

## BJD dissatisfied with Centre over Polavaram project, warns of dire impact on Odisha's Malkangiri dist

levels have not been addressed,” Mishra stated.

The delegation highlighted discrepancies in backwater impact studies.

While the original design flood capacity of 36 lakh cusecs in 1970 limited backwater levels to 174.22 feet, more recent studies suggest levels as high as 232.28 feet due to the revised capacity, Mishra said.

These changes, the delegation asserted, have not been matched by adequate consultation or compensation plans.

The delegation members also emphasised that Odisha's tribal communities remain vulnerable. Mishra pointed to the National Green Tribunal's failure to conduct public hearings or address safety concerns adequately. He called on the Centre to prioritize a fresh backwater study, conduct surveys to identify the extent of submergence, and ensure comprehensive R&R measures for the affected communities.


Other members of the cabinet will likely take

Category. This festival highlighted Odisha's commitment to fostering creativity and raising awareness through art. The details of the sand artists recognised for their incredible talent is given in Annexure A.

**Notable dignitaries**

Honourable dignitaries of the evening included Additional Director Tourism Shri Biswajit Routray, General Manager Odisha Tourism Development Corporation Shri Lalatendu Sahoo, Secretary Odisha Sangeet Natak Akademi Dr. Bhagyaliipi Malla among other State Government officials.

The success of this year's Konark Festival and Sand Art Festival reflects the collaborative efforts of Odisha Tourism, Odisha Tourism Development Corporation, the District Administration, and the artistic community. These festivals continue to honor Odisha's rich cultural heritage, drawing visitors from across the globe to witness the state's vibrant traditions and breathtaking artistry. As the curtain falls on these landmark events, the Department of Tourism extends heartfelt thanks to all performers, artists, dignitaries, and audiences for their invaluable contributions to this celebration of art, heritage, and creativity.




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# Dancing Divinities Light Up Konark’s Fourth Evening

**Bhubaneswar , 5th DEC (KCN Bureau/Prasar Khuntia):**The fourth evening of the 35th Konark Festival was a feast for art and dance enthusiasts with captivating performances showcasing the rich heritage of Indian classical dance forms. The event witnessed exceptional displays of Kuchipudi and Odissi dance styles leaving the audience spellbound. The evening began with a stellar Kuchipudi performance by Smt. Deepika Reddy from Hyderabad, a veteran dancer with over five decades of expertise. Accompanied by her talented troupe, she presented a series of spellbinding performances starting with Kuchipudi Vandana dedicated to Lord Ganesha. This was followed by Thakuvemimnaku and



Madhuram Madhuram, portraying Lord Krishna’s divine music and rasa. The highlight of the segment was Niranjanam, where intricate rhythms and joyful movements in the Kuchipudi style captured the audience’s admiration. Smt. Deepika Reddy, the founder of the Deepanjali Institute, has been

instrumental in elevating the Kuchipudi dance form to great heights. Her remarkable efforts include teaching the art to physically challenged youth, showcasing her belief in dance as a means of devotion and God-realization. The music for the Kuchipudi segment was composed by DSV Shastri adding depth and soul to the performance.

The second segment featured a mesmerizing Odissi performance by Guru Bichitrnanda Swain and his troupe from the Rudraksha Foundation, Bhubaneswar. They presented two exquisite pieces: Hans Kalyani Pallavi, highlighting the grammar of Odissi dance and Shakya Muni Buddha, depicting the



spiritual journey of the Buddha. The dancers showcased Rasa, Raga, Chhanda drawing inspiration from the intricate sculptures of Konark. The performance, directed by Guru Bichitrnanda Swain was elevated by the music of Gurus Ramahari Das, Srijan Chatterjee and Dhaneswar Swain.

The evening was graced by distinguished guests including Principal Accountant General Dinabandhu Sahu, ASI Superintendent of Puri Circle Braja Sundar Gadanayak and Additional Director of the Tourism Department Biswajit Routray. The dignitaries lit the ceremonial lamp in the presence of Lord

Jagannath's sacred aura and extended their congratulations to the performers. Simultaneously, the 14th International Sand Art Festival at Chandrabhaga celebrated its fourth day with themes reflecting clarity of service for male sculptors and the beauty of marine life for female participants. The festival highlighted the

creativity and talent of sand artists drawing enthusiastic crowds. The evening’s celebration was orchestrated by Deputy Director of Tourism Saroj Kant Pradhan, Konark Tourism Officer Amiya Ranjan Sethi and other officials from the Odisha Tourism Development Corporation. Dr. Bhagyalakshmi Malla, Secretary of Odisha Sangeet Natak Akademi also played a key role in organizing the event. The programme coordination was skillfully managed by Dr. Mrityunjay Rath and Shovana Mishra ensuring a seamless experience. The fourth evening of the Konark Festival once again showcased the unmatched cultural richness of Odisha leaving audiences eagerly anticipating the remaining performances.

## CARE Hospitals Hosts 'CARE Rebound' to Advance Physiotherapy Excellence in Odisha

Empowering Physiotherapists with Advanced Sports Injury and Rehabilitation Protocols



**Bhubaneswar , 5, December 2024(KCN):** CARE Hospitals, Bhubaneswar in association with Sironix MEDTECH successfully organized CARE Rebound: Pioneering Physiotherapy Growth in Odisha, a groundbreaking program aimed at advancing physiotherapy practices in the state. The event was held at Hotel Padmaja Premium, the session brought together 150 of Odisha's leading physiotherapists for an evening of knowledge exchange, collaboration,

and skill enhancement in sports injury management and rehabilitation. The event featured an engaging agenda aimed at equipping physiotherapists with both practical and theoretical expertise. Inaugurated by Chief Guest Dr. Deepak Samantaray, Principal, Hi-Tech Medical College, the session set a collaborative and insightful tone. Expert talks on cutting-edge topics such as advancements in sports medicine, pelvic tilt rehabilitation, and ACL rehabilitation were delivered by Dr. Sandeep Singh, HOD of

Orthopedics & Chief Consultant at CARE Hospitals, Dr. Dinesh Behera, Physiotherapy Specialist, and Dr. Soumendra Panda, Rehabilitation Expert. The session culminated in a hands-on workshop on advanced sports physiotherapy techniques, providing participants with actionable insights and skills to enhance their practice. Dr. Sandeep Singh, HOD of Orthopedics & Chief Consultant at CARE Hospitals emphasized the importance of the initiative, stating, "Care

Rebound showcases our commitment to advancing physiotherapy in Odisha. By embracing technological advancements in sports medicine, we aim to empower professionals with the knowledge and tools to deliver exceptional patient outcomes." Dr. Dipak Samantray highlighted the collaborative spirit of the event, noting, "Such initiatives foster a culture of learning and innovation. By bringing together experts and practitioners, we are shaping the future of rehabilitation sciences in Odisha." The CARE Rebound event exemplifies CARE Hospitals Bhubaneswar's dedication to fostering excellence in healthcare education and patient care. By uniting experts and practitioners, the hospital reaffirms its commitment to elevating physiotherapy standards in Odisha and beyond.

## ‘Fakir Mohan Story Award’ Introduced by Fakir Mohan Sahitya Parishad

**Balasore, 5/12: (Krushna Kumar Mohanty)** The state of the Odia language and literature has reached a critical juncture, with the condition of Odia fiction being particularly concerning. This alarming situation, indirectly affecting Odia identity, has prompted the Fakir Mohan Sahitya

Parishad to introduce the ‘Fakir Mohan Story Award’ starting this year to promote Odia fiction. Students of Fakir Mohan University and all its affiliated colleges are invited to participate in a story-writing competition in the Odia language. The best story, selected by a panel of judges, will receive a cash prize of ₹5,000. The

award will be presented during the annual festival of the Parishad, held between January 13 and 16, coinciding with Fakir Mohan Jayanti celebrations. Participants must submit their stories (limited to 1,500 words) through the head of their respective institutions. Along with the submission, they must also

include a declaration stating the originality of their work. The stories must reach Dr. Subash Chandra Patra, Chairman, Fakir Mohan Sahitya Parishad, Jail Road, Balasore-756001, via registered post by December 15. The contact number provided by the Parishad is 9437376219.

## Rural Study Camp of Sambalpur University Social Service Students



**Sambalpur,(KCN):**Like every year, this year also a rural study camp was completed by the students of the Social Service Department under

Sambalpur University in "Urduna" Panchayat under Bhatli Block of Bargarh District. In this, the students adapted themselves to the

environment of that village for fifteen days and did some research, survey and study. In this, they studied about women's participation, women's empowerment, women's health, menstruation of girls, financial literacy and for this they studied about local SHG (Self Help Group), improvement of Farmers and the condition of old women. Along with this, they also discussed some important issues like

washing hands before eating and awareness against drugs among the local primary and high school students. Dr. Sudam Thandi and Vandana Meher were present as assistant professors to guide them in this program of Sambalpur University. As a result of this 15-day camp, both the students involved and the residents of the "Urduna" village benefited from some new experiences.



