

## Bhubaneswar sears at 43.5 degree Celsius as hottest city in Odisha BJD Announces More Candidates

**Bhubaneswar(KCN):** Intense heat wave conditions continued in Odisha as five cities recorded maximum temperature above 40 degree Celsius till 2.30 pm Friday.

As per the information provided by the India Meteorological Department's (IMD) regional office, Bhubaneswar is so far the hottest in the state with the mercury touching 43.5 degree Celsius till 2.30 p.m.

For the last couple of days, the state has been reeling under scorching heat along with conditions of intense humidity.

Today, Sambalpur recorded 40.8 degrees while the coastal town of Chandbali in the Bhadrak district and Hirakud in



western Odisha witnessed 40.6 degree Celsius till 2.30 p.m.

"Due to prevailing mainly northwesterly/westerly dry air and high solar insolation, maximum temperature (Day Temperature) is likely to be more than 40 degrees Celsius at many places over the districts of Odisha and likely to be above

normal by 3 to 5 degree Celsius over some districts of Odisha till April 6, 2024," read the IMD bulletin.

Earlier, IMD official, Umasankar Das had said that the temperature in the capital city is likely to touch 44 degree Celsius or more on Friday. Das also predicted that the

other cities of the state, too, will witness intense heat waves on both April 5 and 6.

According to him, cities like Sundargarh, Bolangir and Titilagarh etc experienced warm night conditions during the last 24 hours. Das further stated that as many as 11 places in the state witnessed temperature

soaring over 40 degrees Celsius Thursday.

Boudh and Malkangiri were recorded as the hottest places of the season till now with 42 degree Celsius.

The official predicted that people may get some respite from the scorching heat due to widespread rain at many places in interior and coastal districts of the state April 7 and 8.

Meanwhile, the regional IMD centre has also issued a yellow warning for intense heatwave conditions for Khorda, Cuttack, Keonjhar, Boudh, Malkangiri, Nayagarh, Angul, Bolangir, Kandhamal, Balasore, Bhadrak, Jajpur, Mayurbhanj, Jharsuguda districts for April 6.



**Bhubaneswar(KCN):**

The Governing Biju Janata Dal (BJD) President and Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik today announced names of another nine MLA candidates. So far, the party has announced candidates for 108 MLA and 20 MP seats.

The party has re-

nominated Sarada Prasad Nayak for Rourkela, Sworup Kumar Das for Balasore and Prasant Behera for Salepur MLA seats. Former MLA Prakash Behera, who recently joined the BJD after resigning from BJP, has been given ticket for Barabati Cuttack seat. Similarly, Rohit Joseph Tirkey, son of senior tribal leader George

Tirkey, has been given party ticket for Biramitrapur MLA segment. Rohit has joined the BJD very recently.

Raisen Murmu, who took VRS from DSP post and joined the BJD four month back, has been nominated for Rairangpur MLA seat. Besides, the BJD has nominated Sudarshan Haripal for Rengali MLA segment, Meena Majhi for Keonjhar and Naba Kishore Mallick for Jaydev seat. Naba Mallick had contested the last assembly election in 2019 independently and got a good amount of votes. So, the party has picked him to fight against BJP nominee Arabinda Dhali.

## New DMs SPs Appointed



**Bhubaneswar(KCN):**

Following the orders of Election Commission of India (ECI), the State Government today appointed new District Magistrates for Cuttack and Jagatsinghpur districts.

As per a notification published by the General Administration and Public Grievances Department, 2011 batch IAS Officer Arindam Dakua has been appointed as new Collector of Cuttack while 2012 batch IAS Officer Anupam Sahai is the new Collector of Jagatsinghpur.

The ECI had earlier asked the Odisha Government to transfer previous Cuttack DM and District Election Officer (DEO) Vineet Bhardwaj and Jagatsinghpur DM & DEO Parul Patawari. Similarly, on the recommendation of the Commission, the State Government has appointed new IPS

Officers at four positions.

As per the Home Department notification, IGP, Vigilance, Sanjay Kumar Kaushal has been posted as IG (Central), replacing Ashish Singh while Prakash R has also been transferred and posted as Cuttack DCP. He will succeed Kanwar Vishal Singh, who too has been asked to report to State police headquarters, Cuttack. Similarly, DIG of Police, Intelligence in-charge Security Wing, Brijesh Kumar Rai, has been appointed as Rourkela SP, replacing Mitrabhanu Mahapatra. DIG of Police, SIW, Umashankar Dash, has been posted as Angul SP. Both Shri Mahapatra and present Angul SP Sudhansu Sekhar Mishra have been asked to report to state police headquarters, the notification said.

## In Poll Manifesto, Congress Invokes Rabindranath Tagore's Poem To Win Back Voters



**New Delhi(KCN):** Invoking Rabindranath Tagore's "Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high", the Congress Friday made a fervent appeal to people to repose faith in the party in the Lok Sabha polls and promised greater freedom, faster growth and justice for all. In the election manifesto the Congress released from the AICC headquarters here, the party alleged that the last 10 years of the BJP-NDA government have been marked by exaggeration and publicity rather than substance and performance.

"The economy has registered less-than-satisfactory growth.

Widespread unemployment, high inflation and falling consumption have debilitated even this modest growth. While the poor and the middle classes have been hit below the belt, the atmosphere in the country has become hate-filled and divisive," the party alleged under the rubric 'Appeal'.

The Congress also claimed that constitutional values have been pushed to the background and majoritarianism has taken over.

"Inequalities have widened. Every section of people lives in fear. What

The people yearn to walk on the road of all-round development, equality, equity, freedom and justice. Congress has the capability to provide the leadership to the people to walk on this new road," the manifesto said.

"The lessons of history are there before you. Congress delivered Independence. Congress laid the foundations of democracy. Congress steered the country's economic development through the 1950s and 1960s. Congress governments fought the wars of 1965 and 1971 and protected the sovereignty and integrity of India. Congress brought about a paradigm change in 1991 and ushered in an era of impressive growth," it said.

In the last 10 years, the Congress claimed that it has been the bulwark against illiberalism and authoritarianism.

## India removes export curbs on specified quantity of onions, rice, wheat flour, sugar for Maldives

**New Delhi(KCN):** India Friday removed export curbs on specified quantity of certain commodities such as eggs, potatoes, onions, rice, wheat flour, sugar, and dal for Maldives during the current fiscal year. The Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) in a notification said these exports have been permitted to Maldives under bilateral trade agreement between the countries during 2024-25. "Export of eggs, potatoes, onions, rice, wheat flour, sugar, dal, stone aggregate and river sand have been permitted to Maldives... The export of these items to Maldives will be exempted from any existing or future restriction/prohibition on export," the DGFT said. In general, there is either a restriction or prohibition on the exports of these goods. The specified quantity allowed includes potatoes (21,513.08 tonnes), onions (35,749.13 tonnes), rice (1,24,218.36 tonnes), wheat flour (1,09,162.96 tonnes), sugar (64,494.33 tonnes), dal (224.48 tonnes), stone aggregate (one million tonnes) and river sand (one million tonnes).



## Only SAD can bring Punjab on road to development: Sukhbir Badal



**Chandigarh (JAG MOHAN THAKEN), April 5** – Urging the people of Punjab to compare the work done by successive SAD governments with that of the erstwhile Congress and present Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) governments which had taken Punjab back by twenty years, Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) president Sukhbir Singh Badal on Friday said that only SAD could bring the State back on the road to development.

The SAD president, who led the Punjab Bachao Yatra into Fatehgarh Sahib and Amloh constituencies, said "Punjabis should decide whom they want to elect to power. A regional

party with a proven track record of speedy development and unique social welfare schemes which cater to all sections of society, or scam ridden Congress and AAP governments which have made life hell for them". The SAD president said "the SAD is known to fulfil all promises made to the people – be it free power for farmers, old age pension scheme, aata-daal scheme or shagun scheme – all of which were initiated by it. In comparison the erstwhile Congress government promised a complete loan waiver to farmers but failed to keep its promise". He said the present AAP government had promised to eradicate the menace of drugs in weeks but had

presided over the expansion of the drug trade in the State. "Punjab does not need

such anti-Punjabis governments who take their orders from Delhi", he added.

Asserting that Punjabis had seen through the conspiracies which were hatched to weaken the

large numbers to welcome the Punjab Bachao Yatra". He said Delhi based parties would never stand for or address the core issues of Punjab. "The SAD on the other hand has taken a principled stand to safeguard the interests of Punjabis at all costs". The SAD president in a strident attack on chief minister Bhagwant Mann, said the latter had not only bankrupted Punjab but had presided over the total collapse of law and order and flight of industry from the State. He said despite taking a whopping Rs 1 lakh crore loan in the last two years the AAP government did not have anything to show by way of development. He said

the investment climate had also been destroyed due to gangster culture and steep rise in extortions. "This is the reason that there has been a flight in capital worth Rs 20,000 crore from Punjab to other States like Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh during the last two years". He assured the people at various stops during the Yatra that once the SAD formed the government in the State it would end gangster raj as well as the menace of drugs. "We are also committed to making the State an attractive investment destination to galvanise the industry and create job opportunities", Mr Badal added.

