

## Odisha CM Naveen Launches Sports Projects Worth Rs. 120 Crores In Sambalpur

**Sambalpur (KCN):** Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik today launched, through video conference, sports projects worth more than Rs. 120 crores which will boost the sports development in Sambalpur.

He inaugurated the Burla indoor stadium and laid foundation stone for Sambalpur Football Academy and Sambalpur University sports complex, including Hockey Stadium.

Aligned with the vision of Chief Minister, 'Sports for youth, youth for future', these projects have been undertaken under the 5T initiative with the aim to benefit the people, especially the youth of Sambalpur.

Chief Minister Sh Patnaik praised the sports culture in Sambalpur and expressed hope that these facilities will further strengthen the sports development in the district. He also mentioned that football is quite popular in Sambalpur and therefore, Sambalpur Football Academy is being



established to provide top quality coaching and competition facilities for the local football talent. Burla Indoor Stadium features four badminton courts and a seating capacity for over 400 spectators. The centralised AC facility also has players' changing rooms, a first aid room, a gym, and multipurpose halls that can accommodate other indoor games such as carom, chess, fencing, etc. The playing arena is well-equipped with wooden synthetic flooring and BWF recommended sports lighting system to

provide an international experience to the players. The stadium has been built at a cost of Rs 32 including funding from MCL for Rs. 10.35 crore and Government of India for Rs 7.5 crore. The upcoming Sports Complex at Sambalpur University will have a hockey stadium with a Category 1 FIH certified synthetic hockey turf, FIH recommended sports lighting system and a gallery that can accommodate around 3000 spectators, including seating for differently-abled people. Additionally, the hockey stadium will have

players' facilities, gymnasium and dignitary seating. It will also have a 1000-seater multipurpose indoor stadium, with an arena of BWF standard badminton courts, which will accommodate volleyball, basketball, kho kho and various indoor sports like table tennis and combat sports. The multipurpose indoor stadium will feature a fitness centre, a dedicated weightlifting hall, offices, coach rooms, and a medical room. It will be equipped to host regional level competitions. The Government of Odisha is investing Rs. 70 crore in this project.

5T and Nabin odisha chairman Sri VK Pandian coordinated the program. Sports and Youth Services Minister Tusharkanti Behera, Rairakhol MLA Sri Rohit pujari

Development Commissioner Ms Anu Garg, Secretary Sports and Youth Services Sh R Vineel Krishna, Collector Sambalpur Ananya Das and other officials from MCL, district administration and players were present on this occasion.

## Quit Steering Wheel' Protest Enters Third Day



**Bhubaneswar (KCN):** Odisha Drivers' Mahasangha joined the all India 'Quit Steering Wheel' movement called by truck drivers over the new Hit and Run law today.

The protest entered its third day on Saturday. Odisha State Co-operative Milk Producers' Federation Limited (OMFED) service has been hit by the protest as they are

unable to transport milk to the market due to the drivers' protest. The impact of the strike is also seen in Cuttack's Netaji Bus Terminal. As the drivers are involved in the strike, the bus services are affected. Odisha government's Mo Bus public transport service is seeing a huge rush of passengers. Sundargarh district is also witnessing the impact of drivers' strike, as many services in the district are affected too.

## ED Arrests TMC Heavyweight Shankar Adhya In Multi-Crore Bengal Ration Case

**Kolkata (KCN):** Enforcement Directorate (ED) sleuths arrested heavyweight Trinamool Congress leader from North 24 Parganas district, Shankar Adhya on late Friday night in connection with the multi-crore ration distribution case in West Bengal.

Adhya, also the former chairman of the Bongaon Municipality in the same district, has been brought to the ED's office at Salt Lake on the northern outskirts of Kolkata. He will be first taken to a hospital for medical check-up and then presented at a special court of Prevention of Money Laundering Act



(PMLA) in Kolkata on Saturday afternoon, where the central agency counsel will seek his ED custody. This is the third arrest by ED in the ration distribution case, the first being Kolkata-

## Lower Suktel Dam Featuring In Nat Geo

**Bhubaneswar (KCN):** National Geographic will air a special program featuring the story of the Lower Suktel Dam in Odisha today, at 7 pm. This dam is a remarkable project that has transformed the irrigation and drinking water supply in Bolangir district.

The National Geographic's Superstructures today at 7 PM will reveal the full story of how the dam was constructed and its impact on the region. The trailer of this program has been posted on "X" by Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik. On January 3, 2024, the Odisha Chief Minister inaugurated the Lower Suktel Irrigation Project, which will help to provide water to 203 villages over one lakh acre land of in the Bolangir and Sonepur districts. More than 70,000 people will now have access to drinking water.

**ADITYA - L1**  
for the benefit of humanity," he wrote on X. After the successful entry of Aditya-L1 to its designated orbit, the satellite is anticipated to remain for the next five years. Situated at a

distance of 1.5 million km from earth, the Aditya-L1 satellite, launched from Sriharikota on September 2, will execute a crucial manoeuvre upon reaching L1.

During his visit Shri Vaishnaw told that Gopalpur-Rairakhol new rail line will be reviewed to include Phulbani, District Head Quarter of Kandhamal district in railway map. Hon'ble Railway Minister further added that feasibility of connecting Kantilo and Khandapada with Khurda-Balangir rail line project will be explored. Earlier on the day before visiting Daspalla in an inspection train Hon'ble Minister visited the Bhubaneswar railway station and reviewed the ongoing station redevelopment works and directed the officials to expedite the construction activities so as to complete the project before schedule.

**BHUBANESWAR (KCN):** Hon'ble Minister of Railways, Communications and Electronics & Information Technology Shri Ashwini Vaishnaw today inaugurated the newly constructed Nuagaon Road-Daspalla Railway section, Daspalla Railway station building and flagged off passenger train services to Daspalla in a function witnessed by a large gathering of about 8,000 people held at Daspalla railway station.

After the flag off, services of four passenger trains 18423/18424 Bhubaneswar-Nayagarh Town-Bhubaneswar Express, 08429/08430 Bhubaneswar-Nuagaon Road-Bhubaneswar Passenger Special, 08423/08424 Puri-Nuagaon Road-Puri Passenger Special and 08555/08556 Bhadrak-Nayagarh Town-Bhadrak MEMU were extended to Daspalla.



During his visit to Daspalla, Shri Ashwini Vaishnaw was greeted by more than 300 people at Sanapadar and thanked him for sanctioning the Passenger Halt. A gathering of about 500

## Bhubaneswar Private Hospital Explosion: Victim Claiming To Be Dillip Samantaray Dies Under Treatment

**Bhubaneswar (KCN):**

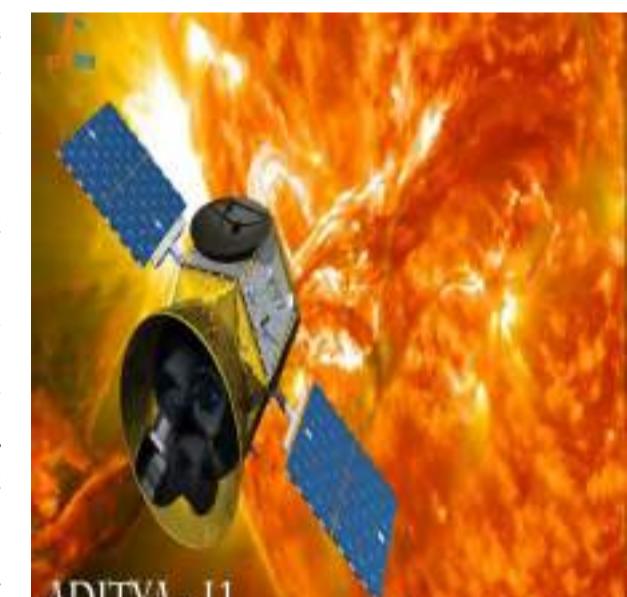
Another injured person who was undergoing treatment in the name of Jyoti Ranjan and later identified himself as Dillip Samantaray died during treatment on Friday.

Hospital authority have confirmed the death of the injured person. He was out of ICU on Friday and claimed himself as Dillip. Earlier, Dillip's wife committed suicide after hearing the death news of her husband. Similarly, another man who died last week in the identity of Dillip was not real Dillip. His family members also performed last rites after receiving the body from police in the name of Dillip. The confusion arose that who is Dillip and who is Jyoti. Jyoti's



family members already took part in the identification process and confirmed that the person claiming himself Dillip was not their son Jyoti. It is worth mentioning that four persons including Dillip and Jyoti suffered critical burn injuries following an explosion of AC compressor during repair last week. Three of them have died while another person is still undergoing treatment.

## Aditya L1 Reaches Its Destination, Ready To Illuminate Sun's Secrets



**Bangalore (KCN):** The Indian Space Research Organisation's ambitious debut mission to study the Sun, Aditya L1 has successfully reached its designated orbit at Lagrange Point 1.

After the historic success of space mission, prime Minister Narendra Modi congratulated ISRO on X.

