

BJD Revokes Expulsion Of Senior Party Leader Damodar Rout

Bhubaneswar(KCN): The Biju Janata Dal (BJD) on Monday announced that it has revoked the expulsion of Damodar Rout, a former Minister and senior leader of the party.



The party supremo Naveen Patnaik, issued a one-line order stating that the expulsion order has been revoked with immediate effect. Damodar Rout, a seven-time MLA, was expelled from the party in September 2018. He was earlier sacked from the Council of Ministers in 2017 for making a casteist remark against the Brahmin community at a function in Malkangiri and was also removed from the position of party vice-president.



Bhubaneswar(KCN): A new era will begin in the transportation sector with a focus on safe travel in less time and at less cost as Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik today laid the foundation stone for the first phase of the Bhubaneswar Metro Rail Project. While participating in a program organised in Barang's Ratagad, the Chief Minister said that today will be a special day in the history of development in the state with huge changes in the transportation sector. On this occasion, he said, "Today, I am fulfilling the promise I had given for the Metro Rail." The Chief Minister said that LAccMI Yojana has brought transformation in the village, and the Metro Rail Project will take this transformation further by strengthening the relationship of the new capital Bhubaneswar with the former capital Cuttack. The Chief Minister said, "While coming here, I received the greetings of



thousands of people on the road. Their happiness made me very happy too. May this happiness and joy of the New Year continue every day... This is my prayer to Mahaprabhu Jagannath. May the festival of development move forward with your support.”

The Chief Minister said that this first phase of metro rail will be constructed from Bhubaneswar Airport to Trishulia. This 26-km-long project will have 20 stations and Rs 6255.94 crores will be spent on it. The Chief Minister said that this is a flagship

project of the state in the 5T initiative. Stating that the state government will bear the entire cost of the project, he said that this is the biggest investment in infrastructure in the history of Odisha.

Before concluding he informed that directions have been given to prepare a master plan for the transmission of metro rail to Khurda, Puri and Cuttack. The Chief Minister called for the formation of a new Odisha.

Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik today reached the metro rail foundation laying event at Retagad In Barang in a road show

from Bhubaneswar Airport after paying floral tributes at the statue of Legendary Biju Patnaik. He greeted the people present at various Chowks in the city at the roadshow and laid the foundation stone for the metro rail project. It is noteworthy that in April this year, the Chief Minister announced this metro rail project in Odisha. In October 2019, 5T Chairman Shri VK Pandian visited Trishulia and reviewed the progress of the preparation. This project was approved by the Odisha Cabinet on November 10th. Within

just 4 months of getting the approval, the detailed project report was prepared and its foundation stones were laid today. This project will be implemented in a joint venture between Delhi Metro Rail Corporation and Bhubaneswar Metro Rail Corporation.

Attending the event, Minister for Social Security and Empowerment of Disabled Ashok Panda said that it was a long-awaited dream of the people of the state for a metro rail from Temple City Bhubaneswar to the former capital Cuttack. Today it has been fulfilled through this project.

State Agriculture and Farmers Empowerment Minister Ranendra Pratap Swain said that this project launched by the Chief Minister today is going to create a special identity for Odisha. This project is a symbol of pride for the entire Odisha.

New Delhi(KCN): During the April-December 2023 period, gross GST collection witnessed a robust 12% y-o-y growth, reaching ₹14.97 lakh crore, as against ₹13.40 lakh crore collected in the same period of the previous year (April-December 2022). The average monthly gross GST collection of ₹1.66 lakh crore in the first 9-month period this year represents a 12% increase compared to the ₹1.49 lakh crore average recorded in the corresponding period of FY23. The gross GST

revenue collected in December 2023 is ₹1,64,882 crore out of which CGST is ₹30,44 crore, SGST is ₹37,93 crore, IGST is ₹84,25 crore (including ₹41,534 crore collected on import of goods) and cess is ₹12,249 crore (including ₹1,079 crore collected on import of goods). Notably, this marks the seventh month so far this year with collections exceeding ₹1.60 lakh crore. The government has settled ₹40,057 crore to CGST and ₹33,652 crore to SGST from IGST. The total

revenue of the Centre and the States in December 2023 after regular settlement is ₹70,50 crore for CGST and ₹71,587 crore for the SGST. The revenues for December 2023 are 10.3% higher than the GST revenues in the same month last year. During the month, the revenues from domestic transactions (including import of services) are 13% higher than the revenues from these sources during the same month last year.



Plea For Road Safety

Bhubaneswar(KCN): To create road safety awareness among the citizen, the Commerce and Transport Department of Odisha has declared the first week of January 2024 i.e. from 1-7 January, as the Road Safety Week. The theme of this year's Road safety week is "Sadak Surakhya – Parivar Rakhya". Minister Commerce and Transport Tukuni Sahu inaugurated the event at the Exhibition area, KIIT Convention Centre, Bhubaneswar followed by a walkathon to the Driving Testing Track, Chandrashekharpur, Bhubaneswar. Usha Padhee, Principal Secretary, Commerce & Transport, Amitabh Thakur, Transport Commissioner,



Lalmohan Sethi, Additional Commissioner Transport (Road Safety), Pradeep Kumar Mohanty, Joint Commissioner Transport (Road Safety) along with other senior officials, students and general public were present during the inauguration ceremony.

Shri Thakur, Transport Commissioner started by wishing everyone a happy and safe new year and then emphasized the importance of road safety in our daily lives. He highlighted that the role of student in spreading road safety awareness among peers and family is very impactful. Principal Secretary

Shrimati Padhee added that the Transport Department has made its mission to sensitize all citizens about the importance of road safety. It is the responsibility of all the road users to follow the traffic rules which will ultimately ensure a safer road for everyone. Minister stressed that road safety is not just

limited to the safety of the individual, but it is connected to the safety of their family as well as other road users. It extends beyond mere duty and should be a shared responsibility among all road users. During the Walkathon, a Road Safety Van was flagged off which will move throughout the district showcasing road safety short films to spread awareness on various road safety themes. A Standard Operating Procedure for Picnic Places was also unveiled during the event which details the roles & responsibilities of various stakeholders like bus owners & bus drivers going for picnic / pilgrimages, RTOs, Police, etc. At the end, a vote of thanks was given by Lalmohan Sethi, ACT (Road Safety).

NTPC Kaniha gets New Project Head

Talcher, (KCN): Shri Ashok Kumar Sehgal, General Manager has taken over as Head of Project of NTPC Talcher Kaniha. He succeeds Shri N S Rao, ED, who has been transferred to NTPC Northern Region Headquarters, Lucknow as Regional Executive Director (RED). Earlier Shri Sehgal was General Manager (Operations & Maintenance) at NTPC Kaniha. A mechanical engineer by profession, Shri Sehgal joined NTPC in 1989 as Executive Trainee at NSPCL Durgapur and has thereafter worked at NTPC Dadri, OS Department at EOC Noida, NTPC Mouda, NTPC Vindhyanal in various capacities in commissioning



Operations, Mechanical Maintenance, Maintenance Planning, Ash Dyke Management before joining NTPC Kaniha in August 2022 as General Manager (Maintenance). He became General Manager (O & M) in November 2022. Shri Sehgal holds an M.Tech degree in Power Engineering from IIT Delhi, besides P.G. Diploma in Finance from IGNOU and has wide experience in the area of operation and maintenance of Power Plants. Shri Sehgal has undergone extensive training in Power Plant Management in reputed institutes of the country including the famed Power Management Institute, Noida.

RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat arrives in Odisha on five-day visit

Rourkela (KCN): Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) chief Mohan Bhagwat Monday arrived here in Odisha's Rourkela on a five-day visit during which he is expected to preside over several meetings of the outfit. Bhagwat reached Rourkela by road from Jharsuguda airport, where he arrived from Kolkata, an RSS leader said.



This is his second visit to the state in a fortnight. Bhagwat will participate in the national-level 'Chintan Shivir' of the outfit here, RSS sources said. RSS general secretary Dattatreya Hosabale will also take part in the shivir, along with top functionaries of its affiliated organisations, the sources said. Bhagwat will leave for Kolkata January 5.

Kalahandi: Residential House Guttred In Fire Mishap

Kalahandi(KCN): A house reduced to ashes in a fire mishap in Bagdiani village under Rampur police station limits in Kalahandi district last night. As per reports, some people set fire outside the house of one Bidyadhar Naik in the village to get rid of cold wave last night. Suddenly the fire spread inside the house. Soon, the bikes, cycles and other accessories caught fire. The villagers called the fire tenders to put out the fire. The fire also spread to his neighbour Jugeswar Naik. Before destroying his house, the fire tenders reached there and doused the flames.



"Shortest Story Ever": Bhagwant Mann's Swipe At Congress On Day 1 Of 2024

Chandigarh(KCN): Aam Aadmi Party's Bhagwant Mann took a roundhouse punch at the Congress on New Year's Day, predicting the end of the party. "The shortest story a mother in Delhi or Punjab, can narrate to her child is 'Ek thi Congress (there was a Congress)'," the Punjab Chief Minister told reporters today. Mr Mann's swipe is seen as a blow to the Opposition bloc that is prepping to start seat-sharing talks ahead of the Lok Sabha elections due later this year. It is being read as the Aam Aadmi Party's unwillingness to share seats with the party in Delhi and Punjab, which together account for 21

Lok Sabha seats. While the Congress has been thoroughly marginalised in both states, AAP's showing in the 2019 general elections had not been sterling. Though the party won four of the 13 seats in Punjab, it ended up losing them to factionalism and party-hopping. Mr Mann was the last MP, who quit his seat to become the Punjab Chief Minister. Gurmail Singh, the AAP candidate who was fielded from his Sangrur seat, lost. In Delhi, AAP lost all eight seats to the BJP. While the Opposition bloc INDIA is proceeding on the principle of one-on-one

contest against the BJP, there is no consensus yet on what percentage of seats will be given to the Congress in states like Bengal, Delhi and Punjab, which are ruled by parties not known for their proximity to the Congress. Last week, Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee had made it clear that the Trinamool Congress does not intend to share any of the state's 42 Lok Sabha seats with the Congress. "INDIA alliance will be there across the country. In Bengal, the Trinamool will fight and defeat the BJP. Remember, in Bengal, only Trinamool can teach a lesson to the BJP and not any other party," Ms Banerjee said

at a gathering in North 24 Parganas. The Shiv Sena UBT, too, has signalled its unwillingness to share. "This is Maharashtra, and Shiv Sena is the biggest party here. Congress is a national party. Uddhav Thackeray is having positive discussions with the decision-making leaders of Congress including Rahul Gandhi, Sonia Gandhi, Mallikarjun Kharge, and KC Venugopal," senior party leader Sanjay Raut had said. "We have always said that Shiv Sena has always been fighting on 23 seats in the Lok Sabha elections including Dadra and Nagar Haveli and that will be firm," he had added.



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Odisha's Quest for Equality: Tackling the Challenge of Dwindling Child Sex Ratio

Prasar Khuntia

In recent years, a Sample Registration System (SRS) survey has sounded an alarm about the declining sex ratio in India, particularly at birth. The figures, revealing a downward trajectory from 900 in 2013-15 to 896 in 2015-17, highlight a concerning trend that extends beyond mere statistics. This dip from 900 in 2013-15 reflects a complex interplay of societal, cultural, and economic factors affecting the gender distribution at the very onset of life. While India grapples with a declining sex ratio, the state of Kerala stands out with the highest sex ratio in the country — 1058 females for every 1000 males as per the 2011 census. The state's high literacy rate plays a pivotal role, fostering a society that values both genders equally and minimizing instances of female foeticide. The decline in the sex ratio is further exacerbated by the grim reality of female foeticide and

maternal mortality. Infant mortality rates, influenced by gender-based discrimination and inadequate maternal care during childbirth, contribute significantly to the alarming figures. Addressing these challenges is crucial for any meaningful improvement in the overall sex ratio. Despite the concerning current scenario, there is a glimmer of hope on the horizon. The Women and Men in India 2022 report anticipates an improvement in India's sex ratio to 952 by 2036, a significant leap from 943 in 2011. This alarming trend, reflecting an imbalance between male and female populations, has raised significant questions about societal norms, cultural biases, and the need for urgent interventions. Nowhere is this issue more pronounced than in the state of Odisha, where the sex ratio decline paints a stark picture of a demographic



challenge. India, with its rich tapestry of cultures, traditions, and a deep-rooted patriarchal system, is witnessing a disconcerting decline in its sex ratio. According to census data, the national sex ratio stands at 943 females for every 1,000 males. While this ratio indicates progress from previous decades, the persistent gender gap remains a formidable challenge. Odisha, a state known for its diverse landscapes and cultural heritage, finds itself at the forefront of the sex ratio crisis. Despite efforts to promote gender equality, the state's sex ratio is significantly lower

than the national average. Societal factors, coupled with economic disparities and access to education, contribute to the skewed ratio, particularly in rural areas. In a disconcerting revelation, Odisha's child sex ratio has been on a persistent decline since 1961, painting a grim picture of gender imbalances that demand urgent attention. The trajectory, from 1,035 females per 1,000 males in 1961 to a staggering low of 941 in 2011, underscores a complex societal challenge that necessitates a comprehensive approach.