# Engineering colleges across Bengal showcased 49 Prototype Designs that can solve human problems

**Kolkatta (KCN):** Ideas & imagination coupled with the spirit of innovation and implementation was the motto for this year's 7th Inter-college Competition on Prototype Design for Mankind (ICCPDM) 2024 organized by Department of Applied Electronics and Instrumentation Engineering, Heritage Institute of Technology (HITK) on 5th April at the HITK campus. These Prototype Designs are real time projects made by the engineering students that can give solutions to various problems faced by mankind.

The competition was inaugurated by Dr. Manojit Nayak, Jurisdictional Director of Software Technology Parks of India (Under

MeitY, Govt. of India), Kolkata as the Chief Guest followed by Shri Sanjay Kumar Das, MD, Webel, Kolkata, Prof. (Dr.) Maitree Bhattacharyya, Director, JBNSTS, Kolkata, Shri Partha Sarathi Biswas, Founder and CEO, Signotron, India Pvt. Ltd. as the Guests of Honour. During the inaugural session, Prof. Basab Chaudhuri, Principal, Heritage Institute of Technology encouraged the students to participate in such a programme which is an eye opener to the real world of engineering & technology. "From the stage of initiation to the stage of innovation, bring your ideas which are ready to be implemented to find real solutions to human problems is what matters a lot and HITK



is giving you the right platform for the same in today's competition," said Prof. Basab Chaudhuri. Mr. P.K. Agarwal, CEO, Heritage Group of Institutions stressed on the fact that such projects should focus on improving the quality of life for mankind rather than creating any disruptions.

"Clearly defining the

problem statement is very much important for the students to work on such type of projects," said Shri Sanjay Kumar Das during his address at the inaugural session. "Students should make innovative projects that can be implemented at a minimum cost and should have societal benefits. Instrumentation engineering and sensor based technology is

pervasive in all the fields of engineering," said Prof. (Dr.) Maitree Bhattacharyya. Nearly 49 projects were selected out of 55+ projects that were submitted by various colleges across the

State. The competition was participated by Future Institute of Engineering and Management, Techno India Engineering College, New Town, Narula Institute of Technology, Adamas University, MCKV Institute of Engineering, RCC Institute of Information Technology, Heritage Institute of Technology, Aliah University and many more.

Exciting projects like Health monitoring system for IoT based RO Filter, Aqua Amica- River Cleaning Bot, Autonomous Drone Delivering System, Surveillance with Autonomous Robust monitoring system, LPG Gas Leakage Detection System, IoT based Smart Switchboard, Statistical analysis of Foot worn Insole, Smart IoT Based ventilation system, Motion detection and its Appliances, Solar Powered System for Farms, Smart Hand gloves for Parkinson's diseases, Anti Gravity Wheelchair for Divyangjan Person etc. Adamas University bagged the Champions Trophy at the 7th ICCPDM for their project on Autonomous Drone Delivery system at regulated temperature, Narula Institute of

Technology bagged the runners-up trophy for their project on Anti Gravity Wheelchair for Divyangjan Person and Heritage Institute of Technology bagged the second runners-up position for their project on IoT based Ventilation System. Mr. Shantanu Som, Founder & CEO, Som Imaging Informatics Pvt. Ltd., Dr. Saptarshi Chatterjee, Associate Director-Incubation Centre, Adamas University, Mr. Tarak Bhandary, Technical Architect, Indusnet Technologies and Mr. Tushar Kanti Dutta Adnoc Offshore were the judges.

## Fire engulfs cotton laden vehicle in Kalahandi district; high-voltage electrical wires blamed



**Kesinga (KCN):** A pick-up truck carrying cotton sacks caught fire in Karlabhadi village under Kesinga block in Kalahandi district Friday. The blaze, believed to be caused by a short circuit after the vehicle (OD

08M 3199) came into contact with a low-hanging electric wire, was extinguished by Kesinga fire brigade who arrived promptly after being alerted by local residents. The blaze erupted when

cotton sacks inside a pick-up truck (registration number OD 08M 3199) ignited due to a short circuit upon contact with an electric wire. Prompt action was taken by individuals present at the scene who

immediately alerted the Kesinga fire services personnel. Firefighters swiftly arrived and extinguished the flames.

Substantial damage, estimated at 80-90 per cent, was inflicted upon the sacks within the vehicle, although the full extent is yet to be determined.

Locals attributed the accident to the presence of high-voltage electricity wires along the village road, a concern that has been repeatedly raised with the electricity department to no avail. Villagers contend that such incidents stem from the department's negligence. An ongoing investigation aims to ascertain the cause of the short circuit.

## Odisha: Gahirmatha beach bustling as olive ridley turtles return for mass nesting



**Kendrapara (KCN):** The Gahirmatha beach in Odisha's Kendrapara district was bustling as the olive ridley turtles returned for annual mass nesting.

Last year, 5.12 lakh turtles had come to Gahirmatha for nesting, between March 8 and 13. This time, the phenomenon was delayed by a month, likely due to a rough sea and a spell of unseasonal rains, said

Divisional Forest Officer Sudrashan Gopinath Yadav.

"However, it is heartening to note that turtles have finally come to lay eggs at the tranquil beach in the Gahirmatha Marine Sanctuary," he said. The natural phenomenon is expected to last for at least a week, he added.

The topography of the beach, free from erosion, is conducive

for the turtles to nest, Yadav said.

The beach is a protected area under the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), which conducts missile tests from the neighbouring Wheeler Island. As a result, people are not allowed entry here, except forest guards who are the lone witness to the rare sight of thousands of turtles crawling on the

beach making a cacophony.

"The presence of forest personnel on the nesting ground did not bother the turtles as they maintained a distance. Emphasis is on to provide privacy to the turtles during the egg-laying process," said another official.

It's only the female turtles that invade the nesting beaches, usually in the dead of the night, to lay eggs, a phenomenon described as 'arribada'.

"After laying eggs, the turtles leave the nesting ground to stride into the deep seawater. Hatchlings emerge from these eggs after 45-60 days. It is a rare natural phenomenon in which babies grow without their mother," said an official.

Each olive ridley turtle lays about 120-150 eggs, but not all remain intact as predators devour some, he said.

"Besides, eggs are also washed away by sea waves during high tide," he added.

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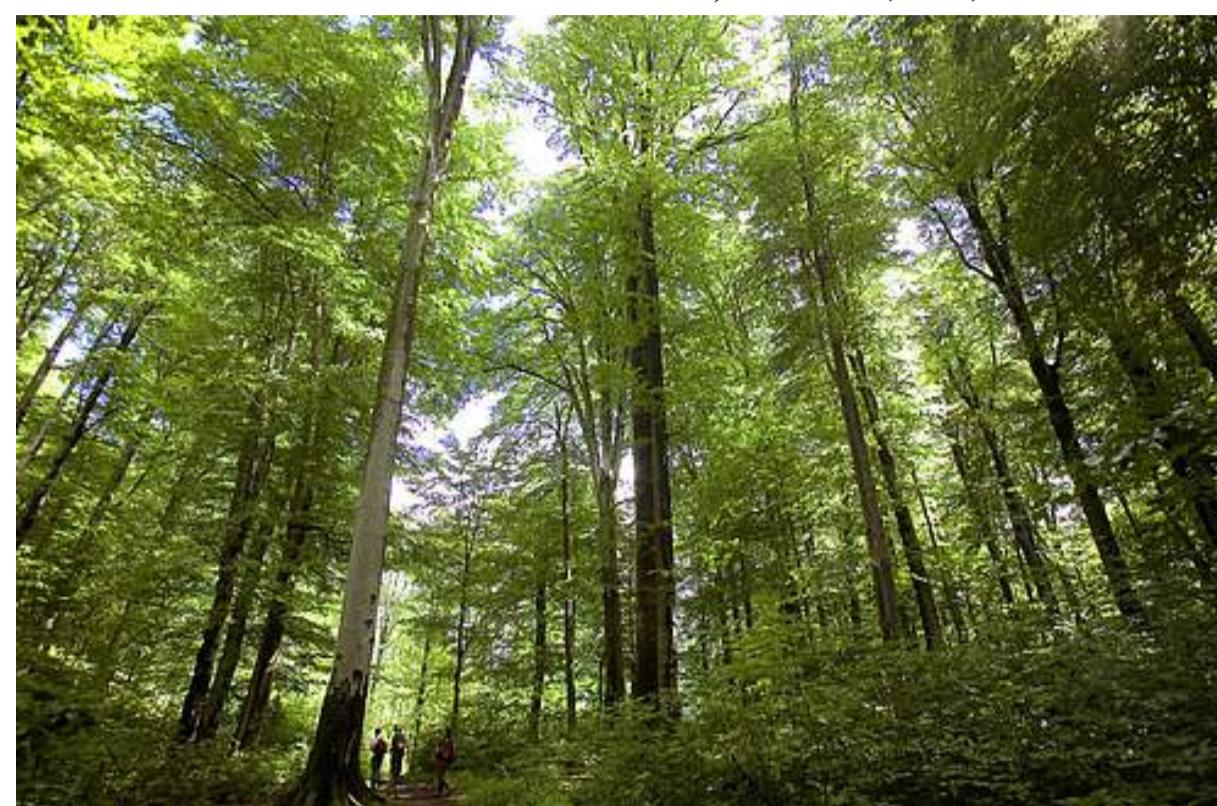


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# The Importance of Forest



Alekh Chandra Samal, OFS-I (S.B.)



are an essential part. They provide us oxygen, remove carbon-dioxide from air, etc. For healthy functioning of our planet, forests are incredibly significant. If there are no forests, then human civilisation would cease to exist because we are dependent on them for many essential resources such as wood, paper, food, timber, etc. Forests provide home to many species of plants, insects, animals, etc. They also house microorganisms. On the well-being of weather also, forests have an ultimate impact as they filter air and water, regulate the weather as well as the changes in the climate.

