

People's Odia daily 'Paryabekhyak' Celebrates Silver Jubilee



Bhubaneswar(KCN): December 31, 2024: Popular Odia daily 'The Paryabekhyak' celebrated its Silver Jubilee year at the Jaydev Bhawan in Bhubaneswar on Tuesday, December 31, 2024, with enthusiastic participation of people from all walks of life. The Silver Jubilee function began with the "Bande Utkala Janani" at 11:00 AM and lighting of diyas by honorable guests. Dr. Pabitra Mohan Samantray, Editor in chief, The Paryabekhyak and The Kalinga Kalinga Chronicle, introduced the guest speakers to the audience felicitates them with Mementos and Angabastras. The celebration was inaugurated by Former chief minister & Union minister CM of Odisha, Dr. Giridhari Gamang, among others, who released the special edition of The Paryabekhyak on the auspicious occasion. Other distinguished personalities graced the occasion were former PCC chief Prasad Harichandan, former Director of AIIMS Dr Ashok Mahapatra, veteran sculptor Padmabibhusana Sudarshan Sahoo, and BJD General secretary former Bhubaneswar North MLA Priyadarshi Mishra, eminent writer and gynecologist Prof Dr Sindhur Nandini Tripathy, renowned film maker & director. Sabyasachi Mohapatra and Member of the State Planning Board Prof Dr. Prasanna Patasani. The guests narrated how 'The Paryabekhyak' continued its journey during the pandemic and financial crisis. More than 100 reporters of 'The Paryabekhyak' family, friends and well

wishers attended the event. Ten paryabekhyak reporters and 15 other eminent persons of different fields were felicitated on the occasion. Rajkishor das, Layout designer, Neelkanth jena, Web designer, gopinath system administrator, Subrat sahu, coordinator, loknath das, Social activist, satyabrat Nayak, Youth and students organise, Bhaskar Chandra Nayak, Blood donor, and

Bijay das, Sr journalist, pt. itikant das, Rig veda, P. divakar, Atharvedi, prases Das, Social worker, Aditya Chandra das, Columnist, D. subham, Agriculture columnist, Baridhara Mahapatra, PARYABEKHYAK's District correspondent Jajpur, Ratikant Mohanty, State Reporter, Ramchandra swain, Special correspondent, Paradip, Sudhanshu sekhar maharana, DC, Sambalpur, Dilip Kumar Mishra, DC, Dhenkanal, Tapas Kumar sahoo, Bala soro, Correspondent, Anant Pradhan, Berhampur Reporter, Lalit ballav rout, Reporter, Talcher, prasant padhi, Former BMS Odisha union president, ABWJAI President, Sr journalist Sunil Kumar Mishra, Sr journalist pravat Kumar prusty, General secretary of OUWJ & IMC Rajani Kanth Samantaray were felicitated on the occasion. The Meeting was anchored by Sonali & Adishree. Vote of thanks was given by Paryabekhyak Bhubaneswar special correspondent Sanjay das.

PM Modi to launch power projects worth Rs 28,978 crore in Odisha February 3



Bhubaneswar(KCN): Prime Minister Narendra Modi is scheduled to dedicate two power projects by NTPC and lay the foundation stone of another with a total investment of Rs 28,978 crore during his daylong visit to Odisha on February 3. Modi is scheduled to dedicate the Darlipali Super Thermal Power Station (2x800 MW) and NSPCL Rourkela PP Expansion Project (1x250 MW) and lay the foundation stone of NTPC's Talcher Thermal Power Project, (2x660 MW) during the visit.

Addressing a press conference, NTPC's regional executive director (Eastern Region I & II) Sudip Nag said, "The upcoming power projects will be flagged off by the Prime Minister."

Located in Sundergarh district, the Darlipali STPP is a pit-head power station with supercritical (highly

efficient) technology and will supply low-cost power to its beneficiary states such as Odisha, Bihar, West Bengal, Jharkhand, Gujarat and Sikkim. The 250 MW project of NTPC-SAIL Power Company Ltd was established in Rourkela Steel Plant (RSP) to provide reliable power for the steel plant, which is vital for economic growth, he said, adding that the NTPC is developing the Talcher Thermal Power Project, Stage-III, within the old TPPS plant premises in Angul district, was taken over by NTPC from Odisha State Electricity Board in 1995.

After completing more than 50 years of service, the old TPPS plant was decommissioned. The upcoming plant will have highly efficient ultra-supercritical technology-based units and approximately three times the capacity of the old TPPS plant.

NTPC has undertaken various community development initiatives in the surrounding villages, such as education, drinking water, sanitation, health, women empowerment and rural sports. The company has also set up a medical college-cum-Hospital in Sundargarh, the official said.

Interim Budget 2024-25 Promises Stepping Up Value Addition In Agricultural Sector, Boosting Farmers' Income

New Delhi(KCN): Farmer's welfare and boosting rural demand is one of the main highlights of the interim budget 2024-25 presented by Union Minister for Finance & Corporate Affairs Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman in Parliament today.

Terming Farmers as our 'Annadata', Smt. Sitharaman stated that Minimum support prices for the production of 'Annadata' are periodically increased appropriately.

The Finance Minister said that every year, under PM-KISAN SAMMAN Yojana, direct financial assistance is provided to 11.8 crore farmers, including marginal and small farmers, while crop insurance is given to 4

crore farmers under PM Fasal Bima Yojana. She stated that these, besides several other programmes, are assisting 'Annadata' in producing food for the country and the world and added that the worries about food have been eliminated through free rations for 80 crore people.

The interim budget 2024-25 has promised to step up value addition in the agricultural sector and boosting of farmers' income. Union Minister for Finance & Corporate Affairs Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman promised to further promote private and public investment in post-harvest activities including aggregation, modern storage, efficient supply chains, primary and secondary processing



and marketing and branding to ensure faster growth of the agriculture and food processing sector.

"The sector is poised for

inclusive, balanced, higher growth and productivity. These are facilitated by farmer-centric policies, income support, coverage of risks through price and insurance support, promotion of

technologies and innovations through start-ups.", the Finance Minister mentioned in her speech. She said Pradhan Mantri's Formalisation of Micro Food Processing Enterprises Yojana has assisted 2.4 lakh SHGs and sixty thousand individuals with credit linkages. The finance minister added that other schemes are complementing the efforts for reducing post-harvest losses and improving productivity and incomes. Smt. Sitharaman mentioned that Pradhan Mantri Kisan Sampada Yojana has benefitted 38 lakh farmers and generated 10 lakh employment. The Finance Minister said the Electronic National Agriculture Market has integrated 1361 mandis, and is providing services to 1.8 crore farmers with a trading volume of Rs. 3 lakh crore. These and the provision of basic necessities have enhanced real income in the rural areas. Their economic needs could be addressed, thus spurring growth and generating jobs." the finance minister asserted.

