounts.

"The bank had got an internal enquiry done and it was ascertained that fraudulent transactions were carried out in the form of unauthorised overdraft against fixed deposits. Such overdrafts were availed through i-Mobile application, fake investments in mutual funds, pre-closure of FD and misappropriation of premium amounts related to ICICI prudential policy. Swagatika had carried out the alleged disputed transactions for personal gain. All the alleged transactions were done from February 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022," stated the CB official. Later, the Regional Head of the ICICI Bank's Financial Crime Prevention Group lodged a complaint with the Crime Branch in December last year. The CB launched an investigation registering a case (33/23) in this regard.

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'Madgaon Express' box office Day 7: Kunal Kemmu's film eyes Rs 15 crore

Kunal Kemmu's directorial debut, 'Madgaon Express', is steadily heading towards the Rs 15-crore mark. On Day 7, the film earned Rs 13.5 crore at the box office. The film stars Divyendu, Pratik Gandhi, and Avinash Tiwary in lead roles.

Kunal Kemmu's 'Madgaon Express' earned Rs 1.2 crore on Day 7. The film earned the same amount on Day 6. The total tally now stands at Rs 13.5 crore.

The film

saw an overall occupancy of 12.64 per cent in the Hindi belt.

The film clashed with

Randeep Hooda's 'Swatanya Veer Savarkar' at the box office.

Kunal,

who recently

turned

director

with

'Madgaon Express'

expressed his gratitude to

the

crew

and

fans

for

loving

the

film.

He

shared

a few

behind-

the-scenes

(BTS)

photos

of

himself

, and

wrote

, 'From day 1 of shoot to

the day I said the last

pack up on the sets of

Madgaon Express. Each

day has been so special

in so many ways. And I

couldn't have done it

without my amazing

team of

actors

and

technicians (sic)."

"To the many colours of

friendship that the film

showcases and the many

colours of my own

personality that I got to

explore through this film.

I wish you all a very

happy Holi and thank you

so much for all the love

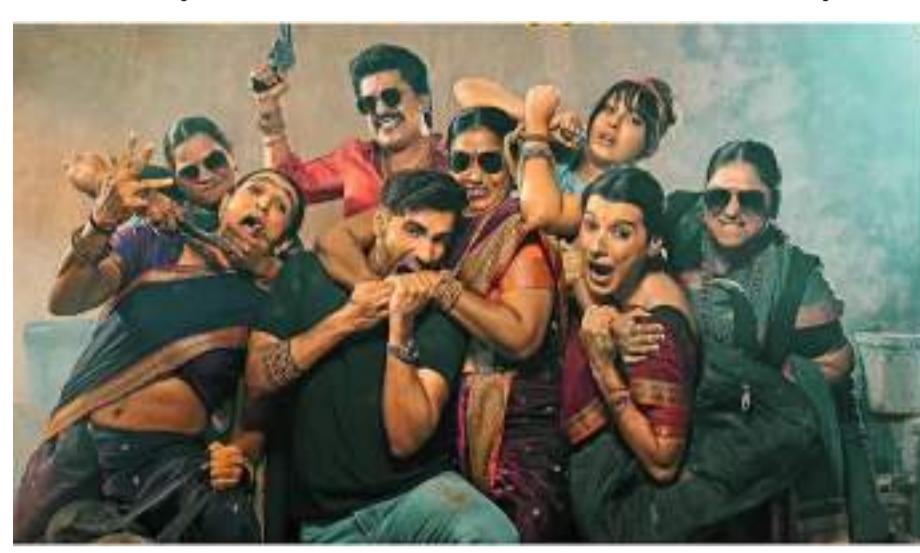
that you have shown to

our film. May this festival

of colours bring you all

your happiness and good

luck," he added. Directed by Kunal Kemmu and produced by Excel Entertainment (owned by Ritesh Sidhwani and Farhan Akhtar), 'Madgaon Express' is about three childhood friends who take a trip to Goa that takes an unexpected turn. It was released on March 22, 2024, promising viewers a heartfelt journey. The film also stars Nora Fatehi, Upendra Limaye, and Chhaya Kadam in key roles.



without my amazing team of actors and technicians (sic)."

"To the many colours of

friendship that the film showcases and the many colours of my own personality that I got to

explore through this film. I wish you all a very happy Holi and thank you so much for all the love

that you have shown to

our film. May this festival

of colours bring you all

your happiness and good

luck," he added. Directed by Kunal Kemmu and produced by Excel Entertainment (owned by Ritesh Sidhwani and Farhan Akhtar), 'Madgaon Express' is about three childhood friends who take a trip to Goa that takes an unexpected turn. It was released on March 22, 2024, promising viewers a heartfelt journey. The film also stars Nora Fatehi, Upendra Limaye, and Chhaya Kadam in key roles.

Sanjay Kapoor on 'Merry Christmas' wink scene: 'Made all the difference'

Actor Sanjay Kapoor, in an exclusive conversation with IndiaToday.in, delved into the hilarious wink scene from 'Merry Christmas' and its impact on the film's tone, alongside discussing his approach as a director's actor. His performance in the film

garnered widespread acclaim from both audiences and critics alike. Kapoor highlighted how a small difference in a scene can make a lot of change and cited the example of 'Merry Christmas'. He said, "It's a combination of the content and the director.

Sometimes even a correct close up, highlighting a specific emotion on the actor's face can make a huge difference to the whole scene. For example, in 'Merry Christmas' there is a lift scene where I take off my wedding ring, and I'm pretending to tie my shoe lace. In the same scene, I look at Albert (Vijay Sethupathi) and wink. If that wink was not done, the impact of the scene would have only been 50 percent." He also talked about how a good actor and a good director complement each other. "That wink made so much of a difference in the

scene. It clearly showed that he has come to Maria's (Katrina Kaif) place to have a good time. So it's a combination of everything. And then, obviously, the actor has to be good. So yes, all the things must be taken into consideration, but the film is the director's medium and a good actor

will always complement a good director," the actor said. When asked about whether he is a director's actor, Sanjay Kapoor said, "Every actor is a director's actor. If you see any actor's films, they are excellent in some and for others, they're not that good. I

Sara Ali Khan's Christmas Album From London Features Mom Amrita Singh And Dad Saif



(share)."

Sara Ali Khan, who was missing brother Ibrahim big time, shared a picture collage comprising photos of Saif and Amrita. No caption needed. In another Instagram story, the actress wrote, "Missed my baby brother (or not so baby). Thank you Santa for this Merry merry Christmas. Ibrahim Ali Khan, I wish you was here. To have pecan pie and celebrate and spread Christmas joy and cheer... And then eat black cod individually with the OG two who to us are extremely dear but for now these pics I shear

Sara Ali Khan has a super busy schedule ahead. She will next be seen in Ae Watan Mere Watan. Her line-up of films also includes Metro... In Dino and Murder Mubarak. Her last project was Zara Hatke Zara Bachke. Sara Ali Khan also had a cameo appearance in

Rocky Aur Rani Kii Prem Kahaani song Heart Throb. She has featured in films such as Kedarnath (her debut movie), Simmba, Love Aaj Kal. She also featured in the Coolie No 1 remake. Sara was also seen in Atrangi Re.

