

## Ruckus in Odisha Assembly over CM Majhi's policy decision announcement outside House

**Bhubaneswar(KCN):** Odisha Assembly Monday was adjourned till 4pm as both the opposition BJD and Congress created a ruckus over Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi making announcement on reservation for Agniveers outside when the House was in session.

Congress member Taraprasad Banipati moved a breach of privilege notice against the Chief Minister accusing him of disrespecting the Assembly and making policy decision announcements outside the House July 26. He said the government should not make any policy decision

announcement outside when the House is in session.

Congress and BJD members asked Speaker Surama Padhy to accept the privilege notice and forward it to the privilege committee. However, the Speaker said that she would examine the notice. Annoyed over the Speaker's decision, both the opposition parties created a ruckus in the well of the House following which the House was adjourned first for 20 minutes, then till 12.20pm and later from 12.24pm to 4pm. As soon as the Zero Hour began, the Speaker asked Parliamentary Affairs minister Mukesh Mahaling to give a statement where he read out the announcement



made by the chief minister July 26. He informed the House that the government has reserved 10 per cent seats and relaxed five years age limit for Agniveers in the state's

uniform service. The Agniveers who could not be adjusted in the defence service would get 10 per cent reservation in the state uniform service. However, Bahinipati

raised objection to allowing Mahaling to read out the chief minister's announcement based on which he has served the privilege notice. "The Chief Minister has

created a bad tradition by ignoring the House and making announcements outside on a policy decision of the government. I demand a ruling from the Speaker on the

matter," Bahinipati said. Congress Legislature Party leader Rama Chandra Kadam also described the CM's act of making announcements outside the House as an "insult to the Assembly and the Constitution." He urged the Speaker to accept the privilege motion notice and forward it to the privilege committee. BJD Chief Whip Pramila Mallik said it was not uncommon that a new government having no experience makes mistakes. However, the Chief Minister should tender an apology before the House for ignoring it and making policy decision announcements outside the House. She too demanded a ruling from

the chair. Senior BJD lawmaker Ganeshwar Behera termed the CM's act as a "matter of concern" and said that Majhi as the leader of the House should uphold and upkeep the dignity of the Assembly. It is not accepted that the Leader of the House will disrespect the Assembly.

BJP member Iraisis Acharya also moved a privilege notice against the Congress for speaking to the media about its plan to move a privilege motion against the chief minister. The Congress should take permission from the Speaker before making its plan public at least in case of a privilege motion.

## Panel recommends scanning of Jagannath temple's Ratna Bhandar using advanced technology

**Bhubaneswar(KCN):** The committee formed by the Odisha government to supervise the inventory process of the Ratna Bhandar at Puri Jagannath temple has decided to recommend to the shrine's managing committee the use of advanced technology to conduct a thorough inspection and scanning of the treasury.

This recommendation aims to address concerns and historical indications suggesting the possible existence of secret or hidden chambers within the treasury. Justice Biswanath Rath, chairman of the high-



level committee overseeing this process, made the announcement after a meeting in Puri Monday. The committee unanimously agreed to propose the use of latest technology for a comprehensive inspection of the Ratna Bhandar, he added. "To clear such doubts, we have unanimously decided to recommend the temple managing committee to use latest

technology and non-destructive instruments for proper inspection of the Ratna Bhandar," he said. "If any such chambers are discovered, appropriate steps will be taken; otherwise, necessary measures will be initiated for the repair and maintenance of the treasury," Justice Rath explained. Additionally, the committee has decided

to relocate empty cupboards and almirahs that require preservation. The Shree Jagannath Temple Administration (SJTA) has been instructed to identify a suitable storage space for these items, he said. Furthermore, in response to the requirements identified, the committee recommended modifications to the existing Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), which did not originally address these aspects, clarified Justice Rath, a judge of the Orissa High Court. He assured that utmost care would be taken to ensure that temple rituals remain unaffected

during these procedures. The Odisha government recently commenced the process of cataloging the ornaments and valuables stored in the treasury and undertaking necessary repairs to the structure. The authorised panel overseeing the process opened both the outer and inner chambers of the Ratna Bhandar and subsequently transferred the valuables to temporary strong rooms July 14 and 18. Once the repair work is completed, the valuables will be reinstated to their original locations. The entire inventory process will continue under the supervision of a committee led by Justice Rath.

## 45% rise in male sterilisation over past three years in Odisha: Minister



conducted 259,822 family planning operations from 2021-22 to 2023-24, comprising 4,352 vasectomies and 255,470 tubectomies, the minister said.

Mahaling emphasised the state's commitment to promoting family planning operations, noting the observance of World Population Day on July 11 each year to raise awareness about sterilisation procedures nationwide. The government incentivises these operations, offering Rs 2,000 for vasectomies, Rs 1,400 for female sterilisation, and Rs 2,200 for post-delivery sterilisation to beneficiaries.

## Supreme Court rejects ED's plea challenging Jharkhand CM Hemant Soren's bail

**New Delhi(KCN):** The Supreme Court dismissed a plea filed by the Enforcement Directorate Monday challenging a Jharkhand High Court order granting bail to Chief Minister Hemant Soren in a money laundering case linked to an alleged land scam.

A bench of Justices BR Gavai and KV Viswanathan said the



high court's June 28 order was 'very well reasoned'.

"We are not inclined to interfere with the impugned order," the

bench said. Soren, the executive president of the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM), had resigned as chief minister shortly before the ED arrested him January 31 in the case. After coming out of jail on bail in the case, he returned as the chief minister of Jharkhand July 4.

## Odisha to set up world's first black tiger safari by end of this year: PCCE



**Baripada(KCN):** Odisha is poised to unveil the world's first melanistic (black) tiger safari near Similipal Tiger Reserve in Mayurbhanj district by the end of this year, a top forest official said Monday.

The state government's

proposal for the safari

has received "in-principle" approval from

the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA), with the Central Zoo Authority (CZA) already granting its endorsement, Susanta Nanda, Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, said. Initially, melanistic tigers currently housed at Nandan Kanan Zoo in Bhubaneswar will be relocated to the proposed

hectare. Approximately 100 hectares will be dedicated to the display area, while the remainder will accommodate veterinary facilities, a rescue centre, staff infrastructure, and visitor amenities. Located 15 km from Similipal Tiger Reserve, the site mirrors its natural landscape. Similipal Tiger Reserve is

globally renowned as the sole habitat where wild melanistic tigers are found. This initiative aims to bolster wildlife tourism in Odisha, offering a unique opportunity for conservationists, researchers, enthusiasts, and the public to observe this rare species up close.

## Odisha's BJP govt presented 'name changing' budget: Naveen Patnaik

**Bhubaneswar(KCN):** Leader of the Opposition in Odisha Assembly, Naveen Patnaik, Monday said that the BJP government of the state presented a "name changing budget."

While participating in the general discussion on the annual budget for fiscal 2024-25 in the Assembly, the Biju Janata Dal president asserted that the BJP changed the names of 45 schemes of the previous BJD government.

Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi, who also holds the finance

portfolio, presented the BJP government's maiden budget July 25. "The BJP had said they will present a game-changing budget, but they presented a name-changing budget," said Patnaik who was the Chief Minister of Odisha for five terms. He claimed that 80 per cent of the previous BJD administration's schemes were repeated in the BJP government's budget. "The BJP formed the government by promising people that they would bring paribartan (change). After going

through the budget documents, I find this government has changed the names of 45 schemes," said the BJP president. This budget saw 80% of our schemes being repeated. It shows the robustness, pro-people and progressive character of the schemes designed and implemented by the BJD government. The rest 20% resource allocation is what they will use to implement their manifesto promises to the people of Odisha. We have circulated a copy of BJP manifesto for ready reference. I will talk on 3 to 4 promises, sorry guarantees, out of many that they have made. Point 29 of the BJP

manifesto promised Fifty thousand to pratyek mahila (every woman) of Odisha under SUBHADRA scheme. More than 2 crore women are there in Odisha. Further, this was promised to be given in two years. You will need One lakh crore to fulfill this promise. You have kept only Ten thousand crore in this budget. This will cover less than ten percent women of Odisha. What about the rest One crore eighty lakh women? BJP promised to increase pension to Three thousand five hundred per month. There are about fifty lakh pensioners in the state, out of which hardly one lakh pensioners will benefit as per the budget allocation.

kept in the budget will not be adequate to cover even thirty percent farmers. How do you plan to cover the remaining lakhs of farmers of Odisha? BJP promised three hundred units of free electricity in campaign speeches. The Central Government has planned free electricity for One crore houses for the whole country. Odisha's share may be three lakh houses. We have one and half crore houses in the state. Is this the free electricity you promised to the people?

