

## Parliamentary delegation from Armenia calls on the president

NEWDELHI,(KCN): A parliamentary delegation from the Republic of Armenia, led by H.E. Mr Alen Simonyan, President of the National Assembly of the Republic of Armenia, called on the President of India, Smt Droupadi Murmu at Rashtrapati Bhavan today (December 16, 2024).

Welcoming the delegation, the President recalled the centuries-old cultural linkages between India and Armenia, and the multifaceted contemporary relationship based on shared values of democracy.

The President also noted the close cooperation between the two countries at global multilateral fora, and appreciated Armenia's



membership of International Solar Alliance, and its participation in all three Voice of Global South Summits.

The President expressed India's willingness to

continue contributing to capacity building and skill development in Armenia, through our various development partnership programmes. She also highlighted the need to expand bilateral trade

and enhance both physical and financial connectivity between the two countries.

The President noted that regular parliamentary dialogue plays an important role in

enhancing understanding of each other's systems of governance and laws, and said that this visit by the Armenian Parliamentary delegation would further strengthen our bilateral ties.

## Subhadra Yojana: Dy CM Parida says fourth phase payment put on hold; unlikely by Dec 25

**Bhubaneswar(KCN):** The fourth phase payment of Subhadra Yojana's first instalment is unlikely to be credited by the earlier announced date of December 25, as Deputy Chief Minister Pravati Parida informed Monday that the fourth phase disbursal of state government's flagship scheme has been temporarily put on hold. The decision was made to ensure that the verification and e-KYC process for all eligible beneficiaries is completed before disbursing funds, she added.

"The next steps will be decided once the verification process is complete. We will consult the Chief Minister and announce a new disbursement date. Our goal is to ensure every eligible beneficiary is included in this ambitious scheme," Parida said.



The Deputy Chief Minister highlighted that over 20 lakh women beneficiaries are set to benefit from this final phase disbursal under the first instalment. She urged applicants facing e-KYC issues to update their biometrics. Additionally, those who completed their e-KYC through mobile OTP must redo the process using biometrics at Jana Seva Kendras or Mo Seva Kendras.

Currently, around 5 lakh beneficiaries are on the waiting list or undergoing verification, she added.

Parida further informed that to assist applicants, help desks have been set up, comprising Anganwadi workers and Child Development Project Officers (CDPOs). "They will visit every village with the help of people's representatives and assist applicants facing

problems. RIs have also been advised for field visits and resolve any land-related issues," she added.

Applicants have been advised to register grievances on the Subhadra Yojana portal or visit their block office for assistance. Deputy Chief Minister Parida also encouraged beneficiaries to seek help from local sarpanches or Anganwadi workers if necessary.

## Bees attack youth Congress activists during protest in Bhubaneswar



### Bhubaneswar(KCN):

Several members of the youth wing of the Congress were seen fleeing in panic to escape an attack by a swarm of bees during a protest in Bhubaneswar Monday. Holding party flags and banners, the youth Congress activists took out a protest march to gherao the residence of senior IAS officer Bishnupada Sethi here over his alleged involvement in a corruption case, which is under investigation by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI).

Notably, the CBI

December 10 issued

summons to Sethi, the

principal secretary of



ST&SC Development, Minorities and Backward Classes Welfare Department in connection with a Rs 10 lakh bribery case. Sethi also holds the additional charge as principal secretary of Social Security and Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities Department.

The CBI has arrested three persons including Chanchal Mukherjee, group general manager, Bridge and Roof Construction Company Ltd, Bhubaneswar in this case. When the youth Congress activists reached near Sethi's house, suddenly, a swarm of bees started attacking

them. The agitators started running helter-skelter to protect themselves. Some of the protesters were seen covering themselves with the banners they brought for the agitation.

The deployed police personnel and journalists covering the youth Congress protest also faced the bee attack. Many of them laid down on the ground covering their faces to protect themselves from the bees. After some time, as the bees went away, the youth Congress activists resumed their protest and engaged in a scuffle with the police when they staged a march towards Sethi's home.

### 'Nehru's letters no one's personal property': BJP asks Sonia Gandhi to return them to PM museum

**New Delhi(KCN):** The BJP Monday asked former Congress president Sonia Gandhi to return the correspondences of first prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru with a host of personalities to the Prime Ministers' Museum and Library, saying the historical documents belonged to the country and were not anyone's personal property. Speaking to reporters, BJP spokesperson

Sambit Patra cited reports of the PMML's deliberations on the issue to note that Nehru's correspondences with Edwina Mountbatten, wife of the last British viceroy to India, and leaders Jayaprakash Narayan and Jagjivan Ram lay with the erstwhile Nehru Museum and Library Society, which returned them to Sonia Gandhi in 2008.

## Three-pronged strategy adopted to root out Naxals: Amit Shah

**Jagdalpur (Chhattisgarh)(KCN):** A comprehensive three-pronged strategy is being adopted by the government to free all Naxal-affected areas in the country from the menace, Union Home Minister Amit Shah said Monday.

Paying tributes here to all those who laid down their lives fighting Naxalism, Shah said as part of this strategy, first, those who are willing to renounce violence and ready to return to the mainstream are being welcomed. Secondly, he said, efforts are being intensified to apprehend those who refuse to abandon the path of violence.

"Lastly, strict action will be taken against

individuals intent on harming others, ensuring they face the full force of justice," he added.

The home minister emphasised that this menace must be completely uprooted to prevent further loss of innocent lives.

Underscoring the government's unwavering resolve to restore peace in Chhattisgarh and other Naxal-affected states, Shah said the achievements of the past year in combating Naxalism in Chhattisgarh are unprecedented.

Never before has such a vast area been liberated from Naxal influence in a single year nor have such



The home minister also commended the Chhattisgarh government for establishing a memorial to honour the 1,399 martyrs who made the supreme sacrifice in the struggle against Naxalism.

He said this memorial would not only pay tributes to these heroes but also inspire future generations.

Shah highlighted that the current Chhattisgarh government, since its formation last year, has been steadfast in its commitment to eradicate Naxalism.

Expressing optimism about the future, he assured that after March 31, 2026, not a single drop of blood will be shed in the name of Naxalism on the sacred land of Maa

Danteshwari (Bastar in Chhattisgarh). He highlighted that the Chhattisgarh government has devised a phased plan to accelerate development in areas previously affected by Naxalism. This plan focuses on the welfare of villages and the upliftment of the affected communities, he said.

Shah emphasised that these initiatives are being implemented with the strong support and cooperation of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who has approved the construction of 15,000 houses under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana in the Naxal-affected regions.

# Government's Efforts to Make Disabled Persons Self-reliant, Hon'ble Chief Minister, Odisha

**Sambalpur,(KCN):**The Social Security and Empowerment of Disabled Persons Department, Government of Odisha, launched an e-rickshaw distribution program for the disabled to become self-reliant by Hon'ble Chief Minister, Odisha, Shri Mohan Charan Majhi. Hon'ble MLA, Sambalpur, Shri Jayanarayan Mishra, RDC, (ND) Shri Sachin Ramachandra Jadhav IAS, Zilla Parishad Chairperson Smt. Kumudini Nayak, District Collector Sambalpur Shri

Siddheshwar Baliram Bondar IAS, Mahanadi Coalfield Chairman Shri Uday Anant Kaule chair the dais in the program held at Mandalia playground. At that event, Hon'ble Chief Minister Shri Mohan Charan Majhi said that With the strong will of the disabled, physical disabilities were overcome. Disability is not just a physical deficiency, but it is a mental state. Although the differently abled are somewhat deprived in terms of physical abilities, their dreams and aspirations are the same

as all of us. The differently abled do not want our pity or sympathy, they want the right to live their lives with dignity. Our government is committed to the overall development of the differently abled in the state and is giving importance to their inclusion in the mainstream of society. For this, he said that the Social Security and Empowerment of the differently abled Department of the Government of Odisha is working continuously. The differently abled are

not inferior in any quality, but if they get proper facilities and opportunities, and if they get encouragement from the government, they will definitely perform better in society than a normal person. He gave the



example of our country's Shrikant Bola, who has established Bolant and provided employment to many differently-abled people, not only that, but also Odisha's badminton player Promad Bhagat, who won the gold medal in the Paraolympics in 2020, setting an example for the whole world. Their strong willpower overcame the barriers of physical disabilities. Therefore, he said, it is our responsibility and duty to create opportunities for them. In this regard, today, as a unique initiative, the state

government is distributing battery-powered e-rickshaws with the aim of making the lives of 500 differently-abled people easier. Through this initiative, the differently abled will get an opportunity to establish a livelihood for themselves and they will also be able to provide services to others. In this program, 500 e-rickshaws have been provided by Mahanadi Cold Field Limited (MCL) with a grant of Rs. 7.50 crore (CSR Fund) to make the differently abled people in the state self-reliant. The number of beneficiaries from various districts who have received e-rickshaws is as follows. Angul district 15 e-rickshaws, Balangir district 23 e-rickshaws, Balasore district 28 e-rickshaws, Bargarh district 17 e-rickshaws, Boudh 6 e-rickshaws, Bhadrak 17 e-rickshaws, Cuttack 36 e-rickshaws, Deogarh 4 e-rickshaws, Dhenkanal 15 e-rickshaws, Gajapati 7 e-rickshaws, Ganjam district 39 e-rickshaws, Jagatsinghpur 14 e-rickshaws, Jajpur district 22 e-rickshaws, Jharsuguda 18 e-rickshaws, Kalahandi 18 e-rickshaws, Khordha 26 e-rickshaws, Koraput 14 e-rickshaws, Malkangiri 7 e-rickshaws, Mayurbhanj 27 e-rickshaws, Nabarangpur 13 e-rickshaws, 13 e-rickshaws in Nayagarh, 8 e-rickshaws in Nuapada, 21 e-rickshaws in Puri, 11 e-rickshaws in Rayagada, 15 e-rickshaws in Sambalpur, 8 e-rickshaws in Subarnapur and 22 e-rickshaws in Sundargarh have been distributed to the beneficiaries. Apart from the distribution of e-rickshaws, 5 prosthetic limbs (prosthesis fittings), 30 hearing aids, 5 mobility canes, 25 assistive devices to senior citizens, 150 UDID certificates, 6 marriage incentive funds to PWD couples, 50 Banishree scholarships, 100 MBPY distribution, 3 tailoring machines, 6 bus passes, 1 laptop, 2 motorized tricycles and various other equipment were distributed to the beneficiaries. It is reported that Sambalpur district has earned a reputation in the state and the country in the field of disabled welfare and has set an example in including disabled people in new schemes