"India creates yet another landmark. India's first solar observatory Aditya-L1 reaches its destination. It is a testament to the relentless dedication of our scientists in realising the most complex and intricate space missions. I join the nation in applauding this extraordinary feat. We will continue to pursue new frontiers of science

for the benefit of humanity," he wrote on X. After the successful entry of Aditya-L1 to its designated orbit, the satellite is anticipated to remain for the next five years. Situated at a

work. During his visit Shri Vaishnaw told that Gopalpur-Rairakhol new rail line will be reviewed to include Phulbani, District Head Quarter of Kandhamal district in railway map. Hon'ble Railway Minister further added that feasibility of connecting Kantilo and Khandapada with Khurda-Balangir rail line project will be explored. Earlier on the day before visiting Daspalla in an inspection train Hon'ble Minister visited the Bhubaneswar railway station and reviewed the ongoing station redevelopment works and directed the officials to expedite the construction activities so as to complete the project before schedule.

# All India Rose Convention and Rose Exhibition Kicks Off At KIIT

**Bhubaneswar, (KCN):** The 40th All India Rose Convention and Rose Show got off to a colourful start at the KIIT campus with the unveiling of four new varieties of rose. Four new rose varieties - Lord Jagannath, Lord Lingaraj, Sephali, and Radha - were unveiled by Chief Guest Dr. Achyuta Samanta, Founder, KIIT & KISS. In his speech, Dr. Samanta highlighted the profound significance of the rose, tracing its

origins 3.3 million years back and acknowledging its revered position as the king of flowers. "The beauty and vibrancy that flowers, especially roses, bring to our lives cannot be overstated. They bring smiles and happiness," he remarked, revealing his fondness for flowers and the enchanting rose. In her speech, Smt. Saswati Bal said, flower brings happiness in our lives. Whenever we are in stress, only flowers can reduce our stress.



The three-day convention is a collaborative effort of the KIIT Rose Society, in association with

Odisha University of Agriculture and Technology, Orissa Horticulture Society,

and Directorate of Horticulture, Department of Agriculture and Farmers Empowerment, Government of Odisha. Vice President of India Rose Federation Mr. N K Dadlani expressed gratitude Dr. Samanta for hosting the event at the KIIT campus, acknowledging the beauty of the campus, and making the event the best so far. Secretary of the Odisha Rose Society Mr. Hemant Kumar Pal, Organising President Mr. Sudarshan Panda, and others spoke at the event.

## SAMBALPUR DIVISION WILL ORGANISE FLOWER SHOW AT RAILWAY STADIUM, SAMBALPUR

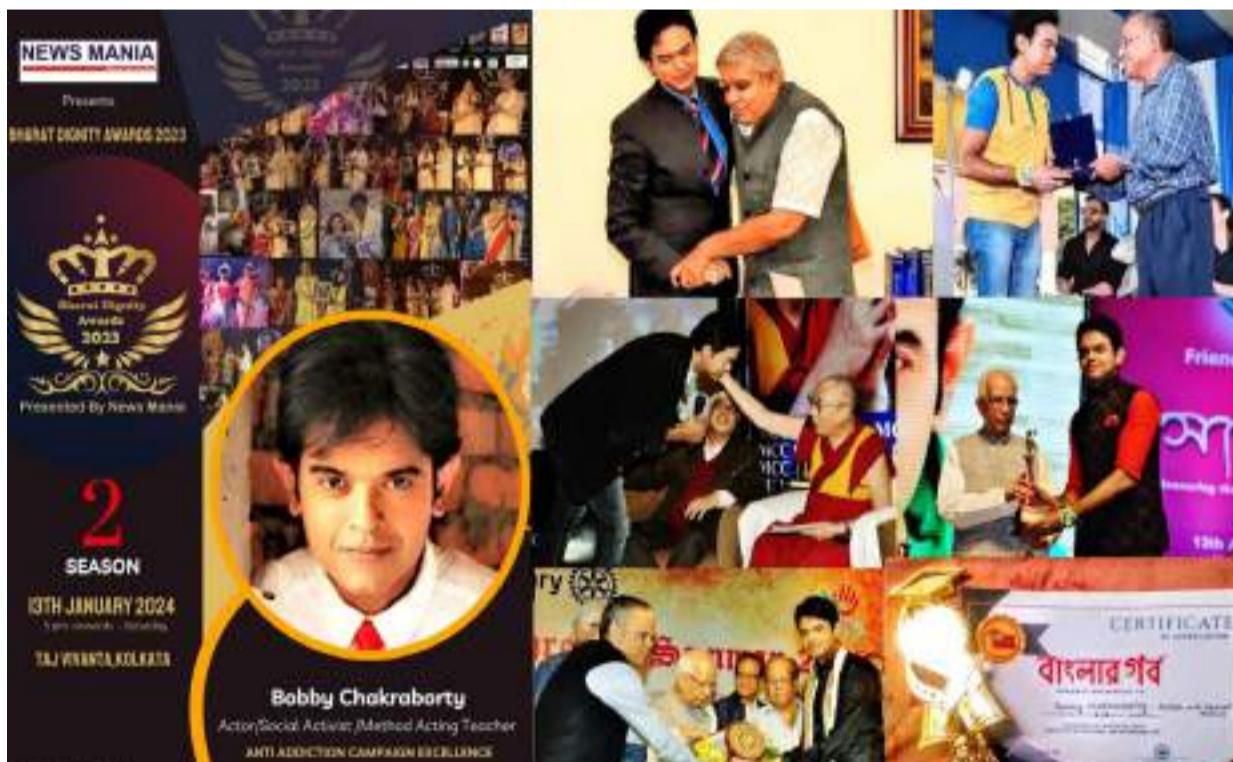


**Sambalpur, (KCN):** Railway, Sambalpur East Coast Division is going to organize a Flower Show and Sharad Utsav at

Railway Stadium, Rail Nagar, Sambalpur on 13th and 14th January 2024.

Various types of flowers and plants will be exhibited during the flower show. During the exhibition, participants from different Railway departments, nurseries and other organizations will be showcasing their collections. Food stalls will be available during the flower show & cultural programme will also be organised. Flower lovers and the general public are requested to witness and enjoy the exhibition.

## BOBBY CHAKRABORTY'S GLOBAL ANTI-ADDICTION CAMPAIGN- RECOGNITION AND AWARDS



**KOLKATA, (KCN):** "Anti-addiction awareness should be taught right from middle school or adolescence, where all the influx of the good and the bad start seeping in the psyche of a child. It goes without saying how important mental and physical health are to life and how the two are interrelated.

I have seen a lot of death and destruction in my own family, in the society around me and in my profession, due to this fatal trap of addiction. So my efforts to create this awareness, is right from

childhood (classes 6/7) before it is too late...against all kinds of addiction (Cigarette, alcohol, smart phones) and against all kinds of harmful popular trends (a abusive language, online obscenity for popularity, gambling through online games, ragging, bullying etc.) through my interactive awareness program called 'I AM THE KING OF MY MIND'." - Bobby Chakraborty. India's renowned actor, social activist, acting coach Bobby Chakraborty, is spreading this

awareness, free of cost, for more than a decade now. He has reached more than 400 schools, colleges and universities in villages and cities within India and abroad. There are students like Ankit, Sumit, Shreyan, Ritam, Sampurna and many others, who are his loyal soldiers and volunteers of his vast army. This very popular awareness program has won numerous awards and felicitations from many, including the Governor of West Bengal (twice), West Bengal Police, Vice



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## Bigg Boss Tamil 7: Vanitha Vijaykumar Allegedly Attacked By Evicted Contestant Pradeep Antony's Supporter



Popular south actress and former Bigg Boss Tamil 3 contestant Vanitha Vijaykumar has reportedly been attacked by a man who claimed to be a fan of actor Pradeep Antony, the evicted contestant of the ongoing Bigg Boss Tamil Season 7.

Vanitha took to her X (formerly known as Twitter) handle and

dropped a shocking photo of her injured face. Her post showed her injured eye, and visibly swollen and discoloured face. The actress, in a series of posts, alleged that she was attacked by a mysterious man in the middle of the night and suspects a 'Bigg Boss Tamil 7' connection. She alleged that the attacker

was apparently unhappy with the fact that she supported the red card issued to Pradeep in the Kamal Haasan-hosted reality show. 'Bigg Boss Tamil' season seven is currently in full swing on Vijay TV and Disney Plus Hotstar. Vanitha's daughter Jovika is also one of the contestants. Vanitha, further wrote.

She continued, "I took first aid and left home with rage and not able to identify my attacker. He laughed like a lunatic which haunts my ears. Taking a break from

who reviews the show on a daily basis, had a late-night dinner and went to park her car at her sister's place when the unfortunate incident happened.

"Ni support vera (You escaped) and hit me hard on my face and fled away. I was in so much pain bleeding in my face and yelling. No one around was around 1 am I called my sister to come down she urged me to go report this incident to police but i told her I lost trust in the process (sic)", she

further wrote. She continued, "I took first aid and left home with rage and not able to identify my attacker. He laughed like a lunatic which haunts my ears. Taking a break from

everything as i am not in a physical condition to appear on screen. For those who support disturbed ppl danger is just a feet away (sic)." Vanitha, who has been active on social media, continues to express her thoughts and comments on the controversies around the 'Bigg Boss 7 Tamil'.

