

## 11,710 children in Odisha suffering from severe acute malnutrition: Dy CM Parida



**Bhubaneswar(KCN):** Deputy Chief Minister of Odisha Pravati Parida Saturday told the Assembly that a total of 11,710 children in the state are suffering from severe acute malnutrition.

Parida, who is in charge of the Women and Child Development Department, said this in her reply to a query from BJP MLA Laxman Bag. As per the deputy CM's statement, tribal-populated Mayurbhanj district has reported the highest number of children suffering from severe acute malnutrition. The district has a total of 1,460 such

children. Similarly, 1,269 children in Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi's home district of Keonjhar are also found to be suffering from severe acute malnutrition while 760 such children were identified in Nabarangpur district, she said. Among other districts which reported higher numbers of such children include, Rayagada (645), Kalahandi (636), Malkangiri (570), Ganjam (558) and Balasore (536). Jagatsinghpur district has reported the lowest number of SAM children among the 30 districts of Odisha. The district has

## Achyuta Samanta Awarded 62nd Honorary Doctorate



**Bhubaneswar, (KCN):** Well-known social worker, educationist, and founder of KIIT & KISS, Dr. Achyuta Samanta, was conferred with his 62nd honorary doctorate by Poornima University, Jaipur, Rajasthan. The honour was presented during the university's 11th convocation ceremony on 7th December, 2024.

The recognition

underscores Dr. Samanta's remarkable contributions to society through education and social service. While conferring the degree, the university commended his exceptional efforts in transforming lives through education and community development.

Expressing his gratitude, Dr. Samanta said, "For the last 33 years, I have

been working relentlessly for the betterment of society. This honorary doctorate will remain a cherished milestone for me." Dr. Samanta has now been awarded 62 honorary doctorates by prestigious universities and institutions worldwide in acknowledgment of his outstanding contributions to education and social service.

The ceremony was graced by Lt. Gen. N.S. Raja Subramani, Vice Chief of Army Staff, Indian Army, as the Chief Guest. Dr. Suresh Chandra Padhy, President (Vice Chancellor) of Poornima University, along with other distinguished dignitaries, was also present on the occasion.

## Minister of Railways Shri Ashwini Vaishnaw Inaugurates 2nd Entry of Cuttack Railway Station, Enhancing Passenger Convenience.



**Bhubaneswar, (KCN):** Minister of Railways, Information & Broadcasting and Electronics & Information Technology, Shri Ashwini Vaishnaw, inaugurated the 2nd Entry of Cuttack Railway Station this evening, marking a significant milestone in the Station's Redevelopment under the Amrit Stations Scheme. This new entry, along with the East Side Station Building, is set to transform passenger travel, offering improved accessibility, safety, and convenience. The 2nd Entry is designed to provide seamless movement for passengers

arriving from the National Highway side, making the station more accessible and ensuring hassle-free access. This development is a part of an ambitious ₹303 crore project aimed at redeveloping Cuttack Railway Station into a modern transportation hub with world-class amenities.

Shri Vaishnaw, in his address at the inauguration, emphasized the importance of this development in improving passenger experience and enhancing the connectivity of the region. He highlighted that this project will also contribute to socio-economic growth by boosting trade and

commerce, making Cuttack Railway Station a key hub in the region.

- Air-conditioned Spaces: 21,270 sqft of air-conditioned space ensuring a comfortable environment for passengers.
- Modern Amenities:

Includes a food court (2,100 sqft), modern toilets, ticket counters, waiting areas, escalators, lifts, and more.

- Accessibility: Equipped with Sugamya-compliant escalators and lifts for enhanced accessibility, catering to all passengers, including those with Divyangjan.

- Improved Passenger Facilities: Spacious circulating area, parking, and pickup/drop-off facilities for easier access to the station.
- Additional Services: Features Pradhan Mantri

Bharatiya Janaushadhi Kendra (PMBJK), ATM kiosk, Automatic Ticket Vending Machines (ATVM), and One Station One Product (OSOP) trolleys, promoting local handicrafts made by women self-help groups. The 2nd Entry project, completed at a cost of ₹14.63 Crores, addresses long-standing demands for better connectivity in the region. The new infrastructure is

expected to streamline station operations and improve passenger flow, enhancing safety and travel efficiency. The station will serve passengers not only from Cuttack but also from surrounding districts such as Paradeep, Jagatsingpur, Kendrapara, Jajpur, Badambari, Narasinghpur, and Niali. With a focus on passenger comfort and safety, this development is poised to become a model for future railway station redevelopments across the country.

- Fulfillment of the long-cherished demand for improved accessibility for people from Cuttack and nearby districts.
- Enhanced connectivity for passengers traveling through Cuttack Railway Station.
- Improved passenger experience with modern facilities, such as the food court, waiting areas, and accessible toilets.

Other dignitaries present on the occasion are Shri Bhartruhari Mahtab, Hon'ble Member of Parliament (Lok Sabha) from Cuttack; Hon'ble MLAs and other eminent personalities and public representatives.

## Farmers call for cheaper credit, lower taxes, and doubling of PM-KISAN support in Pre-Budget meeting with FM

New Delhi, December 7(KCN):

During a two-hour pre-budget consultation with Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Saturday, representatives from the farming community and agricultural stakeholders presented a series of proposals aimed at addressing the sector's challenges. Their key demands included cheaper long-term credit, reduced taxes, and an

increase in the PM-KISAN income support scheme.

The discussions focused on a range of issues impacting agriculture, including financial relief, market reforms, and strategic investments. Bharat Krishak Samaj Chairman, Ajay Vir Jakhar, emphasized the need for focused interventions to enhance agricultural productivity and improve farmer welfare.



Key proposals included reducing interest rates on agricultural loans to as low as 1% and doubling the PM-KISAN annual instalment from Rs 6,000 to Rs 12,000. Farmers' organizations also called for zero-premium crop insurance for small

farmers under the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana. Taxation reforms were a significant part of the proposals, with stakeholders advocating for GST exemptions on agricultural machinery, fertilizers, seeds, and

medicines. The PHD Chambers of Commerce and Industry also urged a reduction in the GST on pesticides from 18% to 5%. Jakhar proposed a focused investment strategy of Rs 1,000 crore annually for eight years to support specific crops such as chickpeas, soybean, and mustard. The goal is to boost national agricultural productivity, reduce import dependency, and enhance nutritional security across the country, he said after the meeting.

## Odisha Assembly adjourned amidst Adani controversy, to resume on Monday

Bhubaneswar, December 7(KCN):

The Odisha Assembly was adjourned till Monday following chaos and protests over the Adani issue.



The disruptions began during the afternoon session on Saturday, when Congress MLAs once again raised the Adani controversy, accusing the previous BJD government of corruption.

100 day campaign is starting today with a focus on the high burden TB districts. India is fighting TB in a multi-pronged manner with Doubling support to patients, Jan Bhagidari, Newer drugs, Use of tech & better diagnostic tools. Let us all come together and do our bit to eliminate TB."

Responding to a post on X by Union Minister JP Nadda, PM Modi wrote: "Health Minister Shri JP Nadda Ji gives an insightful picture of the steps we are continuously taking to make India TB-free.

Officer (ASO) jobs for Rs 30 lakh. The controversy led to a series of protests by BJD lawmakers, who disrupted the proceedings during the Question Hour. BJD MLAs stormed the well of the House and raised slogans, forcing Speaker Padhy to adjourn the session until 11:30 am. When the proceedings resumed, further disruptions led to another adjournment, until 4 pm.

intensifying the commotion in the house. In response to the turmoil, Speaker Surama Padhy declared the Assembly adjourned until Monday. Prior to this, a significant disruption was witnessed in the morning session on Saturday. The unrest followed accusations made by Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi on Friday, alleging that the previous Naveen Patnaik-led government had sold Assistant Section

made that detergent powder was used instead of salt in cooking. However, Muribahal Block Education Officer (BEO) Santanu Parihar said the students might have inadvertently ingested detergent residue after improperly washing their plates. "After consuming food, the students washed their plates with detergent powder but didn't rinse them properly before drinking water," he explained. The BEO informed that a probe is being ordered.



block of Bolangir district, more than 10 students fell ill after eating their mid-day meal. The students reportedly began throwing up after

lunch. Teachers and locals immediately took them to Titlagarh Government Hospital for treatment. According to sources, allegations were

including those with Divyangjan.

- Improved Passenger Facilities: Spacious circulating area, parking, and pickup/drop-off facilities for easier access to the station.
- Additional Services: Features Pradhan Mantri

Bharatiya Janaushadhi Kendra (PMBJK), ATM kiosk, Automatic Ticket Vending Machines (ATVM), and One Station One Product (OSOP) trolleys, promoting local handicrafts made by women self-help groups. The 2nd Entry project, completed at a cost of ₹14.63 Crores, addresses long-standing demands for better connectivity in the region. The new infrastructure is

- Hassle-free access for passengers, ensuring safer, quicker, and more efficient travel.