## KIIT DU Awarded Prestigious UN ECOSOC Special Consultative Status

**Bhubaneswar (KCN):** KIIT Deemed to be University has been granted the distinguished Special Consultative Status by the United Nations Economic and Social Council (UN ECOSOC), recognizing the University's substantial contributions to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). From a pool of 476 applications around the World, only 19 organizations, including KIIT DU, were selected for this prestigious honour. The status was conferred during the UN ECOSOC management segment meeting held on July 23, 2024, at the United

Nations Headquarters in New York. This recognition underscores KIIT's unwavering commitment to the United Nations' Agenda 2030 and the SDGs. Attaining Special Consultative Status marks a significant milestone, positioning KIIT among a select group of universities globally that have earned this esteemed distinction. In another development, KIIT has signed an MoU with UN Volunteers (UNV). This partnership opens a remarkable opportunity for students of KIIT DU to engage with various UN agencies to serve as 'National University



UN Volunteers' who will be deployed for various development initiatives within the UN agencies. These opportunities will equip KIIT students with valuable professional experience in international development, shaping

their future career paths with proper stipend. This initiative is a first of its kind by any private university in South Asia.

Similarly, the American Council of Young Political Leaders (ACYPL), a global leader in fostering

international understanding and diplomacy has announced its historic collaboration with the Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences (KISS) and KIIT. KISS is the sister concern of KIIT. With the steadfast support of the U.S. Department of State and a score of other partners, over 8,900 leaders in the U.S. and in 129 countries and territories around the world have travelled on our life-changing exchange programs. With alumni that include

prominent figures such as Prime Minister Narendra Modi of India, Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell, U.S. Department of Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg, North Carolina Governor Roy Cooper, Illinois Governor JB Pritzker, Congresswoman Tulsi Gabbard of Hawaii, and former South Carolina Governor Nikki Haley, ACYPL has a storied history of influencing international relations and leadership. Expressing his happiness Dr. Achyuta Samanta, Founder, KIIT & KISS said that it is a matter of pride that KIIT is the only professional/technical university in India to achieve UN ECOSOC Special Consultative Status. Also, in India, both KIIT and KISS in Odisha are proud to get this prestigious award. KISS has already been awarded with UN ECOSOC Special Consultative Status in 2015 and has been continuing with this status till date, he informed. He has also expressed that KIIT is the only university in South Asia to get UNV status for engaging students for internship. ACYPL is a very prestigious thing for KIIT to engage political diplomats and leaders to visit KIIT & KISS from across the world and have an internship programme, he added.

### East Coast Railway (ECoR) General Manager Inspects Khurda Road-Palasa Railway Section:

**Bhubaneswar (KCN):** East Coast Railway (ECoR) General Manager Shri Parmeshwar Funkwal conducted a detailed inspection of the Bhubaneswar-Palasa Railway section recently. He was accompanied by senior officials from ECoR headquarters, construction teams for ongoing projects, and representatives from the Khurda Road Railway Division, led by Divisional Railway Manager Shri H S Bajwa. During the inspection,



Shri Funkwal reviewed the progress of the Amrit Stations project, emphasizing the importance of adhering to the targeted timelines.

The stations inspected included Balugaon, Bhubaneswar, Brahmapur, Chatrapur, Khurda Road, Lingaraj Temple Road, Palasa, and Ichhapuram. The current status of ongoing construction works at these stations was also reviewed.

Additionally, he inspected infrastructural and developmental works related to traffic facilities and passenger amenities at various railway stations. He advised officials to take necessary steps to ensure the early completion of these projects, underscoring the importance of providing enhanced services and facilities to passengers.

### Lions Club Bhubaneswar Nayapalli installed its New Office Bearers for the year 2024-25.



**Bhubaneswar (KCN):** Ln T Rabi Kumar Patro, President presided the meeting. All Lion members of this club and many from other clubs with their office bearers, Past District Governors attended. Club Secretary Lion Sanjukta Subudhi read out the Activity report along with the

power point representation. ZC Lion Surabhi Dash and 1st Vice District Governor Ln Dr Hemant Kumar Khuntia praised the noble jobs performed by the club Induction officer cum Guest of Honour Ln Dr Anjali Chhotray inducted 10 new members. The Chief

Guest Lion Rajanish Kumar, PDG-322A from Bihar explained the responsibility to all the new Office Bearers with the leadership of new President Lion T Pramod Patro and new Secretary Ln Sanjukta Subudhi and installed them. Ln Rajnish Motto of Lionism to serve the downtrodden and carry out activities to protect the environment. Meeting was meticulously organised by Lion Pradipta Mohanty and Lion Kunal Kishore Das, MOC Lion Mahendra Patra conducted the program covering all the agenda.

### Joint Grievance Hearing Camp of Collector and SP held at Dunguripali.

**SUBARNAPUR (KCN):** Subarnapur District Dunguripali Block Level Joint Grievance Camp has been held at the block conference hall. Collector & District Magistrate Mrs. Anya Das and Additional Supdt. Of Police Mr. Birendra Kumar Naik joined the Joint Genocide Camp and received 90 registered complaints of public against various objections and problems. 82 applications have been received and 08 collective applications have been accepted. The applications have been given to the departmental officers of the various departments

concerned to resolve them within the stipulated time. In the joint complaint hearing program held under the supervision of BDO Dunguripali Bipin Bihari Deep, Zilla Parishad Chairperson Supra Thela, Panchayat Samiti Chairperson Ahalya Sahu the district level including District Chief Development Officer Zilla Parishad Ashwini Kumar Meher, Sub Collector Sonepur Suraj Kumar Patnaik, Superintendent Engineer Er. Damodar Kaibart, District Chief Supply Officer Suresh Panigrahi, District Panchayat Officer Arjun

Charan Majhi, District Information and Public Relations Officer Ashwini Kumar Bhoi, District Culture Officer Yamuna Pradhan, District Welfare Officer Achyutananda Singh, District Social Security Officer Govinda Ballabha Sarangi, District Education Officer Lakman Bhoi, District Sports Officer Chittaranjan Mishra, District Labour Officer Sabita Kumari Naik, District Fisheries Officer Prasanna Kumar Patnaik, Executive Officer T.P. W.O.D.L. Ashok Kumar Mishra, Executive Engineer Development B.N. Reddy, Executive Engineer Water Lift Irrigation Project Prafulla Kumar Behera, Deputy Director Handicrafts Banmali Tappno, Forest Range Officer Dumbarudhar Pradhan, Deputy Director Handicrafts Binaya Prusti, GM. District Industries Center Abhijit Tripathy, CDVO Dr. Parmananda Sethi, Tehsildar Rampur Bimal Patra, Deputy Collector (Grievances) Shubhashree Rath, various District Level Officers, Tehsil and Block Level Officers, Journalists contributed significantly.



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# Holistic Progress Card by NCERT for classes 9-12 to focus on evaluating competencies



while finalising the HPC. The NCERT has developed HPC in sync with the National Education Policy's framework National Curriculum Framework for School Education. The framework aims to introduce multidisciplinary education, foster creative pedagogies, and nurture the holistic development of students beyond traditional pen-and-paper exams. NCERT is also hopeful of integrating it with the traditional report card, by focussing on building the personality, developing intrinsic skills and helping in building long-term career goals.

"The secondary stage in HPC focuses on helping students make career choices in a targeted manner. The progress card assesses students' interests to connect them with their work potential. The card includes questions

about how students envision themselves in one, two, or ten years, as well as inquiries about their progress, preparation for competitive exams, and skills required to achieve a certain goal. Teachers and counsellors will assist students in completing these sections to help them better evaluate their career goals," said Prof. Indrani Bhaduri, CEO PARAKH and head, Educational Survey Division, NCERT.

The NCERT has started to run regional workshops for the implementation of HPC. "We are in talks with different state boards and SCERTs for the implementation of the progress card at the secondary level. The implementation varies in each state, as Himachal Pradesh, Haryana, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, and Madhya Pradesh have already shown interest in initiating the process and conducting workshops to help the

Vijay GarG

teacher assign 'master trainers' from each educational block to conduct the training sessions. "The teachers will be supported by a sample of HPC that will help them to understand its essential sections and their role in its execution. We are connecting with different boards, the Directorate of Education, and SCERTs to conduct training sessions at the district levels. Those trained in these sessions will be called master trainers, who will then train the teachers," Bhaduri says. The training sessions are designed to equip teachers with in-depth knowledge of HPC, which will enable them to provide guidance and support to students who may struggle with filling out the progress card. The sessions will also help the teachers enhance their instructional approaches and

embrace innovative solutions to support the students with the challenges that they face. More focus on career In March, PARAKH introduced the HPC for the foundational, middle, and preparatory stages, aiming to enhance primary students' comprehension and creative abilities. For the secondary stage, the HPC developed by PARAKH places greater emphasis on vocational learning and career choices. The HPC includes sections that evaluate the vocational courses students have undertaken, their professional interests, career plans, and self-assessment of their career choices.

