

PRESIDENT OF INDIA INAUGURATES THE 5TH EDITION OF THE MEGHALAYA GAMES

DIVERSITY IS THE BEAUTY OF OUR NATION AND WE SHOULD UTILISE IT TO FURTHER BOOST INDIA'S GLOBAL IMAGE IN SPORTS ARENA: PRESIDENT MURMU

New Delhi, (KCN): The President of India, Smt Droupadi Murmu inaugurated the 5th Edition of the Meghalaya Games in Tura, Meghalaya today (January 15, 2024). Speaking on the occasion, the President said that the North East region has a tremendous potential for development of sports and sportspersons. She noted that this region traditionally has a strong sports culture. The President said that diversity is the beauty of our nation and we should

utilise it to further boost India's global image in the sports arena. She emphasized the need to support the talent from the tribal areas and groom them to become professional sports persons.

The President was happy to note that the society of North East encourages women to play and join sports as a profession. She said that the North East region has produced many great women athletes. She also underlined the potential of adventure sports and adventure tourism in this



region and the need to explore and leverage it on priority.

The President said that India's sporting culture has developed

immensely in recent years. With Government's new

initiatives and encouragement to the athletes, Indian

sportspersons are now winning more medals than ever in global events. Programmes such as Khelo India are helping in identifying and nurturing future sports champions. She said that India has also demonstrated its ability to host large scale international sporting and other events. The President urged children and youth to learn at least one sport and participate in sports activities. She said that they may or may not adopt sports as a career but playing together will

inculcate team spirit and competitiveness in their personality apart from keeping them physically and mentally fit. The President said that the decision of the government to hold these games in different parts of the state is a welcome step and would ensure wider reach of such events among masses. She expressed confidence that the events like Meghalaya Games will encourage athletes for excellence, promote competitiveness and create a vibrant sporting ecosystem.

**Prez Murmu, PM
Modi, Odisha CM
Naveen Extend
Greetings On
Makar Sankranti**

Bhubaneswar(KCN): President Droupadi Murmu, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik have extended greetings to their fellow citizens on the auspicious occasion of Makar Sankranti. “Heartiest greetings to all Indians on the occasion of Lohri, Makar Sankranti, Pongal, Magh Bihu and Uttarayan! These harvest festivals are the lively manifestations of our heritage to respect Mother Nature. May these festivals continue to spread love and harmony among the people of our country. My best wishes to all fellow citizens for a bright and prosperous future,” read a post on the Official Twitter account of Rashtrapati Bhavan.

Extending wishes, Prime Minister Modi, in a post on X wrote, “Sending heartfelt wishes for Makar Sankranti, the auspicious festival linked with the sacred practices of contemplation and benevolence. On this festival that celebrates nature, I hope that the Uttarayan Sun God brings joy, prosperity, success, and good health to all my fellow countrymen.”

Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik also wished people on the auspicious occasion and wrote, “Heartiest greetings and congratulations on the occasion of the holy Makar Sankranti. May everyone’s life be filled with happiness and prosperity by the grace of Lord Shri Jagannath.”

DGP Arun Sarangi Reviews Srimandir Parikrama Project



arrangements are being made for the inauguration of this project. Many important personalities from outside the state will also join this ceremony. Arrangements have been made for their accommodation and hospitality. Similarly, an auditorium has also been prepared in front of the monastery on the north side. It is worth mentioning that, about 25 Sri Jagannath buses along with 50 battery vehicles will be there at Samang Parking. There will be all the facilities for commuters and tourists in the Parikrama project.

Puri(KCN): The Director General of Police Arun Sarangi on Monday visited Srimandir and reviewed the Parikrama project. Also, he visited the Shree Setu and Jagannath Ballav

Pilgrim Centre. He also inspected Shree Marga, Shree Jagannath Ballav Vihar, Shree Setu and Samanga Parking and discussed the smooth arrival and movement of pilgrims from Samanga Parking to the Parikrama.

He had detailed discussions with the senior officials regarding this. The inauguration ceremony of the Srimandir Parikrama project will be held on January 17. Security

India, Iran Reach Final Agreement To Develop Chabahar Port: Report

Tehran(KCN): External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Monday held wide ranging discussions with Iranian counterpart Hossein Amirabdollahian here and their discussion focused on the long term framework for India's involvement with the strategically vital Chabahar port and the North - South connectivity project.

Mr Jaishankar, who is in the Iranian capital as part of the ongoing high-level exchanges between the two sides, also called on Iranian President Dr Ebrahim Raisi and conveyed the greetings of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

"Held wide ranging discussions today in Tehran with Iranian FM @Amirabdollahian. Our bilateral discussion focused on the long term framework for India's involvement with Chabahar port and the INSTC connectivity project," Mr Jaishankar said in a post on X.

He also spoke about threats to maritime shipping in the region and stressed that it's important that this issue be "speedily addressed", in an apparent reference to targeting of merchant vessels in the Red Sea by



Iranian-backed Yemen's Houthi rebels amid the Israel-Hamas conflict. The US and the UK have launched air strikes targeting the Houthi positions in Yemen. India has been closely monitoring the unfolding situation in the Red Sea. The issue figured in a phone conversation between Jaishankar and US Secretary of State Antony Blinken on Thursday. The Indian Navy has already enhanced deployment of its frontline ships and surveillance aircraft for maritime security operations in view of the maritime environment in the critical sea lanes including the North and Central Arabian Sea. Following the airstrikes targeting the Houthi positions, US President Joe Biden said he will not hesitate to direct

further measures. "The response of the international community to these reckless attacks has been united and resolute," he said. "Other issues on the agenda were the Gaza situation, Afghanistan, Ukraine and BRICS cooperation," Jaishankar said after his meeting with the Iranian foreign minister. Later, he called on Iranian President Raisi and apprised him of his "productive discussions" with the Iranian ministers. "Honoured to call on the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran Dr Ebrahim Raisi @raisi_com. Conveyed the greetings of PM @narendramodi. Expressed condolences over the Kerman attack. Apprised him of my productive discussions with the Iranian

Ministers. Value his guidance for further development of ties," Mr Jaishankar posted on X.

Iran's official IRNA news agency earlier reported that Foreign Minister Amirabdollahian and his Indian counterpart discussed developing bilateral relations. "They also reviewed regional and international developments," it added.

Earlier on Monday, Mr Jaishankar began his engagements in Iran by meeting Minister of Roads and Urban Development Mehrdad Bazrpash during which the two sides held a detailed and "productive" discussion on establishing a long-term cooperation framework on the strategically vital Chabahar port.

Mr Jaishankar also exchanged views on the International North-South Transport Corridor with Mr Bazrpash.

"Began my engagements in Tehran by meeting the Minister of Roads and Urban Development @mehrdadbazrpash. Detailed and productive discussion on establishing a long-term cooperation framework with respect to Chabahar port.

Rain Likely In Several Districts Of Odisha For Two Days



Bhubaneswar(KCN)
The India Meteorological Department (IMD) on Monday predicted light rain in several parts of Odisha from January 17, 2024. As per the IMD, light rain is very likely to occur at one or two places over the districts of Bargarh, Sundargarh, Jharsuguda, Keonjhar, Sambalpur, Deogarh, Mayurbhanj on January 17.

