

IIT Bhubaneswar holds Interaction with Incubatee Start-ups and students to mark World Entrepreneurship Day

Bhubaneswar, (KCN): As part of the World Entrepreneurship Day celebration, the Research and Entrepreneurship Park (REP) of Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Bhubaneswar organised enriching interactive sessions for the students and about 30 start-ups incubated by the IIT. The sessions were handled by Prof. Shreepad Karmalkar, Director, IIT Bhubaneswar, Shri Brahmananda Mishra, President, Utkal Chamber of Commerce and Industry (UCCI) Limited and some successful start-up founders. The session provided a fruitful opportunity for the start-ups to share their journey, challenges, and innovative solutions

directly with the Director, fostering a spirit of collaboration and mentorship. Speaking on the occasion, Prof. Karmalkar mentioned that more than 15% of the adult workforce is entrepreneurs in economically developed countries. Thus, entrepreneurship is necessary for economic development. Entrepreneurs are people who choose a life of challenge and risk over security and comfort. We must create value for such a lifestyle in India from childhood, if we want to promote entrepreneurship and thus propel economic development. Further, in developed countries, a large fraction of the research gets



commercialized due to the presence of entrepreneurship related coursework in the curriculum of Higher Educational Institutions, and involvement of about 5% of the faculty in start-ups. IIT Bhubaneswar has initiated several measures to develop the

entrepreneurial mindset following these observations, Prof. Karmalkar said. The institute is building a Rs. 130 cr Research and Entrepreneurship Park of 13,500 square meter area that will provide co-working space and workshop facilities for 150 start-ups. Hon'ble

Minister of Education launched the transformative 100-CUBE Start-ups initiative of the IIT BBS Research and Entrepreneurship Park (REP) in February 2024. This envisages the development of at least 100 start-ups of minimum Rs. 100 crore

worth each by 100th year of Odisha, i.e. 2036. About 5% of the IIT faculty would contribute to these start-ups. To achieve this goal, the institute has started a course titled 'Introduction to Research and Entrepreneurship' for all PhD and MS students to

create a taste for research and entrepreneurship using interactive lectures, anecdotes, activities and discussions. Further, start-up ecosystem exposure visits and Concept to Commercialization workshops are planned for interested people within and outside the institute. A minor degree for program on 'Innovation & Product development' has been introduced for B.Tech students. Regular sensitization meetings and workshops are planned for school students on a massive scale to inculcate entrepreneurial culture among the Odiya populace right from the school days," added Prof. Karmalkar. He

urged participants to come forward with their ideas and efforts to support the endeavours of IIT Bhubaneswar in this front. Dr. Soobhankar Pati, CEO, REP IITBBS also addressed the gathering and assured the start-ups of full support for industry collaborations to accelerate their growth. It may be mentioned that his commitment to fostering strong industry connections adds a significant boost to the entrepreneurial ecosystem of the Institute. The World Entrepreneurship Day celebration was filled with insights, inspiration, and collaboration, strengthening the entrepreneurial ecosystem at IIT Bhubaneswar.

NTPC Bongaigaon's EVOICE Initiative Distributes Educational Kits to Empower Local Youth

Kolkata, (KCN): In a significant step towards empowering the youth of neighboring villages, NTPC Bongaigaon's CSR wing, Bardwi Shikla Ladies Club, and Employee Volunteering Services (EVOICE) under its Disha Classes initiative recently distributed educational kits to 60 students. The kits, which included books, sports shoes, raincoats, and stationery items, were provided to support the students from nearby villages in their academic and physical training endeavors. Additionally, a whiteboard was presented to the Disha Classes center to enhance the teaching and learning experience. The distribution of the items was led by Sh. Akhilesh Singh, Head of Project, NTPC Bongaigaon, in the presence of Sh. Debabrata Kar, GM (O&M); Sh. Asutosh Biswas, GM (Operations); Sh. GM Thangzom, Commandant CISF; Sh. M S Kandari, Assistant Commandant, CISF; Sh. Ashish Kumar, Deputy Commandant, CISF; Sh. Onkar Nath, AGM (HR); Smt. Sangeeta Singh, President, Bardwi Shikla Ladies Club (BSLC); Smt. Soumya Kar, Vice



President, BSLC; and Smt. Jhumita Biswas, Senior Member, BSLC. They were also joined by EVOICE members, teachers, and representatives of HR-CSR. During the event, Sh. Akhilesh Singh praised the dedication of the EVOICE member-teachers and commended the students for their determination in traveling long distances to attend the classes. Sh. Singh encouraged them to dream big, aspire to greater heights, and make their families and nation proud. The students also shared their experiences studying in the Disha Classes, expressing gratitude to NTPC for conducting these classes free of cost, which has significantly aided them in competing in various competitive exams. The Disha Classes is an educational outreach

initiative under NTPC Bongaigaon's EVOICE program, designed to provide free coaching to youth from nearby villages. The initiative focuses on preparing students for competitive exams, particularly for paramilitary and military forces. To complement this academic support, NTPC employees have teamed up with the CISF unit at the station to offer physical training, ensuring comprehensive preparation for the students. To date, more than 21 youth from nearby villages have secured employment in various paramilitary forces, including Assam Police, through the Disha Classes. A highlight of the event was the presence of Shri Narkw Nazary, a former student of Disha Classes who is now employed at NTPC. He shared his journey, motivating the

current students with his success story and reinforcing the program's positive impact. Since its inception in 2019, the EVOICE team's Disha Classes have been dedicated to the holistic development of local youth, empowering them through various employment avenues. NTPC employees, along with CISF, have been devoting their time beyond office hours to provide guidance and education, with the aim of preparing the youth for competitive exams in armed, defense, state, and central paramilitary forces. NTPC Bongaigaon remains committed to supporting the community through such initiatives, ensuring that local youth are equipped with the necessary skills and resources to succeed in their future endeavors.

Central University of Odisha Concludes Sanskrit Festival with Enthusiasm and Excellence

Koraput, (KCN): Central University of Odisha successfully concluded its week-long Sanskrit Festival on August 26, 2024. The event, organized by the Department of Sanskrit, commenced on August 16, 2024, and was marked by significant enthusiasm from students and faculty alike. The closing ceremony was presided over by the Hon'ble Vice-Chancellor of the University, Prof. Chakradhar Tripathi. The event was graced by the presence of the Chief Guest, Prof. Banamali Bishwal, Director of Central Sanskrit University, Sri Sadashiva Campus, Puri, and the

Guest of Honor, Prof. V.C. Jha, Adviser of CUO. Also in attendance were the Registrar of the University, the Dean of the School of Languages, and the Head of the Department of Sanskrit, Prof. Narsingh Charan Panda. Among the distinguished guests were Prof. Bharat Panda, Head of the Department of Education; Dr. Chakradhar Pradhan, Head of the Department of Hindi; and Dr. T. Anjaneyulu, a faculty member of the English Department. The ceremony commenced with the traditional lighting of the lamp, accompanied by

Vedic chanting. Prof. Narsingh Charan Panda extended a warm welcome to all the guests. Two students from the Sanskrit Department delivered insightful speeches on the importance of Sanskrit, while two others showcased their skills by reciting Shlokas melodiously. In his address, Chief Guest Prof. Banamali Vishwal highlighted the significance of Sanskrit and its relevance in various scientific fields, drawing examples from ancient scriptures. The Guest of Honor, Prof. V.C. Jha, also shared his perspectives on Sanskrit literature.

Throughout the week, a variety of competitions were organized for the university students, including Shlokavritti (recitation), essay writing, speeches, painting, and rangoli. Students who excelled in these events were honored with awards for securing the top three positions. The program saw enthusiastic participation from all faculty members of the Sanskrit Department, including Dr. Sanjeev Sarkar, Dr. Naveen Kumar Pradhan, Dr. Devashis Karmakar, Dr. Virendra Kumar Shadangi, and Mr. Satyavrat Mishra.



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Honouring the Spirit of Uttarakhand: Reflections on November 9, 2000, and the State's Journey

In this article, the author reflects on the significance of September 2, the 24th anniversary of Uttarakhand's formation. She sees the Shaheed Smarak Bhawan in Jhulaghar, Mussoorie, which houses sculptures of those who dedicated their lives to the Uttarakhand Andolan. Thus, these sculptures are not merely artworks; they symbolise the state's journey toward independence. She recalls two key events—the Khatima Goli Kand and the Rampur Tiraha incident in Muzaffarnagar—both instrumental in shaping today's Uttarakhand. Today, the young generation might be tempted by modern and Western culture. However, they should understand Uttarakhand's unique status. It has emerged through the blood and sacrifice of its residents, where both men and women sacrificed their lives with their aspirations for statehood. The demand for a separate state from Uttar Pradesh involved several peaceful protests, persistent demands, and violent confrontations. The demand for a separate state dates back to the Indian National Congress special session in Srinagar on May 5–6, 1938. This appeal gained momentum over the years, culminating in a mass movement by 1994. The Uttarakhand movement gained momentum on August 8, 1994, when Jeet Bahadur Gurung became the first martyr in Pauri. Uttarakhand finally gained official recognition as India's 27th state on November 9, 2000, a significant win in the region's struggle for autonomy.