Actor Pradeep Antony recently got expelled from the Bigg Boss Tamil 7 over reportedly his inappropriate behavior towards female co-contestants. Ever, since his exit from the show, the actor has been hitting the headlines for his social media posts. "It is my personal space which I use to share my happiness with my friends. It is not that I

don't consider you my friend but I'm not in a place I can trust and let anyone inside my life. My Instagram page has photos of friends and family. I feel social media is a mix of positives and negatives and it can tend to attack you on a very personal level. I can take criticism well, but I don't want my friends and family's privacy to be attacked. I'll share the portion of my life I want to share with the public on Twitter on whatever platform I feel comfortable with, but certain things I only want to share and enjoy with my very close ones and not be judged. I hope you understand my situation," he shared.

## Prime Video's Maitri: Female First Collective Hosts Its First Session In Chennai



Prime Video released the latest session of 'Maitri: Female First Collective', hosting its maiden discussion in Chennai. Launched last year, the collective is an endeavour to create a safe space where women from the Indian media and entertainment industry can come together to discuss their experiences, challenges and successes, and offer their perspective on bringing about a positive shift.

The session featured 8 eminent women from India's various entertainment industries, ranging from award-winning prolific actors who have worked across languages like Malavika Mohanan, Aishwarya Rajesh and Madhoo, to women who have left an indelible mark behind the camera, like creator, writer, showrunner & producer Reshma Ghatala, writer & director Swathi

Raghuraaman, and cinematographer Yamini Yagnamurthy, in addition to Aparna Purohit, creator – Maitri & head of India Originals, Prime Video, and Smriti Kiran, creator and curator of Maitri & founder, Polka Dots LightBox. Sharing personal anecdotes, the participants discussed the existing gender dynamics in the film industry, the challenges faced by female professionals, including stereotyping, colourism, ageism, and much more. Surprisingly, the women noted how the issues were similar irrespective of whether they worked in front of the camera or behind it, or whether they worked in production or corporate roles. The core discussion also touched upon the true essence of feminism and empowerment, what gender-equality really means for the trailblazers gathered in the room. An interesting insight that was shared by all was

that true equality can be achieved when the industry stops tagging a particular role, a narrative or a job as woman-oriented or male-oriented. The group as a whole agreed that age-old conditioning often restricts the personal and professional growth potential of women, and can be changed only if it is internalized in one's home and social environment. The interaction also highlighted the critical role that streaming was

playing in improving female representation, creating new opportunities for actors, regardless of their age, body size, or skin colour, and for creators to tell all kinds of unique stories.

"Equal representation opens up a new world for young girls to draw inspiration from, making it all the more important to have women in positions of influence, where they can provide a platform for newer voices and open up doors for more women," said Aparna Purohit, creator – Maitri & head of India Originals, Prime Video. "However, we know that change is a gradual process. It is, therefore, important for us to continue having these discussions across the country, and we are thrilled to have hosted our first session in Chennai. Even though it is only a year old, Maitri has managed to drive change in the right direction. It is heartening to see people

having a conversation about diversity, equity and inclusion when writing or planning their projects."

Speaking about the need to have such conversations frequently, Smriti Kiran, creator & curator of Maitri and founder, Polka Dots LightBox said, "There is an undeniable need for spaces where women can voice their stories without any fear. Creating an environment that allows women to share their experiences without judgement is the first step in enabling any change, whether it is in the industry or society. This is precisely why we have to keep the conversation going relentlessly. Thrilled that Maitri is in Chennai today, tomorrow it will be in another part of India. We will continue to connect women across sections and states through conversation and collaboration."

## Prabhas, Deepika Padukone's Project K To Create History, To Be First Indian Film To Debut At San Diego Comic-Con



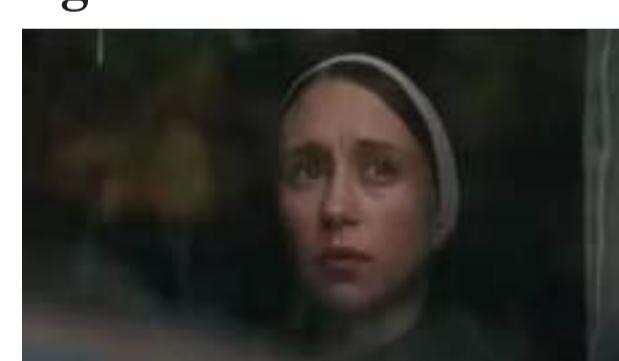
There's good news for Bollywood lovers who have been waiting for a long time to get an update on Amitabh Bachchan, Deepika Padukone, Kamal Haasan and Prabhas-starrer 'Project K'. According to Variety, the hugely-anticipated Indian big-budget sci-fi film will unveil exclusive footage in the presence of talent at the San Diego Comic-Con (SDCC). Kicking off the SDCC celebration, Vijayanthi Movies will offer fans a look at the film as part of an opening night party on July 19. On July 20, the film's

team will host a panel titled "This is Project K: First Glimpse of India's Mytho-Sci-fi Epic" with Deepika, Prabhas and Haasan during which the film's full title, teaser trailer and release date will be revealed, Variety reported. Interestingly, the stars will also feature in a performance on SDCC's largest stage. "This exclusive event will transport guests into India's most ambitious cinematic universe yet with their captivating storytelling, futuristic setting, and 'Spice Punk' aesthetic inspired by the film," the producers said in a statement.

Director Ashwin also expressed excitement. He said, "We are thrilled to present 'Project K's' debut at San Diego Comic-Con. India's storytelling tradition has ancient roots, with its epics serving as the origins for many civilizations worldwide. A world as big as this needs a platform as big to introduce it to the people. Comic-Con felt like the perfect place, where the honesty and enthusiasm needed for 'Project K' will be found."

unknown new character. The USD 2 billion franchise began in 2013, with the original "The Conjuring" film, starring Patrick Wilson and Taissa Farmiga's older sister, Vera Farmiga. The original film was inspired by paranormal investigators Ed and Lorraine Warren's nonfiction book, "The Amityville Horror." "The Nun 2" will introduce new additions to the "Conjuring" universe, including Katelyn Rose Downey as Sophie, Anna Popplewell as Marcella and Storm Reid as an

## The Nun 2 Trailer Teases Returns Of 'The Conjuring' Universe



spinoff, "The Nun" in 2018. Since "The Nun," the "Conjuring" universe has released "The Curse of La Llorona," "Annabelle Comes Home" and "The Conjuring: The Devil Made Me Do It."

Directed by "The Conjuring: The Devil Made Me Do It's" Michael Chaves, "The Nun 2" was written by "M.3.G.A.N." screenwriter Akela Cooper and "Fear the Walking Dead" screenwriters Ian Goldberg and Richard Naing.

# Odisha launches District SDG Indicator Framework and SDG Website

Pradeep Kumar Panda



Hon'ble Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik launched "District SDG Indicator Framework- Odisha". He also unveiled SDG Odisha website for wider dissemination of Sustainable Development Goals across length and breadth of Odisha. Comprising of 183 indicators, the 'District SDG Indicator Framework - Odisha' is structure that is both standardized and customised to suit the unique characteristics of 30 districts of Odisha.

Odisha is one of the pioneer state in SDG implementation in the country. Odisha was one of the early adopter of State SDG Indicator framework. Odisha is first state in the country to adopt SDG based budgeting.

Together, we can. Together, we will. CM paved the way for localisation of Sustainable Development Goals and better monitoring process supported by standardised data. In all these exercises, concerned departments will work as a whole. This will help convergence of goals to achieve identified objectives in a faster, coordinated and sustainable manner.

The CM also released Department-wise Ready Reckoners, Department-wise Convergence Matrices and Mastering Metadata in the Odisha SDG Indicator Framework 2.0 series. Sustainable

Development Goals (SDG) has 17 goals and 169 targets which need to be achieved by 2030 for developing a perfectly equitable society. The district framework will target achievement of these goals at the district level with better monitoring process supported by standardised data. In all these exercises, concerned departments will work as a whole. This will help convergence of goals to achieve identified objectives in a faster, coordinated and sustainable manner.

Speaking on the occasion, the CM said that the SDGs emphasize the importance of inclusive and equitable development. In line with these goals, the policies of our PVTGs, BASUDHA and many such other



initiatives directly address the challenges highlighted by the SDGs. He further said that these initiatives have paved the way for enhancing the quality of life for every citizen. Odisha champions numerous such programs that echo a sustainable future for all. The principles of our 5T Initiative reinforce our commitment to 'Leave No One Behind'. Highlighting state's journey in achieving

these goals, he said that mirroring the principles of inclusivity, prosperity, and environmental sustainability, Odisha's transformative journey is intricately woven with a narrative that transcends geographical and societal diversities. Therefore, he said, it becomes highly imperative that we monitor our progress in precise and challenging ways. He emphasised that all these new efforts will help monitor our progress in precise ways with District Administration serving as a crucial bridge to link the global goals with local communities. This will also give uniformity and help balance our progress. He further said that Odisha's SDG journey takes centre-stage with a dedicated website

launching. The SDG-Odisha website will help paving the way for convergent efforts for all, leading to a brighter and sustainable future for our State, he added. He hoped that these efforts will be of great help to all the stakeholders in implementation of Sustainable Development Goals in our State. He thanked the Planning & Convergence Department, UN Agencies, and all other partners for the initiative. 5T Chairman VK Pandian was present at the launching programme. Speaking on the occasion, Chief secretary Pradeep Kumar Jena said that the success of SDG goals depends on our ability to monitor progress at a local level. Odisha has

initiated a 'whole of government', and a 'whole of society' approach to achieve better and quick results. Development Commissioner-cum-ACS Planning and Convergence Anu Garg, in her welcome address, said that each department has been provided with ready reckoner to work on its goals. Besides, there is also convergence of goals among departments, and standardised data called Meta Data. These efforts will enhance the ability to monitor outcomes for each scheme at local levels. Standardised data will ensure better monitoring of local outcomes, she said. Special Secretary, SDG, Planning & Convergence Department Chitra Arumugam proposed the vote of thanks.