Likewise, on January 18 there will be light rainfall in the districts of Sundargarh, Keonjhar, Deogarh, Mayurbhanj, Angul, Dhenkanal, Jajpur, Balasore, and Bhadrak. It is important to note that this forecast will continue to be accurate until January 19 at 8 am.

Weather Forecast
Day 1 (Valid upto 0830 hrs IST of 16.01.2024)
Yellow Warning: Dense

fog likely to occur at one or two places over the districts of Mayurbhanj, Keonjhar, Sundargarh, Angul, Dhenkanal, Cuttack, Khurda, Puri, Nayagarh, Ganjam, Kandhamal, Kalahandi, Bolangir, Koraput.

Day 2 (Valid from 0830 hrs IST of 16.01.2024 to 0830 hrs IST of 17.01.2024)

Dry weather very likely to prevail over the districts of Odisha

Day 3 (Valid from 0830 hrs IST of 17.01.2024 to 0830 hrs IST of 18.01.2024)

Light rain very likely to occur at one or two places over the districts of Bargarh, Sundargarh, Jharsuguda, Keonjhar, Sambalpur, Deogarh, Mayurbhanj

Day 4 (Valid from 0830 hrs IST of 18.01.2024 to 0830 hrs IST of 19.01.2024)

Light rain very likely to occur at one or two places over the districts of Sundargarh, Keonjhar, Deogarh, Mayurbhanj, Angul, Dhenkanal, Jajpur, Balasore, Bhadrak

ATM Looter Gang Busted In Balasore, Five Held



Balalore(KCN): Police have busted the interstate ATM looter gang in Balalore and arrested five persons of the gang. Also the police seized Rs 6,13,700 from their possessions. The five accused persons hail from Haryana. They were apprehended from Bhubaneswar, while they were trying to flee. The stolen cash and other incriminating materials including one pistol were seized from their

possessions. As per reports, on 11 January, the accused persons looted two ATMs in Khaira and Soro area. On receiving information about the theft, the police team chased the vehicle of the looters. However, the looters managed to escape from the spot. The next day the car was found abandoned on a wooden bridge in a rural area under Khunta police station. After

investigation, it was found that the vehicle was a stolen car from Delhi region. From the belongings found in the car, the scientific team, dog squad and cyber cell detected that both theft cases occurred on the same day. During interrogation, the looters confessed that they had committed multiple ATM cutting and thefts. One of the accused of the gang is still absconding.

ESG Certification is going to be critical catalyst to draw investment in corporate sector in India

Kolkata (PARTHA ROY): Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) Certification is going to play critical catalytical role to draw investment in corporate sector as well as to do business across all sectors in India in upcoming times to face challenges arising due to climate change as well as sustainability issues . Investors are evaluating ESG - non-financial factors as part of their analysis to identify material risks and potential growth opportunities. ESG framework is used to evaluate an organization's business practices and performance on various sustainability and ethical issues. Also , it provides a method to measure business risks and opportunities in those areas. In capital markets, some investors use ESG criteria to evaluate companies and help determine their investment plans, a practice known as ESG investing. Sustainability, Ethics and Corporate Governance are generally considered to be non-financial performance indicators. Role of an ESG program is to ensure accountability and the implementation of systems and processes to manage a company's impact, such as its carbon footprint and how it treats employees, suppliers, vendors and other stakeholders. ESG initiatives also contribute to broader business sustainability efforts that aim to position companies for long-term success based on responsible corporate management and business strategies. A session on theme "Driving Responsible Business with ESG at the core" was organised at 17th Environment Partnership Summit hosted by Indian Chamber of Commerce (ICC) in Kolkata on 11th January 2024 to spread awareness as well as highlight importance of diligent implementation of ESG Frameworks in Indian corporate sector . Md Ghulam Rabbani, Minister in Charge, Department of Environment , Government of West Bengal, highlighted the



fact on the inspiration and guidance of Chief Minister Smt. Mamata Banerjee West Bengal Government is proactively taking initiatives to tackle environmental & climate

change related evolving challenges as well as minimise carbon footprints across all sectors. Minister Rabbani mentioned Government of West Bengal is initiating several policy

Rabbani mentioned West Bengal currently ranks 11th nationally in environmental sustainability. ESG Frameworks are changing fast with evolution of new technologies. So ,ESG systems and best practices need continuously updating. In India, ICAI a Government of India statutory body is working on ESG parameters as well as facilitating implementation of ESG Frameworks & parameters in corporate sector. Dr. Rajesh Kumar, IPS, Member Secretary, West Bengal Pollution Control Board , stressed on importance of corporate responsibility and environmental compliance. He mentioned each and every company is striving to contribute positively. Government of India has mandated BRSR submissions, evaluating adherence to ESG norms. Government aims to create a system that yields meaningful reports, assessing companies' waste management and water affluency compliance . Government's goal is to promote collaborative effort towards achieving the mission of a developed nation. Companies need to address environmental concerns . Kumar highlighted the four principles of ecology : "Nature knows best, everything is connected, everything must go somewhere and we must question our actions today."

AILWAY MINISTER REVIEWED THE PROGRESS OF REDEVELOPMENT OF BHUBANESWAR AND CUTTACK RAILWAY STATION



Bhubaneswar(KCN): Hon'ble Minister of Railways , Communications and Information & Technology Minister Shri Ashwini Vaishnaw today inspected the Bhadrak-Bhubaneswar railway section and reviewed the Safety, Traffic facilities and took stock of the ongoing infrastructure works in the Railway Section. During the inspection he advised railway officials to take necessary precautions to ensure safe and smooth train operations. He also emphasised on timely completion of infrastructure related projects and passenger amenities work. Later, Shri Vaishnaw visited the Cuttack and Bhubaneswar Railway station and reviewed the progress of the ongoing infrastructural works for redevelopment of these stations as a World Class station. Shri Vaishnaw expressed his happiness with the progress of the work. He emphasized that these world class stations at Bhubaneswar and Cuttack will become the hub of the city with the world class passenger facilities Assurance fulfilled on Promotion to Maniabandha Handloom products: During Shri Vaishnaw's visit to Cuttack Railway Station, today, he visited Maniabandha One Station One Product Stall. In his last week visit to Maniabandha village, Shri Vaishnaw felt that the weavers engaged in handloom products in different sectors, are getting less price than the

market and the Lion's share margin goes to third parties. So Shri Vaishnaw assured weavers to provide facility to sell their products at Cuttack Railway Station. Within a week, an One Station One Product Stall opened to sell their products. Now, the weavers are happy. While expressing their gratitude, they said that many leaders assured, but no one fulfilled their commitment. But, today we thank Shri Vaishnaw as he fulfilled his assurance.

