

Letter to Editor

Dear Honorable Chief Minister Sri Majhi,

My heartiest congratulations to you on becoming the Chief Minister of Odisha. I pray that Lord Jagannath blesses you to lead Odisha to great heights in development and social justice under your able leadership. I am also impressed by your commitment to addressing the basic needs and infrastructure that are urgently required at this moment.

One of the serious concerns across Odisha is the poor quality of water. Many tube wells across Odisha have fluoride-rich water, and most of the districts are affected by fluoride contamination. Furthermore, most tribal, hilly, and slum regions lack access to good quality drinking water. Many villagers in tribal and aspirational districts walk several kilometers to fetch drinking water, and some depend on "Chua". Even where the pipe-supplied water is provided, the water is often contaminated, leading to hundreds of deaths each year in Odisha due to poor quality water. Kidney diseases are also widely reported in many locations.

Sir, Odisha has recently been earning significant additional resources from mining and GST. When reviewing the budget allocations of the previous government over the last five years, a large amount of money was spent on initiatives like the 5T transformation, temples, stadiums, sponsorships, and hockey advertisements, while common people in Odisha continue to struggle for basic needs. I suggest that, similar to the free grain supply by the central government, Odisha should start a free supply of drinking water bottles for each family.

Odisha has roughly ONE crore families. If the government could supply 10 bottles/cans of 20 liters each to every family every month (2-3 bottles/cans per week), it would require the distribution of 120 bottles annually per family. Given that the market price for a 20 liter water bottle/can is about 40-50 rupees in many localities in Odisha, this initiative would cost approximately 6000 crore rupees annually. This would not only provide high-quality drinking water at the doorstep but also encourage many small-scale industries at the local level to set up drinking water bottle/can plants and distribute/supply water bottles for public consumption, thus boosting the local economy, especially at the panchayat/village level. It will also create more job opportunities at the local and village levels, reducing bonded labor and simultaneously boosting the rural and urban economies. Diarrhea deaths and related diseases, kidney diseases, and fluoride and arsenic-related health problems among the population in Odisha could be reduced by improving the quality of public health, especially in tribal and hilly regions. I urge you to consider this proposal in the coming budget for providing free drinking water cans/bottles irrespective of social and economic status.

Thank you and best regards,
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CM Visits Native Village

Keonjhar (KCN): Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi today visited his native village Raikala in Keonjhar district for the first time after assuming the top post in the State.

The Chief Minister, who began his two-day visit to Keonjhar district on Sunday, visited his village Raikala today and met his family members and near and dear ones.

As soon as he reached Raikala, a rousing welcome was given to the Chief Minister in a traditional way. Later, Shri Majhi led a roadshow from Raikala to Durga field in Jhumpura.

Shri Majhi's relatives have prepared pure Odia dishes like Pakahala, Saga Vaja, Badi chura, etc to Majhi. The CM's mother served him lunch with her own hands. He



also interacted with the villagers during his first visit to his native place after assuming the office of Chief Minister. Addressing a gathering, the Chief Minister became emotional while remembering his childhood and earlier days that he spent in the area. He appealed to his localite not to worry if did not respond to their phone call because he has taken a big responsibility in the

shoulder to run the State. It was the very people who had elected him and made him the CM, Majhi said. Keonjhar is rich in minerals but some people have been exploiting the district. Now, the BJP government has come to power and the exploitation and loot of minerals will be stopped, he said. "If we will properly utilize the minerals

available in our district, Keonjhar will emerge as the most developed district. We have to take a pledge in this direction," Majhi said. Attacking the previous BJD government, he said the development works were not moving on the right track during BJD government's tenure. The previous government had exploited the people, did not work for the development of the people and insulted the women.

BJD Counters CM Majhi's Allegations On Exploiting Keonjhar's Mineral Resources

Bhubaneswar (KCN): A day after Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi held the previous BJD govt responsible for exploiting Keonjhar's rich mineral resources, the conch party on Monday responded with sharp criticism.

During his first visit to his home town after becoming chief minister, Mohan Charan Majhi, addressed a public gathering and said that the previous government plundered the mineral resources in connivance with the district administration. He said, "Those who looted the mines are under my radar... Mohan Majhi is not scared of anyone... Mohan Majhi govt will put them behind bars and jails are ready for them from Keonjhar to



Jharpada in Bhubaneswar". Taking a dig at the previous govt, Majhi added, "When I was the opposition chief whip, I was asked to leave the BJP and was offered a mine in Keonjhar: I was also promised the post of a minister: I am thankful to the people of the state for throwing out the previous corrupt govt." On Monday, BJD responded to the Chief Minister's comments.

BJD Deputy Chief Whip and Aul MLA, Pratap Keshari Deb urged the Chief Minister to maintain the dignity of his position. Deb said, "It is very unfortunate that the way the Chief Minister is commenting that no one will be spared in the mining corruption and he was being offered ministerial posts and other inducements. The Chief Minister should know that he is no longer

in the opposition party." "BJD is ready to counter all the allegations. But when the Chief Minister is saying that he was being tempted, then he should have revealed it in the media at that time instead of remaining mum", the BJD deputy chief whip added.

The BJD Aul MLA stated that Chief Minister Mohan Majhi should refrain from making such statements and stop acting like an opposition party. Deb added, "In Parliament, Prime Minister Narendra Modi praised Odisha's mining reforms. He also praised Naveen Patnaik's work in the federal system. The Chief Minister should accept his leader's words."

SRC Alert On Monsoon

Bhubaneswar (KCN): With south-west monsoon set over entire Odisha, Special Relief Commissioner (SRC) and Additional Chief Secretary (ACS) Revenue & Disaster Management, Satyabrata Sahu has asked all Collectors and Municipal Commissioners to take preparedness measures for probable flood situation in this rainy season.

Writing a letter to all District Collectors and Municipal Commissioners, the SRC reminded them about his previous letter issued on 13.06.2024 wherein detailed instructions have been issued for advance preparation before onset of Southwest monsoon.

IMD, Bhubaneswar has forecast that there may be intense spell of rainfall due to active prevailing monsoon starting from 26% of June throughout the State. As a result, there may be instances of flash-floods/ flood-like situations, water-logging and landslides at different locations, he said.

"Keeping this in mind, you are requested to take immediate action," Shri Sahu told the Collectors. The SRC asked them to keep the field-level functionaries in strategic locations of flash flooding/water logging alert & ready to meet any eventuality



and should not leave headquarters. In urban areas, low-lying areas may have water logging and roads/drains may be submerged/ cut-off. In case of very heavy rain, people of low-lying areas may be shifted to safer locations temporarily, he advised.

Similarly, all the urban bodies were asked to keep the drains/ storm-water channels de-congested and deploy adequate dewatering pumps. Traffic of vehicles on submerged roads are to be regulated, Shri Sahu said.

The ACS further advised the Officer to take de-watering steps in advance by pre-positioning water pumps with generators in low-lying areas susceptible to water logging.

"Ensure supervision of weak/ vulnerable points in river/ canal embankments. Flood-fighting materials may be pre-positioned at such places. Drainage clearance must be ensured for free flow of rain/ flood water," he directed.

The District Collectors and Municipal Commissioners have been asked to bring any urgent issue before the notice of the Department immediately.

"No More Support To BJP, Only Opposition": Naveen Patnaik After Poll Loss

Bhubaneswar (KCN): Ex-Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik's Biju Janata Dal - which helped ex-ally Bharatiya Janata Party pass key bills in the Modi government's first two terms, when it lacked numbers in the Rajya Sabha - seems to have firmly switched sides now and labelled itself a "strong and vibrant opposition".

"We will make the centre accountable on all issues. BJD MPs will raise all issues pertaining to the state's development and the welfare of the people of Odisha. Many rightful demands haven't been met," the party quoted Mr Patnaik after a meeting with his nine Rajya Sabha MPs in Bhubaneswar Monday.

The BJD's assertive stance comes not only after providing the BJP outside support on various issues in the past 10 years, but after breakdown in alliance talks in March, just weeks before the elections began.

Had those talks born fruit, the BJD and Mr Modi's party would have re-aligned nearly 15 years after a split that prompted late BJP leader Sushma Swaraj to say Mr Patnaik would "regret" snapping ties.

