

Signing in: Modi-led new govt gets into work gear as ministers assume charge

New Delhi(KCN): Signalling both change and continuity, India's new government, headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi for a third consecutive term, got into work gear Tuesday with cabinet ministers and ministers of state filing into their respective offices to assume charge. A day after the much-anticipated portfolios were announced and two days after Modi and 71 ministers were sworn in at a grand ceremony in Rashtrapati Bhavan, there were flowers and felicitations aplenty in the corridors of power. Some said it with prayers and a few slogans were heard too. NDA 3.0 'took office' a week after election results threw up a majority for the alliance with 293 seats, above the halfway mark of 272, with the BJP getting 240. In a seamless transition from the previous government to the present one, the four big frontline portfolios stay the same — Amit Shah for Home, S Jaishankar for External Affairs, Nirmala Sitharaman for Finance and Rajnath Singh for Defence. Bharat First and V a s u d h a i v a Kutumbakam (The world is one family) will be the

two guiding axioms of Indian foreign policy, Jaishankar said shortly after taking over. On ties with China going forward, Jaishankar said some issues remained along the border with that country and efforts will be made to resolve them. "Our focus with regard to China will be on how to resolve the remaining issues," he told reporters. BJP president J P Nadda assumed charge of the Health as well as the Chemical and Fertilisers ministries. Several ministers made initial statements as they took charge of their ministries. Ashwini Vaishnaw who continues to hold the key portfolios of Railways and Electronics and Information Technology, assumed charge as Information and Broadcasting minister in the presence of senior officials, including Information and Broadcasting Secretary Sanjay Jaju. "Prime Minister Narendra Modi has made service to the poorest of poor the motto of his life and the main aim of the government. He has taken measures for welfare of the farmers, youth and empowerment of women," Vaishnaw told reporters.

Donning his MeitY hat as he resumed charge of the ministry, he said the government will push ahead with its tech-driven agenda of cementing India's global lead in semiconductor and electronics manufacturing and as a technology and digital hub. Jitendra Singh, who took office as Union Minister of State (MoS) for Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions at his North Block office, said good governance reforms undertaken in the last decade will continue to increase citizen-centricity and ensure ease of living for every citizen. Modi is in charge of the ministry. "Last 10 years have witnessed a series of revolutionary governance reforms happening under the guidance of PM Modi, which were basically inspired by the spirit of 'minimum government, maximum governance' and increasing citizen centricity to bring ease of living for every citizen of the country," Singh told reporters. Jyotiraditya Scindia, a p p o i n t e d Communications minister, said both the telecom sector and the India post division have key roles to play at the global as well as local stage.



The minister recalled his previous tenure as the Minister of State for Communications about one and half decades ago. "It is also a little bit like coming full circle for me. I worked as a junior minister in this department many many years ago in 2007, 2008 and 2009. Therefore for me it is also a department with which I have had tremendous emotional ties," Scindia said. Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju, also given the responsibility of Minority Affairs, said he will make all efforts to take everyone along to ensure smooth functioning of Parliament. There was no need to pull each other down on the basis of numerical strength, he added. "We need not pull each other down on the basis of numerical strength.

People use muscle power outside Parliament, but inside the House, we should use vocal power for good debate," he said after assuming charge in the presence of his predecessor Pralhad

Joshi and Ministers of State Arjun Ram Meghwal and L Murugan. Annapurna Devi, the country's new Women and Child Development minister, said she will work towards fulfilling

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's dream of a Viksit Bharat. Culture Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat echoed her and said his ministry will contribute towards the vision of making a Viksit Bharat. Senior BJP leader from Karnataka Pralhad Joshi took over as minister for Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution and said his priority would be to implement the 100-day agenda of the government and further strengthen the food security system. "I am thankful to the

prime minister who has given me the responsibility of this important department which is linked to the common people, where we provide free foodgrains to 80 crore people," Joshi told reporters. RSS pracharak, Haryana's former chief minister and now Union Power minister Manohar Lal Khattar met heads of public sector undertakings in the power sector and other top brass of his ministry to understand the dynamics of the sector.

Vaishnaw takes charge of Electronics, IT Ministry; promises focus on tech, manufacturing

New Delhi(KCN): Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw Tuesday said the government will push ahead with its tech-driven agenda of cementing India's global lead in semiconductor and electronics manufacturing, and as a technology and digital hub. Taking charge of Ministry of Electronics and IT (MeitY) — a nodal ministry tasked with crafting crucial policies and regulations for fast-evolving digital and tech landscape — Vaishnaw vowed that the government would build on the past momentum and leverage the power of technology and digital solutions to improve lives of people. He highlighted that the Modi government's Digital India initiative has empowered the common man, bringing transformative changes through Jan Dhan, Aadhaar, and other programmes over the last 10 years. Vaishnaw, who retained his electronics and IT portfolio in Modi 3.0 government, took charge of MeitY Tuesday morning, after assuming office in Railways as well as Information and Broadcasting — the two other ministries allocated to him. Vaishnaw said his efforts will be to ensure that technology continues to bring positive changes in the lives of people in the country, and that it empowers youth with a promising future driven by new-age tech. "Modi government will



continue its work of bringing transformative change in people's lives, through use of digital technologies...India will keep its lead in every segment, be it semiconductor, telecom tech, manufacturing tech...." Vaishnaw told reporters. Over the past years and months, Vaishnaw has scripted success stories around electronics and semiconductor manufacturing and also spearheaded the enactment of crucial pieces of legislation like Digital Personal Data Protection Act. Mobile phone manufacturing during Vaishnaw's tenure crossed Rs 4.1 lakh crore worth of production, marking a 21-fold jump compared to 2014-15, when 98 per cent of local demand was met through imports. The country now meets 97 per cent of its total mobile phone demand, locally. So far as regulations go, the DPDP Act approved by Parliament in August last year seeks to crackdown on misuse of individuals' data by online platforms. It mandates several compliance requirements for the collection, processing, and protection of personal data, and entails up to Rs 250 crore penalty for any

data breach. The DPDP moots creation of Data Protection Board of India to handle grievances of individuals around personal data privacy if data fiduciaries or firms using personal data fail to address individuals' complaints. Vaishnaw's return to the ministry also sets the stage for taking forward the work on proposed Digital India legislation, which would replace the 24-year-old IT Act. As it is, MeitY has been doing the groundwork on draft Digital India legislation that would provide guardrails and prescribe regulatory approach to new-age technologies like artificial intelligence (AI). It would also offer stringent safeguards against newer forms of online offences such as deepfakes, catphishing, doxxing, cyber stalking among others. India has been pulling out all the stops to bolster its semiconductor and electronics manufacturing capabilities, and Vaishnaw, during his tenure in Modi 2.0 was instrumental in getting global storage semiconductor firm Micron to set up a chip assembly plant followed by investments from

i n d i g e n o u s conglomerate Tata to set up a chip manufacturing plant in Gujarat and an assembly unit in Assam. A fourth unit has been set up by CG Power in partnership with Renesas Electronics Corp and Stars Microelectronics in Gujarat. India's AI agenda too is action-packed. Before heading for 2024 general elections, the Modi government had approved an allocation of over Rs 10,300 crore for the IndiaAI Mission to bolster India's AI ecosystem. The financial infusion, slated over the next five years, is poised to catalyse various components of IndiaAI Mission, including pivotal initiatives like the IndiaAI Compute Capacity, IndiaAI Innovation Centre (IAIC), IndiaAI Datasets Platform, IndiaAI Application Development Initiative, IndiaAI FutureSkills, IndiaAI Startup Financing, and Safe and Trusted AI. Nittin Arora, Partner, Grant Thornton Bharat noted that several policy measures have been announced over the years, to promote indigenisation, job creation and entrepreneurship. He mentioned the thrust on PLI schemes for sectors including telecom and electronics hardware, significant spends on digital infrastructure, and incentives for deep-tech/ 5G.