Subhas Bose Institute of Hotel Management Commemorates Swami Vivekananda's 162nd Birth Anniversary in Grand National Youth Day Celebration

Kolkata(ABHIJIT SETH): Subhas Bose Institute of Hotel Management (SBIHM) orchestrated a splendid celebration recently in honor of the 162nd birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda. The event unfolded at SBIHM's Newtown Campus and marked the institute's active participation in the nationwide observance of National Youth Day. The celebration was carried out in collaboration with Vivek Bharti Seva Trust, Belur Math, the headquarters of the Ramakrishna Math and Ramakrishna Mission, founded by Swami Vivekananda. The highlight of the event was the gracious presence of Swami

Sevaparananda Maharaj, Secretary of Vivek Bharti Seva Trust, Belur Math. SBIHM extended a warm welcome to Swami Sevaparananda Maharaj, adorning him with garlands as a symbol of their genuine collaboration from the northern region. Swami Sevaparananda Maharaj, in his insightful address, added a profound depth to the National Youth Day celebration by shedding light on Swami Vivekananda's teachings and philosophy. The festivities at SBIHM were diverse and engaging, showcasing the talent and creativity of the students. The program commenced with an

opening song, followed by Vedic mantra recitation, Swadesh Mantra recital, and a mesmerizing lyrical yoga performance. These activities were carefully curated to reflect the essence of Swami Vivekananda's ideals and principles. Bidisha Sarkar, CEO of SBIHM, expressed her thoughts on the occasion, stating, "National Youth Day is more than just a celebration; it is a reflection on the principles and lessons imparted by Swami Vivekananda, offering ongoing inspiration and guidance to the youth of our nation. SBIHM takes pride in being a part of this commemoration, nurturing the values that

Swami Vivekananda stood for. Our commitment persists in promoting ideas and teachings that contribute to the holistic development of our students, aligning with the vision of Swami Vivekananda." The celebration at SBIHM was not just an event; it was a collective tribute to the enduring legacy of Swami Vivekananda, fostering a sense of purpose and inspiration among the youth. The collaboration with Vivek Bharti Seva Trust, Belur Math, added a significant spiritual dimension to the commemoration, making it a memorable and spiritually enriching experience for everyone involved.



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THE DISSENTING VOICES IN THE INDIAN PARLIAMENT

Dr. Pradeep Kumar Nayak

In a parliamentary democracy the legislature, the highest forum of discussion and the only legitimate law-making body, comprises the members of the Ruling Party and those of the Opposition Party. In all the countries having bi-cameral legislatures Bills introduced by the Government or private members are passed as per "procedures established by law" or according to "due process of law" after thorough discussions and debates in both the Houses. The role of opposition is very significant because it curbs the arbitrary tendencies of the Ruling Party to introduce obnoxious Bills to suit its needs. A toothless Opposition cannot take on the brute majority of the Ruling Party if it does not have solidarity, worst still, if it happens

to be a coalition group. The suspension of 146 M.P.s from Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha during the ongoing Winter Session of the Indian Parliament in December 2023 on the grounds of unruly behavior and misconduct has raised many pertinent questions as to the legality of that extreme step. Political pundits and constitutional experts have expressed their grave concern over the en masse expulsion of the MPs who are after all Representatives of the People and have constitutional rights to raise any burning question of the nation on the floor of the highest forum of discussion. Be it Adani issue or Manipur issue or Pegasus spy malware issue or EVM hacking issue every citizen of India should

be apprised of the controversies that have raised clouds of dust in the national politics and have made people skeptical of the integrity of the national leaders.

In parliamentary democracy the role of opposition and the Leader of Opposition should neither be undermined nor be ignored or else it will lead towards the dangerous trend of authoritarianism. The Opposition Parties in the Parliament control the Executive (the Ministers) through debates, discussions, call attention motions, half an hour discussions, adjournment motions and question hours. The Ruling Party and their ministers should lend a patient ear to the Opposition members' pleas on different issues and should have

constructive discussions to sort out contentious issues. However, things often take an ugly turn in our Parliament in recent times because of the uncompromising attitudes of the Ruling Party. The Parliament, in recent times, witnesses noisy scenes, indiscipline, slogan-shouting, mimicry of the Chairman/Speaker of the House as case may be, vilification of Opposition MPs and deteriorating standards in debates reducing the sacred Houses into a battleground of sort or a pitiable scene of bedlam which was rare ever in the post-independent parliamentary history. If the members of the Opposition were taken into confidence by the Ruling Party through mutual understanding and amiable discussion, things

would not slip out of hands as it happens now. Since the Opposition Party has a Right to Dissent on every relevant national issue it cannot be denied the same. On the contrary, the Opposition should also play a constructive role during the sessions and should not oppose or obstruct everything introduced in the parliament simply to oppose.

The tradition of opposition in modern times evolved in Britain in 1688. The phrase "His Majesty's Opposition" became very popular in Britain in the 19th century. This apart, the convention of the Leader of Opposition also took root in Britain in 1937 when the Government enacted the Ministers of the Crown Act, 1937 and even prescribed a salary of 2000 pound

to the Leader of Opposition. After this, countries like Canada, Australia and South Africa too gave statutory recognition to the post of Leader of Opposition. In the parliamentary system of Britain an Opposition in Parliament is dubbed the "Shadow Cabinet" or "Alternative Government". In India the political scenario was dominated by the single party, that is, Indian National Congress from 1952 to 1962 and none of the opposition parties could be able to secure 1/10th of the total seats in the House of the Legislature concerned resulting in no recognition of Leader of Opposition. Prior to the 1977 General Election, except for a period of one year (from December 1969 to December 1970) there was no Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha. From 1977 an official Leader of

Opposition was recognized till the 15th Lok Sabha in 2014 (with the exception of the 7th and 8th Lok Sabha in 1980 and 1984 respectively). The matter of appointing the Leader of Opposition as per the guidelines of the 1977 Law of the Parliament falls within the jurisdiction of the Speaker of Lok Sabha who can appoint the Leader of the single largest party of Lok Sabha as the Leader of Opposition under Rules-120 and 121.

Anyway, the parliamentarians right to speak and right to dissent on the floor of the House are inviolable and indispensable in a democratic country wedded to the parliamentary system. In the language of Rangsman Rome, a Thailand MP: "Parliament must be an example to the society. If we cannot speak

openly about our country inside the parliament, how can people outside be expected to?" In 2021 the international watchdog agency Asian Parliamentarians For Human Rights has published a report titled "Parliamentarians at Risk" in which it gives vivid details of suppression of opposition members of parliaments and their intentional harassment through suspension, court cases etc. in countries like Thailand, Philippines, Myanmar, Cambodia and Malaysia. So, dissenting voices of the people's representatives should be respected and not suppressed otherwise no one can prevent the authoritarian rule in future in India.

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Silence is the Golden Mantra

Bipin Bihari Rout



The teacher at the school tells the children, "Finger on your lips." "I want pin-drop silence". Because the quieter you become, more you are able to hear! Silence is the Golden Mantra. It is the language of God. Silence is a state of solitude in meditation. Contemplate on silence. When silence takes over you, you are connected to the divine. Then nothing matters, neither

anguish nor joy... Everything evades. Only peace and harmony prevails. Lord Buddha says, Silence is a place of great power and healing! It has the vastness of an ocean. Silence isn't empty, it is full of answers, and Silence is perhaps the best answer. Scientific Studies suggest that silence has health benefits. Sound increases the stress levels even during sleep. This stress results in increased stress hormones. Psychologists suggest that children too require undisturbed stillness during their sleep time or they become averse to sounds.

In 2023, in a

study done on mice, it was found that when the mice were exposed to two hours of silence a day; new cells in the hippocampus were developed. Silence helped the new generated cells to become functional neurons and integrate with the system. This means that silence actually helps the brain to grow. It has been found that silence helps to internalize, contain and evaluate the information during the acts of stillness.