In the past, support from the BJD and ex-Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Jagan Mohan Reddy - his YSR Congress was ousted by the BJP's ally, Chandrababu Naidu's TDP - was crucial on

several occasions, such as the election of Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw to the Rajya Sabha in 2009 and 2014. More recently, the BJD's support also helped the BJP push through the Delhi services bill, ensured a no-confidence motion against the Modi government flopped, and pushed through laws like Triple Talaq and the J&K Reorganisation Bill. The "rightful demands", the BJD's statement said, ranged from 'special category' status for Odisha to housing and education for the poor, and from establishment of premier medical institutions like All India Institute of

Medical Sciences - "... not satellite units" - to improved national highways. The party also flagged social and economic issues, including the controversial topic of MSP, or minimum support price, for farmers, which has been a bone of contention between the opposition and the BJP since the violent protests of 2021/22. The BJD also said it will "demand inclusion of 162 communities" in the state's Scheduled Tribes list, which it said it had been lobbying for "for many years". All of this comes after thumping wins by Mr Modi's party in the

majority - to form its first Odisha government. The twin defeats left Mr Patnaik firmly on the backfoot in a state he has dominated since 2000; his BJD had won every Assembly poll and over 50 per cent of Lok Sabha seats in each general election.

In fact, the BJD has failed, for the first time, to win even one Lok Sabha seat.

The BJD, which had 12 Lok Sabha MPs in 2019, now has only nine in the Rajya Sabha. And that number will be cut in half in 2026, when four Odisha seats - now held by the BJD - fall vacant. Earlier today BJD leader Sasmit Patra said party boss Naveen Patnaik had given "clear instructions to fight for the rights of the

state's people in Parliament". "No more support to BJP, only opposition. We may go to any extent to protect the interests of Odisha," he said after Mr Patnaik's meeting.

In the recent election the BJD was not part of the Congress-led INDIA bloc, which united the opposition to stifle Mr Modi, the BJP, and the party-led National Democratic Alliance.

Mr Patnaik and Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar - who helped found the INDIA group before jumping ship to the NDA after internal rows - met in May last year but the BJD boss remained non-committal and passed off the meeting as one between "old friends and colleagues".



May-June Lok Sabha and Assembly elections. In the former the BJP routed the BJD by winning 20 of the state's 21 seats and, in the latter, Mr Patnaik - who lost the Kantabanji seat to the BJP's Laxman Bag - won only 51 of 147, down from 112 five years ago. The BJP secured 78 - four over

Inauguration of the 75th Amrit Mahotsav Convention of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan at Central University of Odisha, Koraput

Koraput (KCN): The 75th Amrit Mahotsav Convention of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan, jointly organized by the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan and the Central University of Odisha, Koraput, was formally inaugurated on 23 June 2024 at the main campus of the Central University of Odisha, Koraput. The event commenced with traditional ceremonies and welcomed Hindi enthusiasts from across India.

The inauguration began with the lighting of the ceremonial lamp, followed by a welcome address from Prof. Chakradhar Tripathi, Hon'ble Vice-Chancellor of the Central University of Odisha, Koraput. Prof. Tripathi

emphasized that Hindi is more than just a language; it is a complete culture. He stressed the need to connect the world through Hindi, highlighting its role as a symbol of India's inclusive culture capable of spreading Indian heritage globally. He expressed his deep affection for Hindi and his vision for its future, underscoring the importance of the mystics who have shaped the language. He also highlighted the support from the government for the Hindi literacy campaign in Odisha.

Prime Minister of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan, Shri Kuntak Mishra, expressed pride in hosting the convention at the



university campus. He noted that Hindi literature is now being written in Odia as well, demonstrating the potential for greater linguistic unity. Shri Mishra called for recognizing the historical significance of the Sahitya Sammelan and maintaining the cultural unity of India through Hindi.

Prof. R.S. Sarraju, former Pro-Vice Chancellor of the Central University of Hyderabad, served as the Chief Guest for the inaugural session. He emphasized the need to connect South India and other parts of the country through Hindi, noting the portrayal of middle-class

consciousness by Hindi writers. He called for the technological enrichment of Hindi, linking its practice to cultural perfection. Dr. Sunil Baburao Kulkarni, Director of the Central Institute of Hindi, Agra, highlighted the global stature, importance, and respect of Hindi today. He stressed the need to preserve and document the endangered dialects and languages of Hindi. Dr. Kulkarni was awarded the title 'Sahitya Vachaspati' by the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan, and he emphasized the importance of continuing the tradition of Hindi service.

Hemraj Meena, Dr. Dr. Nirjhari Tripathi, Dr. Padmasharan Mishra, Dr. Prasenjit Sinha, Dr. Kakoli Banerjee, Dr. Naveen Pradhan, Dr. Gurjit Walia, Prof. Bharat Panda, Dr. Nikhil Gowda, Dr. Kapil Khemendu, Dr. Sarveshwar Barik, Dr. Phagunath Bhoi, Kumar Gaurav, Asim Tikri, and over 300 scholars, litterateurs, teachers, and Hindi service enthusiasts from different states. This event marks a significant milestone in promoting and preserving Hindi literature, reflecting a collective effort to uphold the cultural unity of India through its rich linguistic heritage.

RED (ER-I and ER-II), NTPC highlights Inclusive Development and praises NTPC Bongaigaon for its safety practices.



Kolkata (KCN): Shri Sudip Nag, Regional Executive Director (ER-I and II), NTPC, undertook a two-day visit to NTPC Bongaigaon recently. Emphasizing the importance of inclusive development for all stakeholders, Shri Nag highlighted NTPC Bongaigaon's potential to become a model station within the NTPC network. Accompanying him were Shri Akhilesh Singh, Head of Project, NTPC Bongaigaon, and senior officials of the station.

During his visit, Shri Nag conducted inspections of various plant areas including the Coal Handling Plant (CHP) and the wagon tippler area. He reviewed several critical aspects of the plant's operations, visited the Central

Control Room (CCR) for Units I, II, and III, and inspected the under-construction Flue Gas Desulfurization (FGD) unit. Shri Nag interacted with engineers in the control room, expressing his satisfaction with the operational parameters being maintained and motivating them to continually improve while prioritizing safety. He stated, "NTPC Bongaigaon has all the potential to become the model station of NTPC and all must work towards it with team spirit."

Shri Nag also conducted a review meeting with all Heads of Departments (HODs), congratulating NTPC Bongaigaon for setting new benchmarks in power generation and commendable safety practices. He

encouraged the team to continue their exemplary work and assured them of full support from the regional office in all areas of operation and maintenance. He praised the leadership of Shri Akhilesh Singh, acknowledging the significant progress under his guidance. Meetings were also held with union representatives, associations, and Engineering Trainees (ETs), where Shri Nag sought their positive support in enhancing various operational and human resource functions. Shri Nag also visited the Sericulture Unit of Bodoland Silk Park and laid the foundation stone of the dormitory building.

In the evening, a cultural program featuring the dance forms of the North East was organized in Shri Nag's honor. During the event, Shri Nag released two films—one on biodiversity and the other on cleanliness (Swachhata). Addressing the employees, he congratulated NTPC Bongaigaon for ranking among the top ten stations in the Safety Evaluation Matrix and commended the station's vibrant culture.

As part of the visit, Shri Sudip Nag and Shri Akhilesh Singh planted saplings to promote environmental conservation. The occasion was also graced by Shri Induri S Reddy, GM (O&M), Shri Asutosh Biswas, GM (Operation), and Shri Sanjay Pande, GM (FGD), HODs and departmental heads.

Odisha: Two workers killed as mechanical structure collapses in private steel plant

Bhubaneswar (KCN): Two workers were killed and a few others injured as a mechanical structure of a private steel company collapsed and fell on them in Odisha's Dhenkanal district Monday, a police officer said. The mishap took place at Rungta Mines Ltd (Dhenkanal Steel Plant) located at Jhadabandha in



Dhenkanal district. Soon after the incident, a rescue operation was

launched. "As per the preliminary report, two workers

died and a few others were injured in the incident. Police have reached the spot and an inquiry will be conducted into the incident," Dhenkanal SP Madkar Sandeep Sampat told PTI over the phone. The deceased workers have not yet been identified. It is suspected that the workers are from other states, police sources said.

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Essential skills for success after Class XII



Qualifying Class 12 board exams is a significant milestone, marking your transition from the protected environment of school to the vast expanse of adulthood. This transition calls for equipping yourself with essential life skills that will serve as a compass, guiding you through the twists and turns of higher education, the workforce, and life itself.