The historical data reveals a concerning narrative, showcasing a consistent decline in Odisha's child sex ratio. From 1,035 in 1961, the numbers have steadily dwindled, reaching 941 in 2011. This decades-long descent prompts an exploration into the causes and consequences of this disconcerting trend. The National Family Health Survey-5 (NFHS-5) report exposes a recent decline in Odisha's child sex ratio from 932 in 2015-2016 to a stark low of 894 in 2019-2021. The report highlights regional disparities, with educated and comparatively

developed districts experiencing surprisingly lower sex ratios than tribal areas. Despite various initiatives by the state and central governments, the child sex ratio continues its downward spiral. The Pre-Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (PC & PNDT) Act, designed to curb female foeticide, faces challenges in implementation. Experts emphasize the need for stringent measures and punitive actions against those involved in this heinous act. In response to the alarming decline, authorities in Odisha have initiated

consultative workshops involving legal experts, health professionals, social scientists, and policymakers. The objective is to identify solutions, sharpen existing laws, and address the root causes of the skewed sex ratio. The involvement of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) in these initiatives signals a collaborative effort to combat the crisis. Health officials attribute the declining sex ratio to deep-rooted cultural, social, and economic factors, including a preference for male children. The challenge goes beyond numbers, reflecting societal attitudes that necessitate a paradigm shift. Legal measures, education, awareness, and community engagement emerge as key strategies to alter mindsets and foster a positive change. Despite advancements in various sectors, Odisha's child sex ratio ranks sixth among states, showcasing the

urgency for collective action. The fall from 948 to 925 females per 1000 males in four years demands immediate attention. Initiatives aimed at changing societal mindsets and replicating successful practices from other districts and states are crucial for reversing this concerning trend. As Odisha grapples with a declining child sex ratio, it is evident that the solution requires a collective endeavor. By addressing cultural norms, strengthening legal frameworks, and fostering awareness, there is hope for a future where the birth of a girl is celebrated with the same enthusiasm as that of a boy. The journey toward gender equality demands commitment, collaboration, and sustained efforts to reshape the narrative for the generations to come.

The author is a journalist and columnist

New graduates should think beyond conventional roles for unorthodox careers

Vijay GarG



In a rapidly evolving world, graduates must embrace adaptability and constant learning. Success depends on reinventing oneself and staying curious. Letting go of past knowledge opens new doors and by connecting multiple passions and pursuing a multidisciplinary path, students can create unique opportunities for themselves. Even the parents understand the importance of fulfilment and value non-traditional career paths. To prepare for the unknown, graduates should focus on their passions, deepen their understanding, and find connections that make them stand out. Being true to oneself and embracing

uniqueness leads to a fulfilling and prosperous future. Success lies in adaptability, constant learning, unlearning, finding one's true calling, and integrating financial knowledge. High school graduates can confidently navigate the evolving world by following their own unique path to success. Beyond the disruptive innovations in existing fields, many new career avenues have emerged, that offer unique opportunities for students with diverse interests and passions. **Following are some of these exciting new-age careers for students:** Sound engineering and music The realm of sound engineering offers an immersive experience for individuals with a love for music and audio production. Sound engineers play a crucial role in recording, mixing, and mastering music tracks as well as providing audio support for live performances and

film production. This field combines technical expertise with creative flair. Artificial Intelligence The rise of AI has opened up a world of possibilities across various industries. AI specialists work on developing algorithms, machine learning models, and intelligent systems. From autonomous vehicles to personalised recommendation systems, AI professionals shape the future by harnessing the power of data and automation. Digital marketing and advertising In the digital age, businesses rely heavily on digital marketing and advertising to reach their target audience. Careers in this field involve creating engaging content, analysing consumer behaviour, and utilising various online platforms to promote products and services. Digital marketers combine creativity, analytical skills, and strategic thinking to drive

brand success. Drone and robotics The field of robotics is advancing at an astonishing pace which presents opportunities for individuals interested in designing and programming robots and drones. Robotics engineers develop robots for industries ranging from manufacturing and healthcare to logistics and entertainment. This field requires a blend of engineering skills and a passion for innovation. As the job market evolves, it is essential for graduates to explore the new-age career options available to them. These fields not only provide exciting opportunities, but also offer the chance to make a meaningful impact in the world. By embracing the power of technology, innovation, and creativity, students can pave the way for a successful and fulfilling career.

Retired Principal Educational columnist malout, Punjab

A veritable storehouse of learning and life's lessons

Vinod Chandrashekhar Dixit



Recently I have gone through a very well-researched, thought-provoking and eye-opener book "From a Car shed to the Corner Room & Beyond" written by Sunder Rajan Raman a former CMD of Canara Bank. Executive Director of Union Bank of India and former WRM, SEBI. The book narrates the personal and professional journey of S. Raman in an honest and candid manner. A Post Graduate in Economics, Raman holds a Diploma in Business Management and a Senior Diploma in German Language, besides CAIIB from the Indian Institute of Bankers and ACIB from the Chartered Institute of Bankers, London. Raman, who assumed charged with effect from yesterday, would have a tenure of two years up to September 2012 as CMD of Canara Bank. Raman joined the State Bank of India as a Clerk at 19, while not yet a graduate. On completing B.Com as a University Topper and Rank-Holder, he joined Bank of India at 21 as a Direct Recruit Officer where he spent 35 years across India, besides two stints abroad. Raman started with modest

beginnings, living in a car shed for about 6 years of his childhood, before gradually rising to head Canara Bank, one of India's largest banks, where his father had served as a stenographer for more than three decades earlier. The book exemplifies how a simple career path should be for an honest banker and in reality, how circumstances can stress test the person fully. I feel myself lucky that I got an opportunity to work with S. Raman when he was Zonal Manager in Bank of India—Ahmedabad Zone. Really he has shared the joys of success and sorrows of setbacks experienced in his personal as well as professional journey and the balance he had maintained during his successful tenure. If you speak particularly of people involved in business endeavours across industries, we're often faced with constant pressure to perform at our best and achieve success, whether it's in our careers or our personal lives. It is rightly said that Success is not how high you have climbed, but how you make a positive difference to the world. For S. Raman, Success isn't always about greatness. It's about consistency and consistent hard work has led to success and greatness. During his entire career, Raman's attitude was to go for hard choices that would lead to lasting benefits rather than going for easy options. His

book is a well-crafted biography that vibrates with the universal themes of honest hard work and strong determination. On going through many chapters, one feels that Raman is a good story teller as he can turn a minor incident into a major vent, worthy of the attention of the unsuspecting reader. It transports impactful leadership lessons through forthright language that encourages continuous reading. The book reveals the fact that hard work is about doing something that may not directly inspire you but that is necessary for you to achieve your goal. It really speaks of S Raman's professional learnings, including the tougher situations he has had to face. Some of these events tell of difficult times that the author faced personally. Despite the hardships, this book articulates his beliefs in spirituality and his truthful journey. Post retirement, Raman had to face some disastrous events. The way he faced these difficulties is an important part of the book, which essentially is the story of his professional and personal life, intertwined in a smooth and seamless way. The author has very nicely depicted the transformative power of mentorship and the impact of meaningful relationships in his life's journey. The acumens can really help to enhance proficiency in business development, operations

Raman's is a remarkable story; but he is also a remarkable story teller. He deftly weaves together his personal and professional journeys to give us a narrative of his life story that is honest, candid and, most of all, touching in its portrayal of his affection for his family and friends, and of his pride in his work.