Movie Review: Kho Gaye Hum Kahan Is Compelling Coming-Of-Age Story In Digital Age

"We are so obsessed staring at the screen these days that we didn't realize life has gone past us," laments Ananya Panday's Ahaana in a poignant moment in Arjun V Singh's "Kho Gaye Hum Kahan." The hustle of living from one post to another, constant life updates, and the thirst for validation from the many faceless followers on social media are perhaps the story of our lives.

Debutante Director Arjun V Singh takes us into the world of three best friends. Imaad (Siddhant Chaturvedi) is a stand-up comic with a happy-go-lucky attitude towards every situation, including his dating life. If not on stage, he is busy swiping left and right on Tinder, the dating app. Ahaana (Ananya Panday) is Imaad's flatmate, a whiz who is in a long-term relationship with her boyfriend, whom she hopes

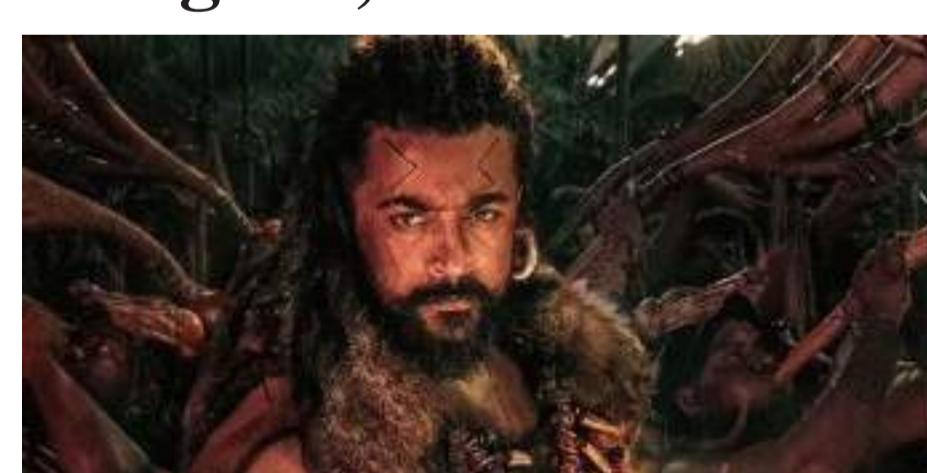


to marry. Then there is Neil (Adarsh Gourav), a gym trainer who aspires to have his studio someday. Like any regular 25-year-old, they are following their passion, working hard, and partying harder.

Introspection of life happens over several bottles of beer; they keep no secrets from each other, or do they? Even though their parents don't understand their mindset—Imaad's rich father asks him to start working in the family's business, while Neil fails to understand the penny-pinching mindset of his working-class parents, who tell him that he does not know the difference between need and want. Ahaana, a brilliant professional with fancy degrees and medals to her credit, is a pushover who gets walked over by her boss as well as her boyfriend. But we live in a world where FOMO (Fear of Missing Out) is a thing. Keeping it private, keeping it real are passé. If it is not on social media, then it may as well not exist. We have given the rite of passage into our lives to strangers and people we are unlikely to meet since a thumbs up or down from them is what can make or break us. Take Ahaana; her heartbreak after getting dumped by her boyfriend is further amplified when she realizes his new girlfriend has over a million followers.

The unsure Ahaana creates a fake account to stalk her boyfriend and starts putting out happy and sexy touched-up pictures of herself on Instagram to prove her life continues to rock. Imaad, on the other hand, who flits from one fling to another, meets an older and wiser woman (Kalki Koechlin), but being commitment-phobic, continues to see other women. Neil, who is dating his client LaLa (Anya Singh), an influencer, cannot understand her obsession with filtered images and wanting to be constantly seen.

Suriya Gets Injured On Sets Of Kanguva, Film Shoot Halted



Actor Suriya has been busy with the shooting of his upcoming film 'Kanguva', a Tamil period-drama. The film is directed by Siruthai Siva and the shooting has been taking place at a film city in Chennai. According to TOI report, a grand set has been erected by the makers for the shoot of film. The latest report stated that a rope camera lost

control during the shooting of 'Kanguva' and it fell on Suriya, thus leaving him injured. The report further mentioned that the actor suffered injuries on his shoulder after which the shoot was halted. Fortunately, it was a minor mishap and no major injury was caused to Suriya. According to another report, the actor has

been advised by the doctor for a two-week bed rest. Meanwhile, Suriya was expected to wrap up the film for his portions in 'Kanguva' this month and the entire filming was slated to be over by next month. However, with the latest development, there may be a slight delay in production. 'Kanguva' was announced in August

Income Tax Appeals before CIT(A)/ JCIT (A)



Adv. Narayan Jain & CA Dilip Loyalka

If a taxpayer is not satisfied with the assessment or Intimation, he can prefer an appeal before the Commissioner of Income Tax (Appeals). Here are important issues relating to appeals.

1. Procedure for filing an appeal before CIT(A): Appeal should be filed in Form No. 35 within 30 days of receipt of Assessment Order and Demand Notice, before the CIT (A) / JCIT (A). The appeals are generally required to be filed online and normally hearings are faceless. The following are required to be filed in appeal: a) Form No. 35 duly filled up, signed and verified b) Original Demand Notice c) Copy of Assessment Order d) Challan for payment of appeal fee.

2. Appeal before Joint Commissioner (Appeals): As the first authority for appeal, Commissioner (Appeals) are currently overburdened due to the huge number of appeals and the pendency being carried forward every year. In order to clear this bottleneck, a new

authority being Joint Commissioner/Additional Commissioner for appeals has been created w.e.f. 1st April 2023 by the Finance Act, 2023 to handle certain appeal cases involving small amount of disputed demand. Such authority has all powers, responsibilities and accountability similar to that of Commissioner (Appeals) with respect to the procedure for disposal of appeals. However appeal cannot be filed before the Joint Commissioner (Appeals) where an order is passed by or with the approval of an income-tax authority above the rank of Deputy Commissioner.

3. Transfer of Appeal from CIT (Appeal) to JCIT (Appeal): Section 246(2) provides that where any appeal filed against an order referred to in sub-section (1) is pending before the Joint Commissioner (Appeals), the Board or an income-tax authority so authorised [Principal Director General of Income-tax (Systems) or

case Rs. 250 - In case of appeals under other direct taxes. Rs. 250 In case the appeal is filed after the expiry of prescribed time of 30 days, the appellate authority is empowered to condone the delay in appropriate cases.

Rule 45 of the Income Tax Rules 1962, mandates compulsory e-filing of appeals, in respect of persons who are required to furnish return of income electronically.

5. Faceless hearing of appeals before CIT (A)/JCIT (A): The Finance Act, 2020 has amended section 250 w.e.f. 1.4.2020 to automate the entire appeal process at the First Appellate level, including the process that follows after filing the appeal, the Central Government is now empowered to notify an e-appeal scheme for disposal of appeal before CIT (Appeals) so as to impart greater efficiency, transparency and accountability by:-

(a) eliminating the interface between the CIT(A) and the appellant in the course of appellate proceedings to the extent technologically feasible; (b) optimising utilisation of the resources through economies of scale and functional specialisation; (c) introducing an appellate system with dynamic jurisdiction in which appeal shall be disposed of by one or

more CIT(A). The CBDT has stated that hearing of all appeals before CIT (A) will be faceless w.e.f. 25th September, 2020. Likewise JCIT (A) has also to dispose off appeal in faceless manner.