1. Decision making: The power of critical thinking and problem-solving

In a world brimming

with choices, the ability to make informed decisions is paramount. Critical thinking and problem-solving skills are the bedrock of effective decision-making. Develop the habit of analysing situations from multiple perspectives, weighing the pros and cons, and considering the long-term implications of your choices. This skill will empower you to navigate complex situations and make well-reasoned decisions that align with your goals and values.

2. Financial literacy: Unlocking the door to financial independence

Mastering financial literacy is a game-changer in today's world. Understanding budgeting, investment strategies, and cost-saving techniques will equip you with the knowledge to make sound financial decisions after board exams and beyond. It's

never too early to start learning about money management, as it will pave the way for financial independence and security in the long run.

3. Design thinking skills: Unleashing your creativity and problem-solving PROCESS

short article insertIn a rapidly evolving world, the ability to think creatively and solve problems is a highly sought-after skill. Design thinking encourages you to approach challenges from a human-centered perspective, fostering empathy, ideation, and innovative solutions.

Embrace this mindset, and you'll be equipped to tackle complex problems with elegance and ingenuity.

4. Communication and debating skills: The art of persuasion and clarity

Effective communication is the cornerstone of personal and professional success.

Hone your ability to convey your thoughts with clarity and precision, both in written and verbal form. Additionally, develop the art of debating, where you learn to construct persuasive arguments and respectfully engage with opposing viewpoints.

These skills will serve you well in academic discourse, professional settings, and everyday interactions.

5. Diversity management skills: Collaboration, teamwork, and empathy

In our increasingly interconnected world, the ability to work effectively with diverse teams is essential.

Cultivate skills in collaboration, teamwork, and interpersonal communication. Develop empathy and an appreciation for different perspectives, as this will enable you to

navigate diverse environments with ease and build meaningful connections.

6. Digital and AI literacy: Embracing the future of technology

The digital age has ushered in a new era of technological advancements, including the rise of artificial intelligence (AI). Equip yourself with digital literacy skills, enabling you to navigate the ever-evolving digital landscape with confidence.

7. Self-directed learning: Embracing the lifelong journey of learning and unlearning

In a world where knowledge is constantly evolving, the ability to embrace self-directed learning is invaluable. Cultivate a growth

mindset and a hunger for continuous learning and unlearning. Develop the skills to seek out credible sources of information, analyze and synthesize knowledge, and apply it in practical contexts. This skill will enable you to adapt and thrive in an ever-changing landscape.

8. Time management: Mastering the art of prioritization and planning

Effective time management is the key to unlocking productivity and achieving your goals. Learn to prioritize tasks, create realistic schedules, and eliminate time-wasters. Develop strategies for balancing multiple commitments,

such as academics, extracurricular activities, and personal pursuits. By mastering time management, you'll be able to maximize your potential and make the most of every opportunity that comes your way.

9. Adaptability and resilience: Navigating setbacks with grace

Cultivate an open mind and a willingness to learn about different communities, beliefs, and traditions. Engage in civic activities and develop a sense of social responsibility, as this will empower you to contribute positively to your local and global communities.

Mastering these ten essential skills will equip you with the tools to navigate the challenges and seize the opportunities that await you beyond the walls of high school. Embrace the journey of self-discovery and personal growth, and remember that learning is a lifelong pursuit. With determination and a growth mindset, you can unlock your full potential and pave the way for a fulfilling and rewarding future.

Vijay Garg Retired Principal Educational columnist malout ,Punjab

Naveen Patnaik proved Leadership is the capacity to translate vision into reality

Dr. Ravi Chaturvedi



Linda Hill, Professor at Harvard Business School, has stated, "Becoming a great leader is a journey of continuous learning and growth. It's a process — one that thrives on embracing challenges, seeking feedback, fostering connections, and cultivating understanding. Star leaders aren't born with superhuman capabilities. Rather, they tend to have intentionally put themselves in situations where they have to learn, adapt, and grow — a crucible for developing the tenacity and fortitude to motivate and guide others." Naveen Patnaik, who recently served as the Chief Minister of Odisha, exemplifies the principles outlined in Professor Hill's framework.

Patnaik recently demonstrated notable political maturity during the swearing-in ceremony of the newly elected Chief Minister of Odisha, Mohan Charan Majhi. His display of courtesy and decorum was evident in the Odisha Assembly, where, following his oath-taking as a member of the assembly from



Bonhomie between victor Narendra Modi & vanquished Naveen Patnaik



Bonhomie between victor Laxman Bag & vanquished Naveen Patnaik.



Oh, You Defeated Me, Patnaik Tells BJP MLA Laxman Bag in Odisha Assembly

the Hinjili constituency, he encountered his political rival, Bag. As they came face-to-face in the corridors of the Assembly, Bag, standing respectfully, greeted Patnaik with folded hands, asking, "How are you?"

Upon Bag introducing himself, Patnaik responded with grace, "Oh, you defeated me." Accompanied by Aul MLA and former minister Pratap Keshari Deb, Patnaik then congratulated Bag. This interaction was met with a warm reception from the entire Assembly. Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi, along with his deputies, KV Singh Deo and Pravati Parida, also stood to greet Patnaik as he entered the Assembly. Patnaik's dignified presence was a poignant reminder of his undisputed leadership and his 24 years of service to the state.

His decorum and civility were profoundly evident when he met Prime Minister Narendra Modi with folded hands, and they shared a heartfelt exchange, holding each other's hands with an outpouring of mutual respect and warmth. This display of genuine regard for one another moved all those who witnessed these

moments. The sight of the victorious Modi and the vanquished Patnaik clasping hands in mutual admiration is a rare and poignant moment in the current Indian political landscape.

In stark contrast, stand the aloof and high-headed leaders such as Akhilesh Yadav, Arvind Kejriwal, the Abdullahs, the Muftis, Mamata Banerjee (whose name ironically means 'affection' in Hindi), Rahul Gandhi, and M. K. Stalin. During the prolonged 47-day

election campaign, these politicians consistently directed the most contemptuous and vitriolic rhetoric at Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Unlike them, Naveen Patnaik's criticism of the BJP was largely political and devoid of personal attacks against the Prime Minister, describing the formation of the new government as "undemocratic, unconstitutional, and illegal." Banerjee not only boycotted the oath-taking ceremony but also refused to extend her best wishes to Modi, underscoring the acrimony that has characterized her approach.

The contributions of

some of the aforementioned chief ministers to their states have been minimal, often personal comforts and gains at the expense of the public exchequer. In sharp contrast, Naveen Patnaik stands as a towering figure. Under Patnaik's leadership, Odisha has transformed from a state plagued by starvation deaths to one that has achieved food security, and from being vulnerable to natural disasters to becoming a role model in disaster management.

Naveen Patnaik's significant role in reviving the fortunes of Indian hockey will be remembered as a monumental achievement. The Indian men's hockey team won its first Olympic medal since the 1980 Moscow Olympics, while the Indian women's team narrowly missed the bronze to

finish an all-time high fourth at the Tokyo Olympics. The end of the 41-year medal drought in hockey at the Tokyo Olympic Games was significantly facilitated by Patnaik's support. He has exemplified the adage, "Leadership is

the capacity to translate vision into reality."

TV & Radio Cricket Commentator C/O Manish Chaturvedi
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Sarvadevmay Pita

Dr. Samrat Kar



In a world that often focuses on maternal love, it's crucial to acknowledge the profound and indispensable role of fathers, writes Sumit Paul. "I always wondered why God was supposed to be a father," she whispers. Fathers always want you to measure up to something. Mothers are the ones who love you unconditionally, don't you think? — Jodi Picoult

Nothing moves a loving father's soul quite like his child's cry. When the mother's sugary affection gels with the father's stern love, the all-round development of children becomes easier and better. Children require love as well as discipline for balanced growth. They get love from their mother and are disciplined by their father. There is no teacher equal to a mother, and there's nothing more contagious than the dignity of a father. To quote Urdu poet Munavvar Rana, "Ammi se milti hai nikhalis muhabbat/Abba se mil jaati hai kabhi daant bhi" — pure love is received from mothers/fathers, at times, rebuke their children. But this so-called scolding has a profound meaning. What we become depends on what our dads teach us at odd moments, even when they are not trying to teach us anything at all. We are formed by little scraps of wisdom. A dad will teach his children the ways of life so that they can face challenges and vicissitudes with equanimity and equipoise. But he does this sans fanfare. What he faces in life and learns, he passes it on to his offspring. He's a living and walking school for his children and embodies all that is wise, profound, and sacred.