Forests are part of our natural environment and are essential for sustaining the planet. Forests are home to flora and fauna. Trees release oxygen into the atmosphere and take the carbon dioxide. Based on the geographical conditions, there are 5 types of forests: Coniferous, Deciduous, Mixed, Mediterranean Forests and Tropical Rainforests.

Forest conservation is a necessary step to sustain the planet for future generations.

In an ecosystem, forests

## FIBROIDS IN PREGNANCY



Dr. Subhashree Mishra

Gynaecologists in the past used to be concerned that a fibroid may grow quickly due to the rising oestrogen level in pregnancy and cause major problems. Recent medical research has shown that most fibroids do not actually become larger during pregnancy, and those that do often return to their prepregnancy size afterwards.

However, there are several ways that a fibroid may affect a pregnancy. A uterine fibroid can cause uncomfortable feelings of discomfort, pressure, heaviness or even pain if they grow larger and press on surrounding organs or pelvic structures. A fibroid may lead to sharp pain in the lower back (lumbar region) and

legs if there is pressure on a nerve.

Red degeneration of a fibroid in pregnancy is a rare complication of a fibroid during pregnancy. This problem is known medically as carneous degeneration. If red or carneous degeneration occurs there is haemorrhage within the centre of the fibroid. This usually happens in the middle trimester of pregnancy and is thought to result from the leiomyoma growing rapidly and outgrowing its blood supply.

Red degeneration can be very painful, with severe lower abdominal pain, usually requires treatment with strong painkillers. but nearly always settles down without causing serious problems or needing specific treatment.

With regard to falling pregnant, fibroids are thought to account for about two to three percent of all infertility problems. If a fibroid or fibroids develop just under the endometrium this may affect the way in which

a fertilised egg attaches or implants in the endometrium of the womb. A fibroid therefore, may cause recurrent early miscarriage, which is often so early that a woman is not even aware that she has been pregnant.

More rarely a fibroid may obstruct the canal of the cervix or the opening of the fallopian tubes into the womb. Sometimes later in pregnancy, fibroids may also disrupt the normal development and growth of the uterus, leading to premature labour and childbirth. Extremely rarely, fibroids may lead to a miscarriage before 23 weeks of pregnancy.

Even though they are becoming more common, the exact nature and reasons for leiomyomas causing infertility and problems when a woman is pregnant are not fully understood.

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can make it hard to tell whether a person has bulimia. Someone with bulimia eats large quantities of food over short periods. They then take steps to compensate, such as fasting, overexercising, vomiting, or using laxatives or diuretics. They may also worry about gaining weight and experience mood changes and social withdrawal.

Nutritional deficiencies, chemical imbalances, and effects on the digestive system can lead to physical signs and symptoms. These can develop over time and include: brittle nails, dry hair and skin, weakness, fatigue, dental problems, due to the impact of stomach acid on the teeth, irregular menstruation, swollen lymph nodes, constipation and other bowel-related issues, a persistently inflamed Trusted Source sore throat,

swollen salivary glands in the neck and jaw, acid reflux, kidney problems, muscle spasms, bones that fracture easily due to osteoporosis, an electrolyte imbalance, increasing the risk of a heart attack or stroke, heart problems, severe dehydration, seizures.

Treatment for bulimia may be long-term. It will address the person's mental health and any underlying physical issues. The approach will include nutrition counseling and possibly medication. Before beginning, the person needs to recognize that the problem exists. The sooner the treatment

involving the participation of local and indigenous communities. Educating people about the importance of forest preservation. Practising sustainable logging. This will ensure that only a limited number of trees are harvested and that regeneration is allowed. Managing protected areas and national parks to protect endangered species.

Deforestation is the main reason why forest cover is shrinking and affecting everyone on the planet. Annually 10% of global warming is caused by forest loss and damage. There are multiple reasons why people practice deforestation. Illegal logging practices destroy the livelihood of indigenous communities. The increased practice of mining results in the clearing of a large

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## Bulimia Nervosa : Eating Disorder

Dr. Samrat Kar



identify and address the thinking patterns that lead to unhealthful eating habits. Interpersonal therapy sets bulimia in a social and interpersonal context. It addresses underlying issues such as grief and interpersonal conflicts. Support from family and friends can play a key role during recovery. The Maudsley Method is one form of therapy that focuses on how family members can support their loved one in establishing healthy eating habits.

Counseling : Cognitive behavioral therapy, which is sometimes called CBT, can help a person

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# The Reason of Congress Party's Total Eclipse



Country's oldest and strongest Congress Party has disintegrated; the party's loyal and strong grassroots leaders are leaving the party, and joining its biggest rival Bharatiya Janata Party that, too, when Lok Sabha elections are round the corner. This defection of Congress leaders is surprising; the ongoing process of leaving the party only underlines the pitiful condition and dark future of this oldest party. Although some BJP leaders and some other parties have also gone to the shelter of Congress, in comparison the number of its leaders leaving Congress is much more. The question is why did such conditions arise for a democratic organization to go into the abyss? A review of its reasons is

necessary. Congress Party has not only been continuously losing, but is also breaking and disintegrating its support base, despite these big reasons-- the top leadership of the party neither reviewed nor analyzed the reasons lying behind. Congress is branded with dynasty and filial piety. There is no internal democracy in the party. Top leadership is incapable of taking decisions. There is no policy for the welfare of the majority community of the country. Appeasement policy and blatantly communal agenda are also proving fatal for him. Despite these big reasons, due to silence in the party, many responsible and courageous leaders are leaving the party or have gone away. Today's top Congress leadership has become so much 'entrenched' with communal, anti-social, selfish, sycophantic and anti-national elements that it has become difficult to get out of it. There is a snake-rat situation. Neither does it come out nor spits out.

The Congress leadership suffers from the illusion of gaining power and the phobia of losing it. The party leadership should be surprised at many leaders leaving the Congress, but this is hardly the case, because Rahul Gandhi usually neglects his duty by terming such leaders as cowards or opportunists. He and his close ones are not ready to see and understand the reasons as to why these leaders are leaving the party one after the other. The joining of BJP by Ravneet Singh, grandson of former Chief Minister Beant Singh, is a big blow to the Congress Party, because Punjab is one of those states where the Congress looks relatively strong and the BJP is seen as the third-fourth party. The situation is similar not only in Punjab, but also in Maharashtra, Himachal and other provinces. This fact should not be ignored that among those who have left Congress were considered close to Gandhi family, like Ashok Chavan, Milind Deora, Suresh Pachauri. Before

this, most of the leaders who were said to be members of Rahul Gandhi's youth brigade have also left Congress. A large number of leaders who have left Congress are those who have their independent political dominance and identity and are known for their own support base among the masses. Among the leaders close and sycophantic to the Gandhi family, there are very few who have the ability to win elections on their own. The question is why did Congress fall in this situation? The Congress leaders of the past, who kept the diversity, character and culture of the country intact, before whose statues and pictures we bow our heads and offer flowers, were not ignorant. Today such national thinking and sense of public welfare are being denied and such leaders are being called 'short-sighted'. Gradually, the big-thinking workers working at the grassroots level in the Congress decreased, and the number of sycophants has increased, which is

responsible for the disintegration of Congress. Time is seeing all this and is also giving a harsh slap. Congress is no longer credible and moral and power cannot be held without trust and morality. A golden vessel is needed for the lioness's milk. Congress is not fulfilling its national responsibility and organizational responsibility with political skill in an ethical manner. Instead of cursing the darkness, it would have been better if someone had lit a candle at the party's tomb. Time has taught us that the power to illuminate has become dull. The result of this is that the number of leaders leaving Congress is increasing rapidly, from this it seems that a campaign like leaving the party is going on. Rahul Gandhi may feign that the departure of Congress leaders does not affect the health of the party, but the truth is that now it seems to be making a difference. The results of the upcoming Lok Sabha elections will make this difference

even more vivid. Some leaders are not willing to contest the elections and some have taken back their steps after being declared candidates. Congress may be showing that it is capable of countering the BJP, but it is not hidden from anyone that it could not give the shape to the front led by it, the India Grand Alliance, which was expected. Congress cannot blame anyone else other than itself for coming to this pass. The decline of Congress is not a good sign, because it is a national party in the true sense compared to BJP. There is no other national party which has its roots across the country. A strong opposition is also necessary in a democracy, but the ruling party cannot worry about its strength.

