

## Singapore High Commissioner Simon Wong Meets CM Mohan Majhi

**Singapore President to Visit Odisha in January**

**Bhubaneswar,(KCN):** Singapore President Mr. Tharman Shanmugatnam will visit India during January. During his India visit, he will also come to Odisha. Mr. Simon Wong, the High Commissioner of Singapore to India informed this to Chief Minister Sri Mohan Charan Majhi, when he met him at Lok Seva Bhawan today.

It may be mentioned here that Singapore and India are celebrating 60 years of diplomatic relationship. Both the nations enjoy deep historical, cultural and economic ties. This relationship has now evolved into a strategic partnership encompassing areas like trade, defence, technology and cultural exchange. Singapore is one of the largest sources of FDI in India. India too has a strong presence in Singapore through its companies in IT, banking



and manufacturing. With shared values of democracy, innovation and sustainable development, both nations are keen to strengthen ties for mutual growth and regional stability.

To commemorate this bilateral tie, Singapore President is visiting India next month. Besides, during his Singapore visit last month, Chief Minister Sri Majhi had requested the Singapore Government to arrange a visit of Singapore

President to Odisha too. Accepting the invitation of the CM, the President has decided to come to Odisha during his India visit.

During the discussion, Mr. Wong said that Singapore would be the first country partner for Utkarsh Odisha- MIO Conclave 2025. He said that while the President is visiting India in January, Odisha is the only state he chose to visit as he sees the huge opportunity for strengthening business

partnership with Odisha along with the existing cultural ties. He further said that the highlight of the visit will be the state's potential in petrochemicals, green energy and skills.

Welcoming the High Commissioner and his team, the Chief Minister extended his thanks to the Singapore Government for accepting his invitation to Singapore President for a visit to Odisha. The Chief Minister said that there is tremendous potential for collaboration between Singapore and Odisha. He further stated that the relationship is now poised for the next level in various sectors such as petrochemicals, urban planning, tourism, renewable energy and skill development. The CM also expressed his thanks to the Singapore Government for hosting him and Team Odisha that resulted in a

**President of India graces Human rights Day CELEBRATION organised by the National Human Rights Commission**

**New Delhi,(KCN):** The President of India, Smt Droupadi Murmu graced and addressed the Human Rights Day celebration, organised by the National Human Rights Commission, in New Delhi today (December 10, 2024). Speaking on the occasion, the President said that India, with its civilisational heritage spanning over 5,000 years, has long upheld values of empathy, compassion, and the inter-connectedness of individuals within a harmonious community. Based on these values, institutions such as the NHRC and SHRCs along with civil society, human rights defenders,

future, we are confronted with emerging challenges. Cybercrimes and climate change are new threats to human rights. The digital era, while transformative, has brought with it complex issues such as cyberbullying, deepfake, privacy concerns, and the spread of misinformation. These challenges underscore the importance of fostering a safe, secure, and equitable digital environment that protects the rights and dignity of every individual. The President said that Artificial Intelligence has now entered our day-to-day life, solving many problems and creating



**Odisha: 857 elephants died in past 11 years, says minister**

**Bhubaneswar,(KCN):** As many as 857 elephants died in the past 11 years in Odisha, with electrocution being the key cause of unnatural death of the animal, the state Assembly was informed Tuesday. Diseases, accidents, poaching and electrocution were some of the other reasons for elephant deaths in the state, Forest, Environment and Climate Change Minister Ganesh Ram Singhuntia said in response to a query in the Assembly. According to the statistics furnished by the minister, 149 elephants were electrocuted to death between 2014-15 and 2024-25 (till December 2) while poachers killed 30 elephants.

special rapporteurs and special monitors, have been working to ensure the protection of human rights for all. She appreciated the proactive role played by the NHRC in addressing violations, raising awareness and recommending policy changes to uphold the rights of the marginalised. The President said that India is steadfast in its commitment to guaranteeing to all the citizens, the civic and political rights. The Government also guarantees a number of socio-economic and cultural rights, spanning from providing housing, clean drinking water, improved sanitation, electricity, cooking gas and financial services to healthcare and education for all. The provision of basic necessities is seen as a matter of rights. The President said that as we progress into the



notice. Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge, Congress Parliamentary Party Chairperson Sonia Gandhi and the floor leaders of various opposition parties are also not among the signatories, the sources said. The notice, spearheaded by the Congress, comes in the wake of turbulent ties between opposition parties and the Rajya Sabha chairman. "ALL parties belonging

to the INDIA group have had no option but to formally submit a no-confidence motion against the learned Hon'ble Chairman of the Rajya Sabha for the extremely partisan manner in which he has been conducting the proceedings of the Council of States. It has been a very painful decision for the INDIA parties to take, but in the interests of parliamentary democracy they have had to take this

## Opposition submits notice for moving no-confidence motion against Vice President Dhankhar

**New Delhi,(KCN):** Opposition parties Tuesday submitted a notice to move a motion for removing Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar for allegedly conducting the House in a partisan manner.

Congress leaders Jairam Ramesh and Naseer Hussain submitted the notice to Rajya Sabha Secretary General P C Mody.

The vice president is the ex-officio chairman of Rajya Sabha.

The sources said about 60 opposition MPs — including from the Congress, RJD, TMC, CPI, CPI-M, JMM, AAP, DMK — have signed the notice.

However, they said top Congress leaders who hold Constitutional posts have not signed the

## Signing of MoU for Implementation of Comprehensive Project on Rice Fallow Management

**Bhubaneswar,(KCN):** Today at Krishi Bhawan Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has been signed between Department of Agriculture & Farmers' Empowerment and Implementing Agencies IRRI, ICRISAT, ICARDA, MSSRF & AFC India Ltd. for implementation of Comprehensive project on Rice Fallow Management in presence of Hon'ble Deputy Chief Minister Shri Kanwar Singh Deo. Recognizing the pressing need to address the underutilization of around

16 Lakh Ha rice fallow areas and declining soil fertility, the Department of Agriculture & Farmers' Empowerment initiated the Comprehensive Project on Rice Fallow Management in 2022-23 with an initial target of 70,000 hectares. This ambitious project aimed to maximize the utilization of residual soil moisture in these areas by cultivating short-duration pulses (Green gram, Black gram, Bengal gram, Lentil, Field pea & Grass pea) and oilseeds crops (Mustard & Sesamum). Building on the success of the first year, the project



was scaled up significantly in 2023-24, covering 3.9 lakh hectares.

For the current year, an even more expansive program is under implementation, targeting 4.5 lakh hectares. This includes 3.45 lakh hectares under the state-funded CRFM scheme and 1.10 lakh hectares under the central government's TRFA-Pulse and TRFA-Oilseed schemes. To effectively implement the project and reach approximately 5 lakh beneficiaries across the state, the Department has collaborated with

renowned international and national institutions such as CGIAR-ICRISAT, IRRI, ICARDA, MSSRF, and AFC India Ltd. This collaboration will facilitate the timely dissemination of critical technologies. A crop-specific input cafeteria is developed emphasizing the use of bio-based inputs and IPM devices to promote sustainable and regenerative agricultural practices. At the district level, coordination has been established between the district administration, block-level extension

# Pravasi Bharatiya Divas: Odisha to provide homestay options for visiting NRIs

**Bhubaneswar(KCN):** As Odisha is gearing up to host the three-day Pravasi Bharatiya Divas from January 8 to be attended by around 7,000 NRIs, the state government is making homestay arrangements for the visitors apart from hotel accommodations. The homestay owners have been provided training in guest management and safety protocols.

"It is a big opportunity for the people of Odisha to host the NRIs. We will also make homestay arrangements for them apart from hotel accommodation," Deputy Chief Minister Pravati Parida said.

Odisha's hospitality would be on the like of "Atithi Deva Bhabo" (Guest is God), she said. In order to facilitate the visitors to book their accommodation, Parida said the Odisha Tourism Department has blocked 200 hotels with more than 3,700 rooms in Bhubaneswar, Cuttack and Puri.