Shri Vaishnaw's visit underscores the government's commitment to improving railway infrastructure in the eastern region of India and enhancing the overall travel experience for citizens. Other dignitaries present on the occasion are Shri Bhartruhari Mahtab, Hon'ble Member of Parliament (Lok Sabha) from Cuttack; Hon'ble MLAs and other eminent personalities and public representatives.

# AIIMS Bhubaneswar Tests 8,518 Individuals, 31 Test HIV Positive in Last Three Months

- 8538 individuals counselled
- AIIMS Bhubaneswar is one of eight Regional Institutes for HIV Surveillance and Epidemiology in India
- Free condom distributed to promote safe practices and prevention

**Bhubaneswar, (KCN):** Over the past three months, AIIMS Bhubaneswar's Integrated Counselling and Testing Centre (ICTC) has tested 8,518 individuals for HIV and provided counselling services to 8,538 people. Out of those tested, 31 individuals were found to be HIV positive, and 27 of them have been linked to the Anti-Retroviral Therapy (ART) Centre (ARC). This reflects

AIIMS Bhubaneswar's ongoing commitment to the prevention, diagnosis, and care of individuals affected by HIV. Dr. Ashutosh Biswas, Executive Director of AIIMS Bhubaneswar, emphasised the vital role of HIV Counselling and Testing Services (HCTS) as a key entry point for HIV prevention, diagnosis, treatment, and care. "Our efforts are aligned with national goals, and we aim to



expand awareness and ensure timely treatment for those diagnosed with HIV," Dr. Biswas stated. As part of the World AIDS Day celebrations, AIIMS Bhubaneswar organised a series of events to raise awareness about HIV/AIDS, including an awareness programme held at the OPD foyer for the public. The

programme, supported by the Department of Community Medicine and Family Medicine and the Department of Transfusion and Blood Bank, in collaboration with the Odisha State AIDS Society, centered around the theme "Take the Rights Path: My Health, My Right". The event attracted esteemed dignitaries, medical

professionals, staff, and community members.

The event also featured a free HIV testing camp and voluntary blood donation camp, with around 45 individuals taking the opportunity to get tested. Informative leaflets and booklets on HIV/AIDS prevention

and care were distributed, and free condoms were handed out to promote safe practices. AIIMS Bhubaneswar continues to lead the charge in HIV surveillance and epidemiology, being one of the eight Regional Institutes for HIV

Surveillance in India. The institute's coverage includes the states of Odisha, Andhra Pradesh, and Chhattisgarh. AIIMS Bhubaneswar will also host the 19th round of HIV Sentinel Surveillance (HSS) in January 2025. While India has the second-largest HIV epidemic in the world, with approximately 24.67 lakh people living with HIV (PLHIV), the country has made significant progress in ART coverage, which stands at 68%. Odisha, with 52,000 PLHIV, has an HIV prevalence rate of 0.14%, with ART coverage at 49.7%. These statistics highlight the need for sustained

## CUO Pays Tribute to Dr. Ambedkar on Mahaparinirvan Diwas

**KORAPUT, (KCN):** The Central University of Odisha commemorated Mahaparinirvan Diwas, on 06 December 2024, marking the death anniversary of Bharat Ratna Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, a visionary leader who reshaped India's social landscape. Prof. N.C. Panda, Acting Vice-Chancellor and Registrar; Prof. S. K. Palita, Dean, School of Biodiversity and Conservation of Natural Resources; and Dr. Kapila Khemundu, HoD, Dept. of Sociology along with faculty, staff, and students, paid heartfelt floral tributes to Dr. Ambedkar, honoring his enduring legacy. Dr. Sunit Paswan, Assistant Professor of Hindi, delivered the welcome address, reflecting on the significance of Mahaparinirvan Diwas and Dr. Ambedkar's contributions.

In his address, Prof. N.C. Panda praised Dr. Ambedkar for his unparalleled contributions to post-independence India. He emphasized Dr. Ambedkar's vision of equality, justice, and freedom, which transcended all aspects of society, including social,



economic, and political spheres. Prof. Panda noted that Dr. Ambedkar's drafting of the Indian Constitution was a monumental achievement, making it the largest written constitution in the world, and called upon students to study his writings to understand his vision for India's prosperity. Prof. S.K. Palita highlighted Dr. Ambedkar's remarkable life and his contributions, particularly the framing of the Indian Constitution. He elaborated on Ambedkar's social philosophy, stressing his commitment to equality and social justice. Prof. B.K. Panda quoted a verse from the Bhagavad Gita (Yada Yada hi Dharmasya) to describe Dr. Ambedkar as a divine

figure (Avatar of God), whose mission was to eliminate ignorance and establish true equality for the development of the nation. Dr. Kapila Khemundu discussed Dr. Ambedkar's vision of social and democratic values, focusing on his belief in the principles of justice, equality, and fraternity. He praised Ambedkar as a visionary leader who was not only a great social thinker, but also a jurist, economist, educationist, and political leader. Dr. B.K. Srinivas, Coordinator of the Dr. Ambedkar Centre of Excellence extended the vote of thanks. Dr. Anjaneyulu Thotapally, NSS Coordinator, and Dr. Phagunath Bhoi, Public Relations Officer,

coordinated the programme.

Faculty members and students including Dr. Padma Charan Mishra, Dr. Nikhil Gauda, Dr. Chakradhar Padhan, Dr. Gurujit Singh Walia, Dr. Debabrata Panda, Dr. Kakoli Banerjee, Dr. Subhasmita Parida, Dr. Alok Baral, Dr. Pradosh Kumar Swain, Dr. Raghunath Ojha, Dr. Nisha Sabar, Dr. Nabin Chandra Pradhan, Dr. Manoj Kumar Singh, Dr. Debasish Karmakar and many others were present on this occasion to pay tribute to the visionary leader.

The observance of Mahaparinirvan Diwas at the university reaffirmed Dr. Ambedkar's lasting influence on Indian society and the ongoing relevance of his values in today's world.

## Jindal Stainless Wraps Up World Quality Month 2024



**Kalinganagar, (KCN):** Jindal Stainless, Jajpur, concluded its month-long celebration of World Quality Month 2024 with a grand valedictory ceremony on December 4. The event was graced by Dr. A. K. Purohit, Director and Head of BIS, as the Guest of Honour, alongside senior leaders

of the company. Outstanding performers were felicitated for their exceptional contributions to quality and innovation. The celebrations, held throughout November, aligned with the global initiative to promote best practices and raise awareness about quality, under this year's theme,

"From Compliance to Performance." Reflecting on the celebrations, Unit Head, Jindal Stainless, Jajpur, Mr. Deepak Agrawal said, "World Quality Month is a reminder of the critical role quality plays in driving excellence and achieving organizational goals. At Jindal

Stainless, we are committed to not just meeting standards but surpassing them through continuous innovation and a shared dedication to excellence."

The month-long activities included online quiz competitions, virtual training sessions on Quality Management Systems, IATF standards, and problem-solving techniques, along with an online quality pledge reaffirming employees' commitment to maintaining world-class standards. Speaking at the grand finale, Dr. Purohit commended Jindal Stainless for fostering a culture of quality, emphasizing its contribution to advancing the global quality movement.



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## Director Vasan Bala says Jigra box office was his responsibility: Alia trusted me



Jigra director Vasan Bala opened up on the box office failure of Jigra once again. In an interview, he said the box office performance of the film was "his responsibility".

Jigra director Vasan Bala opened up on the box office performance of his film, Jigra, which ended up being the lowest opener of actor Alia Bhatt's career. In his latest interview, the director gave others a free pass by taking full responsibility for his film's reception at the ticket window.

Bala was speaking to Fever FM when he said Alia trusted him with making a film that could work at the box office, and he should have delivered that performance. The director appreciated the 31-year-old and said she made a choice by starring in his film and the rest was his responsibility.

"She is the first choice for everyone. She could have been on any other film set, but Jigra, during that time. So she has to make that choice. And she has trusted me with that choice. So it is my

responsibility to deliver box office, because we are in the business of filmmaking also," he shared.

Bala added that he now wants to assess where things have gone wrong. He went on to say that it's a director's responsibility to justify an actor's time. He continued, "So that is why I need to analyse. Kuch toh hua hai na (Something has happened, right)? Something has happened where people have stayed away, something that they have not bought, something that

they didn't feel the need to come to the theatre. If at all any other actor decides to give their time, his or hers, then you know, make it worth it."

Jigra, which was released during the Dussehra weekend, opened at around Rs 4.55 crore nett in India. While it performed decently during the first weekend, the collections witnessed a drastic drop from its first Monday. After its 10-day run, it only collected Rs 27.30 crore nett at the box office.