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# Amid dating rumours with Abhishek, Nimrat Kaur finds 'new companion'

Actress Nimrat Kaur has found a new tea-time companion.

On Wednesday, she took to her Instagram stories to share an adorable photo of her pet cat. Alongside the image, the Airlift actress wrote, "Back home with my tea-time companion." In the picture, Nimrat's cat is seen sitting on a sofa with her.

Recently, the actress has been very active on her photo-sharing app. Earlier, she posted a series of photos of herself posing in a field of flowers. She captioned the post, "Khil-khilaate kheton mein khelti huee khaatoon!! 5 baar lagataar bol sakte ho

mere yaar!?"

A few weeks ago, the Dasvi actress made headlines for a post where she talked about a friendship so strong it makes people jealous. She shared a humorous reel where she was seen sitting on the floor and lip-syncing to a trending dialogue: "Friendship inni pakki honi chahiye di, loki dekhte hi jal jaye, jal jaan. Kahe 'haww', aida." (Friendship should be so strong that people feel jealous just by looking at it. They should say, 'Wow,' like that.)

Nimrat Kaur has recently been in the spotlight due to an unverified Reddit claim suggesting she is in a relationship with



Abhishek Bachchan, allegedly sparked during the filming of their 2022 film Dasvi.

Since the rumours

surfaced, she has faced significant backlash on social media, with some accusing her of being involved in the

breakdown of Abhishek and Aishwarya Rai's marriage.

However, a source close to the Bachchan family

has dismissed these allegations, calling them "mischievous, malicious, and utter rubbish." The source stated, "There is not an iota of truth to these rumours. We wonder why the lady (Nimrat Kaur) has not issued a denial. Abhishek is keeping silent as he has a lot going on in his life right now and has been advised to avoid any controversies."

Nimrat had also addressed the rumours, stating that no matter what she does, people will always say what they want. She further explained that gossip is inevitable, so she chooses to focus on her work instead.

# Sukesh Chandrashekhar unveils portrait of Jacqueliene

Alleged conman Sukesh Chandrashekhar, currently lodged in a Delhi jail, has unveiled a striking artwork featuring actress Jacqueliene Fernandez. The piece is prominently displayed on the upper deck of a lavish yacht that he gifted to her for 39th birthday.

The yacht has been named 'Lady Jacqueline'.

In a recent letter addressed to the actress, Sukesh wrote: "My Love, My Jacqueline, Baby my Baby, saw you new pictures, God how can someone be so pretty, Baby you are just too extremely pretty. On this note, I have two things to dedicate to you my love, today."

He dedicated the song 'Sajni' from the recently released movie 'Laapataa Ladies'.

"Baby, first I wanna dedicate an apt song, which is my current mood, and right now feelings for you, and the song is "SAJNI" from

Lapata Ladies. Baby every line in that track is for you. I really don't know how my day and night is passing without you around me or me talking to you," wrote Sukesh.

He further said: "My Second Dedication is unveiling a stunning Art Work of your Portrait installed in the upper Deck of your Birthday Gift. Lady Jacqueline, which is enroute to Mumbai, as of now. Bomma my Baby, you know whats special about this Art Work, it's a Work which is straight out of my dreams, which is brought to reality, and now installed in your Baby Lady Jacqueline, for you my Sajni, I hope you will like it."

"Baby Sometimes we all face the Highs and Lows, it's just a part of our lives, we even feel we don't need anyone. Loving ourself is enough, or our close ones, But, Baby we give our heart only to the 'One'. No matter what hits us our Heart beats



only for that one person, and for me that's you and just you, come what may, and the same is with you and I know it, and you have loved me as crazy as it can get and no matter what just remember the promise we made to each other, I would never give up on you My Baby, Rest you know me better my Doll," he said.

He added: "Baby you know, what's the amazing thing our love story is today's Romeo Juliet, and the whole world is witness to it, because our love story is set a Benchmark Example to how love has no barriers. Baby Girl, a thousand would

say a thousand things, look and hear what really exists deep in our Heart, and all that it would say is 'JFS' forever."

"Baby my love, just two more to go, Can't wait my Love, I Love you my Jackie, every second only thinking about you my Baby Boo. Love you like crazy my Sajni, my Botta Bomma. You are amazing my love. Missing You, Love Mr S," concluded Sukesh. Sukesh was arrested May 29, 2015, for offences under Sections 420 (cheating) and 120-B (criminal conspiracy) of the Indian Penal Code (IPC), and some sections of the Prize

Chits and Money Circulation Schemes (Banning) Act and the Maharashtra Protection of Interest of Depositors (in Financial Establishments) Act. He allegedly used illegal money to buy gifts for Jacqueline, as per the ED charge sheet filed in 2022.

Jacqueliene was summoned by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) for questioning in a money laundering case involving Sukesh Chandrashekhar.

Earlier, to mark Jacqueliene's birthday, the conman has pledged a donation of Rs 15 crore and 300 homes for the families of the victims of the Wayanad landslide disaster. He has also announced 100 iPhone 15 Pro for making the song 'Yimmy Yimmy' featuring Jacqueline, a super hit.

The Sri Lankan actress and model Jacqueliene made her acting debut in 2009 with fantasy

action comedy Aladin directed by Sujoy Ghosh. The film starred Amitabh Bachchan, Sanjay Dutt, and Riteish Deshmukh.

She then featured in a special number Aapka Kya Hoga in the 2010 comedy drama Housefull.

The actress has appeared in movies like Race 2, Kick, Roy, Brothers, Housefull 3, Dishoom, A Gentleman, Judwaa 2, Race 3, Drive, Mrs. Serial Killer, Bhoot Police, Bachchan Paandey, Vikrant Rona, Ram Setu, and Cirkus.

She was last seen in a special appearance in the song Deewane in the 2023 comedy-drama Selfie directed by Raj Mehta and produced by Star Studios Dharma Productions, Magic Frames, Prithviraj Productions and Cape of Good Films. The film stars Akshay Kumar and Emraan Hashmi.

Jacqueline next has Fateh, and Welcome To The Jungle in the pipeline.

# 'Tauba Tauba' fever: Revisiting Bollywood songs that left internet groovy

Here's a look at how and why the internet embraces the viral Bollywood dance numbers like Vicky Kaushal's 'Tauba Tauba', Katrina Kaif's 'Kala Chashma', and others.

What makes a song go viral on the internet? There's no formula to make a song go viral. It's about this whole package - of music, lyrics, dance, who's performing it and how it's being presented. Like everything else in the creative business, a good video has to click with the audience. For it to go viral, it has to appeal to all kinds of audience - even those who usually don't consume that kind of content. 'Tauba Tauba', a new song from the Bollywood film 'Bad Newz' has done just the same.

It has instantly crawled up the top chartbusters' list and even though it is just all about the glam, with a very sexualised Vicky Kaushal, it's a hit among the audience. So much so that he has got newfound popularity among the heartland audience, known for never holding back their craze for a scintillating dance number. 'Tauba Tauba' has music by Punjabi singer Karan Aujla, and it is choreographed by Bosco Martis. Interestingly, it does a great deal of glorifying a woman's beauty, referring to Triptii Dimri in the video, but ends up highlighting Vicky as the very definition of 'tall, dark, handsome'. Vicky's tryst with Punjabi music and his casual dance moves have made



many videos go viral on Instagram before, but this time, he seems almost unstoppable. The choreography does justice in utilising the actor's full potential as a dancer in a never-seen-before fashion. While the popularity of 'Tauba Tauba' can be largely attributed to the actor's ever-growing charm, it is also the vibe that it exudes. When a trend rises on

social media, it breaks down into many forms of entertainment, but the vibe remains the same. You could be a failure at dancing, nowhere near to Vicky's smooth-like-butter-moves, but if you could still manage to match the mood of the song, your job is done. 'Tauba Tauba' is also one of those dance numbers which is brilliantly made to

please the female gaze, as opposed to your regular dance numbers where the 'Chikni Chamelis' and the 'Sheelas' of the world are objectified to satisfy the male gaze. It puts the onus of glamourising the screen on a man's shoulder, and he never disappoints.