## Prof. Narasingha Charan Panda Selected for Prestigious Bagdevi Samman-2024

**Koraput:(KCN):**The Keshab-Subhadra Foundation has announced the selection of Prof. Narasingha Charan Panda, an eminent Sanskrit scholar, for the prestigious Bagdevi Samman-2024. This recognition honors his remarkable contributions to the preservation and promotion of Sanskrit, as well as his dedicated efforts to spread its knowledge beyond India. Prof. Panda's illustrious career spans decades of teaching and research. He has served as a Professor at the Central University of



Odisha, where he is currently the Dean of the School of Languages, Professor in the Department of Sanskrit, and acting Registrar. He has also held significant positions, including acting Vice-Chancellor and acting Finance Officer of the university. Prof. Panda's academic journey includes noteworthy tenures at Banaras Hindu University and Panjab University, earning him widespread admiration. His contributions abroad are

equally commendable, with four years of service as a Professor in Thailand and Mauritius, where he showcased exceptional expertise in Sanskrit scholarship. The scholar has received numerous accolades for his dedication to Sanskrit, including the prestigious Sanskrita Mahamahopadhyaya Award. His life and work remain an inspiration for scholars and students alike. Prof. Panda will be honored with the Bagdevi Samman-2024 on 19 January 2024, at a ceremony held at Zilla Sansruti Bhawan, Puri.

## Chief Minister attended the Golden Jubilee celebrations of Janardana Pujhari High School at Sindurpank, Sambalpur

**Sambalpur,(KCN):**The Hon'ble Chief Minister attended the Golden Jubilee celebrations of Janardana Pujhari High School in Sindurpank. The Hon'ble Chief Minister thanked the school for the proposal. The Chief Minister said in his speech that the farmers have provided input, which the previous government had never done. The Chief Minister said that this school will definitely be made a smart school of good quality. The present government is committed to strengthening the education system from the primary level itself. The Hon'ble Chief Minister said that I am very happy to attend the



school program. Apart from the Hon'ble Chief Minister, Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan, Odisha Government's Panchayat Raj, Drinking Water, and Rural Development Minister Shri Ravi Narayan Nayak, Sambalpur MLA Jai Narayan Mishra were the chief guests. Earlier responding to the demand of Burla High school

while attending the 75th Platinum Jubilee program, regarding various problems, the Honorable Chief Minister said that the Odisha government has paid special attention to the budget in the education sector. School is a man-made factory, present state government always believes in providing quality education, value-added education. He commented on the implementation of the National Education Policy in Odisha. He highlighted the opening of the Godavarish Mishra Adarsh Prathamika Vidyalaya Yojana in every Panchayat in Odisha. The Chief Minister said that Burla High School will be converted into a heritage school.

## Inter-college Photography Fest 2024



**Kolkata,(KCN):**The photography club of The Heritage College, Kolkata, organized Inter-college Photography Fest 'Photage 2024' on 12th & 13th December, 2024. The inaugural

session of the fest was addressed by renowned artist Mr. Samir Aich as the Chief Guest. Mr. Boidurjo Chowdhury, a leading guitarist and a member of Cactus Band was also present in the inaugural ceremony.

More than 20 colleges across the city participated. The two-day event consisted of various competitions like reel making, story making, mobile photography, photography exhibition and many more such exciting competitions. One of the highlights of the fest was a photography workshop by Canon India, where budding photographers participated in both theoretical and practical sessions.



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# Three groups in fray for key to Ferozshah Kotla Stadium

Dr. Ravi Chaturvedi



It was early wintery morning of November 10, 1948; a 10 year-old cricket-crazy kid purchased a 5 season ticket to watch 1948-49 India West Indies series first Test at Ferozshah Kotla. The decenary enthusiast reached the ground early to occupy a vintage seat at the Fort end and watched closely the swinging balls of Dattu Phadkar, Commandur Rangachari, Prior Jones and Gerry Gomez while guiles of Vinoo Mankad, Jimmy Cameron and Robert Christiani mesmerized the young cricket enthusiast. The brilliant strokes of Clyde Walcott, Everton Weekes, KC Ibrahim, Lala Amarnath were breath-taking while match-saving knocks of Hemu Adhikari (unbeaten 114 & 29) and Chandu Sarwate (37 & 35 n.o.) left a lasting impression. The most exciting moment came while the teenager had just started feeling at home at Kotla when

pacer Commandur Rangachari bowled neck and crop George Headley for paltry 2 runs with the visitor's on mat at 27 for 3. Sadly, it was the end of the road for the illustrious career of batter baptised as "Black Bradman". Since then much water has flown down the holy (now dangerously polluted) River Yamuna.

It will be pertinent to point out that Feroz Shah Tughlaq was the 19th Sultan of Delhi from 1351 to 1388. He was a sports-lover who built a Polo ground adjacent to present Willingdon Pavilion where he used play Chaugan (mini Polo).

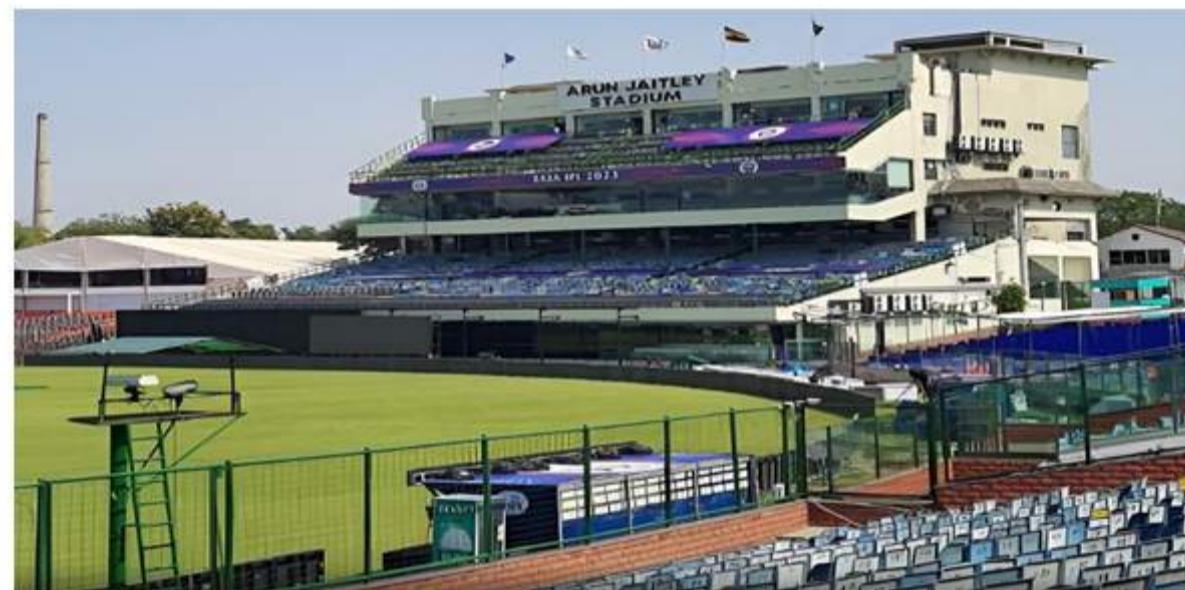
The serene Yamuna River flowing nearby added another meaning to the relaxation as polo did to the ruler of his kingdom.

Willingdon Pavilion owes its origin to the rivalry between Maharaja Bhupinder Singh of Patiala and Benaras' (Varanasi) cricket-loving ruler Maharajkumar of Vizianagram popularly known as (Vizzy).

Patiala outplayed his



Rohan Jaitley, Kirti Azad in ring for key to sit in Willingdon Pavilion, Ferozshah Kotla Stadium, New Delhi



Majestic Arun Jaitley Stadium on a ground used by Delhi Sultan Feroz Tughlaq to play Chaugan (mini Polo)

national championship to honour cricket wizard KS Ranjitsinhji of Nawanagar state of Gujarat who played for England. Vizzy restored the parity with the British ruler by building Willingdon Pavilion at Kotla. Actually, during the British Raj, the Englishmen built this ground in 1883 to play cricket.

