



Love

Sailabala Mahapatra

Embrace me
I shall compose
the lyric pf liberty

Unfold me
I shall create
the chain of words.
.....

With your love
I am a poet
With your betrayal
I turn a living mummy.

Writing for over last half a century, Sailabala Mahapatra is a well known contemporary Indian poet with seven anthologies of poems in Odia and Hindi besides over fifty translations and eight books for children in English, Hindi and Odia and one book of essays on eminent women. She has been widely translated and published in Hindi, English, Bangla, Asomiya, Gujarati and Urdu .

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Translated by Manas Ranjan Mahapatra from Odia



Poets

Alok Kumar Pradhan

Sorrow doesn't leave
nor happiness
Poets are lost in thoughts
and compose poetry
with exclusive
dreams
soaking mind

Pluck dreams with
Fragrant roots
Jewel from sea- shells
Meters from
Symphony

Show completeness in
a vacant sky
poets are lost in feelings
create waves on stone
a carpet of search for wisdom

Poets
Vapour language with
thoughts everyday
in juices of poetry
and creativity in the
vaccum mind.

Translated from Odia by Manas Ranjan Mahapatra



Quotation of the Day

**"EVERY NEW DAY
BEGINS WITH
POSSIBILITIES."**

- RONALD REAGAN

Bon voyage

M PRADYU

The ship is set to sail and the sail is set to flail,
with hopes and dreams, and wishes and visions
With Inspiration, aspiration, expectation, anticipation
board little sailors, brave little sailors, sailors the world will see
unto the sea, onto the horizon
towards a blissful land
hearts with glee, To sail the sea ,to set afoot on a new strand.

The breeze is cool, the sea is blue, the waves splashing by,
Without a clue, out of the blue storms can smack the ship,
clouds too black, tides too high, can wreck and break the deck,
dear little sailors, brave little sailors don't fret , fume and cry
think once, think twice and lo! you find our blessings there for you,
To take you across the mighty sea ,to the land of name and fame
and once on the strand, your foot on the sand , never ever forget your
alma mater , your beloved alma mater .



Vice Principal
Sree Narayana Vidya Mandir Sr Sec School,
Kannur.

A Day with History

Prof Manas ranjan Mohapatra



I was once sending my poems almost in a mad manner to Puja specials of magazines and newspapers. Very few were there and many were not publishing new writers. I remember Bhagban Nayak Burma of Dharitri saptahiki, he was encouraging new writers....half a century ago. Now I have reached a position that any newspaper or magazine will happily publish me, but the craze that was four decades back is not there in me after seeing the rackets of literature everywhere. I don't find a single person like Bhagban Nayak Burma in the group of Odia literary magazine editors who goes by merit of the writing than status of the writer. I feel sad

and have almost stopped sending my poems to magazines. While writing in magazines and newspapers I came across many wonderful news items. Once I came across news about Bipra Charan Pattanayak of Phulbani popularly known as Bipra Sir. I had many reasons to meet Bipra Sir, for he preferred to be a School Headmaster than an Inspector of Schools. He did an excellent translation of Richard Bach's famous book 'Jonathan Livingstone Seagull'. My happiness was doubled when I came to know that my dear young friend, Binay of Srujanika, translator of Tetsuko Kuroyanagi's educational classic Totto-chan into Odia for NBT is his son. We were doing the largest newspaper of the world which later got award from the Limca Book of Records. A series of workshops involving children was being held throughout the country for the purpose. Binay proposed that the

workshop for Odisha be held at Phulbani, his hometown in Odisha. I being the Odia language editor of NBT was given the responsibility to conduct the workshop with the help of Manavik, an organisation led by Binay's brother Bijoy. I reached Phulbani. Phulbani valley is the district headquarters of Kadhamal district, one of the most underdeveloped districts of the state. It is home to the Kandha tribes who constitute more than half (54%) of its total population. Literacy rate of the district is low (male 65% and female 44% as per Census 2011). This district located at the heart of Odisha is known for it's natural beauty, rich biodiversity, indigenous culture and forest products including turmeric (with a GI tag), ginger, arrowroot and varieties of honey, mushrooms, seasonal fruits and organic vegetables. This district is also known world over for the longest riot of the

world that took place here in 2007 after the assassination of S w a m y L a x m a n a n d a Saraswati, founder of the Chakapad Ashram. It was a bright morning of April 1999. Bijoy had given me their address. I had been to Phulbani twice before, once in 1995 for attending Phulbani Book Fair organised by my teacher Adhyapak Biswaranjan as a Guest, and later, to hold a Book Exhibition of NBT in 1996. But this time it was different. On the two earlier occasions I had heard about Bipra Sir, and this time, it was a great pleasure to meet him and spend a day with his family. I knocked at their door. A girl opened the door. 'Namaskar, Manas Bhai! Welcome. I hope, you had no problem in reaching here,' she said. She was Surabhi, younger sister of Binay. They were aware of my visit, Binay kept them informed. Soon the entire family assembled. I had a

grand welcome with tea. Binay and Nikhil Mohan Pattanaik had a cosmic relationship. As said by Binay, 'Nikhil Bhai came to Phulbani in 1987 couple of times and interacted with Bapa and his active colleagues for organizing the Bharat Jan Vigyan Jatha (BJVJ), 1987 that moved from Kerala, entered South Odisha and moved to Bhopal via Phulbani and North Odisha. Bapa, being a deep lover of science, organized this grand BJVJ-1987 in Phulbani in collaboration with the science enthusiasts from the valley. We all supported the activities enthusiastically as volunteers and enjoyed the true spirit of science by interacting with reputed scientists and a wide range of scientific tools. Nikhil Bhai while interacting with us at our home came to know about my interest in science, participation in zonal science camps and my keen interest in

research. He asked Bapa if I would like to do research with him. Bapa liked Nikhil Bhai very much. He agreed. I gave up my research with Prof. Sushil Kumar Pattanayak, Berhampur University and teaching at Udaygiri college and moved to Bhubaneswar. The historic BJVJ-87 experience gave me a new hope in science! Our handmade newspaper Workshop held at A. J. O. High School, Phulbani was attended by over 50 enthusiastic children. I must have done over a thousand such workshops and it was the first of its kind in tribal Odisha. We came back in the evening to a local book store, Geetanjali Book Store who was one of the local book stores enrolled by me during my tenure as the Odia Editor of NBT. Alas, my successor has given no emphasis on distribution of NBT books in Odisha. Owner of this book store was a laboratory assistant. He was a student of Bipra Sir.