Every time a Bollywood song has taken the internet by storm, it hasn't just

been done casually. It was back in 2015 when it all began. Salman Khan decided to give his audience a double dose of 'Prem' on-screen. It was Sonam Kapoor's graceful moves on the song 'Prem Ratan Dhan Payo' which made everyone sit up, take notice, and try it again and again till they got them right. So, we didn't just get influencers, but also the brides, the bridesmaids and everyone who could keep their timidity at bay, grooving to the song with their waist out hands up. The popularity of the song made the singer, Palak Muchhal, an overnight star, and Sonam, who was not known for her dance until then, a quintessential demure Bollywood heroine.

# Challenges posed by China's military dominance in Asia.

Priyanka Saurabh

*How can India respond to China's military dominance in Asia while protecting its national interests and promoting regional stability? As global power dynamics change, countries like India must continue to engage in diplomatic and defensive measures to promote regional stability. With the right combination of strategic partnerships, modernization of defense capabilities, and diplomatic engagement, India can secure its interests while contributing to a peaceful and stable Asia.*



China's growing military dominance in Asia has significantly altered the regional security landscape, causing concern among its neighbors. With advanced military capabilities, strategic infrastructure projects, and assertive territorial claims, China has expanded its influence across the Indo-Pacific region. This has posed serious challenges to regional stability, requiring a strategic response from countries like India to safeguard their interests and maintain peace. The challenges posed by China's military dominance in Asia are territorial disputes and expansionism. Challenges posed by China's military dominance in Asia China's territorial claims

in the South China Sea and the India-China border challenge regional stability, leading to frequent military confrontations. China's Nine-Dash Line claim in the South China Sea has led to disputes with several Southeast Asian countries, undermining freedom of navigation and regional peace. China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) has allowed the build-up of military assets in key areas, increasing its military presence near neighboring countries. The construction of a military base in Djibouti and strategic ports in Sri Lanka and Pakistan increases China's influence in the Indian Ocean region, affecting India's security concerns. China's naval expansion and military modernization are a direct challenge to the balance of power in the Indo-Pacific, where countries such as Japan, Australia, and India are concerned. China's growing naval presence in the Indo-Pacific and frequent military exercises near the Taiwan Strait and the Malacca Strait have

raised concerns about regional security. China's military might often goes hand in hand with its economic influence, which it uses to secure regional dominance and limit the strategic autonomy of smaller countries. China's debt-trap diplomacy in Sri Lanka, coupled with its military presence in the Indian Ocean, highlights how economic dependence can translate into military leverage. China's military build-up acts as a deterrent to its neighbors, making them hesitant to confront Chinese aggression, which could disrupt regional security. The 2017 Doklam standoff between India and China is an example of China using military posture to assert territorial claims, which impacted India's relations with its regional neighbors.

India's response to China's military dominance is strengthening strategic alliances while protecting national interests. India has focused on building strategic alliances to counter China's growing influence, especially in the Indo-Pacific region. India's participation in the Quad (Quadrilateral Security Dialogue) with the US, Japan, and Australia strengthens military cooperation and ensures a collective response to China's assertive behavior. India must enhance its defense capabilities to effectively deter Chinese aggression, especially in areas such as cyber warfare, space technology, and missile defense. India's purchase of the S-400 missile system from Russia and the BrahMos missile development strengthens

its defense against China's growing missile and air power. Economic self-reliance and strategic partnerships can help India boost national security, reducing its vulnerability to China's economic leverage. The Atmanirbhar Bharat initiative encourages India to focus on indigenous defense production while reducing dependence on China for critical defense technologies. India's focus on securing its maritime borders and enhancing naval capabilities is crucial to countering China's growing naval presence in the Indian Ocean. India has strengthened naval cooperation with countries such as Japan and Australia, focusing on freedom of navigation in the Indian Ocean and South China Sea to counter China's influence. India should

also engage in diplomatic efforts to build regional consensus against China's expansionist policies while using soft power to strengthen ties with Southeast Asian countries. India's active role in ASEAN forums and its Act East policy promote closer ties with Southeast Asia, countering China's economic and military dominance in the region. India's response to China's military dominance is encouraging multilateral cooperation while promoting regional stability. India should promote multilateral frameworks to address regional security concerns and encourage dialogue among Indo-Pacific countries. India's participation in the East Asia Summit and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO)

promotes cooperation on security issues, including countering China's influence. India can strengthen regional autonomy and self-reliance by supporting smaller countries in asserting their sovereignty against external pressures. India's support to Sri Lanka and Nepal in resisting Chinese economic influence through projects such as the MGC (Mekong-Ganga Cooperation) is an example of promoting autonomy. India should emphasize the importance of transparency in defense spending and military activities to reduce regional tensions. India's open defense budget and participation in UN peacekeeping missions contribute to regional trust and reduce the risk of conflict. By promoting inclusive economic growth and ensuring equitable development, India can counter China's economic coercion and build more stable regional relations. India's focus on improving infrastructure and promoting trade with ASEAN countries reduces their dependence on Chinese projects. India should actively promote

peaceful conflict resolution mechanisms through diplomatic channels to maintain stability in the region. India's participation in the India-China border talks and support for ASEAN-led negotiations on the South China Sea disputes exemplify its commitment to regional peace. As global power dynamics change, countries like India must continue to engage in diplomatic and defensive measures to promote regional stability. With the right combination of strategic partnerships, modernization of defense capabilities, and diplomatic engagement, India can secure its interests while contributing to a peaceful and stable Asia.

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# A TRANS-INDIAN ODYSSEY: A TALE OF TWO BIKERS

Dr.S.SaiGanesh



Dr. SaiGanesh, a professor from Hosur, Tamil Nadu, and Mr. Senthil Kumar, a businessman from Krishnagiri, embarked on an extraordinary 12-day, 4800km motorcycle journey across India. Their adventure, fueled by the spirit of exploration and friendship, took them through five states and two union territories: Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Goa, Daman, Gujarat, and Rajasthan. Their journey began from the industrial city of Hosur, winding through the diverse landscapes of India. They experienced the serene backwaters of west coast, the bustling streets of Mumbai, the golden sands of Rajasthan, and the pristine beaches of Goa. They savored the unique flavors of each region, from the spicy curries of the South to the delectable sweets of the North. Beyond the stunning vistas and gastronomic delights, the real reward of this journey was the human connection. They met

people from all walks of life, each with their own stories and dreams. The warmth and hospitality of the locals, regardless of their background, left a lasting impression. This cross-country adventure was a testament to the spirit of adventure and the power of friendship. It was a journey that not only explored the vastness of India but also the depths of the human soul. A Coastal Sojourn: Goa and Daman Their first destination was Goa, a tropical paradise renowned for its pristine beaches, vibrant nightlife, and Portuguese colonial architecture. They soaked up the sun, explored historic forts, and indulged in the delectable seafood. From Goa, they ventured to Daman, a former Portuguese colony, where they explored its serene beaches and colonial-era structures. A Smooth Ride through Gujarat and Rajasthan The duo was pleasantly surprised by the excellent infrastructure they encountered, particularly in Gujarat and Rajasthan. The well-maintained roads, especially the stretch between Barmer and other Rajasthan cities, made their journey smoother and more enjoyable. They were

also awestruck by the magnificent Statue of Unity, a towering tribute to Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. Such well-developed infrastructure not only facilitates travel but also boosts economic growth and connectivity. It's a testament to the government's commitment to improving the country's transportation network. A Tapestry of Hospitality at Gujarat Their journey wasn't without its challenges. One late night, cruising through the dense forests of the Western Ghats in Maharashtra, they found themselves stranded. The weekend rush had filled all the hotels, leaving them scrambling for a place to rest. It was then that the true beauty of India shone through. A group of young people (Gujarat -Maharashtra Border), encountering their predicament, went above and beyond to help. They tirelessly searched with SaiGanesh and Senthil, finally securing a circuit house in the remote forest for the night. This experience reaffirmed their belief: good deeds have a ripple effect. By approaching the world with open hearts and helping hands, they received kindness tenfold. Everywhere they went, they were



welcomed with open arms, a testament to India's rich tradition of hospitality. A Spiritual Sojourn: Kolhapur Their journey concluded with a visit to the holy city of Kolhapur. They sought the blessings of Goddess Mahalaxmi at the renowned Mahalaxmi Temple. The serene atmosphere of the temple provided a peaceful end to their adventurous journey. This motorcycle odyssey was more than just a journey; it was a transformative experience. The duo learned valuable lessons about resilience, adaptability, and the importance of human connection. They realized that challenges are opportunities for growth and that kindness can go a long way. By embracing the unexpected, they discovered the beauty of India's diverse landscapes and the warmth of its people. Their journey was a testament to the power of friendship, the spirit of adventure, and the enduring allure of India.