The people's strong cultural and historical desires were represented in the creation of Uttarakhand. In contrast to Jharkhand, which was established on November 15, 2000, and Chhattisgarh, which was based on November 1, 2000, mainly as a result of economic inequality, Uttarakhand's campaign for statehood was firmly anchored in the aspiration for cultural and identity validation. Not economic concerns but a desire for cultural recognition propelled the movement. The areas now comprising Uttarakhand—Kumaon and Garhwal—have distinct identities separate from the rest of Uttar Pradesh. Historically, Kumaon and Garhwal were independent entities ruled by local dynasties such as the Panwar, Chand, Sah, and Katyur. Even during the Mughal era, these regions retained their autonomy. Under British rule, while they were administratively incorporated into the Northern Province, Tehri Garhwal remained an independent princely state until India's independence. On September 1, 1994, in Khatima, Udham Singh Nagar, a peaceful protest against government actions turned violent when the police fired on the crowd without warning. The protest began at Ramlila Maidan and involved around 10,000 people, including women carrying traditional sickles and veterans with licensed weapons. As the procession passed the police station, stones were thrown from nearby houses, prompting the police to open fire for over an hour. Eight people were killed, and hundreds were injured.

The police attempted to conceal the incident by hiding four bodies and later dumping them in the Sharda River. They justified the shooting by claiming the protesters had fired first, citing the presence of sickles and guns, although no evidence of violence from the protesters was found. The incident is remembered as a significant act of suppression in the history of the Uttarakhand statehood movement. The martyred agitators were Pratap Singh, Salim Ahmed, Bhagwan Singh, Dharmanand Bhatt, Gopichand, Paramjit Singh, Rampal, and Bhuvan Singh. Violence and repression plagued the Uttarakhand movement, particularly after the Mussoorie incident on September 2, 1994. Stones were thrown at the demonstrators during a peaceful march calling for statehood, violently upsetting them and sparking a deadly altercation with the police. Deputy Superintendent of Police Umakant Tripathi, who was renowned for his dedication to justice and equity, was sadly slain in the police firing and lost his life as a result of the brutality of the police response, which included shooting a police officer. He has permanently damaged the communal memory of the area. His sacrifice became a symbol of the struggle and continues to be remembered with profound respect by the people of Uttarakhand. Despite the violence and subsequent legal battles, the movement continued, driven by the unyielding resolve of its leaders and supporters. Later that night, the police chief of Mussoorie was replaced. The area around the Joint Struggle Committee office at

'Jhulaghar' was surrounded by Provincial Armed Constabulary (PAC) and police personnel, who began firing indiscriminately. The Uttarakhand statehood movement was proceeding as usual on that day. Protesters at the Joint Struggle Committee office near 'Jhulaghar' in Mussoorie were on a hunger strike protesting the shooting incident in Khatima. During this time, the PAC and police started firing on the protesters without any prior warning. Martyrs of the shooting incident included 'Balbir Singh Negi, Dhanpat Singh, Rai Singh Bangari, Madan Mohan Mangai, Belmati Chauhan, and Hansa Dhanai.' Following the incident, the police began arresting protesters, causing chaos throughout the city. Five protesters were detained by the evening of September 1 and were sent to the police lines in Dehradun, then transferred to Bareilly Central Jail. Many protesters faced legal battles with the Crime Branch of India (CBI) for years. This incident ended with the Rampur Tiraha incident of Muzaffarnagar on 2nd October 1994, where the administration wreaked havoc on the protesters from Garhwal and Kumaon going to Delhi to protest for a separate state at Jantar Mantar in Delhi. The slogan 'Koda-Jhangora Khayenge, Uttarakhand Banayenge' floated in the air. Everyone was involved in some way or another in the movement for a separate state. Pradeep Kukreti, District President (Uttarakhand State Aandolankari

Manch), said that 28 years ago, on October 2, in large numbers, the agitators moved ahead and reached Rampur Tiraha in Muzaffarnagar, where firing, atrocities on the helpless, lathi-charge, and stone pelting took place. Children and women were treated rudely, which can never be forgotten. The writer has referenced 'Teri Saun,' a 2003 Uttarakhandi film, from her childhood memories. Teri Saun means "Teri Saugandh" in Hindi. The film is based on the Uttarakhand movement. Teri Saun was written, produced and directed by Anuj Joshi, a Mumbai-based TV program director. A significant part of the movie, 70%, was in Hindi. Still, two other versions of the film were released in Kumaoni and Garhwali languages to bring in the originality of both state regions. The soundtrack sold 35,000 copies in the first fortnight of the film's release, significantly higher than a record for any Kumaoni or Garhwali film. The film stars seasoned actors and actresses of Uttarakhand Cultural Front, such as Ramendra Kotnala, Durga Kukreti, Roshan Dhasmana, Rajini Dukal, Kaulana Ghansyal, Girish Sundriyal, Vineet Gairola, Gokul Panwar and others. Meanwhile, the hero Manav and heroine Mansi are played by Saksham Juyal and Pooja Rawat, respectively. The film intertwines the characters' fictional lives with the actual events of 1994. A beautiful love story set against the backdrop of the movement is also a part of Teri Saun. While the hero and heroine meet in the film's first half, the Rampur Tiraha,

Muzaffarnagar incident's misdeeds lead the characters on a more depressing path. Eventually, the love of the hero's family, teachers, and relatives convinces him to abandon the path of violence, and he continues the Uttarakhand struggle peacefully and democratically. Madan Dukal, the editor of Chithi-Patri, who wrote the songs for the film, and Alok Malsi, the music composer, have profoundly impacted the people of Uttarakhand. The film's songs became quite popular—the heart-touching song, "Meri Janmabhoomi Mero Pahad" (My birthplace is my mountains). Awakens love among lakhs of Pahdi people living in Uttarakhand's mountains. The writer tells how, in her childhood, buying Garhwali and Kumaoni films and song cassettes was so familiar. At that time, everyone should listen to these songs in the morning or evening. While remembering those days, the writer hums this song from the film "Teri Saun"..... (written in Garhwali dialect with the Hindi language). This represents the deep love that each Pahadi resident holds for Uttarakhand.

The Garhwali song ("Meri Janmabhoomi Mero Pahad") is a heartfelt tribute to the singer's homeland, the mountainous region of Uttarakhand. The song reflects deep love and pride for the land's natural beauty, cultural heritage, and spiritual significance. The first line, Meri Janmabhoomi Mero Pahad, signifies, "My birthplace is my mountains." Ganga Jamuna Yakhi ... Badri Kedar means "Here flows the Ganga and Yamuna rivers... Badrinath and

Kedarnath." The mention of the sacred rivers Ganga and Yamuna, along with the revered temples of Badrinath and Kedarnath, highlights the spiritual significance of the region. These places are central to Uttarakhand's spiritual, cultural and religious identity. Phool Khilandi... Phoolon Ki Ghati. "Flowers bloom... in the Valley of Flowers" (is a famous and picturesque national park in Uttarakhand known for its vibrant meadows filled with endemic flora. This line celebrates the region's natural beauty. Raas Jagandi ... Himwali Kaathi) "The night awakens on the snow-capped peaks." This imagery evokes the serene and majestic environment of Uttarakhand's snow-covered mountains, often called the "Himalayan peaks." Nanda Ki Chhaya, "In the shade of Nanda Devi..." is one of India's highest peaks and holds great cultural and religious significance in Uttarakhand. This line suggests a sense of protection and reverence under the shadow of this sacred mountain. Jageshwar Dham, "The holy place of Jageshwar", a group of ancient temples in Uttarakhand dedicated to Lord Shiva. It's a significant pilgrimage site. Panch Prayag Yakhi, Hemkund Sahib refers to five sacred river confluences in Uttarakhand, and "Hemkund Sahib" is a revered Sikh pilgrimage site. These references further emphasise the spiritual richness of the land. Auli Gaumukh Yakhi, Hari Haridwar, Auli, is known for its scenic beauty and skiing slopes. Gaumukh is the source of the Ganga River, and Haridwar is a major pilgrimage city. The line

pays homage to these iconic locations, highlighting the diversity and sanctity of Uttarakhand. Meri Janmabhoomi Mero Pahad. Repeating the refrain, the song reinforces the deep emotional attachment to the mountains of Uttarakhand. The author brought back all those memories by stating that the creation of Uttarakhand was a political achievement and evidence of the people's tenacity and resolve. It acknowledged the distinct cultural identity of the Pahari people and resolved long-standing complaints about representation and administration. It is important to remember those who lost their lives defending the cause when thinking about the events that led to the creation of Uttarakhand. Through defending their legacy and fighting for their rights, the people of Uttarakhand ensured their identity was acknowledged, and their voice was heard. Uttarakhand is a modern-day model of cultural pride and resiliency, embodying the spirit of a people who refused to let history define them.