Since the Delhi &

District Cricket Association (DDCA) elections are round the corner, Kotla has become a hub for the members who are converging in large numbers to assess the ground realities. This year election has become a close contest with the entry of Kirti Azad MP, ex Test Cricketer and member of the 1983 World Cup

wining Indian team in fray as Presidential candidate against the outgoing Rohan Jaitley, a legal luminary and a competent son of former union minister Arun Jaitley. It is a triangular contest for all the posts, barring president where saddled Rohan Jaitley is facing Kirti Azad. The three-cornered contest is between Rohan Jaitley, Dr. CK

Khanna, Gopi Manchanda; Kirti Azad-Sanjay Bhardwaj; Rakesh Paweriy, Vinod Tihara, SP Bansal panels. The punters are putting their money on the Rohan Jaitley panel but predicting a close fight for the secretary's post between Vinod Tihara, Ashok Sharma and Sanjay Bhardwaj. The final outcome will be known after election

on December 13, 14 and 15. The result of the election will showcase the confidence of the members in the Rohan Jaitley stewardship and facilities created for the benefit of the cricket-loving community of the capital city. On the other hand, Kirti Azad has bag full of promises to upset the apple cart. Only time will tell the members tilt. Rohan Jaitley, a visionary leader has already charted out a plan to improve cricket at all levels and augment the infrastructure within the Ferozshah Kotla. One of his top priorities is to have a cricket academy of the DDCA. Among the upgrading of the facilities on the card is a swimming pool; indoor nets, card and carom rooms, indoor games facility, and a banquet hall. The Jaitley team is going to pay lot of attention to cater to the comforts of the senior members of the club a separate block and provision of lift in general stand.

The three groups and their supporters are burning midnight oil to win the voters' confidence. Nevertheless, the final outcome will be known after election on December 13, 14 and 15. All the same, the result of the election is being waited with bated breath. The capital city of Delhi has witnessed the rise and fall of different dynasties over the Centuries while the scribe has watched from close quarters the entry and exit of the numerous cricket administrators in the portals of the Willingdon Pavilion. The arrival of the next one is being awaited anxiously.

\*Scribe has been commenting at Ferozshah Kotla since early 1960s, residing at A-31/F, Munirka Flats, New Delhi-110067. For contact email-ravi31f@hotmail.com

## Mental health and mental well-being are the call of the time



learning new skills. Achieving mental well-being doesn't mean an absence of mental health challenges; rather, it means having the tools and support to manage them effectively. Mental health and mental well-being are closely interconnected, as they both contribute to an individual's overall emotional and psychological state. Here's how they relate to and influence each other:

1. Mental Health as a Foundation for Mental Well-Being: Mental health refers to the state of one's cognitive, emotional, and behavioral functioning. It includes the ability to cope with stress, work productively, and maintain relationships. It reflects a broader sense of life satisfaction, positive emotions, and purpose.

2. Influence of Mental Well-Being on Mental Health: Mental well-being, which includes feelings of happiness, hope, and fulfillment, can act as a protective factor for mental health.

3. Mutual Impact: Poor mental health (e.g., conditions like anxiety, depression, or stress) can diminish mental well-being.

4. Shared Determinants: Both are influenced by similar factors, including genetics, life experiences, social connections, physical health, and access to support or resources. For example, chronic stress or trauma can negatively impact both mental health and well-being, while a supportive social environment can enhance both.

5. Intervention and Prevention: Efforts to improve mental health (e.g., therapy, medication, or stress management) often lead to improved mental well-being.

6. Promote Emotional Resilience: Understanding mental wellness encourages people to develop coping mechanisms, build resilience, and adopt healthy habits like mindfulness, exercise, and social connections, which can prevent mental health challenges.

7. Prevent Mental Health Crises: By recognizing warning signs and understanding the importance of self-care, individuals and communities can work together to prevent crises like severe depression, anxiety disorders, or even suicide.

8. Government Initiatives: National Mental Health Programme (NMHP) was launched in 1982, it aims to provide affordable mental health services across India, though its reach and implementation remain inconsistent.

9. Empowerment Perspectives: Young people are increasingly engaging in mental health advocacy, leveraging platforms like Instagram, YouTube, and mental health support groups.

10. Perspectives: Young people are increasingly engaging in mental health advocacy, leveraging platforms like Instagram, YouTube, and mental health support groups.

being, leading to a cycle of negative emotions, low self-esteem, and a lack of fulfillment.

Conversely, enhancing mental well-being—through practices like self-care, supportive relationships, or physical activity—can improve mental health outcomes.

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Efforts to

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often lead to improved

mental well-being.

Similarly, promoting well-

being through activities like

mindfulness, exercise,

or community involve-

ment can help

prevent mental health

challenges and build

resilience.

In essence, while mental

health is a key component

of mental well-being, they

reinforce and influence

each other, creating a

dynamic relationship

essential to living a

balanced, fulfilling life.

Mental health and

wellness is crucial for

several reasons:

1. Reduce Stigma: Mental

health issues are often

surrounded by stigma,

which can lead to shame,

Saikat Kumar Basu

discrimination, and more supportive environments. Raising awareness normalizes conversations about mental health, making it easier for people to acknowledge their struggles without fear of judgment.

2. Encourage Early Intervention: Awareness helps individuals recognize the signs and symptoms of mental health issues in themselves and others. Early identification and intervention can prevent conditions from worsening and improve recovery outcomes.

3. Promote Emotional Resilience:

Understanding mental wellness encourages people to develop coping mechanisms, build resilience, and adopt healthy habits like

mindfulness, exercise, and social connections, which can prevent mental health challenges.

4. Improve Access to Support and Resources:

Awareness campaigns often provide information about available mental health services and resources, empowering individuals to seek professional help when needed.

5. Enhanced Productivity and Quality of Life:

Mental health significantly affects

productivity, relationships, and overall

quality of life. Promoting

awareness ensures

individuals and organizations prioritize

mental well-being, leading to healthier and

situation:

1. Growing Awareness: Over the last decade, mental health has become a topic of public discourse, largely driven by celebrities, social media, and advocacy campaigns. Influencers and public figures like Deepika Padukone have shared their struggles, reducing the challenges.

2. Support Vulnerable Populations: Certain groups, such as youth, the elderly, and marginalized communities, may face unique mental health challenges. Awareness ensures their needs are recognized and addressed.

3. Prevent Mental Health Crises:

By recognizing warning signs and understanding the importance of self-care, individuals and communities can work together to prevent crises like severe depression, anxiety disorders, or even suicide.

4. Government Initiatives:

National Mental Health Programme (NMHP) was launched in 1982, it aims to provide affordable mental health services across India, though its reach and implementation remain inconsistent.

The Mental Healthcare Act, (2017) is a landmark law that

decriminalized suicide and focused on rights-based care for

individuals with mental illnesses. It guarantees

access to mental health

services and emphasizes

patient dignity and

confidentiality. Programs

like Manodarpan target

school students, and

there is a growing focus

on mental health policies

in workplaces.

5. The Way Forward:

Better implementation of

the Mental Healthcare Act

and expanding

government programs are

needed. Tackling stigma at

the community level through

culturally sensitive programs and using regional languages is vital. Increasing the number of trained professionals, particularly in rural areas, should be a priority. Collaborative efforts between the government, NGOs, and private players can accelerate change.

Encouraging early interventions and mental health education can significantly reduce the burden of mental illnesses.

Conclusion

India has made strides in

mental health awareness

and empowerment, but

systemic issues like

stigma, resource

shortages, and

accessibility need

continued attention. With

sustained efforts, India is

moving toward a more

inclusive and empowered

mental health ecosystem.

Affordability. Efforts are being made to incorporate mental health into school and college curricula, fostering early awareness.

5. The Way Forward: Better implementation of the Mental Healthcare Act and expanding government programs are needed. Tackling stigma at the community level through culturally sensitive programs and using regional languages is vital. Increasing the number of trained professionals, particularly in rural areas, should be a priority. Collaborative efforts between the government, NGOs, and private players can accelerate change.

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# India's Hunger Crisis: GHI 2024 Ranking and Solutions



The 2024 Global Hunger Index (GHI) has placed India in the 105th position out of 127 countries, marking its status under the "serious" category alongside nations like Pakistan and Afghanistan. The GHI, a tool created by Concern Worldwide and Welthungerhilfe, is designed to assess and track global hunger levels, focusing on undernutrition and child mortality. India's position in the ranking highlights the stark realities of hunger, which remain significant despite ongoing efforts. It highlights the need for renewed strategies to address food insecurity and child malnutrition. The GHI is an annual report used by international humanitarian agencies to gauge global hunger levels. It combines four key indicators: This measures the percentage of the population with insufficient caloric

intake. It refers to the percentage of children under five who have low height for their age, reflecting chronic undernutrition. It is the percentage of children under five with low weight for their height, indicating acute undernutrition. It measures the percentage of children who die before their fifth birthday due to inadequate nutrition and related health issues.