5T Chairman Reviews Transformation Works In Gajapati, Dhenkanal Dists

Bhubaneswar(KCN): As per the direction of Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, 5T and Nabin Odisha Chairman, V Kartik Pandian visited Gajapati and Dhenkanal District to review the progress of developmental works in the district and interact with students and the general public. He attended the Maha Guru Abhisheka ceremony at Padma Samabhaava Monastery, Jiranga and

offered prayer. Then he interacted with the priests and devotees and reviewed the progress of the development of the Monastery for Rs 2.68 Crores which was sanctioned after his earlier visit to this place in May last year. He reviewed the progress of various development projects with the district collector and other senior officials. He directed the officials to ensure the project implementation was as per timelines. Later, Kartik

Pandian participated in the Nua-O Program and interacted with students of all colleges of Dhenkanal. He discussed with the students on Nua-O program providing a platform for youth to showcase their talent and to help achieve overall personality development in addition to their academic achievements and urged the students to work hard with self-confidence to achieve success in life. He motivated the students to aim high and mentioned about the

achievements of some prominent personalities from the Dhenkanal district.

He mentioned Pradeep Kumar Jena, IAS presently serving as the Chief Secretary, Govt of Odisha; Anoop Kumar Sahoo, IPS –IG of Police, Odisha; late Justice Gati Krishna Mishra, Ex-Chief Justice in Odisha High Court; notable writer and researcher Padmashree Dr. Antaryami Mishra and famous mountaineer late Kalpana Das.



The National workshop on Development of Decarbonization Strategies in Odisha towards achieving Net Zero

Bhubaneswar(KCN) : Vasudha Foundation, New Delhi and Indian Chamber of Commerce (ICC) jointly organized a national conference to seek stakeholder perspectives and inputs on the possible pathways that the State of Odisha could embark on towards becoming a Net Zero economy and specifically on the issue of opportunities, challenges, and potential solutions that the state could implement towards becoming Net Zero. The program was Presided by Chief Guest, Member Secretary of Odisha State Pollution Control Board and Director of State Department of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of Odisha Dr. K. Murugesan. The other dignitaries present at the inaugural sessions were Dr. Malay Kumar Pradhan, Deputy Director of Directorate of Factories and Boilers

, Government of Odisha & Advisor to ICC ESH Committee, Shri J B Pany, Chairperson, Indian Chamber of Commerce State Council, Shri N R Sahoo, Convenor of ESH Committee, ICC Odisha State and Chief Environmental Engineer of Odisha State Pollution Control Board, Shri. Rajesh Kanungo, Member Core and Advisory Committee, and Co-Convenor, ESH Committee, ICC Odisha State, Shri Srinivas Krishnaswamy, Chief Executive Officer, Vasudha Foundation and Shri. J P Pal, Regional Director-ICC. Dr. Murugesan highlighted that the State of Odisha was the first State in the country to prepare the State Action Plan for Climate Change, and currently actively preparing a roadmap for Net Zero strategy for the State of Odisha. Dr. Malay Kumar Pradhan provided a bouquet of

solutions particularly from the Industry side on reducing their carbon footprint and play a role towards making Odisha Net Carbon. Shri N R Sahoo highlighted the importance of Mission Life. Dr. J P Pany and Shri Srinivas Krishnaswamy welcomed the participants and set the context and purpose of the workshop. They also gave a brief overview on the expectations from the workshop and the way forward. The inaugural session was followed by two key technical sessions. Technical session 1 focused on opportunities and possible approaches towards mitigating GHG emissions in Odisha. The key speakers in the session were Dr. Malay Kumar Pradhan, Shri Rajesh Kanungo, Shri Srinivas Krishnaswamy, Mr. Prafulla Dhal, State Head, CSR and Sustainability, JK Paper Mills Limited and Shri

Brahma Mishra, President, UCCI and Managing Director, Bait Snaayu Smart Solutions Pvt. Limited. Dr. Malay Kumar Pradhan highlighted the importance of scaling up energy efficiency across industries in Odisha. He also highlighted the importance of scaling up renewable energy installations across Industries and particularly energy intensive industries. Dr. Rajesh Kanungo made a very detailed presentation on the issues, approach and solutions towards industrial

decarbonisation. Shri Srinivas Krishnaswamy

highlighted the importance of access to data and information for the development of robust pathways for decarbonisation and showcased the effort done by Vasudha Foundation in this front, by presenting the India Climate and Energy Dashboard, which Vasudha Foundation has developed in partnership with NITI Aayog. Shri Prafulla Dhal and Shri Brahma Mishra added to the rich insights in the panel of talking of solutions ranging from

reducing emissions from agriculture and waste sectors. The technical session II was on the topic of role of adaptation strategies and localisation of climate action. The key speakers in this session were Dr. Sutapa Pati, Dean, School of Sustainability, XIM University, Dr. Pradip Panigrahi, Convenor, MSME Committee, ICC State Council, Dr. S Satapathy, Advisor-Climate, Vasudha Foundation, Mr. Nabaghan Ojha, UNDP, and Dr. Payodhar Padhi, Chairman, Hi Tech Medical College and Hospitals. The speakers

in this session provided rich insights and inputs on the importance of localisation of climate action, highlighted solutions that can be done at the local level and scaled up to the state and national level and also spoke of initiatives and programmes of the National and State Governments in this effort. A detailed minutes of the meeting with all the inputs would be converted into a compendium and presented to the Government of Odisha, as inputs from this stakeholder consultation.



STATE LEVEL FOLK LITERATURE CONFERENCE



Jajpur(KCN): The Mahavinayak Natural Parijat Folk Literature Conference on behalf of KAIVALYA SAHITYA SANSAD has been held at Mahavinayak Ashtashambhu Temple, Chandikol, Jajpur. The founder, Dr. SANGRAM K E S H A R I S A M A N T A R A Y, presided over the meeting. The state-level poetry reciting and discussion were held in two stages. Shree Jagannatha's bhajan and devotional music were sung by vocalists. Saint Ramakant Baba of Olashuni Peetha inaugurated the meeting by lighting the lamp. Metaphors of nature and spiritual concepts enliven the literature.