I had to come back to Bhubaneswar the same night. In the evening I saw Bipra Sir distributing homeopathic medicines among the local poor people. - 'Are you a practitioner of homeopathic medicine, Sir?' I asked. Bipra Sir smiled and replied, 'This is a part of the debt I repay'. 'Repay?' I was amazed. 'Yes,' he replied. 'I have two more debts which I regularly repay. I spend only a quarter of my income for me and my family,' he smiled and replied. Then he said, 'I repay three debts as per Hindu view of life. The first debt is Pitru Runa or repayment of debt of my forefathers. The second is Bhoomi Runa, debt of the land that stands me. The third is Deba Runa. This charity is a part of Deba Runa that I am repaying.' Then he said, 'Pitru Runa is what I have done or is doing for my seniors and forefathers. Bhoomi

Runa is what I spend for education of children.' Bipra Sir served children and people whole life on the central hills whole life silently. He never aspired for any power or, position. Rather he enabled his associates to be in position and he stood with them as a guide and mentor. He never applied for any award in life! Bipra Sir closed his eyes on 17 January this year after an active dedicated life of 60 years in Kandhamal! Bipra Sir didn't possess a vehicle. In the night, Bijay dropped me on his scooter at the bus stand after our dinner. Visiting Professor of Development Communication Former Director, I & PR and Culture, North Eastern Council Ministry of DoNER, Govt. of India Former Director, Book Publishing Courses & Editor, NCCL National Book Trust, Ministry of HRD, Govt. of India

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Manjot Singh on how Fukrey's sleeper success changed his career trajectory: 'Life seedha audition se narration pe shift ho gayi'

Actor Manjot Singh has worked in several big banner Bollywood films but his character of Laali in the Fukrey franchise stands out for his audience. The actor, who was last seen in Fukrey 3, says that the first Fukrey's sleeper success changed his standing in Bollywood. Although even after Fukrey, he did get offered stereotypical roles, he had become stronger as an actor and no longer needed to take up any role he didn't want to.

The 31-year-old actor started his acting career with 2008 film Oye Lucky! Lucky Oye!, which was led by Abhay Deol. In an interview with indianexpress.com, Manjot talks about how the film helped his career and how roles for Sikh actors have changed in Bollywood over the years. Reflecting on his journey, Manjot said, "Fukrey took us to a level where it made us

feel seen. When Fukrey became a sleeper hit, to phir life seedha audition se narration pe shift ho gayi. Log narration ke liye bulate the ki 'aap ye film karna chahte ho ke nahi' (Life straight up went from audition to narration. People would call me for narration and check if I wanted to do that film)."

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Sikh actors in the past have often been subjected to stereotyping and Bollywood has been inclined towards giving them mostly comedy roles. Manjot feels that over the years, things have changed and the Sikh actors are being considered for more diverse characters. Asked if he feels stereotyped now, Manjot said, "After



Fukrey, there was a phase... but I always knew what I wanted to do. Every person knows what goes inside them. Obviously only when you showcase something, mindsets start changing. I feel people have become more open in the industry. Roles are being written for Sikh actors. I have got many offers.

There is a Hindi film I am doing. Wild Wild Punjab, by Luv Films. This film has the most different look and role that I have ever done in my life."

The actor adds, "I am really waiting for people to see me from that point of view. This perception (towards Sikh actors) is changing and that is why I got that film. It's not

kiya hi hoga, warna aise kyu dega koi award (I must have done something good, otherwise why would anyone give me award), was the thought that encouraged Manjot to explore cinema further. The actor then became part of films such as Student Of The Year, Azhar, Dream Girl and Dream Girl 2.

Asked about his take on doing Punjabi films, especially when actors such as Diljit Dosanjh and Gippy Grewal have opened new avenues for the Punjabi film industry, in India and abroad, Manjot says, "Honestly I would love to be part of Punjabi films. I have been offered films but I am a little choosy. I can't do something if there is something that I don't feel in my heart. Obviously I am waiting if I get something good in Punjabi films. A good story, where I feel I can justify my role, then I would definitely do it," said the actor.

Allu Arjun on Ram Mandir: 'It feels like the beginning of a new era in India'

Telugu star Allu Arjun has also joined the long list of Indian celebrities who are rejoicing at the inauguration of the Ram Mandir temple in Ayodhya. The event which took place on Monday saw several stars from across the country in attendance. While the Pushpa actor was not spotted at the event, he took to Instagram to share his feelings about Ram Mandir.

On Instagram, he wrote, "What a day for India. Feeling very emotional about the inauguration of Ram Mandir. I felt like it was the beginning of a new era in India with his arrival. I truly wish to see Ayodhya as the biggest pilgrimage in the world in the years to come. Jai



Shri Ram. Jai Hind."

Earlier, Ram Charan and Chiranjeevi also visited the temple on the inaugural day. Ram Charan said that it has been a long wait and added, "Just witness the magic that we are seeing now, and going to see from here on. I am so

blessed to be here. I hope all of you are finally witnessing what should have happened 500 years ago."

Rajinikanth, Alia Bhatt, Ranbir Kapoor, Vicky Kaushal, Katrina Kaif, Amitabh Bachchan, Kangana Ranaut, and many other celebrities

attended the event. Rajinikanth said that he will come to the temple every year from now on. Mahesh Babu, Kichcha Sudeep, Akshay Kumar, and Tiger Shroff were among other actors who expressed their happiness online as they couldn't attend the event.

Bigg Boss 17 SHOCKER: Vicky Jain Eliminated Before Grand Finale? All You Need To Know

He might have been one of the most popular contestants of Bigg Boss 17 but it seems that Vicky Jain's journey is all but over. A businessman and actress Ankita Lokhande's husband, Vicky has reportedly been evicted from the 'Bigg Boss 17' house days before the grand finale in a surprise mid-week eviction. This has left fans surprised because many had thought Vicky would make it to the top 3 or 4.

A promo shared by the channel on Instagram shows a final nomination and eviction task to take place on Tuesday, where Bigg Boss talks about how he has been biased in the show and the current Top 6 are his favourites and



worthy of the show. He then says that this is his final night with the six contestants as now five will be left, and the final eviction before the finale will take place. He asks the housemates to get the

answers about their fate from the birdhouses that are hung in the task area. The voice of 'Bigg Boss' then talks about the evicted contestant's days in the house and ends the promo by saying: "101

and out."

The news of Vicky's supposed elimination has evoked strong sentiments among fans. One user posted on X, "The most unfair eviction of the season He was the most

deserving contestant this season with full potential to win but unfortunately he was not Bigg Boss favourite, so things never went in his favour." Another user wrote, "Surprised to

Saif Ali Khan reveals Rani Mukerji's advice on dating Kareena Kapoor: 'Think of it as two heroes...'

In an upcoming episode of Tata Play Binge's Now Bingeing, Saif Ali Khan and Kareena Kapoor will get candid about their relationship. One such revelation made by Saif proved how insightful actor Rani Mukerji is. Her advice seems to have helped



Saif while dating Kareena. He revealed that a throwaway statement from the Black actor made so much difference to his life.

Talking about the insightful advice he received from Rani, he said, "Rani is truly amazing, and our friendship has deepened over time. During a shoot, she was away from the love of her life and suggested, 'Let's shoot non-stop, finish this, and not take a day off.' She also said, 'You're going out with Kareena, and I'm so happy. I'll give you some advice – think of it as two heroes in the house.' I grasped the essence of her words, and even today, I sometimes reflect on that advice.

see that all finalists took Arun Mashetty's name when asked who's the most undeserving and now he's in top 5 and Vicky Jain is eliminated. Don't underestimate anyone!" Another upset Bigg Boss fan asked how both Isha Malviya and Vicky Jain got evicted when they deserved to be in the top 5. Some also blamed Vicky's wife Ankita for his alleged eviction.

But has Vicky been actually eliminated? Only time and tonight's episode will tell. Apart from Vicky, the top six contestants of Bigg Boss include Mannara Chopra, Munawar Faruqui, Arun Mahshetty, Ankita Lokhande and Abhishek Kumar.