Emphasis on research A distinct feature of the HPC is its emphasis on individual research and the learning process. Students will be required to conduct research on the subject of their

choice and fill in the digital courses. One section of the HPC focuses on the registration and completion of digital courses on subjects such as Entrepreneurship and Artificial Intelligence. Teachers will assist the students to register on digital courses and assess their progress." The initiative has been introduced to help students access digital learning and build skills beyond classrooms. "The idea is to bridge the gap between rural and urban learners. Students who come from cities are aware of such courses that they can utilise to learn more about their subjects of interest. However, there is a significant gap in awareness of such courses in the rural belt. Emphasis on digital learning will help fill these gaps."

**Retired Principal Educational columnist malout**

## The Importance and Utility of Career Counselors



even intelligent students may end up in unsuitable career paths.

### The Role and Benefits of Career Counseling

Career counseling plays a crucial role in guiding students to make informed decisions about their academic and professional futures. A good career counselor helps students select subjects and career paths that are both suitable and fulfilling. By addressing the psychological and emotional aspects of career choice, counselors can assist students in aligning their educational paths with their true interests and capabilities.

In Kashmir, the scarcity of career counseling services exacerbates the problem. Many students and their families lack access to expert guidance that could help them make better-informed choices. This gap in the system can lead to a situation where educational degrees end up being perceived

as mere pieces of paper, devoid of real market value.

**Why Career Counseling is Essential Guidance in Subject and Stream Selection:** Career counselors provide valuable insights into which subjects and streams are best suited to a student's strengths and interests. This helps prevent the frustration and disillusionment that can occur when students struggle in areas that do not align with their abilities.

**Psychological Support:** Career counselors offer emotional and psychological support, helping students navigate the stress and anxiety associated with academic and career choices.

**Future Readiness:** Counselors ensure that students are prepared for the demands of the job market. They provide information about emerging fields, industry trends, and the skills required for various careers.

**Improved Job Market Outcomes:** By guiding students towards careers with strong job prospects, counselors help reduce the

**Aubaid Ahmad Akhnoor**

disconnect between academic achievements and real-world job opportunities.

**The Current Shortage of Career Counseling Services in Kashmir:** Kashmir faces a significant shortage of career counseling cells. This lack of infrastructure means that many students are not receiving the support they need to make informed decisions about their education and future careers.

**Establishing Comprehensive Career Counseling Cells in Schools and Colleges:** Establishing comprehensive career counseling cells in schools and colleges is essential. These cells would offer personalized guidance, career assessments, and support services that can help students align their educational choices with their career goals.

**Steps to Address the Lack of Career Counseling:** Establishing career counseling centers: Setting up dedicated career counseling centers in educational institutions across Kashmir is crucial. These centers should be staffed with trained

professionals who can provide expert advice and support.

### Increase Awareness and Training:

**Educators and parents should be made aware of the importance of career counseling.**

**Training Programs for Teachers and Career Counselors:** Training programs for teachers and career counselors can help improve the quality of guidance provided.

**Collaborate with Industry Experts:**

Partnerships with industry professionals and organizations can provide students with insights into various careers and job market trends.

### Enhance Accessibility:

**Ensuring that career counseling services are accessible to all students,**

**including those from underprivileged backgrounds.** This can be achieved through outreach programs and online counseling options.

**Career Counselor Qualifications and Skills:**

**Becoming a career counselor typically does not require specific qualifications,**

**but those with certifications or degrees in public**

**relations, human resource management, psychology, or related fields**

**are often preferred.** Essential skills for career counselors include:

**Strong Communication:** Effective communication skills are crucial for understanding and advising clients.

**Empathy and Understanding:** A good counselor must be able to relate to students' concerns and provide compassionate support.

**Complete Senior Secondary Education:** Obtain a high school diploma or equivalent.

**Pursue Relevant Courses:** Enroll in certification or degree programs in career counseling, human resources, or related fields.

**Gain Experience:** Work in relevant fields or internships to build experience.

**Seek Advanced Education:** Consider higher education or additional certifications to enhance qualifications.

**Salary Expectations:** Career counselors can earn between 1,000 to 20,000 rupees per case, depending on their expertise and market demand.

**reputation and credentials grow, there is significant potential for higher earnings in this field.**

**Bottom line:** Career counseling is more than just guiding students; it is about shaping their futures and ensuring that their educational pursuits lead to meaningful and rewarding careers.

The establishment of career counseling cells in Kashmir is not just a necessity but a crucial step towards securing a brighter future for our students and ensuring that their degrees hold real value in the job market.

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# Robust GDP Growth Amidst Rising Indirect Taxes and Subsidy Cuts



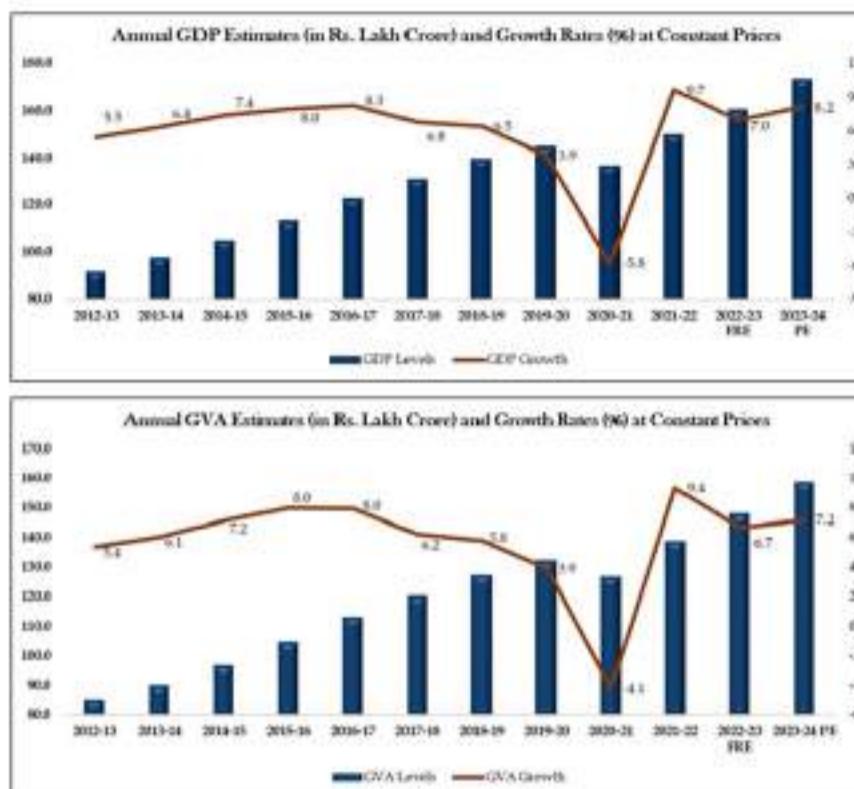
Real GVA has grown by 7.2% in 2023-24, up from 6.7% in 2022-23. Real GVA is estimated at ₹158.74 lakh crore for the year 2023-24, up from the First Revised Estimates (FRE) of ₹148.05 lakh crore for 2022-23, marking a growth rate of 7.2% compared to 6.7% in 2022-23. Nominal GVA for FY 2023-24 is projected to reach ₹267.62 lakh crore, compared to ₹246.59 lakh crore in 2022-23, reflecting a growth rate of 8.5%. The sharp divergence of 1% between real GDP and real GVA growth in 2023-24, compared to 0.3% in 2022-23, is a serious concern. Due to higher indirect taxes like GST and excise on petroleum products, coupled with reduced subsidies, GDP appears higher than GVA. This disparity, driven by increased indirect taxes and subsidy cuts, adversely affects low-income people, suggesting that GDP growth can coincide with increased suffering among the lower-income population.