The top leadership in the Congress party has become weak. Due to dynasty politics and nepotism, the Congress party is sinking day by day. Earlier, public welfare was the first priority for Congress leaders, but today anti-

Modi policies are their priority. In the name of anti-Modi, she sometimes starts opposing the nation; this change in her priority has also weakened the party. Congress is also becoming weak because of its appeasement policy. If she doesn't change this policy, her condition will go from bad to worse. It has come to be understood that no party can rule the country by angering the majority community of the country. What Rahul Gandhi says, what he thinks, no clear message is communicated to the general masses? A decision is taken in Congress which is not a decision at all. People don't understand what has been said. For this reason, many leaders have gone into the background, but are giving the impression that we are on the stage. Many are standing on the stage, but it seems that someone is 'prompting' them. It is no better than a puppet show which does not say anything on its own behalf. She carries out the tasks whatever she is asked to do. She doesn't even claim

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## Air pollution threat for women across borders in South Asia

**- Women across Pakistan and India are grappling with respiratory issues, heart problems, cancer and other diseases due to alarming levels of air pollution. While such pollution affects everyone, doctors say women face some unique problems.**

**Amit Baijnath Garg/Khalida Niaz/Diwash Gahatraj/Meenakshi J**

Every day Noreen, a 25-year-old school teacher in Peshawar, Pakistan, drives along polluted streets on her way to school, breathing in fine dust that makes her sick. "The dust during my daily commute triggers cold-like symptoms, worsens my condition, and even affects my eyes, hindering my ability to work," she said, adding that her doctor attributes all these problems, and her persistent ear pain, to air pollution.

About 1,700 km kilometers away in Begusarai, Bihar, India, 80-year-old poet and writer Mukullal Iltija faces severe breathing problems and chest ailments because of high pollution levels and had to relocate to her native house on the outskirts of the town to get relief. The latest report by Swiss organization IQAir indicates that in 2023, Begusarai claimed the unenviable title of the world's most polluted city, boasting an average annual PM2.5 concentration of 118.9-23 times higher than WHO guidelines.

The women's plight is not unique. Women across Pakistan and India are grappling with respiratory issues, heart problems, cancer and other diseases due to alarming levels of air pollution. While such pollution affects everyone, doctors say women face some unique problems. For example, recent research linked air pollution to a higher incidence of breast cancer in women. And activities such as cooking on smoky stoves add to women's health risks.

Pulmonologists underscore that indoor air pollution stems not just

from cooking but also heating and lighting practices - and all of this is exacerbated by deforestation and urbanization trends. "Women are more vulnerable to air pollution due to their physical structure, having children, not having a balanced diet, spending more time in the kitchen and not being economically independent," said Dr. Muhammad Shahzad, medical officer in Aman General Hospital in Peshawar, Pakistan. The governments of Pakistan and India are taking steps to reduce air pollution, but they don't specifically target women and some experts suggest they don't go far enough given the ever-growing threats of climate change.

**DEADLY AIR**  
Over the last two decades, air pollution has evolved into a global crisis, especially in South Asian countries, the World Health Organization says. The impact is stark. It's the leading environmental factor contributing to poor public health, experts say, leading to seven to nine million deaths worldwide annually. Michael Greenstone, a professor from the University of Chicago, said three-quarters of the global population affected by air pollution reside in six countries: Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, China, Nigeria and Indonesia. But despite being the most significant external threat to human health, investment in global air quality infrastructure lags compared with the substantial funds allocated annually for HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis.

A recent study by the

University of Chicago underscores the severe impact of air pollution on life expectancy in Pakistan in particular. Adhering to the WHO's air quality standards could potentially add 3.9 years to the average life expectancy of Pakistanis. For residents of Peshawar, located in northwest Pakistan, this improvement could be even more significant, potentially adding 5.2 years. If current levels of air pollution persist, the WHO says, the average life expectancy might plummet by up to seven years in major Pakistani cities like Lahore, Kasur, Sheikhpura, and Peshawar. Air pollution can be deadly. The Peshawar Clean Air Alliance, a voluntary civil society organization, reports that Pakistan witnesses 22,000 premature deaths annually due to air pollution.

Across the border in India, a Lancet study said it causes more than 2.3 million premature deaths. The Swiss firm IQAir says India has now secured the position of the world's third most polluted country. According to the report, India's air quality in 2023, with an average annual PM2.5 concentration of 54.4 micrograms per cubic meter, ranked only better than Bangladesh and Pakistan. Bangladesh recorded 9.9 micrograms per cubic meter, while Pakistan recorded 73.7 micrograms per cubic meter. These figures positioned Bangladesh and Pakistan as the most and second-most polluted countries, respectively, among 134 countries.

IQAir says nine of the world's top 10 most polluted cities from 2017-2023 were in India, and

the other is Lahore. Dr. Adil Zarif, who teaches in a North West medical college in Hayatabad, notes that Peshawar recently topped the list of the world's most polluted cities for several weeks. Zarif said people there, and in other polluted Pakistan cities like Lahore and Karachi, face the same health dangers as those in Indian cities like Delhi.

In fact, experts say, Peshawar's air poses health risks comparable to smoking three to four cigarettes daily.

### WOMEN SUFFERING ACROSS SOUTH ASIA

Pollution harms women's health in many ways. Some women said it contributed to their severe health problems. These include Zartaja-a 48-year-old resident of Peshawar who like other Pakistani women only allowed her first name to be used for this story-said she's been struggling with heart disease for more than two years. Initially oblivious to her swollen heart, Zartaja experienced symptoms like chest pain and high blood pressure, which she initially dismissed. However, a subsequent visit to the doctor unveiled her heart condition. Meanwhile Zeenat, a 52-year-old resident of Nowshera district, is grappling with a severe lung disease and a kidney issue. She's been undergoing treatment in the hospital for the past two months, and her condition recently took a critical turn. When Zeenat is in the hospital, her condition is slightly better, but when she comes home, she faints and has to be brought back to the hospital. One of Zeenat's kidneys has failed and swelling has

developed in her body. For many women, the effects of outdoor air pollution are made worse by indoor air pollution.

In Khyber district adjacent to Peshawar, 70-year-old Gul Pari cooks with wood-fired stoves at home. After experiencing a persistent cough, she sought medical attention and learned she had Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease, a condition that causes breathing difficulties that doctors attributed to smoking and air pollution. While incurable, the disease can be managed. Dr. Sadia Ashraf, a pulmonologist at Khyber Teaching Hospital, said women face the brunt of indoor air pollution, with 5.3 million losing their lives worldwide annually due to this silent threat. Ashraf said household activities such as cooking, especially with wood or dung as fuel, release harmful particles that affect women's health. The repercussions extend beyond lung diseases to include skin and eye ailments, she said. Harmful particles entering the bloodstream during exposure can lead to cardiovascular diseases, strokes, lung diseases, cancer, and diabetes in women.

**OTHER DOCTORS underscored THE PROBLEM**  
Dr. Saima Abid, founder of the Public Health Association Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Pakistan, said women who use

the body against pollution.

Advocates for clean air said governments need to do more to address the problem. For example, social activist Shafiq Gigyani, founder of Peshawar Clean Air Alliance, said city-wide efforts are needed there, such as discouraging the burning of plastic and tires. But for now, women across South Asia are taking matters into their own hands. Iltija, the Indian poet, said her move to a less polluted area on the outskirts of her city improved her condition greatly - showing that green spaces can make a real difference.

### PROGRAMMES AIM AT SOLUTIONS

Pakistan's cabinet has approved the country's inaugural National Clean Air Policy (NCAP) in line with recommendations from the Ministry of Climate Change in 2023. This policy aims to establish a structured approach to enhance air quality, identifying priority interventions across transportation, industry, agriculture, waste management and residential sectors. It recommends five key mitigation actions for each sector.

If effectively implemented, the NCAP's directives could lead to a reduction in mortality rates and transboundary pollution, enhancing the health of Pakistani citizens and positively impacting the nation's overall economic activity.

Mohammad Akmal Khan, a Pakistan-based climate change expert, said the policy endeavors to offer a comprehensive framework for air quality enhancement in Pakistan. But Khan also noted that Pakistan is highly affected by climate change but has a weak

infrastructure unable to cope with its challenges. "Our government appears attentive to global developments but neglects crucial ground-level necessities," he said. For example, he said, the Ministry of Climate Change isn't effectively coordinating with other ministries. Khan believes the government needs to act to reduce pollution, food shortages, extreme temperatures, and other impacts of climate change.

On the other side of the border, India introduced its National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) in 2019, aiming to tackle air pollution in 131 cities. However, by the end of 2023, more than half of the allocated funds remained unused, according to government data. Additionally, an analysis by Climate Trends suggests that the program's impact on pollution reduction has been varied, based on air quality assessments since the NCAP's inception.