The families owning homestays, who would host the visiting NRIs, have been provided basic training in guest management and safety protocols, a senior official said.

The aim is to provide the Indian diaspora with the experience of Odisha's atmosphere as well as the

culture and tradition in Odia homes, the official said.

This apart, in view of cyber frauds in hotel bookings, the state government has advised the delegates to book their accommodation through a dedicated website 'pbdindia.gov.in.'

The state tourism department has shared the names and other details of hotels with the Ministry of Home Affairs for the safety of delegates.

The department has also identified as many as 30 tourist destinations in Bhubaneswar, Puri, Konark, Chilika-Satapada and



Raghurajpur crafts village where the NRIs may pay visits, the official said. The PBD event began in

2003 and is being held in Odisha for the first time. Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi Monday

reviewed the preparations for the programme. Majhi said the

cleanliness of Bhubaneswar should be of international standard. For this, he suggested that a special cleanliness campaign be conducted in the state capital.

All the roads in the city are being renovated, illuminated and decorated, while tourist places are being beautified.

According to a statement issued by the CMO, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar is scheduled to attend the first day January 8, Prime Minister Narendra Modi January 9 and President Droupadi Murmu January 10.

The event will feature a Plenary Session on topics

such as 'Unraveling India's Best Kept Secret' and 'Odisha – the Land of Opportunities'.

During the PBD events, the state has planned as many as 10 festivals in

Bhubaneswar in January.

These are Raja Rani

Music Festival (January

7-11), Muktaswar Dance

Festival (January 7-11),

International Odissi

Dance Festival (January

7-11), Tribal Dance and

Folk Art Festival

(January 7-11), Adivasi

Mela (Tribal Fair)

(January 5-15), Chilika

Bird Festival (January 6-12), Flower Show

(January 7-11), Food Fest

(January 8-10) and Night

Flea Market (January 8-10).

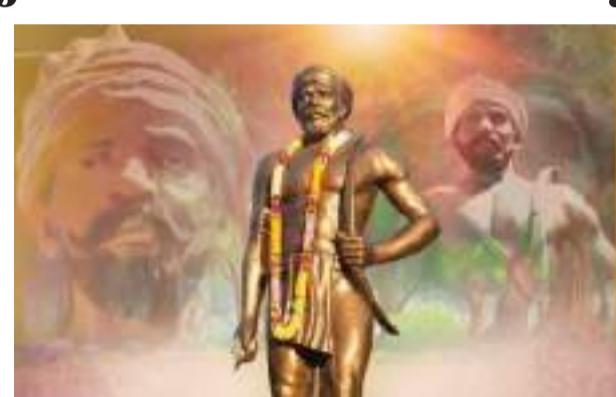
## Odisha remembers tribal freedom fighter Rendo Majhi on his 169th martyrdom day

**Bhawanipatna(KCN):** Odisha Tuesday remembered freedom fighter and tribal icon Rendo Majhi on his 169th martyrdom day.

Rendo Majhi headed a movement against the British from 1853 till he was shot dead by the police two years later.

Taking to X, Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi said "A humble tribute to the great freedom fighter, tribal leader Rendo Majhi, on his sacrifice day. His dedication and sacrifice for the protection of motherland will always be remembered."

Rendo Majhi, along with his 19 associates, was gunned down by British police while they were



taking rest at Uraldani in Kalahandi district December 10, 1855. He became the target of the British police following his revolt against the East India Company's interference in the socio-cultural and religious matters of tribals and intervention in the rights of tribal on minor forest products. To suppress the movement, the police arrested Majhi and made him walk in villages in chains. However, this aggravated resentment of the local inhabitants further and the tribals snatched him away. Majhi then organised tribals and launched attacks on the British police.

Remembering the sacrifice and bravery of the tribal icon, floral

tributes were paid to the leader in Bhawanipatna, Uraldani, Rangapadar and Lubengarh.

A torch rally amid playing of tribal musical instruments was held at Uraldani. It was organised by Adi Kondh Samaj, Manav Surakhya Sangathan and Rendo Majhi Smruti Samiti. Thousands of tribals also attended a public meeting. A memorandum was sent to the Chief Minister to focus on different development activities in Uraldani, Lubengarh, Manikera and Mohangiri areas.

A rally was also organised at Bhawanipatna by Kalahandi district Adivasi Sangh.

## Rally in Bhubaneswar to protest 'atrocities' on Hindus in Bangladesh



**Bhubaneswar(KCN):** A massive rally was held in Bhubaneswar Tuesday to protest the alleged atrocities on Hindu minorities in Bangladesh. The rally, organised by Hindu Suraksha Manch (HSM), started at the Exhibition Ground and

ended at Lower PMG with hundreds of people participating. With placards and posters, the demonstrators raised slogans urging all Hindus across the world to come together for the protection of the

minorities in Bangladesh. "Following the political unrest, Hindus are being attacked every day in Bangladesh. Their houses and businesses are being set on fire and they need our support. So, we have organised this protest rally to

express our solidarity and create awareness among the Hindu people in Odisha," said HSM convenor Jayakrushna Prusty.

"Not only in Bhubaneswar, several such protests are being held in different districts of the state," he said.

Prusty said the people of Bangladesh should not forget that India helped them to get independence in 1971.

Following the rally, representatives of HSM submitted a memorandum addressed to President Droupadi Murmu, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and UN Secretary-General António Guterres to Odisha Governor Raghbar Das, seeking protection of minority Hindus in Bangladesh.

## Two Bangladeshi vessels with 78 crew members held for fishing in Indian waters



**Paradip(KCN):** The Coast Guard Tuesday intercepted two Bangladeshi vessels with 78 people on board while allegedly fishing in Indian waters, a statement said. The two vessels were located during routine surveillance by the Coast Guard ship 'Amogh', it said. The vessels — FV Laila-2 and FV Meghna-5, were found engaged in unauthorised fishing

activities in Indian waters near the International Maritime Boundary Line (IMBL), violating the international maritime laws and bilateral agreements, it added. While there were 41

crew members on FV Laila-2, there were 37 crew members on FV Meghna-5, the statement said.

Upon inspection, approximately 160 ton of fish were found in the two vessels. Subsequently, the vessels and the crew members were brought to Paradip in Odisha for further investigation, it said. Both vessels were booked under the Maritime Zones of India Act, 1981.

The Coast Guard said it

was coordinating with relevant authorities, including the Ministry of External Affairs and the Fisheries Department, for further legal actions.

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## Deepika Padukone holds onto baby Dua as she exits Mumbai airport



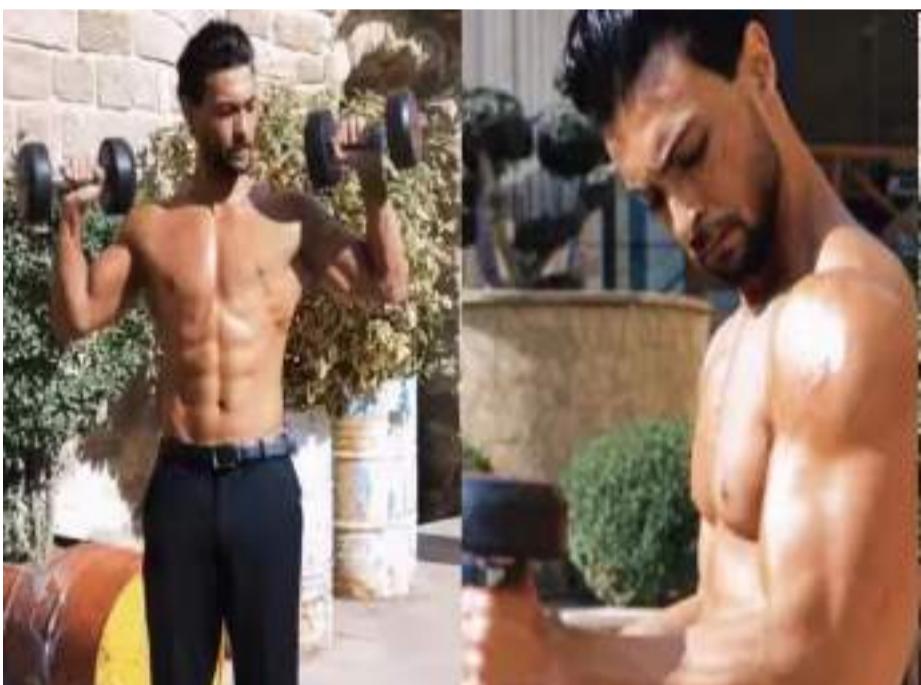
Hindi film star Deepika Padukone was seen holding onto her daughter Dua tight as she exited Mumbai's Kalina Airport. The actress, who was seen creating a tizzy at Punjabi sensation Diljit Dosanjh's Dil-Luminati Tour concert in Bangalore, was seen exiting the airport in a fiery red oversized shirt. She completed her look with big sunglasses and her hair tied into a neat bun.