The provisional estimates of the annual GDP for FY2023-24 reveal a healthy economic growth performance. Real GDP is estimated to grow 8.2% in 2023-24, compared to 7% in the previous fiscal year.

calculated through the product method. Under the production/output approach, officials compute the value added by the three major sectors—agriculture, industry, and services. The sum of value addition is termed GVA. They then add product taxes and subtract product subsidies from GVA to derive GDP. Product taxes include GST (post-2017), excise duties, VAT, and import/export duties, while product subsidies include subsidies on food, petroleum, and fertilizers. The growth rates thus influence the difference between GDP and GVA in taxes and subsidies.

Provisional and Quarterly Estimates of National Income are compiled using the benchmark-indicator method, whereby estimates from the previous year (2022-23) are extrapolated using relevant indicators reflecting sector performance. The Second Advance Estimates (SAE) of National Income for 2023-24, initially released on 29th February 2024, have been revised to incorporate the latest information on relevant indicators for the financial year. The sector-wise estimates are based on the following indicators and data sources for the

Prof (Dr.) S N Tripathy\*



financial year 2023-24: The sector-wise estimates are based on a range of indicators and data sources for the financial year 2023-24, including the Index of Industrial Production (IIP); the economic performance of listed companies in the private corporate sector, based on quarterly financial results; Advance Estimates of Crop Production; production of major livestock products; fish production; production and consumption of cement and steel; net tonne-kilometres and passenger-kilometers for railways; passenger and cargo traffic

handled by civil aviation; cargo traffic handled at major and minor sea ports; sales of commercial vehicles; bank deposits and credits; and accounts of Central and State Governments. Total tax revenue used for GDP compilation includes both non-GST and GST revenue. The latest information from the Controller General of Accounts (CGA) and the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) has been used to estimate taxes on products at current prices. For taxes on products at constant prices, volume extrapolation is done using the volume growth of taxed goods and

services. Total product subsidies are compiled using the latest information on significant subsidies such as food, urea, petroleum, and nutrient-based subsidies for the Centre, along with the expenditure on subsidies by most States up to March 2024 and the Centre/State-wise Revised Estimates (RE) and Budget Estimates (BE) Provision for 2023-24. Information on revenue expenditure, interest payments, subsidies, etc., from the Centre and States for 2023-24 is used to estimate Government Final Consumption

Expenditure (GFCE). Improved data coverage and revisions in input data by source agencies may lead to subsequent revisions of these estimates. Evaluating a country's progress solely in terms of GDP neglects qualitative aspects of life such as education, social relations, social progress, and scientific innovation. The government should reconsider measuring development primarily through GDP and adopt a more holistic approach considering these qualitative aspects.

However, this is not a time for celebration, as GDP is merely an indicator of economic activity, not the well-being of society. GDP often masks the harsh realities and sufferings of the masses. Even if 40 crores out of 140 crore people consume and spend more, boosting GDP, it does not reflect the plight of the remaining 100 crore people. The benefits of growth tend to be reaped by a few wealthy individuals, leading to jobless growth and rampant inequality, a stark and unjust reality. This underscores the urgent need for a more comprehensive measure of societal progress that goes beyond GDP.

There are ongoing contentions that India's GDP needs to be more accurately measured and corroborated by ground realities, including various indices such as human development, hunger, and happiness. Critics argue that India's GDP calculation methodology needs to be revised despite the government claiming adherence to international practices. GDP is measured through production/output, expenditure, and income methods. The expenditure approach measures the total spending on goods and services produced within the nation's borders. GDP is the sum of private consumption, gross investment, government investment, government spending, and net foreign trade (the difference between exports and imports). The income approach measures the total income earned by all households in the nation, considering payments made to primary factors of production in the form of rent, wages, interest, and profit for their productive services over an accounting year. In all three methods, GDP figures should align.

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

## MISOGYNY, WOMEN EMPOWERMENT AND THE HYPOCRISY

M.R.LALU



and frequently burned in effigies. Your identity of being a woman becomes so hard to establish in a country that drumbeats its gender equality while hypocritically sensitizing its impact of being a free society. Additionally, the race is more compact and challenging for Kamala as she is the first black woman and also a South Asian and misogyny is the most dangerous weapon that she has to fight against. This indeed has become the pressing threat and demands our attention. America's long journey as democracy failed to award its female population the right to vote until 1920. It remained a male dominated democracy for centuries and even today when Kamala Harris ramps up the show, the concern that disturbingly echoes across the echelon of the polity is her gender, color and ethnicity. And this time, for her, it is intense misogyny with racism. This has been the reality of the western world. Women for centuries were pressed hard to suffer the ignominious authority of male dominance and

endure society's resentful hypocrisy. Male -driven societies had vehemently justified their indifference to the feminine gender mostly refusing to treat it with respect. With religious doctrines sanctifying masculinity as the power and authority to capture the prospects of societies fully, women in most of the western world had to quell their desire to break the misogyny. Undoubtedly, fables of a God who created a woman to breathe from the rib of a man, whom he created in his own image, do not, in the first glance, appear to be misogynistic. This, in a later period, was canonized as a divinely ordained enterprise of the almighty. The differences and their ramifications and the disorder began there. Accentuating the sanctity of misogyny further, the New Testament of the Bible, on behalf of St Paul declares that women could not teach at the pulpit because of their inherent sinfulness and moral corruption. Your journey through the philosophical gardens of monotheistic religions would not bless you with

the breeze of equality and amiability between the two prominent genders. In fact, they would crush your confidence and pull you hard from the meadows of spiritual insights that you have consistently gained by flipping their pages. The alarming reality overturns your conviction and a new dawn of understanding gets its imprints deeply engraved. India's case was entirely different. We, from the beginning of our civilizational journey were aware of the feminine energy, its power and impact on society. The godhood that we adhered for centuries was a fine combination of the masculine and the feminine. We worshipped the feminine power in the form of Durga, Saraswati, Lakshmi and Kali. We adorned its power and made its various representations part of our daily spiritual activity. Celebrations in the name of the divine in the feminine bring millions together even today and the festivities run for days.

A complete assimilation of womanhood in the lives of Indians has given it a deeper meaning. We began it from the smallest social units called families, where the women received the highest recognition. Families nourished the feminine aspects of gentleness and empathy with respect, acceptance and inclusion. No religious authorization could throw her away from the institution called family. Though that was not the case with monotheistic faiths across the world, India, especially the Hindu view of life, preserved its womanhood.

Our spiritual understanding had never discriminated between man and woman. Both enjoyed equal space and valid representation in the society. Creation, according to the Indic traditions, was supreme, which they professed, was divine. God, in Hinduism, is a divine representation of half man and half woman. Epics were written to establish womanhood, its purity, sanctity and power. The Ramayana and the Mahabharata have comprehensive descriptions of respect

enjoyed by women such as Sita and Draupadi and they also depict the sacrifices these women had to undergo while remaining virtuous. The wars that the epics have resoundingly narrated were for the protection of womanhood and its dignity. Lord Rama had a long and tedious journey on foot devotedly taken across the gigantic landscape covering the whole of India for his divine consort Sita. And his ultimate challenge, the sea, was also overcome with admirable focus. The Vedic period was probably the golden period for women. From among the Vedic women emerged female sages who are known to have composed certain hymns and taught generations of students. Victoria Woodhull was the first woman to run for President of America. She ran for the top job in 1872. Among those who tried their luck was Patsy Mink in 1972 to Carol Moseley Braun in 2004 to Hillary

Clinton and Tulsi Gabbard and a few more women of socio-political repute. But their race to the Oval office ended as a dismal affair and got throttled under the power of the country's patriarchy. Kamala, the first female Vice-President is now the candidate for the top job of her party. Though India held womanhood in high esteem, murmurs from the political colonies in our country were also heard recently when Draupadi Murmu, India's first adivasi woman became the President. There were misogynistic narratives on her ascent being apathetically scribbled and publicized by people in social media. Questions were raised and eyebrows convulsed skeptically on the woman who held the top office even before Murmu's regime.