Inflation remains a big challenge before the Government



Obstinate sustenance inflation can further influence consumption, and thus growth. It is true that one of the reasons for inflation is very often seasonal, especially in the case of food items. But today the rate of inflation is above five percent, so many types of cesses will also contribute to it. The question is, what happened to the government's ability to control inflation? Regrettably, the contemporary framework designed to control inflation is looking only at the supply side. Policymakers looking for relief measures in case of inflation have to understand this. Especially when they are desperately trying to revive Asia's third-largest economy in a sustainable way after the recession caused by the epidemic. In such a situation, it is not right to put the burden of inflation on the shoulders of

consumers in an inappropriate manner. Service category prices, including housing, health, education, entertainment and personal care, have also seen a sequential increase, as demand has gradually improved. Service providers face the challenge of moving forward cautiously. In such a situation, before understanding the mathematics of prices, policy makers have to understand the account of food production, consumption and government procurement. There must be some savings money in the pocket of the common man. This will enable the common man to relax and focus on other aspects of his life. If nothing could be saved due to inflation, then how would he go to the market to shop. The market breakdown has a direct impact on the economy. Therefore, it is necessary that marketing, storage and import of goods are worked with a rational approach to control inflation. The issue of inflation also points to the growing gap between the organized sector and the unorganized sector.

The organized sector is saved from inflation on the strength of its salary increases, allowances and profits, but the difficulties of the people working in the unorganized sector increase. Therefore, inflation is rightly called a 'tax on the poor'. In our country, only a small section comes in the organized sector, most of the population belongs to the unorganized sector. The challenge of tackling inflation is actually the challenge of bridging the gap. The latest data on inflation for December, released by the National Statistical Office (NSO), showed that retail inflation was on the rise and higher than in November. It rose to a four-month high of 5.69%, driven by higher food inflation. It was expected, and the RBI had stated that "the near-term outlook is masked by risks to food inflation which might lead to an inflation uptick." The Consumer Food Price Index moved up from 8.7% to 9.53% in December, mainly due to the rise in prices of cereals by 9.93%. All cereals, including coarse cereals, have seen steady increases

in price in the past few months. The prices of pulses have gained at a faster pace, and were at a 43-month high in December. They may rise further as the Rabi crop may be lower than in the previous year. Cereals and

in prices, and that is a challenge. RBI has said that food inflation will be on top of the central bank's agenda. It said core inflation has been falling, but inflation is difficult to predict because it is subject to many international

trend of inflation. The MPC is likely to stick to the status quo on rates. Continuing inflation can hurt the economy and household budgets. It is particularly difficult when inflation is led by food inflation. It leads

November 2023. While in the first term the food inflation rate was lower than the retail inflation rate, in the second term the average food inflation rate has been 6.4 percent in the one-year period till November 2023. But unlike Modi-II, policies in Modi-I were being made for the interests of the producers meaning farmers were being protected from imports. This was due to higher domestic production leading to higher stocks and lower prices of agricultural products in the international market. During Modi-I, the subsidy on sugar exports was given up to over Rs 10,000 per tonne and exports of sugar from the country reached a record high of 110 lakh tonnes in 2021-22. Moreover, in 2022-23, India became the largest exporter of rice with a 40 percent share in the global market. Wheat exports had reached 7 million tonnes in 2021-22. The government provided five kg of foodgrains free of charge to 800 million people in addition to National Food Security Act (NFSA). But now the situation has changed. Elections are ahead and

the government's strategy of keeping prices of agricultural products under control will continue. In other words, the policy of protecting consumer interests instead of farmers' interests will continue. At the same time, given Kharif production figures and Rabi prospects, the government will continue a liberal import policy in terms of food products as the prospects for improvement in production are not much better. The farmer is facing a double blow as production falls. Weak production reduced his income and the government will not allow them to take advantage of high global market prices. In other words, domestic farmers were not getting the benefit of international prices and in a way, an indirect tax of 15 per cent had been imposed on them.

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pulses are the most important items in the food basket of ordinary households and the rise in their prices would really hurt. Vegetable prices have also increased at a high pace in the past few months. Tomatoes and onions saw the highest increases, by over 33% and 74%, respectively, over that in December 2022. But vegetable prices vary in the short term, depending on seasonal factors and the supply situation. Overall, all food items have seen an increase

developments and weather events. The present inflation levels are much higher than the RBI's tolerance levels. Its latest projection for the current financial year is 5.4% and the expectation for 2024-25 is 5.2%. The present trends indicate that the final figure may go above the projections. Next month, the interim Union budget will be presented and the RBI's Monetary Policy Committee will hold its meeting to evaluate the inflation position. It is unlikely that either event will impact the

to suppression of demand and a fall in consumption, as is being seen currently. Consumer demand has been at low levels for many quarters and a further fall could drag growth down. The Narendra Modi-led government at the Center is leaving no stone unturned to prevent inflation from becoming an issue in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections. In the first term of the Modi government, the average retail inflation rate (CPI) was 4.3 percent, while in the second term it has been 5.8 percent till

The Coolest Winter Foot Care Tips

Shahnaz Husain



Your feet take care of your entire body. Do you take care of them? When it comes to skin and body care, our feet tend to be overlooked. The chilling winds of the winter season tend to make your feet dry which can be hard on the feet. The skin on your feet is typically drier than the rest of the body, primarily because there are no oil glands underneath it to keep it naturally hydrated. Certain factors such as friction, pressure, diseases such as eczema and advanced diabetes, and even old age can make your skin increasingly dry. Dry skin eventually leads to cracked heels. And, ignoring the cracks will only worsen the situation. It is important to take certain precautions to ensure that your feet stay warm and dry.

This is particularly important to those people in higher risk groups, such as diabetics, those with poor circulation, who have medical conditions such as Raynaud's disease, or who may be more susceptible to damage from falls. Ultimately, your feet take the full pressure of your life. It is your responsibility to at least pamper them occasionally to keep them silky and smooth. With just a little bit of care, you can be more comfortable and confident with your pretty feet. Here are the best foot care tips for winter: -

1---The skin of the feet is commonly thick and dry and you need to take a regular foot care regime dedicatedly to beautiful and glowing feet. Fill a foot tub with warm water and add ½ cup of Epsom salt to it. You can add some honey for an added layer of moisturization. Soak your feet in this preparation for a few minutes until the

water turns cold. Use a soft foot brush to scrub your feet lightly when the skin is soft enough from the soak. Dry your feet after the soak, and put on a thick foot cream or an oil-based lotion to seal in the moisture. 2---Your feet have a blood supply that is affected by climate. "As the temperature fluctuates the skin is left hot or cold. When your feet feel cold, it means the skin's blood supply to the top layers of the skin has been reduced to preserve heat. A brilliant way to restore the heat is to use a foot cream in circular motions from the heel up to the toes. This will not only warm your feet but also moisturize them at the same time." 3---An organic pedicure uses natural oils and products containing natural substances. Nowadays, foot spa treatments have also gained in popularity. They can be combined with pedicures. Foot spa includes exfoliation and massage, to reduce fatigue, tone the

muscles, improve blood circulation and induce relaxation. For a home pedicure you will need a nail brush, pumice stone or heel scrubber, nail clippers, emery board, cotton wool, cotton buds, massage cream, polish remover, nail polish and a small tub for soaking the feet. First remove old polish if necessary with the remover, using cotton wool. Soak your feet in warm water, to which you should add some herbal shampoo and any vegetable oil, like sunflower oil or olive

