

Actor Varsha Priyadarshini in BJD's sixth list of candidates for Odisha Assembly polls



Bhubaneswar(KCN): The BJD Saturday nominated nine more candidates, including Odia film actor Varsha Priyadarshini, for the upcoming Odisha Assembly elections. While announcing the sixth list of candidates for the Assembly elections, the ruling party in the state denied nomination to seven sitting MLAs. Priyadarshini, who joined

the BJD Thursday, got a ticket for the Barchana Assembly segment, while Congress turncoat Ganeswar Behera, will contest from Kendrapara as a nominee of the ruling party. The Odia film star replaced sitting MLA Amar Prasad Satpathy. Sanatan Mahakud was named as the BJD candidate for the

Champua Assembly seat as incumbent legislator Minakhi Mahanta was denied a ticket this time. Former MLA Raghunath Sahu will contest from the Chilika Assembly segment as the BJD candidate, while Abhimanyu Sethi will be the party nominee from Anandpur where sitting legislator Bhagirathi Sethi was denied re-nomination.

The party had earlier expelled Chilika MLA Prasant Jagdev.

The BJD fielded Subhashini Sahu from Simulia, replacing incumbent MLA Jyoti Ranjan Panigrahi. Bidyasmita Mahalik will contest from the Remuna Assembly seat on a BJD ticket as the party had earlier expelled Sudhasu Sekhar Parida, the sitting MLA.

Debashis Marndi got a

BJD ticket for the Saraskana Assembly seat while the party re-nominated minister Basanti Hembram in the Karanji seat.

The BJD has so far announced the names of 135 candidates for elections to the 147-member Assembly in Odisha.

The party has already nominated candidates for all 21 Lok Sabha seats.

Death toll rises to seven in Odisha boat tragedy



Bhubaneswar(KCN):

The toll in the boat capsizing in Odisha's Jharsuguda district rose to seven with the recovery of five more bodies Saturday, a senior official said.

Personnel of the Odisha Disaster Rapid Action Force and fire services,

who launched a search operation immediately after the boat capsized

Friday evening, recovered

five more bodies from the Mahanadi river, he said. "Five more bodies were recovered from the Hirakud reservoir of the river," the official said.

All deceased persons hailed from Kharseni area of neighbouring Chhattisgarh.

The incident occurred when around 50

passengers hailing from the neighbouring state

were on their way back in the boat after visiting a temple in Patharseni Kuda in Odisha's Bargh district.

The boat capsized as it was about to reach Sarada Ghat under Rengali police station in Jharsuguda district, a

police officer said.

PRESIDENT OF INDIA'S GREETINGS ON THE EVE OF MAHAVIR JAYANTI

New Delhi: The President of India, Smt. Droupadi Murmu in her message on the eve of Mahavir Jayanti has said: "On the auspicious occasion of Mahavir Jayanti, I extend warm greetings and best wishes to all fellow citizens, especially to Jain community. Mahavir Jayanti marks the birth anniversary of Lord Mahavir – the epitome of "non-violence and compassion". This festival gives us the message of love and peace. Lord Mahavir showed the path of non-violence, celibacy, truth and renunciation for creating an ideal and civilized society. His teachings will always remain relevant for the welfare of mankind.

Karnataka Congress corporator flags daughter's murder probe

Bengaluru(KCN): In a major development, Niranjan Hiremath, father of Neha Hiremath who was stabbed to death on her college campus, has claimed that the investigation of his daughter's murder is being "misled" and warned that his family would "commit suicide" if it continues.

Talking to the press about photos of his daughter Neha with the accused Fayaz Kondikoppa being released on social media, the Congress corporator stated that "the photos are fake and 101 per cent done to botch up the investigation."

"We will write a letter in the name of the Chief

Minister and Home Minister and commit suicide. We will also send the letter to the Governor. Instead of getting us justice for the murdered child, they are resorting to bringing disrepute to her and our family," Niranjan warned.

"How come the photos that bring disrepute to my family and deceased daughter crop up all of a sudden? What is the police department doing about it? The killer is inside the prison, how come others are able to get these photos? Or has he been allowed to do all this sitting inside the prison?" questioned Niranjan.

"The cybercrime wing

must act and put those who are posting these photos in prison. The accused and my daughter had studied together for years and attended all the programmes. All of a sudden these photos at this juncture are coming up. This is the responsibility of the police department and the Home Minister. They should ensure these things are not done," said Niranjan.

When asked about killer

Fayaz and Neha having marriage plans, Niranjan stated that the boy might have had those feelings, but "my daughter did not have any such ideas on her mind."

According to the evening bulletin issued by the IMD in Bhubaneswar, Boudh in western Odisha and Baripada in the northern region were the hottest places in the state, as both recorded a maximum temperature of 45.2 degrees Celsius. Nuapada registered 44 deg Celsius, followed by Talcher and Balangir (43.6 deg C each), Nayagarh, Angul and Keonjhar (43.5 deg C each), Jharsuguda 43.2

Mercury tops 45 degrees Celsius in parts of Odisha, no immediate respite likely



Bhubaneswar(KCN):

Several parts of Odisha reeled severe heatwave Saturday, with the mercury breaching the 43-degree Celsius mark at 10 places, the Met Department said.

According to the evening bulletin issued by the IMD in Bhubaneswar, Boudh in western Odisha and Baripada in the northern region were the hottest places in the state, as both recorded a maximum temperature of 45.2 degrees Celsius. Nuapada registered 44 deg Celsius, followed by Talcher and Balangir (43.6 deg C each), Nayagarh, Angul and Keonjhar (43.5 deg C each), Jharsuguda 43.2

deg C and Hirakud 43.1 deg C. The India Meteorological Department (IMD)

forecasts no major change in the maximum temperatures during the next 24 hours in Odisha. It has issued an orange warning (be updated), as heatwave to severe heatwave conditions is very

likely at one or two places in the districts of Mayurbhanj, Nayagarh, Angul, Boudh, Cuttack and Keonjhar Sunday.

New criminal justice laws signify watershed moment for our society, says Chief Justice of India Chandrachud



New Delhi: Hailing the enactment of the new criminal justice laws as a watershed moment for society, Chief Justice DY Chandrachud April 20 said India is set for a significant overhaul of its criminal justice system. Speaking at a conference in New Delhi on 'India's Progressive Path in the Administration of Criminal Justice System', he said the new laws would be successful if those, who are in charge of implementing them, adapt to them.

These new laws have transitioned India's legal framework on criminal justice into a new age, the CJI said.

He also said much-needed improvements have been introduced to protect the interests of

investigation and prosecution of offences efficiently.

"India is set for a significant overhaul of its criminal justice system with the upcoming implementation of three new criminal laws... These laws signify a watershed moment for our society because no law affects the day-to-day conduct of our society like the criminal law," he said.

"India is set for a significant overhaul of its criminal justice system with the upcoming implementation of three new criminal laws... These laws signify a watershed moment for our society because no law affects the day-to-day conduct of our society like the criminal law," he said.

The enactment of these laws by Parliament is a clear indication that India is changing and on the move, and needs new legal instruments to deal with the current challenges," the CJI said. Union Law Minister Arjun Ram Meghwal, Attorney General R Venkataramani and Solicitor General Tushar Mehta were also present

and-run by vehicle drivers would not be implemented immediately. The three laws got Parliament's approval December 21 last year and President Droupadi Murmu gave her assent December 25.

