

No BJD leader met me in Delhi, no discussion on any alliance: BJP's Odisha election in-charge

BHUBANESWAR, (KCN): Amidst the suspense over the BJD-BJP alliance with two senior leaders of the ruling party visiting Delhi recently, BJP's election in-charge for Odisha Vijaypal Singh Tomar on Saturday categorically stated that no leader met him. Tomar also tried to clear the air by stating that no discussion took place regarding any alliance. He went on to say that the BJP is doing all preparations to fight the upcoming elections. "We will win more than 80 MLA and 16 Lok Sabha seats here in Odisha. There was no discussion in the BJP about an alliance with BJD. People should ask the people who floated the idea of an alliance. But we are preparing to fight on all 147 seats in Odisha," Tomar said. It is pertinent to mention here that two BJD leaders- 5T chairperson VK Pandian and BJD organizational secretary Pranab Prakash Das visited New Delhi in a special flight on



Thursday evening, reportedly to carry forward the discussions with the BJP on the modalities of a coalition. However, Tomar refuted any meetings with them. "Nobody from BJD met me in Delhi. If anybody had met with our Central leaders, then they would have informed me," Tomar added. Notably, after a series of meetings at Naveen Niwas, senior BJD leader Debi Mishra had told the media earlier that a discussion on the alliance was held and the decision would be taken in the interests of the people of Odisha.

Similarly, BJD MLA Nrusingha Charan Sahu on Saturday stated that alliance or no alliance, BJD is going to win at least 110 Assembly seats in Odisha. Speaking to reporters, Sahu said, "I have heard speculations about an alliance. CM Naveen Patnaik will take the final call on that. BJD has agreed to an alliance only in the interest of Odisha. The people of Odisha will be benefitted from the alliance. While some BJD ticket aspirants will be displeased after not getting tickets, I do not think anybody will revolt in BJD."

Commenting on Nrusingha Sahu's statement, Gopalpur MLA and BJP leader Pradeep Panigrahi said, "State BJP president has already clarified twice everything on the alliance. He is the only authority in Odisha who can say anything on this clearly. And he has cleared that there has been no discussion about the alliance. There is no basis for the speculation about a coalition." "BJP will fight alone in Odisha. It will also send many MPs to Delhi to form the NDA government at the Centre as well. There is no doubt

about that. The support for the BJP was evident at PM Modi's public meeting at Chandikhol. It was like a saffron tsunami," Panigrahi added. Asked about BJD MLA Nrusingha Charan Sahu's statement to win 110 Assembly seats in Odisha, Panigrahi said, "If they actually mean it, then why don't they declare they are going alone in the election and fighting BJP on the ground?" It is pertinent to mention here that Odisha BJP chief Manmohan Samal who returned after talks with Central leaders from Delhi on Friday, dismissed the talk of the alliance and stated that no such talks took place in Delhi. During his visit to Bhadrak today, he reiterated his earlier statement. He said, "Who is campaigning about the alliance in the state? You have to catch its roots. Only the one who started the discussion can answer it. There will be a wave of lotus in Odisha in the upcoming elections."

Puri Srimandir Ratna Bhandar counting: Panel meets to discuss convenient time, technicalities



The first meeting of the high-level committee formed by the Odisha government to supervise the process of inventory of valuables in the Ratna Bhandar (treasure trove) of Lord Jagannath Temple was held in Puri on Saturday. The meeting was chaired by retired Supreme Court judge, Justice Arijit Pasayat at the office of the Shree Jagannath Temple Administration (SJTA). The last time the Ratna Bhandar was opened for an inventory was in the year 1978. Speaking to the media, Arijit Pasayat said, "We discussed the convenient time to enter the Ratna Bhandar for counting the valuables. Usually, devotees do not go to

Srimandir after Snana Purnima. But no one can enter at that time if the servitors do not wish. That period may be fine. We are mulling that after getting the 1978 report on the Ratna Bhandar inventory, we can make use of technology. Cameras, if there is any can study the inside of the Ratna Bhandar. We had preliminary discussions on such aspects." He added, "We have a readymade list of ornaments, but I have not seen that list as yet. The counting of the valuables was done in 1926 during the British Raj and then in 1978. Then minor verifications were done in 1982 and 1985."

Following the recent order of the Orissa High Court, the Odisha government constituted the committee. Justice Pasayat was appointed the chairman of the 12-member committee and eminent heart surgeon Ramakant Panda is the deputy chairman. Members of the committee also include former CMD of Allahabad Bank Bidhubhusan Samal, Chartered Accountant A K Sabat, Puri Gajapati Maharaja Dibyasingha Deb's representative, a representative of the ASI, representatives of servitors and the Deputy Chief Administrator of SJTA. The Chief Administrator of SJTA is the member convener of the panel.

Boulder falls off Puri Srimandir, damages roof of a temple

PURI, (KCN): A boulder fell from the Baraha temple inside the Srimandir premises in Puri on Saturday damaging another temple beside it. As per reports, the boulder fell in the wee hours of Saturday which damaged the roof of Ekadashi temple. After the incident, the Srimandir Commander collected the boulder and informed the ASI authorities. Baraha temple is situated in front of the Bimala temple at the south of the main temple. Notably, the ASI had just finished repair works at the Dakhina Ghara in Srimandir. While the exact reason behind the incident has not been ascertained yet, it is suspected that the loose boulder might have fallen during attempts by monkeys to jump from one side to the other. The ASI admitted the incident and has reportedly taken the issue seriously. However, the Shree Jagannath Temple Administration (SJTA) is still mum on the incident and denied commenting anything on it. It is pertinent to mention here that a one-tonne stone had fallen from the dome of the western gate of the 12th-century Jagannath Temple in Puri in 2011. Nearly 2,000 devotees were in the temple when the stone fell. However, they managed to escape the boulder narrowly. Similarly, a stone slab weighing about 40 kg fell off the 'Jalakrida Mandap' (water recreation hall) of the Jagannath Temple in Puri in 2015.