Researchers studying Neuroscience, Morgan and colleagues found that brain gets into this state when self reflection is done on one's personality or

characteristics. During this silent resting period internal and external information is integrated into a conscious inner space. During this noiseless period brain gets space to process tasks which are goal oriented and gets to integrate the processes both in the internal as well as in the external world. This helps the brain to think of more profound imaginative solutions. Silence is even better than music for brain functioning. It increases motivation and decreases error making. Silence helps to increase cognitive functions of the brain cells.

All these factors made the tourist board of Finland adopt

'Silence' as the selling point as Finland is a 'vast space'. Their Champion marketed an entirely new concept, 'Silence' as a selling product for their Tourism! Spiritually 'Silence' is sacred.... All is known in the sacredness of Silence.... Silence connects to the 'True Self'. Silence takes you to the core of heart... Silence makes you realize the Truth.... The Enlightenment... The wisdom. The same way as Lord Buddha attained 'Enlightenment' sitting under the Bodhi Tree in a Lotus posture.. Soul is all silence. So is 'Brahman'.

Srivihar Colony,
Cuttack, Mob. :
9437666453

Explore the Top Multimodal Artificial intelligence tools shaping 2024's tech landscape

Vijay GarG



Multimodal AI tools, once confined to unimodal input tasks, have evolved significantly, extending their capabilities to encompass text, images, video, and audio. According to Markets and Markets research, the global multimodal AI market is projected to surge from \$1 billion in 2023 to a staggering \$4.5 billion by 2028, highlighting the growing significance of these tools. Navigating through the expanding array of options can be challenging, so let's explore the five best multimodal AI tools for 2024.

1. Google Gemini Google Gemini, a native multimodal Language Model (LLM), stands out as a versatile tool capable of identifying and generating text, images, video, code, and audio. Divided into three versions— Gemini Ultra, Gemini Pro, and Gemini Nano—each caters to specific user

needs. Gemini Ultra, the largest LLM, excels in performance, surpassing GPT-4 on 30 out of 32 benchmarks, as shared by Demis Hassabis, CEO, and co-founder of Google DeepMind. 2. ChatGPT (GPT-4V) ChatGPT, powered by GPT-4 with vision (GPT-4V), introduces multimodality by allowing users to input text and images. With an impressive 100 million weekly active users as of November 2023, ChatGPT supports a mix of text, voice, and images in prompts, and responds in up to five AI-generated voices. The GPT-4V variant ranks among the largest multimodal AI tools, offering a comprehensive user experience.

3. In world AI In world AI, a character engine, empowers developers to create non-playable characters (NPCs) and virtual personalities for digital worlds. Leveraging multimodal AI, In world AI enables NPCs to communicate through natural language, voice, animations, and

emotion. Developers can craft smart NPCs with autonomous actions, unique personalities, emotional expressions, and memories of past events, enhancing the immersive quality of digital experiences.

4. Meta Image Bind Meta Image Bind, an open-source multimodal AI model, stands out by processing text, audio, visual, movement, thermal, and depth data. As the first AI model capable of combining information across six modalities, Image Bind creates art by merging disparate inputs, such as audio of a car engine and an image of a beach. 5. Runway Gen-2 Runway Gen-2 takes center stage as a versatile multimodal AI model specialising in video generation. It accepts text, image, or video input, allowing users to create original video content through text-to-video, image-to-video, and video-to-video functionalities. Users can replicate the style of existing images or prompts, edit video content, and achieve higher fidelity results, making Gen-2 an ideal choice for creative experimentation.

Retired Principal
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Every Single Second is an Opportunity

Jasaswini Pattanaik



Life is beautiful. It becomes more beautiful when we observe it with a certain amount of joy. The joy opens the heart center vastly. It is sheer blessing that we don't do anything special yet every moment we are given life as a gift primarily to nurture

more life. It means by necessary implications that universe does it mysteriously in its own ways. It does it for its own sake or for our sake remains animated.

This blessing, however, is not forever but for a very brief amount of time individually. The time is incalculable one and remains a pure secret to be lived with. It is time to understand the very character of time and be thankful for everything we come upon willingly or unwillingly. There

is no good or bad time specifically but echo of our own actions and reactions largely. A thoughtful consideration proves time and again that pain and pleasure more or less are one being from the same source. Moreover one feeds the other comprehensively too.

Every moment is an opportunity when we possess courage to look beyond the mind, material and whatever is mundane. Each moment is eventful and an opportunity

of its own kind. The moment we think in such terms we make better proximity with life. It yields as per its own ways. It has its own mechanism to hurl surprises after surprises surpassing our imaginations. However, everything remains friendly when taken positively.

Life is an empty canvas. We colour it in our own ways. The mind absorbs each moment as per our understanding. Once we begin to prob its propensities, the peace becomes a real

possibility. The so called struggles or the obstacles turn into disguised opportunities when we see them as existential or a way of living. The way we feel is the way we choose life.

An beautiful quote says "every single second is an opportunity to change your life, because in any moment you can change the way you feel." Chairperson, Nalanda public School, Cuttack, E-mail : ndipadikumar19@gmail.com

UNHCR's 2030 Vision: Climate Refugees & Sustainability

Prof (Dr.) S N Tripathy



The call for a "loss and damage" fund, established at the COP-27 summit in 2022, aims to address climate disasters in developing nations, including SIDS. This fund holds the potential to impact climate refugees' rehabilitation in the future significantly. The most realistic solution involves a collective effort to reduce pollution and limit the production of goods and services. While eliminating these practices may be challenging, reducing consumption, and addressing greed in all aspects of life can contribute to a more sustainable future. Addressing the urgent issue of climate-induced migration requires a comprehensive and collaborative approach. Only through global cooperation, sustainable policies, and a commitment to

reducing our environmental impact can we mitigate the effects of climate change and protect those most vulnerable to its consequences. The UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has been working with a long-term vision to address the issue of refugees, especially climate-displaced people. Currently, the UNHCR is engaged in 130 country operations, with regional wings spread worldwide and its headquarters in Geneva. It is also focusing on 22 countries of high concern until 2026. To tackle the climate refugee issue, the UNHCR is working towards a vision for 2030. This vision is firmly rooted in the UNHCR's Strategic Directions of 2022-26 and aligned with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). The vision states: "By 2030, an increasing number of forcibly displaced and stateless people, fleeing from climate-fueled crises and living in climate-vulnerable countries,

find solutions, are protected and resilient to the impacts of climate change, and have the means to live self-sufficient lives." This vision is based on the Strategic Action for Climate Action launched in 2020 by the UNHCR. However, the new Strategic Plan for Action 2024-30 provides a clear roadmap to address the issue of climate refugees. These objectives are: A. People who are compelled to flee across borders due to persecution, violence, and human rights violations arising from the adverse effects of climate change are protected and safe. The UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) aligns with governments, civil society organizations, academia, regional bodies, etc., to safeguard individuals who are victims of climate change. B. Forcibly displaced and state-less people and their hosts should have access to services promoting the sustainable use of natural resources and a clean, healthy environment. The

primary objective here is headquarters in Geneva. It is also focusing on 22 countries of high concern until 2026. To tackle the climate refugee issue, the UNHCR is working towards a vision for 2030. This vision is firmly rooted in the UNHCR's Strategic Directions of 2022-26 and aligned with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). The vision states: "By 2030, an increasing number of forcibly displaced and stateless people, fleeing from climate-fueled crises and living in climate-vulnerable countries, find solutions, are protected and resilient to the impacts of climate change, and have the means to live self-sufficient lives." This vision is based on the Strategic Action for Climate Action launched in 2020 by the UNHCR. However, the new Strategic Plan for Action 2024-30 provides a clear roadmap to address the issue of climate refugees. These objectives are:

Section A: Protecting Climate Refugees: The UNHCR's primary focus is to provide a secure environment for those compelled to flee due to climate change-related crises. By aligning with various stakeholders, the organization aims to create a comprehensive framework that addresses the unique challenges faced by climate refugees. Through partnerships, the UNHCR ensures that the rights and well-being of these individuals are protected, emphasizing the need for a coordinated international response. People who are compelled to flee across borders due to persecution, violence, and human rights violations arising from the adverse effects of climate change are protected and safe. The UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) aligns with governments, civil society organizations, academia, regional bodies, etc., to safeguard individuals who are victims of climate change. Section B: Promoting Sustainable Resource Use:

Forcibly displaced and stateless people, along with their hosts, must have access to services promoting the sustainable use of natural resources and a clean, healthy environment. The UNHCR advocates for investments in environmentally sustainable public services to ensure the well-being of displaced populations and their host communities. This includes initiatives such as renewable energy projects, waste management systems, and conservation efforts that contribute to the long-term health of the environment. Forcibly displaced and state-less people and their hosts should have access to services promoting the sustainable use of natural resources and a clean, healthy environment. The primary objective here is to encourage governments and other entities to invest in environmentally sustainable public services for these displaced individuals. Section C: Enhancing Climate Resilience: Recognizing the vulnerability of climate refugees, the UNHCR collaborates with host

nations to empower displaced individuals to prepare for, withstand, recover from, and be protected against the impacts of climate change. This involves implementing resilience-building programs, providing education on climate-adaptive practices, and developing early warning systems. By working together with host communities, the UNHCR ensures that climate refugees not only survive but thrive in the face of climate-related challenges. People forced to flee, state-less individuals, and their hosts should be able to prepare for, withstand, recover from, and be protected against the impacts of climate change. This emphasizes that the UNHCR collaborates with host nations to ensure climate refugees' protection and well-being, enabling them to lead safe lives. Section D: Minimizing Environmental Impact: The UNHCR aims to minimize its negative impacts on the environment. The UNHCR utilizes solar panels at its offices to reduce carbon footprints and

endeavours to make its fleet entirely green. Its use of renewable energy resources aligns with the UN's broader commitment to "Greening the Blue". In its commitment to environmental stewardship, the UNHCR is actively working to minimize its negative impacts on the environment. The organization has adopted sustainable practices such as the use of solar panels at its offices to reduce carbon footprints. Moreover, the UNHCR is striving to make its entire fleet environmentally friendly, aligning with the broader UN initiative of "Greening the Blue." By incorporating renewable energy resources and sustainable practices, the UNHCR sets a positive example for other organizations and reaffirms its dedication to a greener, more sustainable future.

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

Makar Sankranti : Life is Movement

Badal Bhuyan



The Makar Sankranti festival is celebrated as a very important festival in India. Sankranti literally means 'movement.' Everything that we recognize as life is movement. Fortunately, people who came before us have moved on, and people who come after us are waiting for us to move on — don't have any doubts about this. The planet is moving and that is why it churns up life. If it were still, it wouldn't be capable of life. So there is something called movement in which every creature is involved, but if there has to be movement, this movement has to be housed — this movement can only happen in the lap of stillness. One who does not touch the stillness of his life, one who does not touch the stillness of his being, one who does not know or has not tasted the stillness within and without, will invariably get lost in the movement.

The significance of Makar Sankranti festival is that it marks the day where there is a significant movement in the zodiac — the arrangement of the earth's dial around the sun — and this movement brings about a new change in the way we experience the planet itself. There are many sankrantis through the year; the two significant ones being Makar Sankranti, and right opposite, after summer solstice is Karka Sankranti. In between, there are many Sankrantis — every time the zodiac sign changes, it is called a Sankranti to suggest the movement of the planet, to understand that our life is sustained and nourished by this movement. If this movement ceases, everything about us will cease. On the 21st of December, the solstice happened, that means in relation to the sun, the movement or the tilt of the planet reaches its maximum. Now, from this day onwards, the northern movement is strong. Things really start changing upon the earth. From Makar Sankranti onwards, winter is being relieved step by step. When a human being makes the necessary effort to touch the stillness within himself, only then

he knows the joy of movement. Otherwise, people are bewildered by the movement of life. Every change that happens in their life they suffer. These days, the so-called modern life is like this — any change means you must suffer. Childhood is tension, puberty is great suffering,



middle age is unbearable, old age is abhorred and feared, and death is celebration — no that is pure terror. Every stage of life is a problem because people have a problem with movement, not understanding that the very nature of life is movement. You can only enjoy and celebrate movement if you have one leg stuck in stillness. If you know what stillness is then movement would be a pleasure. If you do not know what stillness is, if you have no contact with stillness, movement is bewildering. People are trying to track the movement.

Looking at the stars, looking at lines in their hands and looking at all kinds of signs including the tea leaves. People want to read the movement of their lives somehow. This struggle with movement, this paranoia about movement, is happening because there is no taste of stillness. If there was a taste of stillness in you, movement would not disturb you. It is something which sets a certain rhythm. Every rhythm has a beginning and an end; every movement has a beginning and an end. Movement means that which is in transition. Stillness means that which always is. Movement means compulsiveness, stillness means consciousness. The significance of Makar Sankranti is that it is the time to remind yourself that celebrating movement is possible only when there is a taste of stillness within you.

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What is yesterday but today's memory?

Anupama Bhuyan



"What is yesterday but today's memory? What is tomorrow but today's dream." Sufi Saying. All that ever happened or will ever happen to you is contained in this moment; this very moment is perfect and powerful — there is no need to wait for another. Vision gives us focus and direction, and planning saves time. However, we cannot predict the next minute of our lives. Ultimately, we can only live for the moment. We can plan for decades and still be unaware of what the next moment will bring. The best strategy is to plan, but also to take life a day at a time, an hour at a time — even a moment at a time — and live life to the fullest. Yesterday and tomorrow are only relevant because we are alive today. Yesterday exists only in our memory and nowhere else. We cannot recreate yesterday. It is gone forever.