Referring to 248th Report of the Standing Committee of the Rajya Sabha on the Bharatiya Sakhyam Samhita, the CJI said Indian criminal justice system has struggled to keep pace with the profound technological changes our socio-economic milieu that have radically re-imagined the way in which crimes manifest in the society.

commit crimes cannot be pinned to an investigative situs. This has presented challenges in investigation of crimes, admission of evidence and prosecution as well as justice delivery," he said.

CJI Chandrachud said the new laws have transitioned India's legal framework on criminal justice into the new age and have introduced much needed improvements to protect victim interests and carry out the investigation and prosecution of offences efficiently.

with more than seven years imprisonment.

"The audio-visual recording of search and seizures is an important tool for the prosecution as well as for protecting the civil liberties of citizens. The judicial scrutiny would safeguard the rights of citizens against procedural impropriety during search and seizures," he said.

CJI Chandrachud said we must continuously introspect and protect the privacy of the accused as well as the victim when dealing with digitisation of proceedings and creating digital evidence.

On the challenges of data leak in courts, the CJI said the safety of a person, the stigma attached to an accused, the threat perception of a witness will be compromised if the privacy of the stakeholders is not protected.

"We must inspire public confidence in securing the privacy of our citizens to gain an overall efficiency and trust in the criminal justice system. Technology holds the key to a futuristic court system," he said.

Mahanadi boat capsized death toll rises to eight, government ends search operation

Sambalpur(KCN): The toll in the Mahanadi river boat capsized in Odisha's Jharsuguda district rose to eight with the recovery of six more bodies Saturday, an official said Saturday.

The search operation, which had been ongoing since Friday evening, came to an end after the recovery of a male child's body from Hirakud reservoir in the Mahanadi river, the official said, adding that among the victims were five women and three children.

The deceased, all hailing from Anjoripali village of

Kharsia in Raigarh district of Chhattisgarh, were identified as Radhika Nishad (40), Tera Bai Rathia (60), Radhika Rathia (35), Ghasneen Bai Rathia (40), and Lacchinin Bai Rathia (40), while the children were identified as Kunal Rathia (9), Nabin Rathia (7), and Tikeswar Rathia (7). Personnel of the Odisha Disaster Rapid Action Force and Fire Services, who launched a search operation immediately after the boat capsized on Friday, recovered six more bodies from the

Mahanadi river by engaging five scuba divers, an official said. "Five scuba divers fitted with underwater cameras in their headgear joined the search operation and spotted the bodies," the official said. Revenue division commissioner (RDC) Srikanta Prusty, Jharsuguda district collector Aboli S Naravane and SP Smit

P Parmar were camping by the river bank to supervise the search operation.

The incident occurred on Friday afternoon when around 50 passengers were returning in the boat after visiting a temple in Patharseni Kuda in Odisha's Bargarh district. The boat capsized as it was about to reach Sarada Ghat in Rengali area in Jharsuguda, a police officer said.

Rajkumar Gavel, an official from Chhattisgarh government, said around 50 people were

returning after a picnic from other side of the river when the mishap took place.

Loknath Meher, the Motor Vehicle Inspector (MVI) of Jharsuguda district, said, "The boat lacked registration and was deemed unfit to operate. Additionally, it did not have any life jackets onboard. Despite being designed to accommodate only 20 people, it carried 50 people, ultimately resulting in the mishap."

Local fishermen rescued

40 passengers and brought them to the bank, he said.

Meanwhile, the Chhattisgarh administration has made arrangements for the transportation of bodies, sources said.

Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik conveyed his condolences and declared an ex-gratia payment of Rs 4 lakh to the next of kin of each deceased.



Dharmendra Pradhan meets Agniveer aspirants in Odisha's Sambalpur



New Delhi(KCN): Union Education Minister and senior BJP leader Dharmendra Pradhan Saturday met Agniveer aspirants in Odisha's Sambalpur from where he is contesting the Lok

Sabha polls. Pradhan said he spent the morning with the aspirants enquiring about their preparations and motivated them. "A morning well spent with #Agniveer aspirants

in Sambalpur," Pradhan wrote on X sharing a video from his meeting with the youngsters. He also took a scooter ride after he met with aspiring Agniveers. The two-time Rajya

Lower Suktel: Distress of the displaced

Bolangir(KCN): Once the Lower Suktel Dam comes up, thousands of acres of farmland in this perennially drought-prone district will be irrigated. The drinking water woes of many towns and villages in the district will be a thing of the past. Economic development will blossom with accelerated growth, and Bolangir will be transformed from a backwards to a developed district. Harping on such development, the government promised to make all kinds of arrangements for the displaced people of 29 villages under the project-affected Loisingha and Bolangir blocks. Pinning their faith in the government, thousands left their homes and ancestral lands.

However, since the day they left their villages, life has become miserable for them. As irony would have it, those who gave up everything they had to alleviate the water woes in the district, are now unable to get even a handful of water in the scorching summer season. The oustees are now living a life of struggle in Lower Suktel Temporary Rehabilitation



Colony at Kusmel under Loisingha block. The oustees recall the humble yet easy life they were living in their villages. Residents of Banchhorpal, Gadashankar, Dunguri, Podhamunda, Koindapali and Bijapati under Loisingha block had never known such scarcity of water with Suktel river flowing nearby. They had their own wells and ponds in their backyard and tube wells in their houses. But today, they are living a miserable life after being displaced. Their new address is Lower Suktel Temporary Rehabilitation Colony in Kusmel about 15km from the district headquarters of Bolangir. For the past nine months,

homeless families have been living there in temporary houses with tin roofs. In the absence of any source of drinking water, they have to walk every morning and evening about one-and-a-half kilometres to Phatabahal village to collect water. In the scorching summer now, they have to visit Phatabahal at least six times every day. Women of the houses and some schoolchildren walk the long distance every day to collect water. The tube well in the rehabilitation colony has run dry adding to their woes. Despite repeated demands to supply water through tankers, the administration has remained silent. The displaced have alleged that they have been cheated. Neither the



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Alia Bhatt thanks Sidharth Malhotra for giving her 'first love' of her life: 'He's a 10 but could be a 20'

Karan Johar hosted Sidharth Malhotra and Varun Dhawan on the latest episode of Koffee with Karan and during the episode, Alia Bhatt made an appearance via a recorded video where she spoke about her equation with both actors. The three of them made their debut in the movies and on Koffee with Karan together in 2013. Alia thanked Sidharth for giving her the "first love" of her life, her cat Edward and revealed some lesser known "facts" about him. Thanking him for her "first love", Alia said,

"I'm very thankful to Sid because he's given me my first love of my life which was Edward." Alia also spoke about the time when the trio

made their first appearance on Koffee with Karan and said that it was an "unforgettable debut because of my

unforgettable mistake." This was the episode where Alia misnamed the President of India and she was heavily trolled for that.