Gold prices touch Rs 65k in Bhubaneswar, 22-carat at Rs 60k

BHUBANESWAR, (KCN): Gold prices surged to a new peak, soaring to Rs 65,350 per 10 grams of 24-carat gold in Bhubaneswar on Friday. This indicates a notable increase of over Rs 2,700 within the initial week of March last week. Similarly, the 22-carat gold also saw a surge in price which climbed to Rs 60,650 in Bhubaneswar on Saturday. A week ago, 22-carat gold was being sold at Rs 57,600 per 10 grams in Bhubaneswar. As per the experts, this remarkable uptrend in the value of the precious yellow metal is primarily attributed to the anticipation of an interest rate cut by the US Federal Reserve in June. This expectation has ignited bullish sentiments in both domestic and international markets, further fuelling the rise in gold prices.

Odisha CM Announces Incentive Hike For Mission Shakti Community Support Staff

Bhubaneswar (KCN): Chief Minister Shri Naveen Patnaik on Saturday announced the increase in the incentive amount of Mission Shakti Community Support Staffs. Mission Shakti's 59,509 community support staffs will benefit from this. The Chief minister has announced the increment to encourage the Mission Shakti Community Support Staffs

acknowledging their outstanding contribution in women empowerment. About 59,509 community support staffs such as MBK, CRP-CM, Bank Mitra, Prani Mitra, Krishi Mitra and Jeevika Sahayika work under Mission Shakti. According to this new announcement, all Community Support Staffs working at Gram Panchayat level under

Mission Shakti will be benefited. The said increased incentive amount will be implemented from the month of October 2023 as follows. • MBK, Bank Mitra and Jeevika Sahayika will get Rs 6750 to Rs 10750 per month. • Krishi Mitra and Prani Mitra will get a total of Rs 6,250 instead of Rs 3,750 per month. • CRP-CM will now get

Rs 6,100 per month instead of Rs 3,600. While the state government has decided to pay the above increased incentive amount from October, 2023, the state government has decided to spend an additional amount of 96.51 crores. It is worth noting that during the 5T Chairman's visit to the district, the community support staff met him and drew his attention to increase their incentive amount.

1294 Join Different Departments In Odisha Govt Service

Bhubaneswar (KCN): As many as 1294 persons joined in different departments under Odisha government service. While 725 joined the School & Mass Education Department, 280 joined the Finance Department. 129 were recruited in the Rural Development Department. Besides, 160 outstanding sports persons joined five departments, namely Steel & Mines Department, Revenue & Disaster Department, Higher Education, School & Mass Education and Home Department. Chief Minister Shri Naveen Patnaik today said that People's will is supreme in his governance mechanism. Joining a programme for



orientation of newly recruited officials at the convention centre, the CM said that his government is working hard bring transformative changes in the lives of people. The new employees should work with all their sincerity and commitment to serve the people, he advised the new appointees. Welcoming the officials, the CM said that this is a huge achievement in our endeavor to accelerate the process of recruitment for filling up vacancies in the government. He said that over the past few years, we have been recruiting on a regular

basis. This strengthens our capacity to serve the people, he added. He thanked all the departments and the recruitment agencies for bringing efficiency to the recruitment system. He also expressed happiness for many outstanding sports persons being appointed. This will certainly encourage our budding sporting talents, he said. The CM said that "No work is small or big. Every job has its own significance in achieving the overall goal of greater public good. Just remember that the people of Odisha are paying for our work and we are here to serve

them." He further said, "I consider the entire four and a half crore people of Odisha as my family members. We have to serve them with dignity. Our 5T Initiative has been very effective in bringing visible transformation in every sector and every region of the state. Odisha is now a model for other states in many areas. I am sure you will learn the mechanisms of 5T in your orientation and reflect it in your work in letter and spirit." He called upon all to work for a new Odisha, an empowered Odisha. Finance Principal Secretary Shri Vishal Dev delivered the welcome address and School & Mass Education Secretary Aswathy S proposed the vote of thanks.

CM Naveen Launches 'Mo Bus' Services In Sambalpur & Berhampur



Bhubaneswar (KCN): Chief Minister Shri Naveen Patnaik today launched 'Mo Bus' services in Sambalpur and Berhampur.

It is worth noting that 15 buses have been provided in both the cities. This bus will operate between Sambalpur-Burla-Hirakud in Sambalpur city. Similarly, this bus will ply between MKCG Medical College-Engineering School-Railway Station-Berhampur University in Berhampur city.

On this occasion, the Chief Minister said that better communication is the basis of a prosperous future. The 5T initiative has transformed the transport system from villages to cities across the state. Starting from Mo Bus, LAccMI bus Yojana and Metro Rail Yojana are strengthening our efforts towards New Odisha.

The Chief Minister also said that today, 'Mo Bus' service has been started in your city. This allows you to travel within and around the city in a convenient and cost-effective way. He also said that 'Mo Bus Card Tap and Pay' facility has been provided for 'Mo Bus' service in both cash and digital mode, and safety of passengers has been given utmost importance. He said that 90 percent of Sambalpur Mo Buses employ women as conductors. The 'Mo Bus' Service aims to provide safe travel at low cost. He announced that the bus service facility will be available in all the cities of the state.