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'Tera Kya Hoga Lovely' trailer: Film offers bold take on India's fair skin obsession

The makers released the trailer for 'Tera Kya Hoga Lovely' on February 27, starring Ilena D'Cruz and Randeep Hooda. This marks Ilena's return to the screen after her role in the 2021 film 'The Big Bull'. Directed by Balwinder Singh Janjua, the film sheds light on India's fixation with fair skin and dowry. Set in the backdrop of Haryana, the film portrays Ilena as Lovely, a dark-complexioned girl seeking a suitable match for marriage, but later deciding to pursue further education instead. Enter Randeep Hooda, who falls for her irrespective of her skin tone. However, complications arise when his family discovers his affection for a dark-skinned woman. The makers released the



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education instead. Enter Randeep Hooda, who falls for her irrespective of her skin tone. However, complications arise when his family discovers his affection for a dark-skinned woman.

Suriya Gets Injured On Sets Of Kanguva, Film Shoot Halted



Actor Suriya has been busy with the shooting of his upcoming film 'Kanguva', a Tamil period-drama. The film is directed by Siruthai Siva and the shooting has been taking place at a film city in Chennai. According to TOI report, a grand set has been erected by the makers for the shoot of film. The latest report stated that a rope camera lost

control during the shooting of 'Kanguva' and it fell on Suriya, thus leaving him injured. The report is further mentioned that the actor suffered injuries on his shoulder after which the shoot was halt. Fortunately, it was a minor mishap and no major injury was caused to Suriya. According to another report, the actor has

been advised by the doctor for a two-week bed rest. Meanwhile, Suriya was expected to wrap up the film for his portions in 'Kanguva' this month and the entire filming was slated to be over by next month. However, with the latest development, there may be a slight delay in production. 'Kanguva' was announced in August

2022 with the tentative title 'Suriya 42' as it became Suriya's 42nd film in a leading role. The shooting of the film has taken place in Goa, Kerala, Kodaikanal, and Rajahmundry. The official title 'Kanguva' was announced in April 2023.

'Kanguva' stars Suriya in six roles, leading an ensemble cast that includes Disha Patani and Bobby Deol, alongside Natarajan Subramaniam, Jagapathi Babu, Yogi Babu, Redin Kingsley, Kovai Sarala, Anandaraj, Ravi Raghavendra, K. S. Ravikumar, and B. S. Avinash. The film will mark the Tamil debut of Disha and Bobby. It is scheduled to be released theatrically in early 2024 in standard, 3D and IMAX formats. The official release date of the film is yet to be announced.

Al Pacino to Zendaya, meet the first round of Oscars 2024 presenters

The first round of Oscars presenters has been announced by the Academy. The 96th Academy Awards will be streamed live on March 10. Zendaya, Michelle Pfeiffer, and Oscar winners Nicolas Cage and Al Pacino are among the first set of presenters that were announced on February 27.

Other names in the first set of Oscars presenters are Mahershala Ali, Jamie Lee Curtis, Brendan Fraser, Jessica Lange, Matthew McConaughey, Lupita Nyong'o, Ke Huy Quan, Sam Rockwell, and Michelle Yeoh. More presenters will be announced in days to come. Jimmy Kimmel returns as the Oscars host after three years. The 96th Academy Awards is being executive produced by



Raj Kapoor (who also serves as showrunner), Molly McNearney, and Katy Mullan. The nominations for Oscars 2024 were announced on January

23 (IST). The nominations list was dominated by Christopher Nolan's acclaimed 'Oppenheimer', which led with 13 nods. Nisha

Pahuja's 'To Kill a Tiger' is nominated for Best Documentary Feature at the Oscars. The 96th Oscars will be held on Sunday, March 10, 2024, at the Dolby

John Abraham, Sharvari, Tamannaah Bhatia Starrer 'Vedaa' Set For Release On August 15.

The release date of John Abraham and Sharvari-starrer 'Vedaa' has been announced. The film will hit the theatres on Independence Day, August 15. Directed by Nikkhil Advani and written by Aseem Arora, 'Vedaa' is produced by Zee Studios, Umesh Kr Bansal, Monisha Advani, Madhu Bhojwani, John



Abraham, and co-produced by Minnakshi Das. The film also stars Abhishek Bannerjee and Tamannaah Bhatia. As per a statement, the film "promises a jaw-dropping story filled with heart-pounding stunts and high-octane action." Director Nikkhil Advani earlier said in a statement, "Vedaa is not just a film. It's inspired by real events and is a reflection of our society and pushes the boundaries of reality. Working with John, Sharvari and Abhishek Banerjee has been an incredible experience and I'm glad to finally announce the release date and fingers are crossed the audience gets moved the way we all did when we first heard the story of Vedaa."

Madhu Bhojwani, producer, Emmay Entertainment said in a statement, "We are delighted to announce the release date for our film. Vedaa is an inspiring tale based on true events with engaging performances and high-octane action and drama, perfect for a big screen experience."

The film is written by Aseem Arora.

Diljit Dosanjh shares fun BTS clip from 'Crew' set with Kareena Kapoor

Singer Diljit Dosanjh recently posted a fun video from the sets of the Crew film. The fun clip also features Kareena Kapoor and Kriti Sanon in it.

Dosanjh, who is famously a fan of American celebrity Kylie Jenner, posted the video with a caption that read, "Kylie Shado, Ethey Poori KAREENA KAPOOR (sic)" (Forget about Kylie, this is Kareena Kapoor). In the clip, Diljit is seen having the time of his life on the sets of the Crew movie. The clip sees him rehearsing a scene with Kareena Kapoor. It also features Kriti Sanon and Farah Khan. As soon as the video was shared by the singer, a lot of fans dropped comments underneath it. Rapper Badshah, who also featured in the clip, wrote, "Paaji is the not remember the lyrics the song of (sic)."

The video was posted with Diljit's voice-over, which worked as some sort of audio guidance for the viewers.



Theatre at Ovation Hollywood and televised live on ABC at the new time of 7 pm EDT/4 pm PDT in more than 200 territories worldwide. Alternatively, Indian

viewers can watch the Academy Awards live on Disney+ Hotstar. The event is expected to open at 4 am (IST) with the red carpet, followed by the main event.