Each country is assigned a score based on these indicators, ranging from 0 (no hunger) to 100 (the worst). India's score in 2024 is 27.3, placing it in the "serious" category. The indicators for India reveal that 13.7% of its population is underweight, 35.5% of children under five are stunted, 18.7% are wasted, and 2.9% of children die before reaching the age of five. These figures underscore a severe nutrition crisis that needs urgent attention.

India's ranking is concerning, particularly compared to its South Asian neighbours. While India, Pakistan, and Afghanistan are classified as having "serious" hunger levels, countries like

Bangladesh, Nepal, and Sri Lanka fall within the "moderate" category, suggesting that they have been more successful in resolving hunger and malnutrition. Nepal and Bangladesh, for example, have made substantial strides in improving food security through targeted nutritional programs, agricultural reforms, and more robust health systems. Despite its economic challenges, Sri Lanka has maintained better health and nutrition indicators due to its historically robust public healthcare system. These comparisons suggest that India's policy measures need reorientation and scaling to match the progress seen in neighboring nations.

India's child malnutrition statistics are particularly alarming. Stunting, wasting, and child mortality all reflect the dire impact of undernutrition during the early years of life. Stunting affects more than one-third of India's children under five, reflecting the chronic nature of malnutrition. Wasting, often associated with acute food shortages or

infections, remains a significant issue affecting 18.7% of children. The mortality rate of 2.9% underscores the tragic consequences of undernourishment combined with poor healthcare and living conditions. This trend of child malnutrition is concerning not only for its immediate impact on child health and survival but also for its long-term consequences. Stunted children are more likely to face cognitive impairments, lower educational attainment, and reduced productivity as adults. These factors perpetuate the cycle of poverty, undermining efforts to achieve sustained economic growth and social equity. India has implemented several schemes to combat malnutrition and hunger, such as the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS), the Mid-Day Meal Scheme, and the National Food Security Act (NFS). These initiatives have provided critical support, particularly for low-income households. However, the persistence of hunger at such significant levels suggests that these

programs must be more effective in reaching the most vulnerable populations. One of the critical challenges is the need for proper implementation and accountability. Corruption, inefficiency, and bureaucratic hurdles often impede the delivery of food aid and nutritional support. Moreover, the growing economic disparity and regional inequalities have left certain groups, particularly tribal communities and rural populations, more vulnerable to hunger and malnutrition. There is also a need for more targeted interventions in areas with the highest burden of malnutrition, such as Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, and Madhya Pradesh. Reforms should focus on improving the efficiency and reach of food distribution systems, strengthening public health and nutrition services, and addressing the underlying socio-economic determinants of hunger. Innovations in agricultural practices, improving livelihoods, and ensuring food security at the household level are crucial to alleviating hunger. Creating synergies

between national policies on food security, health, education, and sanitation can offer a more integrated approach to addressing hunger and malnutrition. The GHI report highlights that achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal of Zero Hunger by 2030 is becoming increasingly unlikely. Global hunger remains high in many of the world's poorest countries, including India, due to a combination of conflict, climate change, economic instability, and population growth. The report emphasizes that without more substantial efforts, many countries will continue to struggle with food insecurity for decades. The global community must support the most affected countries, particularly in financial aid, technology transfer, and capacity building. Initiatives like the World Food Programme and Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) are pivotal in coordinating global efforts, but national governments must take ownership of their hunger crises. As one of the world's most populous countries, India holds a

significant responsibility in the global fight against hunger. To improve its standing in future GHI reports and work towards the 2030 target, India can consider the following measures: Enhance nutrition-specific interventions such as ICDS and NFS coverage, quality, and targeting. These programs need better monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to ensure resources reach the intended beneficiaries. Special attention should be given to the most affected regions and communities, mainly rural, tribal, and conflict-affected areas. A decentralized approach that tailors' interventions to local needs will be more effective. Investing in sustainable agriculture, improving farmers' access to resources, and reducing food wastage can enhance food availability and affordability for the poorest households. The focus should be on maternal and child health services, including antenatal care, breastfeeding support, and immunization programs, to reduce undernutrition and child mortality. Long-term solutions to hunger

require addressing poverty, unemployment, education, and access to essential services. Social protection schemes that provide income support to vulnerable families can also help reduce food insecurity. The 2024 Global Hunger Index reveals the urgent need for India to intensify its efforts to resolve hunger and malnutrition. While existing programs have made some progress, the scale of the issue demands more robust and sustained action. India's position in the GHI serves as a reminder that hunger is not just a health issue but a reflection of more profound structural challenges that must be mitigated to achieve the goal of Zero Hunger by 2030. Through more robust policies, better implementation, and a commitment to equity, India can improve the well-being of its population and contribute to global efforts to eradicate hunger.

\*Former Professor of Economics, Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics, Pune, currently at Berhampur, Odisha

## How to eliminate suicide cases?



Hardly a day goes by without a heart-wrenching news report in the newspapers about a young person preparing for a competitive exam committing suicide. This is an extremely serious issue, and the entire country needs to think about it. Similarly, nowadays, the number of people committing suicide due to business losses is constantly increasing. A few days ago, the billionaire owner of a famous bicycle manufacturing company also committed suicide.

Recently, a discussion on the topic "Defeat Despair" was held at St. Stephen's Cambridge School, located on the Delhi-Haryana border. Psychiatrists, doctors, children, teachers, and parents participated. Dr. Vinay Agrawal, former president of the Indian Medical Association, said that despair has no meaning in life. A multi-faceted approach is needed to save anyone from

suicide. St. Stephen's Cambridge School is run by the same Delhi Brotherhood Society (DBS) that established the country's top St. Stephen's College. The great freedom fighter, C.F. Andrews, was also associated with it. He also taught at St. Stephen's College. He met Gandhiji in South Africa in 1916. After that, both became close friends. He taught at St. Stephen's College from 1904 to 1914. It was through his efforts that Gandhiji first came to Delhi from April 12th to April 15th, 1915. It is important that other schools, colleges and educational institutions across India also organise seminars on the lines of what St. Stephen's Cambridge School has organised.

Certainly, spreading awareness about mental health in schools and colleges is crucial. Students, teachers, and staff need to be educated about the signs of suicide, risk factors, and how to get help. This could include workshops, seminars, and classroom discussions on suicide prevention. Young people need a completely relaxed environment so that

they can study without any pressure or do whatever they want to do. Brother Solomon George, president of the Delhi Brotherhood Society (DBS) which

ask such unnecessary questions from their students. Then they start comparing children studying in the same class with each other. Due to this,

that the child is also given the freedom to choose the desired career according to his/her ability and choice. It is a bitter truth that in our society, the

where coaching institutes for medical and engineering colleges, as well as civil services, etc., are running. There, students are in a state of great

the capital said that we continuously counsel students and remain in touch with their parents. It is said that India has the highest youth suicide rate in the

which was 29% more than in 2019 when 9,052 businessmen took their own lives. In Karnataka, the highest number of deaths (1,772) due to suicide by businessmen were recorded in 2020 - 103% more than in 2019, when 875 businessmen took their lives in the state. In Maharashtra, 1,610 businessmen committed suicide, which is 25% more than the previous year, and 1,447 deaths occurred in Tamil Nadu, which is 36% more than in 2019. Everyone knows that a large part of India's business community is associated with micro, small, and medium enterprises, which cannot withstand major shocks. Due to this, many businessmen committed suicide due to being drowned in debt or losses in business. In short, Brother Solomon George says that it is imperative to effectively curb the increasing incidents of suicide among youth and businessmen, as well as other people in India.

The Author is a Delhi based columnist and former Editor



runs St. Stephen's Cambridge School in Sonipat, Haryana, and a social worker, says that we ensure that the children studying in our school or St. Stephen's College study without any pressure. We also conduct classes for our teachers that they should not ask any child about their caste or their father's income in class. Some irresponsible teachers

unknowingly they prove one child to be weaker than many children. Obviously, this has a very negative impact on the student who has been proven inferior. Such children often sink into despair and depression. See, raising a child is a twenty-year plan. Who doesn't want their child to achieve a high position in society, earn fame and name? But for all this, it is important

measure of success is considered to be a good job, a big house, and all other amenities. Sadly, in the pursuit of the future, we are forcing our children to take the step of suicide. Brother Solomon George says that we must prevent it. Meanwhile, some coaching center operators are making such efforts so that students do not remain under excessive pressure. The head of a coaching center in

world. Meanwhile, according to the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), in 2020, one student died every 42 minutes. This figure is truly frightening. Data from the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) shows that in 2020, when the COVID wave devastated businesses, 11,716 businessmen committed suicide,

# NITTTR Chennai celebrates its 61st Institution Day



**Chennai, Dec 16 (KCN):** "Deepening knowledge fosters innovation," said Chairman of All India Council of Technical Education (AICTE) Prof T G Sitharam. Participating as the chief guest at the 61st Institution Day of The National Institute of Technical Teachers Training and Research (NITTTR), Chennai, an Institute deemed to be a University under the distinct category of the Ministry of Education, Government of India, celebrated its 61st Institution Day on Sunday at the Thiruvalluvar Auditorium, Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam Academic Complex marking the Diamond Jubilee of the institute (1964–2024), Prof Sitharam highlighted the synergy between the

Indian Knowledge System and emerging technologies such as AR/VR, Generative AI, and blockchain, showcasing their transformative impact on digital education and research. Prof. Sitharam lauded India's advancements in Defense through the contributions of ISRO and DRDO, showcasing the nation's leadership in cutting-edge technology. Furthermore, he emphasized the importance of engineering education, calling on engineers with their out-of-box thinking to demonstrate unwavering commitment and dedication to shaping the future generation and driving societal transformation. Presiding over the Celebrations, Director of NITTTR, Prof. Usha

Natesan highlighted NITTTR Chennai's exceptional three-decade-long contributions to technical education. She elaborated on how the institute had set benchmarks in teacher training, capacity building, and its role as a nodal center for technical teacher training. She also noted NITTTR Chennai's global engagement and contributions to national missions like SWAYAM and ATAL, along with its pivotal role in reinforcing digital education. She emphasized the Institute's significant involvement in AICTE's Marga Darshan project and reiterated NITTTR Chennai's unwavering commitment to excellence, innovation, and impactful contributions to the education sector.