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The Unseen Sacrifices: A Life Lesson in Gratitude



Growing up in a household where money was tight, we didn't indulge in the luxury of frequent shopping trips. New clothes were a rare treat, reserved for special occasions like Eid, and even school uniforms were bought sparingly, often just once a year. Despite these challenges, my parents ensured we never felt deprived. They provided for us with whatever means they had, sacrificing their own needs to give us the best they could afford. As I grew older and started earning, life gradually began to change for the better. Our financial situation

improved, and I could afford things that once seemed out of reach. It was then that I made a conscious decision: whenever I bought something for myself, I would also buy something for my parents. It wasn't just about giving them material gifts—it was about acknowledging the countless sacrifices they made during the years when they had so little to give. Our parents' love is a powerful force, often going unnoticed or taken for granted. When a child is born, they are incredibly fragile. A newborn's skull is so soft that even a gentle touch can leave a lasting impression. Yet, despite this fragility, a mother cares for her child with such tenderness and devotion that no harm comes to them. This love, this unwavering commitment, is

something we often overlook as we grow older. We forget the sleepless nights, the countless worries, and the endless sacrifices our parents endured to raise us. When we reach adulthood, it's easy to become critical of our parents, questioning their decisions and wondering why they don't always meet our expectations. But the truth is, they don't need to be perfect or meet any arbitrary standards. The mere fact that they are our parents is enough. They gave us life, nurtured us, and guided us through our formative years. For that alone, they deserve our deepest respect and gratitude. One of my teachers played a significant role in shaping who I am today. Whenever I visited him, I made sure to bring a small gift, though he would always tell me it wasn't



necessary. In my heart, I knew that no gift could ever repay the knowledge, wisdom, and values he imparted

to me. This is the essence of valuing someone—not by the material things we offer, but by recognizing the

immeasurable impact they have had on our lives. If we fail to appreciate the depth of what we've been given, we lose sight of the true meaning of gratitude. Life is filled with people who refine us, guiding us from ignorance to understanding, from raw potential to realized purpose. We owe it to them to show our appreciation, not through grand gestures, but through genuine respect and recognition. The true value of a gift lies not in its price, but in the sincerity and love with which it is given. A story from Islamic tradition beautifully illustrates this principle. Prophet Isa (Jesus), peace be upon him, once asked his followers to give in the name of Allah. The wealthy responded with generous donations of money and valuable possessions. Then, a poor woman

approached with only a single coin, which she offered with a humble heart. Prophet Isa asked Allah what pleased Him most, and the response was that the woman's single coin was the most valuable offering. Though it was the smallest in material terms, it was given with all her heart, making it priceless in the eyes of Allah. In our own lives, we often receive blessings that we did nothing to earn. These are gifts that we must be grateful for, not just in words, but in the way we live our lives. True gratitude is expressed through respect, love, and the recognition of those who have made a difference in our journey. The lesson here is profound: it's not about how much we give, but how deeply we care. The respect and love we show to our parents,

teachers, and mentors are the real measures of gratitude. It's about acknowledging their efforts, honoring their sacrifices, and ensuring that their love and guidance were not in vain. This is the true essence of gratitude—an appreciation that goes beyond material wealth and is rooted in the heart. In the end, life's greatest lessons come not from what we receive, but from how we respond to those who have shaped our lives. Let us live with a heart full of gratitude, not just for the blessings we enjoy, but for the people who have made those blessings possible.

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Resolving Regional Disparities in Odisha: Pathways to Equitable Development



The BJP's promise to create North and South Odisha Development Councils addressed regional imbalances and promoted equitable development across Odisha. While the State Government has already constituted the Western Odisha Development Council (WODC), which covers ten districts and the Athamalik Sub-Division of Angul district, similar North and South Odisha councils remain a critical issue. The WODC is tasked with accelerating the development of its jurisdiction and reducing regional disparities. It is responsible for devising long-term and short-term development plans and programs to achieve these goals. The WODC's efforts are complemented by the Poverty and Human Development Monitoring Agency (PHDMA), an

autonomous organization under Odisha's Planning and Convergence Department. PHDMA's primary role is to monitor poverty reduction progress, improve human development indicators, develop appropriate development programs, and assess the impact of various policies and initiatives on the poor. The agency's work ensures that development benefits are equitably distributed across the State. In addition to these efforts, the State Government has established the Special Area Rural Connectivity Authority (SARCA) to oversee the implementation, supervision, and monitoring of special connectivity programs in the KBK districts. These districts, comprising Kalahandi, Bolangir, and Koraput, along with five others, represent some of the most impoverished regions in the State, with high levels of distress, migration, unemployment, and poverty. The disparities in literacy rates among different social categories in Odisha are particularly concerning. According to

the 2011 Census, literacy rates for Scheduled Castes (SC) and Scheduled Tribes (ST) were significantly lower than the state average, at 69.02% and 52.24%, respectively. The gender gap in literacy rates is also stark, with regions like Nabarangpur showing a dismal literacy rate of 46.43% compared to Khorda's 86.88%. These figures underscore the urgent need for targeted interventions in education to bridge these gaps. Mortality rates, indicative of reproductive health and antenatal care, have improved but still pose challenges. The under-five mortality rate dropped from 91 per 1,000 live births in 2005-06 to 49 in 2015-16, while the infant mortality rate (IMR) fell from 65 to 40 during the same period. However, the persistence of high malnutrition rates, with 34% of children being stunted and 20% suffering from wasting, highlights ongoing issues with inadequate feeding practices and economic hardships. Anaemia remains a significant health concern, with 50% of women being anaemic in 2015-16, despite a

reduction from 61% in 2005-06. Low Body Mass Index (BMI) is also prevalent in the KBK districts, further emphasizing the health challenges in these regions. South Odisha, comprising ten districts, including Ganjam, Nabarangpur, and Kalahandi, represents one of the most resilient yet underdeveloped regions in the State. Despite being part of the country's largest contiguous poor region, where over two-thirds of the population lives below the poverty line, the people of South Odisha continue to demonstrate remarkable resilience. However, they face numerous challenges, including inadequate infrastructure, lack of skilled entrepreneurs, land degradation, deforestation, environmental hazards, displacement, distress migration, and the adverse effects of Naxalite activities. These challenges have hindered the region's industrial development despite its rich mineral resources, forcing many

people to migrate to neighbouring states in search of employment and livelihood opportunities. A joint survey by the US-India Policy Institute and the Centre for Research and Debates in Development Policy identified eight Odisha districts among India's 50 most backward districts. These districts, including Malkangiri, Boudh, and Kalahandi, are characterized by low Human Development Index (HDI) scores, with Boudh being the most poverty-stricken district, having an HDI of 0.12. Education and health indicators are similarly dismal, with Malkangiri having the lowest health HDI at 0.13, followed closely by Nabarangpur and Nuapada. These findings highlight the extreme socio-economic deprivation faced by the southern districts of Odisha. Five southern districts of Odisha—Kandhamal, Gajapati, Malkangiri, Koraput, and Rayagada—are experiencing extreme food insecurity, while Nabarangapur, Nuapada, Kalahandi, and Baudh

face severe food insecurity. These districts urgently require interventions to enhance food security input indicators. Monthly Per-capita Consumer Expenditure (MPCE) is a vital measure of a family's economic status and is crucial in determining poverty levels. MPCE estimates are based on household spending over the past 365 days on essentials like clothing, education, and medical care, and on all other items over the past 30 days. The undivided KBK districts account for 19.72% of Odisha's population and 30.59% of its geographical area, with tribes constituting 38.72%. These districts are among the poorest regions in the country, with low-income levels, large-scale unemployment, and high levels of distress migration. The migration of tribes from these regions, often due to deforestation, land pressure, recurring drought, and poverty, has led to significant social and economic challenges, including

exploitation, social isolation, and identity crises. The coping strategies of these poverty-stricken tribes, such as the distress sale of assets, reduced consumption, increased borrowing, and migration, only add to their human misery. In the long run, these factors contribute to the decline of agriculture in the region, with loss of soil moisture, reduced fertility, and fluctuating incomes and employment discouraging investment in agriculture. To effectively mitigate regional disparities in Odisha, it is essential to enhance the participation of low-income people and focus on inclusive growth. Prioritizing agricultural development, a key strength of Odisha is crucial for boosting the Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) and reducing poverty. Moreover, investing in both physical and human infrastructure is vital for achieving balanced growth. Strategies such as developing the manufacturing sector,

ensuring equal access to education and health services, completing irrigation projects, and promoting technological advancements are essential for fostering equitable and sustainable development. Achieving inclusive and balanced growth in South Odisha requires a comprehensive action plan focusing on agriculture, employment, and social sectors. The State's rich natural resources and favourable climatic conditions provide a solid foundation for development, but strategic interventions are necessary to overcome existing disparities and promote equitable progress. By strengthening local councils, improving governance, and tailoring economic reforms to the socio-political realities of the region, Odisha can achieve its goal of equitable and sustainable development across all its areas.