LESSONS FROM THE ROAD Embracing the Unexpected Life, as our two intrepid bikers discovered, is full of surprises. Their 12-day, 4800km journey was a testament to this. From unexpected mechanical issues to sudden weather changes, they encountered a myriad of challenges. However, they didn't let these obstacles deter them. Instead, they embraced the unexpected, adapting to changing circumstances and finding innovative solutions. This experience taught them that challenges can often lead to the most rewarding experiences. The Power of Human Connection Throughout their journey, they encountered people from all walks of life. The warmth and hospitality they received from strangers reinforced the power of human connection. Sharing a cup of chai with a local tea seller, drivers or a meal with newfound friends created lasting bonds. These

interactions highlighted the universal nature of kindness and compassion. The Beauty of Diversity India, a land of diverse cultures, languages, and traditions, was a cultural immersion for the bikers. They experienced the serene backwaters of the west coast, the bustling streets of Mumbai, the golden sands of Rajasthan, and the pristine beaches of Goa. This diversity broadened their horizons and challenged their preconceptions. They realized that embracing diversity can lead to a richer and more fulfilling life. The Thrill of Adventure Stepping out of their comfort zones, the bikers embraced the thrill of adventure. Every day brought new experiences, from conquering challenging terrains to immersing themselves in local cultures. They realized that adventure can be found in everyday life, not just in exotic destinations. THE IMPORTANCE OF PREPARATION Proper planning and

preparation were crucial for their successful journey. They meticulously planned their route, ensured their motorcycle was in top condition, and packed essential supplies. This foresight allowed them to navigate challenges and enjoy the journey to the fullest. The Joy of the Journey The bikers learned that the journey itself is more important than the destination. The memories and experiences they gained along the way were far more valuable than reaching their final destination. They focused on the present moment, savoring each experience, and cherishing the connections they made. MANAGEMENT LESSONS FROM THE JOURNEY This motorcycle odyssey also offers valuable management lessons: • Adaptability and Resilience: Just as the bikers navigated diverse terrains and unexpected challenges, businesses must be agile and adaptable to changing market conditions. • Effective Teamwork: Their successful journey was a result of effective teamwork, highlighting the importance of collaboration and shared vision. • Customer Focus: Their interactions with people from various backgrounds emphasized the importance of understanding customer needs and building strong relationships. • Risk Management: They carefully planned their

journey, assessing risks and taking necessary precautions, a crucial aspect of effective management. • Cultural Sensitivity: Embracing diverse cultures and traditions is essential for successful business operations in a globalized world. • Continuous Learning: The journey was a constant learning experience, emphasizing the importance of lifelong learning and adapting to new situations. By sharing their experiences, the bikers hope to inspire others to embark on their own adventures and live life to the fullest. Their journey is a testament to the power of human spirit, the beauty of exploration, and the enduring allure of the open road. The warmth and hospitality of the Indian people were evident throughout their journey. From the bustling cities to the serene villages, they were greeted with kindness and generosity. This cross-country adventure reinforced their belief in the universal language of humanity, where emotions like joy, sorrow, and empathy transcend cultural and geographical boundaries. Inspired by this experience, they plan to embark on their next adventure to the east coast, exploring the vibrant cities of Vizag, Puri, Bhubaneshwar, and Kolkata.

**Professor School of Commerce & Management Studies (PG) Dayananda Sagar University, Kuttlu Gate Bengaluru**



## Renewable Energy Capacity in West Bengal Sees 25% Growth Over Last Three Years

**Kolkata (ABHIJIT SETH):** In a major step towards fostering a sustainable future, West Bengal has recorded a remarkable 25% growth in renewable energy capacity over the past three years, as revealed by Janab Md. Ghulam Rabbani, Hon'ble Minister-in-charge, Department of Non-Conventional and Renewable Energy Sources, Government of West Bengal. Speaking at the Energy Conclave 2024 organized by the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) Eastern Region in Kolkata, the Minister highlighted the state's progress in transitioning from fossil fuels to non-fossil energy sources. With renewable energy capacity now standing at an impressive 2,100 MW, the state is solidifying its commitment to a low-carbon future. The conclave, themed "Accelerating Eastern India's Low-Carbon Transformation Through Energy Efficiency", brought together key stakeholders to discuss strategies for expanding clean energy initiatives in the region. West Bengal has implemented a range of innovative initiatives to achieve its renewable energy goals, showcasing

its commitment to sustainable development. The Solar Rooftop Initiatives have resulted in the installation of over 150 MW of rooftop solar capacity, ensuring affordable and clean energy access for urban and rural households. The Green Energy Corridor Project facilitates the seamless integration of renewable energy into the state grid, enabling the evacuation of 1,200 MW of clean power. Another major achievement is the 900 MW Purulia Pumped Storage Power Station, which stands as a cornerstone of the state's renewable energy journey, demonstrating its focus on leveraging diverse renewable resources. Additionally, the mini-grid projects launched in the Sundarbans during the 1990s continue to provide essential energy access to remote regions. The state has also partnered with GIZ (German International Cooperation) on rooftop solar installations and energy access initiatives, reflecting its commitment to international collaboration in advancing sustainability. The state has set an ambitious target to derive 30% of its energy

mix from renewable sources by 2030. Shri Barun Kumar Ray, IAS, Additional Chief Secretary of the Department of Non-Conventional and Renewable Energy Sources, noted that renewable energy procurement is expected to increase to 15 GW by 2026-27 and 25 GW by 2031-32 under Central Government's Renewable Purchase Obligations. This presents significant opportunities for investors, particularly as the renewable energy market in West Bengal expands. Efforts to create low-emission zones, including transforming Kolkata's Sector V and promoting CNG-powered ferries in the Sundarbans, further demonstrate the state's dedication to environmental sustainability. Dr. Andrew Fleming, Deputy High Commissioner (East and Northeast India), emphasized the UK's role as the Country Partner for the event. He highlighted Britain's expertise in energy transition and expressed optimism about strengthening partnerships with India to advance renewable energy initiatives. Dr. John Mathai, Member Secretary of Damodar Valley Corporation, highlighted the role of

Eastern India in electricity generation, contributing 180 billion units annually. He also underscored social initiatives that have extended solar lighting and education improvement projects to over 29,600 villages. Mr. Ivan Saha, CEO of Vikram Solar Limited and Chairman of CII Energy Subcommittee, stressed the importance of industrial sustainability in driving the transition to a low-carbon economy. The Energy Conclave 2024 spotlighted West Bengal's progressive energy policies, robust renewable projects, and significant investment in clean energy. With the state allocating ₹81.64 crore to the energy department for 2024-25, and renewable energy now contributing 12% of the state's installed capacity, the roadmap to a sustainable energy future is well underway. The event concluded with the release of three insightful reports, developed in collaboration with Consultivo, LSI, and GreenEnco, offering valuable guidance to stakeholders in the renewable energy sector. By embracing ambitious goals and fostering collaboration, West Bengal is poised to lead Eastern India's transition to a low-carbon economy.

## Assassination Attempt on Sukhbir Badal: SAD And Congress Slam CM Mann For Deteriorating Law And Order

**Chandigarh (JAG MOHAN THAKEN), December 5(KCN):** Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) and Congress have condemned the murderous attack on former Deputy Chief Minister and senior SAD leader Sardar Sukhbir Singh Badal on Wednesday and termed it as an attack on Sri Darbar Sahib. Badal, when attacked, was doing 'Sewa' at Sri Darbar Sahib as mandated by Sri Akal Takht.

Addressing a press conference here, senior SAD leader Bikram Singh Majithia said the murderous attack was aimed at finishing the moderate Akali leadership of Punjab and spoiling the peace in the border State by creating a communal divide.

"We demand a high court monitored probe into the entire incident to unmask the entire conspiracy behind it".

Taking on chief minister Bhagwant Mann of lying and taking fake credit for nabbing the accused, Mr Majithia displayed video evidence to show the State police was nowhere near the scene of the crime and the militant was allowed to approach the Akali leader despite Punjab Police claims that attacker was under surveillance, a party statement states so.

"This indicates that this was part of a preplanned attack and that the attacker was a sponsored hit man of ISI and agencies besides being a close associate of Sukhjinder Singh Randhawa". He also thanked S Sukhbir Singh Badal's personal security personnel Jasbir Singh for thwarting the attack, saying "Jasbir has been part of Sukhbir ji's security detail since the last twenty years and is a part of the Badal family".

Giving details of the attacker Narayan Singh Chaura, the SAD leader said "Chaura is a dreaded militant from whom bombs, a MP-5 machine gun and an AK-47 have been recovered". Asserting that Narayan was the brother of Narinder Singh Chaura, Mr Majithia said "Congress leader Sukhjinder Randhawa got Narinder elected to the Panchayat Samiti unanimously". He also asserted that two cases against Narayan Chaura were cancelled when the Congress party was in power and that he was also freed in 2018 when Randhawa was a minister in the Congress government. He also gave instances how Randhawa had promoted associates of Sikhs For Justice (SFJ)



earlier.