## Drug De-Addiction Awareness Campaign Held in Kupwara Public School School and Degree College, Kupwara



**KUPWARA (Aasif Malik):** Aiming to empower youth and combat substance abuse, Drugmulla De-addiction Centre, Kupwara successfully organised a comprehensive Drug De-Addiction Awareness Campaign at Kupwara public school and Degree colleges in the city. The initiative focused on

educating students about the dangers of drug abuse, promoting healthy lifestyles, and fostering a supportive environment for prevention and recovery. The campaign featured expert-led workshops, interactive sessions, and motivational talks by Dr Meraz and Ms Tabassum who shared recovery

## ASSOCHAM's honour of excellence for Kalinga Hospital Bhubaneshwar & others



**Kolkata, (PARTHA ROY):** Quality of Healthcare & expansion of Healthcare services provided by private hospitals as well as government hospitals in Odisha are seeing remarkable transformation to best in class service providers in current decade with implementation of people friendly health care policies of both Odisha government and Central government.

In fact, health care services provided by private sector large hospitals in metro cities in India are growing at fast pace and transforming into world class hospitals offering best medical treatment in the world for wide range of diseases as well as various types of physical illnesses.

ASSOCHAM honoured Ms. Nilanjana Mukherjee Managing Director of Kalinga Hospital

Bhubaneshwar for "Women leadership in Healthcare Sector" at 5th edition of "The Health Meet & Excellence Awards 2024". Ms. Mukherjee played important role in turnaround of Kalinga Hospital. At present, Kalinga Hospital is one of best hospital in Bhubaneshwar. ASSOCHAM honoured several other hospitals and health care service providers for excellence

including Dr. Rashmi Rana Senior Scientist of Sir Ganga Ram Hospital in New Delhi for her pioneering invention of development of method for the early detection of gliomas (brain tumor). While addressing the meet, Maxim V Kozlov Consul General of Russia in Kolkata spoke on current Russian Health care system and its inclusiveness to provide easy access to all sections of Russian

journeys. Informative brochures and posters were distributed to spread awareness about the physical, psychological, and social impacts of drug use. Highlighting the importance of collective action, The speakers said, "Our youth are the future. This campaign is a step towards safeguarding them from the clutches of addiction and guiding them towards a brighter, drug-free future." The initiative received overwhelming support from educators, parents, and students, reaffirming the community's commitment to eradicating drug abuse.

## ASSOCHAM's honour of excellence for Kalinga Hospital Bhubaneshwar & others

& inspiration of Smt. Mamata Banerjee Health Policies are developed to provide easy access to healthcare at low cost to all residents of West Bengal. He also mentioned Government is sensitive to needs of service providers and making efforts for solutions of their problems. Mr. Debarshi Duttagupta, Chairman, Health Sector Sub Council, East, ASSOCHAM spoke on current status of Health sector in eastern India. Ms. Perminder Jeet Kaur Senior Director ASSOCHAM offered vote of thanks and her Team ASSOCHAM comprising Shri Kallol Ghosh, Ms. Rita Sarkar and others played significant role in organising the Health Meet.

## Nrityashram celebrated the second anniversary at the Mahabodhi Society, Kolkata



**Kolkata, (Saikat Kumar Basu):**

Shramana Chattopadhyay, disciple of Guru Amita Dutta celebrated the second anniversary of her dance institution named "Nrityashram". The name of the show was "Prayas' 2024" which was held at the Mahabodhi Society Hall in Kolkata on 15th December, 2024. Her Guru Amita Dutt, Dr. Amitabha Mookerjee, and Smt. Sharmistha Bhattacharjee, former Headmistress of Saraswati Balika Vidyalaya and Shilp Shiksha Sadan were the special guests on the occasion. The programme was inaugurated by lighting the lamp.

A total of 21 artists participated in the two-

and-a-half-hour-long dance event. The programme was inaugurated with the performance on Guru Vandana by the students of Nrityashram. Then, under the direction of Shramana Chattopadhyay, she and the students of her organization presented a performance of Rabindranath Tagore's songs of Puja Parjay titled "Tomay Hridoy Majhare Rakhibo." Performers were- Mrinalini, Swarnali, Srijani, Tanushree, Surorsha & Shramana. While the recitation was done by Ina Chowdhury and the music was sung by famous artists like Jayati Chakraborty, Emon chakraborty.

Another important and interesting aspect of the

program is that Shramana Chattopadhyay invited two child artists to the program - Somrik Ghosh (recitation) and Srijita Moulick (Kathak). Then the special guests of the day's program were welcomed and felicitated by Shramana Chattopadhyay. Then the kids of the Nrityashram performed Saraswati Vandana, pure dance on Trital like Aamad, Tehai, Parmelu, Paran, Kavitva, Ladi under the supervision of Shramana. They are Rishita, Divija, Manismita, Aahana, Sangbida, Sanmita, Nishka Shreyashi, Biswameeta, Bishakha, Pritisha and Aishi. Then Smt. Sharmila Mallick presented Jhaptal and finally Shramana Chattopadhyay

presented various bols like Aamad, Tehai, Tukra, Tora, Parmelu, Paran, Chakkar, Ladi etc on Pancham Swari taala. In the beginning of her dance performance she performed a very famous vandana "Angikam" of Devadidev Mahadev and lastly a very famous thumri "Mohe Chherona" written by Bindadin Maharaj. Siddhartha Bhattacharjee (tabla) and Subhasish Bhattacharjee gave c m m e n d a b l e accompaniment with the performers. The Anchor of the show was Ina Chowdhury. The event concluded with vote of thanks by Shramana Chattopadhyay, CCRT Junior and National Scholarship Holder, State Level Champion.

## Adv. Samir Jani elected as new National President of AIFTP



**Junagadh/ Kolkata Dec. 16 (KCN):**

The Reassessment provisions under the Income Tax Act have undergone several changes reflecting the Government's intent to balance the interest of revenue and rights of taxpayers, said Justice Ujjal Bhuyan, Judge Supreme Court of India as Chief Guest in 27th National Convention of the All India Federation of Tax Practitioners in Junagadh (Gujarat) on 14th & 15th December, 2024. Justice B.D. Karia, Judge, Gujarat High Court; Justice Soumitra Saikia, Judge, Guwahati High Court and Justice Pranav Trivedi, Judge, Gujarat High Court also addressed as Guests of Honour.

Addressing on the occasion Adv. Narayan Jain, National President of AIFTP said that the Federation works for the three basic principles EDUCATION, ETHICS AND EXCELLENCE. It has in its fold more than 11200 Advocates, Chartered Accountants and Tax Practitioners all over India. Advocate Samiur Jani of Junagadh was administered the

oath as National President 2025. CA S. Venkataramani was appointed as National Deputy President Other office bearers for 2025 include Santosh Gupta (Secretary General) and Bhaskar Patel (Treasurer). Past Presidents PC Joshi, Dr K Shivaram, Premlata Bansal, M.S. Rao, Nikita Badheka, DK Gandhi, and Pankaj

Ghoya also addressed the Convention. Eminent Speakers were Senior Advocates Arvind Datar, Saurabh Soparkar, Kavin Gulati, Dr. CA Girish Ahuja, Advocate Mukesh Patel, CA Abhay Desai, Adv. Vinayak Patkar, NVP, Advocate RD Kakra, Secretary General, Advocate Bhaskar B Patel, CA Anil Mathur & others actively helped to make the Conference so successful. colleagues, for their tireless efforts and showing their zeal and enthusiasm to make this Conference into mega success. I also congratulate members of Taxation Advisors Association, Junagadh, Gir-Somnath Tax Bar Association, Veraval for their active help. My best wishes to all the delegates.