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Whenever You Think of Nature, Think of Us: Khadi Prakratik Paint



Whenever You Think of Colour, Think of Us. A single line formed the basis for a timeless campaign as color would be timeless and everywhere. This is one of the finest examples of a television driven branding campaign of 70s. The brand in the advertisement was Jenson and Nicholson (India) Ltd. Since everything in life is colorful, so irrespective of the time, anything is in our virtual front one will remember the brand and it will get primed. Can we put that line in a different way to promote one of our eco-friendly product that is "Whenever You Think of Nature, Think of Us: Khadi Prakratik Paint". In January 2021, Kumarappa National Handmade Paper Institute (KNHPI), Jaipur, Rajasthan, a unit of Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC), under the administrative control of the Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME), Government of India, has developed Khadi Prakratik Paint from cow dung

extraordinary, it's Cow Dung. From its role in rituals to its contribution to a greener planet, cow dung stands as a reminder of nature's gifts, the importance of sustainability, and the profound interconnection between all living beings. Since early ages, mud floors and exterior of our walls in our houses have been washed and cleaned with cow dung mixed water. Outside the huts, one would have seen cow dung coating over mud walls. During puja (worship) and solemn occasions, the sacred spot is cleaned with cow dung mixed water. This is a sacred tradition in India. But is it only because of traditions, or is there more to it? In fact, the art of Mithila painting or Madhubani painting is also believed to have originated on the mud walls of the houses in the Mithilanchal region of Bihar and Nepal. Jhoti or Chita is the traditional Odia art on the floor and walls, very popular in the rural areas. Jhoti is quite different from Rangoli. While Rangolis are made using coloured powders, Jhoti involves line art using the traditional white coloured semi liquid paste of rice or Pithau. We all know Goddess Laxmi is worshiped on the ninth month of the Hindu calendar that is Margasira (November to December). It is an auspicious puja performed every Thursday also known as Margashirsh Gurubar. When the day begins every woman starts cleaning the house with cow dung paste and red soil, later women made beautiful Alpana or

Chita in front of their house and every corner. It is believed that the most beautiful house of the village will be visited by Goddess Lakshmi and can get prosperity. It proves beyond doubt that the traditions and practices in our rural societies and tribal peoples were based on the known positive properties of cow dung to our people from ancient times. Cow dung on walls not only worked as a disinfectant but also kept the mud and thatched walls warm in winters and cool in the summer season. In today's world, creating a healthy and sustainable living space is more important than ever. Our homes are the place where we should feel safest and in control. We are in control of the environment around us, from furnishings to decorations, to the sort of paint we use on our walls and ceilings. However, many of us don't consider the affect that those choices have on the quality of the air we breathe, in fact if we were told that the air in our homes is actually actively harmful to our health, many of us would very quickly be looking at ways to fix it. Traditional paints often contain high levels of Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs), which can negatively impact both our health and the environment. VOCs are organic chemicals that easily evaporate at room temperature and are common ingredients in many everyday products, including paints, varnishes, and cleaning solutions. While exposure to low levels of VOCs may cause

mild irritation, long-term exposure can lead to various health problems, including, headaches and dizziness, irritations of the eye, nose, and throat, respiratory problems and increased risk of allergies and asthma. These paints not only harm the human body, but also the environment. The byproducts and waste of the synthetic chemical industry are highly detrimental to the environment and they leave an immense carbon footprint. VOC's present in paint reacts with oxygen which forms ozone layer in presence of sunlight this parameter is contributory factor for air pollution. Petroleum is widely used in some products in paint industry acts as leading contributory factor in environmental issues. These chemical paints are also harmful once applied to our houses and other buildings, a lot of people are not aware that most conventional paints contain micro-plastics. A Norwegian study (Norwegian Environment Agency, "Sources of micro plastics-pollution to the marine environment", 2014) comes to the conclusion that "approximately 17% of micro-plastics generated worldwide originate from the abrasion of paints and lacquers on exterior surfaces that were produced with plastic based binders containing pure acrylates, silicone resins, styrene acrylate or similar conventional paints. In many cases,

instances of mould growth, damp, and flaking or cracking paint can be linked to the lack of breathability within the paint itself. Conventional paints often contain plastics such as acrylic, vinyl or latex, which forms an impermeable layer on top of the painted surface, trapping moisture and causing damage to the fabric of the building. Natural paints, including products allow surfaces such as floor or plaster to breathe, meaning that moisture doesn't become trapped and cases of mould or damp are less likely. Khadi Prakratik Paint, offer a healthier and more sustainable alternative. Unlike conventional paints, this paints is formulated with no or negligible VOCs and is made from a variety of natural ingredients, including cow dung, lime, sand, and natural pigments and creates a healthier living environment, reducing the risk of respiratory problems and other related disorders. This eco-friendly paints is formulated with no allergens and harsh chemicals, making it a safer choice for people with sensitivities and allergies. Its process of manufacturing involves use of renewable resources and low energy processes, minimizing their environmental footprint. Cow dung Paint or Khadi Prakritik Paint, varies from other ecofriendly paints having some unique advantages, it has got antibacterial and antifungal properties but the chemical paints don't have this and at times they are

susceptible to fungus. Since it is made from cow dung it has got much higher heat resistance than conventional paints and helps to regulate humidity and temperature in summer, making it a comfortable and healthy choice for indoor use. Cow dung paint has no unpleasant smell as that of chemical paints of any kind. Chemical paints contain hazardous toxic chemicals like Xylene, Ethyl Acetate, Glycol, and Methylene Chloride and other heavy metals like lead, mercury, chromium, arsenic and cadmium. Cow dung paint contains no such toxic ingredients. This paint offers a unique and rustic aesthetic that complements both traditional and contemporary interiors. It is long lasting and durable. Moreover by using such paints, users are supporting local communities that are involved in producing and promoting sustainable materials. One more advantage of cow dung paints is their affordability and efficiency over artificial paints. You get so many qualities in the least manufacturing and retail prices. Since it's a natural paint and new in the market there may be an apprehension among the consumers regarding its performance but this paint have been tested at three reputed National Laboratories of India namely, National Test House (Mumbai), Shri Ram Institute for Industrial Research

(New Delhi) and National Test House (Ghaziabad). Khadi Prakritik Paint is available in two forms, distemper paint and plastic emulsion, both of them meets Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) specifications. The paint has successfully passed various test parameters such as application of paint, thinning properties, drying time and finish, among others. It dries in less than four hours, and has a smooth and uniform finish. This paint can be applied on interior as well as exterior walls. Both distemper and emulsion paints are available in white base colour, and it can be developed in any color by suitably mixing colorants. The eco-friendly, non-toxic paint, Khadi Prakritik Paint is a first-of-its-kind product. Though most of the elite consumers found the product very useful for environment as well as for human health a number of factors are there in making this product a house hold name like challenge for replacing the existing popular brands, need for promotion and market expansion so also the major challenge is to maintain the standard quality of the product in low cost, because the consumers will be attracted towards this new product if they are offered this product in less price in comparison to the conventional paints. For effective promotion of this product government is providing subsidies/ financial assistance for establishment of the manufacturing unit so also imparting training on

manufacturing of the paints. For effective branding and marketing of the product government must think of use of these paints in government buildings, hospitals, schools, hostels and other public places. According to the 20th Livestock Census, India's cattle population in 2023 was 303.76 million, which includes cattle, buffalo, mithun, and yak. This is the highest cattle population in the world, followed by Brazil, China, and the United States. With production of 231 million metric tons (MMT) of milk (2022-2023), India is the world's largest milk producer, contributing 24.64% of the global milk supply. If we can share the benefits of cow dung paints with consumers globally we can raise our position in becoming the largest producer and exporter of cow dung paint in the world. It will not only benefit the people those are working deeply in this business but for millions of farmers who are rearing dairy animals with limited resources. As the raw material of the paint does cow dung, which is mainly sourced from the village farmers own cows for milk or other agricultural activities. This paint manufacturing is estimated to generate an additional income of about ₹ 30,000 per annum per animal for these farmers. So next time Whenever You Think of Nature, Think of Khadi Prakratik Paint.