Stating that Bhagwant Mann had completely failed as home minister, Mr Majithia said "the State DGP and the Amritsar Police have a lot to answer for". He said the police should explain how a dreaded militant was allowed to roam in the Sri Darbar Sahib complex for two days and why he was not nabbed earlier.

"The Punjab Police should also tell why it compromised the safety of S Sukhbir S Badal by allowing the attacker to approach him and fire at point blank range". He said earlier also the Punjab Police had been found wanting in the case of murder of Sidhu Moosewala as well as attacks on its Intelligence headquarter and even cover up of the media interview gangster Lawrence Bishnoi gave while in police custody. "Now a situation has arisen where a 'Guru ka Sikh' who has been mandated to do 'Sewa' by Sri Akal Takht is being prevented from doing this. How safe can Punjabis be?"

Amarinder Singh Raja Warring, the President of the Punjab Pradesh Congress Committee interacted with the media and released a statement regarding the firing on Sukhbir Singh Badal at Sri Darbar Sahib, Amritsar and expressed deep concern and unequivocally condemned the incident, calling it an alarming failure of governance that highlights the dire state of safety in Punjab. He claimed that the brazen attack on Sukhbir Singh Badal near the sacred precincts of Sri Darbar Sahib, Amritsar, is a shocking testament to the complete collapse of law and order in Punjab under the Aam Aadmi Party's administration. "This horrifying attack

near such a revered site exposes the utter negligence of Bhagwant Mann's government. The police, under AAP's rule, have turned a blind eye to their primary duty of maintaining law and order, allowing Punjab to slip into chaos. If even a Z+ category protectee like Sukhbir Badal is unsafe, how can the common citizens feel secure?" said Warring, slamming the administration for its incompetence.

Amarinder Singh Raja Warring concluded with a stark warning to the AAP government: "Bhagwant Mann ji, how many more lapses will it take for your administration to wake up? The people of Punjab demand action, not excuses. The law-and-order situation has gone from bad to worse under your watch, and your failure to act decisively is putting lives at risk. This negligence will not be forgiven."

Leader of the Opposition (LoP) Partap Singh Bajwa also on Wednesday strongly condemned the assassination attempt on senior Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) leader Sukhbir Singh Badal, calling it a deeply unfortunate and unequivocally condemnable act of violence.

"The attack on Sukhbir Singh Badal outside Sri Darbar Sahib, Amritsar, where he was performing seva as directed by Sri Akal Takht Sahib, is a grim reminder of the deteriorating law and order situation in Punjab. Such incidents undermine the very fabric of societal harmony and have no place in a civilised society," Bajwa stated. Bajwa further highlighted the Union Home Ministry's failure in ensuring the safety of a Z-category protectee. "It is alarming that despite

the Border Security Force (BSF) overseeing security up to 50 km from the international border and the presence of the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) at the premises, an individual with a well-documented history of involvement in terror activities was able to move freely while carrying a deadly weapon. This raises serious concerns about the effectiveness and coordination of both central and state agencies. The Union Home Ministry must be held accountable for its inability to detect and apprehend such a dangerous individual before this heinous act could be carried out," he asserted.

He further cautioned about the potential for larger conspiracies, expressing concerns about the possibility of destabilizing Punjab. "The Sikh Panth has undoubtedly been aggrieved since the Dera Sacha Sauda chief's pardon during the SAD regime. However, this assassination attempt appears to be part of a more sinister plot. We cannot ignore the risk of Punjab slipping back into a period of turmoil," Bajwa warned.

Bajwa called for a comprehensive and impartial investigation by a High Court-appointed committee into the incident. "Given the AAP-led Punjab government's dismal track record in maintaining law and order, it is imperative that a time bound committee appointed and monitored by a sitting High Court judge probes this assassination attempt to uncover the full scope of the conspiracy and ensure justice is served," he asserted.

## Indian Statistical Institute Hosts 27th International Conference on Pattern Recognition in Kolkata

**Kolkata (ABHIJIT SETH):** The Indian Statistical Institute (ISI), in collaboration with the International Association of Pattern Recognition (IAPR), successfully co-organized the 27th International Conference on Pattern Recognition (ICPR 2024) from December 1-5, 2024, at the Biswa Bangla Convention Centre in New Town, Kolkata. This landmark event celebrated the Golden Jubilee of the ICPR conference series, which has served as a global platform for pioneering research and innovation in Pattern Recognition for five decades.

As the flagship conference of the IAPR, ICPR is renowned for uniting experts in fields such as Computer Vision, Machine Learning, Image Processing, Speech Analysis, and Pattern Analysis. ICPR 2024 was particularly significant as it marked 50 years of this prestigious series. During ICPR 2020 in Italy, India was selected as the host for the 2024 edition, prevailing over contenders such as

Australia, Portugal, and Singapore. The Indian Statistical Institute played a pivotal role as the event's co-organizer and technical partner.

The conference commenced with a grand inaugural ceremony. Prof. Umapada Pal from ISI delivered the welcome address, setting the stage for five days of intellectual exchange and collaboration. Renowned scholars, including Prof. Anil Jain from Michigan State University, USA, and Prof. Josef Kittler from the University of Surrey, UK, addressed the gathering, sharing their perspectives on the evolving field of pattern recognition. Prof. Apostolos Antonacopoulos from the University of Salford, UK, provided valuable insights, while IAPR President Dr. Arjan Kuijper and Former President Dr. Daniel Lopresti reflected on the 50-year journey of IAPR and its vision for the future.

The five-day conference witnessed groundbreaking discussions on topics such as Medical Imaging,

Signature Verification, Brain Computing, Automatic Car Driving, Heart Rate Monitoring, and Behavioral Identification. With over 1,000 participants from more than 40 countries, the event underscored its global stature.

Corporate leaders from organizations such as Capital One, NVIDIA, TCS, Adobe, and Vertiv showcased cutting-edge technologies and solutions, adding an industry-driven dimension to the conference. Prominent academic sponsors, including Johns Hopkins University, Maryland University, University of Buffalo, University of Technology Sydney, and Presidency University, also displayed their support through exhibitions and presentations.

ICPR 2024 reinforced India's growing prominence in the global AI and Pattern Recognition landscape. By hosting this milestone event, India not only showcased its robust academic and research capabilities but also highlighted its increasing

influence in driving innovation and collaboration in these fields. The event concluded with a resounding acknowledgment of the collaborative efforts that have advanced the domain of Pattern Recognition over the past five decades. ICPR 2024 acts as a landmark event that celebrated progress while paving the way for future advancements.

ICPR 2024 underscores India's growing prominence in the global AI and Pattern Recognition landscape. With its rich academic tradition and thriving technological ecosystem, India is poised to lead the way in shaping the future of these fields. As the event unfolded, it fostered transformative collaborations and set the stage for groundbreaking innovations in AI and pattern recognition. ICPR 2024 transcended the boundaries of a typical conference, serving as a celebration of collective achievements that have revolutionized our understanding of and interaction with technology.

## FREIGHT LOADING OF 62.299 MILLION TONS ACHIEVED BY EASTERN RAILWAY

**Kolkata, (KCN):** A significant milestone has been reached in the transportation sector with a record freight loading achievement of 62.299 million tons by Eastern Railway (ER) from April to November 2024. This remarkable feat reflects an impressive growth of 20.027%

compared to the 51.904 million tons recorded in the same period last year.

This outstanding performance is primarily driven by the surge in coal transportation, a vital component of bulk freight operations. Coal alone accounted for 42.265 million tons

of the total freight, marking a growth of 30.609% compared to 32.36 million tons during the corresponding period in 2023-24. Coal continues to be the backbone of ER's freight traffic, playing a crucial role in meeting the nation's energy needs.

In addition to coal, other key commodities such as pig iron, finished steel, cement (excluding clinker), and fertilizers have contributed significantly to the increase in freight volumes. These sectors underscore the growing demand for ER's freight services, which are critical to the

regional and national economy.

The achievement highlights the sustained efforts and commitment of ER to enhance its operational efficiency and infrastructure. A strategic approach, combined with the dedicated work of the railway's workforce,

has ensured the seamless transportation of these vital goods.

By bolstering its freight services, ER is not only supporting the energy and industrial sectors but also playing a pivotal role in driving the economic growth of the region. The consistent efforts to improve service quality

and expand the freight network demonstrate the railway's commitment to meeting the evolving demands of its customers and stakeholders.

Looking ahead, ER aims to continue this momentum, with plans to further enhance operational capacity and infrastructure, in

line with the increasing demand for freight services. This will help strengthen the railway's contribution to the economic development of the region, while simultaneously ensuring the timely and efficient delivery of essential goods across the nation.