The Chief Guest Dr. Basant Kishore Sahu, Sahitya Academy award winning on children's literature, gave a detailed look at the social relevance of folk literature in the first session. The Chief Guest of the second session, Vikari Raut, former CBI judge opined that spiritual feelings bring literature alive. Jyotishacharya Dr. Sasmita Mishra as the Chief speaker joined in and beautifully explained the spirituality and nature in folk literature through examples. In the second session, Kalipad Panda, a former member of Sahitya Academy, explained in his own style that events and accidents reflected in people's lives

help to create the best literature. As honorable speakers, Satyabrat Puhan, Saraswati Barik, the Poet Bipin Bihari Barik, Dr. Phillip Senapati, Mr. Vijay Das, (Senior Playwright and Senior Columnist,) Mr. Bhakta Charan Sahu, (Senior Journalist and Children's Literary, Cuttack), Mr. Biswajit Suryasulhi, President Sarvodaya Mandal (Cuttack) Dr. Deepayan Patnaik, Joint secretary Peace Committee, (Cuttack), and Deputy Director Ajay Kumar Panda highlighted various aspects related to nature in folk literature. Literary and social workers contributed in planting trees and cleaning the temple

KIIT-TBI Gets Successful Incubator of the Year 2023 Award



Bhubaneswar(KCN): KIIT-TBI has been awarded the Successful Incubator of the Year 2023 by the Startup Odisha, MSME Department, Govt of Odisha. Shri Pratap Keshari Deb, Hon'ble

Minister of MSME, Govt of Odisha presented the award to Dr Mrutyunjay Suar, CEO, KIIT-TBI. KIIT-TBI has done exemplary work in technology incubation sector and has

set a high benchmark. Earlier, KIIT-TBI adjudged the best TBI of India by the Department of Science and Technology, Govt of India and Best TBI of Asia by Asian

Association of Business

Incubation (AABI). Expressing happiness over the success, Dr. Achyuta Samanta, Founder, KIIT & KISS congratulated Dr. Suar and his team.



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Ranbir Kapoor Visits Sanjay Leela Bhansali's Office Ahead Of Epic Saga 'Love & War' Shoot

On January 24th, 2024, the legendary filmmaker Sanjay Leela Bhansali surprised everyone by announcing his next cinematic spectacle 'Love & War'. The filmmaker has got the biggest casting coup on board with Ranbir Kapoor, Alia Bhatt, and Vicky Kaushal and has unveiled a title poster that features the handwritten signature of the lead cast.

Ever since Sanjay Leela Bhansali made the grand announcement of the epic saga, the excitement among the masses has been palpable and they're excited to watch the massive combination of Sanjay Leela Bhansali and Ranbir Kapoor, that

is announced for a grand theatrical release on Christmas 2025.

Following the grand announcement of the film, the fans and the audiences were waiting for further updates from the film to come out, and

in a recent development, the lead actor Ranbir Kapoor has been spotted outside Sanjay Leela Bhansali's office for a meeting. This is the first time after the announcement, that Ranbir Kapoor has

visited the Sanjay Leela Bhansali's office.

Ranbir Kapoor is set to put a strong dedication to his character in Sanjay Leela Bhansali's directorial and together they're set to weave the magic on-screen.



Do Aur Do Pyaar To Teri Baaton Mein Aisa Uljha Jiya: 4 Rom-Coms You Cannot Miss In 2024

As 2024 unfolds, Hindi cinema promises a delightful mix of films, and at the forefront are some captivating romantic comedies. From endearing performances to unexplored storylines, these rom-coms are set to be the talk of the town. Here's a curated list of four must-watch romantic comedies that will undoubtedly leave you with a smile on your face.

Mere Mehboob Mere Sanam

Prepare to be enchanted by the delightful pairing of Tripti Dimri and Vicky Kaushal in 'Mere Mehboob Mere Sanam'. Scheduled for release on 23rd February 2024, this rom-com promises a captivating blend of charm and stellar performances.

Do Aur Do Pyaar

Featuring eclectic fresh casting of Vidya Balan, Pratik Gandhi, Ileana

D'Cruz and Sendhil Ramamurthy "Do Aur Do Pyaar" has been generating buzz since its first look. This slice-of-life rom-com, produced by Applause Entertainment and Ellipsis Entertainment, is set to steal hearts when it hits the screens on 29th March 2024.

Mr and Mrs Mahi

Get ready for a heartwarming tale as Janhvi Kapoor and Shahid Kapoor grace the screen with their fresh on-screen pairing in "Teri Baaton Mein Aisa Uljha Jiya."

together in "Mr and Mrs Mahi," slated for release on 19th April 2024. This rom-com is sure to stir your emotions and take you on a rollercoaster ride of love and laughter.

Teri Baaton Mein Aisa Uljha Jiya

Mark your calendars for 9th February 2024 as Kriti Sanon and Shahid Kapoor grace the screen with their fresh on-screen pairing in "Teri Baaton Mein Aisa Uljha Jiya."

Saurabh Shukla-Directorial Dry Day Is The Comedy Drama You Need To See - Here's How You Can Watch It



worldwide on December 22. Dry Day is the latest addition to the Prime membership. Prime members in India enjoy savings, convenience, and entertainment, all in a single membership for just ₹1499/year. Dry Day is a story of an imperfect hero who challenges societal conventions, rebelling against norms out of love for his unborn child. The trailer of this comedy drama features Jitendra Kumar, Shriya Pilgaonkar, and Annu Kapoor in pivotal roles. The film is set to premiere exclusively on Prime Video in India and across more than 240 countries and territories

said, "The movie is a social satire presented with a hilarious tragic-comedy of errors with lots of drama and emotions. Dry Day gives an important and relevant message about alcoholism and I consider myself fortunate to have had the opportunity to craft this film, aiming to entertain

and enlighten the audiences. It brings me immense joy to partner with streaming service Prime Video, Emmay Entertainment, and a talented bunch of actors, collectively breathing life into a compelling and beautiful narrative." "Dry Day is a captivating blend of comedy and drama, offering a

Sushmita Sen says her father was 'not happy' about her wearing a swimsuit at pageant, stopped speaking with her because she decided to pursue showbiz



Sushmita Sen created history when she became the first Indian to win the Miss Universe pageant back in 1994. While Sushmita has always spoken about how supportive her family was, in a recent interview, she opened up about how her father did not speak to her when he learnt that she would be participating in Miss India. Even when she had to wear a swimsuit for one of the rounds in the pageant, her father was quite upset about it. Talking to Mid-Day, Sushmita said that she was all of 18 when her life changed, and at that point, her father wanted her to be an IAS officer. "My father wanted me to be an IAS officer, so

I was studying accordingly. When the bomb was dropped on my father that she is going to Miss India, my father didn't speak to me for a bit," she said. Sushmita said that when she entered the world of pageants, her father was quite concerned as she had not even finished her graduation at that point. "I never went to a college and graduate, which was a big problem for my father because he always said, 'Beta, do whatever, just have a degree,'" she recalled. Recalling the time she had an "emotional moment" with her father, Sushmita shared that he wasn't too happy about the fact that she would be wearing a swimsuit on stage. "I remember having this very emotional moment with my father when I

Vivek Ranjan Agnihotri's 'The Vaccine War' To Be Screened At Parliament

Vivek Ranjan Agnihotri is one of the most visionary and responsible filmmakers in Indian cinema. The pioneering director always uses true-life storylines in his films to reflect society and the public. His two true-life stories, 'The Kashmir Files' and 'The Vaccine War', have made an unforgettable impression on the audience's emotions. While the first shocked the country with its tale and conviction and received several awards, including the prestigious National Award, the latter honors the spirit of Indian women scientists and the minds behind the coronavirus vaccine, which shows his ability as a filmmaker to present quality content to audiences.