What is tomorrow, but today's dream? Who knows about it? Why worry about it? There are so many variables about tomorrow. It may never be. So why spend energy living for tomorrow? The future is not something we travel, but is something we build by living to our potential today. All we have is today. It is a priceless day. Seize it! Live it fully! Today well-lived makes yesterday

a good dream and tomorrow full of hope and confidence. Life is what happens day by day, moment by moment. One way to live fully is to go with the flow. If we go with the current, life becomes effortless and the whole river is our helper. If we go against the current, we really have to toil. Going with the flow brings us harmony with the universe. There are things that the universe knows that we don't. The Universal Knowledge knows the end of all ends. The key is to utilize the flow of life and circumstances to assist us in reaching our goals and purpose in life. Planning and visioning are important, but

flexibility in our planning allows us to live fully today, realizing that yesterday is today's memory, and tomorrow is today's dream. Forthcoming day with a new sunrise is today, the present. Understanding that each and every dawn user in with it, a newer opportunity to start with a different life. Presume, tomorrow with a new sunrise, would be a beginning of an unexpected prosperous life, today the present. Why not plan and take the first step on early rise, and exercising the mind and the body for another better tomorrow. It is dough less that; everyone had his yesterday, the past.

Yesterday, today and tomorrow, an ongoing process of time, of life we spent with. Always today is more precious than yesterday. A dream and an imagination about the future is tomorrow, which would be known only with sunrise. Lesser worry about the future, but make yours today, the present, more fruitful prosperous of life. Every today that which is present, let be the glorious day of life. Worry less about yesterday, but be industrious making a successful today, the present.

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Letter to Editor

Sir

The Maldivian President had asked the Indian government to withdraw its military presence from Maldives before March 15. In a hither to strained diplomatic relations scenario between the two nations, over recent derogatory comments by Maldivian ministers targeting Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his visit to Lakshadweep, this insistence will only create the rift to widen. It is unfortunate that the present government which has a pro China stand forgetting the help and support rendered to the island nation in the past. Be it the military aid given during an attempted coup by some mercenaries in 1988, assistance given during the 2004 Tsunami and then the water crisis in Dec 2014 India was always the first to help them in crisis. In 2020, when the Covid-19 pandemic was raging across the globe, India was the first to help with supply of vaccines and Indian tourists were the first to visit the Maldives just after Covid helping it's tourism economy. India has always stood by Maldives in its good and bad times. It is very well understood that some political outfits who are anti Indian are behind the scene and the leaders at the helm are just but puppets dancing to their tune. It is also obvious that China has its own vested interest in supporting and helping Maldives. Days to come will surely make the present Maldivian government understand that all that glitters is not good.

M PRADYU KANNUR

Geeth thalikavu Kannur 670001.

SBIOfficer's Association (Bengal Circle) Unites Against Privatization Threats: 58th AGM Calls for Collective Action

Kolkata, (ABHIJIT SETH): The 58th Annual General Meeting of the State Bank of India Officers' Association (Bengal Circle) took place recently at Nazrul Mancha in Kolkata. The event served as a platform for leaders, members, and distinguished guests to address critical issues surrounding Public Sector Banks (PSBs) and Regional Rural Banks (RRBs), with a resounding call for unity against government policies perceived as detrimental to the banking industry. In his inaugural address, Shri Deepak Kumar Sharma, the General Secretary of All India State Bank Officers' Federation (AISBOF), strongly criticized the government for policies that pose a threat to both Public Sector Banks and the common man. He

praised the State Bank of India Officers' Association (Bengal Circle) for its pioneering efforts in championing the cause of the common man and the banking industry. The focus was on resisting the privatization agenda targeting PSBs, institutions integral to the nation's economic stability. Shri Prem Anup Sinha, Chief General Manager of SBI Kolkata Circle, commended the positive role of SBIOA (Bengal Circle) in the overall development of the region. He acknowledged the officers' relentless efforts towards customer service and emphasized the need to proactively educate customers about cyber fraud. Shri Sinha urged officers to maintain mobile and email etiquette while ensuring prompt responses to queries and grievances.

His address concluded with an expectation that SBI officers in Kolkata Circle would go the extra mile to ensure customer satisfaction. Shri Shubhajyoti Chattopadhyay, General Secretary of SBIOA (Bengal Circle) and Secretary of AIBOC (West Bengal State Unit), emphasized the current challenges faced by the country, including inflation, high unemployment, and income inequality. He stressed the historical role of Public Sector Banks in bringing financial stability to the economy and advocated for greater unity to protect them from government actions. The meeting's tagline, "Together We Can," symbolized the need for collective action. Highlighting SBIOA (Bengal Circle)'s commitment to social

responsibility, Shri Chattopadhyay mentioned the association's ongoing social welfare activities across West Bengal, Sikkim, and Andaman & Nicobar Islands. The association recently donated Rs. 5.00 lakhs to the Chief Minister's Relief Fund of Sikkim to aid flood-affected people. The meeting showcased the solidarity and vibrancy of the membership against the privatization of PSBs, illustrating their dedication to safeguarding national assets and protecting stakeholders' interests. The meeting was graced by prominent figures, including Shri A. Sai Prasad, Chairman of AISBOF, Shri Sudip Dutta, General Secretary of SBI Staff Association (Bengal Circle), Shri Krishnendu

Mukherjee, President of AIBOC (West Bengal State Unit), and Shri Dipak Kumar Basu, General Secretary of Federation of SBI Pensioners' Associations. Presidents and General Secretaries of SBI Officers' Associations from various circles also attended. The gathering of over 4000 officers from different branches and offices in West Bengal, Sikkim, and Andaman & Nicobar Islands underscored the collective commitment to the cause. The meeting, presided over by Shri Asitava Kundu, President of SBIOA (Bengal Circle), concluded with a renewed sense of purpose and determination to safeguard the public banking sector against privatization threats.

Actor Rajit Kapur addressed the students of The Heritage School on the ideologies of Mahatma Gandhi



Kolkata, (KCN): The Making of the Mahatma, a 1996 biographical film directed by Shyam Benegal, was shown today to the students of The Heritage School. The actor in the film, Mr. Rajit Kapur visited the campus and interacted with the students on the basic ideologies of our Father of the Nation, Mahatma Gandhi whose biographical sketch was depicted in the film. The entire event was organized by SPICMACAY to promote inspiring and well crafted films among the young students. During the interactive session, Mr. Kapur

spoke about how the film was made and what inspired him to take up the leading role in the film. Apart from this, he also spoke about the role of an actor in the film making process and how a character influences the role to a greater extent. "Sometimes you like to retain a part of a character and you may not keep it either or dissipate but I like to believe that I retain something of each character I do and that makes me enriched," said Mr. Rajit Kapur during the session at the Heritage campus. The students got an

opportunity to interact with Mr. Kapur on the well known film of Shyam Benegal, which has shown the essence of the basic philosophies of Mahatma Gandhi which are still relevant today. "I am thankful to SPICMACAY for organizing such a wonderful and inspiring event at The Heritage School campus," said Ms. Seema Sapru, Principal, The Heritage School Kolkata. Chief Executive Officer of Heritage Group of Institutions, Mr. P.K. Agarwal was also present during the programme.