6. Whether time taken for making application u/s 270AA for seeking immunity from penalty and prosecution is excluded for computing 30 days from the date of assessment for filing appeal: As per proviso to section 249(2)(b) inserted w.e.f. asst. year 2017-18, where the assessee makes an application u/s 270AA (seeking immunity from penalty and prosecution), then the period beginning from the date on which such application is made to the date on which the order rejecting the application is served on the assessee, shall be excluded for calculating the 30 days period for filing of appeal before CIT appeal. In this connection it may be mentioned that the above rule applies only in respect of the orders passed on or after 01.03.2016-Ashraf Aziz Kasmaniv. ITO [2018] 92 taxmann.com 283 (Mumbai - Trib.).

7. What are the Appealable Orders under sec. 246 and e-filing scheme for appeals before First Appellate Authority: Section 246, substituted

by the Finance Act, 2023:

As per section 246(1), substituted by the Finance Act, 2023, any assessee aggrieved by orders of an Assessing Officer (below the rank of Joint Commissioner)

may appeal to the Joint Commissioner (Appeals) against it. The Appealable Orders are:

(a) an order being an intimation under sub-section (1) of section 143, where the assessee objects to the making of adjustments, or any order of assessment under sub-section (3) of section 143 or section 144, where the assessee objects to the amount of income assessed, or to the amount of tax determined, or to the amount of loss computed, or to the status under which he is assessed;

(b) an order of assessment, reassessment or re-computation under section 147;

(c) an order being an intimation under sub-section (1) of section 200A;

(d) an order under section 201;

(e) an order being an intimation under sub-section (6A) of section 206C;

(f) an order under sub-section (1) of section 206CB;

(g) an order imposing a penalty under Chapter XXI; and

(h) an order under section 154 or section

155 amending any of the orders mentioned in clauses (a) to (g).

Notification No. 33/2023 dated 29.05.2023 regarding e-Appeals Scheme, 2023:

CBDT has notified e-Appeals Scheme, 2023 vide Notification No. 33/2023 dated 29.05.2023.

8. Powers of Joint Commissioner (Appeals) and Commissioner (Appeals) under sec.

251: In disposing of an appeal, the Joint Commissioner (Appeals) shall have the following powers as per section 251(1)—

(a) in an appeal against an order of assessment, he may confirm, reduce, enhance or annul the assessment;

(b) in an appeal against an order imposing a penalty, he may confirm or cancel such order or vary it so as either to enhance or to reduce the penalty;

(c) in any other case, he may pass such orders in the appeal as he thinks fit.

As per section 251(2), CIT (Appeals) or JCIT (Appeals) shall not enhance an assessment or a penalty or reduce the amount of refund unless the appellant has had a reasonable opportunity of showing cause against such enhancement or reduction. In disposing of an appeal, the CIT (Appeals) or JCIT (Appeals) may consider and decide any matter arising out of the proceedings in which the order appealed against was passed, notwithstanding that such matter was not raised before CIT (Appeals) or JCIT (Appeals) by appellant.

Adv. Jain and CA Loyalka are authors of book "How to Handle Income Tax Problems". Email : npjainadv@gmail.com

Advances in Early Detection Methods for Cervical Cancer

Dr. Nitish Ranjan Acharya



Malignant cells, a name synonymous with fear and anxiety, implies to a group of uncontrolled cell growths that attack and disrupt healthy tissues. Among these, cervical cancer is a foremost concern of women globally. It begins in the cervix, the lower part of the uterus that connects to vagina. Even though there are substantial advancements in the prevention and treatment, cervical cancer remains the fourth most common cancer among the women globally. Around 604,000 women are diagnosed with cervical cancer and 342,000 women die from the disease globally each year.

Understanding Cervical Cancer, types, and warning signs:

The cervix is the lower part of the uterus connecting it to the vagina. Cervical cancer is often triggered by the Human papillomavirus (HPV), which ascends from irregular cell growth in the cervix. While most HPV viruses clear on their own, certain strains persist, leading to precancerous changes

and, if left undetected, it potentially progresses to cervical cancer. While cervical cancer is denoted as a single entity, it can be differentiated into diverse types:

- Squamous Cell Carcinoma - Approximately 70-80% of cervical cancers are derived from the squamous cells. These cells are thin, flat cells covering the outer surface of cervix, also known as ectocervix.

Adenocarcinoma-These cancerous cells are formed in glandular cells, which are positioned deep within the cervix, known as endocervix or cervical canal. This makes up roughly to 20-30% of cervical cancer cases. Adenocarcinomas can at times be more threatening and destructive than squamous cell carcinomas and may spread more quickly.

Rare types- Melanomas, Sarcomas, and Lymphomas are the rare types of cancer that are less frequent to happen in the cervix compared to other parts of the body.

Possible warning signs and

symptoms may include:

- Vaginal bleeding between periods, after menopause or after sexual intercourse

- Pelvic discomfort
- Unusual discharge that may be watery, bloody or have a strong odor

- Unexpected and constant back pain
- Key factors that drives the rise of growing cervical malignancy:

- Human papillomavirus (HPV) infection: A sexually transmitted infection is primarily considered as an instrumental aspect for the growth of tumorous cells in the cervix

Poor immune system: Health illnesses like HIV/AIDS can negotiate the body's capability to combat several infections

- Sexual intercourse and multiple sexual partners: Having multiple sexual partners or having intercourse with an infected person increases the chance of HPV exposure.
- Smoking and consumption of Tobacco: Tobacco undermines the immune system and increases the risk of HPV persistence.

Diagnosis and Early Detection:

Diagnosis and early detection of cervical

cancer at an early stage can substantially enhance the therapy options. Some of the effective methods and elementary screening tools include-

- Pap Test-This test analyses cervical cells for irregularities suggestive of precancerous or cancerous alterations.

- HPV Test-This test detects the presence of HPV, the virus responsible for most of the cervical cancers.

Regular check-ups and screening is advised by the healthcare professionals. Some of the advanced diagnostics are offering new avenues for detection of the cervical cancer.

- Colposcopy: Colposcopy is often used in conjunction with the pap tests. This approach involves examination of the cervix in the dubious areas using a magnifying scope.

- Liquid-based Pap Tests: These tests offer improvised precision and ease of interpretation compared to conventional pap stains.

Beyond Diagnosis:

Dietary considerations

- Ensure to have fruits and vegetables rich in antioxidants, these enhance the overall physical condition and well-being

- Foods rich in omega-3 fatty acids can play a paramount role in lowering infections and promoting immune function

- Consume whole grains as much as possible, as these provides fibre and improves hormone balance and helps in detoxification

While innovations in early detection and medications are encouraging, the fight against cervical cancer needs a multi-pronged approach. This involves promoting extensive access to effective screening programs, encouraging immunisation against HPV, and creating awareness about the prominence of healthy lifestyle choices.