It is normal for the political opposition of Narendra Modi to be jubilant as the seats they could harvest in the 2024 Lok Sabha election have considerably accelerated their confidence and brought a fresh sheen to their coalition profile. The next move by the INDI alliance will be to apply the tactics that they applied during the general elections in the upcoming state elections too. But nothing could deter the Modi momentum completely. Though his party was trimmed to a meager size below the required number for an adequate majority, the alliance he could stitch up with TDP and JDU will see him through a vibrant third term. This, unlike the first decade of his dominance in the alliance, would compel him to follow the coalition dharma. Even the smallest

party in the coalition would deserve to be heard. There have been applauds from particular corners of the world which seem to have been celebrating the pull that the Modi regime was made to face. Columns occupied larger spaces in international dailies commenting it as the failure of the policies enacted by the world's most aggressive Prime Minister, who, they describe, was all set to turn India a Hindutva stronghold. But despite being diminished, Narendra Modi and his party would enjoy the credit for being the most dominant force that could alter the Indian tradition of coalition for a decade but obviously from outside the Congress bandwagon. Though multiple factors played their critical role in pulling the tally of the saffron party, the Congress again failed to create a remarkable comeback. It enjoys a breathing space now as its presence in the parliament counts to be more significant and a vibrant opposition with greater numbers seems to

be a challenging force against the new government. Interestingly, Rahul Gandhi gained a credible acceptance among the INDI alliance. His Bharat Jodo Yatras are understood to have churned a momentum in his party's favor. But his detractors refuse to accept it as the electoral progress of Congress. They call it coalition sympathy and dividends poured in for its divisive agenda. The new government, stitched among unpredictable allies, would force the Modi regime to make coalition adjustments and draw alignments before the government acted on policy matters that his party had a historical commitment. The BJP's tireless efforts to expand into unreachable pockets bore fruits but its strongholds like Uttar Pradesh shattered severely. Undoubtedly, Modi's first two terms will be known for their historical decisions and progressive involvements. What he will be known for will be the steps, the initiatives the country had witnessed in his first two tenures.

Stretching from demonetization to the foreign policies to economic growth to the G20 success, there has been an endless list of unique initiatives by the Modi regime. But the BJP has to seriously ponder on its electoral drag. There has been strong anti-incumbency against its MPs. Most of them appeared to have been depending on the popularity of the Prime Minister. The party and its machinery lost its originality as the whole mechanism failed to make credible efforts to counter narratives that its opposite camp flung innumerable. The most damaging one that gained inroads into the middle class and the minds of the lower stratum of the caste oriented societies was the narrative on the potential danger of changing the constitution if Modi was reelected. This appears to have brought tremors of discontent against the Modi regime. Sensing an impending danger, the Prime Minister himself began to stretch his nerves and his comments against

India's largest minority have shaken his stature remarkably while the Election Commission intervened mildly stressing for restraint. With Modi 3.0 begins to roll, Indian parliament will witness uproarious and abominable situations. More vigorous and contemptuous criticisms will be the new normal. What separates Modi regimes from the other governments in Indian history would be his spiritualizing politics with India's culture being allowed to take the front seat. Jawaharlal Nehru's celebrated years in the beginning of India's post independence journey was skeptical about the power of India's spiritual force. Even Vajpayee remained visibly dispassionate about the idea of India's spiritual ethos and the revival of its culture. His focus was to satiate the impulses of the coalition and he successfully maintained it. Modi's third regime is going to be an ideological rivalry standing face to face with his opposition sharpening its teeth more formidably and

contemptuously. An ideological combat between two principal views; one being the proponent of the philosophy of nationalism and the other waiting to eagerly establish the entity of the country as a union of states. Modi, throughout his decade long administration was trying to infuse a sense of divinity, sacredness and motherhood in 'Rashttram', which he unequivocally remained a strong proponent of. This fundamental ideal of a Rashtram which in his divine political term became the resounding concept of Bharat Mata and victory to her "bharatmata ki jai" was his principal slogan. This slogan and its vigorous reverberation still influence millions and Modi tapped the best out of it. That being said, the BJP and its leadership are to face terrible tremors of a backlash that it has had in the region where Ayodhya is located. The ruling party's plan to make the consecration of the Ram temple an event of significant political

ramification could not fructify. Its failure in Ayodhya has held the party tight-lipped as the temple city was for decades its holy cow. Ever since the party ensured its enhanced presence by systematically packaging its Hindutva agenda through the Ram temple, there have been predictions in the air foreseeing its landslide victory in the state. This electoral setback has seriously pushed its Mathura plan into the cold storage. Hindus, the principal majority could be easily divided into castes and sub castes and they probably, were reluctant to accept what Modi affirmed by reuniting and restructuring the Hindutva base. Going beyond the caste distinctions, Modi's efforts were to systematically nurture the Hindu populace of the country as its political majority since 2014 and that is how he countered the minority appeasement of the Congress. Having been diminished and dismantled, the chunk that voted for him in the last decade stood with caste

gimmicks of the INDIA camp this time. With his senior colleagues retaining their previous portfolios, Modi sends a strict message across party lines that the agenda he has set for India through its Amrit Kaal would materialize. And the parliament, with members piling from unpredictable pockets including jail, is sure to give him unprecedented challenges. What he decides to hold on would make it more interesting; his party's strong nationalistic ideology or coalition adjustments. What he decides to give a try would determine the effectiveness of his administration. If he keenly sticks to coalition adjustments, his party's nationalistic ideology will have shrunk into its molecular level.

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The Political Odyssey of Naveen Patnaik: A Chronicle of Welfare and Woes in Odisha

Bruhaspati Samal



In the annals of Odisha's political history, Naveen Patnaik, a name synonymous with modern Odisha politics stands as a testament to longevity and influence. As the Chief Minister of Odisha from 2000 to 2024, he held the reins of the state, steering it through tumultuous times and ushering in an era of development and welfare. However, as with any leader, his tenure was marked by both commendable achievements with a series of electoral victories, governance reforms and significant socio-economic changes in the state on one hand and contentious controversies accompanied by the challenges of prolonged incumbency for two and half decades, internal party conflicts due to creation of another power hub under the control of a bureaucrat, rising opposition, economic slowdown, his personal health issues etc on the other.