Pratibha Patil was the other woman, who, the remnants of misogyny got rattled about. There had also been instances when deep seated differences were buried under particular

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## West Bengal MSME Development Forum Chairperson Mamta Binani lauds proactive measures of Govt for inclusive growth and economic vigour

Kolkata, (Saikat Kumar Basu): Reacting to the Union Budget, Mamta Binani, Chairperson of West Bengal MSME Development Forum, CS, Dr. and Advocate said, "The Union Budget for the financial year 2024-25 presented by Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Tuesday reflects a strong commitment towards inclusive growth and economic vigour. In this Budget, we are optimistic about the Government's initiatives aimed at empowering the youth, boosting agricultural productivity and increasing the participation of women in the workforce. These measures are important to promote inclusive growth and create a conducive environment for business growth. This is a Budget to stimulate economic activity with an emphasis



Mamta Binani is the President of West Bengal MSME Development Forum. Ms. Binani has served as a jury member for the ICSI National Award for Excellence in Corporate Governance and CSR

## World Odisha Society's Delegation meets CM Mohan Majhi

New Delhi, (KCN): A delegation of World Odisha Society led by Chairman and Senior Journalist Kishore Dwibedi met Odisha's Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi at Odisha Bhawan in New Delhi. Shri Dwibedi and other leaders of WOS warmly felicitated Shri Majhi with flower bouquets and Uttariyas.

During the courtesy meeting, Shri Dwibedi handed over an unanimous resolution passed during the joint meeting of WOS's Working committee and Executive body welcoming the New Government of Odisha



under the dynamic leadership of Shri Majhi. It was mentioned in the Resolution that WOS is quite hopeful that

Shri Majhi's Government will definitely be able to fulfil the hopes and aspirations of 4.5 crore Odia people living inside

Odisha and two crore non resident Odias staying outside Odisha. The Founder couple of Mahakankhaya

Tribunal Bar Association, President of Merchant Chamber of Commerce-Legal Affairs Council and Executive Committee Member of Insol India. She is also a member of the Board of International Women's Insolvency and Restructuring Confederation (IAIRC) and is currently the Co-Chair of the India Network. Ms. Binani is also an independent director on some of the prestigious boards of the country, including Century Ply, Birla Chini Mills, Emami Limited and other reputed companies. Ms. Binani believes that the Central Government is an engine and she is a member of that mechanism. Hence, it is her responsibility to take the efforts of the Government to the masses and to all sections of the society.

## Renowned academician Dr. R.K. Uppal appointed principal of Guru Gobind Singh College of Management and Technology

New Delhi, (KCN): Professor Dr. R.K. Uppal has been appointed principal of Guru Gobind Singh College of Management and

research. Dr. Uppal is also the MTC Global Chair Professor of Banking and Finance and Research Professor at the Indian Institute of

completed seven post-doctoral major research projects at UGC and ICSSR, New Delhi. As well as publishing an Encyclopedia on the Indian Banking

Industry, he has also authored 35 national and international patents. In addition to being a member of many professional research bodies, he serves on the advisory board of numerous research journals. It was under the guidance of General Secretary S. Gurcharan Singh that he joined the GGS Group of Institutions as a principal. He expressed his gratitude to the Badal family for appointing him principal.



Technology, Gidderbaha. A prolific writer, a Man of Letters, an eminent academician, a research stalwart, and the most ingenious guide, Dr. Rajinder Kumar Uppal has received accolades not only from the academic world but also from the genre of

Finance. He is also a visiting professor at several national and international institutions/universities. He is also a professor of practice in finance at Narayana Engineering College, Nellore, Andhra Pradesh. Dr. Uppal has 87 books on his credit and has

## DTPA Annual Conference 2024 in Kolkata on 3rd August 2024

Kolkata (KCN): Direct Taxes Professionals' Association (DTPA) announced its One Day Annual Conference to be held in Kolkata on Saturday, 3rd August, 2024 at Taj Bengal Hotel. CA Rajesh Kr. Agrawal, President, DTPA informed that Theme of the Conference is "Heading Towards Deemed Taxation Regime". The delegation includes Sudhir Dash, Kaveri Behera, Advocate Sasmita Tripathy, Dr Nirmal Patnaik, Jnana Prakash Jena, Surya Rath, Nandan Dwibedi, Santosh Panda, Saurabh Mishra, Priyatama Kar and Asit Kumar Kar

illustration, Narayan Jain said that in case of sale of immovable property if stamp duty valuation is more than the consideration shown in sale deed or sale agreement, the difference between such consideration shown in deed or sale agreement and the stamp duty valuation is treated as deemed income of transferor and transferee. Past President Advocate Paras Kochhar, Past President RD Kakra and CA Mahendra Kr. Agarwal, General Secretary of DTPA were also present. Barkha Agarwal and Manjulata Shukla, Vice Presidents informed that about 450+ delegates are going to participate in the Conference.

## Punjab CM Accuses Centre of 'Discrimination', Slams Budget Oversight

Chandigarh (JAG MOHAN THAKEN): Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann has accused the Centre of 'Discrimination' against Punjab. On Sunday Mann alleged that the Union government has stalled Rs 1000 crore of the state under the National Health Mission to deprive the Punjabis from the access of quality health services.

Interacting with the media persons after flagging off 58 hi-tech ambulances for the state, the Chief Minister said that the state government is committed to impart quality health services to the state but the Union government is continuously hatching conspiracies to deny these to Punjabis. He said that the Union government has stalled the grant of worth Rs 1000 crore under the National Health Mission just to torpedo pro-people initiatives being taken by the state. Bhagwant Singh Mann said that this is a condemnable move as the non-BJP governments are being harassed by the Union government on one pretext or another. The Chief Minister said that Aam Aadmi clinics have revolutionized the health care sector in the



state. He said that 1.75 crore people have taken the benefits of these clinics in the state and more than 95% of patients visiting these clinics daily recover from their ailments. Mann said that ever since the starting of these clinics have witnessed a huge footfall indicating that every third person of the state has taken benefit from these clinics. The Chief Minister said that today 58 new hi-tech ambulances have been dedicated to the people of the state thereby ensuring that they are available to people in hour of distress. He said that with this addition in the fleet of ambulances a total number of 325 ambulances have been pressed into the service of people across the state to ensure that they get health services in time. CM Mann asserted that these Ultra-Modern Ambulances have been mandated to reach the needy patients within 15 minutes in Urban Areas and 20 minutes in Rural Areas. The Chief Minister bemoaned that it is

strange that despite of immense contribution in the freedom struggle, making the country self-reliant in food production and safeguarding the unity, integrity and sovereignty of the country, Punjab has been completely ignored in the Union budget. He said that this step motherly treatment with the state is unwarranted and reflects the myopic mindset of the Union government towards the state. Bhagwant Singh Mann further said that this high handedness of the Union government will not be tolerated and

Punjabis will give a befitting reply to it.

The Chief Minister also reiterated his demand for a special economic package for the state in recognition of the immense contribution made by Punjabis in every field. He said that it is the need of hour to ensure that Punjab makes tremendous progress in every sphere adding that this will give a major fillip to the growth and development of the state. However, Bhagwant Singh Mann bemoaned that currently, the tax holiday given to

other states is acting as an impediment to the industrial growth of the state as industrial units are shifting there.

The Chief Minister welcomed the appointment of the new Governor of the state and expressed hope that constitutional rights of both the Government and the Governor will be safeguarded. Mann said that the outgoing Governor had unnecessarily tried to create hiccups in the smooth functioning of the state government. He said that it is unfortunate that the Governor had not granted sanction for calling a budget session and had even declared a session illegitimate only to grant it sanction later.

The Chief Minister said that this is unwarranted and undesirable in a democratic government country like India but unfortunately all this happened in the state. He said that today both freedom and democracy are in danger as the Union government is leaving no stone unturned to sabotage them by harassing the non-BJP governments. Bhagwant Singh Mann said that the voice of opposition is being muzzled and the

The Chief Minister said

that the youth who were compelled by the system of previous governments to migrate abroad are now returning back, which is a positive trend of reverse migration in the state. He said that his government had provided government jobs to more than 43,000 youths in just two years, marking a record in Punjab's history. Mann said that among those who secured these government jobs, some are youngsters returned from abroad.

The Chief Minister said that the state has created history by purchasing Goindwal power plant owned by a private company GVK Power.

He said that for the first time this reverse trend has started that the government has purchased any private power plant whereas in the past the state governments used to sell their assets to the favourite individuals at 'throw away' prices. Bhagwant Singh Mann said that as coal from Pachwara coal mine can be used only for government power plants so with purchase of this power plant this coal can be aptly utilized for producing power to provide it to every sector of the state.

# Dropout rate rising in Rayagada

**Rayagada(KCN):** The increasing dropout rate of students at mid school level has sparked concern in the tribal-dominated Rayagada district despite the Central and state governments spending crores for the development of education. The government is implementing various schemes to check school dropout rates but has failed in its pursuit in Rayagada district due to alleged apathy of the education department officials. Despite the distribution of free books, uniforms and mid-day meals to attract students towards studies, many of them drop out of schools in Rayagada district either after passing Class V or VIII and take to cultivation and other jobs to support their families. Recently, the state government has sanctioned funds to the district to check the school dropout rate under the Star scheme.