Economist, Bhubaneswar

## The future of education lies in inclusivity, adaptability, and forward-thinking approaches



The landscape of higher education is on the cusp of revolutionary changes as 2024 begins. Emerging trends are reshaping traditional paradigms and educational institutions must be prepared to adapt to stay ahead. Following are the key trends and innovations that will redefine the educational experience in the higher education domain and provide insights into the dynamic future of learning.

Quality in hybrid learning As 2024 has arrived, the traditional boundaries of classrooms and textbooks are giving way to the liberating concept of hybrid learning models. These models seamlessly incorporate online and face-to-face interactions which represent not just a passing trend, but a long-term educational revolution. The driving force behind this significant shift is to create a flexible and relevant group of students and provide them with fluid

learning experiences. Hybrid learning not only expands the geographical reach but also caters to the diverse needs of the students by offering an overall educational journey. The growth of these models opens avenues for innovation, allowing educational entrepreneurs to create impactful courses with global reach.

Focus on mental health In 2024, the well-being and mental health of students will be given the topmost priority. Recognising the fact that mental health is integral for academic success and good quality of life, institutions are reimaging student support services. Beyond addressing mental health concerns reactively, the emphasis is now on adopting preventive measures and creating a resilient academic environment. While creating a culture of empathy and support it has to be ensured that students end up becoming resilient.

Sports, sleeping habits, spiritual guidance, and the right peer group can prove to be instrumental in this process. Upskilling and lifelong learning

The evolving landscape of work and education is driving the imperative

for lifelong learning and upskilling. Now that 2024 has arrived, traditional degree programmes are expanding to include modular and skill-based learning programmes. These programmes are designed in collaboration with industry partners to enable the professionals to continuously update their skills in response to changing industry needs. The concept of lifelong learning is transforming alumni networks into lifelong engagement models where graduates return periodically for upskilling and retraining. This shift not only benefits individuals, but also cultivates a community of engaged professionals by contributing to the institutions' reputation and appeal.

Competency-based education is gaining prominence within the educational landscape. Unlike traditional models that emphasise time-based metrics, competency education focuses on mastering specific skills and knowledge. By aligning education with the demands of the real-world, competency based education prepares students for the workforce by prioritising hands on

skills over theoretical knowledge. While implementing competency-based education poses challenges such as curriculum redesign and assessment methods, it offers a unique opportunity for new universities to stand out in the educational market. Due to its emphasis on mastering the skills, personalisation, and alignment with workforce needs, competency education is relevant and effective educational paradigm.

Evolving LMS Integrating the Learning Management Systems (LMS) with the educational domain is of utmost priority. Modern LMS platforms go beyond being repositories of course materials, incorporating artificial intelligence, data analytics, and personalised learning routes. These systems provide accessibility, flexibility and efficiency by catering to the demands of both traditional and hybrid learning models. While the initial investment in a sophisticated LMS is substantial, its long-term benefits in terms of cost savings, streamlining administration, and enhanced student experiences make it a



As Alpha in nature, all female forms are valuable, as each one creates a new life. Only the strongest or smartest male gets the chance to impregnate females. The female may either pair with one male all her life, or she may just present herself to him during the mating season. But the male, mostly, has to compete with other males for her attention by exposing himself to risk and injury when he fights rival males or when he displays his colours or plumage, in full view of predators. However, among humans, the effort has been to overturn this law of nature, which is discernible in the different forms of vivaha or marriage.

The second wife, Satyavati, demands that her children, not Ganga's, are declared heirs. Satyavati gets daughters-in-law very differently: she orders her stepson, Devavrata, to simply kidnap them. Kunti selects her husband while Madri is purchased. Gandhari's father is approached for her hand in marriage, but she is not told that her husband is blind. Kunti's daughter-in-law, Draupadi, is a trophy of an archery contest and ends up being shared by the five Pandava brothers. Thus, we see a clear shift in the status of women from one generation to another.

In the Adbhuta Ramayana, Sita is described as slaying a demon with a hundred heads, suggesting that she is capable of easily slaying Ravana who has only 10, but chooses to downplay her power to establish Rama as God. But, modern storytellers — even on TV — prefer versions that portray her as a weak woman who breaks down when Rama abandons her. They refuse to highlight Sita, who comfortably raises her children alone in the forest, just like Shakuntala, Hidimbi and Kunti. Apparently, men still want women to be victims, needing to be rescued, as dependent creatures, unlike the female in nature, who is quite capable of taking care of herself and her family.

Psychiatrist, The Brain Foundation, Purighat Road, Cuttack, Mob. : 9132433333



vivaha, where the girl is raped while she is asleep. In the Mahabharata, Shantanu cannot get wives he loves until he gives them what they want. His first wife, Ganga, demands complete freedom, which includes killing their newborns.

The second wife, Satyavati, demands that her children, not Ganga's, are declared heirs. Satyavati gets daughters-in-law very differently: she orders her stepson, Devavrata, to simply kidnap them. Kunti selects her husband while Madri is purchased. Gandhari's father is approached for her hand in marriage, but she is not told that her husband is blind. Kunti's daughter-in-law, Draupadi, is a trophy of an archery contest and ends up being shared by the five Pandava brothers. Thus, we see a clear shift in the status of women from one generation to another.

The Mahabharata informs us that there was a time when women and men were free to go to whoever they pleased. Apsaras make love to rishis and simply walk away, often leaving them to take care of their young. Urvashi curses Arjuna that his genitals will fall off because he does not satisfy her.

The Bhagavata Purana tells the story of Usha, a princess who kidnaps Krishna's grandson, Aniruddha, because he is so handsome. Also in the Mahabharata is the story of the origin of marriage. Shvetaketu discovers his mother in the arms of another man, but the father, Uddalaka, is not upset. Shvetaketu wonders how he can be sure that he is his father's son. So, he institutes the

# Intach Cuttack Team Come Upon Ancient Maritime Light Post in Prachi Valley

**Cuttack (KCN):** A team from the Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage Cuttack Chapter have stumbled upon the ruins of an ancient maritime Lamp post in Telikuda Village of Kakatpur Block in Puri district. The broken lamppost was discovered in a neglected condition over a sand dune on the bank of Kadua River near its estuarine point. The existence of the lamp post was reported to the Intach's Cuttack Chapter by a local heritage enthusiast Satyajit Swain. The remnants on the top of the sand dune were discovered when the place was cleared of vegetation for making a temple. A team from

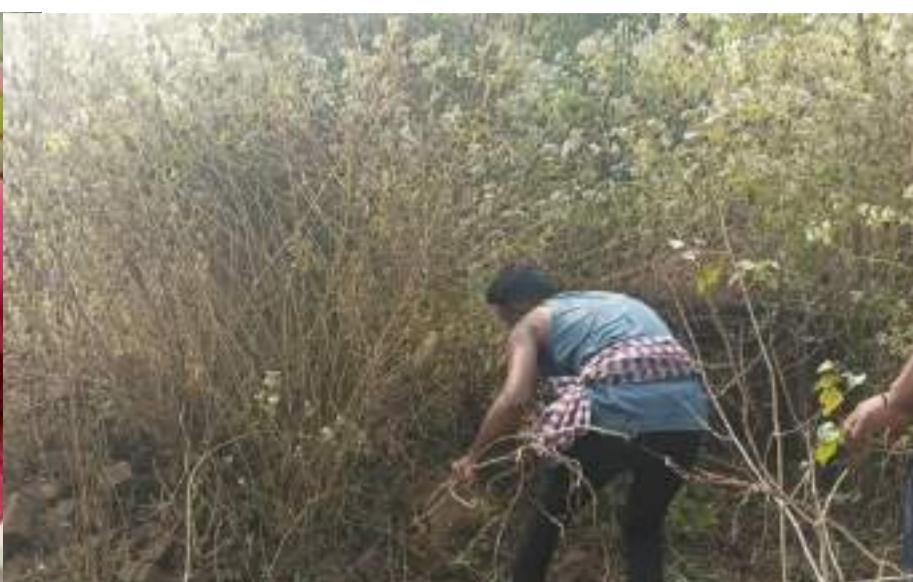
INTACH, lead by Deepak Kumar Nayak which included Anil Dhir, Biswajit Mohanty and Bikram Nayak had gone to Telikuda village to document this historical site. The lamppost was constructed using burnt bricks and stone slabs. The post had collapsed few decades back and locals had repaired it using cement plaster and bricks. However, the old bricks and stone slabs are still present in the foundation and lower portion of the fallen tower.