(Surgical Oncology), HCGPanda Cancer Hospital, Telengapenta, Cuttack

Letter to Editor

Dear sir,
Heed the Warnings

As most part of the country braces for a scorching summer, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) warns of above-normal temperatures and looming heatwaves in coming months. It's crucial for state governments to heed these warnings, prepare for heatwaves, and address long-term climate change impacts. Sustainable solutions like improved water management and increased green cover are essential. Additionally, awareness about heatwave preparedness and access to cooling shelters must be prioritised, especially for vulnerable populations. Beyond discomfort, heatwaves pose significant risks to public health, agriculture, and the economy, exacerbating existing health conditions and straining healthcare systems. To tackle these challenges, proactive climate adaptation and mitigation measures are essential, including investment in sustainable infrastructure and renewable energy sources.

**Dr. Vijaykumar H K
Raichur, Karnataka**

Sir

The distasteful cartoon by a US-based webcomic company depicting the Indian crew aboard the cargo ship Dali, which hit the Francis Scott Key Bridge in Baltimore a few days ago, is really contemptuous and has outraged many. Though the ship went out of control due to some technical fault and hit the huge bridge resulting in its collapse and killing some people the crew operating Dali issued an early mayday call preventing further loss of life and thereby alerting the authorities to stop vehicular traffic over the bridge. If not for their timely alarm there would have been more loss of life. The immediate response of the crew, all Indians, in alerting the authorities and thereby averting more tragedy had won praises from the US President Joe Biden, Maryland Governor and other officials.

The cartoon has been termed 'racist' for its disgraceful content. This outrageous depiction should be condemned and matter taken at the highest level to show our disapproval.

**M PRADYU
KANUR
Geeth Thalikavu Kannur 670001.**

Former Bihar Congress President Quits Party Ahead Of Lok Sabha Polls

Patna(KCN): In a setback to the Congress in Bihar ahead of Lok Sabha polls, former state president Anil Sharma on Sunday quit the party, claiming that it was stuck in a "disastrous" partnership with the RJD.

Making the announcement at a press conference here, Anil Sharma also voiced disgust over the recent induction, "with much fanfare", of controversial former MP Rajesh Ranjan alias Pappu Yadav.

"Today, the party leadership is busy with a rally in Delhi where it is talking of the need to save democracy. Sadly, though, no democracy can be seen in the Congress where even our duly elected national president can take no step without consulting Rahul Gandhi or his close aide KC Venugopal," alleged Anil Sharma.

Anil Sharma became the fourth former Bihar Congress president to have quit the party in



nearly a decade. The latest instance was that of Ashok Chaudhary, who quit the party and joined JD(U) in 2018, a few months after a factional feud caused him to give up the state president's post.

Earlier, in 2015, Ram Jatan Sinha had quit the Congress and after a brief stint in JD(U), he has been in political wilderness. The year before saw Mehboob Ali Kaiser joining late Ram Vilas Paswan's LJP which helped him enjoy two consecutive terms in Lok Sabha from

Khagaria.

However, Anil Sharma insisted he was cut from a different cloth, stating, "I joined Congress in 1985. In nearly four decades, I held organisational posts twice, as state general secretary and then as state president. Never did I lobby for a ticket or a legislative council berth for myself. Nor have I explored possibilities in any other party before quitting the Congress." About the timing of his step that comes just ahead of the Lok Sabha polls, he said, "I have,

since my state president days, been critical of the tie-up with RJD which has helped them thrive at our expense. In the eyes of the people, we have only ended up being held guilty of supporting the jungle raj of Lalu Prasad and Rabri Devi." Anil Sharma said the last straw came when Pappu Yadav was inducted into the party.

"He was virtually felicitated at the national headquarters. The party is upset that Lalu has thwarted its attempt to give Yadav a ticket. Instead, it should have

thought about many better candidates, who are not getting a chance because Congress leadership cannot assert itself before the domineering ally," he said. Notably, out of the 40 Lok Sabha seats in Bihar, the RJD is contesting 26, leaving nine for Congress and five for three Left parties.

Replying to a question, Anil Sharma said the choice of candidates by the RJD showed "tickets have been put up for sale, without taking into account winnability", and that possibility of a "tacit understanding" with BJP, as is speculated by a section of the media in the case of Mayawati's BSP in adjoining Uttar Pradesh, "can certainly not be ruled out".

Meanwhile, state Congress media cell chairman Rajesh Rathore issued a statement slamming Anil Sharma for trying to make "a cowardly escape" and find "an excuse for falling at the feet of Narendra Modi".

Krishnanagar(KCN):

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Sunday mocked the BJP-led NDA's target of winning 400-plus seats in the Lok Sabha polls and challenged the saffron party to win at least 200 constituencies.

Reaching out to the Matua community, who are expected to benefit most from the implementation of the CAA, the TMC supremo urged the community to have faith in her, stating she would never allow "anyone to snatch your citizenship."

"Matuas, please have

faith in me. I will not allow anyone to snatch your citizenship. Do you want that or want to live peacefully? Through CAA, they will snatch everything from you and keep you in a detention camp," she said.

Matuas, originally from East Pakistan, are a weaker section of Hindus who migrated to India during the partition and after the creation of Bangladesh following religious persecution.

Dubbing the BJP a 'Jumla' party, the TMC supremo accused them of "peddling lies" regarding the CAA, stating "Modi's guarantee on CAA is a zero guarantee." "The CAA is a trap to turn legal citizens into foreigners. Once you implement CAA, NRC will follow. We would allow neither CAA nor NRC in West Bengal. Don't fall for the false assurance of the central government. If you

March 13, the government will now start granting Indian nationality to persecuted non-Muslim migrants - Hindus, Sikhs, Jains, Buddhists, Parsis, and Christians - from Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Afghanistan who arrived in India before December 31, 2014.

Praising Moitra for her fight against the BJP, Ms Banerjee said, "Despite Mahua Moitra being elected by you people (electorate), she was expelled unceremoniously." "We have again re-nominated her from this seat. Mahua was expelled as she was most vocal against the BJP in parliament. You people have to ensure her victory with a record margin," she said.

Ms Banerjee criticized the opposition bloc INDIA partners -- CPI(M) and Congress -- for "joining hands with the BJP" in West Bengal.

"There is no INDIA alliance in West Bengal. The CPI (M) and Congress are working for the BJP in Bengal. I have formed this INDIA bloc and gave it this name. After elections we will look into it," she said.

The chief minister urged the voters not to vote for the Left-Congress-ISF alliance candidates in the state as voting for them means "voting for the BJP."

"Cross 200-Mark": Mamata Banerjee's Challenge To BJP For 2024 Polls



"No Plan To Take Electoral Route," Say Farmers Ahead Of 2024 Polls

New Delhi(KCN): Nearly three decades ago, over a thousand farmers in Tamil Nadu, unhappy with government policies, filed nominations from a single constituency in the Lok Sabha polls to draw attention to their grievances.