The program was coordinated by 5T and Naveen Odisha Chairman Karthik Pandian.

Development Commissioner & Additional Chief Secretary Mrs. Anu Garg, Additional Chief Secretary Housing & Urban Development Mr. G Mathi Vathanan were present in the programme.

Mr. Arun Bothra, Managing Director of CRUT, who was present in Sambalpur, delivered the welcome speech.

"Beyond Horizons: Exploring the World in World Literature" Conference Wraps Up Successfully in Koraput

Koraput, (KCN): The picturesque highlands of Koraput were the setting for the triumphant conclusion of the international conference, "Beyond Horizons: Exploring the World in World Literature," which took place from March 7 to 8, 2024. Hosted by the Department of English Language & Literature at the Central University of Odisha, the conference served as a gathering point for literary figures, scholars, and enthusiasts to delve into the multifaceted and transcendent realm of world literature. Professor Chakradhar Tripathi, the Hon'ble Vice-Chancellor of the University, graced the occasion as the Chief Guest, delivering the closing remarks. Notable dignitaries included Professor Alan Johnson from Idaho State

University, USA, Professor N. C. Panda, Dean of the School of Languages at CUO, and Dr. Nirjharini Tripathy, the conference convener and Head of the Department of English Language and Literature. In his address, Prof. Tripathi emphasized the critical importance of character and moral ethics portrayed in literature. He highlighted how the rapid advancements in technology and science have significantly impacted human thinking, leading to a gradual erosion of trust in fellow humans and an increased reliance on machines. Expressing concern over the potential destruction of humanity, he asserted that literature stands as a beacon of hope in such times, capable of salvaging society and the



world. Calling upon scholars to harness the transformative power of literature, Prof. Tripathi envisioned a world where truthfulness, non-violence, fraternity, and love prevail, fostering beauty and peace. Stressing the role of language in shaping culture, he urged English scholars to immerse

themselves in different English-speaking nations to better understand their languages and cultures. Prof. Johnson elevated the discussion on literature and its ability to effect change, while also expressing his admiration for the inhabitants and picturesque landscapes of Koraput. Meanwhile, Prof. Panda delved into the dynamic realm of

world literature, highlighting its profound influence on cultural exchange and mutual

significance of embracing diverse perspectives. Dr. Tripathy, as the Conference Convener, emphasized the importance of welcoming varied voices and narratives in our interconnected global community during her welcoming speech. The conference featured thought-provoking panel discussions and presentations on themes such as globalization, translation, and the intersection of literature with World Literature.

Scholars and experts from diverse backgrounds explored storytelling's capacity to challenge norms and inspire change. As the conference concluded, participants enjoyed a vibrant cultural function celebrating the rich tapestry of cultures and narratives that enrich world literature. It highlighted the event's impact on the literary community, fostering ongoing exploration and dialogue in the years ahead.

Hon'ble Chief Minister, Shri Naveen Patnaik flags-off JBM ECOLIFE Electric AC Buses

Bhubaneswar / Berhampur (KCN): Hon'ble Chief Minister, Shri Naveen Patnaik flagged-off JBM ECOLIFE Electric buses today at a function in Berhampur. A total of 200 air-conditioned electric buses will operate in the cities of Berhampur, Bhubaneswar and Cuttack. This flag-off marks the company's entry in the eastern region of the country. Currently, over 1500 JBM electric buses are running across 10 states and major airports of India. To facilitate seamless operations of these buses, JBM Auto has deployed end-to-end electric bus ecosystem at the depot which includes power and charging infrastructure. The newly launched 9 meter JBM ECOLIFE electric bus is a zero emission vehicle (ZEV) that will save around 1000 equivalent tons of carbon



dioxide and 420,000 litres of diesel over 10 years of its operation. These buses are powered by fast charging lithium-ion batteries and are equipped with all modern features like Real Time Passenger Information System (PIS), Panic

Buttons for emergency, Vehicle Location & Tracking System, CCTV cameras, public address system, stop request buttons, Fire Detection & Suppression System to name a few. The buses are expected to run over 200 kms per day. For

drivers, the ergonomically designed dashboard provides an intuitive and user-friendly system that allows drivers to concentrate on driving without distractions which makes it a truly global product. Mr. Nishant Arya, Vice Chairman & MD, JBM Groupsaid, "This is an important occasion for us as we enter the Eastern market and are thankful to the state government for giving us the opportunity to serve the state and its people. These electric buses are technologically advanced, safe, efficient, comfortable and will go a long way in mitigating the city's pollution. We are committed to ensuring smooth operations and hence have set-up appropriate infrastructure for charging and maintenance of these electric buses".

Vitamin Angels India led Project CLAN showcases impact of Women Leaders Spearheading Nutritional Transformation in Tribal Odisha in Kandhamal district