She had Dua in a baby carrier, which was strapped onto her shoulders and held her close while making an exit and sitting into the luxurious car. The actress did not pose for the photographers, who stood outside the airport. On December 7, Deepika performed on the stage with Punjabi superstar Diljit Dosanjh at his concert in

Bengaluru. In a video clicked by a fan, the actress was seen dancing along as the singer performed his song with Sia, 'Hass Hass', on stage. The two also danced on Diljit's synth-pop track 'Lover'. This marked Deepika's first public appearance after the birth of her daughter Dua. What made the gig special for her was the fact that it was held in her

hometown. The Copenhagen-born actress grew up in Bengaluru before she made her way to modelling. It was on the occasion of Diwali when Deepika and her actor husband Ranveer Singh introduced their daughter to the world. On November 1, the couple revealed their daughter's name. Deepika Padukone took

## Aayush Sharma Shares BTS Video Of His Hardcore Workout On The Streets Of Azerbaijan



Having recently wrapped the Azerbaijan shoot schedule of his upcoming film AS04, Aayush Sharma shared a throwback video of his last-minute grind to ace the perfect body shot physique to shoot a shirtless scene. Aayush recently announced the wrap of his straining schedule packed with action in Azerbaijan, which also included a body shot flaunting his washboard abs and toned muscles. The actor shared a video presenting the grind needed minutes before the main shot, to define the abs and muscles more prominently.

Ever since his jaw-dropping transformation from the lean, guy-next-door look from his debut film to the beefed up, toned,

physique with washboard abs for Antim: The Final Truth, Aayush Sharma has bagged his permanent spot amongst the fittest actors of the business. Further surprising everyone with his muscular built, Aayush Sharma regularly treated his

fans and followers with glimpses into his rigorous workout routine as he gears for his upcoming film AS04.

Launching debutante Sushri Mishra with AS04, Aayush Sharma also roped in veteran South Indian actor Jagapathi Babu for the film.

Produced by KK Radhamohan, under the banner of Srisathyasai Arts, the yet untitled action entertainer AS04 stars Aayush Sharma as the lead, co-starring debutante Sushri Mishra. Directed by Katyan Shivpuri, the film is slated for release in 2023.

## Chitrangda Singh's new emotion is 'nexcited'



Hindi film actress Chitrangda Singh has discovered a new emotion "nexcited", which is a combination of nervous and excited. Chitrangda took to Instagram, where she shared a boomerang video of herself in monochrome. In the clip, the 48-year-old actress is seen sitting in a robe and smiling at the camera.

However, the actress did not share what she is nervous and excited for. She used the queen of pop Madonna's song "True Blue" as the background score for the boomerang clip. It was recently announced that Chitrangda has joined

the cast of Housefull 5 starring Akshay Kumar. Chitrangda will be seen sharing screen space with Akshay once again after Desi Boyz and Khel Khel Mein. She had heaped praise on the star and called him a "true master of comedy."

"Akshay is incredibly talented and a true master of comedy. We've known each other for a long time, and working with him is always a pleasure," the actress, who is heading to London for the shoot of Housefull 5, told IANS.

The first installment of the film released in 2010, which had Akshay, Riteish

Deshmukh, Arjun

Deepika Padukone

and late star Jiah Khan.

## Mrunal Thakur celebrates 1 year of 'Hi Nanna' with unseen pictures



As her film Hi Nanna completed one year since its release, actress Mrunal Thakur celebrated the moment by sharing unseen images and videos from the shoot.

Mrunal took to her Instagram, where she shared a reel video. The clip has her look test, videos from the sets, moments shared with her co-stars, dubbing sessions and a few glimpses of her behind-the-scenes moments among many others.

Hi Nanna released in 2023. The Telugu-language romantic drama film directed by Shouryuv also stars Nani. The film was officially announced in January 2023 under the tentative title Nani 30, as it is Nani's 30th film as the lead actor, and the official title was announced in July 2023. It was shot in Mumbai, Hyderabad, Coonoor, and wrapped by late-September 2023.

The film told the tale of a loving father and his adorable 6-year-old daughter. The duo find their lives taking a dramatic turn when the woman he loves marries someone else.

An avid user of social media, Mrunal often shares updates about her professional and personal life on the platform.

Recently, she shared a post related to her "jeevan saathi", which included a delicious plate of poha, a popular Indian breakfast dish.

The picture was captioned: "Jeevan Saathi." Mrunal started her acting career in 2012 with the television series "Mujhse Kuchh Kehti... Yeh Khamoshiya."

She gained widespread recognition for her portrayal of Bulbul Arora in Ekta Kapoor's popular daily soap "Kumkum Bhagya" and left a lasting impression with her roles in other TV shows like Arjun.

Mrunal showcased her acting prowess in movies such as Super 30 opposite Hrithik Roshan, Batla House, and Dhamaka. She received praise for her performance in the widely praised romantic drama Sita Ramam.

She also featured in the sci-fi epic Kalki 2898 AD, where she shared screen space with Prabhas, Amitabh Bachchan, Kamal Haasan, and Deepika Padukone.

Recently, Mrunal was seen shooting in the scenic locales of Uttarakhand for an untitled romantic film alongside Siddhant Chaturvedi. She also has Son of Sardaar 2 with Ajay Devgn, directed by Vijay Kumar Arora, and a comedy venture featuring Varun Dhawan under the direction of David Dhawan. She also has an upcoming film Pooja Meri Jaan in the lineup.

released. A standalone sequel to Housefull and also an uncredited remake of the 1998 Malayalam film Mattupetti Machan. The first two parts were helmed by Sajid Khan.

The third and the fourth installment was directed by Farhad Samji and the fifth film Housefull 5 is directed by Tarun Mansukhani. The fifth installment also stars Fardeen Khan, Pooja Hegde and Riteish.

The actress was last seen in Gaslight in 2023. The film, which is a mystery thriller, is directed by Pavan Kirpalani. It also stars Vikrant Massey and Sara Ali Khan.

# Vice President's Concern For Farmers: Voice Of The Heart Or The Hurt Voice?



The farmers of Punjab under the banner of Kisan Majdoor Morcha (KMM) and Samyukta Kisan Morcha (SKM, non-political) are agitating for fulfilment of their long pending demands, including guarantee for MSP for more than ten months, but not to talk about the acceptance of their demands, the farmers are being stopped even to enter Haryana for their 'Delhi Chalo' march by using teargas and water cannon in the chilling cold of December.

The State Committee of Bharatiya Kisan Union Ekta Dakoanda, in a statement issued to media, strongly condemning the Haryana Police's repression of farmers who started marching peacefully from Sambhu border to Delhi with a group of 101 farmers, referred that earlier many ministers and leaders of Bharatiya Janata Party had said that farmers can go to Delhi if they do not bring tractors, but now they are not being allowed to go to Delhi even on foot. The organization said that this has exposed the fascist and anti-farmer face of the Bharatiya Janata Party.