It is well known that 'The Vaccine War' has left a huge impact on everyone's mind and the filmmaker



through his flawless storytelling and remarkable direction has opened some bold truths with the film. The film made noise upon its theatrical run and digital release and in a recent development, it is being learned that the film will be screened for the members of Indian parliament.

Besides being an Indic filmmaker, Vivek Ranjan Agnihotri is also a responsible citizen of India and has led an impact on the minds of the people and the generation of today with his work for which he was recently bestowed with the title of Doctorate from the Governor of Maharashtra.

Meanwhile, on the work front, celebrated filmmaker Vivek Ranjan Agnihotri left the audiences in awe as he unveiled his forthcoming film during a grand event in Bangalore. The much-anticipated project, titled 'Parva,' promises to be an epic cinematic journey, as it will be based on the iconic novel 'Parva' by the renowned author S. L. Bhyrappa. This ambitious venture is set to be a three-part blockbuster franchise, cementing its place in the annals of Indian cinema. Besides this, Vivek Ranjan Agnihotri is also working on 'The Delhi Files'

rollercoaster of emotions," shares actor Nirmala, actor Shriya Pilgaonkar shares, "The experience of working on Dry Day has been wonderful and enriching in so many ways. It's a film that will entertain you and emotionally strike a chord as well. I really enjoyed building that relationship between Nirmala and Gannu. The story of our film is all about the transformative power of love and it will also draw your attention to certain important societal issues. I'm so grateful to have got the opportunity to collaborate with Saurabh Sir and the wonderful team at Emmay Entertainment.

Jee Le Zaraa: Real reason behind Priyanka Chopra, Katrina Kaif and Alia Bhatt starrer's delay revealed and it's not date issues

Jee Le Zaraa is one of the most talked about movies starring Priyanka Chopra, Katrina Kaif and Alia Bhatt. The movie was announced a couple of years ago and there has been much excitement around the same as it is. Farhan Akhtar along with Zoya Akhtar and Reema Kagti are making this all-female road



trip movie happen but there have been a lot of hiccups already. Whether Jee Le Zaraa is being shelved or not, has Priyanka Chopra said no to the script, etc. have grabbed headlines in the last couple of days. But fresh reports revealing the real reason for the delay have surfaced. A lot of fans have questioned Farhan Akhtar about the delay of Jee Le Zaraa which is supposed to star Priyanka Chopra, Katrina Kaif and Alia Bhatt in the lead. There have been numerous reasons that have surfaced for the delay in making of the new movie. Recently, reports surfaced talking about Priyanka Chopra opting out of Jee Le Zaraa because she did not like the script. She was supposed to come down to India during Parineeti Chopra's wedding and sign the contract which did not happen. But that's not the case, as per a report in Koimoi.com, Priyanka is very much a part of the movie. She has not opted out of the project nor has she said 'no' to the script.

Small tax demands to be waived



Narayan Jain

2010-11 and demand within Rs.10,000 from asst year 2011-12 to 2015-16 will be waived. It is a welcome step. However the amount to be waived should be revisited and fixed upwards to make it more meaningful. Here is Para 93 of Budget Speech: Moreover, in line with our Government's vision to improve ease of living and ease of doing business, I wish to make an announcement to improve tax payer services. There are a large number of petty, non-verified, non-reconciled or disputed

direct tax demands, many of them dating as far back as the year 1962, which continue to remain on the books, causing anxiety to honest tax payers and hindering refunds of subsequent years. I propose to withdraw such outstanding direct tax demands up to ₹ 25,000 pertaining to the period up to financial year 2009-10 and up to ₹ 10,000 for financial years 2010-11 to 2014-15. This is expected to benefit about a crore tax-payers.

As a result of proposed waiver of demands, the

taxpayers will be

permitted to withdraw their appeals which may be pending before Commissioner of Income Tax (Appeal) or in Income Tax Appellate Tribunal (ITAT). It may be noted that Income Tax department is not permitted to prefer any appeal before the ITAT if the tax effect is within ₹ 50 Lakhs. In para 92 FM has announced, "In keeping with the convention, I do not propose to make any changes relating to taxation and propose to retain the same tax rates for direct taxes

and indirect taxes including import duties". However, certain tax benefits to start-ups and investments made by sovereign wealth or pension funds as also tax exemption on certain income of some IFSC units are expiring on 31.03.2024 and the same have been extended to 31.03.2025, to provide continuity in taxation. This proposal is also well thought of and welcome.

The number of income-tax payers in India rose to 93.7 million in FY23 from 52.6 million in

FY14. The tax deducted

at source (TDS) emerged as the largest component of direct taxes, reaching ₹ 8.17 lakh crore in FY23, almost double the amount in FY18. As stated by V. A. N. A. N. T. H. A. Nageswaran, Chief Economic Advisor to Government of India, our country has projected around 7% growth this fiscal, which is much better than USA and many other countries. Even after global impact of Pandemic, India remains the fastest growing nation with sustainable and inclusive

development for all its citizens including its farmers and labours. Government of India has played a pivotal role in creating an atmosphere for boosting better compliance, increase in tax revenues and economic growth. Now processing of I-T returns is being done almost in 10 days and most of refunds are also being issued in about one month of furnishing of Income Tax returns. This has been possible with use of technology.

The number of individuals filing

income-tax returns has more than doubled in the past 10 years to 77.8 million in 2022-23, helping direct tax-to-GDP ratio to climb to 6.11% from 5.62% during the same period. The cost of tax collection fell to 0.51% of total collection in 2022-23 from 0.57% of total collection in 2013-14. Earlier it was as high as 1.36% of the total collections.

Author is National President of All India Federation of Tax Practitioners. The views expressed are personal views

Despite the reduction in rates for corporate tax and personal tax, collections on the tax front are higher. But lot of appeals are pending. The Finance Minister has said that the Government aims to reduce the tax litigation and waive small tax demand of upto ₹ 25,000 pending upto asst year

Nothing Spectacular in Interim Budget 2024



Pradeep Kumar Panda

Thursday in her pre-election Budget, which is technically a vote on account and popularly termed an interim Budget. Sitharaman said people of India are looking ahead to the future with hope and options. She further said the government under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi covered all aspects of inclusivity.

Structural reforms, people programmes and employment opportunities helped the economy get new vigour, the finance minister said. After contracting by 5.8% in 2020-21, the economy recorded a growth of 9.1% in 2021-22. However, per capita growth declined to 5.1% which is 21 years lowest level.

Expressing hope that the BJP-led government will be blessed again by the people with a resounding mandate in the forthcoming general elections, the minister said: "Based on stupendous work, we expect our government will be blessed again by the people with a resounding mandate." She also said India overcame challenges of Covid-19, created foundations for self-reliant India. India was facing enormous challenges when the Modi government took office in 2014, and it overcame those in right earnest, Sitharaman said.