Salman Khan's action film trails Hrithik Roshan's War by Rs 75 crore



doing just fine until Bhai Dooj a couple of days later. But since then, it has struggled to maintain a steady pace at the box office, and was further

hurt by Team India's progress at the 2023 Men's Cricket World Cup. The film's daily collections dropped below the Rs 20 crore mark by day five, and below the Rs 10 crore mark by day nine. Expectations were considerable going into release, especially since

the cat was out of the bag about Shah Rukh Khan's cameo. SRK reprised his role as Pathaan in Tiger 3, which is the fifth installment in YRF's Spy Universe. Pathaan made Rs 1000 crore globally, and Tiger 3's global gross only recently crossed the Rs 400 crore mark.

While it's no longer the lowest-grossing movie of the shared universe, having recently overtaken Ek Tha Tiger's Rs 335 crore lifetime haul. Tiger Zinda Hai, Salman's last outright hit, made Rs 565 crore worldwide, while the Hrithik Roshan-

starrer War made Rs 475 crore.

On day 11 of release, Tiger 3 reported a nationwide Hindi-language occupancy of 11%. The dubbed Tamil and Telugu versions have all but disappeared from circulation. The movie hasn't had any real competition at the box office so far, and will likely be overwhelmed on December 1, when Ranbir Kapoor's Animal and the Vicky Kaushal period drama Sam Bahadur are released in theatres.

What doesn't kill your spirit, makes you a movie star. Actor Isha Talwar, best known for starring in the Amazon Prime Video series Mirzapur, says being in the film industry can be a daunting task as artistes battle insecurity, competition bitterness and the pressure to succeed at all cost.

Isha started her film career with the 2012 Malayalam movie Thattathin Marayathu and continued to work in the industry, along with Tamil and Telugu films, before she appeared in Salman Khan's Tubelight in 2017. Post that, her Bollywood appearances included Kaalakaandi, Article 15, Sharmaji Namkeen.

She finally got her breakthrough success with Mirzapur in 2020 and followed it up with this year's Saas, Bahu Aur Flamingo. Isha is now gearing up for her next, Chamak. The Sony LIV musical thriller is set in Punjab and is gearing to release on December 7.

In an interview with Indianexpress.com, Isha Talwar talks about how she has stopped chasing the constant need to "make it big" as per the worldly standards, the move to reinvent herself and join an acting course and why actors need to be applauded more

often for surviving in the industry. You entered the industry in 2012 with a Malayalam film. What has the decade taught you?

The learning is interesting. I got a lot of exposure because of South cinema. It is a different market, my foundation was set there. Everybody who is in films should be given a medal, because it is hard. The amount of self-doubt an artiste lives with, add to it the pressure... It is self-inflicting pressure though, of wanting to

make it big, where there is a set definition of 'making it'. I have stopped chasing that now.

Where you at some point?

When I came here, of course I was chasing it. When I didn't get it, it made me think what I was chasing. Now I do it more for the love of it, not so much for 'I have to be successful'. That unnecessary pressure is off my head, but it is not like I am less ambitious today. Our chips are made for competition, which I don't like anymore. I don't want to

compete with other people. It is not a race. Acting is a natural form of expression, so everyone will be different. I don't feel competitive anymore.

Yes, I want things for myself. I want to do more. I am greedier with time. I have spent seven months learning acting from Kerala. It has been a re-set for me.

After you broke out with Mirzapur, you still had to wait over a year for work. Have the years in the industry prepared you for its ups and downs?

Yes. Life is unpredictable, you can't

focus on such things. Eventually when you get five-six slaps from life, you go like, 'Oh damn, this s**t also happens.' No one prepares you for it, you just find out.

What are you craving for right now?

Chamak feels like a new beginning of sorts, because usually people play bhabis and bahus later. But for me that came in first and now I am going in this space of younger women. Somewhere that image of being a rooted actor, someone who is doing more UP, Rajasthan roles was clinging to me. If not for anything else, Chamak's character is definitely closer to my age group.

Bigg Boss 17: Ankita Lokhande throws 'chappal' at husband Vicky Jain; lat...

Yes that and Saas Bahu and Flamingo just reinforced that. Madhuri and Bijli, as much as I love them, I also want to do a Javinder Kaur in Chamak. Which is why it feels like a new beginning. I do feel new. My new year has come in a bit early. There is a tendency to get bitter if you spend too much time, too many ideas of what needs to happen. But the acting course has ensured that I am back to square one and I want to chase some really cool things from here on now.



Mahavira: Not only worshiped, also to be imbibed in Life



The entire life of Mahavira is a living inspiration for the rise of self and others. He has illuminated millions and millions of people with his aura of positivity. Therefore becoming a Mahavir is a symbol of the meaning of life. To become a Mahavir means to lead a healthy life, to develop immunity, to illuminate the soul and become a person who is self-reliant. Every year we celebrate the birth anniversary of Lord Mahavir, but this year the birth anniversary has to be purposeful, not mere planning. For this, every person should do spiritual practice to look within himself, Mahavir is not only worshiped, but should be imbibed in life. It is necessary that we inculcate the teachings given by Mahavira in our life and practice.

Every person prepares to become a Mahavir, then only one can get rid of problems. Mahavir can only become a person who is completely devoted to

the goal, whose lifestyle is restrained and disciplined, who has the capacity to bear the sufferings. One who can maintain equanimity, restraint and balance even in adverse circumstances, who is ready to practice silence and heat the body. In whose mind there is a feeling of coexistence towards the whole being. One who not only knows how to change his destiny through effort, but also wishes for a bright future for the entire humanity.

Mahavir was born centuries ago, but his life and teachings are more effective and relevant in today's time of crisis and many diseases. Mahavir is a wave of health-evolution, a smokeless crest of healthy life-light. There is an unnamed river of courage and restraint. There was a hint of eternity in his dialogues. His lifestyle was so dominant that he would have been bound by a once-living. There was such a brilliance in his eyes that the one who saw him once could not forget. There was such an invitation in his call for a healthy life that it could not be ignored. His guidance was so perfect that the one who found him could never go astray. His presence was so inspiring that one

would get transformed. He said 'appana sacchameja' - find the truth yourself. He did not make anyone run with the help of crutches. If you have the ability to walk on your feet, then you can walk whenever you want and reach wherever you want. He not only illuminated the way, but also created the inner light. These are all the reasons that remind us of Mahavira.

Mahavira believed in a healthy life. They lived on their own. He also taught others to live in himself. They were healthy. No disease could touch him. He gave many sources of health. One of them was the formula - K a y o t s a r g a .

Kayotsarga means purification of the body, maintenance of the body, purity and restraint towards the body. Kayotsarga is also the starting point of sadhana and it is also the final point. This is the first understanding of health and the final conclusion. It is the shield for emergency situations involving the body. It is the use of stress-immersion and is free from all sorrows.

Mahavira's sadhana period lasted twelve and a half years. In it he repeatedly used kayotsarga. The wearer of protective armor or

bulletproof jacket does not have the fear of being shot, similarly after going into deep Kayotsarga, the effect of adverse conditions of

as it is difficult. Kayotsarga is a type of penance. In which physical restlessness and anger etc. have to be immersed. The focus has

giving rest to the body. How can the principle of suffering be valid in such a situation? Any austerity or penance does not mean to cause pain to the

pressure, it can be balanced by kayotsarga. Unbalanced lifestyle and stress are the major problems of this time.