INDIAN COAST GUARD REGION (NORTH EAST) LAUNCHES “MOTORCYCLE RALLY-2024” FROM KOLKATA TO HALDIA TO COMMEMORATE 48th INDIAN COAST GUARD DAY

Kolkata, (KCN): To commemorate the 48th year of inception and to highlight the indomitable spirit of their personnel, Indian Coast Guard Region (North East) launched 'Motorcycle Rally-2024' from Kolkata to Haldia. The Motorcycle Rally was Flagged Off by Inspector General Iqbal Singh Chauhan, TM, Commander Coast Guard Region (North East) from Kolkata today, during which a host of military and civilian dignitaries including Head Business – Royal Enfield Motorcycle Company, IOCL and other sponsors



were present. The Rally members were motivated and cheered by a large crowd which had gathered at the venue. The 40-member strong team included officers and men of Indian Coast Guard Region (North East), who will utilise this occasion to foster a spirit of collaboration among all stakeholders of coastal security. The rally team members will sensitise coastal population and fishing community about the importance of coastal security and educate them about the job opportunities in Indian Coast Guard. The rally will cover a

total distance of approximately 430 kilometres, wherein the team will traverse through various terrain of coastline of the state and will also conduct Medical camps apart from interaction with fishermen, villagers and veterans. The Chief Guest, Commander Coast Guard Region (North East) complimented the entire team for taking up onerous task which highlights qualities of determination, brotherhood and the vital role played by Indian Coast Guard, Fishermen and coastal villages, in coastal security of our country.

Researchers from CUO Identified Nutrition rich little millet (Suan) from Koraput Valley



Koraput, (KCN): Researchers from the Central University of Odisha identified some nutrition-rich little millets (Suan) cultivated by the tribal people from Koraput of Eastern Ghats of India. These nutrition-rich little millet genotypes will address nutritional security to tribal inhabitants and have great potential for making high-value functional foods in the food industry. The group of researchers led by Dr

Debabrata Panda, Assistant Professor in the Department of Biodiversity and Conservation of Natural Resources at the Central University of Odisha, studied the nutritional profiling of 14 indigenous little millet genotypes cultivated by tribal farmers from Koraput. They have identified three indigenous little millets such as Mami, Kalia, and Bada, which showed better nutritional

compositions (higher content of protein, fiber, ash, energy, flavonoid, vitamin C, antioxidants, iron, and zinc) and are nutritionally superior compared to improved variety OLM 208 (developed by OUAT, Berhampur) and other varieties of the locality. Recently, their findings of Research were published in the International Springer Nature Journal "Planta" on 13th January 2024, along with his

students Pramila Muni and Aloukika Panda and Scientists from Swaminathan Foundation, Jeypore Dr. Kartik Lenka and Mr. Prasanta Kumar Parida. Hon'ble Vice-Chancellor of CUO, Prof. Chakradhar Tripathy, and Prof. S. K. Palita, Dean of the School of Biodiversity and Conservation of Natural Resources, have congratulated the researchers for this outstanding contribution to the

Millet Research and especially to tribal crops. Little millet is one of the essential climate-resilient tribal crops domesticated in the Eastern Ghats of India by most of the primitive tribes. Due to modern agricultural practices and the green revolution, Dr. Panda said these vital genetic resources of little millet are being gradually depleted. We must take the necessary steps to conserve this nutrition-rich little millet in its natural habitat. A strategy to promote commercial production of this indigenous little millet is required to boost the local economy and create a market to reach more significant consumers. This nutrition-rich little millet can be used to develop new varieties to address the nutritional security of tribal people and can be used in the food industry for making high-value functional foods, said Dr. Panda.

Ram Lalla Idol Sculpted By Mysuru-Based Sculptor Selected For Temple



Ayodhya, (KCN): A new idol of Ram Lalla sculpted by Mysuru-based Arun Yogiraj has been selected for installation at the Ram temple in Ayodhya, temple trust's general secretary Champat Rai said on Monday. Replying to queries at a press conference here, he said the current idol of Ram Lalla, which has been worshipped for the last 70 years, will also be kept in the sanctum sanctorum of the new temple. The Ram temple "Pran Pratishtha" (consecration ceremony) is being organised here on January 22, and according to Rai, it will begin at 12:20 pm. The new idol whose consecration ceremony will be done is made of stone and "in my assessment, it weighs somewhere between 150-200 kgs", he said. Rai said the idol depicts the deity as a five-year-old boy in standing posture and added that "on January 18, the idol will be placed at its 'aasan' in 'garbh griha' (sanctum sanctorum)". "The 'muhurt' for the ceremony has been decided by Varanasi-based Ganeshwar Shastri Dravid. A large number of people of Kashi and Ayodhya know him and revere him," he said. Rai said the complete

process of the "karmakand vidhi" for the sacred ceremony will be led by Laxmikant Dixit of Varanasi. Both Darvid and Dixit are luminaries in their fields, the general secretary of the Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra said. The temple will remain closed on January 20 and 21 and people can pay obeisance to the deity again from January 23, he said. The city is getting decked up for the grand ceremony at the temple, which Prime Minister Narendra Modi will attend. Over 7,000 people have been invited by the temple trust and they include cricket legends Sachin Tendulkar and Virat Kohli, Bollywood superstar Amitabh Bachchan, and billionaire industrialists Mukesh Ambani and Gautam Adani, according to official sources. Rai said the idol of Ram Lalla sculpted by Mysuru-based Yogiraj has been selected by the trust from among three idols. The idols have been carved separately by three sculptors, he said. Members of the trust have praised the idol carved by Yogiraj, who in the past has sculpted statues of Adiguru

Shankaracharya at Kedarnath in Uttarakhand and that of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose which was installed at the India Gate canopy. Temple construction committee chairperson Nripendra Misra in an interview to PTI on January 4 had said that at an emergency meeting held earlier, trust members had graded the three statues on a scale. Rai would share the decision at "an appropriate time", he had said. "It is clear, the trust will take all three statues. In the future, how those statues will be used, by the trust will decide. One of the three statues will be installed in the sanctum sanctorum of the temple," Misra had said. Rai said the rituals in the run-up to the "Pran Pratishtha" will begin from Tuesday and these will continue till January 21. On January 22, the minimum essential rituals (vidhi) needed for the "Pran Pratishtha" will be conducted, he added. The idol for which the consecration ceremony will be done will also be part of a ritual called 'adhiwas', during which the 'jal niwas', 'fal niwas', 'anna niwas', 'aushadi niwas' and 'ghee niwas' for the idol will be done. Prime Minister Modi, Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh chief Mohan Bhagwat, Uttar Pradesh Governor Anandiben Patel, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath and president of the temple trust Mahant Nritya Gopal Das will be inside the sanctum sanctorum on January 22, Rai said.

C Shekhar Nambiar:- IVI's one millionth free vision screening program - Australian MP Andrew Charlton distributes free spectacles at commemoration in Delhi .IVI's free vision screenings touch one million lives - opening doors, opportunities

New Delhi; India Vision Institute (IVI), the NGO working to improve visual health and provide access to a pair of corrective glasses to those in need, has attained a significant milestone with one million free vision screenings across India, bringing hope of clear vision and brighter futures to urban poor and the underprivileged in remote communities. At a vision screening and spectacle distribution event in Delhi, IVI's CEO Vinod Daniel said "the achievement of one million free vision screenings is a testament to the commitment of our hardworking team, their dedication and to IVI being able to identify vision issues and promote intervention in

communities."