## Heritage Institute of Technology, Kolkata Achieves Double Victory at Smart India Hackathon 2024



**Kolkata, (KCN):** The Grand Finale of the prestigious Smart India Hackathon 2024, organized by AICTE from 11th to 15th December, showcased innovative solutions to real-world challenges across industry and society. Among the standout performers were two student teams from Heritage Institute of Technology, Kolkata. Team Paradox Innovator emerged as a joint winner for the problem statement SIH1582, assigned by the Department of Smart Cities Mission under the Ministry of Urban and Housing Affairs in the Hardware Edition held in Pune, with their system to check the healthiness of the earthing system

and alert staff in case of any malfunction. Team Connexus clinched joint winner status for the problem statement SIH1630, assigned by the Punjab Skill Development Mission (PSDM) of the Government of Punjab in the Software Edition held in Jalandhar, for their implementation of a Mentor Connect platform. These projects, guided by the mentors Prof. Samiul Alam, Prof. Satarupa Biswas, Prof. Sudipta Bhadra, and Prof. Santanu Roy, reflect the Institute's emphasis on nurturing practical and impactful innovations. Expressing his pride, Shri Pradip Agarwal, CEO of the Heritage Group of Institutions, Kolkata, said

"I congratulate the students, faculty, and staff on behalf of Kalyan Bharti Trust for making this possible. These achievements underscore the alignment of industry and academia through innovation, a cornerstone of India's growth journey." Prof. Basab Chaudhuri, Principal of Heritage Institute of Technology, attributed the success "to the collective efforts of the entire Heritage Family and initiatives like HackHeritage, the Institute's internal hackathon, which provided a strong foundation for the students". As stated by the Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, "Through Smart India Hackathon, the youth power of the country is extracting the Amrit of solutions for developed India", the achievements of the students of the Heritage Institute of Technology exemplify the potential of innovation to revolutionize the future.

# Coastal highway could harm Chilika ecosystem: Experts

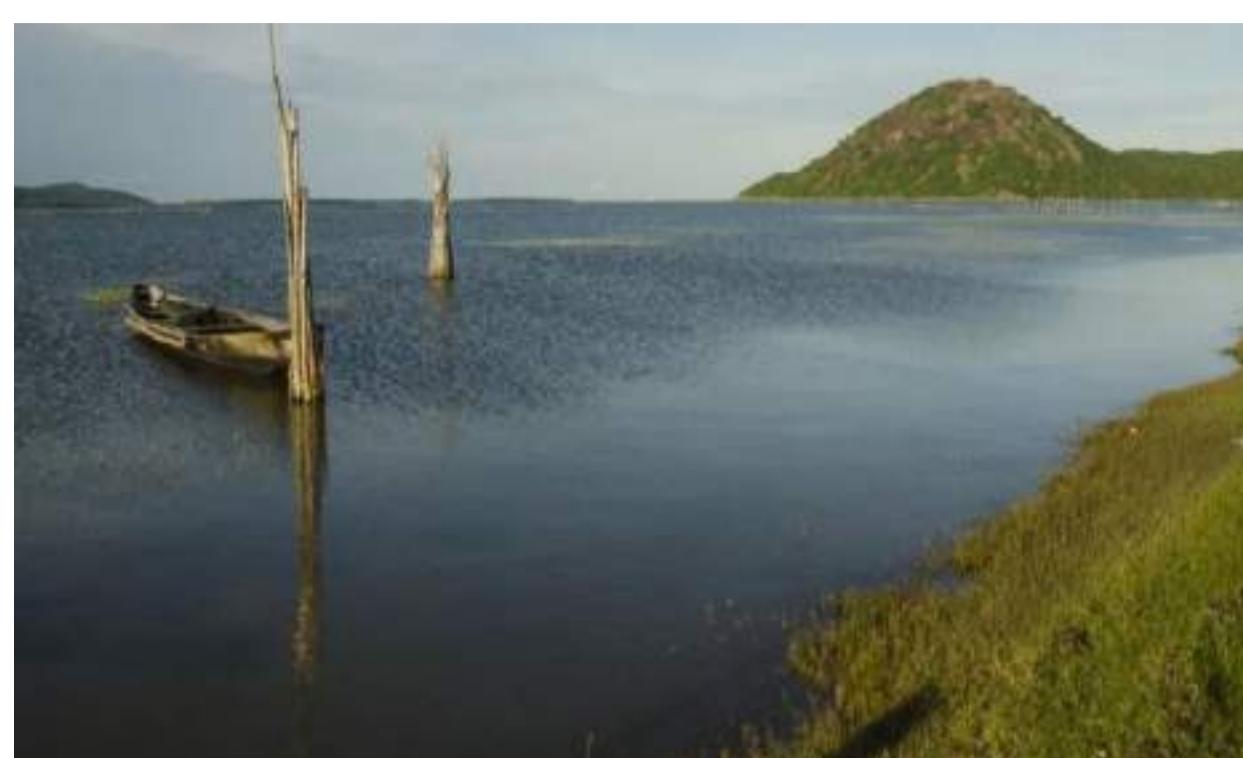
**Bhubaneswar (KCN):** The Central government's decision to construct the coastal highway NH-516A, connecting Gopalpur with Satapada via Krushnaprasad in the Chilika region, has sparked concerns over its potential impact on the lake's fragile ecosystem.

Experts at a discussion organised Sunday by the Orissa Environmental Society (OES) on the theme 'Preservation of Chilika Lake Ecosystem' highlighted the threats posed by the project, including increased air, water, and noise pollution, which could have detrimental

effects on the lake's biodiversity.

Chilika Lake, Asia's largest brackish water lagoon and the second-largest in the world, is recognised as an ecologically significant wetland and has been a Ramsar site since 1981. It hosts diverse marine life, including fish, migratory birds, and Irrawaddy dolphins, and serves as a critical socio-economic resource for local communities.

However, the lake faces



mounting environmental and socio-economic challenges that threaten its ecological health and the livelihoods of those dependent on it.

OES working president Jaya Krushna Panigrahi

attributed much of the stress on the lake to

human interventions, which he said adversely

affect its biodiversity. Former engineer-in-chief of the Works department

Manoranjan Mishra

emphasised the importance of using eco-friendly technologies during construction to minimise damage. Odisha State Pollution Control Board (OSPCB) scientist Debasish Mahapatro warned that benthic fauna and seagrass would face further threats if the highway is built.

Former advisor to the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MOEFCC) VP Upadhyay advocated for comprehensive environmental impact assessments before initiating such a large-scale project.

Centurion University professor Siba Prasad Parida suggested that migratory birds and dolphins might adapt to the changes if construction-related damage is minimised. Meanwhile, OES president SN Patro underscored the need to balance development with eco-restoration measures.

The speakers proposed an alternative route connecting Rambha, Balugaon, Tangi, Bhusandpur, and Satapada to prevent further degradation of Chilika Lake. This alternative, they argued, would help preserve the ecological integrity of the lake while addressing developmental needs.

## Over 47 cases settled in a day in Lok Adalat

**Chhatrapur (KCN):** Over 125 cases were taken up for hearing and judgements were passed in more than 47 of those during the National Lok Adalat held on the Civil Courts premises in Chhatrapur Saturday. Organised by the Taluk Legal Services Committee, Chhatrapur, courts of the ADJM Manoranjan Das, Senior Civil Judge Pooja De, SDJM Pritish Kumar Rath and JMFC Swagatika Swain passed



judgements on litigations from banking, unresolved financial disputes between parties, and

other cases.

A team of advocates, comprising Pradip Kumar Padhi, president

of the Chhatrapur Bar Association played a pivotal role in organising the Lok Adalat.

## Odisha approves Rs 1,386 Crore investment in renewable energy projects



**Bhubaneswar, Dec 16 (KCN):** Odisha is making significant strides in its renewable energy sector with the approval of seven new projects totaling Rs 1,386 crore.

The projects, with a combined capacity of 192.41 MW, were granted in-principle approval at the 8th meeting of the Single Window Committee (SWC) under the Odisha Renewable Energy Policy-2022.

The approved initiatives include a 99 MW wind power project, five ground-based solar projects totaling 91.77 MW, and a 1.64 MW rooftop solar project. These projects aim to leverage the state's natural potential for generating renewable energy and contribute to Odisha's sustainable economic growth goals.

Vishal Kumar Dev,

Principal Secretary of

the Energy Department,

highlighted the

importance of these

initiatives in achieving

Odisha's renewable

energy targets. The

state's investment-

friendly policies and

proactive approach have

positioned it as a

promising hub for

renewable energy

investments.

## Odisha governor Raghubar Das advocates for fair, fearless journalism

**Jamshedpur, (KCN):** The responsibilities of Journalism are not limited to dissipating news but also to making people aware of their rights, besides guiding society, Odisha Governor Raghubar Das said here on Sunday.

Journalists are considered strong sentinel of society and

should discharge their responsibilities fearlessly to bring in constructive changes, said Das, a

former Jharkhand chief minister.

He was speaking to media persons at the Kolhan division-level felicitation of journalists, including the family members of those who died, in the course of service, organised by the Press Club of Jamshedpur on its 18th foundation day function.

was traveling from Bargarh to Bhubaneswar when it lost control over the wheel around 3 am and it collided with a nearby electric pole, sliding into a ditch beside the road.

Several passengers were injured due to its impact, who were immediately shifted to nearby hospital. Being informed, police reached the spot and started investigation into the matter.