Bhubaneswar, (KCN)- Project CLAN is a pioneering project in Kandhamal district in tribal Odisha that demonstrates the power of women's leadership in bridging critical nutritional gaps, with the potential for replication across regions facing similar challenges. The project is a collaboration between Vitamin Angels India and Kandhamal Zilla Sabuja Vaidya Sangathan (KZSVS) and empowers women leaders, known as 'Poshan Ma-elis', to spearhead a nutritional revolution in their communities. Piloted across 79 households in the three villages of Kanjumaha, Padami, and Tembuli, the project addresses the core issues of low nutritional understanding and limited diet diversity

by mobilizing community groups, facilitating access to government nutrition programs, and promoting the consumption of nutritious food from local forests and community kitchen gardens. This strategy has led to significant improvements in dietary practices and increased awareness of nutrition among vulnerable populations. Animesh Rai, Senior Manager, Implementation Science, Vitamin Angels India, highlights the initiative's impact and its scalability: "The transformation we've witnessed in Daringbadi block in Kandhamal is not just a testament to the strength and resilience of our women leaders but also underlines the potential of this model to be

replicated in other regions. By empowering communities from within, we can address undernutrition in a sustainable and impactful way. Vitamin Angels India and its partners are committed to expanding the learnings from this model to other regions, aiming to create a ripple effect of nutritional awareness and improved health outcomes across tribal Odisha and beyond." Key nutritional indicators from NFHS-5 underscore the challenges in Kandhamal district, with significant rates of stunting, wasting, underweight children, and anemia among women. The project's approach to tackling these issues through community-led initiatives and the leadership of

'Poshan Ma-eli' has proven effective, showcasing a successful model of nutritional intervention. While the Anemia Mukta Bharat program, a flagship program of the Government of India refers to three Ts, Test, Treat, and Talk as its core pillars, it also looks at an Intensified year-round behavior change communication campaign (Solid Body, Smart Mind) to play a vital role in increasing awareness around anemia and nutrition in the community. The CLAN project has been designed in line with Government programs and has also adopted POSHAN Abhiyan's principles to provide tailored nutrition counseling to help inculcate nutrition-centric behavior among households.



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Ranbir Kapoor Visits Sanjay Leela Bhansali's Office Ahead Of Epic Saga 'Love & War' Shoot

On January 24th, 2024, the legendary filmmaker Sanjay Leela Bhansali surprised everyone by announcing his next cinematic spectacle 'Love & War'. The filmmaker has got the biggest casting coup on board with Ranbir Kapoor, Alia Bhatt, and Vicky Kaushal and has unveiled a title poster that features the handwritten signature of the lead cast.

Ever since Sanjay Leela Bhansali made the grand announcement of the epic saga, the excitement among the masses has been palpable and they're excited to watch the massive combination of Sanjay Leela Bhansali and Ranbir Kapoor, that



is announced for a grand theatrical release on Christmas 2025. Following the grand announcement of the film, the fans and the audiences were waiting for further updates from the film to come out, and

in a recent development, the lead actor Ranbir Kapoor has been spotted outside Sanjay Leela Bhansali's office for a meeting. This is the first time after the announcement, that Ranbir Kapoor has

visited the Sanjay Leela Bhansali's office. Ranbir Kapoor is set to put a strong dedication to his character in Sanjay Leela Bhansali's directorial and together they're set to weave the magic on-screen.

Do Aur Do Pyaar To Teri Baaton Mein Aisa Uljha Jiya: 4 Rom-Coms You Cannot Miss In 2024

As 2024 unfolds, Hindi cinema promises a delightful mix of films, and at the forefront are some captivating romantic comedies. From endearing performances to unexplored storylines, these rom-coms are set to be the talk of the town. Here's a curated list of four must-watch romantic comedies that will undoubtedly leave you with a smile on your face.

Mere Mehboob Mere

Sanam
Prepare to be enchanted by the delightful pairing of Triptii Dimri and Vicky Kaushal in 'Mere Mehboob Mere Sanam'. Scheduled for release on 23rd February 2024, this rom-com promises a captivating blend of charm and stellar performances.

Do Aur Do Pyaar
Featuring eclectic fresh casting of Vidya Balan, Pratik Gandhi, Ileana D'Cruz and Sendhil

Ramamurthy "Do Aur Do Pyaar" has been generating buzz since its first look. This slice-of-life rom-com, produced by Applause Entertainment and Ellipsis Entertainment, is set to steal hearts when it hits the screens on 29th March 2024.

Mr and Mrs Mahi
Get ready for a heartwarming tale as Janhvi Kapoor and Rajkumar Rao come together in "Mr and Mrs

Mahi," slated for release on 19th April 2024. This rom-com is sure to stir your emotions and take you on a rollercoaster ride of love and laughter. **Teri Baaton Mein Aisa Uljha Jiya**
Mark your calendars for 9th February 2024 as Kriti Sanon and Shahid Kapoor grace the screen with their fresh on-screen pairing in "Teri Baaton Mein Aisa Uljha Jiya."

Saurabh Shukla-Directorial Dry Day Is The Comedy Drama You Need To See - Here's How You Can Watch it

Jitendra Kumar-starrer 'Dry Day' is a powerful and emotional story that delves into the complexities of addiction, love, and the extent of a man's sacrifices for his family. Directed by Saurabh Shukla, and produced by Monisha Advani, Madhu Bhojwani, and Nikkhil Advani, under the banner of Emmay Entertainment, the comedy drama features Jitendra Kumar, Shriya Pilgaonkar, and Annu Kapoor in pivotal roles. The film is set to premiere exclusively on Prime Video in India and across

more than 240 countries and territories worldwide on December 22. Dry Day is the latest addition to the Prime membership. Prime members in India enjoy savings, convenience, and entertainment, all in a single membership for just ₹1499/ year. Dry Day is a story of an imperfect hero who challenges societal conventions, rebelling against norms out of love for his unborn child. The trailer of this comedy-drama intricately explores the societal impact of alcoholism, presenting a thought-provoking narrative rooted in social



relevance. Speaking about the film, Director Saurabh Shukla said, "The movie is a social satire presented with a hilarious tragic-comedy of errors with lots of drama and emotions. Dry Day gives an important and relevant message about alcoholism and I consider myself fortunate to have

had the opportunity to craft this film, aiming to entertain and enlighten the audiences. It brings me immense joy to partner with streaming service Prime Video, Emmay Entertainment, and a talented bunch of actors, collectively breathing life into a compelling and beautiful narrative."