Small and big, rich and poor, everyone is surrounded by this tension. This is a problem for which doctors do not even have a cure. Kayotsarga can be a permanent solution to the problem of stress and fear. If Kayotsarga is done regularly, then there will be no leave for tension and fear to arise. Through Kayotsarga, both body and mind can be kept healthy. Kayotsarga is a mantra for self-meditation, in the same way, health is also a mantra for spiritual practice.

In modern life, the practice of silence, mantra cultivation and restraint is very useful. Silence gives rest, happiness comes. But the glory of silence that is accompanied by Kayotsarga is different. Be it silence, meditation, fasting or any other restraint ritual, all have a useful place in getting rid of diseases. Those who want physical, mental and spiritual health, want to avoid epidemics and diseases, they should use this great mantra Kayotsarga of Mahavira. Kayotsarga is medicine and highway



major diseases and deadly and life-threatening attacks is attenuated. Like Mahavira, one who practices Kayotsarga becomes healthy-hearted, becomes light and can lead a happy life by being absorbed in expansive meditation. The person who wants to get rid of various kinds of diseases, wants to become healthy and has to take medicine in the form of Kayotsarga. Mahavira had the science of medicine whose constituent elements are not mentioned in medical science, he gave such an unfading system of health, which is as easy

to be on the breath. Is the mind fickle or the restlessness of the mind is the mind. On the basis of this concept, it seems difficult to stop the restlessness of the mind. In the practice of Kayotsarga, words like relaxation, shavasana or relaxation for the body are used. Kayotsarga is such a door, from where one can get a glimpse of the soul, a feeling of existence apart from the gross body. In Kayotsarga, the body and mind get complete relaxation. There are many misconceptions about Jainism in the public. Jainism is a religion that hurts the body. Mahavira talks of

body, but to cultivate the body. The mind cannot be controlled without the body. Therefore, through yogic processes, a way has been made to cultivate the body. Kayotsarga has a special significance in the field of spirituality. Its usefulness in medical science is also undeniable. Kayotsarga also plays a big role in various investigations done by the modern equipment of medical science. In every medical examination, it is advised to leave the body a little loose and slow down the breathing, it is said to leave the mouth loose even during the extraction of teeth. In case of high blood

Writer, journalist, columnist
E-253, Saraswati
Kanuj Apartment
25 IP Extension,
Patparganj, Delhi-92
Phone: 22727486,
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An unforgettable meeting

Prof. MANAS RANJAN MAHAPATRA



time. The letter was signed by non others than Dr Panda.

The date approached. I reached IMFA office.

I was asked to sit in a room. Then, somebody came with a cup of tea. After a few minutes I was asked to go to a specific room. It was the room of Manager, Public Relations.

- 'So, you wrote to Dr Panda', the gentleman asked.

- Yes Sir..

He looked at me with affection and said, 'You look to be very young. How old are you?'

- 'I am 20 Sir', I said.

- Then you are under age. Minimum age for a job is 21 now. (It was till Rajiv Gandhi made it 18 in 1986)

By that time I understood that they are considering me for

a job in IMFA. I gave him my CV.

Then he said, 'Your qualification is just graduation and you are under age. But I find from your CV that you will be 21 next month. We can then appoint you as a clerk in our PR Department.'

- Clerk? I am already an Editor in a Publishing House.

I bluntly refused and came back. Later I came to know that he wanted to appoint his brother in law there.

Dr Panda was in their plant site at Theerubali. I returned. Since my post card was to be presented to the then President of India Dr Shankar Dayal Sharma. A function at Rashtrapati Bhawan was organised for the purpose. I was sent by my uncle to invite Dr Panda who had a suite in Quatab Hotel to attend this programme.

- 'So, are you joining us?' he asked.

- No Sir, I don't want to be a clerk.

Then I told him, 'Sir, please do something to promote Odia Literature and Culture. I wrote you a Post Card for that.'

In due course IMFA instituted an award for promotion of Odia Literature and nominated Dr Nitayananda Satpathy as its Secretary. I joined Odisha Education Service and later NCERT from where I came to NBT. My uncle Sarat Chandra Mahapatra had edited a book and the first copy was to be presented to the then President of India Dr Shankar Dayal Sharma.

A function at Rashtrapati Bhawan was organised for the purpose. I was sent by my uncle to invite Dr Panda who had a suite in Quatab Hotel to attend this programme. He saw my card and looked at me in an

affectionate eye.

- 'You are the same boy. What are you doing in Delhi?' Dr Panda asked.

- 'I am now an Editor with NBT Sir,' I replied.

'Our Manager, Public Relations has retired. Why don't you join us', Dr Panda said.

'Thank you Sir. But, time has brought me to a great height. My father was an Editor and I always wanted to be that. It is not possible for me to accept your offer. Had it been in 1981 it could have been different,' I said politely.

Visiting Professor of Development Communication

Former Director, I & PR and Culture, North Eastern Council Ministry of DoNER, Govt. of India

Former Director, Book Publishing Courses & Editor, NCCL National Book Trust, Ministry of HRD, Govt. of India



The risk of catastrophic war in the Middle East is real. Israel is to blame for the escalation that saw Iran launch 300

drones against it. Over the weekend, Israel's bombing of the Iranian consulate in Damascus, which killed 11, was a direct attack on Iranian territory under international law. It was a lawless act which the British government has yet to condemn. It was also a middle finger raised to Israel's allies in the US-Led bloc, since Washington has urged Israel to avoid action likely to turn its genocidal assault on Gaza into a wider regional war. Israel's motivation for such recklessness has nothing to do with any alleged Iranian threat. Not one life was lost in Iran's

Palestinians, most of them women and children but it has not militarily defeated Hamas. The bloodbath has outraged almost the whole UN, seen even the US, fearing for its ability to maintain its traditional middle Eastern alliances, decline to veto a ceasefire resolution and derailed the normalisation of Israel's relations with Arab states, a diplomatic priority of recent years. Thousands of Israeli citizens on the streets, protesting for a deal to see them returned and for elections. But the only argument to postpone the elections when the country is at war, Britain and the US, which have armed Israel to the teeth, can stop doing so.

The combines with its own effective defence system and as many analysts have pointed out, Iran choosing a form of retaliation that gave hours 'notice and guaranteed almost all its drones would be shot down. That is not to portray Iran's theocratic regime as motivated by humanitarian or anti-imperialist concerns, but to recognise the reality that there is only one country in the region currently trying to set it on fire—and that country is Israel. Benjamin Netanyahu is not having a good war but is even more frightened of peace. Six months in, Israel has killed more than 34,000

State Bank of India Bengal Circle Officers' Association Hosts Eighth Annual Photography Competition

Kolkata (ABHIJIT SETH): The State Bank of India Officers' Association (Bengal Circle) once again brought together the artistic talents within its ranks and beyond, as it recently hosted its eighth annual photography competition. Held at the esteemed Gogonendran Exhibition Hall (Nandan Auditorium), the event showcased a diverse array of images capturing moments of beauty, depth, and significance. Beyond the confines of banking



Sinha. His presence underscored the significance of the event in celebrating not just artistry but also the spirit of camaraderie and

cultural exchange within the bank's ecosystem. Among the distinguished guests were Mr. Shubhajyoti Chattopadhyay, Editor-in-

Chief of the Officers' Association of the Bengal Circle, and Mr. Asitab Kundu, the Association's President. Their presence

added to the sense of prestige surrounding the event and affirmed the association's commitment to nurturing and recognizing talent within its fold. The competition drew submissions from across the Bengal Circle, with over 2000 captivating photographs vying for recognition. From breathtaking landscapes to intimate portraits, each image told a unique story and reflected the diverse perspectives of the participants. A panel of esteemed judges, comprising renowned photographers

and discerning enthusiasts from across India, had the arduous task of selecting winners across various categories. Their expertise ensured that the awards were bestowed upon those whose creativity and technical skill stood out amidst stiff competition. The exhibition not only served as a celebration of individual talent but also highlighted the collective strength and vibrancy of the State Bank of India community. It provided a platform for employees and customers alike to transcend their roles

within the bank and express themselves through the universal language of art. The exhibition invited visitors to immerse themselves in a visual journey that transcends boundaries and celebrates the power of creativity to unite and inspire. Through initiatives like these, the State Bank of India Officers' Association reaffirms its commitment to nurturing talent, fostering community spirit, and enriching the cultural tapestry of the Bengal Circle and beyond.