According to Deepak Nayak, the Co-Convenor of INTACH's Cuttack Chapter, the finding of this ancient light post can shed new light on the maritime history of Odisha. Information



gathered from the locals revealed that there was a pillar like abandoned structure on the top of the sand dune since ancient times. The post was nearly 15 feet in height and was known as the 'Alua Khunti'. A fire would be lit on the

platform atop the pillar which used to act as a navigation beacon for the boats that passed through the Kadua river on the way to the sea in ancient days. The Kadua, a distributary of ancient Prachi River, was in ancient times



navigable and had a flourishing maritime activity. The accounts of both the Prachi Mahatmya and Kapila Samhita mention the River Chitrotapala which flowed in the same path as the present day Kadua. The 7th Century CE

Chinese traveller Hieu Tsang possibly went through this waterway to reach the port of 'Cheli-to-la' close to Konark, Nayak has said. According to Anil Dhir, the Convenor of INTACH Bhubaneswar Chapter, who had earlier

documented the entire archaeological remains of the Prachi Valley, this find further establishes the rich maritime activity which was prevalent in the Prachi Valley in ancient days. Dhir has already documented around 140 temples, 80

Mutts, 40 Ghats, Ports and Anchorages, River Forts etc. in his earlier surveys. The team had also discovered some very interesting archaeological remains near the lamppost. Out of them, a very old stone lamp, red black ware potsherds, fragments of religious sculptures are of interest. Er. Gopal Behera, the Convenor of the Cuttack Chapter is writing to the authorities and the ASI for making an expert study of the site. He said that this ancient vestige should be properly conserved and restored. There is certainty that much more will be yielded if a proper survey and archaeological excavation is conducted at the place.

## Economic & Trade Development promotion push in J&K by ICC

**Kolkata (PARTHA ROY):** A new Chapter on promotion of economic and trade development in Jammu and Kashmir initiated by India's premier Business & Industry association Indian Chamber of Commerce (ICC) when it announced setting up of its J&K Chapter recently to focus on economic development of the union territory. ICC has appointed Mr. Khalid Wani as its Chairman of Jammu and Kashmir State Council. ICC has been promoting economic and trade development in India since its establishment in 1925 in Kolkata.

ICC has office in 11 locations in India, including New Delhi, Mumbai, Hyderabad, Chennai, Guwahati, Patna, Ranchi, Siliguri, Agartala and Guwahati as well as in a few foreign countries. Ameya Prabhu, President of ICC highlighted "The ICC's focus on elevating specific regions, such as Jammu and Kashmir, is part of our broader vision for fostering economic growth across India. We believe in creating partnerships that drive innovation and shared prosperity. As we witness the strategic elevation of Jammu & Kashmir, the appointment of Mr. Khalid Wani is a step

in our commitment to fostering strong business ties in the region. We are confident that under his leadership, ICC will play a pivotal role in driving economic development in Jammu and Kashmir."

Mr. Khalid Wani, presently serving as the Senior Director at Western Digital, spearheads the company's operations in India and South Asia. As a vital member of the 6-member India leadership committee, he oversees a substantial 3000+ R&D and engineering facilities in the region. He has over two decades of experience spanning the Middle East, Africa and Asia Pacific.

India's EV market is rapidly expanding. This initiative forms a crucial part of VinFast's strategy to establish a strong presence in key markets and strengthen its supply chain for global expansion. Established in 2017, VinFast already has made its marked presence in global automobile manufacturing market. The establishment of VinFast's integrated electric vehicle facility in Tamil Nadu is expected to generate approximately 3,000 - 3,500 employment locally. Situated in Thoothukudi, VinFast Tamil Nadu project aims to have annual production capacity of up to 150,000 units. Construction of the plant is expected to begin in 2024.

The project aligns with the government's initiatives to minimize carbon emissions in the transportation sector. Ms. Tran Mai Hoa, Deputy CEO of Sales and Marketing, VinFast Global shared: "The MoU demonstrates VinFast's strong commitment to the sustainable development and vision of a zero-emission transportation future. We believe that investing in Tamil Nadu will not only bring considerable economic benefits to both parties, but will also help accelerate the green energy transition in India and the region."

Mr. Thallikotai Raju Balu Rajaa, Minister of Industries of the Government of Tamil Nadu, said: "EV manufacturing companies are not only important economic drivers but also powerful accelerators to the State's green vision. We are delighted that VinFast has chosen to invest in Tamil Nadu to establish its integrated EV facility. Possessing robust capabilities and unwavering commitment to a sustainable future, I believe that VinFast will emerge as a reliable economic partner and substantial contributor to Tamil Nadu's long-term development."

VinFast's green transportation development project is its third manufacturing project and the largest investment in Tamil Nadu's history. Government of Tamil Nadu will be providing cleared land for the manufacturing facilities, uninterrupted power supply, and other infrastructure support on a best-effort basis. VinFast plans to have a nationwide dealership network to establish a strong brand presence and swiftly connect with customers across India. VinFast is in discussion with TN Government and planning to set up EV charging station across the state.

The project is part of Comprehensive Strategic Partnership and will be strengthening relationship between Vietnam and India.

## VinFast to build Integrated Electric Vehicle Facility in TN strengthening Vietnam & India economic partnership



The Vice President and Chairman, Rajya Sabha, Shri Jagdeep Dhankhar graced the inauguration ceremony

## GROWTH IN SER'S FREIGHT LOADING AND EARNINGS

**Kolkata (KCN):** South Eastern Railway (SER) loaded a total 154.37 million tonnes of originating freight in the first nine months (April-December) of the current financial year (2023-24) registering a growth of 3.46% in comparison to the corresponding period of previous financial year. During this period, the revenue generated from originating freight

loading also increased to Rs 13919.84 crore as against Rs. 13314.64 crore in the same period of the previous year. Hence, the earnings from freight loading enhanced by 4.55% for SER.

SER also registered growth in earnings from loading of Coal, Iron ore and Fertiliser in the first nine months i.e. April to December of the current

financial year (2023-24). During this period, SER earned Rs 4256.33 crore from Coal loading, which is 6.14% more than the corresponding period of the previous fiscal.

The main commodities of freight loading during this period included Iron Ore, Coal, Pig Iron & Finished Steel, Cement, Fertilisers, Petroleum Products etc.

## 21 Indian Fishermen Detained By Sri Lanka For "Illegal Poaching" Released

**Chennai (KCN):** As many as 21 Indian fishermen were repatriated from Sri Lanka to Chennai on Friday, the Indian High Commission in Sri Lanka informed through a statement. They were detained by the Sri Lankan Navy for allegedly being involved in illegal poaching in the Lankan waters.

At least 33 Indian trawlers and 220 Indian fishermen were apprehended by the Sri Lankan Navy in 2023, the Sri Lankan Navy said in a statement back in December, last year. Six Indian fishermen from Tamil Nadu were arrested by the Lankan Navy in December.

In a separate incident in the same month, 25 fishermen -- 12 from Tamil Nadu and 13 from Puducherry -- were also detained by the Sri Lankan navy. The arrests of Indian fishermen by the Lankan navy in the recent past have been a matter of concern not just for the Centre but also the Tamil Nadu government.

# Tribal Dance Fest Takes Off

**Bhubaneswar(KCN):** The 13th National Tribal Dance Festival and National Tribal Craft Mela, an annual extravaganza of Indian Tribal culture, takes off on Friday at IDCO Exhibition Ground, Unit-3, Bhubaneswar. The program was inaugurated by Jagannath Saraka, Minister ST & SC Development, Minorities and Backward Classes Welfare, Government of Odisha.

The 3-Day National Tribal Dance Festival from 5-7 January 2024, 6.30 PM – 8.30 PM, will showcase diverse & vibrant tribal dance forms from different corners of the country. Similarly, the National Tribal Craft Mela being organized from 5-11 January 2024, brings together a kaleidoscope

of colors & skills that pay homage to the rich cultural heritage of our tribal communities. The Craft Mela shall remain open from 2:30 PM – 9:00 PM.

"Tribal Communities brings a unique & diverse cultural heritage. Today the new generations are also demonstrating their talent in various fields bringing honor to the communities. Researchers are also showing keen interest to study & disseminate on the tribal culture thus connecting the unique heritage of the indigenous people with the world. The National Tribal Dance & Craft Mela at Bhubaneswar has become a confluence bringing the artists & artisans of the Indian tribal communities together," Said Shri Saraka at the inaugural



ceremony. The inaugural event was also graced by Roopa Roshan Sahoo, Secretary ST & SC Development, Indramani Tripathy, Director Tribal Affairs and SCSTRTI, Santosh Rath, Deputy Director and Samarendra Bhutia, OSD of SCSTRTI. At the occasion an

anthology on painting of tribal artist from Odisha, titled 'Shades on Canvas' was released at the program. The Coffee Table-Book published by SCSTRTI captures the artistic imaginations of 26 young tribal artists of Odisha, vividly showcasing tribal art, culture & lifestyle of the

communities on canvas. This unique event, organized by SCSTRTI under, ST & SC Development, Minorities & Backward Class Welfare Department, Government of Odisha is supported by Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Government of India. The event brings

traditional artifacts. Over 70 stalls are stocked with their products attracting visitors & craft lovers. Apart from this, tribal artists from 14 states, including Odisha, will be displaying various traditional performances. The festival, is being organized for 13 years spreading a wide outreach on Indian tribal art & culture.