oil. You can also add coarse salt. Let the feet soak for 15 minutes. Then clean the nails with the brush. The brush should not be too hard. Use the pumice stone on the heels and smoothen them. Do not cut the cuticles of the toe nails. Do not use sharp instruments to clean the nails. Apply almond oil and push back gently with a cotton bud. circular movements. Pay attention to the heels. Wash off with water. Then massage the feet with olive oil or sunflower oil. Wipe off excess cream with a moist towel. Mix one tablespoon each of lemon juice and honey with 50 ml rose water. Apply on the feet. Lie down and relax for half an hour. Wash it off with plain water. 6--Rice flour is a wonderful exfoliator that also repairs cracked heels and rough skin on the feet. Mix 2 tablespoons of ground rice flour, ½ tablespoon of honey, and 4-5 drops of lemon juice to make a thick paste. Soak your feet in warm water with Epsom salt to soften the skin, apply a layer of the paste, and massage for few minutes to scrub the outer layer of skin. You can keep the paste on your feet for another 10 minutes to deep clean your skin. Wash the paste off with lukewarm water, and apply a thick lotion to seal

side of the soles. Avoid metal scrubbers. You can also scrub the entire feet with a rough towel or loofah. When this is done, wash the feet in clean water. Dry with a towel. 4--If your nails need cutting, better to use a nail clipper. Toe nails should be cut straight across. Avoid shaping toe nails as it can lead to in-growing nails. Use the emery board to 5--Love exfoliating your face, right? So, what's the problem with your feet, boo? Exfoliation removes dead skin cells and preps the feet to better absorb skin treatments. . Mix ground almonds with yogurt and some sugar. Apply them on the feet. After 15 to 20 minutes, rub gently on the skin with

circular movements. Pay attention to the heels. Wash off with water. Then massage the feet with olive oil or sunflower oil. Wipe off excess cream with a moist towel. Mix one tablespoon each of lemon juice and honey with 50 ml rose water. Apply on the feet. Lie down and relax for half an hour. Wash it off with plain water. 6--Rice flour is a wonderful exfoliator that also repairs cracked heels and rough skin on the feet. Mix 2 tablespoons of ground rice flour, ½ tablespoon of honey, and 4-5 drops of lemon juice to make a thick paste. Soak your feet in warm water with Epsom salt to soften the skin, apply a layer of the paste, and massage for few minutes to scrub the outer layer of skin. You can keep the paste on your feet for another 10 minutes to deep clean your skin. Wash the paste off with lukewarm water, and apply a thick lotion to seal

the moisture. Apply oil and massage on feet and nails. Pay special attention to the heels, applying more oil if needed. Use upward strokes for the massage, from the toes towards the ankles. Wipe the feet with a moist towel. Mix a little lemon juice with honey and apply on the feet. Wash it off with plain water after 15 minutes. This moisturizes and softens the skin. If you wish to apply polish, put some cotton wool between the toes. Apply the nail varnish in broad strokes, from the base of the nail to the nail tips. After the first coat dries, apply the second coat of colour. Once a week is more than enough but make that twice if you're cursed with super parched feet once a week is more than enough but make that twice if you're cursed with super-parched feet.

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



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**By Special Correspondent
Saikat Kumar Basu**

Kolkata: A two-day International Conference on 'Sustainability, Global Diversity, Inclusion and Culture; Interdisciplinary Perspectives' was organized under the convenorship and leadership of Prof. Santoshi Halder, Department of Education funded by Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR) in collaboration with National Library of India, Ministry of Culture, Government of India. Over 300 scholars, faculty members, teachers, and educators from all over India and across 10 countries & over 50 Universities/institutes from all corners of India and participated in this mega conference in various capacities across the disciplines for stimulating discussion and brainstorming on the Conference theme. The objective was to collectively map a sustainable INCLUSIVE global society and community for all. The two days international conference was an amalgamation of eminent speakers and specialists from various Universities and institutions across allied disciplines and various countries that reinforced the minds of all ages be it the young budding students and research scholars including the experienced faculties and stakeholders. I am sure the deliberations, suggestions,

experiences, and ideas shared during this 2-day national conference will surely shed light on ways to ameliorate proper strategies and approaches for enhancing the quality of education in our country and stimulate us in making our society and community more inclusive, accessible, and sustainable for all as conveyed by the Conference Convenor Prof. Santoshi Halder. The Conference began with the inaugural session with the gracious presence of the key dignitaries; Santa Datta (De), Vice Chancellor, University of Calcutta, Prof. Ajay Pratap Singh, Director General, National Library of India, Ministry of Culture, Govrn of India, Melinda Pavak, US Consul General. Prof. Ratna Ghosh, Distinguished James McGill Professor Emerita, McGill University and Prof. Norimune Kwai, Deputy Executive Director, Hiroshima University, Director, Institute for Diversity & Inclusion, Hiroshima University, Japan delivered the keynote address. Over twelve special talks, panel discussion, three virtual presentations, one hands-on workshop on inclusive practices on areas such as Universal design, accessibility and alternative technologies, inclusive practices, and strategies, were delivered by specialists & experts from ten country representatives across various disciplines.

The Conference provided a platform for the marginalized and socio-economically disadvantaged to share their stories to the larger audience through the session 'My own Voices; as first-person accounts'. The women who scaled the Everest midst all odds (socioeconomically disadvantaged), plight of the Tiger Widows (reflecting socio-culturally marginalized), an autistic student from Hungary sharing her story & her perception of the world through her own lens, including a farmer, a teacher, a social activist from a Nagaland village. The session reflected the strengths and challenges and the wide range of diversities, socio-economic and socio-cultural marginalization prevailing in our society and highlighted the need and importance of inclusion reflecting the conference theme. The conference also included an overview on India Autism Centre (IAC); Asia's largest residential autism center that we have in India and their services for people with autism. A total of 143 papers were presented during the conference from 18 states of India and 11 countries through a total of 20 technical sessions categorized under 20 subthemes of the conference to reflect more specifically the conference overall objective. The session were chaired by specialists from some of the best Universities/Institutes not only from all corners of India but

also many other renowned Universities outside the country to name a few; JMI, Delhi University, JNU, SNTD University, Punjab University, IIT, Ropar India, University of Minnesota, USA, University of Dundee, U.K, University of Education, Germany, Eotvos Lorand University (ELTE), Hungary, Oslo Metropolitan University, Norway, Hiroshima University, Japan, University of Thessaly, Greece, University of South Africa, South Africa etc. Presenting the conference theme through Nritya Natika by renowned Indian Classical dancer and much acclaimed Fulbright scholar Priyadarshani Shome; 'Dance with Me, We, Us' was a special attraction and a culture boost for the conference audience. Four best paper presenters were conferred to young scholars based on carefully identified crucial parameters assessed by the chairpersons of the technical sessions. One of the special features of the conference was conferring the three notable achievers midst all odds selected from diverse background studying in various Universities. The objective was sensitizing the general masses towards the strengths of the people with diverse needs. The conference culminated with the valedictory address by Prof. Rajkumar Kothari, Vice Chancellor, Sanskrit University, and the Valedictory talk by the Dr Dipyaman Ganguly, IICB, Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar Awardee (Medical Sciences). Needless Prof. Halder says, interdisciplinary collaboration is the key pathway for a sustainable, inclusive,

and equitable society. Prof. Halder pointed out that many of the current global problems can be addressed by accepting & embracing Diversity. Well said by one of the international experts that such event can add significantly bringing strategic change for making the society and community inclusive. Prof. Halder believes events like this are a notable step indeed in sensitizing the general masses not only towards the needs and importance of facilitating the inclusion and participation of people with diversities but also for highlighting their ingenious strengths.