The Padma Purana states, "Sarvadevmay Pita" — father is the embodiment of all devtas, gods. That's why Hindu scriptures say, Pita dharmah, pita swargah, pita hi parvam tapah/ Pitrī preetimapanne preeyante sarva devtah — a father is as sacred as dharma, as divine as the heavens and is one of the greatest symbols of austerity in this world. The gods are pleased if one can make one's father happy.

A father is never a draconian taskmaster. In other words, he's not a martinet. He loves, albeit dispassionately. Ralph Waldo Emerson says, "Father's love is understood only in retrospect. When you grow old and become a father, you understand and appreciate your dad, whom you may not have liked much while growing up." A father's role may appear marginalised initially in a family setup, but it's not. It's central and crucial to the growth and development of not just children but the entire unit. A father who is responsible for his family has to don the mantle of seriousness. Like the headmaster in a school, a dad is the principal in a family. He has to be calm, cool, collected, and also calculated; his heart is pure sterling. Antoine François Prévost rightly said, "The heart of a father is the masterpiece of nature."

The Taittiriya Upanishad exhorts, Pitradevo Bhava — your father is like a god on earth. Whether he's a deity or an angel is inconsequential. Your dad is a human endowed with humane attributes such as love, emotion, affection and intimacy. A dad needs nothing more than a smile. Let's send our love to all dads on Father's Day with a note of gratitude from Robert Southey's immortal poem, 'My cheeks have often been bedewed/With tears of thoughtful gratitude.' Take a bow, all dads.

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India's Water Crisis: A Call for Sustainable Solutions



infrastructure, and pollution further complicate the issue, making water scarcity a pressing concern in the country.

Key Factors Contributing to India's Water Crisis:

Groundwater is a critical resource for India, supplying a significant portion of the country's agricultural, industrial, and domestic needs. However, overexploitation has severely declined groundwater levels, particularly in states like Punjab, Haryana, and Rajasthan. This unsustainable extraction is driven by the high demand from agriculture, which consumes about 80% of the country's water resources, primarily through inefficient irrigation methods such as flood irrigation.

Despite the monsoon season bringing substantial rainfall, India is losing out on a significant opportunity. The lack of adequate infrastructure for rainwater harvesting results in much of the rainwater being lost as runoff, flowing into rivers and eventually the sea. This loss is not just a loss

of water, but a missed opportunity for replenishing groundwater reserves and ensuring water availability during dry periods, a loss we can ill afford.

Inefficiencies and a lack of coordinated planning plague the management of water resources in India. Different states and sectors often take a disjointed approach, leading to suboptimal allocation and use of water. This mismanagement is further compounded by outdated infrastructure that leaks and wastes significant water.

Water Pollution: Industrial discharge, agricultural runoff, and untreated sewage are not just contributors, but major culprits in the pollution of rivers, lakes, and groundwater in India. The contaminants they introduce, such as heavy metals, chemicals, and pathogens, degrade water quality, making it unsafe for consumption and harming aquatic ecosystems. The Ganges and Yamuna rivers, two of India's most important water bodies, are not just polluted, but heavily polluted, despite ongoing clean-up efforts, a situation that demands

immediate attention. The impacts of climate change, including changes in precipitation patterns, increased frequency of extreme weather events, and rising temperatures, are altering the hydrological cycle in India. These changes affect water availability, with some regions experiencing severe droughts while others face intense flooding. The unpredictability of weather patterns complicates water management and planning efforts.

Recognizing the critical threat posed by these factors, the Indian government introduced significant amendments to the Water Act of 1974 in 2024. These amendments propose sweeping changes to the penal provisions of the Act, aiming to enforce stricter penalties for water pollution and over-extraction. Moreover, the government seeks greater control over selecting top officials in state water boards to ensure more effective and accountable water governance.

Impact on Communities: The water crisis in India disproportionately

Prof (Dr.) S N Tripathy

affects rural communities. In these areas, lack of access to clean water impacts health, contributing to a high prevalence of waterborne diseases such as cholera, dysentery, and typhoid. Women and girls often bear the burden of fetching water over long distances, which consumes significant time and energy and limits their educational and economic opportunities. This daily struggle impacts the overall quality of life and hampers community development.

In urban areas, the water crisis manifests in frequent water shortages, affecting households and industries alike. Low-income people who rely on public taps and tanker supplies are particularly vulnerable to these shortages. This inconsistent supply exacerbates inequalities and contributes to social unrest.

Innovative Solutions for Water Management:

Implementing widespread rainwater harvesting systems can significantly enhance water availability. Urban and rural areas can benefit from rooftop rainwater harvesting and community-based initiatives to capture and store rainwater, replenish

groundwater, and reduce dependence on surface water sources. Transitioning to water-efficient irrigation methods, such as drip and sprinkler irrigation, can drastically reduce water usage in agriculture. These techniques deliver water directly to the plant roots, minimizing evaporation and runoff. Government subsidies and farmer education programs can facilitate this transition.

Encouraging industries and municipalities to recycle and reuse wastewater can alleviate pressure on freshwater sources. Advanced treatment technologies can purify wastewater to a level suitable for non-potable uses, such as industrial processes, irrigation, and toilet flushing.

Engaging communities in water conservation efforts is crucial. Awareness campaigns can educate people about the importance of water conservation and encourage behaviours such as fixing leaks, using water-saving appliances, and practising water-efficient gardening. Community-based

management programs can empower local groups to take charge of their water resources. Adopting an integrated approach to water resource management that considers the entire water cycle, from source to disposal, can ensure sustainable use. This approach involves coordinating the management of surface, groundwater, and rainwater and promoting cooperation among different sectors and states.

Supporting research and development in water conservation technologies and pollution control methods can lead to innovative solutions. Academic institutions, government agencies, and private companies can collaborate to develop and implement cutting-edge technologies for water management. Ensuring stricter enforcement of pollution control norms and increasing penalties for violations can act as a deterrent. Regular monitoring and stringent actions against polluters will help in preserving water quality.

Encouraging industries to adopt water-efficient technologies and recycle wastewater can significantly reduce water consumption and pollution. Urban planning should incorporate green infrastructure that enhances water conservation, such as rainwater harvesting systems and permeable pavements. Investing in modernizing water infrastructure, including sewage treatment plants and efficient distribution systems, can help reduce water loss and improve water quality. Offering incentives for businesses and households to implement water-saving measures can encourage the widespread adoption of conservation practices. India's water crisis is a multidimensional issue requiring a comprehensive and collaborative approach.

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

The clean water crisis is an emerging global crisis that affects approximately 785 million people worldwide. An astounding 1.1 billion people lack access to clean drinking water, and around 2.7 billion experience water scarcity for at least one month each year. Furthermore, 2.4 billion people suffer from contaminated water and poor sanitation, leading to severe health and socio-economic issues. India's water crisis is a remarkably complex issue rooted in rapid urbanization, industrialization, and unsustainable agricultural practices. These factors contribute to an ever-increasing demand for water. Climate change exacerbates the situation by causing erratic rainfall patterns that affect surface and groundwater sources. Inefficient water management, inadequate

Will Air Pollution continue to kill innocent children?

- The death of millions of children every year due to pollution in India is a matter of concern, governments will have to take necessary steps



A recent report on air pollution is frightening. The State of the Global Air-2024 report jointly prepared by the American organization Health Effects Institute (AEI) with UNICEF is not only warning about the ever-increasing dangers of air pollution, but also emphasizing on taking measures to avoid it. According to this report, in India, about 1.6 lakh children under the age of 5 have lost their lives due to air pollution related diseases in 2021. Air pollution is continuously increasing due to huge factories, small and big factories, vehicles, brick kilns etc. around us. No village and city has remained untouched by it. Most people are unaware of the dangers of air pollution, but those who know about it and feel its ill effects also generally ignore them. We feel the ill effects of air pollution but innocent children are unable to understand what is happening. The number of such children is increasing, who first fall ill and then die at a young age.