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The Union Minister for Defence, Shri Rajnath Singh in a group photograph with Indian community in Memphis, Tennessee, US

ABRSM hails Unified Pension Scheme as a step towards Financial Security for Govt. Teachers

K o l k a t a / Delhi(PARTHA ROY): Akhil Bhartiya Rashtriya Shaikshik Mahasangh (ABRSM), a premier teachers' organization in Bharat, has welcomed Union government's approval of the Unified Pension Scheme for government employees. Professor J.P. Singhal, National President of ABRSM, emphasized that this landmark decision will ensure a dignified and secure future for lakhs of government teachers after their dedicated service. Professor Singhal highlighted that the Unified Pension Scheme addresses the uncertainties faced by teachers and other employees under the National Pension Scheme (NPS). The scheme guarantees a pension to employees who have completed a minimum of 25 years of service, ensuring they receive 50% of their average basic salary from the last 12 months before retirement. For those with service tenure between 10 and 25 years, a proportionate pension will be provided.

In addition to this, the scheme ensures financial security for families. If an employee passes away during service, their family will receive 60% of their pension as a family pension. Moreover, the government will contribute 18.5% of the employees' basic salary towards their pension. Shri Shivanand Sindhankera, National General Secretary of ABRSM, stated that the scheme provides an assured minimum pension of ₹10,000 per month for retirees with at least 10 years of service. Furthermore, the assured pension, family pension, and minimum pension will be adjusted according to inflation, ensuring protection for pensioners against the rising cost of living. Shri Sindhankera praised this scheme as a significant move towards securing the economic well-being and dignity of government employees. ABRSM

extended its gratitude to Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his administration for this crucial decision. Professor Singhal added that ABRSM has long advocated for removing the uncertainties of the NPS and restoring the guaranteed pension model for teachers. The organization has consistently pushed for this through memorandums, meetings, and demonstrations. The introduction of the Unified Pension Scheme is a positive step towards providing financial security for employees and their families. However, Professor Singhal also pointed out that teachers from various parts of the country have raised concerns, as the detailed notification for the scheme is yet to be issued. ABRSM intends to study the notification thoroughly once it is released and will present its position to the government to safeguard the interests of teachers.

"I Want Champai Soren To Join BJP, Strengthen The Party": Himanta Sarma

New Delhi(KCN): Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said on Monday that former Jharkhand Chief Minister and senior Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) Champai Soren joining the BJP would further strengthen the party. His remarks came amid growing speculation that Champai Soren, who is in the national capital for the past few days, might switch sides from the JMM to the BJP.

"I want Champai Soren to join the BJP and strengthen us. However, since he is a very prominent leader, it is not appropriate for me to comment on him. If he is in Delhi, we will try to communicate with him," Mr Sarma told mediapersons. The Assam Chief Minister also shared that while he has had multiple conversations with Champai Soren, they did not discuss



politics. "But I feel that this is the right time to talk to him about politics," he added. Responding to Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren's allegations that the BJP is attempting to divide his party, Mr Sarma said, "Look, I even want Hemant Soren to join the BJP. BJP means devotion towards the nation. There should be no question of dividing the country. We all work together for the country." Mr Sarma, who is BJP's election in-charge for

Jharkhand that will go to the polls later this year, also stressed the party's willingness to engage in discussions with Hemant Soren on the issue of intruders in Jharkhand, emphasising that welfare of the state is their priority. "We are ready to talk to Hemant Soren regarding intruders in Jharkhand. We want to save Jharkhand; it is never about the BJP. For us, the country is above all, including the party," he said.

The Assam Chief Minister also suggested that if Hemant Soren fulfils his promise of providing five lakh jobs before September 31, "maybe the BJP will not contest the elections". Shifting the focus to the spate of rape cases reported recently, Mr Sarma asserted Assam's efforts to tackle the issue, claiming that while the number of such cases decreased since the BJP came to power, the problem has not been fully eradicated.

"We are trying our best to tackle the problem of rapes in the state. After we came to power, the numbers dropped from 3,000 to 900. However, even if the number drops to one, it is still not a matter of satisfaction," he said. He also stressed the need for stricter laws and faster judicial processes to address such crimes. "Even if one rape is committed, no one can rest. A strict law is necessary. I would want the entire process -- from inquiry to trial to conviction -- to be completed within six months. It will have a positive impact," he added. On the Unified Pension Scheme (UPS), Mr Sarma noted that the notification is not yet out. "After the notification is out, we will make a decision keeping the employees' convenience in mind," he concluded.

National Conference, Congress Crack Jammu And Kashmir Seat-Sharing Deal

Srinagar(KCN): The Congress and National Conference have reached a deal to share Jammu and Kashmir's 90 Assembly seats ahead of next month's election, senior leaders from each side said Monday evening, bringing talks to a successful end hours before the deadline to file nominations for the first phase. The NC will contest the majority of seats - 51 - and the Congress will contest 32, the latter's J&K unit chief, Tariq Hameed Karra, told reporters, adding two will be left for the CPIM and Panthers Party. Significantly, there will be a "friendly but disciplined contest" on five seats, which suggests that differences between the two parties - both of whom are part of the INDIA opposition bloc - were not fully ironed out, even after the Congress rushed two

senior leaders to Srinagar this morning. This will be the first Assembly election in Jammu and Kashmir in a decade; the 2019 poll was not held after the centre scrapped Article 370 and 35A, and bifurcated J&K into two union territories. "It is a matter of great happiness... we started this campaign together against forces trying to divide people here. The INDIA bloc was formed so we can fight forces that want to communalise, divide, and break the country," NC boss and former ex Chief Minister Farooq Abdullah told the press. "Today we have completed negotiations and have completed coordination in a very good (and) cordial atmosphere. The Congress and the National Conference will fight the election



together..." Congress leader KC Venugopal, one of the two big names deployed, echoed the sentiment. "We have completed our discussion and reached a

formula... we will fight together and we will win the J&K election. The Congress and National Conference are coming together to form the next government..." the Lok

Sabha MP declared, accusing the BJP of "trying to destroy the soul of J&K". Earlier today sources told NDTV the NC had offered the Congress only

five seats in the Kashmir Valley and between 28 and 30 in the Jammu region. The national party, however, was holding out for more, particularly in areas its

ally perceived as strongholds. That the Congress and NC were going to fight this election together had been announced earlier. In fact, this became evident after Congress MP Rahul Gandhi's visit to Farooq Abdullah's Srinagar home last week. This is the first time since 1987 the two parties are in a pre-poll alliance in J&K. "We had a good meeting, in a cordial atmosphere. The alliance is on track and god willing, it will go smoothly. The alliance is final. It will be signed this evening and the alliance is on all 90 seats," Farooq Abdullah had said after meeting Mr Gandhi. NC leader Omar Abdullah, Farooq Abdullah's son and a former Chief Minister too, too had said last week that a broad agreement had been reached. "Consensus has

been reached to a large extent...I can tell you we have reached a consensus on the maximum seats out of the 90," he told the media. However, after it seemed seat-sharing talks were failing the Congress sent Mr Venugopal and Salman Khurshid to bring them back on track. The two met Omar Abdullah this morning. Omar Abdullah - who had earlier declared he would not contest a J&K election as long as it remains a union territory - has backtracked and will fight from Ganderbal, it was announced then. He won the seat in 2008 and his father held it for three consecutive terms between 1983 and 1996. Confirmation of the Congress-NC alliance drew fierce barbs from the BJP.

Crypto-Trading Fraud Gang Busted in Bolangir, Four Held

Bolangir(KCN): Police busted a inter-state crypto-trading fraud gang in Bolangir district on Sunday and arrested four cyber criminals.

The accused persons have been identified as Vikash Pareek (31), Pawan Singh(30), Vijay Rai Sharma (33), and Harshit Chauhan (21). All of them hail from Rajasthan.

Also, the police seized five mobile phones along with incriminating articles.

Above Mentioned case has been reported at Cyber Police Station Balangir regarding cheating of victim for 76 lakhs rupees by

impersonating as GBE Crypto Trading Company through Telegram, Whatsapp and various social media platform.

During course of investigation it came to the light that accused persons had hatched criminal conspiracy and executed their plan to fraud the victims through mobile applications, Telegram and Whatsapp accounts.

Thus sent messages related to fake crypto trading applications to different person. They were using virtual mobile numbers and VPN services to conceal their identities on internet. Also some of them



hacked the Whatsapp accounts of others and used by them to cheat.

They had created fake domains and applications of online

crypto trading platforms and shared it through means of Telegram and

Whatsapp to general public. Through collective conspiracy

they were arranging corporate current accounts, saving accounts, debit cards, physical SIM cards, online banking credentials including documents of the account holders through their associates in return of financial gain.

During this fraud the accused persons were utilizing OTP sharing applications among the account holder to access their online banking facilities. They maintained many Telegram and Whatsapp groups for their discussion and coordination related to fraud.