## Bus overturns in Odisha's Khordha district, 10 injured

**Bhubaneswar, (KCN):** A bus carrying approximately 60 passengers overturned into a roadside ditch late last night in Khordha. The incident occurred at Baghmari-Begunia road

in Odisha's Khordha district. Fortunately, no fatalities were reported, though at least 10 passengers sustained injuries during the incident. Sources said, the bus

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## Spark Round table Discussions on Beyond the Brand\* lead on AI First, Women First and Society First

**Sambalpur,(KCN):IIM Sambalpur, in collaboration with NSE (National Stock Exchange) Academy hosted a thought-provoking Round table Discussion on "Beyond the Brand: Rethinking Strategies in the Era of Technology-Driven Disruption". The objective is of the round table is to connect student and industry leaders to navigate on how brands can redefine their branding strategies, market positioning, and customer relationships using tech while staying inclusive in their overall approach. This intriguing round table with industry and academia is aligned with many such steps that the institution has taken to include technology in its curriculum including introducing AI in classrooms. The theme of this discussion examines the impact of technological advancements on the transformation of various industries such as e-commerce, digital marketing, and branding. Key topics such as the function of the metaverse in marketing, the digital transformation of supply chains, and the integration of AI-driven customer insights exemplify how organizations are enhancing customer loyalty and driving innovation. Underscored the importance of integrating purpose-driven innovation,**

**Tata Power leads EV charging space with a pan-India network; showcases wide-range of hi-tech EZ Charge solutions**

**at Auto Expo**

Bhubaneswar: Tata Power, one of India's largest and fastest growing EV Charging solutions provider showcased its wide-range of hi-tech EV charging solutions at the ongoing Auto Expo 2023 in Greater Noida. A first-hand experience of the technology that is driving Tata Power's widespread EV charging network - EZ (read easy) Charge was provided to the visitors, including the award-winning and one of the most downloaded mobile apps for EV charging - Tata Power EZ Charge, which ensures a seamless user experience through features that will help commuters find the nearest charging station, know the real-time availability of charging points, and receive updates on charging status, amongst many others.

Information about Tata Power's one of its kind Network Operations Center (NOC) located in Mumbai was also on display. This center aids in the effective operational management of charging stations across India. NOC is integrated with the online platform that supports Tata Power's EZ Charge services, has a real-time communication link with all on-board chargers, and aids in the early detection of tech-related issues. The NOC additionally supports quick problem solving, back-end system support, and proactive planning for charging infrastructure upkeep. Tata Power has also kicked off an ambitious nationwide plan of setting up approx. 25000 electric vehicle (EV) charging points across the country to support faster adoption of e-mobility over the next 5 years.

such steps that the institution has taken to include technology in its curriculum including introducing AI in classrooms. The theme of this discussion examines the impact of technological advancements on the transformation of various industries such as e-commerce, digital marketing, and branding. Key topics such as the function of the metaverse in marketing, the digital transformation of supply chains, and the integration of AI-driven customer insights exemplify how organizations are enhancing customer loyalty and driving innovation. Underscored the importance of integrating purpose-driven innovation, inclusivity, and resilience to create enduring impacts within dynamic markets. Prof. Mahadeo Jaiswal, Director, IIM Sambalpur said, that "IIM Sambalpur has been at the forefront of integrating AI into

educational settings to effect transformative changes. It's initial exploration focused on how AI could alter the traditional classroom environment by augmenting faculty roles. Research findings indicated a significant

improvement in learning outcomes attributable to AI. To take the initiative forward, aligning with industry standards through the application of AI in education, IIM Sambalpur along with NSE Academy convened a panel of 35 industry leaders, including CHROs and CEOs from Spencers, Shopers Stop, BATA, TATA, KPMG, Deloitte, India Mart, ITC, Aditya Birla, Flipkart, IPE Global etc. to engage in a discussion on whether

AI has implications for branding. The conversation identified three primary drivers of disruption in contemporary business: digitalization, decarbonization, and the democratization of startups. The dialogue centered on five critical pillars of innovation, emphasizing leadership, customer-centricity, societal impact, talent attraction, and technological infrastructure while underscoring the importance of visionary leadership in promoting adaptability and resilience in the digital era." Abhilash Misra, CEO, NSE Academy, highlighting

the importance of usage of tech while Nishit Bansal, Vice President, Talent and Learning, Tata Consumer Products, said, "True business success goes beyond profitability; The panelists shared perspectives on leveraging emerging technologies to personalize customer interactions, build digital trust, and redefine market strategies by emphasizing the importance of purpose-driven values, diversity, and inclusion in attracting and retaining top talent. The discussion outlined strategies for organizations to navigate the rapidly changing business landscape.



# Muskaan Litfest for Child Authors showcases young literary talent

Bhubaneswar : Some of the leading social, cultural, corporate and literary organizations of the country came together for the first time to host a unique literature festival - 'Muskaan Litfest for Child Authors' - under the Muskaan initiative of Kolkata-based non-profit trusts, Prabha Khaitan Foundation and Education for All Trust. The three-day event was held at the Kalubhai, interacted with 30 school-going young authors from all over the country. "Muskaan is a brilliant initiative of PKF to give a platform for the young talented writers to showcase their works and inspire future talents," the minister said. He also gave certificates to the young authors.

day Litfest (Jan 10-12) was organized in collaboration with IGNCA and in association with India International Centre and Sahitya Akademi as the knowledge partner. Shree Cement supported the event as a part of its corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiative.

The festival was inaugurated in the presence of Priyank Kanoongo, Chairman, National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR). Also present on the occasion were Sachchidanand Joshi, member secretary, the executive and academic head of IGNCA; K N Shrivastava, Director of

IIC, and K  
Sreenivasarao, Secretary, Sahitya Akademi.  
"Literature is the mirror of society. It is important to provide child authors the right environment and upbringing to promote literature," Kanoongo said. He asserted that instead of social media, the children should take more interest in writing and literature.

The evening was marked by a scintillating cultural programme 'Udaan' conceptualised by Shinjini Kulkarni, Ehsaas Woman of Prabha Khaitan Foundation. Huma Khalil Mirza, Ehsaas Woman of Delhi and Unnati Singh, Ehsaas

Woman of Indore, also chipped in and livened up the show. Teams of women achievers who work to create cultural capital and assets are a part of a Ehsaas Woman network in major cities of India under the aegis of Prabha Khaitan Foundation.

Dancer and choreographer Avirup Sengupta, who works with specially-abled children through Prayas Foundation, presented an enthralling performance. The Foundation had flown in children from Kolkata for the special performance. The latest issue of PKF newsletter Prabha, based on the theme of children's literature, was formally released.

# Kapil Sharma and his team in Navratna Ayurvedic oil advertisement campaign

**Kolkata:** Navratna, the ayurvedic cool oil market leader from the house of Emami Ltd throws up a laughter challenge this summer as Kapil Sharma comes on board the brand along with his eccentric family members Kiku Sharda, Gaurav Gera and Sumona Chakravarti. In a series of new TV ads and digital content, Navratna Oil introduces a burst of cool comic relief with the irrepressible Kapil Sharma and his band of quirky accomplices. Together, they tackle the everyday chaos and challenges encountered by common man as they present Navratna Oil as “Thandak Ka Badshah, Raahat Ka Raja.” A two-minute champi (head massage) with Navratna Oil offers relief and relaxation leaving one “thanda thanda cool cool”. Commenting on this unique endorsement association, Mr. Harsha V. Agarwal, Vice Chairman and Managing Director, Emami Limited, said, “We are delighted to onboard Kapil Sharma and his quirky team for our brand Navratna Ayurvedic Oil. Humour is well known for being a stress buster and Kapil’s brand of humour has been doing just that for over a decade across demographics. The pairing of Kapil Sharma and team with Navratna, which is India’s number 1 cool oil that provides relief from daily stress to its millions of consumers, is one of the best fitments that a brand can envisage.

# KiiT International School Celebrates 10th Foundation Day of SEN Globe

**Bhubaneswar, Dec 16(KCN):** KiiT International School marked the 10th Foundation Day of SEN Globe, witnessing emotional and inspiring speeches by prominent dignitaries, including the Speaker of the Odisha Legislative Assembly, Surama Padhy, and the Founder of KIIT and KISS, Dr. Achyuta Samanta.

Speaking as the Chief Guest, the Speaker expressed admiration for the unique initiative of SEN Globe. She urged parents of special children not to lose hope but to view their roles as an opportunity to serve a noble cause. Stressing the importance of vocational training, she shared her observations from a visit to Australia, where schools empower special children through skills like toy-making. She called upon teachers and therapists to continue their efforts with utmost dedication, underscoring that these children are also nation-

builders. Padhy, describing the special children as divine creations of God, encouraged parents and

teachers not to feel disheartened but to approach these challenges with enthusiasm and understanding. "If we equip these children with life skills and vocational education, they can become self-reliant and contribute meaningfully to society," she said.

Dr. Samanta emphasized that children with special needs have equal rights to live alongside others and highlighted SEN Globe's unique approach as the only programme in the country integrated into a mainstream school. "Here, children with special needs are taught alongside regular students, under one roof, as equals. This is not a segregated initiative," he said, adding that KiiT International School is ranked among the top 10 in the country.

Dr. Samanta further shared that ten students from SEN Globe have already progressed to higher education at KIIT University, exemplifying the programme's success. He assured parents that the school would focus more on skill education, enabling children with special needs to contribute meaningfully to society.