Dr. D. Subbarao
Former Governor,
Reserve Bank of
India

management, and administrative strategies. The book offers valuable insights into overcoming challenges, making it a motivational read for anyone aspiring to achieve their goals. It delivers impactful leadership lessons through straightforward language that encourages continuous reading. The book is useful not only for bankers but also for individuals with varied interests, given its broad applicability and engaging style. In his epilogue, the author rightly points out that "Positive thinking has ensured that all in our family have retained our optimism and confidence." There is no doubt that this book will be scratched as an inspiring and remarkable narrative for all of us.

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DigiLocker is slowly but gradually changing developing India into a digitally enabled developed society



Prof. Sunil Goyal

Currently, in India, almost all of the government issued documents are in physical form across the country. This means every time a resident needs to share the document with an agency to avail any service, an attested photo copy either in physical form or on scanned form is shared. Use of physical copies of document creates huge overhead in terms of manual verification, paper storage, manual audits, etc. incurring high cost and inconvenience. This creates problem for various agencies to verify the authenticity of these documents, thus, creating loopholes for usage of fake documents. Due to the nature of these documents not having a strong identity attached to it, anyone with same name can

indeed misuse someone else's document. The Digital India program cleared by the cabinet in August 2014 seeks to 'prepare India for a knowledge future'. There are three key objectives; to create a digital infrastructure for online digital identity, mobile phone and a bank account, to service and govern a real-time online financial transaction platform, and to digitize all documents and records of residents and make them available on a real-time basis. This vision of electronic resident document system is minimizing usage of physical documents (no scan/photocopies, no physical papers) via electronic formats and sharing across agencies; and eliminating usage of fake documents (no fake government / degree certificates, no fake usage of someone else's certificate) via a mechanism to verify "authenticity" of government issued documents online. This is also a step to provide a default "digital locker" for

people to store and access Government issued documents in the Government cloud if they wish to subscribe. Such digital repository solution has eliminated need for the residents to maintain hard copy of government issued documents, eliminated need for the residents to produce (in hard format) government issued documents, while applying for services, provided secure, and consented access of government issued documents to user agencies, reduced administrative burden, service fulfillment time, and costs by enabling paperless transactions, ensured all the documents issued to the residents are available to him/her anywhere anytime, in a standard format which can be shared with any other department, provided an open, interoperable, multi-provider architecture to ensure departments and states have flexibility to use best document repository for their purposes, provided an architecture that can

support well-structured future documents as well as a mechanism to digitize older documents that may not have machine readable formats, and also provided a default portal and mobile application for residents to view their documents in a consolidated way. To meet the key goals and the solution objectives, electronic documents architecture has ensured that all government issued "electronic documents" stored in digital repositories are machine readable eliminating human workflow for viewing and verifying the documents, they have a common set of "meta" attributes such as "issuer agency code", "document ID", "issue date", "Aadhaar number(s) of the individual to who the document is issued to", "expiry if any" along with document type (domain) specific sub data structure (e.g. school certificates will have different data elements compared to marriage/caste certificates), all

electronic documents have a printable format "attached" to it allowing continued printing of certificates for individuals and for backward compatibility with existing paper based systems, can easily share the documents with other agencies / departments just by providing the unique document URI without having to share photocopies, scan copies, document uploads, etc., documents in electronic form are digitally signed by the issuing department/agency which allows any tampering to be detected electronically, most importantly, government documents and certificates issued can be verified online for "authenticity" (validating if the document shared by an individual indeed was issued by appropriate authority) eliminating the use of fake documents / certificates. In addition, Aadhaar attached documents/certificates ensure ONLY the owner Aadhaar holder can indeed use the certificate, thus eliminating misuse of

someone else's certificates, documents in the repositories are secure in terms of storage and access. In addition, specific documents (based on type of document) may only be shareable via owner authentication to ensure sharing and access is "authorized" by the document owner. DigiLocker offers a standardized mechanism to issue government documents to Aadhaar holders in electronic and printable formats, store them, and make it shareable with various agencies. This allows government issued documents to be moved to electronic form and make it available for real-time access in a set of "digital repositories". This solution also offers multipledigital locker providers and access gateways to co-exist to enable healthy ecosystem play. Usage of Aadhaar ensures that document owner is strongly authenticable eliminating document frauds. In addition to supporting new documents to be made electronic and online accessible, this solution also offers a

way to digitize older documents. It also offers a mechanism by which "digital lockers" can be offered by service providers and suggestion to provide "a default digital locker" portal and mobile application to residents to view a consolidated list of documents using their Aadhaar number. It is highly recommended that government issued resident documents have the Aadhaar number(s) of the people. When digital documents/certificates are not attached to Aadhaar, it is important to note that, while those documents can be still made available online in electronic format, it can potentially be misused by another person who has same name/gender etc. It is impossible to verify if the certificate/document was issued to same individual without affixing a "real identity" using Aadhaar number. Hence it is important to mandate use of Aadhaar number in all resident documents to strongly "assert" ownership. As far as the achievements are

concerned, DigiLocker NAD has so far onboarded more than 870 Academic Institutions with 3+ crore awards, Indian Navy is issuing all Training Certificates on DigiLocker, HealthLocker service is in the works, DoPPW is giving PPO via DigiLocker to central government pensioners, EPFO Passbook has been distributed using DigiLocker, NSDA/NCVET is providing all Skill Certifications (MoU signed with NSDA), many NBFCs and FinTechs have adopted DigiLocker for their services, 35 Insurance firms have issued more than 51 Cr documents using DigiLocker, DBT Mission has also adopted DigiLocker to promote Citizen-Centric service delivery.

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IS DEMOCRACY SQUEEZED BETWEEN RELIGION AND POLITICS?

M.R.LALU



Two significant events in 2024 would go into the annals of history. Understandably, their impact is going to be long lasting. We will witness them generate a cultural churn and would also see them alter into a political storm. Both are deeply interconnected. It is predicted that the rightwing conservative Hindutva forces in politics will hugely benefit from their impact. What are these events and why would they become defining moments in 2024? The present political scenario in India is ripe and intense for its nationalistic upsurge which is an obvious outcome of meaningfully woven narratives and initiatives manifested in an ideological setting named 'Nation First and Party Next'. This ideological articulation was absent in Indian politics for decades. This has helped the present government at the centre for creating a distinctive image of nationalistic identity. Evidently, the clout of the government led by Narendra Modi has pushed him through an unprecedentedly

growing popularity, which has gone beyond the boundaries and gained international accolades. His ascent for the third time will have a pronounced meaning and impact on his global popularity. Modi's frequent prediction about his hat-trick comeback would be seen as a massive strategy kicked off with the omnipotent support of the beneficiaries of the schemes that he launched. But the two events I earnestly indicated in the beginning would become remarkably instrumental in the Modi rise in its third term. First is the Ram Temple which is going to throw its golden doors open for the public in January in Ayodhya and the second is the year long centenary festivities of the RSS to commemorate its wrapping up of a century. Ever since its inception, the BJP gained consistent support from the RSS and the saffron outfit with its century long initiatives has had golden moments of success to brighten its cultural identity. Both these events are equally important for the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). Its prospects depend on, though not totally; on the impact of the activities that the RSS takes up on the