About 2 crore more houses to be constructed under housing scheme, and govt to launch a scheme for deserving middle class living in rented houses/slums/unauthorised colonies. In last 10 years, 25 crore people got freedom from multidimensional poverty, said FM. Direct benefit transfer of Rs

(PM-KISAN) is one of the world's largest Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) schemes. Under the PM-KISAN scheme, the government provides a financial benefit of ₹ 6,000 per year in three equal four-monthly instalments. The money is transferred into the bank accounts of farmers' families across the country through DBT mode.

As many as 1.4 crore youth were trained and upskilled under the Skill India Mission, the finance minister said while presenting the interim Budget on Thursday. The mission focuses on skilling, reskilling and upskilling through short-term and long-term training programmes.

The government is addressing systematic inequalities, which have plagued society, Sitharaman said. Presenting the interim Budget 2024-25, Sitharaman said economic management over the past decade has complemented people-centric development by inculcating STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) courses have seen enrolment of 43% women, the highest in the world, she added.

About 2 crore more houses to be constructed under housing scheme, and govt to launch a scheme for deserving middle class living in rented houses/slums/unauthorised colonies. In last 10 years, 25 crore people got freedom from multidimensional poverty, said FM. Direct benefit transfer of Rs

34 lakh crore through Jan Dhan accounts have resulted in savings of ₹ 2.7 lakh crore. Under PM Mudra Yojana, 43 crore loans aggregating to ₹ 22.5 lakh crore were extended. The next 5 years will be years of unprecedented development and golden moments to realise the dream of

Rs 75,000 crore will be

extended to states to

realise dream of developed India. Fiscal deficit expected at 5.8% of GDP in FY24, down from 5.9% estimated earlier and 5.1% fiscal deficit expected in FY25. Tax receipts for 2024-25 projected at ₹ 26.02 lakh crore. We continue on path of fiscal consolidation to reduce fiscal deficit to

development and employment generation will be increased by 11.1% to ₹ 11,11,111 crore, that will be 3.4% of the GDP. On reforms in the states for 'Viksit Bharat', she said that a provision of ₹ 75,000 crore rupees as a fifty-year interest-free loan has been proposed to support milestone-linked reforms by the state

passengers. We have also placed orders for over 1,000 new aircrafts," she said. "Under PM Fasal Bima Yojana, crop insurance has been given to 4 crore farmers," she said. She said that Electronic National Agriculture Market (e-NAM) has integrated 1361 mandis, providing services to 1.8 crore farmers with a trading

She also mentioned rooftop solarisation and "muftbijli", saying that 1 crore households will obtain 300 units free electricity every month through rooftop solarisation. "Each household is expected to save ₹ 15,000 to ₹ 18,000 annually due to rooftop solarisation," she said. On Ayushman Bharat, she said that healthcare cover under Ayushman Bharat scheme will be extended to all ASHA workers, Anganwadi workers and helpers. On agriculture and food processing, the Finance Minister said that Pradhan Mantri Kisan Sampada Yojana has benefitted 38 lakh farmers and generated at least 10 lakh employment.

"Pradhan Mantri Formalisation of Micro Food Processing Enterprises Yojana has assisted 2.4 lakh SHGs and 60,000 individuals with credit linkages," she said. "A corpus of ₹ 1 lakh crore will be established with fifty-year interest-free loan to provide long-term financing or refinancing with long tenors and low or nil interest rates," she mentioned about research and innovation for catalysing growth, employment and development.

Interim Budget 2024 could have been more proactive and could have addressed present issues and challenges of India like Inflation, Unemployment, Malnutrition, Rural Distress etc.



4.5% in 2025-26.

Processing time of tax returns reduced from 93 days in FY14 to 10 days and refunds made faster. Sitharaman says no changes in tax rates for direct and indirect taxes, including import duties. Government of India will raise ₹ 14.13 lakh crore for market by issuing dated securities during 2024-25, said FM. Centre will withdraw old disputed direct tax demands of up to ₹ 25,000 till FY2009 and ₹ 10,000 for 2010-11 to 2014-15.

On Infrastructure, she

said that the number of airports in the country have doubled to 149 airports. "Five hundred and seventeen new routes are carrying at least 1.3 crore

volume of ₹ 3 lakh crore.

On Nari Shakti, she said that 30 crore Mudra Yojana loans have been given to women entrepreneurs. "Female enrolment in higher education has gone up by 28%" she said. "Over 70% houses — under PM Awas Yojana — have been given to women from rural areas," she said. On PM Awas Yojana (Grameen) she said that despite COVID challenges, the target of three crore houses under PM Awas Yojana (Grameen) will be achieved soon.

Army Goodwill school Hajinar participate in Young Creators Awards



Asif Malik: Kupwara
K a s h m i r
(KCN): Students from the Innovation club of Army Goodwill Higher Secondary School Hajinar got an opportunity to participate in the Young Creators Awards 2024, our students Fazdha Mushtaq, Raja Affan and Mohd Yousaf under the adept leadership of Fazdha Mushtaq represented the School and proudly participated in the National Level exhibition held at Plaksha University Mohali, Punjab, the total number of more than 50 project were showcased and Selected for final round. The team of AGS HAJINAR involvement in the exhibition showcased their dedication to innovative projects, with a particular focus on their initiative named "Carbon Monoxide Exhausting System." Fazdha Mushtaq's leadership played a crucial role in guiding the team towards developing a solution that addresses carbon monoxide emissions, contributing to Tahir Gaffar, Bharti

environmental sustainability. We would like to thanks Team Bharti Foundation, especially Anil Bhat, Mr. Mudasir Shah and Mr. Mir Aatif for your continuously support in making our school project a reality. Your dedication to our school and community development has left an indelible mark, and we are profoundly thankful for your generosity. The collaboration with Bharti Foundation, the Indian Army, and Army Goodwill Higher Secondary School Hajinar, as well as the commendable support from Bharti Foundation, OIC AGS HAJINAR Lt. Col. Mohit Joshi Sir and Mr. Aftab Ahmad Khawaja Principal AGS Hajinar. These student-led initiative aligns with ARMY GOODWILL SCHOOL HAJINAR T A N G D A R commitment to nurturing young minds and encouraging them to take an active role in addressing global challenges. Tahir Gaffar, Bharti

JOINT SEARCH OPERATION AT CHERAMUNJI NEAR MAGAM FOREST YIELDS SIGNIFICANT RECOVERY



Asif Malik: Handwara(KCN): In a joint search operation today at Cheramunji near Magam, Kupwara, Army and Jammu & Kashmir Police have achieved a major breakthrough against the terrorist activities, resulting in a significant recovery of

ammunition and Warlike stores. The operation was a result of Human intelligence received from a reliable source. A meticulous operation of search and destroy was launch based on the input which resulted in the recovery of 9x UBGL shells, 4x IED receivers, 30 x Commercial grade detonators housed in their original factory packaging, 138 rounds of AK47, a loaded magazine of sniper rifle with 7 rounds, 24 blank rounds of AK 47 and 4x magazines of 9mm pistol.