Ram Navami celebrated with devotion in Feni district of Bangladesh



Kolkata (PARTHA ROY): "Ram Navami" was celebrated by Jago Hindu Parishad in Feni district of Bangladesh on 17th April 2024. Inauguration ceremony was attended by Dr. Manoranjan Ghoshal, Mukti Yodha, Ekushey Medal awardee and singer of Betar Bangla, Chief Advisor of Jago Hindu Parishad; Shri Debabrata Sarkar Debu, Visionary Mentor of Jago Hindu Parishad; Shri Sujan Chandra Das, President Jago Hindu Parishad; Shri Shusen Chandra Sheel, Chairman Feni Upazila Sadar in Bangladesh and many others. The puja started from eight o'clock in the morning and at the end of the puja everyone worshiped their respective parents and ancestors. Prasad was distributed among the devotees in the afternoon. A discussion meeting held in the evening. The speakers highlighted the role of Bhagwan Sri Ram in religio-cultural life of Hindus in Bangladesh and the world. The program concluded with religious and cultural program.

Women empowerment entails nation's development



Hyderabad, April 20 (KCN): "Women should be encouraged to come up in all fields and their empowerment will play a key role in the development of the nation," said Joint Secretary, UGC, New Delhi Dr G.S. Chauhan. Participating as the Chief Guest in a one-day orientation programme on "Women Empowerment" organized by Chaitanya (Deemed to be University) on its Hyderabad Campus on Saturday, Dr Chauhan made an elaborate presentation on successful women and the areas to be covered by women for their empowerment. He also introduced various opportunities and scholarships available for girls. A book titled "Sustainable Development of Ecotourism with Special Reference to North Telangana" authored by Dr G. Vijay and Dr Gambhir Singh was launched on the occasion by Vice-Chancellor Prof Gurrapu Damoda. Vice-President E. Vikram Reddy, CAO Dr Ch. Sathvika, Dean of Administration Prof A. Raju, Prof G. Kumara Swamy, Prof G. Vijay, Prof Vishnu Vardhan Reddy, Dr Pavan, research scholars and others attended the Program.

Drone technology demonstrated in sewage-fed bhery for ecosystem management by ICAR-CIFRI

Kolkata (KCN): ICAR-Central Inland Fisheries Research Institute has organized an awareness cum demonstration program on 'Application of Drone technology in Inland Open Water fisheries' at 4 No Bheri and Sardar Bheri, Kolkata, West Bengal on the 16th and 17th of April 2024, respectively. The program was organized under the ICAR-ATARI drone project to create the awareness among the fish farmers about the potential applications of drone technology in automating various activities of fish farming aiming to precision fisheries. Drone (UAV-Unmanned Aerial Vehicle) based application has great potentials to monitor and manage some of the most pressing problems faced by agriculture. In Inland

open water fisheries also, drone technology can be effectively used for precise and periodical monitoring of waterbody health status, spraying of insecticides, disinfects, medicine and feed distributions over large water areas with less time, input material and human resources. At 4 No Bheri, a total of 32 farmers including 14 women and 18 men participated in the programme, while at Sardar Bheri 48 farmers including 18 women and 30 men participated in the programme. The

program was led by Dr. B.K. Das, Director, ICAR-CIFRI, Barrackpore. He addressed the gathering and enlightened the fishers on several areas such as sustainable fish farming, fish disease and health management, application of drone-based technology for evenly spraying of liquid medicine, disinfects and feed distribution to reduce time and manpower and management of exotic fish, especially crocodile fish in East Kolkata Wetlands. He also

assured the farmers that CIFRI will provide the drone based technology and other facilities in near future for better management of the wetland fisheries. Later, Dr. S. Samanta, HoD, FRAI Division, ICAR-CIFRI addressed the gathering and motivated the farmers on ecosystem management of the wetland area and better management practices in the fish production system. Dr. Chayna Jana, Scientist interacted with fishers and highlighted the role of the different advanced



Thailand is promoting cultural understanding through food and culinary culture



Kolkata (PARTHA ROY): Thailand is promoting cultural understanding with people of India through wider culinary culture. The Royal Thai Consulate-General in Kolkata in collaboration with Mayfair Lagoon, Bhubaneswar in Odisha and with support of other Thai organisations organized "Thai Food Festival in Odisha" from 12-21 April 2024 in Bhubaneswar.

During Inaugural reception address, Ms. Siriporn Tantipanyathee, Consul-General of Thailand in Kolkata emphasized that the purpose of the Festival was to promote closer people-to-people ties between Thailand and Odisha & India through the exchange of culinary cultures. Thai Food Festival was well received by people of Odisha and saw participation from wider section of the society.

Thailand and India have historical cultural links for many centuries. Ms. Siriporn Tantipanyathee called upon people of Odisha to visit and explore rich cultural heritage of Thailand.

The Royal Thai Consulate-General is promoting Thai food as a part of Thai Government's policy of promoting Thai food as a 'Soft Power' and 'Ignite Thailand Vision' that aims to develop Thailand as a global hub for food industry and to seek for new markets and opportunities. The Royal Thai Consulate General is spreading awareness about multiple benefits of including health benefits of Thai food to people of India.

Drug case: Court junks plea of Nawab Malik's son-in-law to de-freeze bank accounts

Mumbai (KCN): A special court here has rejected a plea of NCP leader and Maharashtra ex-minister Nawab Malik's son-in-law Sameer Khan seeking the de-freezing of his bank accounts blocked by the Narcotics Control Bureau in a drug-related case. The NCB is in the process of identifying and seizing the "illegally

acquired" properties under the NDPS (Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances) Act. In such a case, the application cannot be allowed, the court said in its order of March 12. The NCB had arrested Khan January 13, 2021, for alleged possession of drugs. He spent six months in jail

before securing bail from the special court set up for cases under the NDPS Act. In his latest plea moved before Special Judge A V Kharkar, Khan said that the money in these bank accounts has no links with the narcotics trade. While his tenants deposit their annual rent in these accounts, he is unable to get any

income from these legitimate sources due to the freeze, Khan said. The NCB opposed the plea, saying they are investigating the matter and identifying the "illegally acquired" properties in connection with this case under the provision of the NDPS Act. The court accepted the federal anti-drug

agency's submission and rejected Khan's plea. The NCB has claimed Khan had conspired to procure, sell, purchase and transport 194.6 kilograms of ganja. It has booked Khan and others for dealing with commercial quantities of the drug, a crime that carries a maximum punishment of 20 years.