ground and the temple in Ayodhya is deeply connected with its existence and its inauguration a reason for elation. It is not only inaccurate but also immature to make predictions on anything in advance. But for the opposition of Modi, the ferocity of their attacks on the Prime Minister doesn't turn you clueless about their desperation. A visible downsizing of the meaning of their existence is apparently active and their relentlessly inaccurate involvement in badmouthing the man of the moment has dwarfed their political eminence further. Now what happens in disgust and disappointment is mere shadowboxing. The dilemma of the Congress and some of the parties in the INDIA block would alarmingly intensify their heartbeat. This is mostly due to their historic stand on the temple movement which was totally pessimistic and their ill-conceived notions on the existence of Lord Ram. Whatever, they seem to have failed to pass a justifiable reason behind their negation. The after-effect of the temple inauguration would help the Modi government to increase its power and also to personally magnify Modi's spiritual persona. The government's decision

to invite leaders from various political parties deserves appreciation. This indeed, is a calculative move from a trickster's perspective. The move probably would help the BJP to expose the parties that remained fortune-sellers of the religious minorities making minority appeasement their familial enterprise. The BJP and its leaders would come out hammer and tongs to publicly expose the list of parties that turned their faces away in denial to the goodwill gesture of the ruling regime for the temple inauguration. Ram Madhav, an RSS veteran brings a remarkable perspective to what the social reach of the RSS should mean to Indians. The organization will have completed its activities for a century by 2025 and it would certainly set its agenda for an ideological overhauling. Though criticisms are showered on it frequently, its efforts to reframe its Hindutva narratives with critical ideological changes were evident. Look at the statement of RSS Chief Mohan Bhagwat. Probably opposite to its early stand, Bhagwat brought out the vision of oneness that he thinks would only fructify with the

religious minorities, especially the Muslims being taken to the fold. This has been the change, says Ram Madhav which was both intellectual and complex. When Bhagwat says "No Hindu Rashtra without Muslims", what he literally indicates is a compulsion, a necessary accommodation of the minority feelings that its political affiliate the BJP would require to keep for its sustainable winning spree. And for the RSS, it is sure to gain a remodeled reputation, consciously diluting its notorious envy for the Muslim minority, a permanent stance it is accused of. Stretching its hands further the organization is understood to have taken up outreaching activities to further fill the electoral basket of the BJP and bring its man back to the throne for a third consecutive term. But it is doubtful if this cultural shift in the ideological framework of the RSS would help the BJP to inflate its fortunes. This is because the RSS traditionally believed that it is an organization which is meant to unite the Hindus and the Hindus alone. But the Bhagwat philosophy turns its traditional view down. If his words are to be believed, all those who are born in India are Hindus. Perplexity holds you tighter as you fail to comprehend this

ideological hotchpotch. The RSS is appreciative of a culturally inclusive scenario in India viewing all religious factions being consolidated under one Hindu umbrella. Ultimately, it needs various religions to assemble for a single nationalist cause. But its fight against the conversion menace and various forms of Jihad gains it a ruthless enemy status among the minority congregation. As the date of the inauguration is drawing closer, the CPI (M) has formally declined the government's invitation to the event citing its strict disagreement on the BJP's strategy of mixing politics with religion. The Congress is undecided and its response is awaited. But it has a solid reason to not to damage its already broken prestige further. It is known for its diminished self-respect and lost credibility and taking the Marxist line on the temple inauguration would again deteriorate its prospects in the Hindi heartlands. The blemish on its questioning the relevance and existence of Lord Ram had gone deeper, doing irreversible damage to the party. Historically Nehru's stand on the Hindu cause was not different. The

resurrection of Somnath temple had stumbled on some occasions as Nehru was bitter about a state assisted revival of a temple. But for Sardar Patel, the resurrection of Somnath was akin to a major surgery that was performed to remove the cancerous memories of barbarity on a peaceful civilization. This is a labyrinthine situation for all parties that existed on the plank of habitual appeasement. Their secular activism by denouncing Hindutva and its renowned symbols of cultural expression would extensively pull their chances. Enormous

complexities in the judicial processes had not only dragged the problem from gaining a solution for long but also consistently dampened down the patience of multiple generations of believers that venerated Lord Ram in essence and ethics. Presumably, the year 2024 would be the year of prospects for the BJP and perils for its opposition.

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Letter to Editor

Sir

It was a surprise as well as delightful to watch Billionaire real estate magnate Niranjan Hiranandani, entrepreneur and co-founder and managing director of the Hiranandani Group travelling by Mumbai local train, ditching his luxurious fleet of cars, for a trip to Ulhasnagar. The unique experience shared by him turned viral with the public appreciating his gesture as it goes to show that public transport systems are truly time efficient, safe and helps one from traffic congestions that bring life and business to horrible stand stills in our cities.

Rather than private vehicles using public transport systems definitely helps reduce heavy traffic congestions, reduces pollution and also makes one socially aware and encourages responsibility towards the society.

M PRADYU KANNUR
Geeth Thalika Kannur 670001.



The Union Minister for Defence, Shri Rajnath Singh inaugurates Samvid Gurukulam Girls Sainik School at Vrindavan in Mathura, Uttar Pradesh

India Asks Pak To Release 184 Fishermen Who Have Completed Jail Term

New Delhi(KCN): India on Monday asked Pakistan to expedite the release and repatriation of 184 Indian fishermen in view of completion of their jail term.

In addition, Islamabad has also been asked to provide immediate consular access to 12 civilian prisoners in Pakistan's custody, who are believed to be Indian, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said.

India made the request in the context of the exchange of lists of civilian prisoners and fishermen by both the countries as part of a practice to do so on January 1 and July 1 every calendar year under the framework of a 2008 pact.

India has shared lists of 337 civilian prisoners and 81 fishermen in its custody, who are Pakistani or are believed to be Pakistani.

Similarly, Pakistan has shared lists of 47 civilian prisoners and 184 fishermen in its custody, who are Indian or are believed to be Indian, according to the MEA. "The government of



India has called for early release and repatriation of civilian prisoners, missing Indian defence personnel, and fishermen along with their boats, from Pakistan's custody," the MEA said.

"In this context, Pakistan was asked to expedite the release and repatriation of 184 Indian fishermen, who have completed their sentence," it said in a statement.

"In addition, Pakistan has been asked to provide immediate consular access to the remaining 12 civilian prisoners in Pakistan's custody, who are believed to be Indian," it said.

The MEA said Pakistan has been requested to ensure the safety, security and welfare of all Indian and believed-to-be Indian civilian prisoners and fishermen, pending their release and repatriation to India.

"India remains committed to addressing, on priority, all humanitarian matters, including those pertaining to prisoners and fishermen in each other's country," it said.