The film, which was a prison-break action drama, also marked actor Vedang Raina's big Bollywood debut.

Meanwhile, Vasan Bala deactivated his Twitter account after receiving hate for Jigra's performance. In an interview earlier, he mentioned that he didn't consider box office as a film's success parameter.

## Jennifer Lawrence to welcome second baby with Cooke Maroney



Oscar winner Jennifer Lawrence and her husband, art gallery director Cooke Maroney are set to welcome their second child. According to People magazine, Lawrence, 34, was spotted showing off her baby bump in an oversized button-up and baggy trousers while she stepped out for lunch with Maroney, 40. The couple, who tied the knot in October 2019, are already parents to two-year-old son Cy. Lawrence, known for films such as Silver Linings Playbook, American Hustle, The Hunger Games and the X-Men franchises, once jokingly compared her son to a "voodoo doll" in a 2022 Vogue cover story. "I mean the euphoria of Cy is just—Jesus, it's impossible. I always tell him, 'I love you so much,'" she added.

## Janhvi Kapoor hospitalised following food poisoning

Actress Janhvi Kapoor, who was recently seen in the sports drama 'Mr. & Mrs. Mahi', has been hospitalised. The actress has been feeling unwell for the last few days. As per a media report, the actress had cancelled all her appointments for Wednesday in order to rest and recuperate. However, when her health deteriorated Thursday, her family rushed her to the hospital. The media reports have stated that it's a case of severe food poisoning. As Mumbai battling torrential rains, the city has witnessed a spike in infections and ill-health. The actress will be in the hospital for 1-2 days till her condition improves under the observation of doctors. On the work front, the actress has 2 films in the pipeline. She will be seen essaying the role of the Deputy High Commissioner of the embassy in 'Ulajh'. The film, directed by Sudhanshu Sarai, also stars Gulshan Devaiah, Roshan Mathew, Rajesh Tailang and Adil Hussain in the lead roles. It follows the story of a young IFS officer with a legacy of patriots in her family, entangled in a dangerous personal conspiracy far away from her home.

She also has 'Devara: Part 1', which marks her Telugu debut. The film also features the 'RRR' star NTR Jr. and actor Saif Ali Khan. It is directed by Koratala Siva, and is set to debut in cinemas September 27.

## Actor Bijay Anand on criticism received by 'Adipurush': 'Don't see if you don't like'

'Bade Miyan Chote Miyan' actor Bijay Anand, who also played a crisp role as Brahma in 'Adipurush', spoke to IndiaToday.in about the criticism the film received. He said that people should not criticise art. The actor praised Om Raut's vision for the film. Anand, who has

pain, money and time." He continued, "If Rs 600 crore was spent and Om Raut, as the director; it's his canvas, paint and choice of colours to make it this way. Don't see it if you don't like it. Who are we to criticise art?"

He further said, "When you start criticising art,

daily soaps all your life." The actor further said, "But to criticise it [art] and scare other directors or the same director into being creative again; don't create a formula which is successful and force others to follow the same formula for the fear of rejection. And Om Raut didn't have the



also worked in Ravi Chopra's 'Ramayana' and 'Sya Ke Ram', spoke to us about Nitesh Tiwari making his version of 'Ramayana' with Ranbir Kapoor. Bijay Anand played Brahma in Om Raut's 'Adipurush'. Speaking to IndiaToday.in, the actor spoke about the film receiving flak online. Talking about it, he said, "I am an art lover. The concept of a painting is that if there is an empty canvas in front of a painter, it is their choice as an artist as to what they want to paint on it. It's their choice, canvas,

you start degenerating as a society. If you say this is good art or bad art; art cannot be good or bad. It is the artist's interpretation. You don't like it? Don't call it good or bad."

Making his point, Anand shared, "I'm not taking anybody's side here. I'm just being the devil's advocate and saying that today, if we start sitting, judging and hammering people, then what society does is that they scare other artists into being creative. Then go back to 'saas-bahu', wahi dekhte raho zindagi bhar (keep watching

fear of rejection, which is why I love him and find him commendable.)"

We also told Bijay Anand about a version of Ramayana that is currently in the making, directed by Nitesh Tiwari, starring Ranbir Kapoor. When asked to share his take on it, Anand said, "Mythology, even if it is trolled 100 times by 100 different people, it will still be interesting because it's what binds India together. It's India's story."

He also said, "I have travelled to Bali, Vietnam, to all the Asian countries and everybody

## Bhumi Pednekar keeps this year's birthday celebrations 'very simple'

Mumbai: Actress Bhumi Pednekar, who turned 35 Thursday, celebrated her birthday on the sets of 'Daldal', saying that she loves celebrating it but this year she kept it very simple.

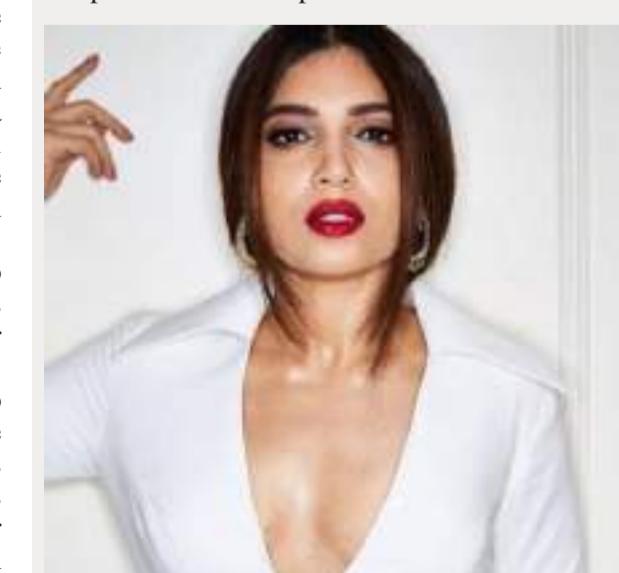
"I brought in my birthday on set. I cut my cake at 12 with friends and family and everybody from my set, from my Daldal set and it was incredible because that's my happy place and it just felt like the right start to my new year," Bhumi told IANS. "Otherwise I'm just gonna spend the day at home with my mother, with my family and just people that love me," the actress added.

Asked if she is big on birthday parties or if she likes time with her family on her big day, Bhumi said: "So this year my birthday is going to be different because usually I'm very big on birthday parties."

"I love going all out, I love celebrating my birthday but this year I've kept it very easy, simple, just like me with my closest friends and people that I really really love. Gonna eat one massive, large, phenomenal meal and just keeping it easy."

Talking about her upcoming web series "Daldal", Bhumi will play the challenging role of a cop. Written by Priya Saggi, Sreekanth Agnieszka, Rohan D'Souza and Hussain Haidry, the series will bring to life Vish Dhamija's fictional detective, DCP Rita Ferreira.

Based on Dhamija's second novel, 'Bhendi Bazaar', 'Daldal' follows Fereira as she sets out to catch a serial killer, even as she grapples with her past traumas and present demons.



# Save the Endangered Fishing Cat



The fishing cat (*Prionailurus viverrinus*) is listed as "Vulnerable" on the IUCN Red List, with populations facing a continuing decline due to habitat destruction, poaching, and human-wildlife conflict. The Sunderbans, a unique mangrove ecosystem spanning West Bengal (India) and Bangladesh, is one of the most crucial habitats for this species. Here's the current status of fishing cats across the region:

**West Bengal (India)**  
Habitat: The Sunderbans of West Bengal offer an ideal environment for fishing cats due to the extensive wetlands and dense mangrove forests.

Fishing cats are adept at living in this environment, thriving near water bodies and wetlands.

**Population Trends:** Recent studies suggest that while fishing cats are present in the region, their population has faced a decline due to habitat fragmentation caused by human settlements, agriculture, aquaculture (shrimp farming), and deforestation.

**Conservation Efforts:** The West Bengal government, along with local NGOs and wildlife organizations like the Wildlife Institute of India (WII) and the Fishing Cat Project, is working on conservation initiatives, including habitat protection, awareness programs, and mitigating human-wildlife conflict. Camera trap surveys and community engagement have been crucial in tracking populations and reducing threats to fishing cats.

**Bangladesh**  
Habitat: In Bangladesh, the fishing cat's range

encroachment, agricultural expansion, and aquaculture.

**Population Trends:**

increasingly coming into conflict with humans. This is largely due to the loss of wetland habitats

Bangladesh is focused on habitat restoration, preventing poaching, and educating local

focused on conducting population surveys, especially through the use of camera traps, to better understand the distribution and population dynamics of fishing cats.

**Threats Across the Sunderbans**

**Habitat Loss:** Rapid expansion of human settlements, aquaculture (especially shrimp farming), and conversion of wetlands into agricultural fields are major causes of habitat destruction.

**Human-Wildlife Conflict:** Fishing cats often prey on poultry and fish from farms, leading to retaliatory killings by locals.