Premature birth, low weight, asthma and lung diseases in children are increasing due to the impact of pollution related health effects. This report shows how air pollution is increasing in our country. According to this report, India has reached third place among the 10 air polluted countries of the world. The air of 83 cities of the country is bad according to the air quality guidelines of the World Health Organization. According to the report, more than 80 lakh people have died due to air pollution in the year 2021 in the world, including 21 lakh deaths in India and 23 lakh deaths in China. It is a matter of great concern that increasing pollution is proving to be fatal for children. In the year 2021, Indian children have been the most victims of air pollution. In the year 2021, 169,400 children have died in India due to pollution. In comparison, 114,100 children in Nigeria, 68100 in Pakistan, 31,100 in Ethiopia and 19,100 in Bangladesh have had to pay the price of increasing pollution by losing their lives. In the year 2021, more than 7 lakh children under the age of 5 died worldwide due to polluted air. It is a disturbing figure that in 2021, more than 2,60,600 children under the age of 5 died due to exposure to air pollution, which is the

second largest cause of death for children of this age group in South Asia after malnutrition. This report shows that the maximum impact of air pollution is visible on children. Children are very vulnerable to diseases caused by air pollution. Children can suffer the damage caused by air pollution in the mother's womb itself and they may have to bear the effects of this on their health throughout their lives. This can cause children to be born prematurely, their weight can be reduced, they are at risk of asthma and lung diseases. 20 percent of newborn deaths worldwide are caused by air pollution, most of which are related to low weight and complications of premature birth. Due to polluted air, millions of people are suffering from diseases that cause breathing problems. The treatment of these diseases is extremely expensive, which puts a burden on hospitals, the economy and the entire society. Children under the age of five are the most affected by polluted air. In our country, pneumonia is a common disease in children, but how many people consider the air pollution around them responsible for this? Most people do not pay attention to air pollution. Pollution is having an adverse effect on their intellectual and attention

pneumonia. The lung capacity of children living in a polluted environment can be reduced by up to 20 percent. This effect is similar to the effect of growing up in a home with cigarette smoke. Air pollution is associated with pneumonia, the leading infectious cause of death in children globally. Polluted air also causes asthma, the most common respiratory disease in older children. According to UNICEF, air pollution disproportionately harms children living in poverty, and is responsible for the majority of diseases and premature deaths in low- and middle-income countries. Poverty forces people to use polluting fuels and appliances for cooking, which remains a major source of indoor air pollution. The worst sources of outdoor air pollution, such as power plants, factories and busy roads, are often located near poor communities. People living in low-quality housing and temporary settlements are also affected by air pollution. A study conducted by researchers from the Barcelona Institute for Global Health shows that our children are becoming mentally weak due to air pollution. Governments also have a big responsibility in this. Unless governments build the capacity of the health

sector to detect, prevent and treat air pollution-related diseases, pollution-related deaths will continue to occur. Similarly, necessary steps will have to be taken to establish and maintain air quality monitoring systems and to make the public aware about this.

As suggested by organizations like UNICEF, the government will have to take steps like setting ambitious climate and environmental policies and targets, providing affordable, clean fuel options to adopt cleaner modes of transport, strengthening policies and investments to accelerate the transition to clean, efficient energy and transport, and implementing advanced emission standards. Along with this, while steps will have to be taken to reduce pollution by planting more and more trees, the industrial units responsible for air pollution will have to be tightened.

In the absence of this, air pollution will keep increasing and our children will be forced to bear its ill effects.

Letter to Editor

Dear Editor

It first started with text messenger. There were maybe a few million messages a day all over the world. Now more than a trillion messages a day and India is one of the major contributors of this huge volume. Every WhatsApp text message requires Network, Storage and Electricity even if it is very little. Ultimately energy in some form, Image or video / audio which was later given for convenience, also size and a factor. In total, a percentage of carbon footprint is created by WhatsApp, mails, Facebook, Instagram may be a very small percentage of overall environmental pollution. But it is still a form of pollution. The impact of the massive volume of social media message exchanges on energy consumption and pollution is significant, considering the scale of data centers and network infrastructure required to support these activities. Here are some key points to consider:

Energy Consumption

Data Centers: The backbone of social media platforms consists of large data centers that house servers to store, process, and transmit data. These data centers consume substantial amounts of electricity for both operations and cooling.

Network Infrastructure: The transmission of data across networks also requires significant energy. This includes the power needed for internet service providers (ISPs), routers, and mobile networks.

Device Usage: Millions of users accessing social media through smartphones, tablets, and computers collectively consume a large amount of energy. Charging devices and the energy used during active usage contribute to the overall consumption.

Pollution and Carbon Footprint

Carbon Emissions from Data Centers: Data centers contribute to carbon emissions, especially if they rely on non-renewable energy sources. While many tech companies are shifting to renewable energy, the transition is not yet complete.

Electronic Waste: Frequent upgrades of devices to handle increasing data demands contribute to electronic waste, which can be harmful to the environment if not properly recycled.

Energy Source: The environmental impact depends on the energy mix used by data centers and network providers. Regions relying heavily on coal and other fossil fuels will have a higher carbon footprint compared to those utilizing renewable energy sources.

Mitigating Factors

Efficiency Improvements: Advances in technology and improved efficiency in data centers, such as better cooling systems and more energy-efficient hardware, can reduce the overall energy consumption.

Renewable Energy Adoption: Many large tech companies are investing in renewable energy sources to power their data centers, reducing the carbon footprint associated with social media usage.

Optimization of Network Traffic: Enhancements in network protocols and the use of content delivery networks (CDNs) can optimize data transfer and reduce energy usage.

The exchange of trillions of social media messages does lead to increased energy consumption and pollution, ongoing improvements in technology and a shift towards renewable energy can help mitigate some of these impacts.

Thanking you

Sincerely yours

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(The author is a senior independent journalist from Rajasthan.)

Farmers blame heat, media for increase in vegetable prices

Rourkela(KCN): The intense heat wave and a 'hyperactive media' are the two major factors for the increase in vegetable prices, farmers stated here Sunday. The vegetable sellers here, mostly tribals, have blamed the two issues for the spiralling cost of vegetables. "Availability of water is not an issue, because we have sufficient supply in our wells and water bodies. However, the intense heatwave in the last couple of months has led to the rotting of vegetables," said Mahidhar Sahu, a farmer from Khuntagaon, selling



long gourd and other leafy vegetables. Sahu's opinion was seconded by another vegetable seller from Bisra sitting next to him at the daily market in Shakti Nagar. "He (Sahu) is right. We have water, but it's the heat that has destroyed the vegetables. I was providing water on the ground twice daily where I was cultivating padwal. Even then, I could only save half of my cultivation," informed Giridhari Munda. Mano Xalxo, an agriculturist from OUAT and a successful farmer, however, blamed the media for the increase in prices of vegetables. "I

will blame the media for the increase in prices. We were selling tomatoes, the indigenous variety for Rs 40-50 per kilogram.

Suddenly the media reported that the prices had gone up to Rs 70. They also said that it will soon touch Rs 100 per kilogram. Had they done a bit of research, then they would have reported in a proper manner," he stated. Another media-savvy farmer who sells his produce at the Rajgangpur local market stated that the media only reports about prices in Bhubaneswar and Cuttack. "The media needs to realise that there are other places in Odisha also. Once they report about the prices at Cuttack and Bhubaneswar, locals here also increase the rates. And the middlemen make the maximum profits pinching the pockets of customers," he said. Professor Sree Kumar however, blamed the price rise of vegetables due to the heatwave. "The farmers lost their crops due to the heat leading to a shortage of supply. It is the main reason for vegetable prices skyrocketing," Kumar stated.

US not keen to import sea fish

Paradip(KCN): The United States of America (USA) is not keen on importing sea fish from the harbour here in Jagatsinghpur district – also all fishing harbours in the country – due to a decline in fish quality, over-processing and delays in transport. According to reports, the export of sea fish to foreign countries is one of the main sources of earnings for Odisha and other states on the eastern coast of the country. The lack of interest on part of the US to procure fish has sparked concerns among fishermen and fish producers in the port town. The fishermen earn their livelihood by catching fish from sea and exporting the stock to the US and several other countries. The US is a major seafood market. According to the Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA), a statutory body established in 1972 under the Union Ministry of Commerce and Industry, the US imported seafish worth 2,549.15 million dollars in FY 2023-24. Meanwhile, the MPEDA has flagged all the fishing harbours in the country over declining fish quality, and the prevalent practice of processing fish as well as its transport. It has asked to change the standard operating procedure (SOP) – from fish production, and



processing to export. As per government reports, around 17,81,602 MT of sea fish was exported from India in FY 2023-24, and the country earned Rs 60,523.89 crore (7.38 billion US dollars) in foreign exchange from it. The issue of the plummeting demand for fish cropped up during a meeting organised by MPEDA at the fishing harbour in this port town, Wednesday.