Originally, the NCAP targeted a 20 to 30% reduction in two key air pollutants - PM10 and PM2.5 - by 2024. Yet, in September 2022, this objective was revised to a 40% reduction by 2026. The analysis reveals that out of 49 cities with available PM2.5 data for five years, 27 showed improvements from 2019 to 2023. Similarly, among 46 cities monitored for PM10 levels over five years, 24 witnessed improvements. Despite these efforts, a recent study shows that most major cities in India are lagging behind the 2024 pollution reduction goals.

**(This story was part of a cross-border reporting workshop organized by the US based East-West Center.)**



firewood for cooking suffer disproportionately from pollution-related ailments, and inhaling smoke from dung fires leads to respiratory and lung diseases, bronchitis, and chest ailments. Abid recommends using gas stoves or wearing masks during kitchen activities if that's not possible. Dr. Adil Zarif emphasized the dangers associated with using wood and kerosene oil for cooking at home. These practices emit harmful gases such as carbon monoxide, carbon dioxide, and sulfur dioxide, contributing to brain, chest, and lung diseases. The rise in air pollution is also linked to an increase in conditions like asthma and cancer. Meanwhile, outdoor air pollution is a growing problem for everyone.

Zarif attributes that to population growth, an influx of vehicles and the proliferation of factories. Areas around brick kilns, where various materials, including hazardous rubber, are burned, stand out as the most polluted in Peshawar. He advocates for environmentally-friendly brick kilns using modern technology to curb pollution. To guard against air pollution, doctors recommend people, especially those with respiratory issues, wear masks. Dr. Anupama Kalia Gangwal, a senior gynecologist in Jaipur, India, advocates for mandatory mask-wearing, coupled with yoga, exercise, and a nutritious diet to strengthen

## Kolkata Celebrates Autism Awareness: Premiere of 'Inimitable Self' Breaks Barriers

**Kolkata, (-ADVAITA SETH):** The premiere of the documentary film "Inimitable Self" held recently at the Press Club Kolkata marked a significant occasion, coinciding with World Autism Awareness Week. Directed by Sourav Sarkar, the film shed light on the remarkable journey of Dr. Anil Kr Kundra, who dedicated his life to creating an autism-friendly environment at a campus near Hyderabad. Through poignant storytelling, Sarkar delved into the lives of autistic individuals, highlighting their emotions, communication, and boundless resilience. The film resonated deeply with the audience, capturing the essence of dedicated service and empathy. Sarkar's meticulous attention to detail portrayed the intricate emotions and experiences of both

autistic individuals and their caregivers. Through a captivating narrative, the film celebrated the joy and dignity of being 'differently abled', while advocating for greater social empathy towards autism spectrum disorder. The premiere event was a testament to the film's impact, drawing a packed audience including participants featured in the documentary. Renowned vocalist Shri Srijan Chatterjee shared his unique experience of collaborating with Sarkar, captivating the audience with his rendition of a Rabindranath Tagore song in Hindi, featured in the film. The enchanting background score, composed by Shruti De on the 'Sarod', further elevated the viewing experience. Illustration artist Shri Joydeep Chatterjee, another participant in the

film, expressed his delight at contributing to a project that serves society's critical needs. The premiere was graced by eminent figures from various fields including education, law, human rights, and paediatrics, who emphasized the importance of early diagnosis, intervention, and legal protection for autistic individuals. Senior paediatrician Dr. Shamik Ghosh underscored the necessity of early intervention in autism, advocating for the proper utilization of the Early Childhood Development Card (ECD Card) for early diagnosis. Dr. Anupama Chowdhury, an educationist, stressed the importance of training workshops for educators, caregivers, and parents to foster holistic understanding and empathy towards autism. Legal expert Shri Bhaskar Mukherjee

## INDIAN COAST GUARD RESCUES BANGLADESHI FISHERMEN AND HANDS OVER TO BANGLADESH COAST GUARD

**Kolkata, (KCN):** In a swift operation, the Indian Coast Guard (ICG) rescued 27 Bangladeshi fishermen on Thursday (April 4, 2024), stranded on their fishing boat at sea. At about 1130 hrs Thursday, the Indian Coast Guard Ship Amogh during patrol at Indo-Bangladesh International Maritime Border Line (IMBL), sighted a Bangladeshi fishing boat (BFB) Sagar II, adrift inside Indian waters. The ICG ship launched a boarding team to investigate. During investigation it was revealed that the boat had a steering gear breakdown for the last two days and had been adrift since then, which led to the boat drifting inside Indian waters. The



BFB had 27 crew/fishermen onboard.

The Indian Coast Guard technical team tried to identify and rectify the defect, but it was observed that the rudder of the boat was completely damaged and could not be repaired at sea. As the sea state and weather conditions were conducive, it was decided that the distressed boat will be towed to the Indo-Bangladesh IMBL and handed over to another

Bangladesh Coast Guard Ship (BCGS) Kamaruzzaman was deployed by BCG for towing of BFB. The BCG Ship Kamaruzzaman arrived near the IMBL at about 1845 hrs on 4th April 24. ICGS Amogh handed over the 27 Bangladeshi fishermen along with their boat to BCG ship Kamaruzzaman.

The operation reflects the commitment of the Indian Coast Guard towards safeguarding precious lives at sea against all odds. Such successful Search and Rescue operations will not only strengthen the regional SAR structure but also enhance international cooperation with neighbouring countries. This is in keeping with the motto of the Indian Coast Guard "VAYAM RAKSHAMAH" which means "WE PROTECT".

constituencies and the JD(S) in the remaining three -- Mandya, Hassan and Kolar -- in Karnataka.

Mr Kumaraswamy, son of Gowda, made no secret of his desire to become Union Agriculture Minister.

"It is not only the aspirations of people of Mandya to see me as union minister, even my BJP friends feel that it will be good for the state if I become a minister. I come from an agricultural background and given an opportunity I want to be the agriculture minister and bring a good name for the government. If the Prime Minister believes that I can do good work and if I am given an opportunity I want to work in the agricultural sector," he said.

The JD(S) leader, who is an MLA from Channapatna in the neighbouring Ramanagara district, said he was under a lot of pressure from the people of Mandya to contest from there.

## "Being Part Of NDA Depends On How JDS Leaders Are Treated": HD Kumaraswamy



Mandya (Karnataka): JD(S) leader H D Kumaraswamy has said he is sincerely working for NDA's better prospects in the upcoming Lok Sabha polls and the continuation of alliance with BJP, after the parliamentary elections, will depend on how his party and its leaders are treated. The former Chief Minister further said that given an opportunity and if Prime Minister Narendra Modi has confidence in him, he wants to be the agriculture minister, in the event of NDA coming back to power at the Centre.

In an exclusive interview to PTI Videos, the BJP would contest in 25

## Patient's care management needs innovation to improve Quality of Health Care system

**Kolkata(PARTHA ROY):** In broader Health Care Systemscape, Patients' care management needs wide range of innovative practices and new protocols to improve quality of health care delivery mechanism across all kind of patients, as indicated by Dr. Vijay Agarwal President of CAHO India.

Dr. Vijay Agarwal was speaking at a session titled "PATIENT FOR PATIENT SAFETY: NEW PARADIGMS IN HEALTHCARE" organised by Women's Indian Chamber of Commerce & Industry, (WICCI) Eastern Regional Council on 4th April 2024 in ICCR Kolkata.

The program was organised under leadership of Mrs. Manjula Jain Chairperson of WICCI Eastern Regional Council.

Dr. Thuppil Venkatesh popularly known as "Lead man of India" and technical adviser to UNIDO and WHO, Dr. Sameet Mehta Vice-chairman CAHO attended the program. World Health Day 2024 is being observed on 7th April 2024 with theme: 'My health, my right'.

Patients for patient safety is an initiative for meaningful engagement



of patients, families and communities to improve health care quality and patient safety.

WHO Patients for Patients Safety (PFPS) is a programme of WHO Flagship Initiative "A Decade of Patient Safety 2021-2030" that engages and empowers patients and families and facilitates their partnership with health professionals and policy-makers to make health

care services safer worldwide. Patient is the only one person gone through his/her entire care process: Her/his and family voice should be heard fully.

Since inception, PFPS programme has broadened and widened to include engagement for people-centredness and universal access and quality care.

Dr. Koel Mitra Professor and Dr.

Sudeshna Ganguly President of WICCI WB Corporate Workplace Council discussed various aspects of current doctor-patient communication system in Government run as well as private hospitals in West Bengal as well as various challenges faced by both doctors and patients and scope of improvement in various aspects of communication in Doctor-Patient relationship. Patients For Patients Safety Initiative in India is a movement to sensitise and empower patients and caregivers which has started in various states across India including in Kolkata, West Bengal. Eighth edition of CAHOCON, Annual Conference of Consortium of Accredited Healthcare Organizations is scheduled to take place on April 6th and 7th, 2024, at the prestigious Biswa Bangla Convention Centre in Kolkata.