The General Secretary of the All-India Congress Committee, former Union Minister, and MP from Sirsa, Kumari Selja has also condemned the police action, "It is condemnable to forcibly stop farmers marching peacefully to Delhi demanding a law guaranteeing MSP (Minimum Support Price), by resorting to lathi-charge and firing tear gas shells. The oppressive policies adopted by the government are not the solution to farmers' problems. If the government genuinely wants to resolve the issues faced by farmers, it should engage in dialogue with them."

Here the noteworthy thing is that the India's Vice-President, Jagdeep Dhankhar himself is also expressing his rage over the inaction of the government for neglecting the demands of the farmers.

The Vice-President comments with a disheartened voice - "There was a movement last year, there is a movement this year too, the wheel of time is turning, we are not doing anything. Farmers in distress and farmers in agitation do not augur well for the overall well-being of the Nation."

Supporting the MSP demand of the farmers, The Vice-President warns, "We are not practical, our policy making is not on the right track. Farmers need a law that guarantees MSP.

Look with an open mind, think with an open mind, and evaluate. And it pains me that the well-wishers of the farmers are silent today, they shy away from speaking. No power in the country can stifle the voice of the farmers. A nation will pay a huge price, if it tries to stop the patience of a farmer."

Vice-President Jagdeep Dhankhar's address on December 3, 2024, at the Centenary Foundation Day of Indian Council of Agricultural Research - Central Institute for Research on Cotton Technology (ICAR-CIRCOT), Mumbai has not only astonished the political analysts, but also perplexed them. How and why the Vice-President expressed his voice of heart which ripped to pieces the farmer policy of his own government even in the presence of Union Agriculture Minister, Shiv Raj Chauhan? Why did he change his tune and tone irrespective of his staunch faithfulness in the government, which thronged him to the present chair? Whether his heart really has lineage towards the aggrieved farmers or he has some other specific agenda? Shocking thing was that he raised some conscience piercing questions.

Indicating towards the Agricultural Research Institutes, the Vice-President said that in a country of 1.4 billion people, a network of

such institutions, dotting every nook and corner of the country, covering every activity of agronomy, 'What is happening? Has the farmer's scenario changed? What is

see where their impact is?"

Showing his concern towards the aggrieved farmers, Vice-President said, "If farmers are protesting today, it would be a big



reaching the farmer?" "If the institutions were alive and contributing, this situation would never have arisen. These are the questions before you and us."

He asked, "We need to look inside as to why we have not been able to do this till now. Is agriculture not developing in the world? Is technology not coming? This is a matter to think about."

Mr Dhankhar asserted, "Whatever is done for the farmers is less. Whatever you do for the farmers will have an impact on the country, in a positive way. When I look at the institutions and

misunderstanding and mistake to assess that movement in a limited way. The farmers who are not on the road are also worried and troubled today."

Mr. Dhankhar warned the government for its lethargic attitude towards farmers, "We cannot fight with our own people, we cannot put our own people in a situation where they are wondering how long they will fight. We cannot have the mindset that their stay will be limited and they will get tired on their own."

Quoting farmer leader, Jagjit Singh Dallewal's

message, the Vice-President asked the Union Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chauhan, "Honourable Agriculture Minister, what did he say, what is his message for me? His message is - why was the promise made to the farmers not fulfilled?"

Mr. Dhankhar further asked, "We all should know, was any promise made to the farmers? Honourable Agriculture Minister, did the agriculture minister who was before you make any promise in writing? If he did make a promise, then what happened to it?"

The Vice-President advised the agriculture minister,

"The challenge for you is that when any government makes a promise and that promise is linked to the farmer, then we should never leave any stone unturned. The farmer is respectable for us, he is worth remembering in the dawn, he is always revered. I myself am a farmer's son, I know what all the farmer does not bear, and he is our provider of food."

Commenting on ignoring the farmers' demands, Mr. Dhankhar said, "Hey, instead of giving reward, we are not paying what is due. We are being stingy even in giving what was promised, and I don't understand why talks are not being held with the farmers?"

"Can we create a boundary between the farmer and the government? Why is this happening, why is my farmer worried? Why is he suffering? Why is the farmer stressed?" These lines seem to show that the Vice-President is heartedly worried about the plight of the farmers, but will the central government listen to the voice of his hurted heart?

The Vice-President's heart seems to burst, when he says, "The farmer is alone and helpless. He doesn't decide what he can decide. Agriculture Minister, every moment of yours is important. I request you and the person in the second position under the Indian Constitution is requesting you to please tell me what was promised to the farmer and what was promised, why was it not fulfilled and what should we do to fulfil the promise?"

Now the question arises, whether the central government will heed towards the painful voice of the second highest thronged person or will it remain unheard like a cry in the wilder ness (Nakkarkhaane Mein Tuti Ki Aawaaz)?

What a surprise! Why and how the hardcore stand of the Vice-President suddenly softened? Hardly the morning wet dried, the Vice-President changed

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## Women empowerment in the digital age

Vijay Garg



Mobile Communications Association' and 'Oxfam', it is clear that women's access to the internet needs improvement. For example, the gender gap in mobile ownership is expected to decline by 11 percent in 2022, but women are still at a disadvantage in mobile internet usage. The share remains stable at 130 1 per cent, widening the gender gap to 40 per cent. Moreover, mobile internet awareness among women is less than 60 percent. This shows that major challenges still remain for women to fully integrate into the digital world.

'Digital for women': The challenges of engagement are not just technical, but also social and mental health. Women face cyber abuse, online harassment and mental health problems, especially when they use social media platforms. This negatively impacts not only their personal security but also their digital engagement. Improving access to the internet, mobile phone access and financial services in India is

important, but it is also important that these reforms are implemented with a gender equality perspective. There is a stark difference in Internet usage between women and men in rural areas, where men are

According to Gurumurthy and Chami (2018), no clear gender-disaggregated training goals were mentioned in the Digital India program document, which expresses the inability to include women inclusively



in the digital world. Furthermore, the initiative also fails to recognize that increasing the rate of Internet usage by women requires digital literacy and skills opportunities. Inclusive development of digital technologies can provide opportunities for all sections of society to overcome barriers to economic opportunity, education and mobility. Digital technologies can create new jobs, facilitate access to digital financial services and facilitate the growth of digital

businesses. Can encourage S. Additionally, digital technology can also help improve public service delivery and promote greater citizen participation. Internet usage in India has grown

is deeper in rural areas. According to the National Sample Survey, in rural India men are almost twice as likely as women to use the Internet. There is no state or union territory in India as a whole where

GDP by 100 billion dollars by 2025. Women will benefit most from this potential growth, as digital platforms provide them with new opportunities for skill development, employment and entrepreneurship. in digital skillsThe number of trained women is increasing at the rate of about 2.5 percent every year. With this, not only are women participating in 'startups', but they are also promoting technological innovation by taking leadership roles. Under the Digital India programme, rural women are being empowered through digitalisation. This has helped them expand their small businesses on online platforms and become financially independent. According to reports, women who have access earn approximately 140 percent more income. Eliminating the 'digital divide' should be a priority in efforts to increase Internet consumption; these efforts should also consider the problems women and girls face due to the Internet. The Government of India has

made a clear commitment to expand digital reach and infrastructure across India through its 'Digital India' programme, with this reach being accelerated by industry giants such as Google, Facebook and Amazon. Data provided by National Family Health Survey provide important information in terms of our progress on the issues, but it is also important to check that the approaches adopted do not reinforce patriarchal norms and structures that increase inequalities. Programs like 'Digital India' aim to eliminate the 'digital divide', but there is a need to ensure that women can fully benefit from the opportunities. Digital literacy, cyber security and mental health protection to promote digital empowerment for women. The measures should be promoted so that they can use the Internet safely and securely.

Retired Principal Educational Columnist Street Kaur Chand MHR Malout Punjab



The Union Minister for Defence, Shri Rajnath Singh laying a wreath and paying homage to the fallen heroes at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Moscow, Russia

## Nari Shakti Award Winner Alleges Ill-Treatment By Airline At Kolkata Airport



**Kolkata(KCN):** A doctor who was conferred with the 'Nari Shakti Puraskar' on Tuesday alleged that she received ill treatment from the employees of a low-cost carrier at the Kolkata airport after her flight to Bagdogra was cancelled due to "bad weather".