Farewell to senior grocer Balaram Behera

Cuttack (KCN): Senior Kirani of Mahanadi Bihar Women's Higher Secondary School, Cuttack has retired from his professional rank on January 31. After spending 34 years of working life under the state government since 1989 (with 662 categories), the pitiful sight of retiring with empty pension at the end has disturbed everyone. Senior columnist Dr. Laxman Sahoo, Principal



faculty member Dr. Keerthi Manjari Sahu, faculty member Manswini Mishra, faculty member Anupama Nand, working assistant clerk Amulya

MCAPS - Carving student's future with advanced career counseling

Bhubaneswar(KCN): Mo College Abhijan, the active society under HED, is stepping up every next day towards empowering and educating students in terms of skill, career counselling, sports and other such activities to prepare students towards a golden future. Among several initiatives, one such recent Initiative was the seminar on 'Skill Training and Advance Career counsel associated with Mentroz, a career excellence platform which helps students to choose the right career with skill training using advanced intelligence. The pilot counselling program was held at BJB Autonomous College, Khordha and Udayanath Autonomous College of Science & Technology, Adaspur, Cuttack.

BJB Autonomous College, one of the leading educational institutions of state, organised the skill training & career counselling program on Wednesday. The introductory speech was given by BJB career counselling cell



coordinator, Dr. Lipsa Mishra where she briefed the purpose and initiatives being taken at the institution towards career development. Principal of BJB College, Prof. Itishree Padhi highly praised this initiative by Mo College where she felt the students are going to embark on the journey beyond the college walls. She also urged bright minds to prioritize career planning. Believing the seminar is going to be a pathfinder for their students, Prof. Padhi stated "Students should set goals, and embrace the opportunities that align with their aspirations. Our Students success is our pride, and thoughtful career planning is the key to unlocking the limitless potential."

Principal of Udayanath

Autonomous College, Prof. Arun Kumar Swain observed the programme thoroughly with Mo College Coordinator Shri Nirmal Pradhan, College Staffs, Members of College Counselling Cell and around 250 students were present during the event. "Employment is the need of the hour and educating & guiding students regarding career is the precise method to shape up the budding future of all these students," stated Prof. Swain during the event. The program ended up with an Interactive Q-A session. Shri Manas Mohanty, a serial entrepreneur and founder of Mentroz, highlighted the importance of career planning and also focused on how to achieve excellence. He inspired and motivated

the students on how to choose their careers by giving diverse real-life examples from his 15+ years of experience. "Mo College Abhijan is constantly working towards shaping up Students career with innovative seminars, webinars and Career guidance program. Mentroz is proud to be the part of Mo College to conduct such inspiring event across the state," stated Shri Mohanty. "The need of career planning is crucial for graduates offering direction, helps to set goals, and ensures a strategic approach to professional growth. By identifying interests, skills, and aspirations early on, graduates can make informed decisions, increasing the likelihood of fulfilling and successful careers.

Vakati Karuna in Court Contempt Case Justice Showcause to Vakati Karuna in Contempt Court Case

Hyderabad (KCN): On 24 August 2023, the High Court gave a judgment regarding the appointment issue of 2010 batch Kakatiya University teachers. Due to judgement was not being implemented by Kakatiya University, Dr Vintha Naini and Dr Anjan Rao approached the high court and filed a contempt case based on Section 10-12 of the Contempt of Court Act - 1971 against Prof. T. Srinivasa Rao, Registrar

of KU and Vakati Karuna, Principal Secretary of Higher Education.

It is mentioned in the affidavit filed in the High Court that those who do not implement the orders of the High Court should be punished. The Assistant Advocate General had argued in the court last month and filed a contempt case based on Section 10-12 of the Contempt of Court Act - 1971 against Prof. T. Srinivasa Rao, Registrar

related to the case is with the government as the new government has been formed. The university filed a counter on 11 January of

this year. On the last month, the High Court Judge K. Laxman issued a show cause order to Karuna and the show cause orders stated that

he must appear in person before the High Court at 10.30 am on February 2. Besides, the show cause order also stated that he should answer why he should not be punished for the offense of contempt of the High Court. The judge also stated in the order that he must attend each adjournment in person till the final order of the court. In these circumstances, there is excitement about the 2010 batch of teachers in KU.

" JIS Maha SAMMAN " 2024 presented to two eminent Scientist & Doctor

Kolkata (PARTHA ROY): "JIS Maha SAMMAN" 2024 was presented to two distinguished personalities - one scientist and one doctor for their pioneering contribution in their professional area.

JIS Maha Samman 2024 was conferred to Dr. Suman Chakraborty, Professor & Dean at IIT Kharagpur, and Dr. Partha Sarathi Bhattacharya, an eminent Pulmonologist.

Dr. Suman Chakraborty,

Professor & Dean at IIT

Kharagpur,

known for his substantial

contributions to

mechanical engineering

and a source of sheer

motivation to numerous

engineering aspirants;

along with Dr. Partha

Sarathi Bhattacharya, an

recognised for his

compassionate and

proficient approach to

simplifying what is often

a very complicated and

confusing area of health

care , specially in

treatment of COPD

patients . "JIS Samman"

is a series awards

launched by JIS group to

honour excellence in

academic, business ,

cultural, sports area.



" JIS Samman " was presented on 1st February in Kolkata on 104th Birth Anniversary of late Sardar Jodh Singh founder of JIS group. Sardar Jodh Singh was visionary with entrepreneurial drive who transformed every challenges in to opportunity and played important role in upliftment & transformation of lives of millions . Sardar Jodh Singh had entrepreneurial vision of creating a difference in the society by educating people. Sardar Jodh Singh's aspiration to serve the society by imparting knowledge and ensuring employability culminated into JIS Group Educational Initiatives. Sardar Tarun Singh, Managing Director, JIS Group, highlighted the role of JIS Samman is to promote & honour excellence in academic , business , cultural , sports area. Today , under the visionary leadership of Sardar Tarun Singh the group is the expanding into new business areas as well as promoting Research and Development in new frontiers of science and technology to improve & enrich quality of life.

for a happy life. In this farewell ceremony, Mr. Behera was felicitated with gifts, garlands, sweets, and sweets from the graduate college, while Mr. Behera was felicitated with shawls, garlands, trophies, and other equipment from the higher secondary school. The hike in departures was a serious and frustrating move, pointing the finger at the government's no-pension retirement policy.

Balasore School triumphs as State Champions in INTACH's National Heritage Quiz.