On the tip of information we have apprehended following accused persons from Rajasthan and the mobile phones which were used for commission of crime have been seized. Last month accused Pawan and Vikash were arrested by Haryana police in the similar fraud case.

Police have also frozen more than 60 bank accounts belonging to accused persons and their associates in which suspected transactions were made and more than 85 lakhs of bank balance has frozen.

Day after Odisha CM's attack on Kashmir issue, Congress reminds him of BJP-PDP alliance



Bhubaneswar(KCN): A senior leader of the Odisha Congress Sunday reminded Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi that the BJP had forged an alliance with Jammu and Kashmir's People's Democratic Party (PDP) in 2015 and his attack on the Congress is "hilarious". Biswaranjan Mohanty's assertion came a day after Majhi slammed the party for joining hands with the National Conference (NC) ahead of the Jammu and Kashmir assembly polls, alleging that the grand old party is "hungry for power".

"Teleprompter Chief Minister of Odisha who is running to Delhi to take orders on how to govern Odisha has found time to criticise the Congress Party on the Kashmir issue," Mohanty said in a statement. Demanding that the Congress explain its stand on Jammu and Kashmir, Majhi in a video message on Saturday sought clarification from party leader Rahul Gandhi if his party would promote separatists by talking to Pakistan, instead of establishing peace by holding discussions with the people of the northern state.

Mohanty said, "I am not questioning him (Majhi) on his experience to speak on national issues but I would like to ask him: Has he forgotten the history of his own party?... Has he forgotten the BJP's alliance with PDP?" After the 2014 assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir delivered a fractured, the BJP and PDP stitched an alliance and Mufti Mohammad Sayeed became the chief minister in March next year. "Who visited Pakistan and started friendship bus which was followed by Kargil?" the Odisha Congress leader

asked. He was referring to former prime minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, during whose tenure Delhi-Lahore bus service began in 1999. Mohanty, however, did not mention the late BJP leader by name. Mohanty said, "The truth is the chief minister is trying to divert public perception at a time when the Congress raised the issue of reservation and caste census in the assembly. Instead of public posturing on issues like Kashmir, the Odisha CM should focus on the emergent issues of the state."

Horseshoe crabs remain unprotected


Mahakalpara(KCN): With the population of horseshoe crabs, a marine creature, fast dwindling, the authorities are yet to implement measures to save the species, sources stated here Sunday. The horseshoe crabs are available in large numbers at the Gahirmatha marine sanctuary in the Kendrapara district. The Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) and the Forest Department have jointly launched geo-tagging of horseshoe crabs in Balasore district but they are yet to take up similar measures in Kendrapara district. Geo-tagging is necessary to track the population and habitat of marine creatures and will also help in increasing their numbers, sources stated. The horseshoe crab species is available in only a few select places. It is found in Balasore district and the Gahirmatha Marine



Sanctuary. The crabs are mostly seen in Hukitola, Shola sea mouth, Launch Gholia, Tanda, Agarnasi, Barunei sea mouth and in the Mahanadi river basin. The mating of this creature starts in January and lasts till March. However, during the season thousands of the species die after getting entangled in fishing nets. Sources informed us that steps should be taken immediately to preserve this particular species of crabs. In January male and female crabs can be seen mating in large numbers in Gahirmatha and the Mahanadi river basin. Male and female crabs can be seen submerged in mud during

the mating process. Their mating mainly starts during a full moon night as it plays a significant role in maintaining the biological diversity of the sea. A distinctive feature of the horseshoe crab is that its blood turns blue when exposed to air. This is because the blood contains a copper-based respiratory pigment called 'hemocyanin'. This pigment is highly in demand in most countries because of its research value and other medicinal purposes. Sources informed that a litre of horseshoe crab blood costs close to Rs 11 lakh. Several medicines for the treatment of diseases

like cancer are produced using horseshoe crab blood. Environmentalist Samarendra Mahali said that the population of horseshoe crabs started declining after the cyclones in 1971 and 1982 and the Super Cyclone in 1999. He said the Forest department should immediately launch efforts for geo-tagging of the marine creatures. The Forest department has completed the geo-tagging of 70 crabs in Balasore district and a similar process should be implemented in Gahirmatha, Mahali added. When contacted, divisional forest officer Sudarshan Gopinath Yadav of Rajnagar Wildlife Division said that they are yet to receive any orders regarding the geo-tagging of horseshoe crabs. "Once we get it, we certainly will implement it,"



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Bajaj Allianz Life launchesworld’s first music video ‘Superstar After Retirement’, created by retired senior citizens

Pune: Bajaj Allianz Life, one of India’s leading private life insurers, launched a world’s music video “Superstar After Retirement”, created byretired seniors showcasing their creativity and fulfilling their life goals. Retirees including ex-bankers, ex-entrepreneurs, ex-educator, ex-engineers and other professionals, areseen unleashing their hidden talents like singing or dancing, and attempting to live their second innings with utmost zeal and passion.

For most individuals, their dreams and desires take a backseat as they strive to ensure financial security and stability for their families.

Commenting on the

initiative, Mr. Chandramohan Mehra, Chief Marketing Officer, Bajaj Allianz Life, said “Aligned to the brandpurpose of enabling LifeGoals, we launched Superstar After Retirement initiative to encourage retired senior citizens to rediscover their talents and explore a world full of possibilities and freedom. Financial security provided through a regular stream of income, post-retirement, allows individuals to pursue their earlier unfulfilled passions.”

Bajaj Allianz Life had launched a pan-India talent hunt, to showcase their talent and fulfil their dreams of becoming a superstar. From a total of

over 5400 entries, 11 superstars from different walks of life were handpicked to be part of the music video. All of these participants,at some point of their lives, had aspired to be dancers, musicians, s i n g e r s , cinematographers, lyricists, art director and stylists, aside from being retired senior citizens.

The music video was created entirely by these 11 senior citizens, after going through multiple enriching workshops with expert mentors from Bollywood.The team’s collective efforts for 37 days and 450+ hrs has resulted in this one-of-a-kind music video.

RELIANCE BRANDS LIMITED INKS A JV WITH PLASTIC LEGNO SPA

Mumbai: RELIANCE BRANDS LIMITED (RBL) and Plastic Legno SPA have signed a joint venture arrangement through which RBL will acquire a 40% stake in Plastic Legno SPA’s toy manufacturing business in India. This investment by RBL serves a dual purpose, bringing in vertical integration for RBL’s toy business and helping diversify the supply chain with a long-term strategic interest in building toy manufacturing in India.

Plastic Legno SPA is owned by the Sunino group that boasts of more than 25 years of toy production experience in Europe. The group started it’s India business in 2009 out of a need to develop a strong production hub that would cater to global markets, but more importantly to the fast evolving and growing Indian market.

“Keeping with our

honourable Prime Minister’s vision of Atmanirbhar India, this collaboration with Plastic Legno’s deep experience in world-class toy manufacturing coupled with our strong footing in the global toy retail industry would open new doors and unparalleled opportunities for toys manufactured in India. It is imperative for RBL to build design to shelf capability for a strategic advantage over the competition and to be an accelerator in building a robust toy manufacturing ecosystem in India not only for domestic consumption but also for global markets.” said the spokesperson of Reliance Brands Limited.

RBL has a strong play in the Toy industry with its portfolio of Hamleys, the British toy retailer and homegrown toy brand – Rowan, making RBL one of the leading toy distributors. Hamleys currently has a global

footprint across 15 countries with 213 doors and is India’s largest chain of toy stores.

“We are very privileged to have RBL as a partner in this Joint Venture. We are confident that Plastic Legno’s experience in Toys production and Hamley’s commercial outreach, will complement one another to enable the JV Company to achieve greater heights and successes. We have important development plans to implement, always in the spirit of creating a cultural background in this specific sector in India. We are ready for the challenges of the future, but when there is a group like RBL alongside, we are sure that together we can do a great development.” said Paolo Sunino, Co-owner, Sunino Group.

H&M revels in sunset colours and embellished details for The Festive Collection



Bhubaneswar: H&M India invites you to the season of celebrations with a special collection personified by all things sparkle and shine. Featuring party-ready ensembles, the collection spotlights designs showcasing strong shoulders, cropped tops and draped details among the statement suiting, party dresses and matching sets. Rhinestones, sequins and high-shine fabrics bring sophistication and vibrancy

to every piece, while a strong colour palette of hot pink, orange, red, sand, gold and black adds to the celebratory mood. ForThe Festive Collection, H&M wanted to create a special collection that draws upon beauty and merriment of the season. Draping along the waistline, shoulder lines and across the body accentuate the female form, while long trousers and skirts contrast with alluring cropped tops.

Tonal looks are vital, but the play of different fabrics and embellishment make it playful and modern. “The Festive Collection comes at such a special time of year and we’re thrilled with the collection. We were really inspired by the importance of light – candles, lanterns and fireworks – and worked that into a vivid sunset colour palette, but also brought in a lot of sequins, rhinestones and satin.