Archiman Lahiri, deputy director of MPEDA said that the US has questions over the quality of fish exported from here. It has asked to improve the quality within the March 2025 deadline. The authorities there have warned to impose a total ban on the import of fish from here if no improvement was marked in the quality, he said. The MPEDA has urged the Odisha Marine Fish Producers' Association (OMFPA), the apex body of fishing trawlers and fish producers at Paradip, to reduce the time consumed between the processing of fish and its transport.

Sources said on average, a fishing boat takes at least a week's time to return to the harbour with the catch. The fish caught on daily basis are kept in cold storage to save them from rotting. A fisherman said ideally around 1,200 gm of ice is required to refrigerate a kilogram of fish. However, most of the fishermen are, instead, using only 700-800 gm of ice for refrigeration of a kilo of fish. The stock in the boat's cold storage is emptied after the boat reaches the harbour before it is taken to the auction hall where various types of fish are segregated and auctioned.

Agents from various export firms procure fish during the auction and load the consignments in their respective vehicles for Bhubaneswar where the processing plant is located. Workers at the plant remove shells from prawns and shrimps (main export items) which are then

kept in cold storage before they are exported. The entire process, from procurement to export, takes at least eight to 14 hours, Manas Padhiari, an agent, said. "This prolonged time period, however, results in a decline in the quality of fish. As a result, the Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) of the US government is rejecting the consignments after the arrival of fish in their country following inspection," he said. Lahiri meanwhile, suggested the setting up of a processing plant right inside the fishing harbour in the port town to reduce the time between processing and transport. The price of the fish will be higher if its quality remains intact and unchanged, he said. OMFPA president Srikant Parida said that the Fisheries department of the state government or at the Centre should take steps to establish a processing plant in Paradip.

6 years on, modern bus terminal at Jajpur remains a pipe dream

Jajpur(KCN): The construction of a proposed modern bus terminal in this district headquarters town has remained a non-starter despite the then-state government sanctioning funds for the project in 2018. The project has not made any headway in the last six years owing to alleged administrative negligence. Jajpur town is famous for a number of religious shrines like Maa Biraja temple, Saptamatrika temple on Baitarani river bank, Baraha temple and Kusuma tank which are of immense mythological, historical and tourism importance. Maa Biraja is the

presiding deity of the district and the temple draws thousands of devotees on daily basis from within and outside the district. The district headquarters town has undergone significant changes following land acquisition for establishment of a medical college, mini secretariat, up-gradation of the district headquarters hospital (DHH), district court, road expansion works and renovation of Kusuma tank. However, the construction of the modern bus terminal near Kianali in the town, which received sanction in June, 2018, is yet to take off except for the land acquisition. On the other

hand, devotees and tourists visiting these temples and places of tourist attraction in the district are undergoing harrowing experiences in the absence of a modern bus terminal in the town. Sources said the state Housing and Urban Development Department sanctioned funds in three phases for the construction of the proposed bus terminal, June 12, 2018. The state government also directed the Jajpur municipality authorities to withdraw the sanctioned funds and deposit it in the account of the executive engineer of Panikoili roads and Buildings (R and B) department for the



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Palak Tiwari appears in Kesh King anti-hairfall shampoo with Shilpa Shetty in new television commercial

Kolkata (AMBAR MUKHERJEE): Kesh King Anti-Hairfall Shampoo has brought together the youthful energy of Palak Tiwari, a rising star in tinsel town, with the timeless beauty of Shilpa Shetty.

Shilpa has been the face of the brand since 2019 and also endorses Kesh King Ayurveda Oil – India's No.1 Hairfall Expert.

Made by Raju Hirani Films, the new Kesh King Anti-Hairfall Shampoo commercial features a captivating exchange between the two celebrities, blended with the nostalgic Bollywood number from yesteryears "Ude Jab Jab Zulfe Teri". The commercial will be on air in the month of May.

Speaking about this new development, Ms. Priti Sureka, Director, Emami limited, said, "Kesh King is a hair and scalp care solution brand with strong ayurvedic credentials. Over the years, the brand has effectively catered to its core TG with Shilpa Shetty as the brand ambassador. Shilpa, with her expertise in promoting healthy living through yoga, perfectly embodies the brand's commitment to natural solutions. In addition,

we have also boarded the very talented Palak Tiwari to appeal to today's generation, who are seeking better hair solutions than what the current market offers, for their persistent hair fall woes. Palak Tiwari, an emerging young talent in Bollywood will supplement youthful freshness to the charming beauty of Shilpa, enhancing the brand's messaging with a contemporary edge."

Palak Tiwari, the latest member joining the brand wagon of Kesh King said,

"India's rich tradition of ayurveda offers holistic solutions for overall health and well-being. In today's fast-paced and demanding lifestyle, natural remedies are essential for combating everyday challenges like hair fall. I love my long tresses, which need regular care and attention. To maintain my hair's strength and vitality, I wholeheartedly trust authentic and reliable ayurvedic solutions like Kesh King. I am thrilled to be on board with Kesh King Anti – Hair fall Shampoo and it's an added privilege to share the screen with the talented and celebrated

Shilpa Shetty." Speaking about the experience, Shilpa Shetty said, "My journey with Kesh King spans around 5 years and I feel proud to be associated with this authentic ayurvedic product that has earned its loyal user base, thanks to its quality, benefits and effectiveness. I feel happy that Palak is joining me in the Kesh King/Emami family, and together, we aim to introduce these invaluable benefits of Ayurveda to today's younger generation."

Apart from capitalizing the influence of two celebrity endorsers through traditional media like television, print and point-of-sale communication, the brand plans to leverage Shilpa and Palak's presence to actively engage and connect with audiences across age groups and strengthen trust through various contests and challenges in the digital space.

Kesh King Anti-Hairfall Shampoo enriched with the goodness of 21 herbs is clinically proven to reduce hair fall up to 98% and nourishes the scalp for silky, shiny and smooth hair.

Ashok Leyland launches industry first 8-wheel truck – AVTR 2620

Chennai: Ashok Leyland, flagship of the Hinduja Group and India's leading commercial vehicle manufacturer, today, launched the industry first 8 wheeler truck – AVTR 2620. With this launch of AVTR 2620, Ashok Leyland becomes the first and only player in the country to have a full range of trucks based on lift axle technology from GVW of 25.5 to 47.5T. This new product can be operated as 25.5 T (6x2) truck with the lift axle down (offering

payload closer to regular 6x2 MAV truck) and a 4x2 truck (18.5T GVW) with lift axle up (lower fuel and operating cost similar to 4x2) during light load/partial load/ return empty. This new product thus offers an excellent operational flexibility to customers to choose the option based on their load, offering best-in-class Total Cost of Operation (TCO) benefits.

Speaking on the occasion, Mr. Sanjeev Kumar, Head - M&HCV, Ashok Leyland, said, "Ashok

Leyland has a history of introducing products which have disrupted the CV industry. AVTR 2620 with its unique lift axle configuration offers higher TCO advantage to our customers operating in Ecom, Parcel & tanker. AVTR 2620 is a testament of Ashok Leyland's technological prudence & our commitment towards providing better logistical solutions to our customers, aligning with our philosophy of AppkiJeet, HamariJeet."

Surprise Inspection by Vigilance in the coal mines of MCL



Sambalpur, (KCN): Led by Shri PK Patel, Chief Vigilance Officer, Maha nad i Coalfields Limited (MCL), domain experts from survey, mining and IT disciplines of the company as well as Geologists and Survey officials from CMPDI's RI

7, Bhubaneswar have started inspecting various mining activities including coal stock verification at Bhubaneswari OCP in Talcher coalfields and Samleshwari OCP in Ib valley coalfields MCL from Friday. This surprise inspection being carried out as a part of preventive vigilance is likely to bring more transparency and good governance in MCL. Similar exercises are being carried out across other subsidiaries of Coal India and are being directly monitored by the Coal Ministry

Nuvoco Vistas Launches Its Second Ready-Mix Plant in Patna



Bhubaneswar (KCN): Nuvoco Vistas Corp. Ltd., India's fifth-largest cement group has widened its operational presence with the inauguration of its second state-of-the-art Ready-mix Concrete Plant (RMX) as Patna-II.

Situated strategically at Ranipur Milki Chak, Patna-II is positioned as Nuvoco's regional flagship plant. It

Begampur, bypass, this plant marks Nuvoco's continued commitment for providing top-quality building materials to the Patna region. Strategically located approximately 24 kilometers from the first plant, Patna-II is positioned as Nuvoco's regional flagship plant. It

capitalizes on untapped market potential by providing quick access to Nuvoco's Cement Plant in the region. Its proximity to nearby Industrial, Commercial, and Residential developments guarantees high-quality concrete solutions on time.