However, the district administration had to return a majority of the funds which remained unspent due to negligence of the officials. Local intelligentsia have demanded proper implementation of the government scheme to check dropout rates in the district. Sources said children in the district often drop out of school ending their studies midway and take to wood cutting or work in hotels



to earn and support their family due to a lack of awareness among the vulnerable tribal population in this district. Most of the children from tribal families or below the poverty line (BPL)

category are seen migrating to other states with their family members to earn a living. It is alleged that the district education department has failed in its bid to bring back these

dropouts to the schools and the district have left studies midway but the officials have not included them in the list. As per the district education department, the number of dropouts stood at 5,465 in 11 blocks of the district by July 18. The highest number of dropouts stood at 1,135 in Kashipur block while it is the lowest at 40 in Ramnaguda block. Similarly, the figure is 318 in Bissam Cuttack block, 284 in Chandrapur block, 494 in Gudari block, 396 in Gunupur block, 445 in Kalyansinghpur block, 348 in Kolnara block, 742 in Muniguda block, 91 in Padmapur block and 397 in Rayagada block.

When contacted, District Education Officer Basant Kumar Nayak said the department is working on reducing the dropout rate and has been able to bring 427 dropouts back to the schools. This work will continue and the Block Education Officers (BEOs) have been directed to bring back more and more dropouts to the schools.

## RMC stresses on green, renewable energy



**Rourkela(KCN):** With the Central government aggressively promoting and laying emphasis on green, renewable energy and clean power generation, the Rourkela Municipal Corporation (RMC) has initiated a unique step in accordance. Solar panels are being installed on the RMC office building for clean power generation and as per sources, this will be done in all the hospitals being managed by the civic body in the coming days.

In the initial phase, panels will be installed on the rooftops of the health centres at Chhend, Mahatab Road, Sector-6 and 22, Panposh, Gopabandhupalli, Tilak Nagar and Basanti Colony following the RMC office building. The power generated from these rooftop installations will be supplied to the grid and the RMC will receive a rebate of up to 30-50% significantly reducing its power bill. Speaking on this, ADM, Rourkela

and RMC Commissioner Ashutosh Kulkarni said, "The Government of India is stressing on the generation of clean and green energy and its use. RMC is also moving in that direction. With the use of solar energy, the power bill will be reduced significantly. In future, this will be done in other places under RMC which will help make Rourkela clean and green." Furthermore, RMC is



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## Int'l Tiger Day: 2 tigresses to be brought to Similipal

**Baripada(KCN):** At least two Royal Bengal tigresses will be brought soon to the Similipal Tiger Reserve in Mayurbhanj district to bring about a change in the genetic diversity among the tigers of Similipal Tiger Reserve, which is witnessing a sharp rise in the population of melanistic tigers. The National Tiger Conservation Authority has given the go-ahead after the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (PCCF) applied in this regard three months back. The mission will start soon after a Central technical team issues an order in this regard, sources from the Forest department said.

Sources said the population of Royal Bengal tigers has now reached 39 in Similipal Tiger Reserve. Among them, 50 per cent are melanistic tigers. The Forest Department hopes that bringing these

two tigresses will help increase the tiger population in the STR and enhance their genetic diversity. In the past, the presence of hundreds of tigers had been recorded in Similipal Wildlife Sanctuary. However, the 2004 census indicated the presence of only four Royal Bengal tigers — three females and a male black tiger — due to poaching and other reasons. The STR witnessed the birth of melanistic tiger cubs following mating between the black male tiger and female tigers. Later, the tiger population rose to eight in the 2014 census. However, the census report published in 2023 has sparked surprise as it says 27 adult Royal Bengal tigers and eight cubs are present in Similipal. The state government conducted a fresh census and identified the presence of 12 cubs including 27 adult Royal

Bengal tigers through trap cameras in the sanctuary. This took the total tiger headcount to 39 but there are more melanistic tigers among them, Regional Chief Conservator of Forests (RCCF) and project director of STR Prakash Chand Gogineni said. The change in colour among the Royal Bengal tigers sparked curiosity and surprise among the experts. An expert team from National Centre for Biological Science at Bangalore rushed to Similipal and conducted a review on changes in colour by collecting samples of feces, vomit, pug marks and scratches made by the tigers. It was concluded that unnatural birth and other reasons might have contributed to the change in colour. Forest officials suspect that the birth of tiger cubs from a single male tiger might be the reason behind the change

## Madhya Pradesh Tourism Board introducing a range of tourism activities in seven tiger reserves

**Kolkata (AMBAR MUKHERJEE):** Madhya Pradesh has cemented its position as India's undisputed "Tiger State". Home to a staggering 785 tigers - the highest number in the country according to the 2022 census - this central Indian state offers unparalleled opportunities for wildlife enthusiasts to witness these majestic creatures in their natural habitat. The Madhya Pradesh Tourism Board is introducing a range of tourism activities, including vehicle safaris, nature walks, jungle safaris, tree house stays, village tours, and stargazing to enhance the visitor experience. An official of the board said here that they are conducting workshops across different national parks to ensure a seamless and exciting journey.

Global Tiger Day is celebrated every year on July 29th July as a way to raise awareness about this magnificent but endangered big cat. This year the theme of International Tiger's Day is "Tigers: Roar for Conservation." This theme reflects the urgency to implement the conservation efforts of the tigers from extinction.

Madhya Pradesh's commitment to preserving its tiger population is evident in the latest tiger census. The state recorded a remarkable increase in the number of visitors' testament to the tireless efforts of the MP Tourism Board to promote wildlife tourism on a national and international level. According to the 2022 census, the maximum number of tigers, 785, was reported to be in Madhya Pradesh, followed by Karnataka (563), Uttarakhand (560), and Maharashtra (444). Being decked with numerous wildlife hotspots that include 7 tiger reserves, 12 National Parks and 24 Wildlife Sanctuaries, Madhya Pradesh is an absolute wonderland and a wildlife destination without compare. The state is not only known as the "Tiger State of India" but also gained the tags of "the Leopard State, the Vulture State, the Ghariyal State, Crocodile State and the Wolf State" of the country. A survey by the Forest Survey of India says that the forest cover in Madhya Pradesh increased to 7748.49 sq km!

Mrs. Bidisha Mukherjee, Additional Managing Director,

Madhya Pradesh Tourism Board said, 'Now, imagine you on a wild road trip to the Tiger Reserves and National Parks of Madhya Pradesh. It's like a real-life episode of your favorite nature show. From the playful rustling of leaves to the jaw-dropping moment when a tiger stops by, every step is a new page in the jungle diary'. She also informed that, "Encounter tigers and other animals on a wildlife safari tour in seven tiger sanctuaries in Madhya Pradesh namely Kanha, Pench, Bandhavgarh, Satpura, Panna, Veerangana Durgavati and Sanjay Duburi. The only place you could find Cheetah in India is at Kuno National Park in Sheopur district'. Think of a place where the swing of fresh air wakes you up, where the morning chimes of neighbors satisfy your soul, and where the blazing heat of summer is overwhelmed by the mist of early morning. Think of a place hidden beneath the green meadows... Think of the mesmerizing national parks in Madhya Pradesh. Principal Secretary of Tourism and Culture and Managing Director Madhya Pradesh Tourism Board Shri Sheo Shekhar Shukla said Madhya Pradesh is committed to responsible tourism and is focusing at the importance of environmental impact and involving local communities. By collaborating with forest departments, local authorities, and tourism operators, Madhya Pradesh aims to sustain tourism activities even during the park closures (July to September) and generate employment opportunities for local residents.

Here's a glimpse into all 7 awe-inspiring tiger reserves of Madhya Pradesh: Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve spans across districts of Umaria and Katni. Encompassing an area of 1,536.93 square kilometres, the reserve boasts a thriving tiger population of 104 tigers. Apart from tigers, Bandhavgarh is home to leopards, deer, langurs, and over 250 species of birds. Kanha Tiger Reserve spanning the districts of Mandla and Balaghat is the most popular place to visit.

## Rice has critically important role to play in national & global food security

**Kolkata (PARTHA ROY):** Rice has critically important role to play in food security of India and around the world in time ahead. With the advent of climate change challenges as well as depletion of conducive resources for rice cultivation, there is need for synergistic sustainable efforts for sustainable development of rice cultivation and rice economy.