A diverse array of handicraft items like iron craft of Chhattisgarh, bamboo craft of Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Sikkim and Gujarat, Handloom and Textile of Assam, Manipur and Jharkhand, Embroidery work of Tamil Nadu, Mooj Grass Products of Uttarakhand, Wood craft of Uttar Pradesh, Tribal Jewellery of Manipur, Assam and Madhya Pradesh are the key attractions at the

National Tribal Craft Mela 2024. Odisha, having 62 types of tribal communities including 13 Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs), showcases the unique artifacts at this national event. This year 16 tribal crafts of Odisha like embroidery work of Dongria Kandha, Textile and Bead works of Bonda & Comb making of Kutia Kandha etc are being demonstrated live by the tribal artisans at the Mela. Tribal artists from different states of India performed their unique dance forms at the inaugural evening. It featured Dhemsia Dance of Gadaba Tribe (Odisha), Mishmi Mix Folk Dance of Mishmi Tribe (Arunachal Pradesh), Kahadiya Dance of Kunbi Tribe (Gujarat) etc drawing the attention of the visitors.

## Ajoy Kumar Hits BJD, BJP

**Bhubaneswar(KCN):** Senior Congress leader and Odisha Pradesh Congress Committee (OPCC) in-charge Ajoy Kumar today slammed both Governing BJD and BJP alleging both parties looting the State.

Dr. Kumar, who has been given the responsibility of Odisha Congress recently, received a rousing welcome from the Congress leaders and workers here on his maiden visit to Odisha after the appointment. From Biju Patnaik International Airport, Dr. Kumar proceeded to Congress Bhawan in a grand procession through Hospital Square, Sishu Bhawan Square, Rajmahal Square and Master Canteen Square. An impressive bike rally was organised by the party.

The OPCC organised a welcome ceremony at the Congress Bhawan for Dr. Kumar.

Speaking to media persons, the OPCC in-



charge said Congress will work with a slogan, 'Odisha for Odias.' Outsiders like BJD and BJP should not rule the State.

Alleging that people from outside the state have captured important jobs, mining operations and politics, the senior Congress leader claimed that Odisha is virtually being run by political outsiders who must be ousted in order to uphold Odia pride and save the state. People of Odisha want the affairs of the state to be run by those from the state, he said.

"There is an undeclared jugalbandi between BJD and BJP in Odisha. This jugalbandi is harmful for

Odisha. The outsiders are running the State but no one is speaking about it. In all spheres whether it is in politics or contracting, business and employment, outsiders are ripping the benefit. Then where will the people of Odisha go?" Dr. Kumar asked. Quoting Abraham Lincoln, the Congress leader said, 'This State is for Odia, by Odia and of Odia ... no outsiders.' "As per our survey, Congress is in a very strong position with at least 70 Assembly seats while there is a strong fight position in another 15 seats. In Lok Sabha seats, we are in a strong position in 12 to 15

constituencies," claimed Dr. Kumar. "If one can see the voting pattern in Rajya Sabha and there is no ED raid on any Minister's properties in Odisha, it indicates that both BJD and BJP are on one side. While other state IAS officers' VRS applications were remaining pending for long long days, in Odisha, the application was approved in three days," he said.

So, Congress is united to fight with both the BJD and BJP in Odisha, which is a holy land, he said. "I left my Lok Sabha constituency for Odisha. AICC told me to fight for Odisha because this state is more important than the LS seat," said the Top Cop turned politician.

The ticket will be given on the basis of winnability only. Those who left the party and were not in contact with BJP or BJD will be welcomed back to the Congress, he added.

## Odisha government announces substantial hike in ex gratia for wildlife attack victims

**B H U B A N E S W A R :** Odisha government on Wednesday announced a substantial hike in ex gratia compensation for damage to life and property in wildlife attacks, in a decision that seeks to address growing man-animal conflict in the state.

Now, kin of people losing their lives in human-wildlife conflicts will be entitled to a compensation of Rs 6 lakh, up from Rs 4 lakh earlier. Similarly, existing compassionate grant of Rs 1 lakh, provided for permanent injury in wild animal attacks, stands hiked to Rs 2.5 lakh for suffering disability of more than 60 per cent and Rs 1.5 lakh for less than 60 per cent disability.

The Chief Minister's Office (CMO) said, the compassionate grant provided for permanent injury, temporary injury,

loss of property and crop damage has also been increased significantly as a measure to check escalation of conflicts. The announcement comes days after The New Indian Express carried a report 'Man-Animal Conflict: Too much pain, too little relief' highlighting how poor compassionate grant is forcing people with permanent injuries to live in misery, making the crisis worse in the state. PCCF (Wildlife) SK Popli said with the fresh announcement, Odisha's compassionate grant has become highest among states in the east-central belt. "Our compassionate grant for those permanently injured is also one of the highest in the country," he said.

As per the notification, people who suffer temporary injuries will be provided free treatment and a compensation of Rs

5,000, while those in need of treatment of more than a week will be provided free treatment and financial aid of Rs 10,000. The PCCF said compensation for loss of livestock in wild animal attack has also been raised to Rs 37,500 for cow and buffalo and Rs 32,000 for bullock against the existing assistance of Rs 5,000.

The compassionate grant for crop damage has also been doubled. As per the notification, financial assistance provided to farmers for loss to paddy and cereal crops in wild animal attacks has been increased to Rs 20,000 from existing Rs 10,000 per acre. Similarly, compensation for cash crops has been hiked to Rs 25,000 from existing Rs 12,000 per acre.

Moreover, financial assistance for partial

damage to house in wild animal attack, which was Rs 2,000 till now, has been increased to Rs 10,000, while assistance for complete damage of house, which was Rs 10,000 has been hiked to Rs 20,000.

Provision of a house under Biju Pucca Ghar for permanent damage to property is still there. However, the government has decided an amount equivalent to the pucca ghar will be given where it is not possible to provide the victim with a concrete dwelling, forest officials said.

Rs 6 lakh ex gratia for kin of people losing lives in man-animal conflict Rs 2.5 lakh for suffering disability of over 60 % Rs 1.5 lakh for suffering disability of less than 60 %

Rs 10,000 and free treatment for those who suffer temporary injuries

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## Khimji Jewellers wins big at the Retail Jeweller MD & CEO awards 2024!

**Bhubhaneswar (KCN):** The Jewel of Odisha's business community, legacy jewellery brand Khimji Jewellers has been awarded the prestigious Regional Retail Chain of the Year (East) award by the Retail Jeweller, MD & CEO Awards for outstanding work in the jewellery industry from the Eastern region of India.

The prestigious award was accepted by Mr. Mitesh Khimji, Director, Khimji Jewellers by the hands of celebrated Bollywood actress Sanya Malhotra and Miss India International 2021 winner and actress



Zoya Afroz.

The august gathering in Mumbai included MDs and CEOs of the largest jewellery brands in India who are considered to be the drivers of growth for the industry and

whose notable contributions have ensured that the jewellery industry continues to be one of the strongest pillars of the economy of India. The official knowledge partner and auditor for the event was

consulting firm Deloitte adding an increased sense of recognition, victory as well as responsibility for Khimji Jewellers to carry on with larger gumption and continue to be the flagbearer of business success for the brand in East India. Khimji Jewellers currently has 9 stores in Odisha and is the largest retail chain jeweller in the state. Delighted with the win, Mitesh Khimji said, “

We are honoured to have been recognized by such an elite gathering of the jewellery industry. Being recognized amongst our peers is a testament to our commitment towards our values, our hard work, our sincerity, our products and our customer friendly policies. These values and actions separate us from everyone else in the market and the entire credit goes to our team of over 1100 people!”

The brand is geared up to achieve more milestones in this new year and potential expansion deeper into Odisha.

## Flipkart's Shopsy Summer Store steers tremendous growth for sellers in Odisha

**Bhubhaneswar:** As the summer starts rolling in, Shopsy - Flipkart's social commerce platform, recently launched the Summer Store, a unique curation to address customers' nuanced seasonal needs by offering a wide range of products across categories under one umbrella. As a testimony to this endeavor, sellers in Cuttack recorded nearly a 9X growth in sales and sellers in Puri recorded nearly a 16X growth in sales bolstered by the summer store initiative. Sellers in Sundergarh have garnered a tremendous 34X growth in their sales over the past month. The summer store recorded increased traction from women buyers which indicates a positive women reseller growth

in Cuttack. Amongst several categories, Hygiene and Wellness, Fashion, Kitchenware and Home Decor emerged as top priorities for customers with demand for products such as deodorants, sunglasses, body washes, essential oils, sarees, table covers, bedsheets and kitchen tools topping the charts.