**Poaching:** Though illegal, poaching for pelts and the pet trade is a concern.

**Climate Change:** Rising sea levels and increased salinity in the Sunderbans, a consequence of climate change, threaten the mangrove ecosystem,



overlaps with the Bangladesh Sundarbans, an extensive mangrove ecosystem. However, like in West Bengal, their habitat is also shrinking due to human

Research on fishing cats in Bangladesh has been limited. However, recent assessments suggest a similar decline as in West Bengal, with fishing cats

and retaliatory killings by local communities when the cats prey on livestock or aquaculture farms. **Conservation Efforts:** Conservation work in

communities about the importance of preserving the species. Government-led efforts, alongside international partnerships, have

further reducing suitable habitats for the fishing cat.

**Conservation Outlook**

Despite ongoing threats, there is hope for the fishing cat's survival in the Sunderbans. Continued research, strong conservation action, and collaborative efforts between India and Bangladesh are critical for the long-term survival of this species in the region. Additionally, involving local communities in conservation efforts will play a key role in reducing human-cat conflicts and ensuring that fishing cats and humans can coexist.

**Apt 6-409  
43 Street South,  
Lethbridge, Alberta,  
Canada, T1J 4B3  
Email:  
saikatbasu@alumniuleth.ca**  
The Author is a  
Canada based Indian  
Agro Scientists

# Winter Fruits for glowing skin



physician, giving us fruits that are needed by the body for different seasons. In winter, we get those fruits and vegetables that are beneficial to the body in cold weather. For instance, Vitamin C helps to strengthen our immune system and protects the body from colds and coughs. In winter, we get plenty of oranges and "mousambi" (sweet lime). Here are some beauty tips with winter fruits:

**1--Grapefruit**  
Grapefruit is rich in minerals, antioxidant, and has high water content. It also keeps the skin's outer layer hydrated. Vitamin C and many antioxidants present in it protect the skin from environmental hazards

Grapefruits are also rich in lycopene, a chemical that helps keep the skin smooth and protects it from UV rays. Grapefruit is an ideal ingredient to add to your diet and products to help achieve a glowing, bright complexion. They can change dry flaky skin into hydrated, radiant skin.

Grapefruits have a natural compound, lycopene, which helps reduce redness and swelling, and may balance your skin tone. You add it to your salad or even make some guacamol

**2-Strawberries**  
Strawberries are those juicy red berries that almost everyone loves. Applying strawberries topically on your skin can make your skin healthy and glowing.

Strawberry is Rich in vitamin C and

antioxidants, that provide immunity to the skin cells and make them better prepared to deal with environmental changes.

Strawberries help hydrate your skin. The vitamin C present in strawberries helps brighten and nourish your skin. It helps ensure soft and supple skin.

Strawberries also

contain ellagic acid,

which fights against sun

and damaged lips. The salicylic acid helps exfoliate the dead skin cells on your lips, while its moisturising properties helps hydrate it and give it an instant lift.

**3--Lemon**  
We all know that lemon is a rich source of Vitamin C, which is needed in winter. As a cosmetic ingredient, lemon can be used in various ways, but avoid using it undiluted, as it

texture. Add lemon juice to "tea water" for a hair rinse, to make the hair silky and shiny. Boil used tea leaves in enough water and cool the liquid. Add the juice of one lemon and use it as a last rinse. Lemon peels can be dried and powdered and used in face packs and scrubs.

**4--Oranges**  
Oranges may be used in hair packs. The rind of oranges are said to contribute to hair luster

after shampoo. It helps to restore the normal acid-alkaline balance and reduces oiliness. It is also rich in Vitamin C. Makes the hair shiny and silky. After your shampoo, add the juice of 2 oranges to half a mug of water and use as a last rinse. Leave on for 2 minutes and then rinse with plain water.

**5--Banana**  
Banana, one of the most popular fruits, packs quite a punch in terms of nutrition and health benefits. It is one of the richest sources of potassium and also contains Vitamin C and B6. Bananas are beneficial for both skin and hair treatments. Its potassium content helps to soften both dry hair and dry skin. Bananas can be made into a pulp and added to both face and hair packs. Bananas help hair that has been damaged by repeated colouring and other chemical treatments. Bananas can be made into a pulp and applied on the hair like a pack. Leave it on for 20 to 30 minutes and then wash

it off. Egg yolk or curd may be added to mashed bananas and applied as a hair pack. If the hair is very dry, add one teaspoon pure glycerin or honey to the banana pack. Almond oil may also be added to the banana hair pack.

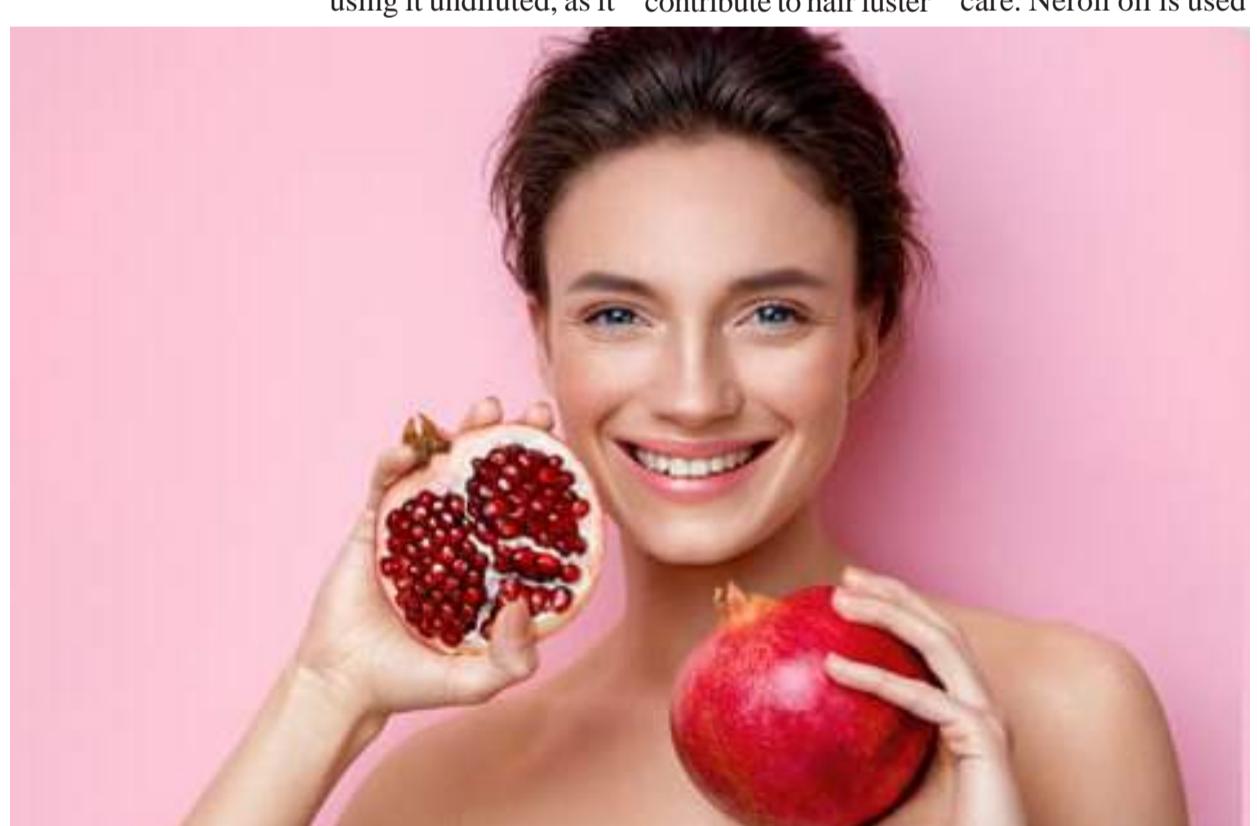
**6--Avocado**

Avocados are excellent for skin care, as they boost cell renewal. It contains Vitamin B and C, which help to build new cells and strengthen the immune system. It also has Vitamin A and E, which keep the skin soft and smooth. In fact, Avocado juice or oil can be very nourishing for the skin and hair. The protein and oil contents of avocado strengthen and nourish the hair. For home hair care, mash the avocado, add honey and a little lemon juice. This can be applied on the hair as a pack. In fact, it can also be applied on the face. Wash it off after half an hour.

**7 - - Pomegranate (Aanaar)**

It has excellent benefits for skin care, as it helps to moisturise the skin and is a powerful antioxidant. It helps to improve the skin's moisture retention ability too. It is said to boost the process of cell renewal and thus helps to delay the formation of ageing signs on the skin. Used regularly on the face, it can remove tan, lighten skin colour and also brighten the skin.