Oriental Trimex Ltd Announces Strategic Developments to Revolutionize the Stone Industry, Expand Market Presence, and Achieve Financial Milestones

Oriental Trimex Limited

New Delhi(KCN) : Oriental Trimex Ltd (BSE – 532817),a leading processor and trader of natural stones in India announces a series of strategic developments that are set to redefine its operational capabilities, expand its market presence, and solidify its financial standing. These initiatives underscore the company’s unwavering commitment to innovation, growth, and customer satisfaction.

Oriental Trimex Limited is poised to revolutionize the stone industry with the importation and installation of a cutting-edge wire-based gang saw machine, commonly referred to as a "Cable Machine for Slab Cutting." This state-of-the-art technology, sourced from Changsha Beto New Material Technology Co. Ltd. in China, will be the first of its kind in India and is set to be installed at OTL’s plant in Gummidipoondi, near Chennai.

Unlike traditional gang saws that utilize multiple blades, this advanced machine employs a series of diamond-coated cables with diameters of 0.4-0.6mm, enabling precise cuts and setting a new benchmark for accuracy and efficiency. With features such as pneumatic wire tensioning, hydraulic cylinder support, and bellow-protected linear rails, the wire-based gang saw significantly

reduces waste, enhances durability, and speeds up the cutting process by approximately three times compared to conventional machines.

This strategic investment, expected to be operational by December 2024, is a testament to OTL’s dedication to embracing innovative technologies that enhance operational excellence. It will allow the company to deliver unparalleled quality to its clients, particularly in the high-end residential and commercial construction segments.

In a move to strengthen its market presence, Oriental Trimex Limited is excited to announce the upcoming launch of a sprawling 21,000 sq. ft. showroom in the building materials market at Site-4, Greater Noida. Strategically located in the heart of GautamBudh Nagar District, this s h o w r o o m - c u m - warehouse is poised to become a one-stop destination for all flooring solutions.

Scheduled to be operational by the end of September 2024, the showroom will showcase an extensive range of finished marbles sourced from OTL’s state-of-the-art processing plant in Chennai. In addition, the company will procure high-quality granites from processors in Rajasthan and Southern India, ensuring a comprehensive portfolio of flooring solutions.

Honda Motorcycle and Scooter India registers 3, 53,188 unit sales

Gurugram: Noting a positive upward movement during the month, Honda Motorcycle and Scooter India today announced its sales numbers for May 2022.

The company’s total sales for the month stood at 3,53,188 with 3,20,844 domestic sales and 32,344 exports compared to the subdued market performance for same period last year amidst multiple lockdowns owing to impact from second wave of pandemic.

Commenting on the sales performance in May’22, Mr.Atsushi Ogata, Managing Director, President & CEO, Honda Motorcycle & Scooter India said,“The market is gaining back strength as disturbances in terms of supply side are subsidingcoupled with rise in physical presence at office and educational institutions. The sales figures this month remain incomparable from May’21 as frequent lockdowns in wake of second wave marred the performance during this period last year. Growth in domestic as well as international trade continues to complement each other as we approach an early monsoon.”

Commissions India’s Largest Fleet of Electric Lithium-Ion Forklifts

New Delhi: Vedanta Aluminium, India’s largest producer of a l u m i n i u m , hascommissioned India’s largest electric fleet of 27 forklifts, powered by lithium-ion batteries.Done in partnership with GEAR (Gemini Equipment and Rentals Private Limited) India, this sets the ball rolling

on Vedanta Aluminium’s plans to decarbonize its industrial vehicle fleet. All 27 forklifts arrived last month and are being operationalisedat the company’s aluminium smelter at Jharsuguda, in Odisha, which is the world’s largest single-location aluminium smelter, ex-China.

The location of this showroom is particularly strategic, given the upcoming Jewar Airport and the envisioned Aerocity in Greater Noida. These developments are expected to drive

exponential growth in the region, and OTL is committed to catering to the increasing demands of the area. The company also plans to expand its footprint with a new showroom in Delhi, post-raising funds

Union Bank of India signs MOU with SIDBIfor Co-Financing arrangement of MSMEs

Mumbai: Union Bank of India today signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) for a Co-Financing arrangement for MSMEs. The MoU was signed by Shri Lal Singh, Chief General Manager, Union Bank of India and Shri Vivek Kumar Malhotra, Chief General Manager, SIDBI. SIDBI is country’s principal financial institution engaged in the Promotion, Financing and Development of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME).

Under the MoU, Union Bank of India would consider Joint financing/Co-Financing with SIDBI to Projects/Units in the MSME. This MoU would help the Banks to increase their

customer base, while helping the MSMEs to meet their funding requirements. The key highlights of the arrangement include joint identification of viable projects and term loan and working capital financing to MSMEs. Initially the arrangement would be at specific centers and once the arrangement stabilizes at these centers, more locations would be covered.

Speaking on the occasion, Shri Lal Singh, CGM (MSME), Union Bank of India, said “MSME is one of the key sectors of our Indian Economy contributing to GDP. Exports, Manufacturing Output, Employment, Women Empowerment etc. MSME is one of the focused areas of the Bank and at Union Bank

through a Right Issue, further reinforcing its position in the market. Oriental Trimex Limited is pleased to announce the securing of a 30-year lease for a Jet Black Granite Quarry spanning 12.260 acres (4.961 hectares) in Village Poteru, Malkangiri district, Orissa. This quarry, allocated by the Government of Orissa, is a significant addition to OTL’s portfolio, boasting a massive deposit of decorative stones and Jet Black-colored granite with substantial export potential.

of India, we aim to become Bank of 1st choice for MSMEs. This tie-up with SIDBI aids in realizing the Bank’s vision to have increased credit flow to the MSME sector and extend operational convenience to the MSME clientele. Under partnership, Union Bank of India through its Pan India branch network can provide general Banking products like Current Accounts, Savings Accounts, Working Capital facilities and other related services to the MSME Customers of SIDBI.”

Also, speaking on the tie-up arrangement, Shri Vivek Kumar Malhotra, CGM, SIDBI reiterated SIDBI’s commitment towards timely financing for MSMEs across all sectors.

Spice Money to enable farmers to withdraw PM-KISAN subsidy through its 1 million Adhikari Network

New Delhi: The Government of India has disbursed PM KISANsubsidy, directly to the farmers’ bank accounts benefitingover 10 crore farmers and families who have received a grant of Rs 2,000 each. Spice Money, India’s leading rural fintech with 1 million strong Adhikari network covering 18,500 plus pincodes, is assisting the farmers and farmer families residing in the heartlands of the country, to withdraw this subsidy through AePS at their doorstep Adhikari outlet. The PM Kisan Scheme, a central sector scheme with 100% funding from the Government of India, became operational on December 1, 2018. Under this scheme, income support of ? 6000 per year, divided into

three installments, is directly transferred to the bank accounts of landholding farmer families, consisting of the husband, wife, and minor children. Speaking on this, Sanjeev Kumar, Co-Founder & CEO, Spice Money, said, “At Spice Money, we have been striving to solve the problem of access to banking & financial services in rural India. As the 11th installment of the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi is rolled out, our 1 million Adhikaris operating across 18,500 pin codes, will be an enabler in ensuring easy access and withdrawal of this subsidy to the rightful 10 crore beneficiaries of this scheme.

Farmers and farmer

families will no longer have to travel large distances to bank branches or just let the money lie idle in their accounts in times of need. Our Adhikaris, trusted banking partners in their communities, will be there at the villages to help farmers withdraw their money, with the help of AePS, thereby providing much-needed safe and secure access to the subsidy amount.” Spice Money has been spearheading the efforts towards bridging the financial services gap in rural India by providingbanking and financial services to the remotest corners of the country, across 700 districts and 5,000 blocks, thereby revolutionising the way Bharat banks.

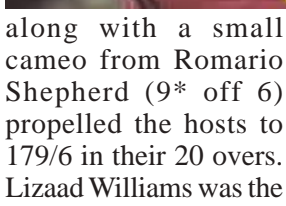
by intelligent terminals and provide Vedanta Aluminium insights on a real-time basis with respect to forklift speed, access to operate, collision avoidance, optimization analysis for operational efficiency and equipment maintenance, among others.

aluminium operations at BALCO in Chhattisgarh. These electric forklifts make use of the cutting-edge ‘Smart Fleet Management’ system to help ensure the highest levels of safety at site. The Smart Fleet Management system uses IOT (Internet of Things) technology to integrate the data collected

New Delhi: West Indies beat South Africa by 30 runs in the second T20I on Sunday, August 25 at Brian Lara Stadium, Tarouba, Trinidad and took an unassailable 2-0 lead in the three-match series. After being put in to bat first, West Indies posted a good score of 179/6 in their allotted 20 overs with Shai Hope once again starring with the bat with his knock of 41 (22).