It was also the only time when the Election Commission (EC) had to adapt by issuing a "ballot book" instead of traditional "ballot papers" to accommodate the unexpected 1,033 candidates from Erode district's Modakurichi. However, farmers from Punjab, who have been camping at the state's border with Haryana for almost two months now, do not think electoral



politics is the way to go. These farmers began a march to Delhi on February 13 to press their demands for a legal guarantee of minimum support price (MSP) for their crops and a farm loan waiver, etc., but were stopped at the Haryana border by security personnel. The farmers have been camping at the Shambhu and Khanauri points

between Punjab and Haryana since then. All India Kisan Sabha member Krishna Prasad said the farmers are committed to opposing the BJP government and its policies.

"But we do not plan to take that (electoral) route. In the mahapanchayat held in Delhi, we had announced our stance to oppose the

BJP and expose its

policies. We are united in this cause," Prasad told PTI. Rashtriya Kisan Mahasangh member Abhimanyu Kohar said, "We have been sitting at the borders since February 13 and we have distanced ourselves from electoral politics. We believe that all parties support farmers when in opposition but when in power, they all become pro-corporate and anti-farmer." When 1,033 farmers from Modakurichi filed nominations for the 1996 Lok Sabha elections, the EC had to print "ballot papers like newspapers" and deploy over four-foot-tall ballot boxes. Voting hours were also extended to accommodate the long

list of candidates. In that election, DMK's Subbulakshmi Jagadeesan emerged victorious, defeating ADMK's R N Kittusamy. Barring Jagadeesan, Kittusamy and an independent, all candidates lost their deposits. While 88 candidates received no votes, 158 polled just one vote each. The 1996 general elections also saw the highest number of candidates at 13,000. Following this, the EC increased the security deposit amount from ₹ 500 to ₹ 10,000. This apparently helped in bringing down the number of contestants per seat to 8.75 in the 1998 Lok Sabha elections.

INDIA Bloc's "5 Demands" To Election Commission At Mega Rally In Delhi

New Delhi(KCN): The INDIA bloc's rally at Delhi's Ramlila Maidan this afternoon, was a massive show of strength where the leaders of all major Opposition parties pressed for the release of Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and Jharkhand's former Chief Minister Hemant Soren. The leaders flagged concerns about the health of the country's democracy, accusing the BJP of decimating the Opposition through the Central investigative agencies. The BJP hit back, declaring that the rally was not about saving democracy as projected but a "save family" and "hide corruption" rally. Congress's Priyanka Gandhi Vadra listed five demands of the Opposition to the Election Commission that included

the provision of a level playing field before the elections.

Efforts to forcefully scuttle the finances of Opposition parties should be immediately stopped, Ms Gandhi Vadra said, without mentioning the freeze on Congress funds and the latest Income Tax notice. Action by the Enforcement Directorate, CBI and the Income Tax department should also be stopped, she said, reading out the list of demands.

The alliance also demanded a Supreme Court-monitored Special Investigation Team investigate what they called the BJP's "extortion" of funds through the electoral bonds scheme. The "Loktantra Bachao Rally", the leaders said, is a mark of the INDIA bloc's commitment to

fighting, winning, and saving democracy in India.

"If the BJP wins these fixed elections and changes the Constitution, the country will be on fire," declared Congress's Rahul Gandhi. "You have to decide if you want democracy or dictatorship... Those who support dictatorship need to be kicked out of the country," added party chief Mallikarjun Kharge.

"A new energy in the politics of India has been born today... Today, the slogan for independence is being raised here... It is our independence that our Constitution and our republic are protected. We will gain this independence," said CPM's Sitaram Yechury. Punjab Chief Minister and senior Aam Aadmi

Party leader Bhagwant Mann declared that Arvind Kejriwal was not a man but an ideology. "You can arrest Arvind Kejriwal, but how will you arrest his ideology? In which jail will you send the lakhs of Kejriwals that are born in India?" he said, reiterating the party stance on the arrest of the Chief Minister, which took place on the eve of the general elections in the country. Mr Kejriwal's wife Sunita Kejriwal and Hemant Soren's wife Kalpana Soren were also present at today's rally. The arrest has brought together the Opposition bloc, which was making more headlines recently over its differences than

O'Brien, however, staunchly declared today that Trinamool "very much was, is and will be part of the INDIA alliance". "This is a fight of BJP versus democracy," he added.

The rally also comes on a day Prime Minister Narendra Modi flagged off the BJP campaign in Uttar Pradesh. Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav, though, appeared unfazed.

Appearing at the rally, Mr Yadav said, "These people are giving the slogan of '400 Paar'. If you are going to win more than 400 seats, then why are you scared of the AAP leader".

"You have sent elected Chief Ministers to jail. Not just the Indians but the whole world is criticising it," he said, without explicitly mentioning the comments

that have come on the subject from the United Nations, United States and Germany.

BJP spokesperson Sudhanshu Trivedi told reporters that the Opposition rally was meant to hide their acts of corruption.

"The Congress is supporting those who have looted the country as Congress has also looted throughout their tenure. From the days of Pandit Nehru, the Jeep scam to the Bofors scam; the coal scam to the Commonwealth scam and the 2G scam. All these happened while Congress was in power," said Union Minister Pralhad Joshi.

"In Ramlila Maidan, those who put dots in between the name of this country and speak about saving the nation.



Sales struggle leaves marigold growers helpless

Sambalpur (KCN): Farmers in Sambalpur district are showing interest in cultivating vegetables and other cash crops while the paddy yield is not as profitable as before. A few years ago in Sanatanpali of Jujumura block, farmers were earning handsomely by cultivating flowers. Seeing this, the farmers of surrounding areas showed interest in floriculture. Many farmers have grown flowers this year in Thakurmal, Baham, Kabrapali, Paikamal, Ghenupali, Jayantpur as

well as Sanatanpali. In particular, marigold cultivation has doubled over the past years. However, the farmers have expressed concern about flower sales and market. Nirakar Pradhan, who started flower cultivation in Sanatanpali, says, "This year, marigold has been cultivated on about 10 acres of land in the village." In the past years, at this time, marigold flowers were being sold at ₹50 per kg in the market. This year, however, due to more production, the shopkeepers are paying

30 rupees per kg. He said with frustration that he had to face a lot of trouble while getting back outstanding amounts from the flower retailers. Flower growers of other villages have also complained about the same. While Sambalpur market is the only option for selling flowers, owing to increased supply, the shopkeepers are exploiting the farmers and buying at lower prices. However, even after 10 years of the government's

announcement, the construction of a state-of-the-art market terminal at Nildunguri could not go ahead. Apart from this, ways to export flowers to other states and abroad

could also be opened, limited which consists of more than a thousand farmers in Sanatanpali, said that Manbodh Barik, the district director of the Sabuja administration was advised to build a Producer Company 'model mandi' in the

village. But that has not happened yet, which is why the growers are forced to go to distant Sambalpur to sell flowers.

Due to this, they have to face many hurdles and resort to distressed sales. Finding no other way, the farmers are selling flowers on behalf of the Farmers Producer Company. There are about 70 flower growers in the area with daily production of over 1,000 kg marigolds. But it is not enough to send flowers out in one vehicle. If more flowers are produced, arrangements can be made for export to other

states and big cities. This is why a 'model market' is necessary, the farmers said.