According to Dr Bharti Kashyap, a Ranchi-based ophthalmologist, she was travelling from the Jharkhand capital to Bagdogra in West Bengal with a stopover at Kolkata.

"After landing in Kolkata

at 10.45 am, after an hour's delay, I found out that the flight to Bagdogra was cancelled," Kashyap told PTI over phone. She alleged that the airline staff could not accommodate her in the airline's evening flight to Bagdogra, and kept her along with some other passengers, waiting for a long time. The connecting flight to Bagdogra from Kolkata was at 12.45 pm which the airline cancelled for the day. "They did not give us any refreshments for a long time. Some staff

members of the airline kept telling us that the airline will provide lunch and later it was provided to us around 4 pm," she alleged. She also said that after accommodating her on a flight on Wednesday, the airline offered her to stay in a dormitory, which she refused. "I am 57 and travelling alone. How can I stay in a dormitory with others?" asked the passenger who received the 'Nari Shakti Puraskar' from then President Ram Nath Kovind in 2017. She also said that her

brother who was travelling to Bagdogra from Mumbai by the same airline had no problem reaching there. "While we were told that our flight was cancelled due to bad weather there, the plane in which my brother was travelling to the same destination could land there," she said. Meanwhile, IndiGo sources at the airport said that one flight, which had left from Kolkata at 7.40 am was already diverted due to bad weather at Bagdogra. The next flight to Bagdogra which was scheduled to depart from Kolkata at 12.45 pm had to be cancelled due to bad weather there, an employee said. Kashyap was scheduled to be on that flight. "We are doing our best to help the stranded passengers. Right now we cannot give them hotel accommodation for the night since all hotel rooms are booked due to the ongoing festive season," the employee said.

Sometime later, the airline

staff managed to give the doctor a room and five others were put up in a dormitory at the airport. "I was stranded at the airport for six hours," Kashyap said after getting the accommodation for the night. "But the hotel says it will not serve tea and dinner unless the airline tells them to do so," she alleged. The airline, however, did not come up with any statement on the matter till the last reports came in.

Dr Bharti Kashyap has been working towards bringing a change in the lives of thousands of people across Jharkhand.

Through the 'Eye

Donation awareness campaign' and 'Vision for Young Rural Jharkhand campaign' she has been working towards bringing the less privileged children and youth out of darkness by organising eye-checkup-camps in the far-off areas of Jharkhand, most of which are heavily Naxal infested.

## India's Rural Areas Drive Rise In Female Labour Force Participation: Study



New Delhi:

Over the past five years, India has seen a significant rise in women's participation in the labour force, with rural areas leading the way, new research has revealed.

The study, titled 'Female

Labour Force

Participation Rate: An

Observational Analysis

of the Periodic Labour

Force Survey', was

conducted by Dr

Shamika Ravi (EAC-PM)

and Dr Mudit Kapoor (ISI, Delhi).

It examined trends in women's involvement in the economy from 2017-18 to 2022-23.

The research analysed data from the Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS), which includes information from over 2.5 million people.

Labour force participation rate (LFPR) is calculated as the percentage of individuals aged 15 years and above, who are either employed or actively seeking work.

Married women in rural areas, particularly in Rajasthan and

Jharkhand, showed a significant increase in LFPR. The presence of children under 14 years had a larger impact on urban women, especially those aged 20-35, compared to their rural counterparts.

Female LFPR followed a bell-shaped curve, peaking between ages 30-40 before sharply declining. In contrast, male LFPR remained high from ages 30 to 50. Marriage was found to lower female LFPR, particularly in urban areas, while married men consistently had higher participation rates.

The study also focused on substantial regional disparities. Punjab and Haryana have persistently low female LFPR, while rural Bihar has shown considerable improvement despite the lowest LFPR in the past.

The Northeastern states have also witnessed impressive growth, particularly in rural areas, with Nagaland and Arunachal Pradesh leading the way. Western and Southern

India also showed signs of growth in rural female LFPR, although urban areas have seen only a modest increase. Andhra Pradesh stands out with a significant decline in urban female LFPR, especially among women with children.

The rise in female LFPR can be attributed to several government initiatives, particularly those targeting rural women. Programmes such as Mudra loans, the "Drone Didi" scheme, and self-help groups (SHGs) under the Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana have played a significant role in empowering women in rural areas. These programmes have contributed to the overall increase in LFPR, especially in rural India, aligning with the vision of women-led development. The study also highlights the need for further research to assess the true impact of government initiatives and address the persistent disparities between states and urban-rural areas.

## Insisting On Belagavi's Merger With Maharashtra 'Foolishness': Siddaramaiah



**Belagavi(KCN):** The Mahajan Commission Report on Belagavi is final, and repeatedly insisting that the district should be merged with Maharashtra is sheer foolishness, stated Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Tuesday.

Responding to a media question in Belagavi regarding the statement made by Aaditya Thackeray, CM Siddaramaiah said the Karnataka government will not tolerate such childish statements.

Criticising the demand to declare Belagavi a Union Territory, CM Siddaramaiah said, "For us, the Mahajan Commission Report is final. Once the Mahajan Report has been accepted, the matter is settled."

When journalists asked if the government would take action if

Maharashtra Ekikaran Samiti members resorted to violence on this issue, the Chief Minister replied, "Whoever indulges in violence, we will not remain silent." Earlier, Aaditya Thackeray had said that Marathi-speaking people in Belagavi were being suppressed. "Since Sunday, the situation has been deteriorating in the region. Our party

workers are being detained," he stated. The border town of Belagavi has been a part of Karnataka since boundaries were demarcated along linguistic lines under the States Reorganisation Act, 1956. However, the inter-state border dispute between Karnataka and Maharashtra erupts every now and then. Commenting on the

46 years before he quit the grand old party, CM Siddaramaiah praised him as an efficient administrator.

"S.M. Krishna served as a member of the Legislative Assembly, Legislative Council, Lok Sabha, and Rajya Sabha," he said.

"S.M. Krishna had been suffering from illness for the past six months. His demise is a great loss to the state. I pray to God to give strength to his family and admirers to bear the grief and for his soul to rest in peace. I had visited him in the hospital two months ago while he was undergoing treatment," he said.

The Chief Minister announced that Wednesday would be a state holiday and there will be a three-day mourning period. He also confirmed his participation in the funeral tomorrow.

Speaking about the demise of veteran leader S.M. Krishna who was part of the Congress for his impeachment. Addressing a provincial convention of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad's law cell (Kashi Province) on Sunday, Justice Yadav purportedly said the "country would function as per the wishes of the 'bahusankhyak' (majority) living in Hindustan".

"I have no hesitation in stating that this is Hindustan, and this country will function according to the wishes of the majority living here. This is the law. It is not about speaking as a High Court Judge; rather, the law operates in accordance with the bahusankhyak (majority). Consider this in the context of a family or society - only what ensures the welfare and happiness of the majority will be accepted," Justice Yadav had purportedly said. Apparently he also used pejorative terms for Muslims and said they are "detrimental" to the country. "Any judge who makes such a statement is violating his oath of office. If he is violating the oath of office he has no right to sit on that chair," said Rajya Sabha MP Kapil Sibal.

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# Protesters block NH-53 in Jajpur, demand completion of highway expansion and new bridge

**J a j p u r ( K C N ) :** Hundreds of people from various social organisations, including college students under Sachetan Nagarika Manch (SNM), Monday blocked NH-53 near Kabatabandha village in Odisha's Jajpur district demanding construction of a second bridge over Brahmani river and early completion of the highway stretch between Chandikhole and Duburi. The protesters also urged the Chief Minister's intervention, claiming that the delay in the four-lane expansion work was leading to frequent accidents. They also warned that they would continue their demonstration until they received a written assurance from the national highway authorities. "The Chandikhole-Duburi stretch has turned into a death trap due to the non-completion of the expansion works for the past couple of years. We are staging this demonstration with seven charter demands, including the expedited



completion of the widening of NH-53, construction of a second Brahmani bridge, a written assurance of when both will be completed, a traffic system for the safe commute of college students, and the illumination of the Brahmani bridge near Kabatabandha," said SNM convener Saroj Kumar Behera. Former Finance Minister Prafulla Chandra Ghadei, who participated in the protest, emphasised the importance of the

NH-53 for the local community, stating, "The urgency of the local residents' call for action underscores the community's reliance on the NH-53 not only for daily commutes but also for economic activities."