# Workshop on “Futuristic approach for inland fisheries informatics: Role of tools and techniques hybridization” conducted by ICAR-CIFRI

**KOLKATA, (KCN):** The ICAR-CIFRI organized a one-day workshop on “Futuristic Approach for Inland Fisheries Informatics: Role of Tools and Techniques Hybridization” in December 2024. Addressing the critical needs of the inland fisheries sector, this was the first-ever initiative focusing on informatics for inland fisheries. The workshop highlighted the development of data systems based on environmental and biological parameters, taxonomic information, catch assessment methodologies, and

generic data science pipelines. The event was attended by 60 participants, including practicing and former researchers and scientists from agricultural universities, fisheries universities, technology institutes, C-DAC, and various ICAR institutes across the country. The session was chaired by Dr. Nabarun Bhattacharyya, Professor and Director of the School of Information and Technology at MAKAUT, West Bengal; Dr. Atul Kumar Singh, Former Director of ICAR-DCFR; and Dr. Sudhir Raizada, Former



ADG, ICAR. In his inaugural speech, Dr. B.K. Das, Director of ICAR-CIFRI, Barrackpore, emphasized the significance of the workshop and underscored the institute's contributions to developing big data platforms. Dr. Malay Naskar, Ms. Chayna Jana, and their team demonstrated the institute's innovative products, including RiverAquaMap, inland native fish species analytics, and catch assessment software. Dr. Bhattacharyya praised ICAR-CIFRI's

approach, particularly their methodology for developing a generic data science pipeline. However, he stressed the importance of addressing cybersecurity and intellectual property rights (IPR) issues related to the web applications and standalone software. Dr. Singh and Dr. Raizada also lauded the research team's efforts and suggested incorporating additional parameters relevant to fisheries to ensure the tools remain futuristic in the evolving data science era. The program concluded with a vote of thanks, followed by the national anthem.

## All India Bank Officers' Confederation Declares Intensified Struggle for Resolving Key Banking Issues

**Kolkata (ABHIJIT SETH):** The All-India Bank Officers' Confederation (AIBOC), the largest trade union representing supervisory cadres in the banking industry, has resolved to escalate its efforts to address pressing concerns affecting its members. In a recent press release, AIBOC emphasized that the delay in resolving key issues is adversely impacting the morale and well-being of banking professionals, further jeopardizing the operational efficiency of Public Sector Banks (PSBs). AIBOC has expressed deep concern over the acute shortage of regular employees in PSBs. With increasing workloads, employee attrition, and limited recruitment, bank officers face immense pressure, leading to precarious work conditions. The confederation has called for immediate recruitment to ensure a sustainable workforce and alleviate the burden on existing staff. This, they argue, is essential for maintaining the resilience and functionality of the banking sector. Despite

years of negotiations and recommendations by the Indian Banks' Association (IBA), the implementation of a five-day work week remains pending. AIBOC stresses that this policy is critical for achieving work-life balance for bank employees, who often endure long hours under high stress. The confederation has urged the government to expedite formal notification of this long-standing demand. Instances of physical and verbal assaults on bank officers during duty continue to rise across the country, despite advisories from the Department of Financial Services (DFS), Government of India. AIBOC has strongly urged the government to implement robust measures to safeguard bankers against harassment, ensuring their safety and dignity at work. The confederation is resolute in its demand for scrapping the National Pension Scheme (NPS) and reinstating the Defined Benefit Pension Scheme for employees who joined post-2010. AIBOC argues that the current pension scheme

lacks security and dignity, depriving retired bank employees of a peaceful retirement. The restoration of the defined pension system is seen as a necessary step toward ensuring fairness and equality. The confederation has voiced strong opposition to DFS directives related to employee performance reviews and premature retirements. With PSBs already facing staff shortages due to limited hiring, such directives are perceived as adding unnecessary stress to an already overstretched workforce. AIBOC has called upon the DFS to respect the autonomy of PSBs in managing their internal workforce matters. AIBOC has raised concerns about increasing intervention by the DFS in the internal governance of PSBs. Excessive micromanagement, the confederation claims, has exacerbated industrial relations issues. AIBOC urges the DFS to respect labour practices and issue advisories reaffirming the autonomy of individual bank managements in upholding fair labour policies. The

confederation has demanded the immediate appointment of Employee Directors and Non-Workmen Directors on the boards of banks. Despite clear legal mandates and judicial directives, these appointments remain pending, undermining inclusive governance and adherence to statutory norms. AIBOC has called for urgent action to address this lapse. Frustrated by the lack of concrete responses from the Indian Banks' Association (IBA) and the government, AIBOC has decided to intensify its agitation. The West Bengal State Unit of AIBOC, under the leadership of Secretary Shubhajyoti Chattopadhyay, has resolved to take determined action to achieve justice for banking professionals and safeguard the financial ecosystem. The confederation emphasizes that the resolution of these issues is not just crucial for the well-being of bank officers but also for the sustainability and stability of the nation's banking sector. AIBOC's intensified struggle reflects its commitment to securing the rights and dignity of its members.

## Distribution of Aids and Assistive Devices to Divyangjans under CSR initiatives of DSP





**Kolkata, (KCN):** International Day of Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) was observed by Durgapur Steel Plant on Tuesday (December 3, 2024) in the auditorium of Shilpangan at P.C. Road, B-Zone through its CSR Initiative for financial year 2024-25. A total of 31 Divyangjans with different types of disabilities belonging to

the underprivileged and economically weaker section from peripheral villages of DSP were identified during assessment camp on November 19, 2024 conducted through Artificial Limbs Manufacturing Corporation of India (ALIMCO), a Miniratna-II CPSU, Govt. of India undertaking company.

Shri BP Singh, Director In-Charge (Burnpur and Durgapur Steel Plant) inaugurated the program amidst presence of all functional heads, other dignitaries, beneficiaries' relatives present on the occasion. It may be known that 12 battery-operated motorised tricycles with Li-Ion Battery, 16 digital hearing aids, six

crutches, six wheelchairs, walking sticks, wheelchairs with commode facilities etc. procured by CSR-DSP from ALIMCO were distributed amongst the divyangjans in the programme. ALIMCO and Swami Vivekananda Vani Prachar Samity had worked as organising partners of CSR-DSP to make the programme successful.



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## CFA Institute in India Expands Student Accessibility with a New Exam Center in Bhubaneswar

**Bhubaneswar :** CFA Institute, the professional body for excellence and thought leadership in finance, has opened registrations for their upcoming February 2023 intake. Additionally, with the rising demand to increase candidate accessibility and convenience, the institute will have 4 new exam centers in Kochi, Chandigarh, Bhubaneswar and Guwahati for the CFA Program. These centers will take the total number of test center cities for the CFA exam to 16 across India and over 400 worldwide.

The recent CFA Institute Investor Trust survey showed that Indians place a high level of trust on the potential growth in job opportunities in the financial services sector. However, In the post-pandemic era, students as

well as professionals are prioritizing safety, accessibility and ease of travel while accomplishing their life and career goals. Ease of accessibility to exam centers is expected to improve a candidate journey through the program and reduce costs associated with travelling to take exams.

The CFA Charter continues to be the global gold standard for professionals aspiring to work in the investment management industry. We constantly work to make the CFA Program affordable, accessible, meritocratic and relevant. During the pandemic we moved our examinations to Computer Based Testing from Paper Based Exams and started offering examinations four times in a year. By expanding of our test

center network, we are taking one more step to bring the CFA Program within the reach of aspiring professionals and students in India.” Said Arati Porwal, Director Society Relations at CFA Institute in India.

India has a robust banking, insurance and investment industry It has a diversified financial sector undergoing rapid expansion, both in terms of strong growth of existing financial services firms and new entities entering the market. With such rapid expansion, there is a growing demand for professionals with relevant competencies and high standards of ethics. The CFA Institute works closely with the industry and regulators to support an inclusive and secure financial services industry in India.