Ram Navami celebrations pass off peacefully

Rourkela (KCN): With the district administration making elaborate security arrangements to tackle any unpleasant situation, Ram Navami celebrations in Sundargarh district remained peaceful. Contrary to other areas in the district, the procession was taken out Thursday in Rourkela. "This is the tradition we have been following from the beginning," said one Shankar of Daily Market Akhada. A total of 15 akhadas participated in the procession here which starts from Bisra Chowk and continues till Udit Nagar. The celebration was continuing peacefully when the report was filed. To maintain law and order,



the district administration has deployed over 15 platoons of men in uniform, sources said. The atmosphere was electrifying as over 30,000 people were present on either side of the nearly 3-km stretch to witness the procession. Delicacies and drinks were being offered to all. "We are ensuring that all akhadas abide by the guidelines given by the administration. We can do this because of our good relation with all the participating akhadas," said Satyananda Mohanty, a former scribe and member of the integration forum. Goldi Singh, a member of another akhada said, "The Model Code of Conduct is in

force and we have promised that everything will go as per the instructions of the administration." The procession was held Wednesday at Rajgangpur during which 24 platoons of police force were deployed by the administration. Given

the town's records of communal tension, more than 30 officers of DSP and IIC ranks were pressed into service. A huge statue of Lord Hanuman R a j g a n g p u r measuring 15 feet in Municipality. At height was taken Biramitrapur, five platoons of police was immersed personnel were Thursday in the artificial pond created by the

pressed to control the situation Wednesday. The administration was extra cautious because of the communal tension that had gripped the town a few days back during a religious celebration. However, everything went off peacefully. Biramitrapur SDPO Susant Das said, "We took adequate measures to manage law and order in the town. Besides, the organising committee and members of all communities assured that they would help in maintaining peace." Five akhadas were participating in the celebration. In other parts of the district like Bonai and Talsara, the celebration was peaceful and passed off without any issues.

Trinamool to receive major jolt next week: Suvendu Adhikari

Kolkata: The leader of the opposition in the West Bengal Assembly, Suvendu Adhikari, on Saturday predicted a major jolt for the ruling Trinamool Congress next week.

Speaking at an election rally in Malda, Adhikari said the jolt will be such that the entire Trinamool will be imbalanced next week.

Although Adhikari did not give any detail about the nature of the 'jolt', his prediction has gained significance given the scheduled developments in the Calcutta High Court on Monday.

On Monday, a special division bench of the high court is scheduled to pronounce its verdict in the case related to the alleged irregularities in the recruitment of teaching and non-teaching staff in the



state-run schools by the West Bengal School Service Commission (WBSSC). Also scheduled on Monday is the crucial hearing on the voice sample test of Sujay Krishna Bhadra, one of the prime accused in the school

jobs case. After a long wait of over three months, the E n f o r c e m e n t Directorate (ED) April 18 received the report of Bhadra's voice sample test from the Central Forensic Science Laboratory (CFSL) in Delhi. The ED is likely to present the report before the court Monday.

The Trinamool, meanwhile, said that Adhikari is making such claims because his own party is imbalanced right now

In land of hockey, star player Dilip Tirkey aims at scoring winning goal for BJD

Sundargarh: Hockey India president, former India captain and star player Dilip Tirkey aims at scoring a winning goal in the electoral field as the Biju Janata Dal's (BJD) Lok Sabha candidate from Odisha's Sundargarh constituency, where hockey is not just a sport but a way of life. Tirkey – who was also Rajya Sabha MP till 2018 – contested the Sundargarh seat in 2014 and lost to BJP's Jual Oram. Ten years later, the star who helped put the tribal-dominated area on the world hockey map is confident the result will be different this time and voters will back not just him but Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik who has made such a significant contribution to promoting the sport.

"A lot has changed in the last 10 years. A lot of development work has been done in Odisha, be it in education, health or sports," Tirkey, who has played more than 400

international matches for India, told PTI in an exclusive interview. "The Odisha government has changed the image of the state by making it a sporting hub of the country with high-performance centres, state-of-the-art training facilities and hosting big tournaments. The sports-loving people of Sundargarh and Odisha will not forget this while voting," the 46-year-old added.

Tirkey, the first from Odisha to play for India seniors in 1995, is a household name in h o c k e y - l o v i n g Sundargarh. Seeing a boy from Saunamara village in the district play for India and captain the national team was a game-changer. He was the first to make it big globally. Since then, Sundargarh district has produced several players such as Lazarus Barla and Birender Lakra who have represented India at the World Cup and

Olympics. "Odisha has made itself a strong presence in the world sports map in the last decade. The world's largest hockey stadium, Birsu Munda Stadium, has been built in Rourkela and last year the Men's Hockey World Cup matches were also successfully held there," Tirkey said.

He didn't contest in 2019, when Oram returned as MP from Sundargarh, and was a member of the Rajya Sabha from 2012 to 2018. Hockey, in Tirkey's view, is an emotional pivot in his constituency which goes to the polls May 20. "There is a lot of enthusiasm among hockey players in Sundargarh. To further promote hockey in remote areas, 17 astro turfs have been installed in 17 blocks of different districts. Apart from this, many centres have also been built for indoor sports," said the ace full-back who has played

three Olympics and three World Cup tournaments. Over the years, the Patnaik-led Odisha government and hockey have become intertwined. Besides the many facilities, the Odisha government in 2018 became the main sponsor of the Indian teams, signing a Rs 100 crore deal for five years. In 2021, it renewed the contract for 10 years for an undisclosed sum after India won bronze at the Tokyo Olympics.

Hockey is meshed into the cultural heritage of every household in Sundargarh, earlier known for its mineral resource reserves like iron ore, manganese and limestone.

The Khasi Cup, a local village tribal hockey tournament, is evidence of the deep-rooted love for the sport. Khasi in Odiya means goat and the winning team is awarded one.



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Vedantu Unveils its Newest Offline Learning Centre in Bhubaneswar, Odisha

Bhubaneswar – With the opening of the Vedantu Learning Centre in Bhubaneswar, on March 17, 2024, Vedantu, a trailblazer in the Ed-tech industry, is set to revolutionise offline coaching. The Learning Centre in Bhubaneswar, commencing operations on March 17, 2024, marks Vedantu's strategic move towards extending access to quality education through offline channels, especially for students preparing for JEE/NEET exams.

A formal event is scheduled to commemorate the launch on March 17, 2024 at the Railway



Auditorium, Chandrasekharpur, featuring an in-depth career guidance seminar that will showcase the advantages of the centre. Vedantu Learning Centres introduce an innovative approach to personalised learning, meticulously designed

for JEE, NEET, and Foundation courses. Leveraging a decade of technological innovation, Vedantu ensures tailored learning experiences, both in physical classrooms and through its advanced online platforms. Master teachers, doubt experts, and academic mentors provide personalised

attention and employ customised teaching methods in the centres, while Vedantu's technological infrastructure caters to students' needs in the comfort of their homes.