"Why is the expansion work between Chandikhole and Duburi getting delayed? Even the 40 km stretch of road widening has not been completed in five years since its commencement," said PK Sahu, one of the agitators.

# AI to turn saviour of elephants in Rourkela

**Rourkela(KCN):** Five elephants that ventured dangerously close to railway tracks were Sunday saved thanks to an innovative pilot project led by the Forest department, harnessing artificial intelligence (AI) technology to safeguard jumbos. The initiative involves the installation of four solar-powered towers, each equipped with 360-degree cameras that provide real-time information to a control room. When elephants approach the railway tracks, the system automatically alerts the control room, which can then notify the railway staff at Bondamunda as well as Forest teams. “We’ve installed these AI-enabled towers with cameras that can detect elephants within a 500-metre radius of the tracks,” said Jasobanta Sethi, the Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) of Rourkela. “This is the



first time such technology is being used in Odisha,” he added. The towers, which were set up at a total cost of Rs 2.9 crore, are positioned at four strategic locations in Chandiposh, Mahipani, Dolakudar, and Sonakhan. The cameras, imported and installed by a vendor from Delhi, are designed to detect elephants and send alerts to the control room. The system has already proven effective — on its first day of operation, the tower at Dolakudar near Lathikata prevented a potential mishap, saving two adult elephants and three calves Sunday. “This technology not only helps save elephants from fatal injuries caused by train hits, but it will also assist in preventing forest fires and illegal poaching activities,” Sethi added. Environmentalist Satya Behera expressed optimism about the project’s success, noting, “From day one, the tower

at Dolakudar saved these elephants, demonstrating the system's potential." The project is being hailed as a significant step forward in protecting wildlife and improving safety for both elephants and humans. The DFO also mentioned that efforts are underway to treat an injured elephant at Rajgangpur, with the team ready to intervene if necessary. This pilot project marks a promising new approach to conservation and safety in sensitive wildlife zones.

# 5 awarded life term in 14-yr-old murder case



**Berhampur(KCN):** A local court here Monday handed down life imprisonment to five persons after convicting them in the murder case of one Dhira Samal, 14 years after the crime was committed. The convicts were identified as Kalia Sethi, 39, of Sriram Nagar Lane-6, P Krushna Chandra Patra, 48, PINKU Patra, 40, Sanjay Pradhan, 43, and Sanyasi Rout, 41 of Jagannath Vihar in Berhampur. District and Sessions Judge Rupashree Choudhury pronounced the verdict after examining the

statements recorded by the witnesses and other evidences, while also acquitting three others for want of sufficient evidence, Cadre Public Prosecutor Trilochan Parida said. The acquitted persons were identified as Santosh Patra, 57, alias Rangin Santu, Rinku Patra, 44, and Manglu Behera, 51, from the Silk City. The incident is stated to be fallout of an inter-gang rivalry. On that fateful day, victim Dhira Samal was talking with two of his friends — Santosh Tripathy and Rajiv Behera at Sriram

Nagar Square under Bada Bazar police limits, July 22 morning in 2010 when miscreants launched a sudden attack and hurled bombs at him. Dhira tried to run away to save his life but the miscreants chased and attacked him with swords inside a godown premises. On being informed, Dhira's younger brother Bhalu, mother Bijaylakshmi and wife Jhuli rushed to the spot. They rescued Dhira in critical condition and admitted him to MKCG Medical College and Hospital here, where doctors declared him

dead after examining his condition. Dhira also disclosed the name of the accused persons in his dying declaration before police. Dhira's two friends Santosh and Rajiv also sustained critical injuries during the incident. A case was registered in this connection at Bada Bazar police station over a complaint filed by the deceased's kin. Police arrested eight persons in phases and produced them in court. Later, they were released on bail. The court recorded the statements of 24 witnesses during the trial of the case.

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## RED.Health and Utkal Hospital join hands to address Bhubaneswar's healthcare challenges



**Bhubaneswar(KCN) :** In a bid to tackle the pressing healthcare challenges in Bhubaneswar, RED.Health has announced a strategic partnership with Utkal Hospital. RED.Health will deploy Advanced Life Support (ALS) ambulances equipped

with state-of-the-art technology to Utkal Hospital to ensure faster emergency response services and better patient care. This collaboration aims to improve emergency medical services in the city and surrounding regions, bringing critical care closer to those in need. The flag-off ceremony was felicitated by Mr Manav (COO), Mr. Arun Khillar (CFO & Unit Head) and Dr. Abinash Mohanty (HOD Department of Emergency) from Utkal Hospital and Mr. Prashant Agarwal, Vice President of Hospital Business at RED.Health

and addressed the media. Commenting on the partnership, Prabhdeep Singh, Founder & CEO of RED.Health said, "In moments of crisis, every second counts. Our collaboration with Utkal Hospital is not just about deploying ambulances; it's about creating a safety net for the people of Bhubaneswar. We are here to ensure that no patient's life is at risk due to delayed emergency care. By combining our advanced technology with Utkal Hospital's medical expertise, we are taking a decisive step towards making critical healthcare accessible when it's needed most." Mr. Arun Khillar, CFO & Unit Head, Utkal Hospital, extended his heartfelt congratulations to Red Health on the successful collaboration with Utkal Hospital. This partnership marks a significant milestone in enhancing our emergency services, enabling us to provide timely and life-saving care to those in need.

Mr. Manav, COO, Utkal Hospital said, "Our partnership with RED.Health is a vital step in addressing the healthcare challenges the city of Bhubaneswar faces today.

## Pigeon launched Airturbo Handheld Dry Vacuum Cleaner in the market

**KOLKATA (AMBAR MUKHERJEE):** Stovekraft, a leading name in innovative home, kitchen and lighting solutions, announces the launch of the Airturbo Handheld Dry Vacuum Cleaner, designed to revolutionize cleaning for both home and automotive use.

This innovative vacuum cleaner combines advanced HEPA+STEELMESH FFT Technology with an impressive 18 kPa suction power, ensuring that every corner of the space remains spotless, a spokesperson of the company said here.

The Airturbo features a robust 600W copper motor that delivers powerful suction capability, easily lifting dirt, dust, and debris from various surfaces. One of its standout qualities is the low noise operation, allowing to enjoy a quieter cleaning experience without sacrificing performance—making it perfect for households with children or pets.

Mr. Rajendra Gandhi, Managing Director of Stove Kraft Limited, stated, "Our commitment to innovation inspires us to develop products that meet and exceed customer expectations. The Airturbo is a testament to our dedication to quality, performance, and affordability, offering a next-level cleaning solution without the need for bulky, heavy vacuum cleaners. Designed to make cleaning effortless and accessible for everyone, it combines power and convenience in a lightweight package."

Weighing in at just a few kilograms, the Airturbo is

lightweight and easy to maneuver, enabling comfortable cleaning without fatigue. Its HEPA filtration system captures even the smallest particles, ensuring cleaner air while effectively tackling allergens in your home. The convenient automatic cord rewind feature saves you time and hassle during cleanup, while the included accessories—a dusting brush and an accessory nozzle—enhance its versatility for various cleaning tasks, from upholstery to tight spaces. With a generous 600 ml dust capacity, the Airturbo allows for extended cleaning sessions without the need for frequent emptying. The 4.5M power cord provides excellent reach, making it easier to clean larger areas without constantly changing outlets.