Glimpses of young NCC and NSS volunteers of Republic Day celebrations, in New Delhi on January 24, 2024. PM presents on the occasion.

Using technology, the country's criminal justice system will overcome all the challenges and become the most modern in the world within 5 years: Amit Shah



New Delhi(KCN) : Union Minister of Home Affairs and Cooperation, Amit Shah, addressed the inauguration ceremony of the 5th International and 44th All India Criminal Science Conference at the National Forensic Sciences University (NFSU). He made it clear that, with the aid of technology, all challenges faced by the criminal justice system would be overcome, making India's legal system the most modern in the world within 5 years. It is noteworthy that the inauguration of the 5th International and 44th All India Criminal Science Conference at the National Forensic Sciences University is happening at a time when India's criminal justice system is

entering a new era. Under the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Amit Shah, the Minister of Home Affairs and Cooperation, has proposed new laws in India, amending the laws previously made by the British. The earlier laws aimed to secure British rule and punish Indians, whereas the new laws have been framed with the fundamental principle of justice. It's significant to note that the term 'punishment' was associated with the previous laws, whereas the new laws emphasize 'justice'. Shah believes that the mandatory visit of a forensic science officer to the crime scene for crimes punishable by seven years or more will

simplify investigations and ease the work of judges. Amit Shah, a strategist in Indian politics known for eliminating the mindset of servitude, has established a system where more than 9,000 forensic science officers will be trained every year in the next 5 years. It is also assured that with the use of technology in the new laws, justice will be available, affordable, and accessible. Three new laws in the coming era will mark the beginning of the era of policing and justice. In the next one year, 9 campuses of NFSU will open across the country, playing a crucial role in preparing resources for forensic science in the criminal justice system. Shah, the architect of Indian politics

committed to justice, has created a system that will produce more than 9,000 forensic science officers annually in the next five years. This development is poised to make India's criminal justice system the most modern in the world within 5 years. The new laws emphasize the importance of forensic science in investigations, prosecutions, and judicial processes, opening up significant opportunities for the youth. The public has witnessed that after independence, a government works transformatively every four to five decades, but the Modi government has achieved more than 50 decades of transformative work in just 10 years. Shah, committed to justice, believes that forensic science should not only be used in investigations but should also be an integral part of the justice delivery process. He also acknowledges the need for the criminal justice system to stay two generations ahead of criminals.

Central University of Odisha bids farewell to the outgoing Controller of Examinations

Koraput,(KCN):The Central University of Odisha bid a heartfelt farewell to Dr. Prashant Meshram, the outgoing Controller of Examinations, in a fitting ceremony held on its Sunabeda campus on Tuesday, January 23, 2024. Dr. Meshram, who joined the university in June 2023, completed a successful 7-month tenure before returning to his parent institution, Visva Bharati, Shantiniketan. The farewell function, attended by Prof. Chakradhar Tripathi, the Hon'ble Vice-Chancellor; Prof. N. C. Panda, Registrar I/c.; Prof. V. C. Jha, Consultant-Academic & Administration; Prof. S. K. Palita, Dean School of Biodiversity and Conservation of Natural



Resources; Prof. Hemraj Meena, Director, Rajbhasha Cell, as well as teachers, officers, and administrative staff, was marked by warm tributes and felicitations. Vice-Chancellor Prof. Tripathi praised Dr. Meshram's multi-talented skills in academic administration, citing his significant contributions to finance, academics, and overall

administration. Tripathi emphasized Dr. Meshram's encouragement of employees to contribute their best for the university's development, acknowledging the positive impact during his short stay. Prof. N. C. Panda highlighted Dr. Meshram's academic achievements and labeled him as a man of action, while Prof. S. K.

Palita remembered his valuable participation in decision-making committees that provided effective solutions during challenging situations. Prof. V. C. Jha expressed gratitude for the collaborative achievements and positive moments shared with Dr. Meshram at CUO. Teachers, officers, and staff collectively reminisced about Dr.

Meshram's impactful contributions and cherished moments spent together during his tenure at the university. In his farewell speech, Dr. Meshram expressed gratitude to the Vice-Chancellor, teaching and non-teaching staff, and colleagues for organizing the grand farewell. He acknowledged the collective effort in striving for the university's development and expressed his enduring connection to the place. The Vice-Chancellor honored Dr. Meshram with a shawl and tribal artifact during the felicitation ceremony. Prof. Hemraj Meena efficiently coordinated the program, ensuring a memorable send-off for the esteemed Controller of Examinations.

Tata Steel Foundation Partners with HP Inc. India to Launch Mobile Literacy Project in Jajpur



Kalinganagar, (Sapan Kar) :- 'Kaushalyan' – digital mobile skill development lab, a joint initiative of Tata Steel Foundation and HP Inc was launched at Tomka High School, Danagadi in Jajpur district of Odisha on Wednesday. Er. Pritiranjana Gharai, Hon'ble Minister of Rural Development, Skill Development and Technical Education,

Government of Odisha, officiated the event in the presence of officials from Tata Steel, Tata Steel Foundation, HP India and the 'Society for All Round Development' (SARD). The mobile computer lab will revolutionize learning for students from class 6th to 12th and youth from underserved backgrounds by offering market-relevant digital

skills, aligning with the vocational education agenda of the 'National Education Policy' of 2020. Addressing the students, Er Pritiranjana Gharai focused on equal importance to skilling as schooling to be successful. He also appreciated the efforts of Tata Steel Foundation, HP and SARD for the initiative. Expressing his thoughts on the collaboration.

Odisha Felicitates 88 Athletes For Outstanding Achievements Across Diverse Disciplines

A total amount of Rs 19,65,500 was awarded to 88 athletes

Bhubaneswar(KCN): The Odisha Sports and Youth Services Department today felicitated 88 exceptional athletes for their outstanding achievements in various sporting disciplines. Deepankar Mohapatra, CEO of Hockey Promotion Council Odisha, presented the cash awards to the athletes at the Kalinga Sports Complex here. A total amount of Rs 19,65,500 was awarded. The ceremony encompassed team and individual events across various sports including para sports and blind sports, making it a testament to diversity and excellence. Speaking at the occasion,

Deepankar Mohapatra, CEO of HPCO, said "Congratulations to all the athletes for their remarkable achievements. Your success brings great pride to Odisha and has the potential to inspire countless others to embrace the spirit of sports. Best of luck in all your future endeavours, may you continue to shine and bring more glory to our state." The felicitation spanned across six diverse disciplines, namely Kho kho, Para Athletics, Blind Cricket, Gymnastics, Weightlifting, and Athletics. For the Junior Women's Kho-kho team that secured the silver medal in the Junior National Championship, each member received Rs. 20,000. Similarly, each



member of Odisha's Blind Cricket Women's team received Rs. 20,000 for clinching victory in the 4th National Blind Cricket Tournament. In Para Athletics, Rs 3,20,000 was distributed amongst eight athletes for the four gold and four silver medals won at the 22nd National Para Athletics Champions 2024, held in Goa. Earlier in the year, Odisha hosted the Junior and Senior Artistic Gymnastics National Championship. 15 of the top performers from Odisha were also felicitated at the ceremony. Weightlifters from Odisha were rewarded with Rs 40,000 for gold medals, Rs. 27,000 for silver and Rs. 17,000 for bronze,

following their impressive showing in the recently concluded National Weightlifting Championship 2023-24, in Itanagar, Arunachal Pradesh along with athletes who demonstrated their prowess on the track and field during the 38th Junior Nationals Athletics Championship of 2023 who were rewarded similarly. Amongst the notable athletes felicitated at the ceremony were Jayanti Behera, Suchitra Parida, Pankaj Bhue (Para Athletics), Jyoshna Sabar, Mina Santa (Weightlifting), Tapan Mohanty, Rakesh Kumar Patra, Mohd Anas (Gymnastics), Bapi Hansda and Sabita Toppo (Athletics).