Shopsy Summer Store is a one-stop-shop for products ranging from electronics, personal care, baby care, food and beverages, apparel, swimwear and kitchenware including air conditioners, deodorants, baby sunscreen, aerated drinks, cotton clothes for men and women, swimsuits and juicer mixer grinders. Of this, deodorants have taken up

the major share of the demand pie clocking over 50% growth, followed by sunglasses which grew by close to 22%. Kitchen tools also contributed to a 6X growth over the past month in Cuttack. This was followed by categories such as kurta sets, cotton sarees, deodorants and body washes that witnessed a 3X jump over the past month in Puri.

Shopsy aims to continue its endeavor to offer a wide range of quality and engaging products for customers at affordable prices, while being a value-based and reliable platform. By providing a simplified social media interface, Shopsy is able to overcome user apprehension of trust and authenticity while shopping online.

## Walkathon organized by Shanti Memorial Hospital on the occasion of World hypertension day

**Bhubhaneswar:** In observance of World Hypertension Day 2022 - commemorated every May 17th, to create awareness amongst people, a walkathon was organized by Shanti Memorial Hospital, Cuttack which covered some important roads of Cuttack city on the day. The walkathon was flagged off by Dr. Sreejoy Patnaik, Chairman & Managing Director and Prof. Dr. Rekha Das, Executive Director of the hospital after a briefing on the purpose of the observation day presented by Dr. Priyadarshi Tripathy, Cardiologist of the hospital. More than 150 employees joined the walkathon with plaque cards and banners carrying awareness message on hypertension prevention and treatment to communicate to the public the importance of hypertension and its serious medical complications, and to provide information on prevention, detection and treatment.

World Hypertension Day was first inaugurated in May 2005 ever since it has become an annual event. The main purpose behind the celebration of the World Hypertension Day is to promote public awareness of hypertension and to encourage citizens of all countries to prevent and control this silent killer, the modern epidemic. Later at Shanti Memorial Hospital, a free hypertension check-up camp was held in which around 100 persons checked their blood pressure and received free consultation.

## Ecom Express announces 55,000 registrations for its Delivery Partner Program

**Bhubhaneswar / Gurugram:** Ecom Express Limited, a new-age technology-driven end-to-end logistics solutions provider to the e-commerce industry, announced that it has crossed 55,000 gig workers registration on their dedicated appalled 'EcomSanjeev' to onboard delivery partners since its launch in September 2021.

The company's delivery partner program aims to create part-time work opportunities for individuals with the option of flexible timings to maximize their earnings by delivering e-commerce shipments to customers. Delivery Partners working through Ecom Express' gig model can earn

anywhere between Rs. 15,000 to Rs. 60,000 per month.

Close to 60 per cent of registrations have been from Tier 4 cities and towns, indicating massive affinity for gig opportunities in those areas. The top 10 cities/towns with the highest registrations include from Delhi, Bengaluru, Mumbai, Hyderabad, Chennai, Kolkata, Pune, Lucknow, Gurugram and Patna.

In Odisha, over 4000 gig-workers have registered for part time engagement as delivery partners with Ecom Express. Most of the registrations have been from Bhubaneshwar, Cuttack, Rourkela, Berhampur and Sambalpur among other

cities. Saurabh Deep Singla, Chief People Officer, Ecom Express said, "Since the launch of our ESP program last year, we have created opportunities for students, homemakers and individuals looking to supplement and maximize their income by delivering e-commerce shipments during their spare time. This flagship program, besides empowering gig workforce, also helped the company to scale their delivery capabilities in assuring speed, reliability, and effective logistics solutions to deliver online-ordered products at end-customers' doorstep safely."

The company has also

announced provision of accidental insurance of Rs. 2 lakhs to safeguard delivery partners from any mishaps, besides offering a host of other benefits, including attendance bonus depending on their work continuity. Referral programs are run from time to time to expand the delivery partner base while rewarding the existing partners. To create stronger affiliation with delivery partners, Ecom Express has further collaborated with leading brands to provide numerous enticing benefits.

Any individual, male or female, fresher or experienced, can earn extra income by applying for this part-time job online using the

app, Ecom Sanjeev, available on Google Playstore. They will have the flexibility to choose their preferred time slots and workdays.

To join as a Delivery Partner with Ecom Express, candidates must possess a valid Aadhaar card, preferably own vehicle, and have a smartphone. Ecom Express also allows gig workers who don't have any owned vehicle to register themselves and work. All personal documents for enrollment can be uploaded through the Ecom Sanjeev app and the verification (PAN card, Bank account) is done online along with physical document verification at the nearest Ecom Express center.

## Navi Finserv Limited is planning to raise ₹600 crore through public issuance of Non-Convertible Debentures

**Bengaluru:**

Navi Finserv Limited (NFS), a wholly owned subsidiary of Navi Technologies Limited (Navi), today announced the public issue of Secured, Rated, Listed & Redeemable Non-Convertible Debentures (NCDs) amounting to ₹600 crore with a base issue of ₹300 crore and an option to retain over-subscription of another ₹300 crore. The issue will open on Monday 23rd May, 2022 and is scheduled to close on Friday, 10th June 10, 2022 with an option of early closure or extension.

The proposed NCDs

with an effective yield of upto 9.80%\* and a minimum application size of ₹10,000.

Speaking about the NCD issue, Ankit Agarwal, Managing Director of NFS said, "The upcoming NCD issue aims to raise funds for onward lending and financing purposes. This will further diversify our borrowing profile and add more retail investors to our portfolio to complement our wide base of institutional partners. This is a secured instrument with A (stable) rating, a low application size and an effective yield of upto 9.80%\*.

Sachin Bansal, Chairman & CEO of NFS added: "At Navi, our mission is to provide financial products that are simple, affordable and accessible. I believe that our customer centric and technology first approach along with our array of instruments such as NCDs, sub-debt, term loans, market linked debentures, commercial papers and, securitisation instruments such as PTCs.

NFS has maintained a strong asset quality reflected by its Net NPA of 0.08% (as on December 31, 2021), which is supported by a collections efficiency of 96.63% (for personal loans disbursed subsequent to April 1, 2021 till December 31, 2021). Its outstanding borrowings on a standalone basis of ₹27,749.76 million as of March 31, 2022 was diversified across an array of instruments such as NCDs, sub-debt, term loans, market linked debentures, commercial papers and, securitisation instruments such as PTCs.

## JioPhone Next 'Exchange to Upgrade' Offer

**Bhubhaneswar:**

Reliance Retail has launched a limited period Exchange to Upgrade offer for JioPhone Next. As per the offer, customers can exchange a functional 4G featurephone or smartphone for a brand new JioPhone Next for just ₹4,499.

The JioPhone Next 'Exchange to Upgrade' offer allows many more Indians to embrace a truly smart Digital Life. With this offer, existing 4G feature phone and smartphone users will no longer be held back by their device constraints and be able to enjoy the true 4G Jio Digital Life to the fullest. Current users of 4G feature phones will now be able

to migrate much more easily to the large screen digital experience on the world's most affordable 4G smartphone. Similarly, the current 4G low-end smartphone users too can affordably upgrade to a seamless and enhanced digital life offer by JioPhone Next which runs on Pragati OS – the optimised version of Android that supports a rich suite of applications and usage without compromising on the user experience.

The offer is available through Reliance Retail's extensive network of JioMart Digital, Reliance Digital and other outlets in the remotest corners of the country, making it geographically and economically accessible to many more Indians. It is worth mentioning here that JioPhone Next, designed jointly by Jio and Google, is the world's most affordable 4G smartphone that comes with a 5.45" HD screen with Corning Gorilla Glass 3 and anti-fingerprint coating, 2GB RAM, 32 GB in-built storage (expandable up to 512GB), 13MP back camera, 8MP front selfie camera, 3500 mAh battery, and a range of other advanced features which include voice fast capabilities, read aloud, translate now, easy and smart camera, automatic feature update, easy media share, OTG support etc.

## JK Lakshmi Cement Posted Net Profit up at ₹ 161.26 Cr. in Jan-Mar.22

**Bhubhaneswar:**

JK Lakshmi Cement Ltd., one of the leading cement companies of India, recorded a turnover of ₹1497.64 crore in Jan-Mar.22 with an increase of 13% over ₹1321.99 crore in the corresponding quarter Jan-Mar.21. Despite unabated increase in Petcoke and Diesel prices which are hovering at all time high, JK Lakshmi Cement could achieve healthy profitability by continuous improvement in operational

efficiencies, energy cost, better product mix and higher volume. JK Lakshmi Cement's EBITDA before Other Income moved up to ₹276.23 crore in Jan-Mar.22 from ₹267.88 crore in Jan-Mar.21. After providing for interest, depreciation & Exceptional Item, PBT stood at ₹197.93 crore in Jan-Mar.22 as against ₹186.53 crore in Jan-Mar.21. After Providing for Taxes and Other Comprehensive Income, JK Lakshmi Cement's Profit was up at ₹161.26 crore in Jan-Mar.22 against ₹138.27 crore logged in the corresponding quarter. During the twelve months April 121 – March 22 Company's Sales increased by 15% to ₹5040.78 crore (₹4384.71 crore) and EBITDA was up at ₹868.52 crore (₹864.22 crore). JK Lakshmi Cement's profit at PAT level during this period moved up by 14% to touch all time high at ₹417.56 crore against profit of ₹366.24 crore in the same period last year.