Sushmita Sen says her father was 'not happy' about her wearing a swimsuit at pageant, stopped speaking with her because she decided to pursue showbiz

Sushmita Sen created history when she became the first Indian to win the Miss Universe pageant back in 1994. While Sushmita has always spoken about how supportive her family was, in a recent interview, she opened up about how her father did not speak to her when he learnt that she would be participating in Miss India. Even when she had to wear a swimsuit for one of the rounds in the pageant, her father was quite upset about it. Talking to Mid-Day, Sushmita said that she was all of 18 when her life changed, and at that point, her father wanted her to be an IAS officer. "My father wanted me to be an IAS officer, so I was studying accordingly. When the



bomb was dropped on my father that she is going to Miss India, my father didn't speak to me for a bit," she said. Sushmita said that when she entered the world of pageants, her father was quite concerned as she had not even finished her graduation at that point. "I never went to a college and graduate, which was a big problem for my father because he always said, 'Beta, do whatever, just

have a degree'," she recalled. Recalling the time she had an "emotional moment" with her father, Sushmita shared that he wasn't too happy about the fact that she would be wearing a swimsuit on stage. "Remember having this very emotional moment with my father when I promised him, I said 'Baba, I have to wear a swimsuit, it is a part of the show. I cannot not wear it but I promise you

Vivek Ranjan Agnihotri's 'The Vaccine War' To Be Screened At Parliament

Vivek Ranjan Agnihotri is one of the most visionary and responsible filmmakers in Indian cinema. The pioneering director always uses true-life storylines in his films to reflect society and the public. His two true-life stories, 'The Kashmir Files' and 'The Vaccine War', have made an unforgettable impression on the audience's emotions. While the first shocked the country with its tale and conviction and received several awards, including the prestigious National Award, the latter honors the spirit of Indian women scientists and the minds behind the coronavirus vaccine, which shows his ability as a filmmaker to present quality content to audiences.

It is well known that 'The Vaccine War' has left a huge impact on everyone's mind and the filmmaker



through his flawless storytelling and remarkable direction has opened some bold truths with the film. The film made noise upon its theatrical run and digital release and in a recent development, it is being learned that the film will be screened for the members of Indian parliament.

Besides being an Indic filmmaker, Vivek Ranjan Agnihotri is also a responsible citizen of India and has led an impact on the minds of the people and the generation of today with his work for which he was recently bestowed with the title of Doctorate from the Governor of Maharashtra.

Meanwhile, on the work front, celebrated filmmaker Vivek Ranjan Agnihotri left the audiences in awe as he unveiled his forthcoming film during a grand event in Bangalore. The much-anticipated project, titled 'Parva', promises to be an epic cinematic journey, as it will be based on the iconic novel 'Parva' by the renowned author S. L. Bhyrappa. This ambitious venture is set to be a three-part blockbuster franchise, cementing its place in the annals of Indian cinema. Besides this, Vivek Ranjan Agnihotri is also working on 'The Delhi Files'

"Dry Day is a captivating blend of comedy and drama, offering a rollercoaster of emotions," shares actor Jitendra Kumar. "It was an exhilarating experience playing the character of Gannu in the movie. Getting into the skin of this intriguing character was like adding a new skill to my toolbox. The character's struggle of defying all odds in pursuit of trust adds depth to the narrative of the film. I'm excited for audiences to witness this unique journey on screen. The film's fusion of heartwarming moments and compelling storytelling is something I can't wait for people to experience and appreciate." Playing the role of Nirmala, actor Shriya Pilgaonkar shares, "The experience of working on Dry Day has been wonderful and enriching in so many ways. It's a film that will entertain you and emotionally strike a chord as well. I really enjoyed building that relationship between Nirmala and Gannu. The story of our film is all about the transformative power of love and it will also draw your attention to certain important societal issues. I'm so grateful to have got the opportunity to collaborate with Saurabh Sir and the wonderful team at Emmay Entertainment."

Jee Le Zarea: Real reason behind Priyanka Chopra, Katrina Kaif and Alia Bhatt starrer's delay revealed and it's not date issues

Jee Le Zarea is one of the most talked about movies starring Priyanka Chopra, Katrina Kaif and Alia Bhatt. The movie was announced a couple of years ago and there has been much excitement around the same as it is. Farhan Akhtar along with Zoya Akhtar and Reema Kagti are making this all-female road



trip movie happen but there have been a lot of hiccups already. Whether Jee Le Zarea is being shelved or not, has Priyanka Chopra said no to the script, etc. have grabbed headlines in the last couple of days. But fresh reports revealing the real reason for the delay have surfaced. A lot of fans have questioned Farhan Akhtar about the delay of Jee Le Zarea which is supposed to star Priyanka Chopra, Katrina Kaif and Alia Bhatt in the lead. There have been numerous reasons that have surfaced for the delay in making of the new movie. Recently, reports surfaced talking about Priyanka Chopra opting out of Jee Le Zarea because she did not like the script. She was supposed to come down to India during Parineeti Chopra's wedding and sign the contract which did not happen. But that's not the case, as per a report in Koimoi.com, Priyanka is very much a part of the movie. She has not opted out of the project nor has she said 'no' to the script.