5T Chairman Reviews Progress Of Major Development Projects In Gajapati, Participates In Nua-O Fest

Bhubaneswar(KCN): As per the direction of Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, 5T and Nabin Odisha Chairman, VK Pandian visited Gajapati district to review the progress of various developmental works and interact with students and the general public. He participated in the Nua-O Program being organised at Gajapati Stadium and interacted with students of all colleges of Gajapati. He discussed with the students on Nua-O program providing a platform for youngsters to showcase their talent and to help achieve overall personality development in addition to their academic achievements. Pandian emphasised that students to work hard with self-confidence to



achieve success in life. He said that the college transformation projects in the district will be completed by February. The 5T Chairman reviewed the progress of nine bridges with a total cost of Rs 54 crore which were sanctioned after the last visit to the district in May 2023. Later, he also reviewed other major projects in the district, including the Chheligada Irrigation project at a

total cost of Rs 996 crores; Mega Piped water Supply projects to Rayagada block at a total cost of Rs 180.5 crores; Paralakhemundi Bypass Road for Rs 54 crores; Development of different Waterfalls and viewpoints at a total cost of Rs 13.5 crores; Development of Jeerango Monastery for Rs 2.68 crores and development of different major temples of the

district. Some of the major projects have been taken up after the previous visit of Pandian to Gajapati District in May 2023, when he attended the grievance meetings and took feedback from the public. Pandian interacted with the public at Kashinagar and Ramagiri, received their grievances on various issues and assured early resolution.

Five Fishermen Arrested For Illegally Fishing Inside Gahirmatha Marine Sanctuary



Kendrapara(KCN): Five fishermen were arrested by the personnel of Gahirmatha Marine Sanctuary for catching fish without permission in the 'No Fishing zone' near Madeli mouth within the sanctuary on Tuesday. A patrolling team led by Gahirmatha Marine

Sanctuary Ranger Pradosh Maharana and Forester Prafulla Kumar Majhi intercepted the boat and apprehended five fishermen identified as Nimai Mandal, Haripad Biswas, Dasarath Das, Rabindra Gaini, and Debarata Majhi. The fishermen were

booked under the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 and were produced before the JMFC court of Rajnagar. They have been remanded into jail custody. According to Ranger Moharana, the fishermen had illegally entered the sanctuary

with their fishing vessel and were caught red-handed while fishing. The forest personnel confiscated their mechanized fishing boat, 1.20 quintals of marine fish catch, a 5 kg weight of Black Tip Shark, a huge Kani fishing net, and a GPS set.



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Kamdhenу Paints Takes its Channel Partners on Dream Trip to Thailand

Bhubaneswar(KCN) :Kamdhenу Paints, a brand of Kamdhenу Group and leading manufacturer of high-quality paints and emulsions, concluded an unforgettable incentive family trip for its valued channel partners to the exotic beach city of Hua Hin, Thailand. This extravaganza promised a whirlwind of excitement, luxury, and cultural immersion, making it a trip of a lifetime. The event was organized to honour high

performing channel partners and celebrate with their families. Former Miss Universe, Sushmita Sen, Bollywood singing sensation Sona Mahapatra, and renowned standup comedian Akash Gupta brought theirs charisma to the stage, delivering power-packed performances. Ms. Sen awarded Gold Chains and other accolades to the deserving winners, channel partner / staff while Mahapatra ignited the stage with her

electrifying live performance. The witty humor of stand up comedian Akash Gupta added an extra dose of joy, making it a memorable trip for everyone in attendance. Speaking at the event, Mr. Saurabh Agarwal, Managing Director, Kamdhenу Colour and Coatings Limited said, "At Kamdhenу Paints, we believe in rewarding our channel partners/ staff for their unwavering dedication and commitment. This trip to Thailand was our way of expressing our heartfelt gratitude



and creating memories that will last a lifetime. We're confident that this experience will not only strengthen our relationships but also

inspire and motivate our channel partners/ staff to achieve even greater heights in the future. In synergy with our channel partners, we aim to

achieve Rs. 1000 Crore in revenue by FY28."

Mr. Sunil Kumar Agarwal, Chairman, Mr. Saurabh Agarwal, Managing Director and

Mr. Sachin Agarwal, Non Executive Director of the Company along with other senior officials attended the event to congratulate and interact with the channel partners and their families.

Channel partners and their families also participated in a friendly cricket tournament – Kamdhenу Cricket League – where regional teams faced off on the field. Ladies participated at the special Ramp Walk Competition held in the ballroom, while kids enjoyed a range of fun activities designed just

for them. During the trip, Kamdhenу Paints also unveiled its next dream destination – a trip to the paradisiacal island of Bali, scheduled during the month June/July 2024.

Mr. Raj Kumar Srivastava, National Marketing Head, headed the 1st International Annual Sales Meet held at Bangkok on 21st January in which all Marketing Heads from all the branches participated and reviewed the sales plans and discuss for new products and future plans to achieve the goal of Rs. 1000 Crore

Tata Steel reports highest ever consolidated EBITDA at Rs 63,830 crores

Mumbai, : Tata Steel today announced its Financial Results for the quarter and financial year ended March 31, 2022. The Company's consolidated reported profit after tax (PAT) for the March 2022 quarter rose to Rs 9,835 cr as compared to Rs 7,162 cr of the corresponding quarter of the last fiscal. For the full year ended March 31, 2022, the Company's PAT rose to Rs 41,749 cr, significantly higher than Rs 8,190 cr reported in the last financial year.

The consolidated Turnover for FY22 stood at Rs 243,959 cr as compared to Rs 156,477 cr of the previous fiscal.

Consolidated turnover for the fourth quarter ended March 31, 2022 stood at Rs 69,324 cr as compared to Rs 50,028 cr in the corresponding quarter of the last financial year.

The Board of Directors recommends a dividend of Rs. 51 per fully paid equity share and Rs 12.75 per partly paid equity shares. A 10:1 stock split is also recommended.

T. V. Narendran, Chief Executive Officer & Managing Director, said: "Tata Steel has again demonstrated its ability to deliver stellar results despite heightened complexity in the face of COVID as well as

geopolitical tensions. Our Indian business showed broad based growth across our chosen segments due to our sustained focus on customer relationships, our distribution network and our portfolio of brands supported by our agile business model. Our European operations delivered robust performance as the transformation programme undertaken helped to leverage the strong business environment. We have pursued several initiatives to de-risk the business particularly across procurement and supply chain and continue to invest in

technology and digitisation to drive productivity and improve our resilience."