"In this context, India has urged Pakistan to expedite necessary action at its end to confirm the nationality status of 65 believed-to-be Pakistani prisoners, including fishermen, whose repatriation is pending for want of nationality confirmation from Pakistan," it said.

The MEA said as a result of sustained efforts by the government, 2,639 Indian fishermen and 67 Indian civilian prisoners have been repatriated from Pakistan since 2014.

This includes 478 Indian fishermen and nine Indian civilian prisoners who were repatriated from Pakistan in 2023, it said.

Director Sericulture attends VBSY in Ganderbal Central Kashmir.

Ganderbal Jk(Aasif Malik): Director Sericulture, Ajaz Ahmad Bhat (IAS), actively participated in the ongoing Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra (VBSY) in Ganderbal today, a nationwide campaign dedicated to raising awareness and ensuring widespread implementation of flagship government schemes.

The event, held in Panchayat Halqa Haripora, witnessed the enthusiastic participation of PRIs, civil society members, and locals.

The campaign featured resource persons who underscored the significance of various welfare schemes. An Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) van was utilized to showcase remarkable success stories of beneficiaries thriving under multiple schemes such as Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PMJAY), Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY), UMEED, Kisan Credit Card



(KCC), Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM Kisan), Poshan Abhiyan, and others. Various government departments set up stalls, presenting a visual narrative of the numerous schemes and programs actively being implemented in the district.

Director Sericulture, along with officers of the district administration, PRIs, and locals, actively participated in the Viksit Bharat pledge, reaffirming their commitment towards the development of the nation.

The 'Meri Kahani Meri Zubaani'

segment showcased impactful firsthand accounts from beneficiaries, highlighting the tangible benefits and positive changes brought about by the government's welfare programs.

In his address, Director Sericulture emphasized that the main motive

behind such programs is to educate the public and analyze the effectiveness of government schemes at the ground level. Underscoring the significance of various welfare schemes, he highlighted how awareness is pivotal for the successful implementation of government initiatives.

The Director expressed gratitude for the active involvement of participants and commended the district administration for the successful organization of the program. He urged everyone to take advantage of the various self-employment schemes run by the government for employment generation. Among others, Chief Planning Officer Irfan Giri, Assistant Commissioner Development Dr. Bashir Ahmad, SDM Kangan Javid Ahmad Rather, and other district officers, officials, PRIs, and the public attended the event.

Ayodhya Case Judges Decided To Have "Judgment Of The Court": Chief Justice

New Delhi(KCN): More than four years after the historic Ayodhya verdict of the Supreme Court, Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud on Monday said the five-judges, who ruled in favour of construction of a Ram temple by a trust at the disputed site, had unanimously decided there will be no authorship ascribed to the judgment.

On November 9, 2019, settling a fractious issue that went back more than a century, a five-judge bench headed by the then CJI Ranjan Gogoi had paved the way for construction of the temple and ruled that an alternative five-acre plot will be found for

a mosque in the holy town in Uttar Pradesh.

In an exclusive interview with PTI, CJI Chandrachud, who was part of the constitution bench, candidly spoke on the issue of anonymity and said, when the judges sat together, as they do before a pronouncement, it was unanimously decided that this will be a "judgment of the court".

He was replying to the query as to why the name of the author judge was not made public.

"When the five-judge bench sat to deliberate on the judgment as we all do before a Judgment is pronounced, we all decided unanimously



that this will be a judgment of the court. And, therefore, there was no authorship ascribed to any individual judge," the

CJI said. "The case has a long history of conflict, of diverse viewpoints based on the history of the nation and all

those who were part of the bench decided that this will be a judgment of the court. The court will speak through one voice and

the idea of doing so was to send a clear message that all of us stood together not only in the ultimate outcome but in the

reasons indicated in the judgment," he said, adding "I will close my answer with that."

Delivering a unanimous verdict on the case that long polarised the country and frayed the secular tapestry of Indian society, the Supreme Court bench had said in 2019 that the faith of Hindus that Lord Ram was born at the site was undisputed, and he was symbolically the owner of the land. Yet, it is also clear that the destruction of the 16th century three-domed structure by Hindu kar sevaks, who want to build a Ram temple there, was a wrong that "must be remedied," the court had said. It said it is not

concerned with faith and belief and instead treated the case as a title dispute over land between three parties -- the Sunni Muslim Waqf Board, the Nirmohi Akhara, a Hindu group, and the symbolic Lord Rama designated as Ram Lalla Virajman (the deity).

The judgment, running into 1,045 pages, was widely welcomed by Hindu politicians and groups, while the Muslim leadership said they will accept the verdict, even though they described it as flawed. Still, they called for peace and calm, and leaders across the political spectrum had noted that it was now time to move on.

Illegal fishing endangering turtles at Gahirmatha

Kendrapara(KCN): The future does not appear encouraging for rare Olive Ridley turtles as fishermen and trawlers continue to intrude into the prohibited zone of Gahirmatha marine sanctuary at Bhitarkanika National Park in Kendrapara district. This is happening on a daily basis despite a ban on fishing in the area, sources said Sunday. The Forest Department has imposed a fishing ban in the Gahirmatha marine sanctuary and declared it a prohibited zone from November 2023 to May 2024. However, the restriction appears to be only in name as rules are

flouted with impunity. Locals pointed out that other than announcing the ban, no measures have been taken by the Forest Department to implement it properly. Sources also pointed out that the number of arrests proves how slack the Forest Department is. A total of 175 fishermen have been arrested and 22 fishing trawlers have been seized in the last two months. Most of the fishermen are from neighbouring Balasore and Bhadrak districts. However, the number of fishermen who continue to tread in the banned sanctuary far exceeds the number who have been arrested. Meanwhile, some of the



fishermen alleged that the Forest Department is adopting repressive measures. They said

that many fishermen with their trawlers inside the prohibited zone are being let off.

On the other hand, fishermen working outside the prohibited zone are being

penalised. Locals alleged that some unscrupulous Forest Department

personnel are working in tandem with fishermen from other districts. They said that Forest staff are cracking down on local fishermen and arresting them even if they are fishing outside the prohibited zone. Observers pointed out that the entry of fishing trawlers in the prohibited zone will result in a decline in breeding of the rare turtles. Environmentalists have also expressed concern over the development. They said that fishing in the prohibited zone will lead to loss of lives of the rare turtles. The Gahirmatha marine sanctuary adjoining Bhitarkanika under

Rajnagar block is spread over 1,435 square kilometres. The marine sanctuary is known as the nursery of the Olive Ridley turtles as they visit the area in large numbers to lay eggs every year. Usually, the turtles start arriving in the sanctuary from November onwards and leave in May. It is the main reason why Gahirmatha is declared as a prohibited zone for this period. When contacted, ranger Pradosh Moharana rejected the charges. He warned that stringent action will be taken against any fishermen or trawlers found in the prohibited zone.