## JSW MG Motor India extends Industry-First ‘Battery-as-a-Service’ (BaaS) Program for Comet EV and ZS EV

**Gurugram , (KCN):**JSW MG Motor India, in its continued effort to redefine the passenger EV segment in India, has extended its recently launched unique BaaS program to its popular Comet EV and ZS EV models. The BaaS concept was introduced with the launch of MG Windsor and since then has received encouraging responses. Under this unique BaaS program, customers can now bring home the Street-Smart Car - MG Comet EV at a starting price of ₹4.99 Lakh + battery rental @ ₹2.5/km, and India’s first Pure Electric Internet SUV – MG ZS EV starting at ₹13.99 Lakh + battery rental



@ ₹4.5/km. The program allows customers to pay a nominal fee per kilometre for battery usage, making these popular EVs their top choice. In addition to the BaaS program, customers can also avail the assured 60% buyback

value after three years of ownership, reassuring customers of a seamless and confident ownership experience. Speaking on the unique ownership program, Satinder Singh Bajwa, Chief Commercial Officer, JSW MG Motor India, said, “With BaaS, we have created a platform for easy ownership, making our

EVs more accessible than ever. Given the strong response to Windsor under the BaaS program, we are now extending its benefits to our popular EV models, the Comet and ZS. I am confident that this unique ownership model will further boost EV adoption in the country.” The introduction of the

BaaS program is supported by a robust network of finance partners, including Bajaj Finserv, Hero FinCorp, Vidyt, and Ecofy Autovert. This strategic collaboration ensures a seamless experience for customers across the country, making the transition to electric mobility smoother. MG Comet EV is spacious inside and compact outside design gives you freedom from tricky turns while offering the certified range of 230 km on a single charge. It has This car meets urban mobility needs with its 55+ i-SMART features. MG ZS EV, India's first pure electric internet SUV offers a 50.3 kWh battery pack with a certified driving range of 461 km on a single charge.

## Blenders Pride Fashion Nights arrives in Bhubaneswar

**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. Truly encapsulating the spirit of ‘Made of Pride’, the designer made use of Odisha weave, which is sustainable, hand-woven, organic and a homegrown initiative of design, painstakingly woven by the weavers of Odisha. The upbeat set was a composition designed to narrate the spirit of Bhubaneswar along with the flair of the designer. The evening was attended by the city’s A-listers & influencers. The fashion walk truly left the guests mesmerized and engaged.

Through this unique showcase of Pride encompassing diverse talent across creative fields, Blenders Pride Fashion Nights 2022, encourages everyone, especially youth at large to celebrate & take pride in their authentic and individual journeys. The evening spotlighted individuals who take Pride in their choices, are comfortable in their skin and, most importantly, embrace their authentic selves – truly living a life that is ‘Made of Pride’.

## Hindalco organized Human Rights Conference in Sambalpur



**Bhubaneswar (KCN):** Hindalco Industries Ltd, in collaboration with the Odisha Human Rights Commission (OHRC), successfully organized the State Level Conference on Human Rights on September 21, 2024 at Club House, Aditya Aluminium, Lapanga, Sambalpur. This significant event brought together prominent dignitaries, human rights experts, government officials, academic experts, members of corporate and civil society organization to engage in meaningful discussions on key human rights issues and explore collaborative approaches to enhance the protection of human rights in Odisha. The conference featured an esteemed panel of dignitaries, including hon’ble Shri Justice Satrughana Pujahari, Chairperson of OHRC; hon’ble Shri Justice Bimal Prasad Das, Former Chairperson of OHRC; hon’ble Shri Asim Amitabh Dash, Member of OHRC; and hon’ble Shri Chitta Ranjan Mohapatra, Member of OHRC.

They were joined by senior administrative and police officials including Shri Sachin Ramachandra Jadhav, IAS, RDC-Sambalpur; Shri Siddeshwar Baliram Bondar, IAS, District Magistrate and Collector-Sambalpur; Smt Aboli Sunil Narvane, IAS, District Magistrate and Collector-Jharsuguda; Mukesh Kumar Bhamoo, IPS, SP-Sambalpur; Shri Parmar Smit Parshottamdas, IPS, SP Jharsuguda and Prof. Bidhu Bhusan Mishra, Vice Chancellor of Sambalpur

University. The conference was also attended by many Hindalco officials including Shri Samik Basu, Chief Human Resource Officer; Shri Nilesh Koul, CEO, Downstream Aluminium Business; Shri Saurabh Khedekar, CEO, Specialty Chemical Business; Shri Jasbir Singh, Cluster HR Head; Shri TM Prakash, Cluster HR Head; Dr Krishna Padhi, Cluster HR Head; Shri Sameer Nayak, Unit Head Aditya Aluminium; Shri PVKR Krishna, Head Projects, Aditya and HIRAKUD FRP; Shri Debasis Mallik, Unit Head, HIRAKUD Power and Smelter and Shri Soumitra Roy, Unit Head, HIRAKUD FRP. Their presence provided valuable insights and perspectives on human rights issues in the state. The event was marked by insightful discussions, engaging panel sessions and interactive dialogues, making it an enriching experience for all participants. The speakers emphasized the importance of safeguarding the rights and dignity of every individual and explored ways to inspire collective action in the fight for human rights. Addressing the gathering, Hon’ble Justice Satarughana Pujahari addressed the evolving role of corporations, noting, “While corporates have often been seen as violators, they are now viewed as protectors of the inalienable human rights. In his speech, Hon’ble Justice Das stated, “Children are born with inherent human rights,

and denying these due to poverty is a violation. Just as oxygen is essential for life, human rights are paramount.” Shri Samik Basu, during his address speech said, “Overall human rights is the core of what ABG stands for and propagates. In Odisha, with such a large force, we must facilitate our efforts by building awareness and improving compliance, identifying issues and vulnerable groups, prioritizing our actions and investing seriously in them, and, after addressing these issues, expanding our reach, collaborating, and partnering to further advance human rights.” The conference served as a platform to discuss critical topics such as indigenous rights, labour rights, gender equality, social justice and the responsibilities of governance in upholding human rights standards. The event fostered dialogue and raised awareness among participants, encouraging collective efforts to address human rights challenges. It reflected Hindalco’s commitment to Human Rights and its ongoing efforts to contribute positively to the community. Hindalco remains dedicated to promoting awareness and inspiring action through initiatives like this, demonstrating its commitment to the community and the cause of human rights. The company looks forward to continue its collaborative efforts with stakeholders to ensure the protection and promotion of human rights in the country.

## Experience the best-in-class customer services at 11 new Alpha Service Centers across India

**Bhubaneswar :** Sony India is expanding its Alpha Service Network across 11 cities in India including Mumbai, Coimbatore, Jaipur, Pune, Hyderabad, Ahmedabad, Trivandrum, Chennai, Indore, Bhubaneswar and Guwahati. This is expansion for Alpha Camera body and lens repairs facilities is a testament to the brand’s continued dedication to customer satisfaction. Sony now has the widest service network of after sales support for Digital Imaging products with 8 service centers for lens repairs, 18 service centers for Alpha Camera Body repair, 40+ service centers which can offer basic

services like CCD Imager cleaning and firmware updates and 220+ collection centers pan India.

The service centers are equipped with necessary jigs and tools to deliver best quality repair of Alpha camera body, Camera Lens, Professional Cameras and other digital imaging products like Digital Still Cameras and Camcorders. Customers can also avail instant services for basic supports like CCD Imager cleaning and getting the latest firmware update to enjoy best performance from their products. The friendly customer care staff at these service centers will help

customers to register their in-warranty products on Sony Alpha Community portal to enable them avail free of cost additional one year warranty on a applicable products. Speaking on the occasion, Mr. Mukesh Srivastava, Head of Digital Imaging Business at Sony India, said, “By supporting and assisting partners in local markets, Sony aims to ensure customers receive exceptional service and satisfaction along with quicker and faster turnaround at all outlets across the country. The new service centers will offer customers a seamless experience across multiple touch-points to provide a consistent brand experience that surpasses expectations.”

## ATLAS OF AFFLUENCE - INDIA’S FIRST EVER WHITE PAPER ON LUXURY LAUNCHED AS A YEARLY FEATURE

**Mumbai:** Amidst leading luminaries of industries spanning across the business of luxury, the Atlas of Affluence (AOA) 2022 has been launched in Mumbai. Created by The Voice of Fashion (TVOF), a division of Reliance Brands Limited, the daily digital magazine that tracks and leads conversations on Indian fashion, design, crafts and retail, AOA 2022, is the

first such wide and deep white paper from India that dissects consumer behaviour studied through the prism of luxury.

A collective reflection on what affluence means in India spiked during the two years of the pandemic. Charting the post-pandemic market and the clearly altered consumer mindset through a specially commissioned study

across six cities and markets of India, AOA 2022 has been published as a book with exclusively commissioned artworks. This study uses the time graph of “pre-pandemic” and “post-pandemic” months to specify a comparative matrix. It also helps debunk long-held ideas about what affluence and luxury have meant to Indians.