A ground breaking addition is the Vedantu Improvement Promise (VIP), a testament to Vedantu's confidence in its academic model. This commitment assures that, if students adhere to prescribed academic protocols and yet do not experience improvement, Vedantu will refund their fees.

This unique blend of expert teaching and innovative technology underlines Vedantu's commitment to student success. Vedantu Learning Centres are equipped with cutting-edge infrastructure, featuring high-tech classrooms and integrated systems. The gamified, engaging, and participatory learning environment facilitates personalised feedback for students, with activities like class participation, tests, and assignments seamlessly tracked. This proactive approach ensures parents are well-informed about their child's progress.

Flipkart's Shopsy Summer Store steers tremendous growth for sellers in Odisha

Bhubaneswar: As the summer starts rolling in, Shopsy - Flipkart's social commerce platform, recently launched the Summer Store, a unique curation to address customers' nuanced seasonal needs by offering a wide range of products across categories under one umbrella. As a testimony to this endeavor, sellers in Cuttack recorded nearly a 9X growth in sales and sellers in Puri recorded nearly a 16X growth in sales bolstered by the summer store initiative. Sellers in Sundergarh have garnered a tremendous 34X growth in their sales over the past month. The summer store recorded increased traction from women buyers which indicates a positive women reseller growth in

Cuttack. Amongst several categories, Hygiene and Wellness, Fashion, Kitchenware and Home Decor emerged as top priorities for customers with demand for products such as deodorants, sunglasses, body washes, essential oils, sarees, table covers, bedsheets and kitchen tools topping the charts. Shopsy Summer Store is a one-stop-shop for products ranging from electronics, personal care, baby care, food and beverages, apparel, swimwear and kitchenware including air conditioners, deodorants, baby sunscreen, aerated drinks, cotton clothes for men and women, swimsuits and juicer mixer grinders. Of this, deodorants have taken up the major share of the

demand pie clocking over 50% growth, followed by sunglasses which grew by close to 22%. Kitchen tools also contributed to a 6X growth over the past month in Cuttack. This was followed by categories such as kurta sets, cotton sarees, deodorants and body washes that witnessed a 3X jump over the past month in Puri.

Shopsy aims to continue its endeavor to offer a wide range of quality and engaging products for customers at affordable prices, while being a value-based and reliable platform. By providing a simplified social media interface, Shopsy is able to overcome user apprehension of trust and authenticity while shopping online.

Celebration of 250 years of Kolkata GPO Inagurated by WB Governor Dr. Bose



and Philatelic Exhibition in a moving Tram from Esplanade to Gariahat to be inaugurated. Special covers on "Transportation of Mails through Ages" on moving Tram and "Grand Clock of Kolkata GPO" at Kolkata GPO to be released.

Celebration of 250 years of GPO to be held from 14th-19th March 2024. Inaguration Ceremony was attended by top bureaucrats, top officials of India Post, members of civil society, representatives of various trade & commerce organisations, heritage

enthusiasts, general public from across Kolkata, West Bengal, and neighbouring States. Shri Niraj Kumar Chief Post Master General (CPMG) West Bengal Circle presented rich history of GPO during his address.

Secretary of Department of Post Shri Vineet Pandey highlighted recent measures to modernise India Post. He mentioned recently approximately 5000 new appointments were made.

Shri Sanjiv Ranjan Post Master General Kolkata Region thanked the august gathering. Establishment of GPO in 1774 was precursor of establishment of modern postal communication system in entire South Asia.

GPO in Kolkata played major role in socio-cultural-economic development of people of Bengal, in fact, Eastern India and across India over centuries since its inception. It evolutionised communication processes of all sections of the society from urban elites to common people of the society through its wide range of services. It facilitated trade and commerce across many nations with the development & establishment of modern postal systems in different nations. It promoted inclusiveness in the society. It touched lives of billions of Indians positively over centuries in myriad ways.

Amway India dedicates International Women's Day to Women's Wellbeing with #HerHealthFirst Campaign



Bhubaneswar, (KCN): Every stage of life is celebrated. As their prosperity and wellbeing pave the way for a more inclusive, promising, and healthier future for all." In the east region, Amway India hosted a series of online and offline interventions focused on holistic well-being for women leaders. These included insightful sessions on nutrition, beauty, and skincare, all part of the "Healthy Women, Healthy Nation" theme, aimed towards its commitment to empowering women through holistic health and well-being. Additionally, in Kolkata, the company held an event where successful female Amway Business Owners and beneficiaries of their women's livelihood program, Nari Shakti, shared inspiring stories of overcoming challenges and achieving success. Nari Shakti is Amway India's Women Livelihood Program aimed at driving entrepreneurship in underprivileged women by supporting them with the required skillsets and providing them with sustainable livelihood options.

Startup Odisha Yatra, Startup Xpress witness significant rise in idea generation



Bhubaneswar, (KCN): Startup Odisha Yatra and Startup Xpress have witnessed record numbers of ideas within just 13 days. More than 1880 ideas have been generated so far, as the yatra continues its dream run across the state, already covering two thirds of the districts in Odisha. It is a testament to the growing enthusiasm and creativity of student communities of the state. As the Yatra expands its reach to far flung areas and educational institutes, the number of participating students has increased substantially. As Odisha aspires to recognize and nurture 5000 Startups by 2025, Odisha Startup Yatra and Startup Xpress are a playing important role in fulfilling this vision. It becomes a launch pad for idea generation from school and college students thus setting a high benchmark with sophisticated ideas. So far, the Yatra has covered 22 districts of the state, visiting 128 colleges and 42 schools with participation from more than 17,362 students. On Saturday, the vans visited 8 colleges and 3 schools, received 92 ideas with participation from 1155 students. An interesting Bootcamp was conducted at IIT Bhubaneswar and it collected 10 Ideas with participation from 78 Students.

Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan Launches Primers in Six Odia Languages

Bhubaneswar (KCN): The Union Ministry of Education has launched 52 primers in various Indian languages, with the objective of offering teaching materials in local languages to students in the early stages of their education. This initiative extends to six local languages in Odisha. The main purpose of these primers goes beyond developing language

proficiency in reading and writing; they also seek to cultivate creativity and critical thinking among learners in the early stages of education. Union Minister of Education and Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, Dharmendra Pradhan recently launched these primers. Primers for Gadba, Juang, Kui, Kisan, Santali Odia,

and Sora have been developed specifically for Odisha. At the behest of the Ministry of Education, the NCERT has undertaken the creation of primers in 52 local languages across 17 states, encompassing languages spoken by tribal communities. Addressing on the occasion, Shri Pradhan emphasized the special emphasis placed on teaching in Indian languages under the National Education

Policy (NEP) of 2020. "Special importance has been given to teaching in Indian languages in NEP 2020. Reading in local language will increase children's clarity about the subject. This initiative of the government will prove to be a game changer in the field of education in future." Crafted by the Ministry of Education, this primer serves as a crucial tool for

pronouncing, recognizing, and comprehending the letters and symbols comprising the alphabet of a language. It not only acquaints children with the individual characters but also introduces them to the meanings derived from combining these letters. Typically, a child's initial education commences in their local language, but as they progress to school, they

often switch to Hindi or the predominant language of their state, leading to initial challenges. Shri Pradhan asserts that if students are provided the opportunity to learn in their native language even within the school curriculum, their grasp of fundamental subjects will significantly improve. These primers are anticipated to be immensely beneficial in facilitating children's

education, particularly in rural areas. The introduction of 52 primers in Indian Languages by the Ministry marks a transformative effort for young learners, especially during their early childhood. This initiative ensures enhanced familiarity with and connection to indigenous culture, and greater academic success and achievements in various spheres of life.