Mr. Prashant Jha, Chief of the Ready-Mix (RMX) Concrete and Modern Building Materials business at Nuvoco Vistas expressed his excitement at the inauguration of this latest plant, stating, "The launch of the Patna-II plant underscores Nuvoco's dedication to providing

Union Bank of India signs MOU with SIDBI for Co-Financing arrangement of MSMEs

Mumbai : Union Bank of India today signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) for a Co-Financing arrangement for MSMEs. The MoU was signed by Shri Lal Singh, Chief General Manager, Union Bank of India and Shri Vivek Kumar Malhotra, Chief General Manager, SIDBI. SIDBI is country's principal financial institution

engaged in the Promotion, Financing and Development of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME). Under the MoU, Union Bank of India would consider Joint financing/ Co-Financing with SIDBI to Projects/Units in the MSME. This MoU would help the Banks to increase their customer base, while helping the MSMEs to meet their funding requirements. The key highlights of the arrangement include joint

identification of viable projects and term loan and working capital financing to MSMEs. Initially the arrangement would be at specific centers and once the arrangement stabilizes at these centers, more locations would be covered.

Speaking on the occasion,

Shri Lal Singh, CGM (MSME), Union Bank of India, said "MSME is one of the key sectors of our Indian Economy contributing to GDP, Exports, Manufacturing Output, Employment, Women Empowerment etc. MSME is one of the focused areas of the Bank and at Union Bank of India, we aim to become Bank of 1st choice for MSMEs. This tie-up with SIDBI aids in realizing the Bank's vision to have increased credit flow to the MSME sector and extend operational convenience to the MSME clientele. Under partnership, Union Bank of India through its Pan

Unacademy produces 178 Rankers for UPSC CSE

Bhubaneswar: Unacademy, India's largest learning platform*, today announced that 178 out of 685 rank holders of UPSC CSE 2021 are Unacademy Learners. Among the top rankers from the Unacademy platform are Gurni Singla (AIR - 3), Aishwarya Verma (AIR - 4), Utkarsh Dwivedi (AIR - 5) and Yaksh Chaudhary (AIR - 6). 3 Learners have secured ranks between 1-5, 32 have secured ranks from 6-100 and 143 have secured AIRs from 101-685.

From the 178 Rankers, 45 Learners were Unacademy's Plus/ Iconic subscribers guided by India's Top Educators. The other rankers were guided by Unacademy's Last Mile Programme for UPSC CSE 2021 Interview. Last Mile Programme is an interview guidance program for the last stage of the UPSC CSE exam that helps Learners who have qualified the Mains exam to crack the Personal Interview stage. The questions are asked by retired bureaucrats, former UPSC members and Top Educators in a mock set-up. In last year's Unacademy's Interview Guidance Program 170+ Rankers qualified the Interview stage by securing AIR 2.

New Delhi: India faces the twin dilemma of co-existence of shortage and abundance in several parts of its energy system. While the provision of electricity has increased significantly over the years, weak institutions and utility governance hamper the power sector's financial performance with issues of accountability, operational efficiency, customer service, and transmission to state-level transmission institutions. The sector takes a huge and grossly unacceptable hit due to extensive losses, leakages and pilferages, and the cost recovery

from tariffs. These are some major findings of a report titled Power Sector in India: New Emerging Opportunities and Challenges released by Infomerics Valuation and Rating Pvt Ltd., the well-known SEBI-registered and RBI-accredited financial services credit rating company.

The report explores the opportunities and challenges ahead for India as it seeks to ensure reliable, affordable and sustainable energy for a growing population. During FY20 and FY19, the growth of electricity generation was lower than in the previous financial years because

India to see largest increase in energy demand worldwide over the next 20 years, says Infomerics

of the impact of COVID-19. The report quotes the International Energy Agency (IEA) stating that during FY21 recovery in electricity demand from the COVID-19 pandemic was faster and stronger in India than in EU countries.

India is the third-largest producer and the third-largest consumer of electricity in the world. With the increasing population, electricity demand is rising at a fast clip and India has improved its power generation capacity over the years. India has added more than 500 billion units until FY22 from FY10.

Blue Dart signs the UNFCCC Climate Neutral Now Pledge

Bhubaneswar: Blue Dart, South Asia's premier express air and integrated transportation & distribution company and a part of the Deutsche Post DHL (DPDHL) Group has signed the 'Climate Neutral Now' (CNN) pledge by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). The pledge highlights the organisation's commitment

to ambitious CO2 reduction targets. The Climate Neutral Now Initiative encourages and supports interested stakeholders to act now in order to achieve a climate neutral world by 2050 as enshrined in the Paris Agreement. The initiative is a tool to promote voluntary action on climate change. Blue Dart has already invested extensively in remaining a Sustainable Provider of Choice by being the first

developed a Sustainability Roadmap that supports the UN's Sustainable Development Goals. We are constantly working towards introducing innovative green logistics solutions that improve our carbon footprint. I am delighted to share that representing the DHL eCommerce Solutions Division in India, Blue Dart has been delivering high on its sustainability initiatives.

Afghanistan script their own blockbuster in this Mumbai sequel

New Delhi: The script was playing out again all too familiarly. The script was playing out again all too ominously. The script was playing out again all too terrifyingly. Another heartbreak loading. Another sleepless night for Rashid Khan. Another what-could-have-been for Afghanistan. Another ode to the glory of Glenn Maxwell.

"Glenn Maxwell has become a taboo word in Afghanistan," an Afghan fan was overheard saying before the match began at the Arnos Vale Stadium in St Vincent. As the Australian run-chase entered the 15th over, Glenn Maxwell was about to become a banned word in Afghanistan, or so it seemed, the way the Australian No 4 seemed to be steering his team towards a win. And a win that had too many shades of Australia's famous win in Mumbai from the 50-over men's World Cup only six months ago to give the Afghans the

jitters. On a surface that none of his colleagues seemed to get settled on, Maxwell was batting like a dream, just like he was after a point that night at the Wankhede. On a night, where Australia's batting had suffered an uncharacteristic collapse, Maxwell was playing the lone hand, and doing so like a batter who seemed to be operating on a higher level than everyone else present. There were other signs too. Ibrahim Zadran, who had famously scored a century that night, had starred with the bat again here, at Arnos Vale with Rahmanullah Gurbaz playing an even better innings. And Naveen-Ul-Haq had given his team the best start with a fiery spell, even if there was no send-off for Mitchell Marsh here unlike at the Wankhede.

It was a humid night again, and Maxwell had started sweating profusely just like he had that night. He hadn't started cramping yet

though, but he was guzzling up fluids every time a reserve player brought some out to him. At one point, after he'd already hit Rashid for six, that led to some banter between the two T20 legends, he played an outrageous shot off a full ball from Gulbadin Naib, that sailed over long-off and brought up his half-century.

At this point, the second highest run-getter for Australia was Mitchell Marsh with 12, as it would remain eventually. He'd already hit a couple of boundaries with no headgear on, just like he had in Mumbai, on this balmy night. And as you looked around the field at the Afghans, you could start seeing signs of déjà vu, with bowlers getting frustrated with fielders. Especially when an over-excited Gurbaz rolled the ball towards Maxwell's stumps from behind the wickets, even though the Victorian was in his crease, and gave away an unnecessary over-throw.

Unlike that night in November though, the Afghans still didn't look like they were wilting under the carnage. They'd seen this movie before after all. They'd experienced the finish after all. If they began looking lost and hapless after a point in Mumbai, in St Vincent, they never looked like they were about to give in, forget give up. This wasn't going to be a repeat. This was a sequel, and most importantly, with a different ending.

That evening Maxwell had given them a couple of chances. Both had been floored, the Mujeeb ur Rahman drop the most damaging. He had also played and missed at nearly a dozen deliveries from Azmatullah and Naveen early in his innings. Here, Maxwell looked like he had his eye in from the moment he walked out to bat. Maybe the six deliveries he faced against Bangladesh in Antigua had helped. Within the first 10 balls he faced here, Maxwell had already pulled off one audacious boundary, whipping a ball on a middle-stump line over deep backward square leg. He'd then taken down the young spinner, Nangeyalai Kharote, with a six and a four. It was a chanceless innings, till he finally got an edge while flashing at a length delivery from Naib. The ball went flying in the direction of short third-man. Noor Ahmad had to bend

down, stretch his hands out towards his left and also make sure he grabbed the ball before touching the ground. He did all three perfectly. It was a terrific catch under pressure. Maxwell was gone. Afghanistan could breathe again. They could say his name without dread again. And just like they'd been for most parts of the night, before Maxwell walked in, they were back on top again.