Theme of 8th CAHOCON 2024: "Making Healthcare Efficient, Effective, Economical & Equitable" CAHOCON 2024 aims to make healthcare systems more efficient, effective, economical, and equitable.

## "BJP Will Lose If Selfies With Me Turn Into Votes": Congress's Gaurav Gogoi

**Majuli, Assam(KCN):** Welcomed by scores of supporters who showered flowers, played dhols and hugged him during the campaign, Congress leader Gaurav Gogoi expressed confidence that he will win the Jorhat Lok Sabha seat, saying BJP MP Topon Kumar Gogoi will definitely lose if the number of selfies clicked with him by the people converts into votes.

Mr Gogoi, the Congress MP of Kaliabor who is fighting this time from

Jorhat, spent two days in Majuli - the world's largest river island located in the middle of Brahmaputra, and addressed as many as 12 street corner meetings across the district.

Majuli was earlier part of Lakhimpur Lok Sabha constituency, but it was added to Jorhat in the delimitation exercise carried out last year by the Election Commission.

Mr Gogoi, the Congress MP of Kaliabor who is fighting this time from

late CM, shifted allegiance to BJP in 2014. Among the communities that have a significant population here are Ahom, Thengal-Kachari, Mising and tea tribes.

After Mr Gogoi's Kaliabor seat was rechristened as Kaziranga in delimitation, he was assigned the mighty task of taking on the BJP in Jorhat, which has become a stronghold of the ruling party over the last 10 years. He is hoping to build an

## Bengal's Medical Sector: A Beacon of Growth and Innovation

**Kolkata, (-ABHIJIT SETH):** In recent years, Bengal has emerged as a frontrunner in the field of healthcare, showcasing remarkable growth and innovation, particularly in the medical sector. Spearheading this transformation are renowned institutions like Peerless Hospital, which have continually pushed boundaries and embraced cutting-edge technologies to deliver superior patient care.

The latest milestone in Bengal's healthcare journey comes with the introduction of Humanoid Robotics at Peerless Hospital, marking the first-of-its-kind advancement in Eastern India. This revolutionary technology, integrating

3D Robotics, Artificial Intelligence (AI), and Mixed Reality with HoloLens, is set to redefine joint replacement surgery, offering unparalleled precision and customization. Driven by a commitment to excellence, Bengal's medical fraternity is leveraging innovation to enhance patient outcomes and elevate the standard of care.

The adoption of Humanoid Robotics underscores Bengal's proactive approach towards embracing innovation in healthcare. By harnessing the power of AI and advanced imaging techniques, surgeons are empowered with real-time intraoperative

visualization, enabling personalized treatment plans tailored to each patient's unique anatomy. This transformative technology not only enhances surgical precision but also reduces operative time, translating into improved patient satisfaction and faster recovery.

The rise of Bengal as a hub for medical innovation is a testament to the state's unwavering commitment to excellence in healthcare delivery. Institutions like Peerless Hospital have been at the forefront of this journey, pioneering advancements that set new benchmarks for quality and efficiency. From the introduction of Computer-Assisted Operating Systems

(CAOS) two decades ago to the latest breakthrough with Humanoid Robotics, Bengal's medical sector continues to evolve, driving positive change and revolutionizing patient care.

Central to Bengal's success in the medical sector is the spirit of collaboration and partnerships between academia, industry, and healthcare providers. Through strategic alliances and knowledge sharing, stakeholders are harnessing collective expertise to tackle complex healthcare challenges and drive innovation forward. This collaborative ecosystem fosters a culture of continuous learning and improvement, paving the

way for transformative advancements in medical technology and patient care.

As Bengal's medical sector continues to thrive, fueled by innovation and collaboration, the future looks promising for healthcare in the region. With a strong foundation built on a legacy of excellence and a relentless pursuit of innovation, Bengal is poised to lead the way in shaping the future of healthcare delivery in India and beyond. Through a shared vision of advancing medical science and improving patient outcomes, Bengal's medical fraternity is laying the groundwork for a healthier, more prosperous future for all.

# Firm flouts rules for mineral transport

**Joda(KCN):** Despite being banned from using a road running through a forest in this district, a mining company is allegedly using it for the transportation of minerals, locals alleged here Thursday. They added that it would not have been possible for the firm to do so had it not been for the tacit understanding between it and Forest Department officials. Sources said that the firm allegedly denuded a forest land of its green cover to facilitate the transportation of minerals from Inganjharan BC Dev

mines under the Joda mining division in Keonjhar district. Upon coming to know about the development, the Forest department had dug a deep trench on the road. Initially, the road remained unusable for a few days. Later on locals were surprised to find that the trench had been filled up and the vehicles of the company were using it again to transport minerals. Councillor Dipti Ranjan Behera of Ward No 13, his associate Churchill Mahakud of Khuntapani locality and the local villagers lodged a written complaint with



the Forest Department highlighting this development. They demanded a probe into the irregularities and alleged that the company has been permitted to transport minerals through the forest

illegally. They added that the permission was granted without organising a gram sabha under the Forest Rights Act (FRA). Locals alleged that the firm initially had built the road through the forest by felling trees illegally. When the Forest department came to know about the development, it had dug a trench March 15 to prevent the movement of vehicles. However, it was filled up

within a few days and now vehicles are plying through the road regularly. What is surprising to note is that a letter (No 2405/6F-Mining/53/2004/March 19, 2024) issued by the DFO and in possession of

this correspondent, states that the company has been allowed to use the rural road through the forest for mineral transportation. The letter states that the Baitarani (A) and (B) reserve forests have a 1.7 km-long rural road passing through them. The firm has been given temporary permission to use the road without violating the bio-diversity and harming wildlife. Villagers living in and around the road alleged that initially the trench was dug up on the direction of the DFO. They asserted that the trench couldn't have been filled up if the DFO

## Newborn goes missing from Balasore DHH



**Balasore(KCN):** An eight-day-old newborn boy undergoing treatment at a special care unit at the district headquarters hospital (DHH) here went missing Thursday. Sources said that the boy had been stolen by miscreants who exchanged the newborn with a baby girl. The incident sparked panic among pregnant women admitted to the DHH. The newborn went missing despite the presence of security officials.

Till reports last came in, police have failed to trace the baby. It should also be stated here that so far there have been no takers for the baby girl who was found in the cot of the newborn. Family members of the boy and their relatives demanded a high-level probe into the incident. The matter has come as a rude eye-opener to many regarding the security provisions in the government-run health facility. The newborn boy was identified as the

the DHH, Tuesday. Tikli had come out of the ward for a few minutes Thursday to attend to a doctor. On her return, she found the boy missing and in his place, a baby girl lying in the cot. She immediately raised an alarm, but said that initially the security personnel and nurses in the ward

did not pay much heed to her. "Had they acted promptly, my boy could have been saved," she lamented. Later, Susant informed the CDMO and complained the police outpost inside the hospital. Police rushed to the spot and launched an investigation. Questions are being raised as to how someone could steal the newborn when two CCTV cameras are installed within the ward and in presence of security staff.

## Five Fishermen Arrested For Illegally Fishing Inside Gahirmatha Marine Sanctuary



**Kendrapara(KCN):** Five fishermen were arrested by the personnel of Gahirmatha Marine Sanctuary for catching fish without permission in the 'No Fishing zone' near Madeli mouth within the sanctuary on Tuesday. A patrolling team led by Gahirmatha Marine

Sanctuary Ranger Pradosh Maharana and Forester Prafulla Kumar Majhi intercepted the boat and apprehended five fishermen identified as Nimai Mandal, Haripad Biswas, Dasarath Das, Rabindra Gaini, and Debarata Majhi. The fishermen were

booked under the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 and were produced before the JMFC court of Rajnagar. They have been remanded into jail custody. According to Ranger Moharana, the fishermen had illegally entered the sanctuary

with their fishing vessel and were caught red-handed while fishing. The forest personnel confiscated their mechanized fishing boat, 1.20 quintals of marine fish catch, a 5 kg weight of Black Tip Shark, a huge Kani fishing net, and a GPS set.

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# Kamdhenu Paints Takes its Channel Partners on Dream Trip to Thailand

**Bhubaneswar(KCN)** Kamdhenu Paints, a brand of Kamdhenu Group and leading manufacturer of high-quality paints and emulsions, concluded an unforgettable incentive family trip for its valued channel partners to the exotic beach city of Hua Hin, Thailand. This extravaganza promised a whirlwind of excitement, luxury, and cultural immersion, making it a trip of a lifetime. The event was organized to honour high performing channel partners and

celebrate with their families. Former Miss Universe, Sushmita Sen, Bollywood singing sensation Sona Mahapatra, and renowned standup comedian Akash Gupta brought their charisma to the stage, delivering power-packed performances. Ms. Sen awarded Gold Chains and other accolades to the deserving winners, channel partner / staff while Mahapatra ignited the stage with her electrifying live

performance. The witty humor of stand up comedian Akash Gupta added an extra dose of joy, making it a memorable trip for everyone in attendance. Speaking at the event, Mr. Saurabh Agarwal, Managing Director, Kamdhenu Colour and Coatings Limited said, "At Kamdhenu Paints, we believe in rewarding our channel partners/ staff for their unwavering dedication and commitment. This trip to Thailand was our way of expressing our heartfelt gratitude and creating memories

that will last a lifetime. We're confident that this experience will not only strengthen our relationships but also inspire and motivate



our channel partners/ staff to achieve even greater heights in the future. In synergy with our channel partners, we aim to achieve Rs. 1000 Crore in revenue by FY28."