Evolution and Significance of Parliamentary Privileges in India



Aishwarya Pathak

The history of parliamentary privilege in India is a fascinating journey that mirrors the nation's struggle for independence and its quest to establish a democratic polity. Rooted in the need for legislative bodies to function effectively and free from external interference, the concept of parliamentary privilege in India has evolved through various stages, reflecting the changing political landscape and the aspirations of its people for self-governance. The seeds of parliamentary privilege in India were sown during the colonial period when legislative councils were established under British rule. These councils had limited powers and privileges, primarily due

to the colonial government's reluctance to grant them full autonomy. However, the need for such privileges was recognized by some, including Lord Macaulay, the first law member, who advocated for facilities like complete information on legislation, freedom of speech, and voting rights. The Government of India Acts of 1909 and 1919 marked significant shifts in the evolution of India's political institutions, allowing more Indians to participate in legislative councils and expanding their functions. The Act of 1919, in particular, introduced a qualified privilege of freedom of speech, albeit subject to the rules set by the Governor-General. This period saw the assertion of privileges as a convention rather than law, with the executive often violating or resisting the privileges claimed by the legislative councils. The Government of India Act of 1935 further extended the

powers of legislatures but continued to place restrictions on the freedom of speech and the rule-making power of the legislature. Despite these limitations, Indian legislators continued to demand privileges akin to those of the UK House of Commons, emphasizing their importance for the effective discharge of legislative functions. The Constituent Assembly, formed to draft India's Constitution post-independence, was acutely aware of the need for parliamentary privileges. The debates in the Assembly reflected a desire to move away from the colonial legacy and establish a modern democratic polity. Articles 105 and 194 of the Constitution, which stipulate the powers, privileges, and immunities of Parliament and state legislatures, were born out of this desire. Parliamentary privilege in India is rooted in the nation's democratic principles and historical

struggle for independence. The Constituent Assembly, while drafting the Constitution, was acutely aware of the need for parliamentary privileges to ensure the effective functioning of the legislature. Article 105 of the Constitution stipulates the powers, privileges, and immunities of Parliament and its members, with a similar provision for State Legislatures in Article 194. The privileges granted to Parliament and its members are essential for the discharge of their functions without fear of external interference. These privileges include freedom of speech within the legislature, immunity from legal proceedings for anything said or any vote given in Parliament, and the right to regulate internal procedures. However, these privileges are not absolute and are subject to the provisions of the Constitution. The necessity test is a

crucial criterion for determining the validity of parliamentary privileges. This test assesses whether a particular privilege is essential for the functioning of the legislature. Privileges must not be exercised arbitrarily or in a manner that infringes upon the fundamental rights of citizens. The Supreme Court has established that neither Parliament nor the state legislature holds exclusive authority over its privileges, and the courts possess the jurisdiction to determine the legitimacy of a privilege claimed by the legislature. Parliamentary privileges are indispensable for the functioning of the House and its members, and they must be exercised in a manner that bolsters the democratic process. While individual members of the House are entitled to certain privileges crucial for their duties, these privileges are not absolute and must be linked to the overall functioning of the House. The exercise of privileges by members must

withstand the necessity test to be considered valid. The judiciary has consistently held that criminal acts, including bribery, are not shielded by parliamentary privileges and are subject to judicial scrutiny. This underscores the principle that lawmakers are subject to the same laws they enact for the public. The assertion of a privilege by an individual member of Parliament or the legislature must satisfy a twofold test: it must be tethered to the collective functioning of the House, and its necessity must bear a functional relationship to the discharge of the essential duties of a legislator. In cases of bribery, the courts have clarified that the offense is complete upon the acceptance or agreement to accept an undue advantage, regardless of whether the promised action is carried out. This interpretation ensures that the integrity of the legislative process is maintained, and that members of the legislature cannot use their privileges to shield

themselves from criminal liability. Thus, the interplay between parliamentary privileges and the rule of law in India reflects a careful balance between ensuring the effective functioning of the legislature and upholding the principles of justice and accountability. The evolution of parliamentary privileges in India reflects a balance between the need for legislative autonomy and the principles of accountability and transparency. While the privileges are vital for the effective functioning of the legislature, they must be exercised within the constitutional framework and with a sense of responsibility towards the public. The concept of parliamentary privilege in India is a fundamental aspect of the functioning of the legislature, allowing members to discharge their duties without fear of outside interference. However, these privileges are not absolute and are

subject to the provisions of the Constitution, ensuring a balance between legislative autonomy and accountability. In essence, the Indian Constitution safeguards the freedom of speech in Parliament and shields members from legal repercussions within the parliamentary domain. The powers and privileges bestowed upon Parliament and State Legislatures are vital for their effective functioning but must not transgress the boundaries set by the Constitution. The courts have the authority to determine the existence and application of these privileges, ensuring that they are exercised in a manner that upholds the democratic process. The necessity test serves as a critical criterion in evaluating the validity of parliamentary privileges, emphasizing their indispensable role in the legislative framework of India.

Advocate-on-Record
Supreme Court of
India

Part 2

Social Forestry

Saikat Kumar Basu



How is social forestry important for ecology and economics integrated together ? By integrating ecology and economics, social forestry contributes to the sustainable development of communities while conserving and enhancing forest ecosystems. This integration is essential for achieving both environmental and socio-economic goals. Social forestry, which involves the management and protection of forests for the benefit of local communities, is important for both ecology and economics in several ways:

1. Ecological Importance:

A. Biodiversity Conservation: Social forestry promotes the conservation of biodiversity by preserving habitats for various species of plants and animals.

B. Soil Conservation: Trees planted in social forestry projects help prevent soil erosion, maintain soil fertility, and improve water retention.