It was a significant moment in both the match and also for Afghanistan, denying Maxwell an encore, and with his departure, the outcome was more or less decided. And when the win came a bit later, accompanied with a real earthquake that was recorded at 6.2 on the Richter Scale, the celebration was emotional, manic and extremely ecstatic. While the Afghan players couldn't stop running around the ground and hugging each other, and there were many senior members of the team led

by Naib who epitomised the magnitude of their victory, assistant coach Dwayne Bravo's reactions towards the end summed up how much this meant to the entire team. Bravo, who in his day enjoyed nothing more than beating Australian teams at World Cups, made his way out of the dug-out some two overs before the finish. He stood just outside the ropes behind long-off, chatting away with Naveen, and even showed extreme displeasure for the carelessness of having an extra fielder outside the 30-yard circle. But then he leapt the highest in the air, as Adam Zampa was caught at long-on by the veteran Mohammad Nabi, to cap off a famous night for Afghanistan cricket. Yes, there will be the history element writ large over this narrative. Yes, there is the bigger picture, but what also needs to be celebrated is how thumping a win this was for Afghanistan.



Mandhana, bowlers shine as India complete whitewash



New Delhi(KCN): Following up her successive hundreds with a blistering 90, Smriti Mandhana led India's 3-0 sweep in the ODI series over South Africa, scripting a comfortable six-wicket win in the third and final match in Bengaluru's M Chinnaswamy Stadium. Arundhati Reddy-inspired bowling comeback helped India cut short South Africa's bright start to keep them to just 215/8. Mandhana then cashed in on the visitors' loose bowling under lights, and combined it with flawless stroke play all around the park to set up the comfortable victory with 9.2 overs to spare.

Trailing 0-2, South Africa still had two crucial ICC

hundreds with a hat-trick of boundaries against Pooja Vastrakar - first one down the ground and then one on either side of the strip - putting on display her full range of strokes. A pull through backward square leg for a fourth boundary helped make it an expensive 17-run final over to powerplay, of which South Africa scored 46 without loss.

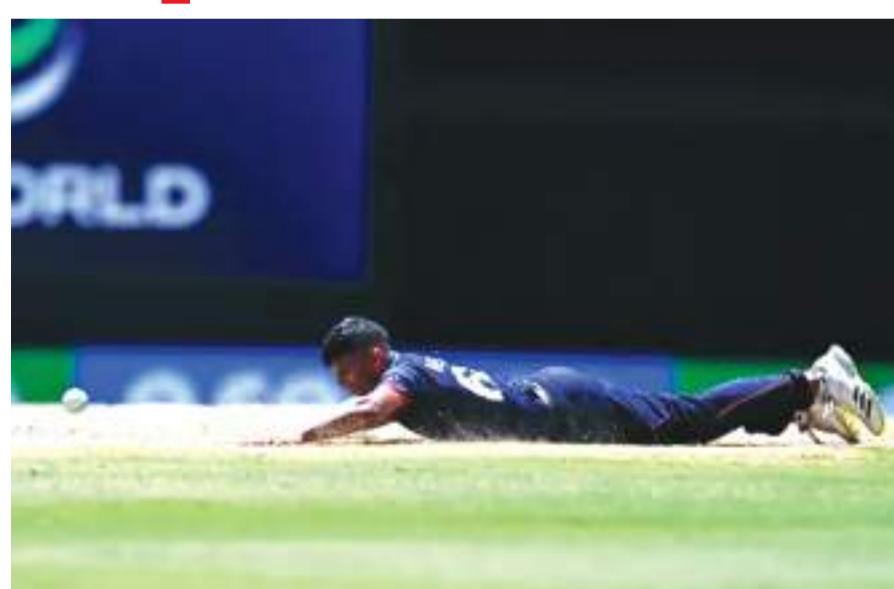
Playing the second fiddle, Tazmin Brits finally freed her arms as she gave Radha Yadav the charge and tonked a six into cow corner. At the end of the same over, Wolvaardt reached her 32nd ODI fifty, and her sixth against India, in just 45 deliveries. She raised a century opening stand not long after, but a brilliant return take at knee height from Arundhati saw the end of the South African captain, who was lured into an uppish drive. Brits perished in the following over, run-out on 38 after a terrible communication breakdown in the middle with Marizanne Kapp. The opener set out for a single, watching neither the ball nor her ball-

watching partner Kapp, who didn't budge an inch. Only three overs ago Brits had survived a run-out scare attempting a tight single. Arundhati pulled off an even better, even lower blinder - again in her followthrough - to send Anneke Bosch back cheaply for her second wicket of the spell. At the other end, a returning Shreyanka Patil - in the XI for legspinner Asha Sobhana - switched to round the wicket angle against Kapp and reaped instant rewards, forcing the centurion from the previous match to drive the fuller length ball and holding on to an excellent return catch when the batter took the bait.

New Delhi: Hosts Germany came back from a goal down to snatch a 1-1 draw with Switzerland thanks to a stoppage-time goal from Niclas Fuellkrug that sends them into the knockout stage of Euro 2024 as winners of Group A, with the Swiss finishing in second place. Germany's Robert Andrich had a 17th-minute goal ruled out for a foul in the build-up, and

11 minutes later Dan Ndoye scored with a deft volleyed finish for the Swiss before striking the foot of the post two minutes later. Germany exerted enormous pressure in the second half but they struggled to get shots on target, and substitute Fuellkrug had to bale them out with a late header to grab a share of the spoils and secure the group victory.

USA's historic World Cup run meets a disconcerting end



New Delhi: High hopes bring higher disappointments. USA's spirited campaign in the group stages earned them a whole host of new fans that flew to the Caribbean in anticipation of another shock victory for the underdogs. Their abject surrender with the bat notwithstanding, each of five sixers by Jos Buttler in as many deliveries against Harmeet Singh would've felt like a dagger in the USA fans' hearts. With the writing on the wall after USA got bundled out for 115, it was quite clear England would be on the loose to jack up their NRR.

Just like the other night with Shai Hope, here again was a world class batter running away with the game with USA bowlers having no clue

of their next move. USA have been ruthlessly obliterated twice in 36 hours, with the opposition making absolute lightwork of their paltry scores with about 10 overs to spare. In a way it was a rude awakening for the fans and the team alike of the quality that prevails at the top of the crop and the steadfast consistency that top flight international cricket demands.

"There's probably a lot of areas that we need to improve on. We are still an Associate nation, growing, trying to get a bigger player pool. Making it through the Super 8s was obviously a historic occasion for the USA, but we did want to show that we were worthy of being in that Super 8 and I thought in the first game against

South Africa we did a really good job" said Corey Anderson. "The last couple of games have just been not quite there, but that's what happens in these Super 8 comps is the bigger boys start to really show up and they're kind of hitting their stride right at the back end of this comp. The more we've played as well, the more footage they have on us, we're a little bit unknown coming into the comp and that's kind of part of cricket"

Anderson himself punched below his weight in the entire tournament. Metaphorically, the big strapping left hander failed to arrive at the World Cup. He was held back in the chase against Pakistan to the point where he never batted.

Was a no show in the super over. Much was expected of Anderson after his exploits in the MLC last year, but failed to leave a decisive impact with the bat. Scraping through to a tally of 66 runs off 72 deliveries in all, he admitted to being 'lacklustre' with the bat

during the tournament. Apart from Andries Gous, who has emerged as one of the breakout stars for USA during the tournament and Steven Taylor's brief cameo against South Africa, USA batters looked out of their element in the Super 8s. Taking Gous

out of the equation, the top 6 meandered their way to their point of dismissals, collectively scoring 191 runs out of 206 deliveries in 3 innings. On the bowling front, barring Saurabh Netravalkar and Harmeet's phenomenal spells against South

Africa, the Super 8s provided little to write home about. USA lacked the zing in their bowling mix. USA possess some quality finger spinners but a wrist spinner will add up being an attacking option in the middle overs. Which, Adil Rashid provided a magnificent exhibition of, with his spell of 2 for 13.

The silver lining of course was the belief that the fans showcased in the team. It is quite an attainment in a way. Those fans who could care less about taping their thumbs one extra time to check a USA scorecard while using their favourite cricket app endured the hassles of flying many miles to the Caribbean, now caring less about how deep their pockets would really burn following this motley crew.