Bhubaneswar (KCN): The Indian National Trust for Art and Culture Heritage (INTACH), Odisha Chapter, held the Finals of the State level inter-school quiz competition on 15th Oct 2023 at the Blossoms School, Bhubaneswar. The INTACH National Heritage Quiz is the biggest event of its type held on a pan-India level. It is an effort to raise awareness and cultivate affection for cultural and architectural heritage. The Quiz was based on the heritage and culture of India, and aimed to increase awareness about our glorious

nation among school children. Students from classes 7th to 10th were eligible to participate in teams of two. In an exciting showcase of knowledge and heritage, the State Final Round saw the emergence of St. Thomas Convent, Balasore as the victor, securing their place in the next round which is the National Level Quiz. The questions asked during the quiz comprised from various topics like India's heritage, history, crafts, art forms, architecture, wildlife sanctuaries, National parks, cultural heritage, art-forms, dances etc. with a special focus on Odisha's legacy and famous personalities. Altogether it was a passionate approach which was put forward as a learning experience for the students. Quizmaster Bivash Rath Attreya conducted the quiz. Four teams from different districts participated in the final round. The teams were from the St. Thomas Convent, Balasore; Odisha Adarsh Vidyayala, Baripada; Odisha Adarsh Vidyayala, Balangir and Blossoms School, Bhubaneswar. The team of Aryashree Das Adhikari and Dibyajoti Das from St. Thomas Convent



Balasore were the first and the team from Odisha Adarsh Vidyayala were runners up. They will go to New Delhi for the National Finals to be held in November. Anil Dhir, Convener of INTACH's Bhubaneswar Chapter, said that the Heritage Quiz was a part of INTACH's initiative for heritage awareness among School children. Amiya Bhushan Tripathy IPS (Retd), State Convener of INTACH gave away the prizes and certificates to the participants.

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



Bhubaneswar (KCN): Dalmia Bharat Group, India's leading conglomerate with businesses in cement and sugar, announces the success of 18000 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 SADRIe 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." Project Hastakala is an

war stories that depict the valiant efforts of the Indian armed forces during the 1971 war. Listeners will have the opportunity to learn about the heroic deeds of our soldiers, their unwavering spirit, and the sacrifices they made to ensure our nation's victory. Red FM will also collate all stories as episodes under a podcast, which will be available on various audio streaming platforms.

Reflecting on the announcement, Lieutenant General

Rana Pratap Kalita, COO, RED FM, and Magic FM, said, "On the occasion of Vijay Diwas, we are elated to be joining hands with the Eastern Command of the Indian Army to honor the lives of the 1971 war veterans. Our army men live through times that are unimaginable to us. The sacrifice of our veterans is truly unfathomable but as a brand, we are looking forward to commanding the valor of the keepers of our nation. The Guts & Glory - Salute 71 initiative will also

recognize the unsung heroes who walk amongst us as common citizens. We are hopeful that these stories will enrich us with empathy and esteem for the gallant troops who made the ultimate sacrifice for our freedom."

The initiative will be rolled out in 12 East-Indian stations namely, Kolkata, Bhubaneswar, Asansol, Siliguri, Agartala, Patna, Muzzafarpur, Jamshedpur, Guwahati, Shillong, Aizawl, and Gangtok. Tune in to 93.5 RED FM to listen to these stories.

Eastern Command of Indian Army & Red FM Celebrate Vijay Diwas With The Guts & Glory - Salute 71

Bhubaneswar : 93.5 RED FM, India's leading private radio and entertainment network is thrilled to announce its partnership with the Eastern Command of the Indian Army to commemorate Vijay Diwas with a grand celebration titled "Guts and Glory - Salute 71." This event aims to pay tribute to the historic victory of the 1971 war and honor the brave soldiers who made it possible. As part of this unique initiative, Red FM will captivate its audience on-air with narrations of intriguing

war stories that depict the valiant efforts of the Indian armed forces during the 1971 war. Listeners will have the opportunity to learn about the heroic deeds of our soldiers, their unwavering spirit, and the sacrifices they made to ensure our nation's victory. Red FM will also collate all stories as episodes under a podcast, which will be available on various audio streaming platforms.

Reflecting on the announcement, Lieutenant General

Airtel Xstream Fiber unlocks its NEW All-in-One plans

Bhubaneswar: To serve the needs of premium households who want the next generational connectivity and entertainment experience, Bharti Airtel ("Airtel"), India's premier communications solutions provider, has once again raised the bar in the home broadband segment with the launch of three new all-in-one plans built for the evolving entertainment needs of today's connected homes.

Vir Inder Nath, CEO – Homes, Bharti Airtel had this to say: "Our new plans are built for India's emerging entertainment needs. Through these bundle offers we plan to offer our discerning customers great value, convenience and unlock a multi-faceted digital experience."

Increased broadband consumption in Indian homes has given rise to the phenomena of hybrid viewing, where families are looking to consume OTT content on the TV screen along with linear TV without the hassle of managing multiple subscriptions and devices. Airtel's plans are the first of their kind in terms of catering to the evolving entertainment needs of the whole family and come with: Subscription to 17 premium OTTs to go with unlimited data. This includes Netflix, Amazon Prime, Disney+ Hotstar and Airtel Xstream Premium ((SonyLiv, Lionsgate, Hoichoi and 11 more OTTs), 350+ TV channels covering the best of linear TV. Airtel 4K Xstream TV Box* that allows you to enjoy OTT and linear TV content with a single device and single remote.

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. The WHEC aims to reshape ideas and practices in higher

EXCEPTIONAL EXPERIENCES AWAITS SINGAPORE AIRLINES CUSTOMERS

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 the curated 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

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, policy dialogue, exchange, and networking. Swami Amritaswarupananda Puri, President of Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham, participated in a round table called "Universities' Contribution to Gender Equality: A global perspective". Adding to his views, Swami Amritaswarupananda expressed how Amrita is 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,



Fit-again Prithvi Shaw in Mumbai's Ranji Trophy squad



Mumbai: Prithvi Shaw is set to make his comeback. The Mumbai Cricket Association (MCA) has included him in their Ranji squad. The decision comes after he received clearance from the National Cricket Academy (NCA), which deemed him fit for competitive cricket. Consequently,

Shaw has been added to the squad led by Ajinkya Rahane, and they will face Bengal at the Eden Gardens starting from February 2. Shaw, aged 24, has been sidelined since August of the previous year due to a knee ligament injury. On January 20, Cricbuzz reported about the delay in return to action by

Shaw as the NCA wanted to subject him to higher volume of workload to test his preparedness. The NCA had informed the MCA, stating, "Prithvi Shaw is progressing well in his batting and fielding drills. He will undergo higher volumes of acceleration, change of direction, and agility

drills over the next 3 weeks to develop the required robustness for his injured knee ligament before making a return to sports."

On Wednesday, the NCA granted him clearance to participate in the Ranji Trophy. With Shaw's inclusion, Mumbai will have a 17-member travelling squad. Mumbai currently lead the Elite Group B Ranji points table with 20 points from four games, boasting three wins and one loss.