C. Carbon Sequestration: Trees absorb carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, mitigating climate change by acting

as carbon sinks.

D. Water Management: Forests play a crucial role in regulating the water cycle, contributing to groundwater recharge, regulating stream flow, and reducing the risk of floods and droughts.

2. Economic Importance:

A. Livelihoods: Social forestry provides employment opportunities for local communities through activities such as tree planting, forest management, and eco-tourism.

B. Income Generation: Communities can derive income from the sustainable harvesting of forest products such as timber, non-timber forest products (e.g., fruits, nuts, medicinal plants), and ecotourism services.

C. Resource Sustainability: By promoting sustainable forest management practices, social forestry ensures the long-term availability of forest resources for future generations.

D. Poverty Alleviation: Social forestry projects can help alleviate poverty by providing alternative sources of income and reducing dependence on unsustainable natural resource extraction.

What are the limitations of social forestry ?

Social forestry, while beneficial in many ways, also has its limitations. Addressing these limitations requires comprehensive planning,



stakeholder engagement, and ongoing monitoring and evaluation to ensure the effectiveness and sustainability of social forestry initiatives.

A. Limited Scope: Social forestry initiatives often focus on specific areas or communities, limiting their overall impact on larger environmental issues.

B. Dependency: There's a risk of creating dependency among local communities on external support for forest management, which may

not be sustainable in the long term.

C. Resource Constraints: Social forestry projects may face resource constraints such as funding, expertise, and manpower, hindering their effectiveness and scalability.

D. Land Tenure Issues: In some cases, unclear land tenure rights can lead to conflicts over ownership and management of social forestry areas, undermining their

success.

E. Ecological Considerations: While social forestry can contribute to reforestation efforts, the selection of tree species and planting methods must be carefully considered to ensure ecological balance and prevent unintended consequences such as invasive species or monoculture.

F. Social Equity: There may be challenges in ensuring equitable distribution of benefits among community

members, particularly if certain groups have more influence or access to resources than others.

G. Policy and Governance: Inadequate policies or ineffective governance structures can impede the implementation and sustainability of social forestry projects, leading to limited impact.

What are the broader implications of the social forestry to our society

the management and conservation of forests, has several broader implications for society:

A. Environmental Conservation: Social forestry promotes sustainable forest management practices, leading to the conservation of biodiversity, protection of watersheds, and mitigation of climate change through carbon sequestration.

B. Livelihood Opportunities: It provides alternative livelihood options for rural communities, reducing dependency on forest resources for sustenance while creating employment opportunities through activities like agroforestry, eco-tourism, and non-timber forest product harvesting.

C. Poverty Alleviation: By empowering local communities to actively participate in forest management and benefit from forest resources, social forestry contributes to poverty alleviation and socio-economic development in rural areas.

D. Community Empowerment: Social forestry fosters a sense of ownership and responsibility among local communities towards forest resources, empowering them to make decisions that affect their

environment and well-being.

E. Conflict Resolution: Involving local communities in forest management can help mitigate conflicts between conservation goals and the needs of indigenous peoples or local residents, fostering collaboration and mutual understanding.

D. Cultural Preservation: Social forestry initiatives often incorporate indigenous knowledge and traditional practices, helping to preserve cultural heritage and strengthen the identity of indigenous communities.

E. Urban-Rural Linkages: Social forestry can bridge the gap between urban consumers and rural producers by promoting sustainable supply chains for forest products and fostering awareness about the importance of forests among urban populations.

Social forestry has the potential to contribute to sustainable development by addressing environmental, social, and economic challenges while promoting inclusive and participatory approaches to natural resource.

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PM flags off new passenger train service between Siliguri and Radhikapur during the "Viksit Bharat Viksit West Bengal program" at Siliguri, in West Bengal

PM Modi Unveils Projects Worth Over Rs 4,500 Crore In Bengal

Siliguri: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday unveiled infrastructure projects worth more than ₹ 4,500 crore in northern West Bengal. The PM unveiled the projects at a programme in Siliguri, the region's largest city, during his third visit to the state this month.

Governor CV Ananda Bose was among those present at the programme.

Addressing the function, PM Modi said eastern India had been ignored after Independence but his government considers it as the growth engine of the country.

"Over the last 10 years, development of the state, especially its northern region, has been a priority for our government. We need 21st century infrastructure for the development of this area," he said.

The PM inaugurated multiple projects of railway line electrification that will benefit the people of northern West Bengal and nearby areas, an official statement said. These railway lines are the Eklakhi-Balughat, Barsoi-Radhikapur, Raninagar Jalpaiguri-Haldibari sections, Siliguri-Aluabari section via Bagdogra, and the Siliguri-Sivok-Alipurduar

Junction-Samuktala section, it said.

"We have completed the electrification of railways here, which will not only enhance the pace of connectivity but also save the surrounding areas from pollution," PM Modi said. "The benefits of the electrification process here will be reaped by the people of neighbouring Bihar as well," he said.

The projects inaugurated during the day are steps we are taking towards 'Viksit Bengal', he said. "There was a time when trains would slow down upon moving towards Northeast, but not anymore. We are streamlining development here," PM Modi said.

He also inaugurated the doubling of the railway line in the Manigram-Nimtita section and

automatic block signalling in the Ambari-Falakata-Aluabari section. The PM also flagged off a new passenger train service between Siliguri and Radhikapur, the statement said. These projects will improve rail connectivity, facilitate freight movement and contribute to employment generation and economic growth in the region, it said.