**The author is an international fame beauty expert and is called the herbal queen of India**



damage. Strawberries are seasonal fruits available during the winter in India. Add fresh strawberries to your cereal bowl or milkshake to reap the benefits of this fruit for glowing skin. Take strawberry puree, mix with fresh cream (dry skin) or yogurt (oily skin) and add a tablespoon of honey. Apply all over the face, leave it on for few minutes and wash with warm water. You can deep freeze and store this mask. Strawberry moisturises and nourishes chapped

skin. However, on areas where the skin is thicker, like elbows and knees, rub lemon halves and wash off with water. Over a period of time, it cleanses and lightens skin colour. Lemon can also be used as a hand lotion. Mix it with rose water and rub it into the skin of the hands. For rough hands, rub granulated sugar and the juice of a lemon together on the hands, till the sugar dissolves. Then rinse off with water. Done regularly, it will help to improve the skin



# Union Health Minister launches 100-Days intensified TB Elimination Campaign from Haryana

**Chandigarh (JAG MOHAN THAKEN), December 7-** In a decisive step towards eliminating TB in India, Union Health and Family Welfare Minister, J.P. Nadda on Saturday launched the 100-day intensified nationwide campaign from Panchkula district in Haryana. The campaign will be implemented in 347 districts across the country. Haryana Chief Minister, Nayab Singh Saini, Health Minister, Kumari Aarti Singh Rao were also present on this occasion.

Addressing the countrymen during the national-level event at Panchkula, J.P. Nadda said that under this campaign, the focus will be on TB-prone districts, and high-risk groups, ensuring comprehensive testing to prevent its

spread. Lauding Haryana's consistent focus and efforts on further strengthening healthcare infrastructure, Nadda said that due to the dedicated efforts made by the present state government, the number of medical colleges in Haryana has increased from 6 in 2014 to 15 today, with plans to establish one in every district under the leadership of Chief Minister, Nayab Singh Saini. He said that even the MBBS seats have increased from 650 in 2014 to 2,185, while postgraduate seats have increased from 243 to 889. The Union Minister said that India had only six AIIMS in 2014, compared to 22 today, with one under construction in Rewari,

Haryana. J.P. Nadda further shared that under the Ayushman Bharat Scheme, 1.22 crore Ayushman cards have been issued in Haryana, facilitating 18.5 lakh hospital admissions. Haryana has spent Rs. 2,700 crore providing free healthcare to the underprivileged under this scheme, which is a commendable achievement, he said. Nadda said that the central government gives free treatment up to Rs. 5 lakh for senior citizens above 70 years under the Ayushman Bharat Scheme. Haryana has issued 70,000 Vay Vandana cards as part of this initiative. Neonatal screening has risen from 63 percent to 85 percent, and institutional delivery has increased from 80 percent to 94



percent. Comprehensive immunization has improved from 79 percent to 92 percent. J.P. Nadda said that Prime Minister, Narendra Modi envisions making India TB-free before achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030. With

renewed energy and momentum, this campaign has been initiated today. He said that there is a significant reduction in TB cases, with the decline rate improving from 8.3 percent in 2015 to 17.7 percent now. The World Health Organization has

decentralized. He said that today early detection of TB has become possible because of the network of over 1.7 lakh Ayushman Arogya Mandirs across the country. He said that by increasing the number of laboratories from 120 in 2014 to 8,293 laboratories today, a significant step has been taken to scale up diagnostic services across the Country. He said that with the over 1.17 crore TB patients have received Ni-kshay support of Rs. 3,338 crore. Besides this, the state government has recently increased the Ni-kshay poshan amount from Rs. 500 to Rs. 1000 and added energy boosters for the nourishment support for TB patients, said Nadda. The union Health minister

said that to make this campaign successful, public participation is the key and we can make the TB Free India campaign successful only by ensuring active participation of public representatives and making people aware. During the program, Union Health Minister Nadda, Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini, and other dignitaries flagged off 10 Ni-kshay vehicles for Haryana and unveiled the poster for the 100-day intensive TB elimination campaign and launched IEC materials for public outreach. Besides this, Ni-kshay Mitras were also honoured, and Ni-kshay nutrition kits were distributed. TB champions who have successfully recovered from the disease were also felicitated.

## ACE, HIRAKUD WILD LIFE DIVISION, PLACED UNDER ARREST BY ODISHA VIGILANCE IN DISPROPORTIONATE ASSETS (DA) CASE

**SAMBALPUR (KCN):** Based on searches conducted on properties, such as Govt. Quarter near Deer Park, Sambalpur. Office chamber of Rebati Raman Joshi AFC, Hirakud at Sambalpur. Triple storeyed building at Ainthapalli, Sambalpur. Flat No. G-5, Kanheya Block, Brijdham Housing Society, near Church Chowk, Sambalpur. Flat No. G-6, Kanheya Block, Brijdham Housing Society, Sambalpur. Flat No. A-406, City Pride Apartment building, Farm Road, Sambalpur. Single storeyed commercial building at Malipalli, Sambalpur on Sambalpur-Jharsuguda Road. Single storeyed building at Padmapur, Dist-Bargarh and his Paternal house of at village Balandia, Bijepur, Dist-Bargarh of Rebati Raman Joshi, Asst. Conservator of Forest (ACF), Hirakud Wild Life Division, Sambalpur, Vigilance Department found possession of disproportionate assets comprising 3 buildings including 1 triple storeyed building in Sambalpur town worth approx Rs. 1.80 crore, 4 flats including 1 flat in BBSR & 3 flats in Sambalpur

## ASSOCHAM honours L.S. Davar & Co in Intellectual Property (IP) Law



**Kolkata (PARTHA ROY):** ASSOCHAM has honoured L. S. Davar & Co with the prestigious title of Outstanding IP Law Firm of the Year 2024 at the 4th IP Excellence Award & Global IP Conclave, on December

3rd, 2024 in New Delhi. Global IP Conclave focused on theme "Innovative Bharat: India's IP Ecosystem Paving the Future", highlighting the pivotal role that intellectual property plays in shaping innovation and driving

## Amit Shah Pays Tribute To Armed Forces For "Valour, Patriotism" On Armed Forces Flag Day



**New Delhi (KCN):** On the occasion of Armed Forces Flag Day on Saturday, Union Home Minister Amit Shah paid his tribute to the armed forces for their 'valour and patriotism' while urging people to contribute to the Armed Forces Flag Day Fund. In a post on X (formerly Twitter), Union Home Minister Amit Shah wrote, "Tributes to the immortal martyrs of our armed forces on Armed Forces Flag Day. With their valour and patriotism, our martyrs have created everlasting sagas of supreme sacrifice to protect the honour of our nation."

"My appeal to all to contribute to the Armed Forces Flag Day Fund for the welfare of our forces and their families," the post further reads.

On this occasion, HM

Shah was also felicitated by the Sainik Welfare and Resettlement, Gujarat State, with a miniature flag. "My heartfelt thanks to the delegation of Sainik Welfare and Resettlement, Gujarat State, for felicitating me with a miniature flag on the occasion," Home Minister Shah added in the same post.

Earlier in the day, Prime

Minister Narendra Modi also paid tribute to the courageous soldiers and urged people to contribute to the Armed Forces Flag Day fund. Posting his tribute to the armed forces in a post on X, PM Modi wrote, "Armed Forces Flag Day is about saluting the valour, determination, and sacrifices of our courageous soldiers. Their bravery inspires

us, their sacrifices

humble us, and their dedication keeps us safe. Let's also contribute to the Armed Forces Flag Day fund."

A defence official pinned the Armed Forces Flag on PM Narendra Modi.

On Saturday, Chief of Army Staff General Upendra Dwivedi also contributed to the Armed Forces Flag Day Fund, the Indian Army said in

## "No Proposal For BRICS Currency:" S Jaishankar After Trump's Tariff Warning



**Doha / New Delhi (KCN):** No decision has been taken to start a new currency to compete with the US dollar, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar has said in Qatar, where he has gone to attend the Doha Forum.

Mr. Jaishankar's comments came a week after US President-elect Donald Trump demanded that BRICS member countries, which include major emerging economies such as India, Russia and China, commit to not creating a new currency or supporting another currency that would replace the dollar. Trump had threatened to apply 100 per cent tariffs if BRICS members start a de-dollarization policy, or move away from the US dollar.

"We had a good relationship, a very solid relationship with the first Trump administration, yes there were some issues mostly trade related issues, but there were a whole lot of issues on which Trump was very international, and I remind people that it was actually under Trump that the QUAD was restarted," Mr. Jaishankar said.

He also noted the personal connection between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President-elect Trump, which has contributed to the strong bilateral ties between the two countries. "There is a personal relation between PM Modi and Trump... Where the BRICS

do discuss financial transactions... The US is our largest trade partner, we have no interest in weakening the dollar at all," he added. While warning BRICS members to not commit to creating a new currency or supporting

another currency that would replace the US dollar, Mr. Trump had said they can go find another 'sucker'.