Naveen Patnaik entered the political arena following the death of his father, Biju Patnaik, a revered leader in Odisha forming the Biju Janata Dal (BJD) in 1997. However, his actual political career began amidst the aftermath of the Super Cyclone of 1999, one of the most devastating natural disasters in Odisha's history. Striking on October 29, 1999, the cyclone caused widespread destruction and significant loss of life. In the 2000 Odisha Legislative Assembly elections, the BJD, in alliance with the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), secured a significant victory. The BJD-BJP

coalition won 88 out of 147 seats, with BJD alone securing 68 seats. This marked the beginning of Naveen Patnaik's tenure as Chief Minister. Upon assuming office in 2000, Patnaik's immediate focus was on relief and rehabilitation for the cyclone-affected regions. Recognizing the need for a robust disaster management framework, Patnaik's government undertook significant institutional reforms. A key initiative was the establishment of the Odisha State Disaster Management Authority (OSDMA) in 1999. The OSDMA was tasked with coordinating disaster preparedness, response, and mitigation efforts, playing a crucial role in enhancing the state's capacity to manage future disasters. Additionally, the construction of multipurpose cyclone shelters in vulnerable areas provided safe havens for thousands during subsequent cyclones. The installation of advanced meteorological equipment also improved Odisha's ability to predict and respond to cyclones. Infrastructure reconstruction was another critical aspect of Patnaik's post-cyclone strategy. Naveen Patnaik's management of the aftermath of the 1999 Super Cyclone showcased his leadership and administrative capabilities. Through immediate relief efforts, institutional reforms, infrastructure reconstruction, economic rehabilitation, and community involvement, Patnaik effectively addressed the challenges posed by the cyclone. His proactive approach to disaster management not only helped Odisha recover from the devastating impact of the 1999 cyclone but also laid the foundation for the state's enhanced resilience to future natural disasters. This effective management significantly contributed to

his political ascendancy and long-lasting popularity among the people of Odisha. Patnaik's early years were marked by robust governance reforms aimed at improving transparency and efficiency in the state administration. The implementation of the Odisha State Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management Act in 2005 was a crucial step towards maintaining fiscal discipline. Under his leadership, Odisha's Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) grew at an average annual rate of 7.5% from 2000 to 2010, surpassing the national average. Naveen Patnaik's government introduced several social welfare programs that resonated well with the electorate. The "Kalia Scheme" (Krushak Assistance for Livelihood and Income Augmentation), launched in 2018, provided financial assistance to small and marginal farmers, and landless agricultural laborers, boosting his popularity among rural voters. By 2024, KALIA had disbursed over Rs.10,000 crores, benefiting more than 50 lakh families and fortifying the agrarian backbone of the state. Empowering women emerged as another focal point of Naveen Patnaik's agenda, exemplified by the Mission Shakti initiative. Since its inception in 2001, Mission Shakti has catalyzed a socio-economic revolution by nurturing over 6 lakh women-led self-help groups (SHGs) across the state. These SHGs, equipped with access to credit, training, and market linkages, have not only fostered economic independence but also empowered women as agents of change in their communities. Moreover, the administration prioritized education and healthcare, spearheading significant transformative reforms in these sectors. Over 20,000 new schools were established, and 200 new

hospitals inaugurated, ensuring enhanced accessibility and quality of essential services. Schemes like Biju Swasthya Kalyan Yojana further bolstered healthcare coverage, extending vital benefits to over 3 crore beneficiaries and ensuring a healthier populace. The Mamata scheme, targeting pregnant women and lactating mothers, provided financial assistance to promote maternal and child health. Since its inception in 2011, the scheme has disbursed over Rs.500 crores, benefiting more than 40 lakh women and children across the state. Through cash incentives and support for antenatal and postnatal care, Mamata has contributed to reducing maternal and infant mortality rates and improving overall maternal health outcomes. In addition to these initiatives, the administration launched Ama Gaon Ama Bikash (Our Village, Our Development) in 2018. This scheme aimed to decentralize governance and empower local communities in the development process. Each gram panchayat received Rs.1 crore annually for grassroots development projects identified by the villagers themselves. By 2024, over 6,000 Gram Panchayats had benefited from the scheme, fostering participatory democracy and grassroots empowerment. Naveen Patnaik spearheaded significant temple reformation and beautification projects in Odisha, particularly focusing on the iconic Jagannath Temple in Puri. His government launched the "Abhada Yojana" to enhance the temple's surroundings, improve infrastructure, and ensure better facilities for pilgrims. Efforts included widening roads, creating pedestrian-friendly zones, and upgrading sanitation and security measures.

Additionally, other temples such as the Lingaraj Temple in Bhubaneswar, Sun Temple in Konark, and the Maa Samaleswari Temple in Sambalpur were restored and beautified, preserving Odisha's rich cultural heritage. These initiatives not only revitalized religious sites but also boosted tourism, enhancing the state's cultural and economic landscape. The BJD's pro-poor policies contributed significantly to reducing poverty in the state, which dropped from 57.2% in 2000 to 32.6% in 2010. During the period from 2010 to 2019, Patnaik's handling of natural disasters earned him widespread acclaim. The state's efficient management of Cyclone Phailin in 2013 and Cyclone Fani in 2019, which involved timely evacuation and effective rehabilitation measures, showcased the administration's preparedness and responsiveness. The death toll in these disasters was minimal compared to previous cyclones, highlighting significant improvements in disaster management. During this period, Odisha witnessed substantial industrial growth, particularly in the steel and mining sectors. Major projects like the POSCO steel plant, although eventually shelved, brought significant investments and employment opportunities to the state. The state's industrial output grew by 8% annually from 2010 to 2019, contributing to a reduction in the unemployment rate from 8.5% in 2010 to 5.6% in 2019. The BJD continued to dominate the electoral landscape, winning consecutive elections in 2004, 2009, and 2014. In the 2014 elections, the BJD secured 117 out of 147 assembly seats, reflecting a 45% vote share. Naveen Patnaik's personal charisma, clean image, and the BJD's grassroots

connect were pivotal in maintaining this dominance. But, after nearly two decades in power, anti-incumbency sentiments began to surface. Despite his efforts, certain regions remained underdeveloped, and issues like unemployment and corruption started to erode public trust. The state's GSDP growth rate slowed down to 5% from 2019 to 2024, reflecting a broader economic slowdown and structural issues within the state's economy. Internal strife within the BJD and allegations of an autocratic leadership style tarnished Patnaik's image. Most importantly, the rise and fall of Naveen Patnaik's political career is intertwined with the influence of V. K. Pandian, an Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer who played a pivotal role in Patnaik's administration. Initially celebrated for his efficiency and dedication, Pandian's growing influence within the Odisha government eventually became a controversial topic, significantly impacting Patnaik's public image. Pandian's growing clout and perceived autocratic style began to draw criticism. Allegations of him wielding undue influence over the Chief Minister and key government decisions became rampant. Critics accused Pandian of bypassing established administrative protocols and sidelining senior bureaucrats and politicians, leading to discontent within the BJD and the state bureaucracy. The opposition parties, particularly the BJP, capitalized on this discontent, portraying Pandian as the power behind the throne and questioning the Chief Minister's control over his administration. The narrative of an unelected bureaucrat exercising disproportionate power resonated with the public