## Ambuja Cements and ACC's ChangeTheStory campaign wins Bronze at the ABBY Awards

**Mumbai:** The first sustainability campaign 'Change The Story' of Ambuja Cements and ACC, has won a Bronze Award at the recent ABBY Awards 2022, under the Green Award category. This category is awarded to outstanding communication that features planet conservation, sustainability etc. The

"Change The Story" campaign aimed to create awareness about sustainability and showcase technology-backed solutions that offer effective and measurable outcomes in this regard.

The #ChangeTheStory campaign highlights a non-invasive bubble barrier technology, which will remove around 2,400 tonnes of

plastic waste from Agra's Mantola canal, thereby preventing its entry into the Yamuna river. The crux of the campaign lay in reaching out to a wide audience across India and globally—and communicating the campaign's features. The campaign winning this honour at the ABBY Awards—often touted as the Oscars of Indian advertising—was a

designed in collaboration with Alok Nanda and Company and serves as another reminder of the crucial role sustainability plays at Ambuja Cements and ACC.

#ChangeTheStory campaign was rolled out across multiple platforms, including print and digital, reaching out to an approximate 32 million people. One of its lead video films conveyed the

message, through the lens of a scientist, that it's time to change the story by taking out the plastic and freeing our rivers of their polluted past. The campaign further leveraged the power of music and created a rap song across owned platforms featuring the campaign mnemonic "Bubble Sharm". This was followed by a bouquet of informative posts and

videos on social media. ACC and Ambuja Cements collaborated with micro and nano influencers to drive engagement around the bubble barrier technology.

The two companies were the first to launch an augmented reality-based game in India, which created an immersive experience for users by illustrating the state of marine plastic pollution

and the basic functioning of the Bubble Barrier technology. This game convinces the user to play their role in driving change by encouraging players to "bubble pop" their way to cleaner oceans and safer habitats for marine organisms.

Mr. Neeraj Akhoury, CEO India Holcim and Managing Director & CEO of Ambuja Cements Ltd., said that the



# Schedule clash 'a cock-up, but SA20 has to happen' says Conrad

**NEW DELHI:** Shukri Conrad isn't short on sharp ideas. "We might have to practise a lot of our mankading skills..." His audience, reporters at Newlands on Thursday after the second Test between South Africa and India, were left hanging for a second or three before he took the edge off the moment with "...only joking."

The levity faded fast as Conrad said: "It's still South Africa who are going there. We don't sing a different national anthem. We don't wear a different blazer. We're going to give our best shot. I hate the fact that South Africa go as underdogs because I

don't think we should ever be underdogs, but we do go as underdogs. Let's not fool ourselves." Conrad was referring to the strength of the squad he has selected for the men's Test series in New Zealand next month. The rubber clashes with the SA20, which South Africa's CSA-contracted players are compelled to make their top priority. Consequently the Test squad has been significantly impacted: half of the 14 are uncapped, including captain Neil Brand.

Of the squad in the series against India that ended on Thursday, only David Bedingham and Keegan Petersen will be in New Zealand. The 16 players

who turned out in the two Tests against India have more than seven times as many caps between them as those who will be in action in Mount Maunganui and Hamilton from February 4 to 17. Hence Conrad's quip about employing unorthodox tactics like bowlers' runout attempts at the non-striker's end. But no-one is laughing about the alarm far and wide over the damage T20 leagues are causing to the oldest format. A leading voice has been Steve Waugh's, who asked on social media: "Is this a defining moment in the death of Test cricket?" In an interview with the Sydney Morning Herald,



Waugh was quoted as saying "obviously they don't care" with reference to what the ICC and the game's more prominent national boards are doing to

remedy the situation. "I don't think Steve Waugh is going to care what I say, but I love how everybody outside of South Africa has become experts on South African

cricket," Conrad said. "Our hand's been forced. Yes, there was a cock-up ... sorry, a balls-up ... somebody got it wrong with the scheduling, and this is why we find

ourselves in this position. But the SA20 has to happen. It is the lifeblood and it's going to continue to be the lifeblood of South African cricket. If it doesn't happen we won't have Test cricket. "It's unfortunate that it is the way it is, but we all saw the value of the league last year. We've got to find a way to coexist with it and with leagues around the world, to ensure sustainability. Maybe there are powers higher up who also need to start taking new stances on where Test cricket sits for nations outside the big three."

South Africa's cricket industry is chronically unstable financially. In

September, CSA declared losses of USD 4.4-million. And that was held up as good news - a bigger deficit had been anticipated. The SA20 turned an unexpected profit in last year's inaugural edition, USD 1.9-million of which went to CSA. That's USD 300,000 more than Australia earned for beating India in the WTC final at the Oval in June. The truth is cricket in South Africa needs money more than it needs WTC points. Burning 24 of them in New Zealand, should that happen, isn't too high a price to pay for another SA20 windfall. No, that isn't a joke.



Australia celebrate with the Benaud-Qadir trophy

## Mujeeb returns to Afghanistan squad for India T20Is

**NEW DELHI:** Mujeeb Ur Rahman, who has been in the news recently for his run-in with the Afghanistan Cricket Board, has been included in the national team squad for the upcoming three-match T20I series against India.

Mujeeb, along with Fazalhaq Farooqi and Naveen-ul-Haq, refused to sign the central contract for 2024. Mujeeb also missed the T20I series against the UAE to take part in the Big Bash League tournament while the other two played in the series, having held talks with the board. The ACB then revoked his No Objection Certificate, which brought an abrupt end to the 22-year old's stint in the BBL.

Rashid Khan, the regular T20I captain, is also part

of the 19-member squad but his participation in the series is in doubt as he continues to recover from a back surgery he underwent recently. Ibrahim Zadran will lead the team in the three-match series against India. Ikram Alikhil is also part of the squad, as the backup wicket-keeper batter, having been in the reserves for the UAE series. Afghanistan squad: Ibrahim Zadran (C),

Rahmanullah Gurbaz (WK), Ikram Alikhil (WK), Hazratullah Zazai, Rahmat Shah, Najibullah Zadran, Mohammad Nabi, Karim Janat, Azmaullah Omarzai, Sharafuddin Ashraf, Mujeeb Ur Rahman, Fazal Haq Farooqi, Fareed Ahmad, Naveen Ul Haq, Noor Ahmad, Mohammad Saleem, Qais Ahmad, Gulbadin Naib and Rashid Khan.

ACB chairman Mirwais

Ashraf said: "We are delighted to be embarking on our maiden tour to India for a three-match series. India is the top-ranked side in the world and it's very pleasing to witness Afgan Atalan competing in a three-match T20I against them. We believe that Afghanistan are no longer underdogs & have excelled well in the recent past and we look forward to a highly competitive series against India."

The opening game of the series will be played in Mohali on January 11. This will be followed by matches in Indore and Bengaluru on January 14 and 17 respectively. India are the No.1 ranked team in the T20I format while Afghanistan are placed in the 10th position.

## T20 World Cup: New York to host marquee India v Pakistan clash

**NEW DELHI:** A 34,000-seater pop-up facility about 30 miles east of New York will host the marquee clash between India and Pakistan on June 9 during the T20 World Cup 2024. The development, about which Cricbuzz had reported back in September, was announced by the ICC while unveiling the schedule for the ninth edition of the T20 World Cup, which will be played across six venues in the West Indies and three in the USA from June 1.

The Kensington Oval in Barbados will host the final on Saturday, June 29. The venue will also witness arch-rivals England going up against Australia on June 8. The full schedule is here.

The facility in New York, which has been

erected in the Eisenhower Park, will also host India's Group A matches against Ireland and the USA. In fact, 10 of the 20 teams will play their first match in the USA according to the ICC.

The tournament will open with the co-hosts USA taking on Canada at the Grand Prairie Cricket Stadium in Dallas. West Indies, the other co-hosts, will kickstart their campaign against Papua New Guinea at the Guyana National Stadium on the next day.

The 20 participating teams have been divided into four groups as follows:



Group C: New Zealand, the West Indies, Afghanistan, Uganda and Papua New Guinea  
Group D: South Africa, Sri Lanka, Namibia, Scotland and Oman

Group A: India, Pakistan, Ireland, Canada and the USA  
Group B: England, Australia, and the USA

qualify," the ICC clarified. Speaking on the occasion, ICC Chief Executive Geoff Allardice said he was excited about adding a 'new frontier' to the game of cricket.

"The release of the fixtures is made even more exciting for fans as we enter a new frontier, with the USA hosting a major ICC event for the first time. With 16 matches being played across three venues in the USA, it allows us to make a statement in the world's biggest sports market," Allardice said.

"It will also be great to have an ICC event back in the West Indies, which has such a rich history of the game. It has hosted World Cups with great success in the past and this tournament will

certainly provide a boost to the game there, especially with the final being played in Barbados."

Vijay Srinivasan, the co-founder of Major League Cricket, said: "Major League Cricket is delighted to host the marquee opening match for the biggest-ever ICC Men's T20 World Cup at the premier MLC venue, Grand Prairie Cricket Stadium in North Texas.

"We know that cricket fans from across the country will be out in force on June 1 as the United States hosts Canada in the curtain-raiser for the tournament. The match will mark a new chapter in a rivalry dating back longer than any other in international cricket, all the way to 1844."