Sarangi Takes DGP IC Charge



Bhubaneswar(KCN): Senior IPS officer Arun Kumar Sarangi today took additional charge of Director General of Police (DGP), Odisha. Outgoing DGP Sunil Bansal formally handed over the charge to Sarangi at police headquarters at Cuttack

in presence of senior police officers. Speaking to the media after assuming the office, Shri Sarangi said, "I will emphasise on law and order, crime control and investigation, and quality policing for the people. I will pay attention that all police officials ensure

quality policing for the people. I will also ensure no indifference in the policing is shown in the matter of crime control, investigation, and law and order." Stating that Odisha police has achieved remarkable success, especially in anti-Maoist

operation, crime control and investigation. The new acting DGP said that Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik has always extended his support and cooperation in strengthening the police force in Odisha. Over 5000 personnel have been recruited for various posts in the police force during the term of my predecessor Sunil Kumar Bansal. With the new manpower, the police force will be strengthened and quality policing can be provided, he added. Shri Sarangi, special DG of Police, Training and Director, Biju Patnaik State Police Academy (BPSPA) was given additional charge of the DGP until a new DGP was appointed. Bansal retired from service today.

Two Odisha youths set out for Ayodhya on foot



Berhampur(KCN): Two youths from Odisha have embarked on a journey to Uttar Pradesh's Ayodhya on foot to offer prayers at the Ram temple. However, they are likely to miss the inauguration of the temple scheduled January 22 as they may take over 40 days to cover the over 1,400-km

distance from Berhampur town in Odisha's Ganjam district. Before starting their journey Sunday, two 22-year-old friends Kuresh Behera and Sonu Bisoi, residents of Chandapur and Kanishi areas respectively, offered prayers at the Ram temple in Kanishi near Berhampur town. With bags on their back and

flags in their hands, the duo set out for Ayodhya amid chants of 'Jai Shri Ram' by locals gathered at the temple. Some people also accompanied them for the next 10-15 km. Behera said they have received heartening moments of solidarity, with several people, including women, greeting them with 'Jai Shri Ram'

on the first day of their journey. "We have set a target to walk for 30-35 km every day in order to reach Ayodhya in the next 40 days. We will miss the inaugural function of the temple but we will offer prayers later," Behera said. "We want to have a glimpse of Ram Lala seated in the temple in Ayodhya. We have sought the blessings of Lord Ram at my village before setting out on our journey," Bisoi said. Both Behera and Bisoi work in private companies. They have planned to stay at roadside temples at night and also spread awareness among people on the need to take the spiritual path.

Odisha: Elephant herd holds up traffic

Thakurmunda(KCN): Tourists who had come to Bhimkund in Mayurbhanj district for an outing Sunday had a harrowing experience while returning in the evening as a herd of 22 elephants blocked the main road. The herd stayed put on the road for more than

hour creating panic among the tourists. A large number of vehicles were seen standing on both the up and down sides of the road as the elephants held centre stage. Forest department officials said the elephant herd had crossed the Tel river

Saturday night and entered Andharikhaman village located in the Thakurmunda range. When villagers and Forest staff tried to drive the herd away, the animals came on to the Bhimkund-Boring road and stationed themselves.

Later staff of the Forest department, locals and some of the tourists managed to drive the herd away towards Ambabeda forest. After the elephants left, vehicular movements resumed once more, much to the relief of the tourists.



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Sony Alpha Community portal to enable them avail free of cost additional one year warranty on applicable products.

Speaking on the occasion, Mr. Mukesh Srivastava, Head of Digital Imaging Business at Sony India, said, "By supporting and assisting partners in local markets, Sony aims to ensure customers receive exceptional service and satisfaction along with quicker and faster turnaround at all outlets across the country. The new service centers will offer customers a seamless experience across multiple touch-points to provide a consistent brand experience that surpasses expectations."

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

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

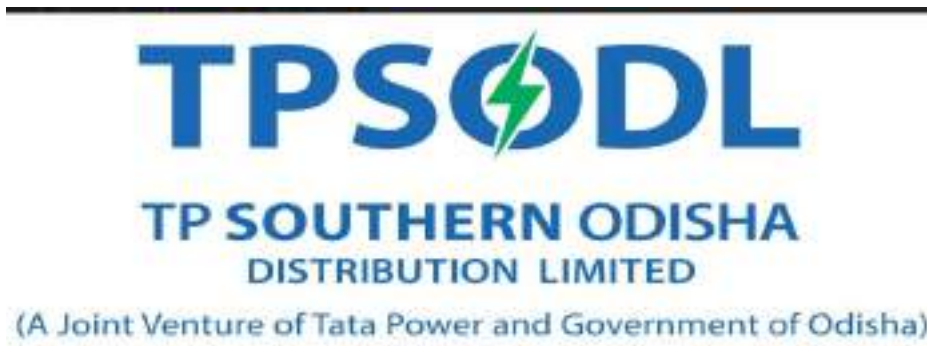
the first such wide and deep white paper from India that dissects consumer behaviour studied through the prism of luxury. A collective reflection on what affluence means in India spiked during the two years of the pandemic. Charting the post-pandemic market and the clearly altered consumer mindset through a specially commissioned study

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

TPSODL issues guidelines for the Festive Season

Berhampur, September 2023: TP Southern Odisha Distribution Limited (TPSODL) is fully prepared to ensure a seamless and uninterrupted power supply during the forthcoming festive season. As part of our commitment to safety, TPSODL has undertaken several initiatives and released essential guidelines for temporary structures and pandals.

To ensure safety and reliability, TPSODL strongly advises obtaining temporary connections from our authorities for any temporary pandals and



shops erected during the festive season. In our pursuit of uninterrupted power supply, TPSODL has deployed dedicated teams from the Fuse Call Centre (FCC) to monitor and maintain seamless electricity

provision at all pandals. These teams will also vigilantly ensure that there is no unauthorized hooking or access to TPSODL lines, guaranteeing a festival filled with uninterrupted joy. TPSODL's 24x7 Call Centre, in conjunction with

SBI now offers Real Time Xpress Credit on YONO app

Mumbai : With an aim to digitally empower customers and offer additional convenience, the country's largest lender, State Bank of India (SBI) has announced the introduction of Real Time Xpress Credit (RTXC) on YONO. The bank's flagship personal loan product for salaried customers – Xpress Credit has a Digital Avatar now. Customers can now avail RTXC from the comfort of their homes through YONO – which is going to be 100% paperless and digital. The end-to-end 8 step journey would be easy and instant for the customers.

Under Real Time Xpress Credit, Central/ State Government and Defence salaried customers of SBI will no longer be required to visit the branch for availing a personal loan. The credit checks, eligibility, sanction & documentation will now be done digitally in real-time.

Shri Dinesh Khara, Chairman, SBI said, "We are pleased to introduce Real Time Xpress Credit (RTXC) Loan facility for our eligible salaried customers on YONO. The Xpress Credit product will enable our customers to experience a digital, hassle-free, and paperless loan process. We at SBI constantly endeavour to offer technology-led enhanced digital banking experience to the customers in order to simplify banking." The digitalization of Xpress Credit delivery will also help the bank to do away with the need to handle and store enormous paperwork.