Chairperson Monalisa Bal emphasized that inclusive education fosters a sense of belongingness among all children. Her vision set the tone for the celebration, highlighting the need to integrate students with special needs into mainstream education. The programme also saw KIIT and KISS President Saswati Bal greeting the children and wishing parents and teachers for their exemplary contribution in shaping the future of the special children. School Principal Sanjay Suar reiterated the school's



# Trailing till 88th min, Amorim's Man United secure dramatic comeback win vs City

**New Delhi:** Manchester Derby: Ruben Amorim's Manchester United secured a dramatic 2-1 comeback win over Manchester City on Sunday, December 15. Trailing till the 88th minute, Bruno Fernandes and Amad Diallo scored in the final moments to hand the visitors a sensational win at the Etihad.

Manchester City's horror run continued as they lost to their arch-rivals Manchester United despite leading the match till the 88th minute on Sunday, December 15. City collapsed once again on Sunday, at their own home, their second consecutive loss in all competitions.

Leading till the 88th minute via a Josko Gvardiol goal in the first half, City went down courtesy of a penalty from Bruno Fernandes and then a last-gasp goal from Amad Diallo in the final minutes of regulation time. Despite controlling the tempo for the better part of the second half, City were punished for losing their concentration late into the second half. For the longest time, it seemed that Ruben Amorim had gotten things terribly wrong, having snubbed Marcus Rashford and Alejandro Garnacho for the high-profile clash. However, United hung in till the very end and secured - what is surely the most

famous and dramatic victory in Amorim's short career at United.

The opening came in the 88th minute, when defender Matheus Nunes tried to pass the ball back to keeper Ederson in the midfield. The ball was intercepted by a rapid Amad Diallo, who drove the ball into the penalty box and smartly waited for the keeper to come at him.

As Diallo stood just inside the edge of the box, Nunes panicked and overcompensated for his mistake. He tried to stomp the ball out of Diallo's feet but ended up catching the player instead. This resulted in a penalty and the kick was driven home by none other than Bruno

Fernandes.

The event made a tectonic shift in the mood of the game as City looked absolutely shattered and scared of holding the ball at their feet. Poor clearance once again resulted in a



chance for the bullet Amad, who drove into the box, stole the bouncing ball and slotted past a clean low shot from the left side of the post. While dramatic, the events were also

the ball low into the right corner from inside the box.

What was initially a worrying slump in form by champions City has now snowballed into a full-on nightmare before Christmas for Pep Guardiola's side as they have now lost eight of their last 11 games in all competitions, winning one. They stay fifth in the table with 27 points from 16 games, nine points behind leaders Liverpool having played a game more.

United remain in the

bottom half with 22 points but will hope their smash-and-grab raid at The Etihad Stadium will spark a move up the table during the festive period.

City did not even muster a shot on target in the second half as they looked barely recognisable from the side that has won four successive Premier League crowns. Midfielder Bernardo Silva made no attempt to sugar-coat a gut-wrenching loss.

## Isa Guha apologises for Jasprit Bumrah 'primate' comment: 'Chose wrong word'

**New Delhi:** English commentator Isa Guha has apologised for her 'primate' comment on Jasprit Bumrah after the end of Day 2 of the Gabba Test on Sunday, December 15. Bumrah picked up his 2nd 5-wicket haul of the ongoing Border-Gavaskar Trophy series.

Guha said she had no malice in mind while making the comment about Bumrah.

Bumrah has been waging a lone battle for India in the Border-Gavaskar Trophy so far. English commentator Isa Guha has apologised for her Jasprit Bumrah 'primate' comment which went viral after Day 2 of the Gabba Test on Sunday, December 15. Guha, who was on commentary duty, was talking about Bumrah's explosive start to life in Australia during the ongoing Border-Gavaskar Trophy.

The Indian pacer got his 2nd 5-wicket haul of the series on Sunday as he waged a lone battle for India as Australia took charge of proceedings.



Guha would call Bumrah the MVP, 'Most Valuable Primate' and also suggested that the Indian pacer does need some support from the other end.

"The MVP - Most Valuable Primate", said Guha. "He is the one that's going to do all the talking for India and why so much focus was on him in the build up to this Test match and whether he would be fit. He needs some support though."

However, the 'primate' comment would go viral

on social media, with fans slamming her for the use of the word. The commentator has now issued an on-air statement on Fox Cricket ahead of Day 3 of the Gabba Test on Monday.

Guha addressed the matter and apologised for any offence she had caused with the use of the word. The English commentator said that she meant to give the highest praise to Bumrah and admitted that she used the wrong word in the end.

Guha hoped that people

would recognise there was no malice in her comments about Bumrah and it doesn't overshadow the action in the ongoing Gabba Test.

"Yesterday in commentary I used a word that can be interpreted in a number of different ways. I'd like to apologise for any offence caused. I set myself really high standards when it comes to empathy and respect of others."

"If you listen to the full transcript I only meant the highest praise for

one of India's greatest players. And someone that I admire greatly. I'm an advocate for equality and someone who has spent their career thinking about inclusion and understanding in the game.

"I was trying to frame the enormity of his achievement and I've chosen the wrong word. And for that I am deeply sorry. As someone who is also of south Asian heritage I hope people would recognise there was no other intention or malice there, and I hope this hasn't overshadowed what has been a great Test match so far - and I look forward to seeing how it progresses," said Guha.

Indian cricket legend Ravi Shastri, who spoke immediately after the apology, praised Isa Guha for her "brave" apology, acknowledging her willingness to address the situation. The former India coach also shared that he had been in touch with the Indian camp, confirming that no offence had been taken regarding Guha's comment.

**New Delhi:** India kicked off the T20I series against West Indies with a comprehensive 49-run win in the first match in Navi Mumbai. Riding on half-centuries from Smriti Mandhana (54 off 33) and Jemimah Rodrigues (73 off 25), India were able to post a massive 195/4 on the board, a total that Hayley Matthews admitted to being "15-20 runs too many" at the post-match presentation ceremony.

It wasn't as one-sided a run-chase as the scorecard suggests though, at least as long as Deandra Dottin was at the crease. The 33-year-old hit 4 fours and 3 sixes in her 28-ball 52, keeping West Indies in the hunt. She added 44 runs for the third wicket with Qiana Joseph (49 off 33) and continued with her merry ways even after Qiana chipped one to mid-off. India's efforts were hindered by two dropped catches of Dottin, but Titas Sadhu finally ended her innings with a catch

at long-on. Once Dottin was accounted for, India tightened the screws with the help of its spinners and crafted what felt like an easy victory towards the end.

West Indies's effort in the field earlier in the day was sloppy, with the visitors dropping as many as three catches during the course of the innings. But it all started with conceding a 50-run opening stand, that saw Uma Chetry play the aggressor early on and Mandhana admirably catch up later and even hitting a six off Dottin.

After Uma was bowled by Karishma Ramharack soon after the PowerPlay, West Indies weren't able to capitalize on the moment. Mandhana and Rodrigues went on to add 81 runs in only 7.2 overs,

the pair picking 18 runs off a Matthews over at one point in time. Rodrigues went on to make her 12th T20I fifty, getting to the milestone off just 28 balls. Mandhana fell in the 14th over, holing out to cover but Richa Ghosh walked in and wasted no time, finishing with a cameo of 20 off 14. Rodrigues meanwhile also kept at it, helping India add 56 in the final five overs. She stayed right until the penultimate ball of the innings, where she was run out but not before she had done the job for her side.

Brief Scores: India 195/4 (Rodrigues 73, Mandhana 54; Ramharack 2-18) beat West Indies 146/7 (Dottin 52, Joseph 49; Sadhu 3-37) by 49 runs

## Puttick wants Afghanistan to add ODI smarts

**New Delhi:** Afghanistan batting coach Andrew Puttick said that his team will need to improve strike rotation against finger spinners as they prepare to take on Zimbabwe in the upcoming three-match ODIs, scheduled at Harare from December 17.

Afghanistan clinched the three-match T20I series but the focus now shifts to their ODI game given it's their last assignment in the format building up to next year's Champions Trophy.

According to Puttick, a key component of their ODI evolution will be to get smarter in the little

nuances of the game. "We need to improve the rotations (strike) against accurate finger spin. I think that is one area we can get better at," Puttick told Cricbuzz. "We generally play wrist spin very well and we clear boundaries very easily as we are good boundary hitters and the areas that we are looking to get better is just rotation of strike I guess. "Smart cricket is all about little more control when you are batting, reading the situation and holding your composure and backing yourself to take the game deep and just having that control," he added.

Puttick, who played one ODI for South Africa, added that the presence of Mohammad Nabi and Rashid Khan down the



order gives the team much needed balance as well as vital experience. "It's good to have those experienced guys (Nabi and Rashid) at six, seven or eight. They have seen it all and they are nice and calm and they are great leaders in their own

Rashid can do he is a very destructive very unique and talented batsman and he wants to know the game and so very useful to have those guys coming down the order and there is a nice feel to the batting order and in the Afghan batting line-up at the moment and we still need to get better at with consistency and its exciting time," he said.

"I think we definitely want to see it and the guys are working hard. Their (bowlers) batting will give them an edge in their selection and get them in the team. They have got a great role model in Rashid who is a world class bowler and always working on his batting and always looking to improve his batting. All the guys are motivated," he added.

all the way down the order. Guys also need to realize in Afghanistan there are lots of good bowlers and if you can stand with the bat as well that can help you for selection as well."

"It's important to have guys who can contribute