Mr. Sunil Kumar Agarwal, Chairman, Mr. Saurabh Agarwal, Managing Director and Mr.

Sachin Agarwal Non Executive Director of the Company along with other senior officials attended the event to congratulate and interact with the channel partners and their families.

Channel partners and their families also participated in a friendly cricket tournament – Kamdhenu Cricket League – where regional teams faced off on the field. Ladies participated at the special Ramp Walk Competition held in the ballroom, while kids enjoyed a range of fun activities

## Tata Steel reports highest ever consolidated EBITDA at Rs 63,830 crores

Mumbai, : Tata Steel today announced its Financial Results for the quarter and financial year ended March 31, 2022. The Company's consolidated reported profit after tax (PAT) for the March 2022 quarter rose to Rs 9,835 cr as compared to Rs 7,162 cr of the corresponding quarter of the last fiscal. For the full year ended March 31, 2022, the Company's PAT rose to Rs 41,749 cr, significantly higher than Rs 8,190 cr reported in the last financial year.

The consolidated Turnover for FY22 stood at Rs 243,959 cr as compared to Rs 156,477 cr of the previous fiscal.

Consolidated turnover for the fourth quarter ended March 31, 2022 stood at Rs 69,324 cr as compared to Rs 50,028 cr in the corresponding quarter of the last financial year. The Board of Directors recommends a dividend of Rs. 51 per fully paid equity share and Rs 12.75 per partly paid equity shares. A 10:1 stock split is also recommended.

T. V. Narendran, Chief Executive Officer & Managing Director, said: "Tata Steel has again demonstrated its ability to deliver stellar results despite heightened complexity in the face of COVID as

well as geopolitical tensions. Our Indian business showed broad based growth across our chosen segments due to our sustained focus on customer relationships, our distribution network and our portfolio of brands supported by our agile business model. Our European operations delivered robust performance as the transformation programme undertaken helped to leverage the strong business environment. We have pursued several initiatives to de-risk the business particularly across procurement and supply chain and continue to invest in

technology and digitisation to drive productivity and improve our resilience."

"Kalinganagar expansion is progressing well and will drive cost savings as well as product mix enrichment. The acquisition of Neelachal Ispat Nigam Limited will be closed in 1QFY23 and we will scale it up rapidly to drive expansion of our high value retail business. I am happy to share that Tata Steel has been recognised as Steel sustainability champion for the fifth year in a row by the WorldSteel," he added.

The 6 MnTPA Pellet plant at Kalinganagar will

be commissioned in 3QFY23 followed by the Cold Roll Mill complex and the 5 MnTPA expansion. Tata Steel India achieved highest ever annual crude steel production of 19.06 million tons, with a growth of 13% YoY. Highest ever deliveries of 18.27 mn tons despite COVID 2nd wave related disruption early in financial year. Broad based improvement in sales volume was witnessed across segments. Automotive was up 27% YoY, Branded Products and Retail was up 11% YoY while Industrial products & projects was up 11% YoY.

## WardWizard plans to set up Li-ion advance cells manufacturing unit at its electric vehicle ancillary cluster in Vadodara

Singapore-based renewable energy management consulting firm Sunkonnect. The association is aimed at facilitating a feasibility study and identification of potential partner for the manufacturing of Li-ion advance cells in India. Under the MoU, Sunkonnect will set up a committee of experienced scientists, engineers and analysts to evaluate and identify the professional partner, as well as to develop the roadmap to set up the manufacturing

plant at WardWizard's electric vehicle ancillary cluster in Vadodara. Commenting on the MoU with SunKonnect, Mr. Yatin Gupte, Chairman & Managing Director, Wardwizard Innovations & Mobility Ltd., said, "We are excited to work with SunKonnect, one of the leading global renewable energy management consulting firms. Their expertise will help us identify the right partner and establish a roadmap to set up the manufacturing

unit of Li-ion advance cells at our EV ancillary cluster between 15-18 months. As the safety and security of our customers are paramount for us, we are integrating cutting-edge technologies to enhance the quality and promote the adoption of green mobility in the entire country."

Further elaborating, Dr. Avishek Kumar, Founder, SunKonnect, said, "We are grateful to WardWizard for giving us the opportunity to become the part of this

EV transition and support the brand in development of battery infrastructure in India. Electric Vehicles are the future, and their success depends on the high grade material and advanced battery management system. Under the MoU, we will work with WardWizard to identify the partner equipped with the latest technology and high standards to manufacture Li-ion advanced cells. Our team will be developing a feasible plan and

drafting standard norms for the manufacture of quality batteries for Joy e-bike's products." Sunkonnect will also identify leading testing and certification agencies to set up a center of excellence for battery testing at WardWizard premises which will draft a standard quality specification for batteries. It will further draft standard norms for batteries to ensure quality and reliability for Joy e-bike's range of models.

## Narayana Nethralaya and Acer India Team up to build India's first PC & tablet-based software therapy for children

Bengaluru Narayana Nethralaya in collaboration with Acer India today launched the PC + tablet based software, "VisioNova" designed for children suffering from Cortical Visual Impairment (CVI). This initiative by Narayana Nethralaya and Acer India aims at breaking down barriers and providing the patients with better access to treatment.

Acer VisioNova, a path-breaking innovation was conceptualized as a mobile alternative to on-site therapy for CVI children that will offer them the standard of care. Narayana Nethralaya as a part of its 'Buds to Blossoms'

initiative provides dedicated therapy programs to help children develop and improve motor, cognitive and visual abilities that significantly improve their quality of life.

Cortical Visual Impairment is a condition of bilateral visual loss caused due to injury of visual areas in the brain without significant eye or anterior visual pathway impairment. CVI is currently an emerging cause amongst children across India. With 161 children in every 100,000 born with CVI, India has declared it to be a high priority issue and classified it as one of 30 conditions that all babies must receive

mandatory screenings. These children with CVI have great difficulty in performing visually guided activities and these therapies rely on machines that are bulky, expensive and require the child to be in the hospital for the entire duration of six-to-nine-month therapeutic process.

In order to address this, Acer provided PC and 100+ tablets under CSR to kick-off this noble cause. Acer has also further intent to supply around 2000 tablets for patients where patients can pay the hospital a small, refundable deposit and receive the tablet for use from the comforts of their home and still

continue treatments even with COVID disruptions.

The tablet will offer CVI patients exercises that can benefit and help them develop and improve their deficient skills and visual abilities that significantly improve the quality of life. Also, since a number of specialised therapies that are deployed require expensive equipments that need the child to be present at the center for the entire duration of the treatment, this tablet will allow remote therapy under the mentorship of Narayana Nethralaya's CVI experts, making this treatment accessible to the outreach.

On the occasion of this

launch, Mr. Harish Kohli, President & Managing Director, Acer India said, "It is a matter of pride for us to join this innovative collaboration with Narayana Nethralaya where technology helps break barriers to improve lives. Acer VisioNova engineered the overall solution, comprising both the software and the hardware. At Acer, we always believe in closing the gap between people and technology and to meaningfully improve clinical outcomes and reduce the systemic cost of healthcare. VisioNova will help patients with timely access to care when they need it.

## EKA partners with NuPort Robotics to introduce smart Electric Buses

Mumbai: EKA, an electric vehicles & technology company, and a subsidiary of Pinnacle Industries Limited, is once again leading the way as they enter a partnership with NuPort Robotics to introduce Level 2 autonomy, advanced driver assistance systems, to their electric bus models. This is a first-of-its-kind-in-the-country initiative towards the utilization and incorporation of progressive Level 2 autonomy and Artificial Intelligence (AI) for Electric buses on Indian roads. EKA begins testing on a range of autonomous features developed by NuPort, an advanced technology that promises to contribute to notable improvements in safety, reducing environmental footprint, and increasing operational

efficiency. Following a "Made in India" approach thereby contributing to the advancement of economic development and innovation ecosystem within the country. NuPort's technology provides level 2 autonomy features specifically targeted for Indian roads, considering the complex nature of Indian traffic, and understanding the Indian driving mindset. NuPort's partnership with EKA is strategic, as it allows both NuPort and EKA to offer Indian customers cutting-edge innovative vehicles that can be continuously updated to retain that innovative advantage. NuPort is using proprietary AI technology which will progressively enable autonomous features thereby increasing safety, operational efficiency, and reduced carbon footprint.