Dr. M. Nanda, Chief Marketing Officer, said "We've always believed that home cleaning should be an effortless experience. Our consumer research study revealed that consumers often found traditional vacuum cleaners too bulky, difficult space-consuming to store, and inconvenient with the constant need to change filtration/dust bags. With the Airturbo Vacuum Cleaner, we've incorporated those learnings into a product that addresses these pain points. It's lightweight, designed for easy storage, equipped with a sturdy plastic dust collector eliminating the hassle of bag changes, and features a HEPA filter to trap even the finest dust particles. Additionally, the sufficiently lengthy cord ensures greater flexibility.

Bhubaneswar : Blenders Pride Fashion Nights, a unique travelling experiential property, arrived in the City of Temples – Bhubaneswar – celebrating the authentic spirit of the city through fashion and style. A spirit that echoes with Pride and inspires the creators of today to become icons of tomorrow. Bhubaneswar's 'Made of Artistic Flair' edition for Blenders Pride Fashion Nights, brought together an eclectic evening that blended fashion, culture and dance, celebrating a symbolic amalgamation of homegrown artistry and the unwavering spirit of local talent.

Exemplifying the region's signature weave through a curated evening at the majestic Vivanta, Bhubaneswar, DC Square was Odia designer Sabyasachi Satpathy, whose intricately crafted ensembles drew inspiration from the multicultural city and its colourful history. In a true celebration of Odisha's distinct and masterful craftsmanship, the show was elevated with a captivating performance by the Prince Dance Group – from the small Odisha town of Berhampur – widely lauded for their artistry. The show drew to a finale with none other than actor Diana Penty, who captivated the audience in a beautiful ensemble by the designer. The "Made of Artistic Flair" edition of Blenders Pride Fashion Nights was a beautiful embodiment of the rich craft and cultural heritage of the city in a modern and contemporary setting.

Taking us on a 'Jatra' – The Journey of a Young Woman – the show encapsulated the journey of a woman from post adolescence to her nuptials, navigating the various challenges, trials and significant moments that come her way. The enigmatic journey was captured through the array of colours and textiles that Odisha Bandha/Ikkat offers.

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## NSDL launches "Market ka Eklavya- Express" in 75 cities to mark 75 years of Independence

Mumbai: India's largest depository, National Securities Depository Limited (NSDL) launched 'Market ka Eklavya- Express', an online investment awareness program for students that will be conducted in 8 different languages including Hindi. The program would serve as a beginner's guide for investing for the youth.

To mark the significance of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, an

initiative of Government of India to celebrate 75 years of independence and the glorious history of our people, culture and achievements, NSDL has launched a new initiative towards investor awareness 'Market Ka Eklavya - Express' across 75 cities, especially aimed at the college students who would very soon be entering the phase where they would start earning and naturally,

look for avenues of investment.

Earlier this month, Market ka Eklavya (5-hours program) was launched by the hon'ble Finance Minister of India, Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman at the silver jubilee event of NSDL.

On the launch of the initiative Ms. Padmaja Chunduru, MD & CEO, NSDL said, "Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav is a special initiative launched by our Prime Minister to

celebrate and commemorate 75 years of India's Independence. Our program has been particularly aimed to create awareness about the financial markets to the young minds who will be the future of our country.

In this Amrit Kaal, our digital education initiative focuses on building a path towards Financial Freedom for our youth, symbolizing the spirit of Atmanirbhar Bharat."

## Nuvoco successfully completes AFR Project at its Risda Cement Plant, Chhattisgarh and Nimbol Cement Plant, Rajasthan

Bhubaneswar : Nuvoco Vista Corp. Ltd., India's fifth-largest cement group in terms of capacity and among the leading players in East India, successfully announced the completion of its Alternative Fuel Resource (AFR) project at Risda Cement Plant (RCP), Chhattisgarh and Nimbol Cement Plant (NCP), Rajasthan. This milestone achievement illustrates Nuvoco's commitment to reducing dependency on fossil fuels and promoting sustainable practices.

sources. By incorporating these alternative fuels into its manufacturing process, Nuvoco is taking significant strides towards achieving its sustainability goals. Nuvoco has introduced AFR feeding into the Pyro-process system for enabling uniform feeding and incorporating all necessary safety interlocks throughout. This system allows us to consume alternate fuels in an efficient and effective way without impacting the environmental standards prescribed and approved by the Pollution Control Board of India. Although this project is primarily focused on environment sustainability, it also has several other benefits for clinker production and can offer significant cost savings through its alternative fuels program.

Mr. Jayakumar Krishnaswamy, Managing Director, Nuvoco stated. "As part of our PROTECT OUR PLANET agenda, we view the AFR project as an important step towards fulfilling our

commitment to sustainable cement manufacturing and reducing the environmental impacts. The successful completion of this project demonstrates our commitment to reducing carbon emissions, maximizing waste consumption, and demonstrating responsible resource management practices."

Additionally, he stated, "The adoption of alternative fuels also aids in resolving issues associated with landfills and unhygienic waste accumulation. For instance, in its cement manufacturing process, Nuvoco uses plastic waste, RDF (Refused Derived Fuel), and municipal waste that is harmful to cattle and other wildlife due to its carcinogenic qualities as an alternative fuel. This along with other themes under PROTECT OUR PLANET agenda are enabling Nuvoco to build robust partnerships with several stakeholders and contribute to society at large."

## "Choose Bold. Choose Water." Royal Challenge Packaged Drinking Water promotes hydration for better celebrations.



Bhubaneswar : Did you know, it takes about an hour to process a standard unit of alcohol, which is generally 10 grams?\* As part of its ongoing commitment to promote responsible consumption, and drinking better, not more, Royal Challenge Packaged Drinking Water has launched its latest campaign, "Choose Bold. Choose Water", which emphasizes on the importance of staying hydrated when consuming alcohol. Through this campaign, the company aims to promote responsible drinking with a simple yet compelling narrative: Often, choosing water is the bold choice.

Harking back to the Diageo motto of "Drink better, not more", Royal Challenge Packaged Drinking Water through this campaign and its social engagement is playing an active role in the prevention and reduction of harmful use of alcohol, while also driving awareness and encouraging individuals to stay hydrated during social occasions. The latest campaign film shares the importance of timely water breaks during moments of alcohol consumption to take care of one's body.

Talking about this campaign, Ruchira Jaitly, Vice-President, Marketing & Portfolio head, Diageo India said, "At Diageo, we believe in drinking better, not more. A good way to do this is by ensuring hydration during drinking occasions. Royal Challenge Packaged Drinking Water wants to

drive recognition for this important and yet often ignored message with the Choose Bold, Choose Water campaign. By focusing on hydration and building the recognition for taking a break for the same, we want to foster a culture where our consumers celebrate life responsibly, and we are proud to be able to lead this conversation."

As one of the prominent packaged drinking water brands, Royal Challenge aims to set a positive example for consumers and to shape behaviour by promoting responsible drinking by choosing hydration for moderation.

## Jindal Stainless signs MoU with SCTEVT, Odisha to train future-ready stainless steel professionals

Bhubaneswar: Odisha's State Council for Technical Education & Vocational Training (SCTEVT) today signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Jindal Stainless to promote technical education in the field of stainless steel and its various applications. Under this MoU, stainless steel courses will be introduced in all the Polytechnic colleges in Odisha from June 2022. The MoU was signed by Vice Chairman, JSL, Mr SS

Upadhyay, and General Manager, Sales & Distribution, Mr Ranit Rana. Commending the development, Chairman, SCTEVT and Principal Secretary to Government, SDTE and Industries Departments, Shri Hemant Sharma (IAS) said, "This collaboration with Jindal Stainless will enhance the learning experience for students and faculty both, as it will give them insights about and practical exposure to the stainless steel industry."