Bengal Rice Conclave was organised by Indian Chamber of Commerce (ICC) with support of Government of West Bengal on the inspiration of Chief Minister of West Bengal Smt. Mamata Banerjee on 26th July 2024 in Kolkata.

The conclave had three panel discussions on 'Best Practice on Farm Management for Quality Rice Production, Seeds, Crop Protection, Micro Irrigation and Climate issues and Technology'; 'Sustainable Post-Harvest Practices, Advanced Rice Milling Technologies & Machinery, Efficiency and Productivity in Milling, Modern Rice Storage Techniques' and 'Market Linkage, Financial Schemes and Export Possibilities'. Eminent personalities addressed the various sessions of the conclave were Shri Sobhaban Deb Chattopadhyay, Minister-In-Charge, Department of Agriculture, Government of West Bengal; Shri Arup Roy, Minister, Department of Food Processing Industries and Horticulture, Government of West Bengal; Shri Pradip Kumar Mazumdar, Minister-in-Charge, Department of Panchayats & Rural Development and Cooperation, Government of West Bengal; Mr. Ashutosh Mondal, Director, Department of Agriculture, Government of West Bengal; Prof. Swapan Dutta, Former, DDG-Crops, ICAR, Ministry of Agriculture, Government of India; Dr. Amresh Kumar Nayak, Director, National Rice Research Institute (NRRI), Cuttack; and



Mr. Shrikant Goenka, Chairman, Agriculture and Food Processing Committee, ICC amongst many others. Minister Sobhaban Deb Chattopadhyay, said, "Rice has been a staple in Bengal for centuries, integral to cultural and religious events. West Bengal, the rice bowl of India, contributes 14% of the nation's rice, featuring rich biodiversity. Over 12 years, significant advances in production and cultivator livelihoods have been made, yet challenges persist, such as climate risks, inadequate seeds, resource depletion, soil health, labour issues and limited mechanisation. Climate change has intensified droughts, floods and cyclones, impacting rice and other crops. The State Government has introduced initiatives, including climate-resilient seeds, crop insurance and direct-seeded rice (DSR). Research focuses on stress-tolerant, hybrid and bio-fortified rice varieties. Efforts to promote indigenous aromatic varieties have expanded cultivation significantly. ... Organic farming and sustainable practices like DSR and AWD are promoted to conserve resources and improve soil health.... Today, Farmers receive ₹10,000 annually, split into two payments of ₹5,000 each, while those with smaller landholdings receive ₹4,000 annually. Insurance premiums are now fully covered and if a farmer dies before the age of 60, their family receives ₹2 lakh immediately. Farmers over 60 are also provided with pensions. Families of farmers in West Bengal, in particular, are now in a better financial state. Our research centres are dedicated to advancing the agricultural sector, including the development of rice with lower sugar content. We are also exploring alternative cultivation options, such as millet production. Rice remains a staple food across several Indian states, including Bengal, Karnataka, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Odisha, Assam and Jharkhand. We are optimistic that our ongoing efforts will help bridge existing gaps and further enhance the sector's resilience." Minister Arup Roy, said, "... Today, Bengal is manufacturing a lot of quality products. In 2011, Govind Bhog and Tulaipanji were very famous in Barddhaman and North Bengal respectively. ... Earlier, the market price of Tulaipanji was around ₹50 per kg, which has now risen to ₹130. ... We are organising the Food Festival at Netaji Indoor Stadium on 9th, 10th and 11th August 2024...." Minister Pradip Kumar Mazumdar, said, "... The Green Revolution of the 1960s, led by Dr. Swaminathan, transformed India into a food-surplus nation, allowing us to feed 1.4 billion people. However, the focus on increasing productivity and quality..... India must remain self-sufficient in rice production, and Bengal plays a crucial role in this. Bengal's traditional rice variety, Jira, fetches higher prices

than Basmati due to its quality and market strategy. This shows the potential for quality rice production and the importance of effective marketing strategies."

Dr. Amresh Kumar Nayak, Director, National Rice Research Institute (NRRI), Cuttack, said, "National Rice Research Institute (NRRI) has a rich history dating back to 1942 when a severe famine struck Odisha, Jharkhand, Bangladesh and West Bengal, killing over 20 lakh people due to erratic rainfall and disease. In response, during World War II, the British government established the institute to ensure food security in the region. Since then, .... increasing grain production, notably boosting rice output by 10 million tons. Rice, being highly resilient and adaptable to diverse ecologies, remains vital for future food security and resilience.... linking rice farming with the market for profitability requires significant research and investment."

Mr. Shrikant Goenka, Chairman, Agriculture and Food Processing Committee, ICC, said, "Rice stands as a cornerstone in India's agricultural landscape, intricately woven into its cultural and culinary fabric. West Bengal, a major rice producer, is projected to produce approximately 15.75 million tonnes this year.

.... Traditional flood irrigation methods are no longer sustainable; therefore, adopting modern technologies such as micro irrigation is crucial for increasing yields. The System of Rice Intensification (SRI) method, which maintains paddy fields in a moist rather than inundated state, has demonstrated a 30% increase in rice yields while optimizing water, land, labor, and capital.... Continuous research and development in organic farming, advancements in rice genetics and biodiversity conservation for resilience and yield are commendable...."

## Bandhan Bank's total business grows 22% to ₹2.59 lakh crore

**Kolkata (PARTHA ROY):** Bandhan Bank announced its financial results for the first quarter of the financial year 2024-25 in Kolkata on 26th July 2024.

The bank's total business grew by 22%, to close at ₹2.59 lakh crore. The Bank's share of retail to total deposits now stands at nearly 69%. The encouraging growth witnessed in the last quarter has been driven by its expansion in distribution, business efficiency and the favourable operating environment. The Bank now serves more than 3.44 crore customers through 6,300 banking outlets in India. The total number of employees working at



Bandhan Bank is now nearly 77,500. During Q1 FY24-25, the Bank's deposit book grew by 23% over the same period in the previous year. The total deposit book now stands at ₹1.33 lakh crore while total advances are at ₹1.26 lakh crore. The current account and savings account (CASA) ratio is standing at 33.4% of the overall deposit book. Capital Adequacy Ratio (CAR), an indicator of the stability of the Bank, is at 15.7%, higher than the regulatory requirement. Speaking on the Bank's

performance, Ratan Kumar Kesh, MD & CEO, said, "The first quarter of the year is a testament to the business performance we aim to sustain throughout the year. We have demonstrated stability and growth across key parameters. Bandhan Bank's foundation is built on the trust of its customers and the unwavering commitment of its employees. These cornerstones, along with a focus on technology, process, product and people, will drive the growth trajectory of Bandhan Bank 2.0." The Bank continues its focus on asset diversification with a clear intention to increase its retail book. The bank intends to focus on greater digitization for higher productivity and efficiency. This will also lead to an overall enhancement in customer experience.



# UltraTech-India Cements deal: what next for Dhoni, Srinivasan and CSK?

**New Delhi:** The proposed acquisition of India Cements Ltd (ICL) by UltraTech Cement, announced on Sunday (July 28), has resonated beyond the cement industry. By the end of the day, though, it became clear that this corporate deal between two of the country's biggest business tycoons will have no impact on cricket. The Chennai Super Kings, one of the most successful franchises in the Indian Premier League (IPL), will remain under the ownership of N Srinivasan and his family.

Questions arose because India Cements, control of which will transfer to the Aditya Birla Group once the proposed sale of 33.72% of its stake is completed, was the original owner

of the CSK franchise. However, it has now been clarified to Cricbuzz that CSK is no longer part of India Cements but an independent company. It is owned by the shareholders, about a lakh of them, of the Chennai-based firm. "Chennai Super Kings and India Cements are different entities. India Cements no longer controls the CSK team. The team is run by a company called Chennai Super Kings Cricket Limited (CSKCL)," Kasi Viswanathan, the CEO of CSKCL, told this Cricbuzz on Sunday night from the US. Viswanathan, a long time associate of Srinivasan, was in the States for the Major League Cricket (MLC), in which CSK has a subsidiary (Dallas Super

Kings). He also confirmed that the N Srinivasan family - comprising Srinivasan himself, his wife Chitra Srinivasan, and daughter Rupa Gurunath - holds a controlling stake in the franchise. The chairman of CSKCL, however, is a certain R Srinivasan, not N Srinivasan. Curiously enough, once the proposed acquisition of the shares by UltraTech Cement is complete, N Srinivasan will no longer hold any shares in the company. "It will be a sad day

when the deal is completed and approvals are taken. I have been associated with the company for more than five decades," lamented Viswanathan.