"Kalinganagar expansion is progressing well and will drive cost savings as well as product mix enrichment. The acquisition of Neelachal Ispat Nigam Limited will be closed in 1QFY23 and we will scale it up rapidly to drive expansion of our high value retail business. I am happy to share that Tata Steel has been recognised as Steel sustainability champion for the fifth year in a row by the WorldSteel," he added.

The 6 MnTPA Pellet plant at Kalinganagar

will be commissioned in 3QFY23 followed by the Cold Roll Mill complex and the 5 MnTPA expansion. Tata Steel India achieved highest ever annual crude steel production of 19.06 million tons, with a growth of 13% YoY. Highest ever deliveries of 18.27 mn tons despite COVID 2nd wave related disruption early in financial year. Broad based improvement in sales volume was witnessed across segments. Automotive was up 27% YoY, Branded Products and Retail was up 11% YoY while Industrial products & projects was up 11% YoY.

WardWizard plans to set up Li-ion advance cells manufacturing unit at its electric vehicle ancillary cluster in Vadodara

Singapore-based renewable energy management consulting firm SunKconnect. The association is aimed at facilitating a feasibility study and identification of potential partner for the manufacturing of Li-ion advance cells in India.

Under the MoU, SunKconnect will set up a committee of experienced scientists, engineers and analysts to evaluate and identify the professional partner, as well as to develop the roadmap to set up the

1GWh cell production plant at WardWizard's electric vehicle ancillary cluster in Vadodara. Commenting on the MoU with SunKconnect, Mr Yatin Gupte, Chairman & Managing Director, WardWizard Innovations & Mobility Ltd., said, "We are excited to work with SunKconnect, one of the leading global renewable energy management consulting firms. Their expertise will help us identify the right partner and establish a roadmap

to set up the manufacturing unit of Li-ion advance cells at our EV ancillary cluster between 15-18 months. As the safety and security of our customers are paramount for us, we are integrating cutting-edge technologies to enhance the quality and promote the adoption of green mobility in the entire country." Further elaborating, Dr. Avishek Kumar, Founder, SunKconnect, said, "We are grateful to WardWizard for giving us the opportunity to

become the part of this EV transition and support the brand in development of battery infrastructure in India. Electric Vehicles are the future, and their success depends on the high grade material and advanced battery management system. Under the MoU, we will work with WardWizard to identify the partner equipped with the latest technology and high standards to manufacture Li-ion advanced cells. Our team will be developing a feasible

plan and drafting standard norms for the manufacture of quality batteries for Joy e-bike's products."

SunKconnect will also identify leading testing and certification agencies to set up a center of excellence for battery testing at WardWizard premises which will draft a standard quality specification for batteries. It will further draft standard norms for batteries to ensure quality and reliability for Joy e-bike's range of models.

Narayana Nethralaya and Acer India Team up to build India's first PC & tablet-based software therapy for children

Bengaluru Narayana Nethralaya in collaboration with Acer India today launched the PC + tablet based software, "VisioNova" designed for children suffering from Cortical Visual Impairment (CVI). This initiative by Narayana Nethralaya and Acer India aims at breaking down barriers and providing the patients with better access to treatment.

Acer VisioNova, a path-breaking innovation was conceptualized as a mobile alternative to on-site therapy for CVI children that will offer them the standard of care. Narayana Nethralaya as a part of its 'Buds to Blossoms'

initiative provides dedicated therapy programs to help children develop and improve motor, cognitive and visual abilities that significantly improve their quality of life.

Cortical Visual Impairment is a condition of bilateral visual loss caused due to injury of visual areas in the brain without significant eye or anterior visual pathway impairment. CVI is currently an emerging cause amongst children across India. With 161 children in every 100,000 born with CVI, India has declared it to be a high priority issue and classified it as one of 30 conditions that all babies

must receive mandatory screenings. These children with CVI have great difficulty in performing visually guided activities and these therapies rely on machines that are bulky, expensive and require the child to be in the hospital for the entire duration of six-to-nine-month therapeutic process. In order to address this, Acer provided PC and 100+ tablets under CSR to kick-off this noble cause. Acer has also further intent to supply around 2000 tablets for patients where patients can pay the hospital a small, refundable deposit and receive the tablet for use from the comforts of

their home and still continue treatments even with COVID disruptions.

The tablet will offer CVI patients exercises that can benefit and help them develop and improve their deficient skills and visual abilities that significantly improve the quality of life. Also, since a number of specialised therapies that are deployed require expensive equipments that need the child to be present at the center for the entire duration of the treatment, this tablet will allow remote therapy under the mentorship of Narayana Nethralaya's CVI experts, making this treatment accessible to the outreach.

On the occasion of this

launch, Mr. Harish Kohli, President & Managing Director, Acer India said, "It is a matter of pride for us to join this innovative collaboration with Narayana Nethralaya where technology helps break barriers to improve lives. Acer VisioNova engineered the overall solution, comprising both the software and the hardware. At Acer, we always believe in closing the gap between people and technology and to meaningfully improve clinical outcomes and reduce the systemic cost of healthcare, VisioNova will help patients with timely access to care when they need it.



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India call up Rajat Patidar for first two England Tests

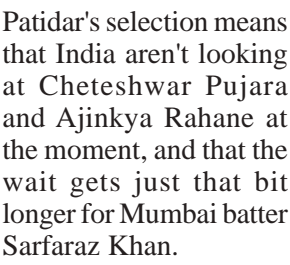
The BCCI announced the NAMAN awards for more than one year, with Deepti also winning the best women's international cricketer for the 2019-20 season. Smriti Mandhana won it for 2020-21 and 2021-22. Among men's cricketers, Jasprit Bumrah was awarded the best international cricketer for 2021-22. Ravichandran Ashwin for 2020-21 and Mohammed Shami for 2019-20. As a result, Bumrah became the first pacer to win the award more than once, having last won it when the ceremony was last held in 2019.



not missed the beat. And you have been involved with Indian cricket right through. It's a very touching moment for me, because when I started my cricket at the age of 17 and I finished at 30 as a player, BCCI were my guardians right through," Shastri said on receiving the award.

"They showed me the path to play sport at a

Mumbai: Rajat Patidar has been added to the India squad for the first two Tests against England. The 30-year-old Madhya Pradesh batter's call-up comes after Virat Kohli made himself unavailable for the first two Tests owing to personal reasons. Patidar has been in rich vein of form lately, having scored 151 against England Lions in Ahmedabad last week. He also scored 111 in the warm-up fixture against the Lions and was on tour to South Africa late last year with the A side. Patidar, who attended BCCI's Naman Awards in Hyderabad on Tuesday (January 23), made his international debut in an ODI against South Africa in Paarl in December, where he opened the innings. But here, he is likely to play in the middle-order if given a chance.



Earlier today, Rinku Singh was added to the India A squad for the second multi-day match against England Lions, paving the way for Patidar's addition to the senior men's side.

How will BPL tackle the Mortaza problem?