Horticulture department official Sushree Mousumi said, "After increasing the production of chilli in the district, arrangements are being made to sell it with the help of ORMAS. While marigold production is increasing in the district, farmers are selling the flowers on their own initiative. If the farmers inform us about the problems in flower sale, we will discuss with the ORMAS and the district administration and try to make arrangements."



Andhra's 'power ploy' to hold elections in Kotia



Pottangi (KCN): The neighbouring Andhra Pradesh has been continuously trespassing into the disputed region of Kotia panchayat under Pottangi block of Koraput district and taking various steps to influence the local residents.

With the general elections being around the corner, Andhra Pradesh officials are

now trying to provide power supply to the residents in Kotia and make voters participate in the Andhra election process. In this process, the Andhra Pradesh Electricity Department has supplied digital meters to the villagers of Tala Ganjeipadar village. Earlier, Andhra Pradesh had set up infrastructure in the region to provide power services to the

villagers. They have also provided digital meters to around 39 beneficiaries after filling the forms. However, after getting information about the development, the local block officials intervened and asked the AP officials to go back. Left with no option, the AP officials returned. On the other hand, Odisha government has provided digital meters to

People will vote for me to elect Modi as Prime Minister: BJP's Jual Oram



Sundargarh (KCN): Senior BJP leader and former Union minister Jual Oram, who is contesting from the Sundargarh LS seat for eight times in Odisha, Saturday said the people will vote for him to elect Prime Minister Narendra Modi to build a 'Viksit Bharat' (developed India).

Oram, who is pitted against BJD's Dilip Tirkey, Saturday said he has been fighting from the Sundargarh LS seat since 1991, and he was elected five times by the people of his constituency, between 1998 and 2019, except in 2009.

"In the 2009 elections, I was defeated because of my fault. There was some issue in election management," he said. The MP said he visited 50 panchayats and met people on the 'Viksit Bharat' programme and found that PM Modi's guarantee is working on the ground and people have accepted Modi as their prime minister.

"So we will win this election as people want to make Modi the Prime Minister," he asserted. Stating that more than

Rs 5,000 crore fund remained unspent in Sundargarh district, the BJP leader alleged that the BJD government is not working to develop the tribal-majority district. Not only in Sundargarh, the Odisha government has also failed to provide basic drinking water facilities to the state's rural population.

While piped water supply connection reached more than 80 per cent of rural households in many states, the performance of Odisha is very poor, since half of its population has been deprived of the facility, he alleged.

As the state government is not cooperating for 'political' reasons, the

projects, which should have been completed in a year, are taking more than three years to get completed, Oram pointed out.

"The BJD government has misled the people that they are giving rice to the people and grabbed the votes. When PM Modi announced free rice for all ration card holders for five years, people of Odisha now realized that Modi is giving them the rice," the MP said.

Speaking about development works done by the NDA government, he said that rural roads, electricity and telecom connectivity have been enhanced across the country during

the past 10 years. The Centre has initiated a lot of development work in his constituency, he said.

The Bimalgarh-Talcher new railway line project has been taken up, an international hockey stadium has been constructed, a new airport was built in Rourkela, and the Vande Bharat train service has also been introduced in Rourkela, Oram pointed out.

Odisha has 21 Lok Sabha seats and 147 Assembly constituencies.

The Lok Sabha and state assembly elections will be held simultaneously in four phases on May 13, 20, 25 and June 1.

2024-2025



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Vikas Lifecare Ltd.'s subsidiary, Genesis Gas Solutions, Incorporates joint Venture Company, "Indraprastha Genesis Technologies Limited"

Bhubaneswar: Vikas Lifecare Limited has announced that its subsidiary company Genesis Gas Solutions Pvt. Ltd. (Genesis) has accomplished the incorporation of "IGL Genesis Technologies Limited", a joint venture company with Indraprastha Gas Limited (IGL). "IGL Genesis Technologies Limited" has been incorporated with equity participation from Indraprastha Gas Limited (IGL) and Genesis Gas Solutions Pvt. Ltd. (Genesis) in the ratio of 51:49 respectively. With the incorporation of "IGL Genesis Technologies Limited", Genesis Gas Solutions Pvt. Ltd. (Genesis) has completed the inducement of its share of the Paid-Up capital amounting INR 181 Million in the newly incorporated entity. Genesis Gas Solutions Pvt. Ltd. had earlier announced having entered into Joint Venture Agreement with Indraprastha Gas Limited (IGL) to establish India's first Integrated State-of-the-Art Smart Meter Manufacturing Plant with a total Capital Expenditure of Rs. 1080 Million. The JV Company "IGL Genesis Technologies Limited" will manufacture Diaphragm Gas Meters equipped with IoT technologies like LoRa, LoRaWAN, Bluetooth, NFC, NB-IoT etc. "IGL Genesis Technologies Limited" will also indigenously develop the Softwares and Interface Programmes with in-built Smart Analytics, Dashboards and Predictive Maintenance Protocols, and Allied Systems for the Smart Meters manufactured. The manufacturing facility is being developed on the land located at Sector-145, NOIDA, Uttar Pradesh, with a building initially measuring about 65000 Sq. Feet. which will be ready by end of February '24 and the fittings and fixtures will be completed by the end of May '24. The orders for the manufacturing equipment have already been finalised and will be placed within the Month of January.

Orientation programme to B.Tech students held at SR university



Warangal(KCN): The Sri Ragavendra (SR) University organized an orientation programme for B.Tech students admitted for the academic year 2023-2024 here at the premises of the university on Thursday.

Speaking on the occasion, the Chancellor of the University A.Varada Reddy said that universal high-quality education is the best way to develop and maximize our nation's rich talents for the benefit of the individual, society, country and the world. In part the SR university launched new programs in engineering, computer science, management, agriculture and commerce. There are no shortcuts to success and every student must work hard during these formative years of their under graduation to reach greater heights.

he advised. The Vice-chancellor Professor Deepak Garg advised the students to participate in various activities on campus. Many professionals from the industry will be available on campus to explain the various happenings in the industry and also to guide the students on various career paths. The students must find themselves what they are by learning something new every day. There is an open house policy at SR University where every student has the access to solve their difficulties. The Registrar and Dean Academics Dr. R. Archana Reddy briefed about the university, the curriculum changes brought in to be fit in the 21st century globalized world. She informed the parents and students about the

mentoring system that is being followed and also urged them to be connected with their children during the formative years of their study. Dean Student Welfare, Dr. V. Mahesh said that SR is favoring the students by providing the required research labs, centers of innovation and incubation. He encouraged and motivated the students to be "Job providers not the job seekers" and asked them to join various clubs and participate in various events hosted by different schools and departments.

This programme helped the parents in identifying suitable follow-up methods as well as new strategies to keep their children updated to reach and accomplish their dreams and goals.

Odisha records 20x growth in job applications in the last 90 days

Bhubaneswar: As one of the fastest-growing states in terms of economy in India, Odisha has been witnessing a steady growth in job opportunities across sectors and industries and has emerged as a popular destination for job seekers. apna.co – India's largest jobs and professional networking platform – recorded 20x quarter on quarter growth in job postings in the state's capital, Bhubaneswar in the previous quarter. The platform has also noted increased job openings for multiple roles in the last three 90 days.