"We require a commitment from these countries that they will neither create a new BRICS currency, nor back any other currency to replace the mighty US Dollar or, they will face 100 per cent tariffs, and should expect to say goodbye to selling into the wonderful US economy," Trump wrote on his social media platform, Truth Social. "They can go find another 'sucker'. There is no chance that the BRICS will replace the US dollar in international trade, and any country that tries should wave goodbye to America," the US President-elect had said.

# Aruha hill turns mound of misdeeds

**Jajpur(KCN):** Despite many efforts taken by the state government to contain rampant plunder of minor minerals, there has been no let-up in illegal quarrying and smuggling of black stone, murram and soil from Dharmasala tehsil area in Jajpur district. It has been over a year since the state government established the office of the deputy director of Minor Minerals department in Jajpur district as part of its move to curb the smuggling. However, this has failed to stop the illegal mining and smuggling of minor minerals. Instead, the illegal practice, depriving the state's exchequer of huge

earnings, has only flourished over the years. The Jajpur district administration has directed for deposit of penalty and closure of the quarries after mining of black stones beyond the permissible limit was proved at Aruha black stone mines under the Dharmasala tehsil. However, some unscrupulous miners continue to extract and smuggle murram from the area. The murram is being used for the establishment of a crusher unit named 'Mass', located about 300 metres from Tarakasuni Primary School in Aruha panchayat. Similarly, the Jajpur Road-Cuttack rail route lies at a distance of



200 metres from the under-construction crusher unit. Reports said that there are five black stone mines on Aruha hill and the state government has prepared a cluster mining plan for the area. However, it has comfortably ignored the presence of a school and the rail route near it

before preparing the cluster mining plan. This has left the local residents surprised as they questioned the wisdom of the district administration in permitting the establishment of a crusher unit which is likely to cause deafening noise and will lead to air pollution in the area.

written to the district Collector demanding closure of the illegal black stone quarry and crusher unit and necessary action for violation of norms. They have also forwarded copies of their complaints to the deputy director of Minor Minerals department, the secretary of Steel and Mines department and the regional officer of State Pollution Control Board (SPCB) at Kalinganagar in the district. According to the complaints, two of the quarries BSQ-2 quarry no-1/16-17 and 34/21-22 are situated at a distance of about 300 metres from the primary school. Moreover, three of the quarries BSQ no-1 quarry no-35/21-22 and quarry no-36/21-22 lie at a distance of about 200 metre from the railway line. The presence of the quarry might endanger

the railway line anytime as residents expressed concern over its security. This apart, four stone crushing units are in operation near these quarries on plot number 2733, 2594, 2704 and 2705 for which the students have been seriously affected by the deafening sound and air pollution emanating from the units. Residents Nirmal Nayak, Harihar Sahu, Pratap Rana, Anand Behera, Pramod Behera, Anam Behera, Sahadev Rana, Mohan Nayak, Chittarnjan Jena and over 100 others have demanded a proper probe into these irregularities and sought stringent action against the wrongdoers.

## Annual Sports Festival Held at Sagada Government High School

**Balasore, 07/12 (Krushna Kumar Mohanty):** The Annual Sports Festival 2024 of Sagada Government High School, under the Bhawanipatna Sadar Block, was conducted successfully over two days. On the first day, the festival was inaugurated by the Chief Guest, District Physical Education Officer Rupasingh Raut, and honored guests, including Sagada Gram Panchayat Sarpanch Govinda Nayak, School Management Committee President Asanta Nayak, Sargiguda Cluster CRC Coordinator Mohammad Zakir, and School Headmaster Sukanta Kumar Sahu, who presided over the event. The festival commenced with a torch rally starting from the local village deity's shrine and culminating at the school premises, followed by a ceremonial worship. Sports competitions were held across various categories: Senior, Junior, and Sub-Junior groups. On the second day, during



the celebration ceremony, District Education Officer Sushant Kumar Chopdar attended as the Chief Guest. He addressed the students, emphasizing the importance of sports in fostering discipline and holistic development. The school also felicitated Mr. Chopdar for his contribution. Other distinguished guests included Bhawanipatna Block Education Officer Achari Sabar, former District Physical Education Officer Mahendra Panda, Principal of Janata High School Borda Prakash

Nishank, social worker Gobardhan Dora, and CRC Coordinator Mohammad Zakir. They encouraged students to develop themselves into exemplary sportspersons. The school's outstanding athletes were honored, with Nitin Nayak from the boys' category and Ananti Majhi from the girls' category receiving special recognition. Students excelling in various fields were also awarded by the Chief Guest and other dignitaries. The event was chaired by Headmaster Sukanta Kumar Sahu, with Senior Teacher Yudhishthir

Muduli managing the stage proceedings. Sports teachers Sunil Kumar Nayak and Subhamayoti Raut from Kiaipada Higher Secondary School coordinated the competitions. All the school's teachers and staff, including Jayapradha Sethy, Manini Pujari, Shailendra Kumar Babu, Saroj Kumar Raut, Kautuk Rana, Sujata Pattnaik, Jayotsnarani Sahu, Madhusmita Panda, Bibhisan Nag, Gajendra Majhi, Snigdha Budhia, Radha Swain, and Manisha Majhi, contributed to the success of the program.

## Balasore District Administration's Continued Efforts to Curb Tobacco Use and Sale Raids in Chandipur Area; Fines Collected from Violators



**Balasore, 07/12: (Krushna Kumar Mohanty)** The district administration is making extensive efforts to prevent tobacco consumption and its illegal sale throughout the district. Officials from the Health Department, Police, and Excise Department

are jointly conducting periodic raids in crowded public places to address this critical public health issue. As part of these efforts, today, District Public Health Officer Dr. Sumitra De, Dr. Arup Abhishek, Ms. Mosumi Samal, and Mr. Brajeshwar Nanda,

prohibition of openly selling tobacco products. This raid operation, conducted under the National Tobacco Control Program, will continue, as confirmed by the officials. The senior officials involved in the operation emphasized that this enforcement is a part of a sustained initiative to protect public health. They stressed the importance of strict adherence to tobacco control regulations. To ensure compliance, a multi-departmental task force will maintain strict monitoring and enforcement measures. Regular enforcement operations will be carried out with severe penalties for violations, according to Dr. De, who reiterated the administration's commitment to this effort.



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# Fino Bank launches “Gullak” account aimed at improving household savings

**Bhubaneshwar :** Having made banking easy, simple and convenient, Fino Payments Bank is now focusing on making customers save more. Continuing its efforts towards creating value for customers, Fino Bank has today announced the launch of a new savings account “Gullak” aimed at improving savings by offering a range of benefits designed to meet the unique needs of customers.

One can open Gullak account at any of Fino Bank's around 16500 merchant points spread across the state of Odisha and enjoy the benefits. With a minimal account balance of Rs

1000, Gullak account holders need not pay any annual plan fee, get to make cash deposits without any charges, avail 7 free ATM transactions in non-metro locations and enjoy offers on Rupay debit card. An exciting proposition is the waiver of the minimum account balance on meeting certain criteria. These include, five UPI transactions through FinoPay mobile app in a month valued at Rs 500 or booking a one-year Fixed Deposit of at least Rs 5000 issued by Fino's partner bank or credit of any government welfare scheme benefit in the account. If customers meet any one of the three criteria, then



even if the account balance is less than Rs 1000 there will not be any charges for non-maintenance of minimum balance.

Gullak (Piggy Bank) assumes significance in

today's context where majority of people withdraw all or most of the money from their bank accounts, thereby losing the opportunity to save and invest.

Announcing the launch

of Gullak savings account Mr. Atul Trivedi, Senior Divisional Head, Fino Payments Bank said, “Customers need to aim towards higher savings to create a corpus for future

expenses as well as any emergency requirements, avoiding the need to take loans. Our endeavor with Gullak is to help account holders develop a savings first mindset,

employed. Customers with the potential to save more than Rs 2 lakhs can do so with Gullak, wherein the excess of Rs 2 lakh gets deposited in a sweep account of a partner bank offering a higher interest rate. With Gullak, Fino's neighbourhood banking services aim at increased engagement and financial well-being of customers. Further, Fino's neighbourhood points are open for extended hours where any bank's customer can transact, do deposits, withdrawals, money transfer and access third party products such as life, health, and motor insurance, referral loans, and pay utility bills. #Hamesha!

## CM Naveen Launches 32 Industrial Projects Worth Rs 6,993 Cr, To Generate 24,508 Jobs

**Bhubaneswar(KCN):** In a significant milestone in the journey of Odisha's economic advancement, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik today inaugurated nine industrial projects and performed a groundbreaking ceremony of 23 industrial units. These Inaugurations & Groundbreaking are statements of the Chief Minister's vision for faster conversion of investment intents to grounding.