# National Cricket League USA banned by ICC

**New Delhi:** A year after establishing stricter guidelines for the sanctioning of T20 and T10 leagues around the world, ICC set a major precedent by clamping down on USA's National Cricket League (NCL) for flouting playing eleven rules. In a letter written to USA Cricket (USAC) and accessed by Cricbuzz, the world governing body informed its decision to not sanction the league for future editions. The letter primarily cited the non-compliance to the playing eleven requirements, which includes the fielding of 7 USAC affiliated or associate players and the breach of sanction regulations known to NCL authorities prior to the event. The NCL endeavoured to

spark interest amongst the cricketing fraternity by roping in stars like Wasim Akram and Vivian Richards as its ambassadors. It also created a stir by attracting Sachin Tendulkar and Sunil Gavaskar to its ownership group. The presence of the star quotient, however, failed to address the operational inefficiencies that marred the league from the onset. In the letter, the ICC also hinted at problems with the NCL 'on and off the pitch'. Apart from the non-adherence to the playing eleven rules, where one saw 6-7 foreign players being fielded on multiple instances, the drop in wickets at the pop up venue proved to be substandard where the likes of Wahab Riaz and Tymal Mills were mandated to bowl spin to

avoid bodily harm to batsmen. Cricbuzz also reported

the concerns regarding the league's handling of foreign players and potential violations of U.S. immigration laws. It generally costs around USD 200,000 to sponsor sports category visas for an American cricket tournament with about six teams. But Cricbuzz independently confirmed not all players entered the USA on valid sports visas to partake in the tournament. Without a clear revenue model to sustain operations, skipping player visa filings seemed less like an oversight and more like a cost-cutting measure.

USA has emerged as the hotbed for fledgling T20 and T10 leagues with the deep pockets of the South Asian diaspora looking to associate themselves with the game. The presence of close to 60 first class and international cricketers in the American set up further facilitates the idea of instituting a quick fix league. Cricbuzz can confirm that USA constitutes the highest number of applications for sanctioning T20/T10 leagues on the ICC desk and an ICC official admitted to planning a complete overhaul in the governing body's sanctioning process in times to come. USAC may have taken heed to ICC's admonition on the NCL issue as it understood that USAC has opted not to sanction the US Open T20, one of the many pop up weekend tournaments with a long standing history of over 10 years. The specifics of the sanctioning disapproval are unclear but it may well have been weeded out as a result of a larger exercise hinted by the ICC to push the reset button on league sanctioning standards around the world.



## Harbhajan Singh hopes Head-Siraj row ends after ICC sanctions: Enough is enough

**New Delhi:** Former spinner Harbhajan Singh is hoping that the Mohammed Siraj-Travis Head has come to an end after both men were given sanctions by the ICC for their actions during the Adelaide Test. Both Siraj and Head were given one demerit point for their actions and the Indian pacer was also fined 20 percent of his match fees.

The third Test between Australia and India at the Gabba will begin on December 14.

Harbhajan Singh is hoping that the ICC sanctions will bring an end to the ongoing Travis Head vs Mohammed Siraj row, which happened during the Adelaide. Tempers flared on Day 2 of the pink-ball Test as Siraj gave an animated send-off to Head after dismissing him for 140 in the first innings.

This would ignite some fire in the series as the



crowd started booing Siraj for his actions. Both men would present their version of the story during the match, and it seemed like they had patched up while Siraj was batting in the second innings. However, both men were sanctioned by the ICC on Monday, December 9, with the Indian pacer being fined 20 percent of his match fees.

Speaking to Star Sports, Harbhajan started off by saying that the ICC was being too strict on the players as such things do happen on the field. The former spinner said that now since both men have

patched up and been given sanctions by the ICC, it was time to end the matter and focus on the upcoming match at the Gabba.

"Well, I think ICC is a bit too strict on players. These things happen in the ground. Obviously, forget what has happened and move forward. The players have patched up and talked to each other. Anyways, ICC being ICC has sanctioned the players. Let's put that aside now and let's move forward which is obviously, Brisbane. Let's focus on cricket rather than all these controversies. Enough is

enough," said Harbhajan.

Piyush Chawla would also weigh in on the matter and echoed the same comments as Harbhajan. While he admitted that things would heat up again in Brisbane, Chawla wanted the Head-Siraj feud to be left behind in Adelaide.

"You can't really say

who was wrong, who was right here. What I feel is that this should be the end of this thing right now. There's no on this thing to the next match or the 4th test match, and just that what I feel personally is, the things will definitely get heated from the next Test match again, but what incident happened here, should leave it here in Adelaide," said Chawla.

The third Test between Australia and India at the Gabba will begin on December 14.



hard to bowl to." Root's comments follow those of England captain Ben Stokes, who termed Brook 'phenomenal'. "From 40-odd for four on day one, to be sat here on the winning side halfway through day three, is pretty special," Stokes said "In cricket terms, that pitch was what we call a snake pit... it was doing plenty. Brook is just phenomenal. No-one has a right to go out and score 120 on that wicket, against the attack that New Zealand have. There are only a few

leaderboard. It was also Root's 19th Test hundred since the start of 2021, which is 10 more than the next best in this period [Kane Williamson].

Brook was quick to repay the compliment back to his senior pro while also tempering his own achievements, among which include an astonishing batting average of 91.50 in Tests away from home. He has, however, yet to play in Australia or India. "I'm trying to catch him, but he's too good, isn't he?" Brook said of Root. "He's got another hundred this week and he's obviously one of the best players, if not the best player, to have ever played the game." It's mega to play with him and he's awesome to watch. I've only played 22 or 23 games, so those stats can soon come soaring down. I'm just trying to keep on getting as good as I can, working hard in the nets and improving areas that are uncomfortable. You can always get better."

## Sri Lanka rue 68 minutes of madness that changed everything

**New Delhi:** But for 68 minutes of madness, Sri Lanka's men's Test series in South Africa might have turned out starkly differently.

Indeed, it wouldn't be stretching a point to say the Lankans could have been going home still in hot pursuit of a place in the WTC final at Lord's in June.

Instead, the South Africans are one win away from clinching a spot. Sri Lanka, who will face Australia in two Tests in Galle in January and February, are dependent on favours from the results of other teams' matches.

South Africa completed a 2-0 win at St George's Park on Monday, when they won by 109 runs.

That followed their 233-run victory at Kingsmead on November 30.

That sounds convincing, and there's no disputing that the home side were the better team. But how much better might the Lankans have fare had they not been bowled out for 42 - their lowest total - in 13.5 overs in their first innings in Durban? Marco Jansen bowled with purpose and accuracy, but did he bowl well enough to take 7/13? He was aided and abetted by bounce and movement through the air and off the pitch. But also by reckless strokeplay from batters chasing balls they had no reason to interact with. And all that after Sri Lanka had restricted

South Africa to 191. Then came those 68 minutes of madness ... It only adds to the mystery of the horror innings that the Lankans made a respectable 282 in the second dig at Kingsmead. Their efforts of 328 and 238 in Gqeberha provided further evidence of a batting line-up who weren't helpless in South African conditions. How did Sanath Jayasuriya handle the aftermath of their catastrophic aberration?

"We had a lot of discussions with the team," Jayasuriya told a press conference on Monday. "And as a coach, as a support staff, we backed them really well. We didn't want to go into the negative side and all the bad publicity. So I gave them a lot of confidence. "And they came back and did well in the second innings, even though we lost the game. Even [in Gqeberha], we were in

the game throughout these five days. That's the key to us improving, and that's why I'm happy. But there are little areas where we need to get better."

Little areas have big effects. Consider that while Temba Bavuma, Tristan Stubbs, Ryan Rickleton and Kyle Verreyne all scored centuries for South Africa, there were no hundreds by the visitors. They competed better on the bowling front, where Prabath Jayasuriya claimed 5/129 in the second innings at St George's Park and finished as the series' second highest wicket-taker: he was four behind Jansen's tally of 14.

"Throughout our bowlers were outstanding except for the damage done by the South African tail," Jayasuriya said. "With the bat, we had our moments in patches. We had starts but couldn't convert them into hundreds." We chatted a lot to the senior group. I know they put in the effort, but if they assess they would admit that it was not up to scratch. If they had put in a better effort this could have been a different story." Indeed. At Kingsmead, the last three partnerships