After recording an economic rating higher than India's GDP, Odisha has become a promising destination for employers to invest in, strengthening the state's economy and creating more job opportunities. apna has become a trusted partner for various popular companies such as Zomato, Bharti AXA, Burger King, TeamLease, Byjus, and Delhivery amongst others in the state to fulfill their hiring requirement. In the last quarter, there has been an increased hiring momentum for roles such as telecallers/BPO, sales, computer/data entry operator, delivery persons, and business development executives amongst others. The capital city continues to be one of the top commercial hubs in Eastern India.

With more than 25 percent female users from Bhubaneswar, apna has become a default partner for women to build their professional networks and participate in helping India unlock its economic potential. According to the platform, there has been a quarter-on-quarter increase in women joining the workforce from the state and participating in uplifting Odisha's economy. Telecalling and business development have consistently been the most popular role amongst women in Bhubaneswar followed by data entry operators. Interestingly, women also opted to get on the field by joining the sales workforce for various organizations after COVID cases dropped drastically.

Commenting on the growth, Manas Singh, Chief Business Officer, apna.co said, "Odisha is witnessing tremendous growth in the past quarter, emerging as one of the key markets with a rise in both workers and employers on apna. We will continue creating more hyperlocal opportunities to help accelerate the economic growth of Bhubaneswar."

FURO Sports Shoes welcomes Shahid Kapoor as its Brand Ambassador

Bhubaneswar: FURO Sports Shoes, (from the house of Red Chief Shoes), is thrilled to announce its much-coveted collaboration with the Bollywood Superstar, Shahid Kapoor. Shahid's youthful and sporty personality of an affable boy gel with the aspiring core values and ethos of FURO Sports Shoes. Shahid appeals to a wider audience across all age groups. While his exceptional fitness lifestyle, dancing prowess, and romantic-action-oriented movies attract the youth, his responsible family guy persona connects with relatively mature age groups as well. Mr. Manoj Gyanchandani (Managing Director) expressing his views on the collaboration, shares, "We are extremely honored to welcome Shahid Kapoor as the newest FURO family member. We couldn't have asked for a better partner in 2022 who comes with such high credible energy which is much needed in such dynamic times to inspire the youth towards athleisure lifestyle. We look forward to a successful partnership with him and hope to have a mutually beneficial long-term relationship."

Mr. Rahul Sharma, (Marketing Head) further shared "To continue leveraging our association both in mass media & digital platforms – Shahid would be part of our forthcoming Brand campaigns, which are back to back lined up starting few weeks from now."

BOB Financial crosses the 1 Million Credit Cards mark

Mumbai: BOB Financial Solutions Limited (BFSL), a wholly-owned subsidiary of Bank of Baroda (Bank) that issues and manages Bank of Baroda Credit Cards, has crossed the 1 Million Credit Cards mark.

As per Reserve Bank of India (RBI) data, Bank of Baroda Credit Cards have grown 9X over the last four years – from 0.12 million cards in March 2018 to over 1.1 million cards in March 2022. Further, the monthly spends on credit cards have grown 10X over the same period – from Rs. 80 crore in March 2018 to Rs. 830 crore in March 2022.

In CY2022, cobranding with IRCTC, HPCL, Defence Services, and partnerships with fintechs have been some of the key initiatives in the ongoing transformation journey.

Speaking on the occasion, Mr. Shailendra Singh, MD & CEO, BFSL said, "In 2017, we started on a journey of transforming BOB Financial into a leading credit card issuer in India. Crossing the 1 million credit cards mark is an important milestone. However, while we celebrate this achievement, our ultimate aspiration is to become one of the largest Credit Card issuers in the country, serving customers of every demographic and socio-economic classification."

BFSL has been focusing on investing in people, processes and technology to enhance customer experience.

LIC Mutual Fund Announces Completion of IDBI MF Schemes Merger

Mumbai : LIC Mutual Fund (LIC MF), one of the reputed fund houses in the Indian asset management industry, has announced the successful completion of the takeover of schemes of IDBI Mutual Fund (IDBI MF).

Commenting on the effective date of merger has July 29, 2023.

The move is in line with LIC MF's mission to strengthen and diversify its product offerings, expand its footprint and grow its assets under management (AUM) to emerge as a leading MF house in the country. LIC MF had an AUM of Rs 18,400 Crores and IDBI MF had Rs 3,650 Crores as of June 30, 2023.

After completion of the merger, out of 20 schemes of IDBI MF, 10 schemes will be merged with similar schemes of LIC MF and the remaining 10 will be taken over by LIC MF on standalone basis, which will take its total scheme count to 38. With this

combined strength will help us capture emerging opportunities in the thriving asset management industry and drive value for investors and distribution partners." He further added "Our vision is to be a trusted partner in wealth creation and a mutual fund of choice. Our track record of managing funds for over three decades has enabled us to gain trust of investors. We will remain focused and work towards delivering long-term performance by adopting adequate risk control mechanisms."

About LIC Mutual Fund: LIC Mutual Fund was established on 20th April 1989 by LIC of India. LIC MF is an AMC with LIC of India as its Sponsor and other stakeholders being LIC Housing Finance Ltd, GIC Housing Finance Ltd and Union Bank of India.

Ambuja Cements introduces Cool Walls, a special product that keep homes cool in summers and hot in winters

Mumbai : Ambuja Cements Ltd, one of India's most sustainable cement manufacturers, is now offering an innovative green solution

for constructing strong walls. Ambuja Cool Walls is a unique wall solution that keeps the house cool during summer and retains inside temperature to make the house warmer in winter. Ambuja Cements is among the first Indian cement companies to offer this unique block and mortar solution to individual house builders.

Ambuja Cool Walls is a sustainable product made with an innovative heat-barrier technology that is far superior to any other products available in the market. The 'heat barrier technology' of this product helps to maintain inside temperature of any house lesser by 5°C as compared to external temperature. These innovative heat

barrier technology, consistent quality and enhanced strength (>5 MPa) are the main differentiators of this product.

Ambuja Cool Walls is an innovative solution to the problem faced by traditional construction with non-sustainable products. The challenge poised by traditional construction today are efflorescence on walls, termite attack, water absorption and highly prone to earthquakes. Ambuja Cool Walls along with unique jointing mortar makes the wall stronger and eliminates the problem faced by traditional construction practices. This helps the consumers in cost saving on electricity due to thermal insulation, low frequency of repeat painting because of no efflorescence, lesser repeat maintenance and lower construction cost. Additional benefits include noise reduction,

KiIT International School becomes the only school from Odisha to win at ToyCathon

Bhubaneswar: The revered founder of KiIT International School, Shri Achyuta Samanta, has always inspired and encouraged the youth to think outside the box. This motivation has led to an immense achievement for the school. A game, 'Untold Stories', designed by Shree Roy, a 10th Grade student of KiIT International School, has been selected as one of the top 7 winning games at ToyCathon, an inter-ministerial initiative of GOI, in association with AICTE.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Mona Lisa Bal, Chairperson, KiIT International School said, "This is an extremely proud moment for KiIT International School family. I congratulate Shree for her endeavours. This is an accomplishment not just for

her but the entire school. We always nurture our students to think beyond their textbooks and take interest in activities outside their classroom. I am glad that this morale-boosting has steered us to achieve this great honour. I firmly believe that these leaders of tomorrow can drive us towards a better tomorrow with proper education and guidance."