These projects with a total investment of Rs 6,992.94 Crore and employment potential of 24,508 are spread over

14 districts i.e., Bolangir, Boudh, Cuttack, Ganjam, Jajpur, Jagatsinghpur, Jharsuguda, Keonjhar, Khurda, Puri, Rayagada, Sambalpur, Subarnapur & Sundergarh.

Speaking on this occasion, the Chief Minister said, “Our industrial portfolio is expanding with the inclusion of new age and employment-intensive sectors such as green energy equipment manufacturing, textiles, tourism, etc. The continuous improvement in the Ease of Doing Business ranking of the state, coupled with a

business-friendly environment, world-class industrial infrastructure, and highly sought-after skill development initiatives, has been instrumental in attracting investments to Odisha. Highlighting the fact that the 32 projects are spread across 14 districts, the Chief Minister expressed his pleasure in the broad-based industrialization in the state. The ceremony was held through Video conferencing in the presence of the Minister Industries, MSME & Energy, senior government officials and representatives of these Industries.

## Dalmia Bharat Celebrates Empowerment of 18000 women on International Day of Rural Women

**Bhubaneshwar,(KCN):** Dalmia Bharat Group, India's leading conglomerate with businesses in cement and sugar, announces the successful empowerment of 18000 women on International Day of Rural Women. Through the establishment of Self-Help Groups (SHGs), these women are provided essential skill training and access to vital resources for sustainable livelihood development.

In collaboration with various organisations like NRLM, NABARD, etc. Dalmia Bharat organizes various training initiatives like micro-enterprise development, handicraft production and others in both farming and non-farming sectors. All these activities are conducted in communities settled around their regions of operation across 12 states in India. These initiatives aim to upskill rural women to empower them, diversify their income sources and provide access to formal credit systems. Two notable initiatives in Odisha include Project Hastakala – upskilling women artisans and enterprise development via mushroom cultivation in communities surrounding its facilities in

Cuttack, Rajgangpur, and Lanjiberna Mines. Dalmia Bharat has enabled over 10,000 women in Odisha to become financially independent earning a monthly income ranging from Rs.4000 to Rs8000, significantly improving their individual well-being and the ability to support their families.

Commenting on the company's initiatives on International Day of Rural Women Mr. Ashok K. Gupta, CEO, Dalmia Bharat Foundation said, “Rural women in developing countries play a vital role in food security and economic development but face severe marginalization, including limited land ownership, higher illiteracy rates and unequal earnings compared to men. Dalmia Bharat is dedicated to uplifting marginalized rural women through holistic programs that bolster their income while managing household responsibilities. Our commitment aligns with UN Sustainable Goals, promoting self-reliance and gender equality for an inclusive and sustainable India, where empowered women drive community and national development.”

Project Hastakala is an ‘earning with joy’ skill

development programme where women are trained in the unique tie & dye batik products. This project is conducted in tribal areas of Jhagarpur & Katang panchayat in Odisha. After witnessing immense success at national exhibitions, Dalmia Bharat introduced the SADRI.e brand for promoting the handmade batik products like bedsheets, handkerchiefs, scarves etc. through multiple marketing platforms.

Another successful initiative includes enterprise development through mushroom cultivation. Dalmia Bharat actively facilitates training programs and market linkage support for SHG women, equipping them to earn an additional monthly income of Rs. 5000 by establishing their own cultivation units.

International Day of Rural Women, observed annually on 15th October, celebrates the vital role of rural women in agriculture, food security, and rural development. It highlights the need to empower them, address inequalities, and aligns with global goals for gender equality and sustainable development.

The WHEC aims to reshape ideas and practices in higher

education to ensure sustainable development for the planet and humanity, as well as to define and prepare a roadmap for a new era of higher education.

As the world comes out of COVID-19, the WHEC's goals and strategic scope remain, and the new timeframe represents an opportunity to deepen and expand common efforts of knowledge production,

education to ensure sustainable development for the planet and humanity, as well as to define and prepare a roadmap for a new era of higher education.

education to ensure sustainable development for the planet and humanity, as well as to define and prepare a roadmap for a new era of higher education.

**Singapore:** Airlines (SIA) today unveiled its all-new flagship SilverKris and KrisFlyer Gold lounges at Singapore Changi Airport Terminal 3, following a \$50 million re-design, upgrade, and expansion project. This will further enhance the on-ground customer experience at the airline's main hub, and comes as the demand for international air travel from and through Singapore takes off once again.

The Private Room, the First Class section of the SilverKris Lounge, the Business Class section of the SilverKris Lounge, and the KrisFlyer Gold Lounge can collectively accommodate around 1,150 customers within

their 6,100 square-metres, translating to 30% more seats and space. This also doubles the capacity that was available during the pandemic while the upgrading works were going on. The airline has created a sanctuary that has been thoughtfully designed to enhance the comfort and convenience of diverse groups of travellers, and meet their evolving needs in the coming years. Customers will be able to enjoy world-class products and services, as well as enticing food and beverage options, around the clock at the lounges before their flight.

Mr Goh Choon Phong, Chief Executive Officer, Singapore Airlines, said: “Extensive customer

engagement and research have gone into the design of the new SilverKris and KrisFlyer Gold lounges. Customers will enjoy thoughtful product offerings and experience the signature Singapore Airlines hospitality, all within a comfortable and restful environment, ensuring that they are refreshed and ready for their journey.

“Opening these lounges at this time signals our commitment to SIA's premium brand and growth strategy. It reinforces our position as Changi Airport's anchor airline, and reflects our confidence in Singapore's future as a pre-eminent global air hub.”

## WHEC recognizes Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham as excellence worldwide in Gender Equality

**Barcelona:** Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham was invited to the UNESCO World Higher Education Conference (WHEC), which recently took place in Barcelona, Spain. UNESCO recognized Amrita as one of five universities of excellence worldwide for its performance in gender equality.

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making a difference in terms of gender equality and which policies have been put into place at the university level. Gender equality is number five in the United Nations' list of 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). He explained how the culture of gender equality is not implemented only in terms of policies within Amrita, but also practiced in spirit.

The round table included Dr. Gloria Bonder, UNESCO Chair on Women, Science and Technology; Dr. Ricardo Vilanueva Lomeli, Rector General, University of Guadalajara; Ms. Elizabeth Shepherd, Leader of the Consultancy team, Times Higher Education; and Dr. Victoria Galan-Muros, Chief of Research and Analysis,

# Travis Head, pacers put Australia in command



**NEW DELHI, (KCN):** Travis Head proved to be a thorn in India's flesh yet again as he smashed a 141-ball 140 that gave Australia a first innings lead of 157. And to further wrest control, their pacers bagged five wickets under the lights as India slipped up ending the day trailing by 29.

As Pat Cummins, Scott Boland and Mitchell Starc made the pink ball hoop around and rip through India's top order for the second time in the game, they only underlined Australia's dominance right through which had been led by Head through the day. By the time Mohammad Siraj bowled Head off the second new ball, the left-hander had done more than enough to dent India's confidence.

The second session saw Head press the accelerator against a tiring attack with an older ball. The time was ripe to cash in and Head did so with elan, smashing

Harshit Rana threw the offside before registering a hundred off only 111 balls - the quickest-ever in a day-night Test as he powered Australia's lead at a rapid pace. Even against the second new ball which was India's biggest weapon, he started off whipping and clipping Bumrah and Siraj as they missed their lines for crucial boundaries. India had a brief injury scare during this period when Bumrah was down clutching his groin but went on to bowl again. But the wicket finally came to Siraj who yorked Head and followed it up with an exchange of words with the batter. It brought an end to a frustrating period of play for India where they were made to toil for every wicket. R Ashwin who had been their best bowler through that period despite being hit for a couple of sixes by Head had got Mitchell Marsh caught behind and saw Head being put down

on 76 by Siraj. But it was amid Head stepping it up in the company of Alex Carey (15) where they put on 74 off just 80 balls before the latter was out caught behind. The lead swelled past 150 before Siraj wrapped up the tail early into the third session leaving India with the toughest conditions to bat in a day-night Test.

KL Rahul was the first to go being surprised by a short ball from Cummins and pulling it to the 'keeper. Yashasvi Jaiswal started confidently until he nicked behind the first ball from Boland, who proceeded to nick off Virat Kohli too soon after. Starc added salt to the wounds getting a ripping incoming delivery to flatten Gill's middle stump. Rohit Sharma had a torrid stay in the middle being hit on the helmet first ball and surviving an LBW call as Starc overstepped. But even

as he stuck on amidst Rishabh Pant's adventurous strokeplay at the other end, Cummins got one to sneak around his defence to hit the top of off. At 105/5, Australia's control over the game was as comprehensive as could be and ensured that the hard work done in a testing first session was not undone. Then, Marnus Labuschagne put away some indifferent form to fight his way to a half-century on a ground where he averages over 70. His partnership worth 65 with Travis Head for the fourth wicket helped them offset two early strikes by Bumrah.