## 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.” Students across India will benefit from this program as it does not restrict to just an area of the population. The program will be conducted for 1 hour and mainly educate the students on demystifying the jargons, 3I’s – types of Income; Inflation and its impact, types of Investment; 3S – Start early- Power of Compounding, Spread wide, Stay long etc.

nothing new to see here' with his characteristic Arey. But it was also a sign of how keen he was to use the handful of sessions he'll get to acclimatise with facing a pink ball. Along with getting himself into a series after having missed the opening Test in Perth, he'd got his chance in Canberra over the weekend, but he hadn't lasted too long before being dismissed. And though there were a couple of nets sessions at the Manuka Oval, Tuesday was Rohit being determined to get his batting rhythms in order, firstly with Abhishek Nayar in tow, before having the other coaches get involved later in the evening when he showed up to bat in the tricky twilight period against his team's premier fast bowlers. By the time he walked out to resume his batting preparation on Wednesday, the focus had shifted entirely from simply getting clips of

opening the batting and how comfortable he was doing it. To put that into context, most questions he had to contend with did have to do with his views on being an opener again in his career. What then you wonder could lead to Rohit potentially dropping himself down the order after having spent the last few years quite successfully at the top of the order-despite his disappointing returns this

calendar year. Considering the tempo at which the captain has been starting most of his innings of late, coming down the order for the pink-ball Test might not be the worst decision, now that Rahul and Jaiswal have shown great skills in seeing off the new-ball. But then the argument could be whether Rohit can set the tempo for the Indian innings like he's wanted to in Test cricket while batting at 5 or 6.

Rahul for the record faced the new-ball as much as Rohit has done over the last two days even if Rohit was overheard asking one of the reserve bowlers if he was indeed operating with a new-ball when he was asked not to during the latter half of his batting stint on Wednesday. While the opening quandary was fascinating in itself, Kohli was spotted indulging in a game within a game against the likes of Navdeep Saini and Mukesh Kumar. And though the two right-armers did get the better of the premier batter on a few occasions, as once again is the norm with the pink ball in the Adelaide Oval nets, Kohli had the last guffaw on Wednesday afternoon, as he power-drove a full delivery from Saini straight down the pitch, and let the fast bowler know he'd finished on top as well. Akash Deep on the other hand has been the most impressive of the fast bowlers with the pink ball, but you'd still think India

will stick with Harshit Rana after his pretty eye-catching Test debut in Perth. Similarly, Washington Sundar was spotted batting along with the top 6 on Tuesday but didn't do the same a day later. R Ashwin on the other hand was spotted having a long chat with Gautam Gambhir who'd also spent an equal amount of time chucking some off-spinners at the world-class off-spinner. Whether that means a return to the playing XI for Ashwin, who's had the better of the Aussie top-order during his last two visits to Adelaide remains to be seen. Or to quote Rohit, Arey we've all seen this before. The suspense, the drama and the inescapable intrigue around the make-up of India's playing XI as they look to exorcise the demons of pink-ball Tests at the Adelaide Oval and take a significant 2-0 lead in the series.

# Jacob Bethell gains ECB Central Contract

A photograph of three England cricketers in white uniforms celebrating on the field. The player in the center has his mouth open in a shout and his hands on his hips. The player on the left is walking towards him, and the player on the right is standing with his hands on his hips. They are all wearing white jerseys with 'enrich' and 'England' logos. The background shows a blurred crowd of spectators in a stadium.

because of how much spin is played. "There's so many tactical decisions that you need to make, whether that be chatting with the bowler or field changes. As a captain, I like to change things quite a lot and the field could be completely different six balls in an over. But that's not taken into consideration. And getting told to just 'hurry up' isn't going to fix it, because we're out there playing a game. The times and the rules are the same wherever you

go in the world. From a player's point of view - and I'm not the only one who shares this opinion - we would like to have a lot more communication with the ICC around this," opined Stokes.

Stokes was particularly irked by the non-response from the ICC in the matter. He also said he hadn't signed the over-rate chargesheet since the Lord's Test as a form of protest until he heard from the ICC, although he and New Zealand captain Tom Latham did accept

the charges levelled in Christchurch for the teams' over-rate offences."The two conversations I've had with the match referees have actually been very good and the match referees have handled it very, very well and been very understanding from a player's point of view. But it's been over a year now since I made some comments around the over rates and still to this day we're yet to hear any response back from anyone at the ICC around that," he said. "I've not signed an over-rate sheet since Lord's in the Ashes just until we hear some communication back from the ICC that we're still waiting for. Captains have to sign over-rate sheets and fines and stuff, but I have said 'no' until I have the conversations. But they still take the fines off you anyway," lamented Stokes.

**London:** England's latest Test debutant Jacob Bethell has been given an upgrade in his contract by the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB). The left-hander, previously under a developmental contract, will now be armed with a two-year central contract.

This puts Bethell in the elite league alongside Joe Root, Jos Buttler and Harry Brook, who head the list. Meanwhile, the pace trio of Jofra Archer, Matthew Potts and Brydon Carse have also extended their contracts till 2026.

The central contract has come as a timely boost for Bethell who has endured a successful season thus far. The 21-year-old made his ODI and T20I debuts during the white-ball home series against Australia in September before making entry into Tests in ongoing tour of New Zealand. Touted as a



cricketer of immense talent with potential leadership qualities, Bethell's rise over the last 12 months has been impressive. The rest of the ECB Central Contracts list remains the same as before.

England Men Centrally Contracted Players 2024/2025

England Two-Year Central Contracts: Jofra Archer (Sussex), Gus Atkinson (Surrey), Jacob Bethell (Warwickshire), Harry Brook (Yorkshire),

Jos Buttler (Lancashire),  
Brydon Carse (Durham),  
Matthew Potts  
(Durham), Joe Root  
(Yorkshire), Jamie Smith  
(Surrey), Ben Stokes  
(Durham), Mark Wood  
(Durham)  
England One-Year  
Central Contracts: Rehan  
Ahmed (Leicestershire),  
Jonny Bairstow  
(Yorkshire), Shoaib  
Bashir (Somerset), Zak  
Crawley (Kent), Sam  
Curran (Surrey), Ben  
Duckett  
(Nottinghamshire), Will  
Jacks (Surrey), Jack  
Leach (Somerset), Liam  
Livingstone  
(Lancashire), Ollie Pope  
(Surrey), Adil Rashid  
(Yorkshire), Phil Salt  
(Lancashire), Olly Stone  
(Nottinghamshire), Josh  
Tongue  
(Nottinghamshire),  
Reece Topley (Surrey),  
Chris Woakes  
(Warwickshire)  
England Development  
contracts: Josh Hull  
(Leicestershire), John  
Turner (Hampshire)

**Dhaka:** Bangladesh head coach Phil Simmons applauded the sheer resilience shown by his side during their series-levening win against West Indies in Jamaica. Bangladesh came up with an aggressive brand of cricket led by Nahid Rana's five-wicket haul that helped them earn a slim 18-run lead in the first innings despite only putting 164 on the board. The batters then followed it up with an intent-filled innings spearheaded by Jaker Ali's sparkling half-century. It set up nicely

for the visitors' bowling attack who then demonstrated their class to earn a comfortable 101-run win at Sabina Park. Bangladesh were able to take the game away from their opponents largely on the back of the counter-attack approach with the bat and the 268 runs that they managed in their second innings left the home team with a daunting victory target of 287. It eventually proved to be a bridge too far for the home side. "I loved the way the

batters came out with a positive attitude. They had a survival attitude in the first few games [since took charge]. On the third day, you saw that they were saying, 'I have come to play the game'. I loved and enjoyed it." Simmons said after the game while chatting with the official broadcaster.

"I made sure that they know that it is the way we have to play from now on. The Test win is something that these young players were looking forward to. It is nice to see them come



felt in Jamaica for a long time, there was no question that we had to bat first. The wicket had dried out. We had to make the running in the Test match, as were down 1-0. The decision

to bat wasn't a difficult one. I think breaking it to the batters...It is a team that likes to bowl first to see what's there. Giving them the confidence that I believe in you, that you can bat first here, I think that led to how we batted in the second innings. We just needed to do better than the first innings," he said.

Simmons singled out Jaker Ali's performance and appeared to be impressed with the way the wicket-keeper batter has been adapting to Test cricket. The West Indian

also underlined the performances of Taijul Islam and Nahid Rana, particularly the latter's aggression.

"Jaker scored three fifties in successive Tests, so he knows his game. We saw that he can also take on every bowler. He needs to take what he gets from here, and try to improve on it. This is not always going to be the way it is," said the head coach.

"Taijul loves hitting the stumps, so he bowls more arm balls than [conventional] spinners.

He seems to be getting better every game. You could see that there was more thought in his bowling here in every session," he said.

"I was even more impressed [with Rana in Jamaica] than I was in Sharjah where he made his ODI debut as for him to be so consistent on this wicket and hitting his lengths. At the end of the day yesterday, he was bowling in his mid-140s. We under-rated the young fast bowler's ability to assess the situation," he said