Shree's game 'Untold Stories' is a multiplayer game where one must answer questions about India's heritage to move on to the next level. With this game, Shree intended to revive the art and culture of India. With modernization and technology, most youngsters are glued to their smartphones and the internet. Shree designed this game with the help of

school's research wing, Inspiron, in a pursuit to move them away from this exposure while enhancing their knowledge on India's art, history, and culture. From over 14 lakh online entries, 200 games were chosen for the physical edition of ToyCathon. Untold stories was the only winner from Odisha among the top 7 felicitated games.

Under the 'AatmaNirbhar Bharat Abhiyan' initiated by our Hon'ble Prime Minister, Shri. Narendra Modi, ToyCathon is conceived to challenge India's innovative minds to conceptualize novel Toy and Games based on Bharatiya civilization, history, culture, mythology and ethos.

'For the last year and a half, I had been visualising my debut' - Mayank

New Delhi: Genuine pace does generate excitement in the cricketing world. So, when Mayank Yadav stormed his way to one of the most eye-catching debuts in IPL history, the world sat up to take notice. The tearaway pacer was brought into the attack after nine overs with the Punjab Kings having raced along to 88/0. Shikhar Dhawan and Jonny Bairstow were going great guns to put the run chase on track, putting Lucknow Super Giants in desperate waters.

Mayank's first over went for ten runs including two boundaries but what was instantly noticeable was his raw pace as he clocked well over 145kph and close to 150 kph or beyond as well. The 21-year-old went on to pick a wicket in each

of his remaining three overs including the big scalp of Bairstow with the Englishman beaten for pace on the pull shot. While nerves are inevitable on debut, Mayank opined that the big stage didn't pull him down mentally. "For the last year and a half, I had been visualising my debut," said Mayank at the post-match press conference. "How my first ball would be and how I'd manage myself with the ball in front of such huge crowds. Everyone told me that there would be pressure and nervousness, but I honestly didn't feel that. When my captain gave me the ball, I felt from inside that I belonged straightaway and there was a lot of confidence." Given his immense potential and raw pace, Yadav is undoubtedly

going to be LSG's x-factor with the ball this season. On a night when the Ekana Cricket Stadium surface arguably played the best it has in recent years, strokemaking was visibly easier for batters when compared to last season when the average score at the venue was just 148. In a high-scoring game, Yadav's pacy burst was ultimately the difference between victory and defeat. The pacer revealed how the coaching staff had kept him in good spirits by not complicating his thought process.

"JL (Justin Langer) and Morne (Morkel) never told me to work with anything. They know that my pace with hard lengths are good. They just told me to keep plans simple, bowl quick on hard lengths and attack the stumps as much as

possible."

Having the kind of pace that Yadav possesses is rare but rarer is the ability to marry such high speeds with accuracy. Teams often accept the trade-off of high economy for such strike bowlers, given their ability to produce consistent breakthroughs.

That is precisely why Yadav is a unique breed, because consistency is something he has yearned for, without compromising on his pace. In the 2022 Vijay Hazare Trophy that brought him into the spotlight, he ended up with 10 wickets from just five games at an economy of 5.61 - commendable numbers indeed. It was during one of these games that Yadav caught the eye of Vijay Dahiya, LSG's then assistant coach who wasted no time in putting the youngster in the franchise's wishlist for the

auctions. While he didn't get opportunities in the 2022 season, an injury meant that Yadav couldn't feature in the 2023 season as well despite an opportunity presenting itself. "My goal has always been to be consistent for the team and give less runs. This pace is a plus point for me, so I try to use it to the best of my ability."

"I love speed, not just in cricket but also in general life. Be it plane or rocket or super bikes. So, I love speed."

"I had a side strain with rib fracture. It happened after the Vijay Hazare trophy. All the physios I tell me that these injuries are part and parcel of a fast bowler's life. In the last 12-18 months, I've had two to three major injuries and I missed last IPL season due to injury itself. So, I'm focused on trying

to avoid injuries as much as possible and manage my strength and conditioning."

Yadav's impressive debut also drew praise from the opposition camp with Punjab Kings Head of Cricket Development Sanjay Bangar hailing the debutant's impactful performance.

"I thought we had a great start, credit to Mayank Yadav who came in and broke the back of our batting. He bowled really fast, the lengths he bowled made it really difficult. He used the big side of the ground well.

It's something that put us back big time in the game. Livingstone's injury also hampered us as he bats slightly higher up. So if you put all these things together, those are some of the things that meant that we ended short by 21 runs."



Babar Azam to lead Pakistan again in white-ball cricket



New Delhi: Babar Azam has been re-appointed as Pakistan's skipper in white-ball cricket, the Pakistan Cricket Board announced on Sunday (March 31). As a result, Shaheen Afridi's reign as the T20 skipper has come to an early end after he led the national side in just one series.

Babar, who was Pakistan's all-format skipper until last year,

resigned from his role following his side's poor campaign in the World Cup held in India. The PCB at the same time underwent multiple changes and eventually it was decided to hand over the Test captaincy to Shan Masood. While Masood led in Australia where Pakistan lost, the T20I captaincy was handed over to Afridi with Mohammad Rizwan

Miami Open: Danielle Collins wins maiden Masters 1000 after beating Elena Rybakina

New Delhi: American Danielle Collins said she has achieved the goal she set herself for her final season on the WTA Tour by winning her first Masters 1000 title at the Miami Open on Saturday. The 30-year-old overcame fourth seed Elena Rybakina in just over two hours to become the sixth American woman to claim the crown in Miami.

"I have always wanted to win every tournament that I have signed up for, but I do think that because it is my last year, I really wanted to try to win a Masters 1000 this year," Collins told

reporters after winning the third WTA title of her career.

"That's really important to me. That's something that I talked a lot about with everybody close to me. I really wanted to make a push to be able to bring out my best tennis.

"I'm so glad that I have been able to figure out some of the physical things I have needed to do to peak at the right time and to feel like I'm ready to go. I certainly did that this tournament, but it has been a goal. So I got to tick it off the list." The former Australian Open runner-up announced in January she would be quitting the sport in 2024 and that she hoped to start a family.

Asked if she was reconsidering those plans, Collins said: "No, I'm not. I feel like all of these questions are coming from such a good place, because I feel like a lot of people would like to continue seeing me play well." But like I said, I have some health challenges, and with those health challenges, it makes things for me away from the court a little more difficult. I hope everyone can respect that. It's a very emotional and personal thing."

Collins, who is from Florida, thanked the home crowd for their vocal support throughout the match, saying: "It was just such a happy day for me on the court. "Whether I won or lost, having the crowd support, I have never gotten to experience anything like it... It literally felt like I was playing in front of thousands of my best friends, I just - yeah, I'll never forget it."



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