and fueled anti-incumbency sentiments. This perception was further exacerbated by reports of Pandian's involvement in key political decisions, candidate selections, and the administration of crucial welfare schemes. The perception of an overreaching bureaucrat controlling the state's political machinery alienated party members and voters alike, contributing to the decline of Patnaik's political dominance in Odisha. The expulsion of senior leaders also created rifts within the party. Furthermore, the BJD's declining performance in the 2019 general elections, where it won only 12 out of 21 Lok Sabha seats, signaled weakening support. The resurgence of the BJP in Odisha posed a significant challenge to Patnaik's leadership. In the 2019 Assembly elections, the BJP increased its tally to 23 seats, up from 10 in 2014, and garnered a 32% vote share. The BJP's focus on issues like corruption and lack of job creation resonated with the youth and urban voters. Naveen Patnaik's health issues, which became more apparent in the latter part of his tenure, also contributed to his political decline. His frequent medical visits abroad and reduced public engagements created a perception of a leadership vacuum within the state. The COVID-19 pandemic further exacerbated the challenges faced by Patnaik's government. The state's healthcare infrastructure, although improved over the years, struggled to cope with the surge in cases. The economic impact of the pandemic led to increased unemployment and poverty, further straining the government's resources and diminishing public support. The culmination of these factors was reflected in the 2024 Assembly elections, where the BJD was defeated by the BJP. The BJD managed to secure only 51 seats, a significant drop from its previous tally. Instead, the BJP won 78 seats, capitalizing on the anti-incumbency wave and promising a new direction for Odisha. Naveen Patnaik's political journey from 2000 to 2024 is a study in the dynamics of Indian state politics highlighting both the successes and struggles of his tenure, providing a comprehensive understanding of his rise and fall in Odisha's political history. As his tenure drew to a close, his legacy emerged as a tapestry woven with threads of welfare initiatives, governance reforms, and the indelible imprint of controversies. His stewardship exemplified the complexities of leadership, wherein commendable achievements coexisted with contentious challenges. The fall of Naveen Patnaik serves as a poignant reminder of the impermanence of political power and the enduring quest for inclusive growth and equitable development. As Odisha embarks on a new chapter under different leadership, it must draw upon the lessons of the past to forge a future rooted in integrity, empathy, and empowerment for all its citizens. However, Naveen Patnaik's legacy of simplicity, gentleness, understated demeanor and unassuming lifestyle combined with his focus on empathetic governance, has made him a beloved leader whose impact transcends the usual political divides.

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Plea in SC seeks cancellation of NEET-UG 2024 exam



New Delhi(KCN): A PIL has been filed before the Supreme Court seeking cancellation of the NEET-UG 2024 examination. The plea seeks directions for the constitution of a Special Investigation Team (SIT) to investigate the “malpractices and fraud involved” in the NEET examination held May 5 and a stay on counselling till the investigations on the paper leak are completed. The PIL filed by two members of an

organisation working for the assistance and benefit of the students said that the news of the NEET exam paper leak has shaken to the core as many of the meritorious students lost the opportunity to become future medical practitioners. “The petitioners are filing the present petition with the sole purpose of providing justice to the aggrieved students who with the support of their respective family members had put in their entire time, hard-earned

money and energy along with the hard work and dedication in preparing for NEET Exam 2024 and have been denied a level playing field,” it said. The plea added that some students have secured 718 and 719 marks which are statically not possible and the entire exercise conduct of the exam is without any rationale and the same is arbitrary and done with mala fide intention to grant entry to the students through backdoor. Further, it said that 67 students scored 720 out of 720 marks out of which eight students were from the same examination centre, raising serious doubts regarding the examination conducted by the NTA. Recently, the apex court denied a stay on the declaration of the result of the NEET-UG examination but issued a notice to NTA and others in a similar matter.

Diarrhea is spreading in Semiliguda Subai village; More than 30 people in the village are suffering from diarrhoea.

Semiliguda:(KCN) Diarrhea is widespread in Koraput Semiliguda Subai Gaud Sahi. More than 30 people in the village have contracted diarrhoea. Women, men and children are among the victims. After being treated at the medical center, he is now recovering at home. On receiving the news, the medical team of Semiliguda block administration and district health department reached the village and conducted a health check with the villagers. He checked the sanitation system of the well in the village. The health



department team is investigating the cause of the spread of diarrhea. The situation is now under control, the District Chief Medical

Officer has informed. The District Chief Medical Officer has informed that an investigation is being carried out as to why

diarrhea has spread in the village. He has ordered the village to be cleaned by throwing bleaching powder. After receiving this news, the

newly elected Congress MLA of Pottangi, Ramachandra Kadam. Subai reached the village and discussed with the people.

In this presence, health workers, Anganwadi Asha workers, people's representatives warned the villagers to use boiled water. Meanwhile, Dr. Nil Madhav Shatpathi, who leads the Koraput medical team, which is closely monitored by the district administration, informed. He said that attention is being paid so that no one else gets infected with diarrhoea

Prof Sudershan Rao awarded 'Gurukul Fellowship' by ICHR

Hanumakonda, June 11 (KCN): Dr Yellapragada Sudershan Rao, a former Professor of History and former Chairman of Indian Council of Historical Research (ICHR), has been conferred prestigious Gurukul Fellowship, according to the Officiating Member



Secretary Om Jee Upadhyay. In a mail sent to Prof Sudershan Rao on Tuesday, it was stated that the Fellowship which has been declined by Prof Sudershan Rao on the dilemma to avail of the Fellowship in the capacity of former Chairman of ICHR, the Council in its meeting held on March 27 unanimously resolved to request Prof Sudershan Rao to reconsider his decision and accept the Fellowship. Speaking to 'The South India Times', Prof Sudershan Rao said that he would accept the Fellowship. The Fellowship is of duration of two years and he would like to work on 'Cultural History of Bharat (Remote Past)', he added.

First ever UN International Day of Play on 11th June 2024

Kolkata(PARTHA ROY):United Nations is observing first-ever International Day of Play, on 11 June 2024. It marks a significant milestone in efforts to preserve, promote, and prioritize playing so that all people, especially children, can reap the rewards and thrive to their full potential. Play of is a universal language spoken by people of all ages,

transcending national, cultural, and socio-economic boundaries. Playing fosters a sense of community and national pride. Playing of all types of games and sports fosters resilience, creativity, and innovation in individuals. For children in particular, play helps build relationships and improves control, overcome trauma, and problem-solving. It helps

children develop the cognitive, physical, creative, social, and emotional skills they need to thrive in a rapidly changing world. Play is promoting tolerance, resilience, and facilitating social inclusion, conflict prevention, and peace building. United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child has enshrined play as a fundamental right of every child under Article 31.

Restoring Riverine Ecosystem: ICAR-CIFRI Ranched 3 lakh Fingerlings at Mayapur



Kolkata, (KCN) : ICAR-Central Inland Fisheries Research Institute, Barrackpore under its flagship NamamiGange project continues the National Ranching Program III at Mayapur, Nadia, West Bengal towards conservation and restoration of River Ganga. The main objective of the river ranching is to replenish the depleted fish stocks of the river. Till today, ICAR-CIFRI has ranched more than 110 lakhs of fish fingerlings of Indian Major Carps in several sites across the four states of the country. In Mayapur, ICAR-CIFRI implemented a

ranching programme aimed at protecting and revitalising the Ganga river. 25 local men and women fishers as well as scientists and other members of the ICAR-CIFRI project team carried out the event. In an effort to replenish the riverine stock, 3.23 lakh additional fingerlings of Indian Major Carps were released into the Ganga River at Swarupganj Ghat, Mayapur. The goals of the NamamiGange initiative were described by scientists from ICAR-CIFRI. They highlighted some of its most recent achievements and made the local fishermen aware of the importance of

preserving the Ganges river system's health in order to protect the variety of indigenous fish species. Results from NMCG Phases I and II were emphasised, as were the noteworthy accomplishments. Studies on fish diversity, assessments of populations of economically significant species (such as Hilsa), the development of seeds from wild germplasm of certain fish species, and the mega ranching activities in the designated river length were among them. The Ganga river system may become more viable in the long run if this ranching event is successful.