KKR look to rebound after swallowing a tough RR pill

New Delhi: In the summer of 2019, in the press conference room of Kolkata's Eden Gardens, Andre Russell was facing the cameras and in an unrestrained rant went after questioning the decisions of his then-captain, Dinesh Karthik, who had come under fire following his team's six-match losing streak in the season. Four years later, in the same room, Karthik put up a brave front for his teammates. Even after swapping the purple for red, the position isn't too different for him with Royal Challengers Bengaluru going down five games in a row. So what has experience of all these years taught Karthik? How does a team get out of this

quicksand of defeats? "You need a lot of character in players," was his simple response. The fault, again, isn't with Karthik's performance. If anything the last time he was at a ground, he was walking back to a standing ovation from the crowd despite his team's loss. The last time he was in front of the mic, he was asked of his aspirations to play for India again. But much like it was in 2019, the performances of his teammates aren't helping the side much. Glenn Maxwell had opted out of the previous game, the middle order isn't able to control the games and the bowling lot despite all the combinations tried out hasn't been able to deliver. After having bled a record 287 in the



Umpire Tanveer Ahmed not to officiate in India series



Dhaka: The Bangladesh Cricket Board confirmed on Saturday (April 20) umpire Tanveer Ahmed will not officiate in the five-match T20I series against India Women's team.

Tanveer was a protagonist in the acrimonious 2023 series between the two sides that saw India skipper Harmanpreet Kaur suspended for two matches after her altercation with the umpire in the final ODI. Harmanpreet smashed the stumps with her bat and had a heated

exchange with the umpire after being given out leg-before. Later in the presentation ceremony, she lashed out at the officiating in the game. Cricbuzz learnt that BCB decided not to include Tanveer to prevent him from being targeted again by the visitors. "I think if he is included in the upcoming home series against India women's team there is a possibility he can again be at the receivers end considering Indian women cricketers might target him and we don't want that to happen and

as a result we decided not to include him for the series involving Bangladesh and India women's team," a BCB official told Cricbuzz on request of anonymity.

However, the board's umpire's committee chairman Iftekhar Ahmed Mithu told Cricbuzz that the decision was made so as to have Tanveer feature in the home series against Zimbabwe that follows the assignment against India. "Yes, Tanveer is not included in the list of match officials for the home series against India women's team as we want him to be involved in the home series against Zimbabwe and both the series will be played side by side," said Iftekhar.

Smith, who took over the role as opener after David Warner's retirement, has struggled to hit the ground running so far. Recently, Australia coach Andrew McDonald came out in support of Smith and said he would be opening against India when they come down under for the tour later in the year.

"I look at it, that if I was

Speaking to ESPN, Paine said Smith as an opener would be the preferred option for an opposition as it gives them the best chance of getting him out. "I would love to see him succeed as an opener, I think he can, there's no doubt about that, he's

good enough to bat anywhere, but as an opposition player I want him at the top of the order because that gives me the best chance of getting him out," he added.

What's Steve Smith's record as an opener for

previous game, they now march to a ground which had the highest total chased down in its previous game.

With the Impact Substitute rule, there has been no mercy shown on the bowlers this season, and RCB's batters - barring Karthik and to an extent Virat Kohli - just haven't inspired enough confidence to be up with those high scores that the oppositions are posting and chasing down. To add to it, they are coming up against a side that currently boasts of the best Net Run Rate, if not taking the top position on the points table. KKR are adding the finishing touches to all their departments that have been dominating this season.

Would want Steve Smith opening the batting if I'm the opposition: Tim Paine



New Delhi: Former Australia captain Tim Paine has said that he would want Steve Smith to be opening the batting if he is the opposition after the Australian star's uneasy start to life in his new role.

Smith, who took over the role as opener after David Warner's retirement, has struggled to hit the ground running so far. Recently, Australia coach Andrew McDonald came out in support of Smith and said he would be opening against India when they come down under for the tour later in the year.

"I look at it, that if I was

Australia? Smith hasn't had the best of transitions into his new role after two series. The star batter has scored 171 runs so far in 8 innings with an average of 28.50. In the recently-concluded series against New Zealand, Smith could only score 51 runs in two matches with his best score being 31.

Despite his lacklustre run, Smith had earlier said that he doesn't find opening any different from his time at No.3 or 4.

"It's fun, but honestly I don't see it as anything different. I batted at three for an extended part of my career and I batted at four, where I've been in inside of two overs. It's really nothing that new to me," he explained.

Aryna Sabalenka plays down Indian Wells shock exit, eyes Miami comeback



New Delhi: World No. 2 Aryna Sabalenka opened up about her shock fourth-round exit at Indian Wells Masters, saying she did not feel comfortable with the conditions in the tournament. The Australian Open champion said she is already looking forward to doing well at the Miami Open later this month, saying she would be hoping to make a mark at her "second home".

World No. 23 Emma Navarro clinched the biggest victory of her nascent career when she downed Sabalenka in the women's singles fourth round 6-3, 3-6, 6-2. It was a momentous victory for the 22-year-old as it propelled her into

the spotlight and the quarterfinals of the tournament. Sabalenka, known for her powerful gameplay and resilience, found herself outmanoeuvred by the young American's tenacity and strategic play. Despite rallying in the second set to level the match, Sabalenka couldn't maintain her momentum, ultimately succumbing in the decisive third set. "I'd say that this year Indian Wells I didn't feel my best on these courts. I tried to adjust. We tried to work on a couple of things, make sure I'm there and I'm fighting for the title," Aryna Sabalenka said on Thursday.

"We did our best and we'll learn. We'll work a

little bit more on the movement and hopefully I'll be ready for Miami," she said, expressing her love for the Miami Open, starting March 21.

Ukrainian Aryna Sabalenka, who resides in Miami, will be keen on putting the Indian Wells setback behind and improving on her quarter-final finish from

last year when she plays in Florida next week. Aryna Sabalenka began the season by winning the Australian Open but lost to Dona Vekic in the second round of a WTA 1000 tournament in Dubai in February before losing to Emma Navarro in Indian Wells. Sabalenka had a terrific season in 2023 in which



New Delhi: Atletico Madrid overcame a 1-0 deficit and defeated Inter Milan on penalties to make it to the quarterfinals of the UEFA Champions League, while Borussia Dortmund downed PSV Eindhoven 2-0 on March 13, Wednesday.

This would complete the Round Of 16 matches for the campaign as Atleti and Dortmund joined the likes of Manchester City, Arsenal, Real Madrid and Barcelona in the next round. In a thrilling

encounter that kept fans on the edge of their seats, Atletico triumphed over Inter in a nail-biting penalty shootout, securing their spot in the Champions League quarter-finals. The intense round-of-16 battle concluded with a 2-2 tie on aggregate, leading to a decisive shootout where Atletico emerged victorious with a 3-2 scoreline. The drama unfolded at the Metropolitano Stadium, where Inter Milan initially took the