Vidhi, a Class X student vision screened by IVI and received a pair of corrective glasses today, became the one millionth beneficiary. To mark the occasion, the visiting Australian Parliamentarian, Dr Andrew Charlton MP, distributed corrective glasses to community and children at an event organized by IVI in association with the Delhi Council for Child Welfare (DCCW), an NGO working to provide vocational training to underprivileged communities in Delhi. The vision screenings and spectacles distributed are part of IVI's Eye See & I Learn campaign for the underprivileged school children and Eye See & I



Work program for adults. The Deputy High Commissioner of Australia, Ambassador Nicholas McCaffrey,

was present at the event along with Mr. Daniel and Ms. Neeru Bhatnagar, Director, DCCW.

"We thank our partners who have been with us in our journey to achieving this milestone. With 150 million visually impaired

still in need for access to vision screenings and spectacles, we are aware of the work ahead as we endeavour to reach as

many underprivileged people as possible," said Mr. Daniel. "Refractive error correction through an eye check and a pair of spectacles can help improve vision health of people. A simple pair of glasses can make children do well in class as well as in outdoor activities, and improve their future prospects. In adult beneficiaries, clear vision will boost productivity and their income earning potential," he added. Dr Charlton said "It is good to visit an IVI project and see the work being done to benefit disadvantaged communities, including children. I am happy that the beneficiaries are able to lead a better life, with improved

work potentials and better grades for children in school. Congratulations to IVI for achieving the significant milestone of one million vision screenings. I wish IVI and the team all the best in future." Delhi Council for Child Welfare (DCCW) is a registered non-profit NGO established in 1952. The Council first started its work providing care to children who had been displaced, lost or abandoned in the riots surrounding the Partition of India. It now works from 14 centres across Delhi, providing vocational and skill training to girl children and the community.

161st Birth Anniversary of Swami Vivekananda was celebrated by Ramakrishna Mission & others as "National Youth day"

New Delhi & Kolkata (PARTHA ROY): Swami Vivekananda's 161st Birth Anniversary was observed as "National Youth Day" on 12th January 2024 across India and in many places abroad by Indian diaspora to celebrate the spirit of youth as well as role of youth in ushering in transformation in socio-political-cultural-economic development for positive healthy growth of human society. Ramakrishna Mission at Paharganj in Delhi & in Sector -47 Gurugram celebrated Swami Vivekananda's Birth Anniversary with focus on youth development. Swami Sarvalokananda Maharaj lead RKM - Delhi program. Vivekananda Institute of Values (VIVA), Ramakrishna Mission Sector- 47, Gurugram,



organised program focused on youth. On National Youth Day, amidst other programs, VIVA inaugurated Youth Connect, a weekly program. This weekly program will provide a platform to youth between the age of 15-30 years to come together and work on themselves to achieve their highest potential in the light of Swami Vivekananda's

ideas. The young minds get to implement Swamiji's idea of 'Be and Make' under the guidance of the Gurugram center head, Swami Shantatmananda. Youth Connect is a free program available to interested youth every Sunday between 3:00-4:00 pm. 70 children from different institutions attended the inaugural session.

VIVA conducts value-based workshops for various stakeholders of the society with the aim of introducing everyone in the society to Swamiji's thought that "Each soul is potentially divine." In Kolkata's New Town, Subhas Bose Institute of Hotel Management (SBIHM) celebrated birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda with great fervour and enthusiasm at SBIHM's Newtown Campus, as part of the nationwide observance of National Youth Day. Bidisha Sarkar, CEO, SBIHM highlighted relevance & importance of philosophy of Swami Vivekananda on human development in present time. Swami Sevaparananda Maharaj, Secretary, Vivek Bharti Seva Trust, Belur Math grace the program at New Town.

MGM Supports Green Event



Bhubaneswar(KCN): The Annual Flower Show of the Ekamra Kanan was a signature event where nature lovers and enthusiasts flocked to see the winter blooms. An avid nature lover and philanthropist Pankaj Lochan Mohanty, Chairman and Managing Director of MGM Group has extended his support of the State Level Green Event. Shri Mohanty has been religiously supporting Green Initiatives and always believes in nature care, for which he is extending MGM support

in this regard, said a veteran IFS Officer. Hundreds of green enthusiasts of the city enjoyed the annual flower show organized by Regional Plant Resources Centre (RPRC). While 36 organizations participated in the green event, more than 50,000 visitors joined the green event and enjoyed the wonderful gardening coverage. The objective of the flower show is to let the people know that beautiful flowers are grown here and to generate awareness



among the people, said RPRC Chief Executive Suresh Pant. ACS Forest, Environment and Climate Change Satyabrata Sahu graced the concluding ceremony as Chief Guest and handed over the prizes to the participants. Earlier PCCF & HOFF Debidatta Biswal inaugurated the green

show, which attracted large number of participants and footfall was great, said a Member of Plant Lovers Association. It is great to see a city, known for the temples, tending carefully to flowers. The people of this city take interest in flowers and hold an annual show, which is wonderful, said an garden expert from Karnataka, who visited the stalls including the roof top garden stall, which has attracted large number of green enthusiasts.



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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 show-case 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 I N T A C H ' 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 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 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.

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

Rana Pratap Kalita, said "I am delighted to know that Red FM has taken the initiative to narrate stories of valour and courage of our soldiers who fought in the 1971 war. In our vision to salute the bravery of the heroes, we are delighted to present to you Guts & Glory - Salute 71, as part of this year Vijay Diwas Celebration. We are hopeful to present a deeper insight into the triumphant moment of Indian history." Speaking on the announcement, Nisha Narayanan, Director &

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 commending 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, Aizwal, and Gangtok. Tune in to 93.5 RED FM to listen to these stories.

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.

EXCEPTIONAL EXPERIENCES AWAIT 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 S\$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 thoughtfully 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

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

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,

sandwiched between those. But he had to depart in the next over, bowled by Arshdeep, who in the same over ended up being hit for a six and a four by Majeed Ur Rahman. Dube was handed the ball for the penultimate over as part of India's experimentation but Karim found the bowling to his liking as he struck a four and a six, and Majeed ended the over with another maximum. Arshdeep bagged a couple of wickets in the final over, eight runs came off it, and there were a couple of run outs too as Afghanistan finished with 170-plus. Brief scores: Afghanistan 172 in 20 overs (Gulbadin Naib 57; Arshdeep Singh 3-32, Axar Patel 2-17) lost to India 173/4 in 15.4 overs (Yashasvi Jaiswal 68, Shivam Dube 63*, Karim Janat 2-13) by 6 wickets.

to contain the free-flow of runs and snared three wickets - Sadeera Samarawickrama, Charith Asalanka and Wanindu Hasaranga. However, Angelo Mathews and Dasun Shanaka's 55-run stand revived Sri Lanka's chase and left the hosts needing six runs in two balls when the former departed on 46, mistiming a slower ball by Blessing Muzarabani at deep mid wicket.

half of the financial burden. However, as of today, Zee has reportedly not fulfilled its side of the financial commitment, leaving Star to shoulder the entire financial obligation. It remains uncertain whether this arrangement pertains to the entire cycle or if the association with Zee has been temporarily paused. The next significant event in the cycle is the Twenty20 World Cup scheduled for June in the Caribbean and the US. Zee executives, meanwhile, are busy with the preparation for the telecast of the second edition of UAE's ILT20 which, incidentally, also kicks off on January 19. The Under 19 World Cup runs till February 11 with 16 teams taking part. There will be 48 games in all. India are the defending champions.