CIFRI introduced Amur Carp among beneficiaries of Hill area of Sittong, WB



Kolkata,(KCN): The small and marginal fish farmers of the hilly region have their own tiny cemented tank. Due to lack of proper knowledge and technical support on fish farming, they can't do commercial fish production. To improve their livelihoods by providing technical support for enhancing the fish production from these small unit, a awareness program along with input distribution was organised by ICAR-CIFRI under SCSP programme at Sittong on 9th June, 2024. With the vision of upscaling

socio-economic condition of rural hill community, ICAR-Central Inland Fisheries Research Institute (ICAR-CIFRI) is promoting the Amur Carp fish farming for strengthening their livelihood under the leadership of Dr. B. K. Das, Director, ICAR-CIFRI. In this programme ICAR-CIFRI distributed 50000 Amur Carp seeds to 50 beneficiaries among them 10 females from Sittong and Mongpu of Darjeeling district in collaboration with Sittong Multi Agro Cooperative (REH). The Sittong Gram

Panchayat Pradhan Mr. Sushil Sukhna and Ex. Pradhan Mr. Digger Lepcha also graced the occasion and share their thoughts about the fisheries as alternative livelihood opportunity in the region. Dr. Das has interacted with the farmers and encouraged them about scientific fish farming with the scientists of ICAR-CIFRI. He also provided scientific advice to the queries of a few trainees. Dr. Das, has advised the people to continue this fish farming on a mission mode approach on a cluster basis and assure CIFRI's support for them.

MANAGE celebrates 37th Foundation Day



Hyderabad, June 11 (KCN): “National Institute of Agricultural Extension Management (MANAGE) has been established as an autonomous organisation under the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Govt. of India to address challenges in agricultural extension through training, research, policy advocacy, consultancy, implementation of Govt. of India Schemes and knowledge management,” said Director General of MANAGE Dr P Chandra Shekhara. Presiding over the 37th Foundation Day Celebrations of MANAGE on Tuesday, Dr Chandra Shekara said that MANAGE would reach out to more than one lakh stakeholders that included agricultural

extension officers, scientists, input dealers, agripreneurs, FPO, Agri Startups, private sector, youth, farmer leaders, students etc. He added that through international initiatives such as ITEC training programs, MANAGE had been consistently working beyond borders covering more than 30 countries. Further, he indicated MANAGE's green initiatives for a sustainable organisation, including solar and hybrid solar units to harness solar and wind energy, "Me and My Plant" program for PGDM-ABM students, bamboo plantation on campus, solid waste management, vermicomposting, and the introduction of an electric buggy which could be followed by

other organisations. Participating as the chief guest, Vice Chancellor of Rani Lakshmi Bai Central Agricultural University, Jhansi Dr. A. K. Singh shared his memories of MANAGE since its foundation and highlighted the significant contribution of MANAGE in agricultural extension management which promoted farmers' participation and convergence of stakeholders at the grassroot level in the country. He commended MANAGE for its continuous innovation through its training programs, services and its dedication to the welfare of farmers. Pointing out the innovative programs like SEWA, DEASI, the MANAGE Gyandeep Krishi lecture series, and

international training initiatives, Deputy Secretary (Extension) MoA & FW GOI Anil Jain praised MANAGE for its growing reputation. He pointed out the innovative programmes that had contributed significantly for strengthening the agricultural extension system in India. During the event, faculty members and staff members shared their experiences about M A N A G E organization. As part of the 37th Foundation Day Celebrations, guests distributed nine awards across three categories, Best Post-Graduation Thesis, Best Ph.D. Thesis, and Best Book in Agricultural Extension in the 37th MANAGE Foundation Day Celebrations. More than 100 participants including MANAGE faculty, MANAGE Fellows, Consultants, Staff members and awardees were present. Dr. B. Renuka Rani, Deputy Director (NRM), MANAGE coordinated the program.

FinMin, Speaker posts curse for Ganjam leaders

Berhampur(KCN): With the Biju Janata Dal (BJD) facing a major debacle in the recently concluded elections after 24 years of its rule in the state, many party heavyweights including former Assembly Speaker and Finance Minister Bikram Keshari Arukha from Ganjam district have also faced drubbing. However, the posts of Assembly Speaker and finance minister in the state are proving to be a curse for the politicians in Ganjam district, if the poll performance of the leaders holding such posts in the past is any indication. There are numerous instances to prove this claim where the political careers of high-profile politicians

have declined after their appointment either as Speaker or as finance minister in the state government. Reports said Lal Mohan Patnaik was appointed the Speaker of the Assembly and remained in the post from 1946 to 1952 after Odisha was formed as a separate province April 1, 1936. Later, he vanished from politics. Former Chief Justice of Orissa High Court Lingaraj Panigrahi forayed into politics after his retirement. He contested on a Congress ticket from Berhampur Assembly constituency and became a Cabinet minister after winning the election in 1957. Subsequently, he contested the Kodala Assembly seat in 1961



and was appointed as the Speaker of the Odisha Assembly. Later, he left politics and was appointed as the Vice-Chancellor of Berhampur University. Congress MLA Somanath Rath, who was elected from the Bhanjanagar Assembly constituency in 1980 election, was appointed the Speaker of the State Assembly. He,

however, left the post after a period of two and a half years. Chintamani Dyan Samantara was first appointed a deputy speaker in the Assembly after winning the Chikiti Assembly seat in 1985. Later, he again emerged victorious from the same seat in 1995 and was first appointed a Deputy Speaker and

then a Speaker of the Odisha Assembly. His political career received a jolt after he was defeated in the 2000, 2004 and 2009 elections. Later, he stayed away from politics. Similarly, Binayak Acharya was appointed as a finance

minister in the second term of government of former Chief Minister Nandini Satpathy. Subsequently, he also became the Chief Minister for a brief period. Later, his political career declined and he quit politics. Rama Krushna Patnaik was elected from the Kodala Assembly constituency on a Janata Dal ticket in 1990 election and appointed as the finance minister in the Biju Patnaik-led government. However, he was removed from the ministry after a period of two years. Rama Krushna again won the Kodala Assembly constituency on a BJD

ticket in 2000 and was appointed the finance minister in Naveen's first term. He was shifted to a separate ministry after a period of two years and later sacked from the party. Later, his political career witnessed a sharp decline and ultimately he said goodbye to politics. Likewise, veteran BJD leader Late Surya Narayan Patra won Digapahandi Assembly constituency in 2019. He was appointed the Speaker and became the fifth leader from Ganjam district to get appointed to the coveted post. He resigned from the Speaker post due to illness following which

Arukha, who had won the Bhanjanagar Assembly seat, for the sixth time was appointed as the sixth Speaker of the state Assembly from the district. Later, he resigned and again became a minister in the state government. He was also given an important portfolio of finance ministry. Although Arukha contested from his traditional bastion of Bhanjanagar for the seventh time in 2024, he was trounced by his nearest BJP rival by a margin of over 16,000 votes reportedly due to the saffron wave. Meanwhile, speculations are rife about Arukha's political future post his defeat.