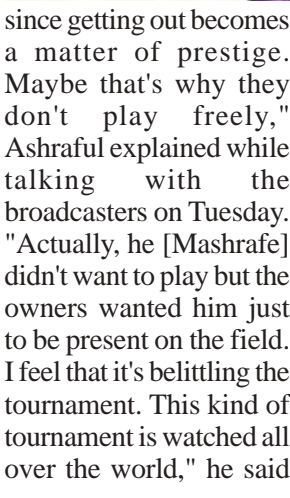
Their momentum was halted once again when Thomas Kaber broke the threatening stand in the tenth over to end Smuts' stay in the middle and then trapped the in-form Heinrich Klaasen LBW cheaply in his following over. It went from bad to worse as Stoinis departed hit wicket, DSG losing their third wicket for 25 runs in the middle-overs. Having played the anchor all along, Breetzke missed out on a half-century by just a couple of runs but Mulder single-handedly ensured DSG had a respectable total on the board as he hit half a dozen boundaries in his 20-ball unbeaten cameo that took his side past the 150 mark. That, however, proved enough on a dry track that slowed down further as the game progressed. Only

Sam Curran (38) looked to be timing it right in his 27-ball knock as he out together a 48-run stand with Dewald Brevis (21 off 19) after the hosts slipped to 39/3 at the end of the seventh over. As many as three other batters got starts but neither managed to convert it into anything substantial.

Stoinis got rid of both the set batters in his succeeding overs to break the momentum and, in the meanwhile, Noor struck telling blows by dismissing Liam Livingstone and Kieron Pollard in the 15th over in a miserly spell of 3-22. After losing two in a row, DSG picked up their fourth win of the season to be placed second in the points table now, behind Paarl Royals only on NRR.

New Delhi: Mashrafe Mortaza has come under the firing line during BPL 2024. The veteran, who last played a competitive game in May 2023, has struggled with his fitness. The eternal knee injury hasn't helped and it reduced him to bowling from just three steps. Mortaza's participation at a time when he is clearly past his prime has come in for sharp criticism from Mohammad Ashraful. Ashraful, who had recently made a name as a TV analyst following his stints with T-Sports during the World Cup, insisted that Mortaza is diminishing the standards of BPL by taking part in the ongoing edition despite being unfit to play a tournament of this

During Rangpur Riders' opening game of the season against Chattogram Challengers, the 40-year-old got a wicket with his first ball but it also raised a few eyebrows due to his shortened run-up. It prompted Sri Lankan commentator Russell Arnold to say that he was not sure whether Mashrafe was bowling medium pace or off-spin. Apart from the obvious fitness concerns, the argument against Mortaza is that he is taking up the spot of a potential youngster. "He (Mashrafe) got a wicket with his first delivery. Actually when a young player faces him, they are in doubt about whether to hit him or not



adding that he feels he is stopping young pace bowler like Rejaun Rahman Raja to flourish. "Here we will see our future stars. There is a World Cup in six months and they have Rejaun Rahman Raja in the side, who is sitting in the sidelines. He [Raja] had a chance to do well in this tournament to make a place in the World Cup. That's missing," he

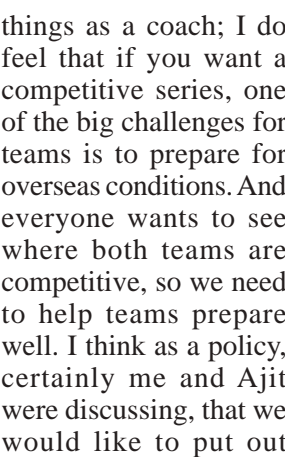
added. Mashrafe admitted that his participation in the BPL is not ideal during the post match press conference after their loss to Rangpur Riders, a game where he did not bowl a single delivery. "You cannot explain everything every time. So, what I feel that it's not an ideal situation for me," Mashrafe told reporters when his attention was drawn regarding Ashraful's remark. "Yes, that's obvious [passion and love]. But to be very honest in an ideal situation it's better if it doesn't happen. But many things can't be explained. Ideally maybe... I am mostly alright but the knee problem is problematic even though it's small," he said.

New Delhi: Rahul Dravid, India's head coach, has trained the focus on due preparation for teams traveling for a Test series. Speaking ahead of India's opening Test against England in Hyderabad, Dravid chose to speak about the quality of opposition that teams get to play while touring these days. "One of the things that's been a challenge actually, to be very honest, is to get the right preparation for Test teams. Something I have felt as well. Just at times the quality of the sides you get to play in places. It's not like the old days when I first started; you went to county cricket, professionals would be playing against you, the best players would be playing against you. That's changed a lot," opined Dravid. India's overseas tours in recent times have seen them field squads from

touring members as opposition to get a higher quality than provided by host associations. "Maybe it's because of the amount of cricket or I don't know what's the reason but certainly we have seen a dip in the quality of the tour teams. I think that can sometimes be quite frustrating from a coach's perspective. Then the coaches have to be unique about how to prepare, what they think is the best form of preparation. On our last tour of South Africa, we played an intra squad game. We had our A team there at the same time and we felt that if we could mix the teams up in such a way that Jasprit Bumrah is bowling to Virat Kohli, or someone like a Siraj is bowling to Rohit Sharma, we would give ourselves the best chance at practice in terms of quality of opposition," he

reiterated. To that extent, Dravid also feels that he along with chief selector Ajit Agarkar have taken up the initiative to provide better quality opposition to touring teams, with the recent England Lions game against India A as an example.

"To be very honest and I was speaking to Ajit [about this], but I thought England would come and play one of the A games with some of their players. We put out a very competitive A team, pulled a lot of our players out of the Ranji teams so that they get to play A team cricket. Lot of our guys who are pushing for selection for this team [were picked as well]. So we are trying to put out competitive teams for oppositions when they come out here to play tour games, hoping that that will be reciprocated when we go there. That's one of the important



competitive teams for people when they come here hoping that it will be reciprocated," said Dravid. The aforementioned India A game also offered the senior team have a close look at the likes or KS Bharat, who scored a hundred, given that Dravid confirmed that KL Rahul wouldn't be considered as a

wicket-keeper in the Test series against England. Bharat, alongside Dhruv Jurel, are the contenders for the spot with the former seemingly ahead in the race given his performances in the recent past. While not a lot of frontline England players got to play that game, Dravid did not believe that they'd be

short of exposure at this stage. "There's a lot of other exposure that the players get; may not be India exposure but certainly exposure at various levels in subcontinental conditions. I don't think that it should be much of an issue. But having said that, it will be interesting to see how they go. Obviously we came to see how they step up as well. We respect the fact that they have got a good side and have played some really good cricket as well. They have played well in Pakistan, in these kind of conditions, so expecting a tough series and a good series," he felt. The five-Test series is the start of a long Test cricket calendar for India with the World Test Championship always being a topic of interest, but Dravid chose to stay away from thinking about it.

"I think we can't focus on the WTC at this stage. I think we will focus on this series and this Test and play what's in front of us. Which is honestly this particular Test match. The moment we start thinking about what's ahead.. like I said there's a lot of cricket before we can think about the WTC. But we know that we are up against a very good team that's played an exciting different brand of cricket. And we know we have to respond to that and play well. They have very experienced players, may not be so much in the bowling attack that hasn't come here that much but certainly a lot of their batters have been here many times during the IPL, so they have a lot of exposure and experience in these conditions as a team. And they are playing well. We are looking forward to it."