India Cements, a 77-year-old company that celebrated its platinum jubilee a few years ago, has employed hundreds



of cricketers at the international, state, and local levels. Among its current employees are MS Dhoni, Rahul Dravid, Dinesh Karthik, R Ashwin, S Badrinath, and L Sivaramakrishnan among others. S Venkataraghavan, a former India spinner, was the first cricketer

recruited by the company under N Srinivasan.

The exact reason for Srinivasan selling his family's shares in the company is unclear, but he will continue to control 18 clubs in the Chennai league associated with the Tamil Nadu Cricket

Association (TNCA), which India Cements used to sponsor.

On Sunday, UltraTech announced it is acquiring of shares in India Cements at a cost of Rs 3,954 crore, following a previous purchase of 22.77% shares for Rs 1,889 crore in June this year. An UltraTech official told this website that the company is aware that this acquisition will not grant it any control over the CSK.

Meanwhile, it has been learned that MS Dhoni's future association with CSK will depend on the number of retentions

allowed in the upcoming IPL season. Dhoni and N Srinivasan are believed to have discussed this matter, and the former captain, who has been its face since inception in 2008, could continue to play for the side if the IPL

## Stokes hails 'phenomenal' Wood after match-winning fifer at Edgbaston



**London:** 'Phenomenal' was how Ben Stokes, the England captain, described Mark Wood's performance on Day 3 of the third Test at Edgbaston as the pacer's five-wicket haul paved the way for a quick finish to the game and helped England clean-sweep West Indies 3-0.

At Lunch time on Day 3, West Indies had mounted a spirited fightback, thanks to half-centuries from Mikyle Louis and Kavem Hodge, and had turned a 61-run overnight deficit into a handy 57-run lead. Wood had bowled a testing spell at the start of the day but had no rewards to speak for his efforts. But come the second session, the express speedster found reverse swing and put on a pace-bowling exhibition, bagging five wickets for only nine runs in six overs to skittle West Indies out for 175 and set up an easy chase for England.

"The rewards that he [Wood] got I think was later than he actually deserved to get them. The effort that he always puts in when he wears

his England shirt is just phenomenal. He's got the heart of a lion and that little sort of 45 minutes or an hour period when he had the ball is exactly what you want as a captain," Stokes told the host broadcaster at the post-match presentation. "Fast, extremely skilful, and he really blew the game open there for us... he was just phenomenal. It felt like he was going to take a wicket every ball. Obviously, when the balls reverse swinging at 93mph, it's definitely going to be a lot harder. He's very, very

important. The skill that he possesses, the X factor he has, every team wants one of those and he showed why it's so important today," Stokes said of Wood. Wood, who was named the Player of the Match, said he wasn't too happy with himself at the end of the first session but a conversation with James Anderson, who's now the bowling mentor for England for the rest of the summer, helped him turn things around. "Speaking to the management at lunchtime, I was pretty

down on myself and frustrated, but Jimmy [Anderson] gave me a great chat, telling me to focus on the skill side of things and moving the ball, rather than the outcome, and I really feel like that is what I tried to do. That first wicket gave me a lot of confidence and from there it just started to fly. "My role is to bowl fast and that's what Stokesy wants me to do and I'm proud of that role. Over the years my speed has been a bit up and down with injury but I've managed to maintain it

these games and hopefully I can continue that into the summer," said Wood.

Stokes also praised the two debutants in the series, Gus Atkinson and Jamie Smith, who both impressed in the three Tests. Atkinson, the Player of the Series, finished with 22 wickets while Smith scored 207 runs in three innings, with two half-centuries, including a crucial 95 in the first innings of the third Test that helped England recover from 54/5 and post a good total.

"Gus and Jamie, what a first series for them. Gus's debut couldn't have got any better. He's improved every single spell. Different conditions here and he showed his skills. Great to be able to throw the ball to two guys who've got such pace. Jamie Smith has been exceptional with bat and as a keeper you sort of want to be unnoticed. He's grown into that No.7 role very nicely," said Stokes, who also spoke about how England have refined their batting approach, which allowed them to stage a recovery in the first innings of this Test.

**Dhaka:** Bangladesh is all

set to host the next ICC board meeting as well as there is a possibility of holding the election of the sport's governing body, said Bangladesh Cricket Board president Nazmul Hasan on Sunday (July 28). Greg Barclay is the current chairman of the ICC. In November 2022, Barclay was

unanimously elected as ICC chairman for a second two-year term that expires later this year.

"It has been confirmed

that the next ICC board meeting will be in Dhaka. Possibly the election [ICC] would take place here," Nazmul told reporters during an impromptu press conference at the secretariat on Sunday.

"I think there will be an election (in the ICC) as the current chairman will have the last board meeting. We are expected to give our election mandate by this time," he said.

Nazmul relayed that while ICC were

concerned about the

unrest in the country, his

presence during the latest

ICC board meeting has assured the governing body that Bangladesh are going through with plans to host the upcoming Women's T20 World Cup. Earlier, BCB chief executive Nizamuddin Chowdhury and BCB women's wing chairman Shafiqul Alam Chowdhury Nadel echoed similar sentiment. It was reported that International Cricket Council members were monitoring the situation in Bangladesh, where the government had to impose an emergency last week that is yet to be lifted, to control the affairs of the state following public protests on the streets. Nazmul did not deny it altogether but insisted that the representatives

of different countries were convinced that the tournament can be hosted as per schedule after he arrived at the ICC meeting in Sri Lanka. "When I went there, the situation of the country was very bad and there was no communication with Bangladesh from outside and the news they were getting [was something] they were quite afraid [of]," Nazmul said. "But after seeing me they said at least they are convinced that everything is alright in the country." After that there was no discussion about it and all they wanted to know was what had happened. For us the important thing is the Women's World Cup that we will host here," he said.

## Dominant Washington Freedom crush SF Unicorns to seal MLC 2024 title



**New Delhi:** Washington Freedom capped off a dominant season by clinching the MLC 2024 title with another commanding performance in the final at the Grand Prairie Stadium in Dallas. The league's two best teams had split the games they contested in this past week with the San Francisco Unicorns even gunning down a target of 177 inside 14 overs in the first of those games. But on the night of the big title clash, the Unicorns were never in the contest once they conceded 207/5. Having posted a season-high score, the

Washington Freedom then buried their opponents under this mountain of runs, romping home to the title by 96 runs - the biggest margin of win (by runs) in the season - with Marco Jansen and Rachin Ravindra claiming three wickets apiece.

In many ways, victory on the night of the big final was set up by captain and talisman Steve Smith, who took his season aggregate to 336 (at 148.67SR) with a quickfire 88. This time, however, the Freedom skipper had to prop up a big total on the board

without too much contribution from compatriot and trusted opening partner Travis Head, who came into the game with five straight 50+ scores under his belt. After Freedom were asked to bat first on an excellent pitch, Head went through an interesting opening over, hitting a pair of fours and surviving a dropped chance. However, it was another Australian, Pat Cummins, that put paid to Freedom's fast-starting hopes with a back-of-length delivery angled across Head, whose attempted hook only found a thick edge to slip.

At the other end, Smith endured a fairly sedate start, scoring just 10 off his first 11 balls after five overs with Andries Gous providing the innings with much-needed impetus. Gous struck Cummins's second over for a pair of fours and a six before falling in the sixth over for a 14-ball 21. By then, Smith had worked himself into a semblance of rhythm, hitting a lofted drive and a sweep off Hassan Khan to complete a 49-run PowerPlay. The Freedom captain moved up the gears through the middle overs, intelligently playing the

maximums to five for the

innings.

A sensational scooped six into the first-tier beyond fine-leg powered Smith into the eighties while Maxwell took Smith to a 34-ball half-century, which he used as a springboard to further push up the scoring rate. The arrival of Glenn Maxwell at the fall of Rachin Ravindra's wicket proved to be another blessing for that Freedom scoring rate.

The two Australians plundered 28 runs off Juanoy Drysdale's 13th over with Smith pepping cow corner for a four and two sixes, taking his tally of 40 (22). Despite Cummins's best efforts at the death bowling his patented into-the-wicket off-cutters, Mukhtar Ahmed and Obus Pienaar found 16 runs off a Haris Rauf over that allowed Freedom to surpass their own total of 206 - the previous highest score of the season they achieved against the Texas Super Kings 10 days ago.

A score of 200 has never been chased down in the short history of the MLC and the Unicorns' hopes were dented early when Jake Fraser-McGurk chopped a Marco Jansen ball onto his stumps.