Challenge as 'doda' smuggling surfaces in Saranda

Rourkela(KCN): A fresh challenge has surfaced for the security forces involved in anti-Maoist operations across the state border which may very well prove to be a test of their strength on this side. In the last couple of months, security forces have found a trail of 'doda' smugglers. 'Doda' is the bark of the opium tree. The personnel have seized 'doda' worth Rs 6 crores during anti-Maoist search operations. The combined forces of CRPF, Jaguar and CoBRA battalion have found huge amounts of 'doda' in two successful operations. Following a tip-off, security forces recovered the banned substance in an abandoned house April 21, this year. The contraband, weighing over 2,162 kg, was kept in 92 sacks, the market value of which was nearly Rs 3.24 crores. The finding alerted the forces, said one



paramilitary personnel involved in anti-Maoist operations on this side of the border. Subsequently, in another raid conducted in a jungle under Tobo PS near the bank of Chaki river June 2, they found another huge consignment of 2,100 kg 'doda' worth nearly Rs 3.15 crore kept in 83 sacks. It became clear to the security forces that such activity could not be carried out inside Saranda forest without the involvement of the Naxals. The banned contraband has a huge market in northern India, especially in Punjab and

Haryana. Notably, seizure of 'doda' consignments was made not very far from the Odisha border — within 30-50 km in West Singhbhum district in neighbouring Jharkhand. "This is another means of earning money by giving protection to this activity apart from their regular sources like mines and industries in the Maoist-affected areas," one official on the other side said. This intelligence has been shared among forces. It is pertinent to mention that Rourkela shares a porous border with Jharkhand and

illegal timber smuggling is an open secret here. Saranda forest is one of the biggest forests in the country stretching over 820 sq. kms. It borders Odisha and timbers brought from here are sold in Rourkela and sent to different parts of the state. On the other hand, Rourkela is the transit point for 'ganja' smuggled from Kandhamal, Koraput districts and other surrounding areas. This contraband has been seized in large amounts on several occasions while being smuggled to Jharkhand and Bihar.

Diarrhoea kills man in Rayagada; 4 admitted



Bissam Katak(KCN): A person from Gailakana village under Daliakuji panchayat of this block in Rayagada district died of diarrhoea while undergoing treatment at Rayagada Government Hospital Monday. Three other villagers who were also suffering from diarrhoea have been admitted to Government Hospital at Muniguda and Bissam Katak Christian

Hospital. The deceased has been identified as Gopal Kandamaka, 28, and the four other affected villagers have been identified as Kadulu Kandamaka, 40, who is undergoing treatment at Government Hospital at Muniguda and Kumari Mandika, 40, Milan Mandika, 18, and Kabita Sabar, 12, all are undergoing treatment at Bissam Katak Christian

Hospital. According to reports, Gopal started experiencing vomiting and loose motion Sunday. As his health condition deteriorated, family members rushed him to the Government Hospital at Muniguda Sunday later, as per the advice of the doctors he was shifted to the Government Hospital at Rayagada. He died

while undergoing treatment at the hospital Monday. Villagers when informed Bissam Katak BDO and Rayagada Collector about the matter, three medical teams from Bissam Katak, Muniguda and Rayagada reached the village, and distributed medicines and ORS to the villagers.



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PLATINUM GUILD INTERNATIONAL (PGI) INDIA AND SENCO GOLD & DIAMONDS UNVEIL THE ‘PLATINUM EVARA’S NOVA COLLECTION’

Bhubaneswar – Platinum Guild International (PGI)-India, in collaboration with Senco Gold & Diamonds, proudly introduces the Platinum Evara Nova Collection, a tribute to the modern woman embodying joy, abundance, and empowerment. With a legacy of over eight decades, Senco Gold & Diamonds India is known for its high-quality jewellery that blends craftsmanship, exquisite designs, and timeless elegance. With an emphasis on creativity and artistry, the new platinum jewellery collection offers a wide range of statement pieces that can be worn for various occasions as well as paired with a variety of outfits. Reflecting the inherent

attributes of platinum as a metal—clean lines, understated and timeless elegance, and classy sophistication, the Platinum Evara Nova Collection is designed to resonate with the dynamic spirit of today's multi-faceted women. Crafted from 95% pure platinum, each piece in the collection showcases the versatility and beauty of platinum, complemented by exquisite diamonds and other precious stones, as well as touches of pink gold. With platinum's naturally white luminous leading the design narrative, the collection incorporates interesting themes including organic negative spaces, soft-layering and unique

dimensions as well as elements like subtle and clean lines, scales and grooves, and curved shapes that instantly elevate the designs, resulting in one-of-a-kind & contemporary pieces. Among the highlights of the collection are the neckwear pieces, including the bi-metal chain necklace that are accentuated with pink gold accents as well as platinum adorned with diamonds, statement earrings featuring intricate designs and flexible bracelets designed for frequent wear. Speaking on the collection, Suvankar Sen, CEO & MD, Senco Gold & Diamonds said, “We are excited to be collaborating with PGI India to launch the all-new Platinum Evara Nova collection for women. The women of today are multi-faceted; they are pursuing their dreams, transitioning to



their better selves, and manifesting their extraordinary potential as they embark upon their new journeys in the world. Inspired by their unabashed spirit and relentless strength, the collection is themed around the 'New World, New Me' ethos that celebrates, and captures the essence of these women. Through our expert craftsmanship, we have infused diamonds, precious stones as well as hints and accents of pink gold with a rare metal such as platinum to provide a modern look and feel to the collection. Through this collection, we aim to offer women versatile yet elevated platinum jewellery pieces that reflect their individuality and aspirations.”

Commenting on the launch, Vaishali Banerjee, MD, PGI India, stated, “We are thrilled to deepen our partnership with Senco Gold & Diamonds through the introduction of the Platinum Evara Nova Collection. This collection is a testament to our commitment to meeting the discerning tastes and preferences of modern women — bold, empowered, and unapologetically themselves. At PGI, we continuously seek new opportunities for platinum jewellery by exploring innovative design avenues. This collection represents our dedication to offering fresh and contemporary platinum jewellery pieces that resonate with our consumers' aspirations and individuality.”

Odisha govt enforces leave restriction for officials till June 30

Bhubaneswar(KCN): The Government of Odisha Tuesday announced restriction on leaves to all government officials, effective immediately until June 30, 2024. This directive, issued by

Additional Chief Secretary Surendra Kumar aims to ensure that all officials remain available at their respective headquarters during the swearing-in ceremony of the new Council of Ministers

scheduled for June 12, 2024, and subsequent activities. The restriction includes a prohibition on leave during public holidays, with exceptions only on health grounds, the notification issued by Kumar added.