Blenders Pride Fashion Nights arrives in Bhubaneswar

Bhubaneswar : Blenders Pride Fashion Nights, a unique travelling experiential property, arrived in the City of Temples – Bhubaneswar – celebrating the authentic spirit of the city through fashion and style. A spirit that echoes with Pride and inspires the creators of today to become icons of tomorrow. Bhubaneswar's 'Made of Artistic Flair' edition for Blenders Pride Fashion Nights, brought together an eclectic evening that blended fashion, culture and dance, celebrating a symbolic amalgamation of homegrown artistry and the unwavering spirit of local talent.

Exemplifying the region's signature weave through a curated evening at the majestic Vivanta, Bhubaneswar, DC Square was Odia designer Sabyasachi Satpathy, whose intricately crafted ensembles drew inspiration from the multicultural city and its colourful history. In a true celebration of Odisha's distinct and masterful craftsmanship, the show was elevated with a captivating performance by the Prince Dance Group – from the small Odisha town of Berhampur – widely lauded for their artistry. The show drew to a finale with none other than actor Diana Penty, who captivated the audience in a beautiful ensemble by the designer. The "Made of Artistic Flair" edition of Blenders Pride Fashion Nights was a beautiful embodiment of the rich craft and cultural heritage of the city in a modern and contemporary setting.

Taking us on a 'Jatra' – The Journey of a Young Woman – the show encapsulated the journey of a woman from post adolescence to her nuptials, navigating the various challenges, trials and significant moments that come her way. The enigmatic journey was captured through the array of colours and textiles that Odisha Bandha/Ikkat offers. Truly encapsulating the spirit of 'Made of Pride', the designer made use of Odisha weave, which is sustainable, hand-woven, organic and a homegrown initiative of design, painstakingly woven by the weavers of Odisha. The upbeat set was a composition designed to narrate the spirit of Bhubaneswar along with the flair of the designer. The evening was attended by the city's A-listers & influencers. The fashion walk truly left the guests mesmerized and engaged.

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

or visit the nearest Fuse Call Centre/office.

Mr. Amit Garg, Chief Executive Officer of TP Southern Odisha Distribution Ltd, stated, "We are fully prepared and committed to providing uninterrupted power supply to all pandals during this auspicious festive season. We urge the public to seek proper electricity connections and adhere to all safety measures. In the event of any emergency, please reach out to our toll-free helpline number." TPSODL wishes everyone a safe, joyous, and electrifying festive season.

Odisha Startup Yatra a hit among student community, received more than 500 ideas in just 5 days

Odisha Startup Yatra and Xpress to cover three coastal districts from September 18th onwards



Bhubaneswar: Odisha Startup Xpress, a flagship initiative of the Government of Odisha to nurture entrepreneurial mindset in the state at grassroot level, has received and collected more than 540 Ideas in just 5 days, with participation from 5618 students across 47 colleges and 12 schools. Today, the Startup Vans visited 8 colleges and 2 schools of Cuttack and received 72 ideas with participation from 858 students.

In silvery city of the state, Cuttack – the Yatra covered Eight educational institutes namely Ajay Binay Institute of Technology (ABIT), Ravenshaw University, Shaile Bala Women's university, Udayanath Autonomous College of Sc. & Tech, Govt ITI Cuttack, DRIEMS College, Ganapati Institute of Engineering and

Technology (Polytechnic) & Madhusudan Law University. Whereas Startup Xpress visited Cambridge School and Bidanasi Municipality High school. Odisha Startup Yatra & Xpress, taking its journey forward will tour three coastal districts namely Kendrapara, Jagatsinghpur and Puri from September 18 (Monday) to foster entrepreneurship and innovation at district level.

After successful completion of Khordha and Cuttack tour, this program is now set to engage with students and startups in three coastal districts. During this tour Odisha Startup Yatra & Xpress will cover four colleges and one school of Puri namely XIM University (Puri), SCS Autonomous College, Government ITI, College of

Pharmaceutical Sciences and St Xavier High School respectively. In Kendrapara, district the vans will visit Kendrapara Autonomous College and St Joseph's School, whereas in Jagatsinghpur district it will visit Suddhanda Vidyalaya, SVM Autonomous College and Paradeep College. After remarkable achievements in the past edition, this year Odisha Startup Yatra aims to leap forward by visiting 200+ colleges and 60+ schools thus impacting 25,000+ students. With a core focus on guiding and empowering young minds at the grassroot level in the realms of innovation and entrepreneurship, the initiatives seek to equip them for harnessing the ample opportunities within the startup ecosystem.

BOB Financial and HPCL launch co-branded contactless RuPay Credit Card

Mumbai: BOB Financial Solutions Limited (BFSL), a wholly-owned subsidiary of Bank of Baroda (BoB) and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd. (HPCL) – a Maharatna Central Public Sector Enterprise in partnership with National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI), have announced the launch of HPCL BoB co-branded contactless RuPay Credit Card. The card is designed to reward customers for spends at HPCL fuel pumps as

well as the HP Pay app. It also offers accelerated rewards for spends on utilities, grocery and departmental stores. This card can be used across merchants and ATMs globally through the JCB network. Cardholders of HPCL BoB RuPay Contactless Credit Card will be able to earn up to 24 reward points (per INR 150 spent) for spends at HPCL fuel pumps and on the HP Pay app. In addition, cardholders will also benefit from 1% Fuel

Surcharge Waiver on fuel purchases at HPCL pumps or on HP Pay. Customers who spend INR 5,000 or more within 60 days of card issuance will get 2,000 bonus reward points. The co-branded credit card will offer 10 reward points (per INR 150 spent) on utilities, grocery and departmental stores and 2 reward points on other categories. The card also offers attractive discount on movie ticket bookings.

Jindal Stainless signs MoU with SCTEVT, Odisha to train future-ready stainless steel professionals

Bhubaneswar: Odisha's State Council for Technical Education & Vocational Training (SCTEVT) today signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Jindal Stainless to promote technical education in the field of stainless steel and its various applications. Under this MoU, stainless steel courses will be introduced in all the Polytechnic colleges in Odisha from June 2022. The MoU was signed by Vice Chairman,

SCTE&VT, Shri Reghu G (IAS) and Unit Head, Jindal Stainless Limited (JSL), Shri Deepak Agrawal. Dignitaries present at the ceremony included Chairman, SCTE&VT and Principal Secretary to Government, SDTE and Industries Departments, Shri Hemant Sharma (IAS); Additional Secretary, SDTE, Govt of Odisha, Shri Tapan Satpathy (OAS); Resident Director, JSL, Mr SS

Upadhyay, and General Manager, Sales & Distribution, Mr Ranit Rana. Commending the development, Chairman, SCTE&VT and Principal Secretary to Government, SDTE and Industries Departments, Shri Hemant Sharma (IAS) said, "This collaboration with Jindal Stainless will enhance the learning experience for students and faculty both, as it will give them insights about and practical exposure to the stainless steel industry."