In reply, South Africa were bundled out for 149 in 19.4 overs as Romario Shepherd (3/15) and Shamar Joseph (3/31) decimated their batting

run flow going with his quick-fire knock of 41 off 22 balls smashing two fours and four sixes. The opener missed his second successive half-century of the series as he fell prey to Patrick Kruger in the ninth over. Following Hope's wickets South Africa made a good comeback by dismissing Roston Chase (7 off 9) and dangerous Nicholas Pooran (19 off 19) cheaply to leave West Indies on 108/4 after 12.5 overs. Crucial knocks from captain Rovman Powell (35 off 22) and Sherfane Rutherford (29 off 18)



pick of the bowlers for the Proteas with figures of 3/36. In the second innings, South Africa's chase got off to a rollicking start

with Reeza Hendricks (44 off 18) launching an all-out assault on the West Indies bowlers. He added 63 runs for the first wicket off 28 balls

forging a 43-run stand off 39 balls with Rassie van der Dussen (17 off 24). However, he failed to replicate his heroics from the 1st T20I and fell prey to Akeal Hosein (2/25). From there on, there was no comeback for the Proteas as West Indies bowlers ran through their batting to bundle them out for 149 and sealed the win for their side. Meanwhile, having taken a 2-0 lead in the series, West Indies will be aiming for a whitewash in the third and final T20I on Tuesday, August 27 at the same venue.

out their premier spinner Abrar Ahmed and picking a pace-heavy bowling attack. After scoring 448 for six (declared) in their first innings, Shan Masood's Pakistan went downhill as Bangladesh stormed their way back into the game. The home team was bowled out for 146 in their second innings, after which Bangladesh chased down 30 in 6.3 overs. Afridi also heaped praise on the visiting team for their 'brand of cricket'. "A 10-wicket defeat raises serious questions about the decision to

prepare this type of pitch, select four fast bowlers and leave out a specialist spinner. This to me clearly shows a lack of awareness about home conditions. That said, you cannot take the credit away from Bangladesh for the brand of cricket they played throughout the Test,” Afridi wrote on X.

A 10-wicket defeat raises serious questions about the decision to prepare this type of pitch, select four fast bowlers and leave out a specialist spinner. This to me clearly shows a lack of

awareness about home conditions. That said, you cannot take the credit away from Shahid Afridi .

After the match, Masood said that the pitch in Rawalpindi did not play out as they thought. The skipper said that with rain around, he expected the ball to move around and help the fast bowlers.

“Never to make an excuse, it (the pitch) didn't play the way we thought it would. Also the weather it had been around in Islamabad and Rawalpindi, it rained around 8-9 days before the first day of play. Firstly looking at the pitch, we expected it to do a bit more. With three pace bowlers, they were going to be pushed to the limit. At the end of the day, we got it wrong,” Masood said in the post-match press conference.

Pakistan will be looking to draw level in the series when the second and final Test gets underway on August 30 in Rawalpindi.

New Delhi: Bangladesh captain Najmul Hossain Shanto praised Shakib Al Hasan for stepping up in the first Test in Rawalpindi despite being in a controversial situation. Najmul Hossain Shanto credited Shakib Al Hasan for not losing his focus from the game despite facing turmoil in his personal life. The 37-year-old Shakib was recently named among 147 individuals, who were accused in a murder case in student's protests in Bangladesh. As per the FIR filed, he was either the 27th or 28th accused. The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) has also received an official notice to remove Shakib from the national team. But instead of letting the tumultuous times affect him, Shakib played a crucial role in Bangladesh's 10-wicket win over Pakistan in the opening Test in Rawalpindi. Shakib faltered with the

bat in the first innings after Saim Ayub dismissed him for 15. But he returned to pick up four wickets, including three in the second innings. Shanton praised the all-rounder for stepping up and helping the team script history. "He is someone who is dedicated. He does whatever is needed for the team to win. He knows very well how to focus on cricket by keeping his personal life aside. He knows how to help the team and juniors."

Despite being in such a situation, he deserves credit for performing the way he did and giving his inputs, especially in bowling. We expect him to perform even better in the next game,” Shanto said in the post-match presentation ceremony. Shanto also hoped that Bangladesh’s win will give his countrymen something to cheer for. The student’s protests coupled with floods have made life tough for people in Bangladesh.

“Last one month has been tough. Problems are still there, but in Bangladesh, we all support each other. I hope this win will bring them a smile on their faces. That’s why we are very happy and we will look to continue like this even in the next game,” Shanto added.

After taking a 1-0 lead, Bangladesh will be looking to win the series when the second Test starts on August 30 in Rawalpindi.

New Delhi: Australia Women have left out experienced spinner Jess Jonassen and picked pacer Tayla Vlaeminck in the 15-member squad named for the Women's T20 World Cup 2024, due to be played in UAE in October.

Heather Graham will also be part of the squad for the preceding T20I series against New Zealand at home, but won't be travelling for the World Cup.

SQUAD: Alyssa Healy (C), Darcie Brown, Ash Gardner, Kim Garth, Grace Harris, Alana King, Phoebe Litchfield, Tahlia McGrath (VC), Sophie Molineux, Beth Mooney, Ellyse Perry, Megan Schutt, Annabel Sutherland, Georgia Wareham, Tayla Vlaeminck

Opting for consistency and stability, Australia have gone for the exact same squad that played their last T20I assignment, in



flegler, Cricket Australia's Head of Performance (Women's Cricket) and National Selector. "Phoebe Litchfield is a real x-factor for us and will be well supported by an experienced group at her first World Cup," he added. "The pace duo of Tayla Vlaeminck and Darcie Brown is one we've been wanting to unleash for a while and is a real point of difference for us."

Vlaeminck made her Australia comeback in the T20I leg of the team's Bangladesh tour, after having missed considerable cricket since her stress injury ahead of the 2022 ODI World Cup. After a 18-month hiatus since, Vlaeminck also suffered a shoulder injury leading up to WBBL 2023.

Jonassen, meanwhile, has not represented Australia in the shortest

format since the 2023 home series against West Indies whereas her last international appearance was the on-off Test at Wankhede against India at the end of the year. The left-arm spinner, however, had a very successful stint in WBBL 2023 that followed, finishing the season as Brisbane Heat's highest wicket-taker, with 24 scalps, and second overall. She was also the joint third highest wicket-taker in WPL 2024, with 11 scalps.

"Jess Jonassen is again unlucky to miss out, but we've been impressed with the way she's bounced back, and we'll continue to monitor her form ahead of the home summer."

Successfully defending their crown in UAE would see Australia become the first team, men or women's, to claim four consecutive T20 World Cup titles.

New Delhi: As speculation continues about Jay Shah potentially becoming the chairman of the International Cricket Council (ICC), one thing is becoming clearer by the day: Disney Star is looking to renegotiate its massive broadcast deal with the ICC, signed precisely a couple of years ago. If Shah does take over as chairman, this will be one of the significant issues awaiting him in his Dubai office. The \$3 billion Star-ICC contract took effect with the recent Twenty20 World Cup in the US and West Indies, and the broadcaster is now simultaneously also seeking immediate relief on the championship's overall valuation for several reasons. The request for a renegotiation is separate from the call for a discount on the World Cup delivery. Star has written two letters to the ICC, and the issue

was discussed during last month's Annual Conference in Colombo. Outgoing chairman Greg Barclay also engaged with ICC officials on the matter. Still, it is understood that the final decision will rest with the Board, the all-powerful decision-making body. Star is believed to be seeking a discount of over \$100 million from the recent World Cup, citing several reasons, most notably the washout of the India-Canada game in Lauderdale, Florida, on June 15. The India fixtures in World Cups are high-value events, and the broadcaster claims significant losses due to the abandonment of this match. While a few other games, such as England vs. Scotland, USA vs. Ireland and Sri Lanka vs. Nepal, were also washed out, the broadcaster is believed to have specifically highlighted the India-Canada match. Broadcast deals typically do not include refund clauses, so how much it can

convince the ICC remains to be seen. Star is also believed to have raised points about the low-scoring semifinal between Afghanistan and South Africa on June 26 at Tarouba, where Afghanistan were bowled out for 56 in just 11.5 overs. South Africa chased down the target in under nine overs, resulting in a contest that did not quite fit the billing of a World Cup semifinal. The ICC later rated the pitch at the Brian Lara Academy as unsatisfactory. Other concerns raised included the tournament's marketing, the timing of matches in the US, and the low-scoring nature of the high-profile India-Pakistan game. However, the broadcaster was unwilling to discuss the issues. A spokesperson for Star declined to comment, while the ICC, citing policy, refrained from making statements on commercial matters.