Mumbai squad: Ajinkya Rahane (captain), Shivam Dube, Prithvi Shaw, Jay Bista, Bhupen Lalwani, Amogh Bhatkal, Suvad Parkar, Prasad Pawar (WK), Hardik Tamore (WK), Suryansh Shedge, Tanush Kotian, Atharva Ankolekar, Aditya Dhumal, Mohit Awasthi, Dhaval Kulkarni, Roystan Dias and Sylvester Dsouza.

Jack Leach unlikely for Vizag Test



Visakhapatnam: Brendon McCullum might have teased the idea of playing an all-spin attack against India but that ploy will have to wait. Jack Leach, England's most experienced spinner in the current squad, is unlikely for the second Test against Visakhapatnam.

The left-arm spinner, who banged his left knee in the outfield twice, and then aggravated the injury by bowling

through it in the fourth innings, didn't bowl in the practice session in Visakhapatnam two days out from the Test match. He was visibly limping and was seen receiving treatment on the sidelines of England's training session.

England, though, now have at their disposal offspinner Shoaib Bashir, who arrived late in India owing to visa issues and as a result wasn't available for

selection in Hyderabad. McCullum has spoken about Bashir impressing the management during their team camp in the UAE.

"He's a great kid, he's got a lot about him," Zak Crawley said of Bashir. "He knows what he is trying to do with his bowling, and he backs himself."

"I like that and feel like if he got his chance in this series he would go well."

Sri Lanka pick three uncapped players for one-off Afghanistan Test



New Delhi: Sri Lanka have picked three uncapped players for the upcoming one-off Test against Afghanistan in Colombo, that is set to begin on February 2. This will be Dhananjaya de Silva's first assignment as full-time Test skipper after taking over from Dimuth Karunaratne.

Wicketkeeper-batter Lahiru Udara, fast bowlers Chamika Gunasekara and Milan Rathnayake are the three uncapped players picked for the one-off clash. While Udara and Gunasekara have played in a T20I and an ODI respectively for the national side before, Rathnayake hasn't

featured in any format so far.

The selection committee has dropped Lakshitha Mansinghe, Praveen Jayawickrama and Pathum Nissanka from the squad that was picked for their previous Test assignment against Pakistan last year. Nissanka didn't get to play against Pakistan in that series last year despite making a return to the squad. Dilshan Madushanka, who made his debut in that series, hasn't been considered either with the pacer currently playing the ILT20. This will be the first ever Test match featuring these two teams.

Marsh, Gardner take top honours at the Australian Cricket Awards



New Delhi: Mitchell Marsh and Ashleigh Gardner emerged as the big winners at the 2024 Australian Cricket Awards. Marsh became the first all-rounder since Shane Watson in 2011 to win the coveted Allan Border Medal whereas Gardner won the prestigious Belinda Clark Award, her second overall.

Marsh totalled 223 votes, 79 ahead of Pat Cummins who had a pretty incredible year himself. Gardner polled 147 votes to finish in front of Ellyse Perry (134 votes) and Annabel Sutherland (106 votes).

Marsh enjoyed a successful year all around, starting with his 118 in the third Ashes Test after missing the first two and then scoring a career-best 177* against Bangladesh in the ODI World Cup. Gardner, who returned figures of 12 for 165 against England, the second-best figures in the history of women's Tests,

picked more wickets than any of her colleagues during the eligible time-frame (56 scalps at 19.39 in 30 matches).

Nathan Lyon, who recently picked his 500th Test wicket and was instrumental in Australia winning the Indore Test, won the Shane Warne Men's Test Player of the Year. Jason Behrendorff won the Men's T20I Player of the Year.

Ellyse Perry, whose batting lately has witnessed a rejuvenation,

won the Women's T20I Player of the Year and the Women's ODI Player of the Year.

Marsh, who flourished as an opener and as one-down player in the white-ball formats, also won the Men's ODI Player of the Year. Jason Behrendorff won the Men's T20I Player of the Year.

Other awards: Women's Domestic Players of the Year: Elyse Villani and Sophie Day

Men's Domestic Player of the Year: Cameron Bancroft

Bradman Young Cricketer of the Year: Fergus O'Neill

Betty Wilson Young Cricketer of the Year: Emma de Broughe

BBL Player of the Tournament: Matt Short (Adelaide Strikers)

WBL Player of the Tournament: Chamari Athapaththu (Sydney Thunder)

Jay Shah set to continue as ACC president



New Delhi: Jay Shah is all set to continue as the president of the Asian Cricket Council (ACC). His extension for another year was unanimously approved at the ACC Annual General Meeting (AGM) in Bali on Wednesday. Shah, the secretary of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI), is in the midst of his second year of his second two-year term as the ACC Chief. Shah's extension was proposed by Shammi Silva, the president of Sri Lanka Cricket (SLC), and the nomination was unanimously backed by all ACC members, as stated in a Wednesday press release by the ACC.

Taking over the reins of the ACC in January 2021

from Nazmul Hassan, the president of the Bangladesh Cricket Board, Shah became the youngest administrator to be re-appointed as the ACC president. The ACC presidency rotates among the full ICC members in the continental body, and Shah is the first person to secure two consecutive terms. "I am grateful to the ACC Board for their continued trust. We must

remain committed to ensuring the all-round development of the sport, with a special focus on regions where it is still in its infancy. The ACC is committed to nurturing cricket

across Asia," Shah stated after his re-election.

Cricbuzz reported about the ACC meeting in Bali on January 29 and on the possibility of discussions over the ACC president position. In the end, Sri Lanka Cricket (SLC), whose turn was next for the post, proposed Shah's continuation. "Jay has played a pivotal role in steering the ACC towards significant progress in promoting and developing cricket across the Asian region. Under Mr. Shah's guidance, the ACC has been instrumental in unearthing and promoting new talent in cricketing powerhouses like Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka," SLC chief Shammi Silva said.

'I have enjoyed the first couple of weeks' - Smith on opening in Tests



battled against the new ball numerous times, coming in early. I've enjoyed the first couple of weeks of it ... if they see fit to move me back down, I'll do whatever the team needs."

Smith lavished praise on young West Indies pace sensation Shamar Joseph who scripted a stunning turnaround to pick seven wickets and bowl his side to a memorable win. "I overheard a conversation, I think we were seven down just before lunch and I overheard him speaking to Kraigg (Brathwaite) ... he's like, 'I'm bowling to the end, man!', Smith recalled. "He's a rare talent and I think it's great for cricket what he was able to do and see the West Indies competing like they did. He just kept coming in, and actually probably

dismissed to give West Indies victory. "I've thought about it, whether we could do different things," Smith said. "Maybe I could have probably tried to leave just one ball from Joseph for Josh Hazlewood to face in the over where the tailender was eventually

take all six from Alzarri (Joseph)."

Smith will now lead Australia in the upcoming ODI series against West Indies that kicks off at the MCG on Friday. This will be Australia's first assignment in the 50-over format since winning the World Cup in India last November.