India's morning session was given a boost when Bumrah had Nathan McSweeney caught behind with a ball nipping away and soon after also had Steven Smith caught down the legside, putting Australia in a spot of bother at 103/3. Head was tested early with the round-the-wicket angle

by both Bumrah and Mohammed Siraj, but managed to see it through. Along with Labuschagne, he saw through that spell to cash in later. Harshit Rana was hit for four fours in an over as Australia cruised ahead after seeing past the initial threat.

But against the run of play, Labuschagne ended up cutting a delivery from Nitish Reddy to Yashasvi Jaiswal at gully. But his departure on 68 did not dent Australia much as Head marched on, getting to his fifth Test fifty against India and second on the trot in the series. It also ensured that Australia took the lead in the first session. India had a close LBW call against Mitchell Marsh turned down on review with the third umpire controversially deeming that there was no conclusive evidence if Ashwin's ball had struck the pad or bat first. More replays shown by the broadcaster were indicative of the ball striking pad first but India ended up losing the review, capping off a frustrating morning session which was only exacerbated subsequently through the day.

**Brief Scores:** India 180 (Nitish Reddy 42; Mitchell Starc 6-48) & 128/5 (Rishabh Pant 28\*; Pat Cummins 2-33) trail Australia 337 (Travis Head 140, Marnus Labuschagne 64; Jasprit Bumrah 4-59, Mohammad Siraj 4-98) by 29 runs

**Shami yet to get all-clear from NCA; continues to be with Bengal team**



**NEW DELHI:** The Sports Science wing of the BCCI's Bengaluru-based Centre of Excellence is yet to submit an all-clear report to the BCCI regarding Shami's fitness © BCCI

Mohammed Shami is unlikely to fly to Australia anytime soon. Indications are that he has not yet received fitness clearance, and the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) is still undecided when he can be sent to Australia. Precisely, the exact dilemma is whether rather than when. It is evident that Shami's fitness is under scrutiny. The Sports Science wing of the BCCI's Bengaluru-based Centre of Excellence is yet to submit an all-clear report to the BCCI. As reported by Cricbuzz on December 1, a team from the NCA went to Rajkot where he was playing in the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy (SMAT) to monitor his progress. Among those

on the Shami duty were a national selector (SS Das), the head of BCCI's Sports Science wing (Nitin Patel) and a Strength and Conditioning trainer (Nishanta Bardule).

Shami represented Bengal in the National T20 competition, finishing with an impressive tally of eight wickets in seven games. More crucially, the 34-year-old pacer, returning after a year-long injury hiatus, is said to have made a strong impression with his bowling performances. But more than his bowling, the assessment was whether he would be able to withstand the gruelling workload of a Test match.

Sources reveal that Shami is unlikely to fly to Australia immediately, despite his absence being felt in the ongoing Border-Gavaskar Trophy (BGT) series. The veteran pacer might be there for the final Test in Sydney, with the best-case scenario being his availability for the

Boxing Day Test at the MCG, starting on December 26. However, sources caution that this is an overly optimistic expectation, and it would not be surprising if he is not sent to Australia at all.

Bengal have reached the knockout stage of the SMAT and they are up against Chandigarh in the pre-quarterfinals which will be played at Chinnaswamy Stadium in Bengaluru on November 9. Shami continues to be with the Bengal team and he is expected to feature in the knockouts of the SMAT.

Shami was recently bought by Sunrisers Hyderabad for INR 10 crore in the Indian Premier League (IPL) mega auction in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. Should he regain full fitness, he will take part in the IPL after one year - he had missed the whole 2024 IPL season because of an ankle injury for which he had to undergo surgery.

# South Africa bring their A game to Gqeberha



**New Delhi:** More than two hours before the first ball would be bowled in the second men's T20I between South Africa and India on Sunday, St George's Park's gates remained firmly shut to civilians. But already around a thousand or so ticket-touting fans had lined up at the turnstiles. Most were wrapped up against the chill of the thin easterly breeze; the damp, win-the-toss-and-field wind that comes off the Indian Ocean and makes the ball swing at this ground. Above, grey ruled with impunity. But, unlike in Durban on Friday, the clouds were high and docile.

From inside the home of cricket - the first Test played in South Africa, and the first outside Australia and England, was at St George's Park in March 1889 - came the strains of Jana Gana Mana. It was played once, twice, thrice. So was South Africa's unnamed composite national anthem. Thereby hangs what media muppets, social and mainstream, had tried to turn into a controversy.

Happily, they failed. When India's anthem was played at Kingsmead, the recorded audio cut out twice, and resumed twice. Suryakumar Kumar and his team looked bemused, but they did the sensible thing and kept singing; with and without accompaniment. After all, it wasn't as if they needed help. In an attempt to make amends for any perceived slight, the anthem was played in full again. Sensibly, again, the players sang once more. South Africa's anthem passed free of glitches.

Kingsmead confirmed to Cricbuzz that they had not received a complaint from the Indians. Instead, SuperSport sources said, the visitors had a quiet word with the broadcaster. The playing of the anthems is not, of course, SuperSport's responsibility. And there this unremarkable matter might have died an unnoticed death and been buried in an unlabelled online wrinkle. It did and it was,

save for a smattering of headlines in India claiming the anthem had been "disrespected", that the start of the match had been "overshadowed", and that India's "furious" supporters deemed this "unacceptable". India fans who do feel this way will be considered shockingly immature by their peers, and rightly so. How much of the outrage was fact and how much faux can't be known, but the people who took offence probably argue that politics and sport don't mix. Closer to the truth is that notions of patriotism and sport shouldn't be mixed. Why is international sport encumbered with the irrelevant, artificial stiffness of national anthems? Even so, there was reason for St George's Park to make doubly and triply sure that it brought its anthem A game on Sunday. Hence the repetitions in the hours before the match.

The gates were still closed and the anthems still playing when Ashwell Prince, who is commentating on the series, sidled past the

back of the crowd. Prince was born and raised in what was then called Port Elizabeth - now Gqeberha - and is still lazily referred to as PE. It was at St George's Park that he scored the first of his 45 first-class centuries: an undefeated 125 that took Eastern Province B to a seven-wicket win over Natal B in November 1996.

The crowd noticed Prince's presence and a whisper of "Ashy P is in the house" rattled through the ranks. So there was no escaping the thronging selfie-hunters, and Prince

duly and patiently obliged. "Still big in PE," someone quipped at him. "Only big in PE," he retorted gamely. The last man in the scrum eagerly held up his phone only to discover the lens was the wrong way around. Prince waited for him to sort it out, and gently chided in Afrikaans: "Heeltyd gewag, maar die camera is reversed!" (You've waited all this time, but the camera is reversed!).

Just more than two hours later, after a drizzle had abated, the anthems had been

flawlessly delivered, and as the brass band were warbling through Eddy Grant's "Gimme Hope Jo'anna", Marco Jansen stood at the top of his run ready to start the match from the St George's Park Drive End. At the Duckpond End, Sanju Samson, the king of Kingsmead on Friday for his 50-ball 107, was coiled into a crouch. Jansen's third delivery swung wickedly through the air, seamed after pitching, and nailed the top of leg stump. It was the first time in three T20I innings that Samson had

not hit a century, and the first time in all of India's 240 T20Is that they had lost their first wicket without a run on the board.

There were 6,740 pairs of eyes in the stands and on the grass banks at that moment. They blinked, and when 8,146 pairs of eyes opened in the 15th, India were 87 for 6. Hardik Pandya, dropped twice in the 20th, batted in three of the four biggest stands of the innings for his 45-ball 39 not out. Of the rest, only Tilak Varma and Axar Patel reached 20. No-one's strike rate touched 130.

On Friday, Samson struck at 214 and Varma at 183.33. Jansen's 6.00 was South Africa's only economy rate under eight, and four of the seven bowlers were in double figures. But not every pitch is going to be bespoke for T20 cricket, like Kingsmead's was, with an outfield to match. There was nothing wrong with the St George's Park surface, but recent rain had juiced it for seam bowlers. The grass on it was noticeably

green and the bounce fairly boomed. When the innings ended, with India having wobbled to 124 for 6, the 8,231 present no doubt thought South Africa had set themselves up for a simple victory. Never in the 87 T20Is in which they had fielded first for a full 20 overs had they failed to reach a target as low as Sunday's. Only once in the 84 games they have won batting first had India defended a total as low in a full innings, when they held Pakistan to a reply of 113 for 7 after being dismissed for 119 in Nassau County in the T20 World Cup in June this year.

Why the focus on the spectator figures? There was a clue in the Springbok shirts and caps many in the crowd wore.

Twenty minutes after India's innings ended, the Boks kicked off against Scotland in Edinburgh. Millions of pairs of eyes would turn to them. Would the few thousand eyes gathered at St George's Park leave en masse?