Entertainments Group shared his optimism around the reopening of Madame Tussauds in India saying, "we are thrilled about the comeback and really excited to bring back the legend of Madame Tussauds to the culturally rich land of India. Our Wax Attraction will open a new chapter of entertainment to the population of India at large and serve them with the ultimate fame experience and transport them onto the red carpet. India is a significant market for us, and the re-opening will help pave the way to entertain guests in our fantastic new location and shall expose our guests to the most ultimate celebrity experience of visiting a World-famous wax attraction. As Indian travellers are returning to overseas destinations, we are hopeful that Madame Tussauds India will serve as their gateway to Madame Tussauds counterparts in other cities around the world".

The world-famous wax attraction first opened in Delhi at Connaught Place in 2017. The earlier edition of Madame Tussauds in Delhi successfully celebrated several years of curating a spectacular fame experience through its star-studded gallery.

Madame Tussauds first opened its doors in 1835 in London and has over 200 years of heritage and legacy. Each figure at Madame Tussauds is created using the expertise of sculptors who use the same techniques as the famous Marie Tussaud.

Rob Smith, Divisional Director, Midway Asia Pacific, Merlin

# Australia hand Bangladesh a reality check ahead of WC

**New Delhi:** The Bangladesh women's outfit was beaming with confidence ahead of the home series against Australia. Taking inspiration from their recent success against India, the home team were determined to give the tourists a run for their money. Although in reality, they were brought down to earth as the visitors clean swept them away in both ODIs and T20Is.

The failure to compete against Australia in any game was a warning sign for the home team who are slated to host the forthcoming T20 World Cup. Bangladesh head coach Hashan Tillakaratne did admit concerns over the lack of challenge from his troops.

## USOPC and ICC reprimand USA Cricket as suspension looms

**New Delhi:** Cricbuzz understands that the United States Olympic & Paralympic Committee (USOPC) sent out a hard hitting letter lambasting the present state of affairs of the USA cricket board. According to sources in the know, the Olympic body has expressed severe dissatisfaction with the current governance and management practices within the organization. USOPC is understood to be 'disturbed' with the interference of board directors in the day-to-day operations of the board. Furthermore, the recent ouster of CEO Dr. Noor Murad is believed to be the inflection point which may move the Olympic body to look beyond USA Cricket.

To add insult to injury, following their board meeting on March 15, the ICC issued a direct warning to USA Cricket to get its house in order.

It is learnt that an overwhelming number of full members were in

"Well it's been disappointing," Tillakaratne told reporters following their series concluding T20I game at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium on Thursday. "It's about the way we played and I don't mind losing as we are playing the top side in the world. How we played against them or about challenging them, that's been disappointing," he said. "I thought they [batters] had a reasonable series against South Africa. Playing against a top side, you are taught to use your game experience and they [opposition] challenge you as well. No excuses but it's the first time we played Australia in a bilateral series but the way we applied

ourselves, I don't think that's excusable." Tillakaratne added that they need to go to the drawing board to understand where they went wrong while pointing out that the fear of failure played a big part as well. "We have to go back to our drawing board and see where we went wrong and come back strongly because no one has performed very well against Australia. Except for one or two performances everyone failed miserably. "Fear factor and fear of failure [was there] because this is first time playing a bilateral series against Australia. I haven't seen this when we played India, South Africa and Pakistan

because they are a little reluctant to express themselves against Australia and they were little scared and that is where we went wrong against Australia," he said.



"We want to have a chat with the girls first and do an honest debrief and see what went wrong and take it from there. There is no point chopping and changing because we must understand that we invested a lot on these girls and I am sure that with time they will make a comeback," he said. "Of course playing against them is a big positive and we know how they raise the bar and if we have to

challenge or compete against top sides what are the areas we need to improve," he said.

"As a part of coaching staff, I would say the girls need to improve considerably because it's not easy even though we are very down and disappointed. But we have to come back," he concluded pointing his fingers towards the upcoming home series against India followed by the T20 Asia Cup and the T20 World Cup.

While Bangladesh got a reality check, Australian skipper Alyssa Healy

well as building momentum before the T20 World Cup, slated to be played in Bangladesh in September-October this year. "Yeah I think from Australia's perspective, I think we got everything we possibly could have had on this trip. Opportunities were given when necessary and the results went our way," Healy told reporters following their successful tour. "From the big picture perspective and what we are building towards, we are building towards, we got everything we possibly could from this series. More positives than negatives and the way the group looked after one another was even more important. So, hopefully going to be an exciting 12 months for this group," she said.

## PV Sindhu pulls out of Uber Cup to prepare for Olympics



**New Delhi:** India's star badminton player PV Sindhu has pulled out of the Thomas and Uber Cup for the 2024 season. In an official press release, the Badminton Association of India confirmed the news that Sindhu has asked for a leave of absence to prepare for the Olympics, set to be held in Paris in July-August 2024. The association also announced the men's

team, who are entering the tournament as the defending champions this year. For the Uber Cup, the selectors decided to give an opportunity to youngsters after top players in both singles and doubles pulled out. PV Sindhu informed the selectors that due to b a c k - t o - b a c k tournaments leading up to the Olympics, she and her team have decided to

skip the Uber Cup to prepare for the Olympics. Top doubles pairs also cited similar reasons and, since it is not a full strength team, they also pulled out. The selectors then decided to go ahead with young players who have done well recently at the National Championships. Speaking about the team combination, Badminton Association of India General Secretary

Sanjay Mishra said, "The senior selection committee after a lot of discussion has decided the best possible combination for the Thomas Cup team to defend the title. The committee felt we needed to have one additional player in the singles while in doubles they have picked top two pairs and Sai Prateek is selected as an additional doubles player after consultation with Mathias Boe (Danish doubles coach) just in case somebody is not fully fit or needs recovery. "With all the experience as top-level players themselves and years of coaching experience, I believe they have picked a very balanced team and I believe these boys can win the title once again. "The Uber Cup team also looks good with the young talented players. I wish them the best of luck and hope they will make the nation proud with their performances."

# Redemption time for the 'real' Shashank Singh

**New Delhi:** In the recent DY Patil Group-managed T20 tournament in Mumbai, Shashank Singh led the B side of the eponymous group. Among those who played under him were the likes of Dinesh Karthik and Ayush Badoni. More pertinently, Shikhar Dhawan also joined the team as a professional and played under Shashank's leadership. Fast forward to the IPL, there is a role reversal. However, according to those closely associated with Shashank, a 32-year-old battle-hardened cricketer from the Mumbai Maidans, it's more of a role appreciation. "I'd call it role recognition," comments Subramaniam Doraiswamy, the coach

of the DY Patil Group B side. "Shikhar has observed Shashank closely and seen his batting. Hence he offered him an opportunity right from the first game of the season at Punjab Kings." Shashank did not disappoint his captain. Following a series of moderate performances in the initial three games, he delivered a stunning innings on Thursday night, orchestrating an unthinkable victory for the side with an unbeaten 61, a performance that could go down as a defining moment of the season. Out of the contest for close to 15 overs, Punjab Kings emerged winners, clinching the victory by three wickets. The result silenced close to 60,000



home team fans at the Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad. "Shashank came in and played really well. The way Shashank hit those sixes, it was brilliant, the way he hit the ball, it looked effortless. He started from No. 7 and is now showing his positive mindset. He is playing in the IPL after a long time and he played so well," Dhawan said after the match. Chasing 200, Punjab were staring at a certain defeat at 111 for 5. Shashank took charge of the chase and unleashed a flurry of boundaries and sixes that stunned the crowd at the colossal venue. A six off Noor Ahmed, inarguably the best bowler of the night, came against the run of play in the 10th over and

he proved that it was not a fluke hit by lofting one off Umesh Yadav in the very next over. Then he slog-swept Rashid Khan, one of the most difficult bowlers to hit, and then smashed one off Mohit Sharma over deep mid-wicket for the crucial six

of the innings. It took the target to seven in the final over in which he finished the job off the penultimate delivery. Ashutosh Sharma, who came in as an impact player, contributed a crucial 31 off 17 balls but Shashank remained undeterred by the difficult situation and went on to smash six fours and four sixes in his 29-ball unbeaten knock that clinched an improbable victory for the visitors. It could easily be the breakout performance of the season for Shashank who has been a journeyman in the domestic circuit, having played for Mumbai, Chhattisgarh and Puducherry. In the IPL, he represented SunRisers Hyderabad before being taken by Punjab Kings. He cut his cricketing teeth in Mumbai having learnt the ropes under reputed coach late Vidya Parakar, who had taken many illustrious students under his wings, including Ajinkya Rahane and Zaheer Khan. Shashank is employed by the DY Patil Group and he mostly plays in Mumbai cricket. Among those who have helped him establish as a cricketer are Abey Kuruvilla, a former India fast bowler who is currently a general manager at the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI). "Shashank is very sincere and whenever he is not playing for his state (Chhattisgarh) side, he comes and plays in local Mumbai cricket. He is a prolific scorer, be it in the inter-club or corporate tournament," says Doraiswamy. Shashank Singh's entry into the Punjab side was a bit dramatic. After he was bought for his base price of Rs 20 lakh at the auction in Dubai in December, Punjab Kings were almost on the verge of disowning him thinking that they had bought a wrong player. There is another cricketer with the same name in the domestic circuit and there was some confusion and Punjab had to clarify later.