Bhubaneswar: Half-day holiday at govt offices for swearing-in ceremony

Bhubaneswar(KCN): The Odisha government Monday announced that all state government offices and courts in Bhubaneswar will close after 1pm June 12 due to the swearing-in ceremony of the new Chief Minister and Council of Ministers. According to a notification issued by the Revenue and Disaster Management Department, the order will apply to all state

government offices and revenue and magisterial courts (executive) within the jurisdiction of the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC). The new BJP government will be sworn in June 12 at 5pm. Prime Minister Narendra Modi is scheduled to arrive here at 2:30pm and proceed to Raj Bhavan from the airport. He

will later attend the oath-taking ceremony at Janata Maidan at 5pm. The state unit of the BJP has urged people to observe June 12 like Diwali by lighting at least two diyas (lamps) – one for the Central government and another for the state government. Balasore MP Pratap Sarangi highlighted that the two diyas symbolise the ‘double engine sarkar’ (dual government) in the state.

Dalmia Bharat Celebrates Empowerment of 18000 women on International Day of Rural Women

Bhubaneshwar,(KCN): Dalmia Bharat Group, India's leading conglomerate with businesses in cement and sugar, announces the successful empowerment of 18000 women on International Day of Rural Women. Through the establishment of Self-Help Groups (SHGs), these women are provided essential skill training and access to vital resources for sustainable livelihood development. In collaboration with various organisations like NRLM, NABARD, etc. Dalmia Bharat organizes various training initiatives like micro-enterprise development, handicraft production and others in both farming and non-farming sectors. All these activities are conducted in communities settled around their regions of operation across 12 states in India. These initiatives aim to upskill rural women to empower

them, diversify their income sources and provide access to formal credit systems. Two notable initiatives in Odisha include Project Hastakala – upskilling women artisans and enterprise development via mushroom cultivation in communities surrounding its facilities in Cuttack, Rajgangpur, and Lanjiberna Mines. Dalmia Bharat has enabled over 10,000 women in Odisha to become financially independent earning a monthly income ranging from Rs.4000 to Rs8000, significantly improving their individual well-being and the ability to support their families. Commenting on the company's initiatives on International Day of Rural Women Mr. Ashok K. Gupta, CEO, Dalmia Bharat Foundation said, “Rural women in developing countries play a vital role in food security and economic development but face severe marginalization,

including limited land ownership, higher illiteracy rates and unequal earnings compared to men. Dalmia Bharat is dedicated to uplifting marginalized rural women through holistic programs that bolster their income while managing household responsibilities. Our commitment aligns with UN Sustainable Goals, promoting self-reliance and gender equality for an inclusive and sustainable India, where empowered women drive community and national development.” Project Hastakala is an ‘earning with joy’ skill development programme where women are trained in the unique tie & dye batik products. This project is conducted in tribal areas of Jhagarpur & Katang panchayat in Odisha. After witnessing immense success at national exhibitions, Dalmia Bharat introduced the

Eastern Command of Indian Army & Red FM Celebrate Vijay Diwas With The Guts & Glory - Salute 71

Bhubaneswar : 93.5 RED FM, India's leading private radio and entertainment network is thrilled to announce its partnership with the Eastern Command of the Indian Army to commemorate Vijay Diwas with a grand celebration titled "Guts and Glory - Salute 71." This event aims to pay tribute to the historic victory of the 1971 war and honor the brave soldiers who made it possible. As part of this unique initiative, Red FM will captivate its audience on-air with narrations of intriguing

war stories that depict the valiant efforts of the Indian armed forces during the 1971 war. Listeners will have the opportunity to learn about the heroic deeds of our soldiers, their unwavering spirit, and the sacrifices they made to ensure our nation's victory. Red FM will also collate all stories as episodes under a podcast, which will be available on various audio streaming platforms. Reflecting on the announcement, Lieutenant General Rana Pratap Kalita,

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

Magic FM, said, “On the occasion of Vijay Diwas, we are elated to be joining hands with the Eastern Command of the Indian Army to honor the lives of the 1971 war veterans. Our army men live through times that are unimaginable to us. The sacrifice of our veterans is truly unfathomable but as a brand, we are looking forward to commending the valor of the keepers of our nation. The Guts & Glory - Salute 71 initiative will also recognize the unsung

heroes who walk amongst us as common citizens. We are hopeful that these stories will enrich us with empathy and esteem for the gallant troops who made the ultimate sacrifice for our freedom.” The initiative will be rolled out in 12 East-Indian stations namely, Kolkata, Bhubaneswar, Asansol, Siliguri, Agartala, Patna, Muzzafarpur, Jamshedpur, Guwahati, Shillong, Aizwal, and Gangtok. Tune in to 93.5 RED FM to listen to these stories.

Airtel Xstream Fiber unlocks its NEW All-in-One plans

Bhubaneswar: To serve the needs of premium households who want the next generational connectivity and entertainment experience, Bharti Airtel (“Airtel”), India's premier communications solutions provider, has once again raised the bar in the home broadband segment with the launch of three new all-in-one plans built for the evolving entertainment needs of today's connected homes. Vir Inder Nath, CEO – Homes, Bharti Airtel had this to say: “Our new plans are built for India's emerging entertainment needs. Through these bundle offers we plan to offer our discerning customers great value, convenience and unlock a multi-faceted digital experience.”

Increased broadband consumption in Indian homes has given rise to the phenomena of hybrid viewing, where families are looking to consume OTT content on the TV screen along with linear TV without the hassle of managing multiple subscriptions and devices. Airtel's plans are the first of their kind in terms of catering to the evolving entertainment needs of the whole family and come with: Subscription to 17 premium OTTs to go with unlimited data. This includes Netflix, Amazon Prime, Disney+ Hotstar and Airtel Xstream Premium (SonyLiv, Lionsgate, Hoichoi and 11 more OTTs). 350+ TV channels covering the best of linear TV. Airtel 4K Xstream TV Box* that allows you to enjoy OTT and linear TV content with a single device and single remote.

WHEC recognizes Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham as excellence worldwide in Gender Equality

Barcelona: Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham was invited to the UNESCO World Higher Education Conference (WHEC), which recently took place in Barcelona, Spain. UNESCO recognized Amrita as one of five universities of excellence worldwide for its performance in gender equality. The WHEC aims to reshape ideas and practices in higher

education to ensure sustainable development for the planet and humanity, as well as to define and prepare a roadmap for a new era of higher education. As the world comes out of COVID-19, the WHEC's goals and strategic scope remain, and the new timeframe represents an opportunity to deepen and expand common efforts of knowledge production,

policy dialogue, exchange, and networking. Swami Amritaswarupananda Puri, President of Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham, participated in a round table called “Universities' Contribution to Gender Equality: A global perspective”. Adding to his views Swami Amritaswarupananda expressed how Amrita is

making a difference in terms of gender equality and which policies have been put into place at the university level. Gender equality is number five in the United Nations' list of 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). He explained how the culture of gender equality is not implemented only in terms of policies within Amrita, but also practiced in spirit.

The round table included Dr. Gloria Bonder, UNESCO Chair on Women, Science and Technology; Dr. Ricardo Vilanueva Lomeli, Rector General, University of Guadalajara; Ms. Elizabeth Shepherd, Leader of the Consultancy team, Times Higher Education; and Dr. Victoria Galan-Muros, Chief of Research and Analysis,

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