"We now have train services from West Bengal to Bangladesh. We are bridging the gap between the two nations in cooperation with the Bangladesh government," the PM said. PM Modi claimed that allocation for railway projects in West Bengal, particularly in the northern region, has increased several times under the BJP rule at the

Centre. The PM also inaugurated two national highway projects worth ₹ 3,100 crore. These are the four-lane Ghoshpukur-Dhupguri section and the four-lane Islampur Bypass on NH 27. The Ghoshpukur-Dhupguri Section is part of the north-south transport corridor, connecting eastern India with the rest of the country.

"Will Be A Sweep": Chandrababu Naidu After Finalising Poll Deal With BJP

New Delhi: In a huge boost to the BJP, which has been seeking to expand the NDA to meet its target of winning 400 seats in the upcoming Lok Sabha elections, the party has finalised an alliance with the Telugu Desam Party and the Jana Sena Party in Andhra Pradesh. Announcing that the pact has been sealed, TDP chief Chandrababu Naidu said on Friday that the alliance would sweep the Assembly elections in the state, which are expected to be held simultaneously with the Lok Sabha polls.

"Andhra Pradesh has been destroyed badly. The BJP and the TDP coming together is a win-win situation for the country and the state," the former chief minister was quoted as saying by news agency PTI. Minutes after Mr Naidu's statement, BJP President

JP Nadda made a post on X welcoming the TDP and the Jana Sena Party (JSP) into the NDA. A joint statement by the three parties emphasised the long relationship between the TDP and the BJP.

"The BJP and TDP have a very old relationship together. The TDP joined NDA in 1996 and has worked together successfully in Atalji (former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee) and Narendra Modi's government. In 2014, the TDP and the BJP fought the Lok Sabha election and Assembly election together," the statement said.

Mr Naidu and Mr Kalyan held a meeting with senior BJP leader and Home Minister Amit Shah on Friday and a deal was hammered out after an intense round of negotiations. Sources said that while the BJP

wanted to contest 10 out of the 25 Lok Sabha seats in Andhra Pradesh, the TDP made it clear that it is the primary opposition party in the state. Sources said the formula which has been arrived at is that the TDP will fight 17 Lok Sabha seats while the BJP will be allotted six and the JSP will contest from two. The details of exactly which constituencies will be allotted to each party will be worked out after a BJP team visits Andhra Pradesh. The TDP had been a part of the NDA until 2018 when Mr Naidu - who was the Andhra Pradesh chief minister at the time - had walked out of the coalition over financial support for the state. The alliance with the BJP was crucial for his party this time around after a humiliating defeat at the hands of the Jagan

Mohan Reddy-led YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) in 2019. The YSRCP had won 22 out of the 25 Lok Sabha Seats and 151 out of 175 Assembly constituencies while the TDP had managed to achieve victory in just three and 23, respectively. The alliance also marks a shift for the BJP, which has been supported by the YSRCP on several occasions, especially in getting bills passed in the Rajya Sabha. It will, however, help the national party gain a foothold in the southern states, where it is perceived to be relatively weak. Having won just 29 of the 130 Lok Sabha constituencies in the region in 2019, the party is keenly aware that it will have to significantly better that score to reach its target of securing 370 seats on its own and 400 for the NDA.

"Himachal Government Will Fall Soon": Union Minister After 11 MLAs Shifted

Rishikesh: Six Himachal Pradesh Congress MLAs who voted against party nominee Abhishek Manu Singhvi in the Rajya Sabha elections, along with three Independent lawmakers, have shifted to a hotel in BJP-ruled Uttarakhand amid an ongoing rebellion against Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu. Two BJP MLAs Vikram Thakur and Trilok Jamwal from Himachal Pradesh were accompanying the legislators, who arrived in Rishikesh from Haryana's Panchkula by a chartered flight late on Friday and checked into Hotel Taj. Congress MLAs Sudhir Sharma, Rajinder Rana, Inder Dutt Lakhanpal, Devinder Kumar Bhutti, Ravindra Thakur and Chaitanya Sharma have



since been disqualified for defying the party whip on the state budget. Three Independent MLAs Hoshiar Singh, KL Thakur and Ashish Sharma were also with them when they arrived. The Congress currently has 34 MLAs in the Himachal Pradesh Assembly while the BJP has 25. The three Independent MLAs had also sided with the BJP in the Rajya Sabha polls. Security around the hotel has been tightened and no

one is being allowed to enter the premises except those who have advance online bookings. The hotel is located about 30 kilometres from Rishikesh along the Rishikesh-Badrinath Road. The Congress has already stepped up efforts to set its house in order in Himachal Pradesh and is holding parleys with senior ministers of the state. Meanwhile, Union Minister of State for Development of North Eastern Region BL Verma

told reporters in Haridwar that the Congress government in Himachal Pradesh will soon fall. "The Sukhu government in Himachal Pradesh is battling internal conflicts. It will not last long because of this infighting," Verma said. He claimed Rahul Gandhi's actions have eradicated the Congress in Uttar Pradesh and will wipe it out from all over the country after the Lok Sabha elections. Verma was in Haridwar to attend a 'Sahakarita Sammelan' organised at yoga guru Ramdev's Patanjali Yogpeeth. Replying to a question about the presence of the Himachal Pradesh MLAs in Uttarakhand, Verma said the case of their expulsion is in the Supreme Court and the BJP honours the courts. He also described the Samajwadi Party as a family-oriented organisation that will not be able to open its account in the general elections. Calling the ongoing farmers' movement politically motivated, he claimed the budget for farmers was only ₹ 21,900 crore in 2013-14. It has been increased by Prime Minister Narendra Modi to 1.25 lakh crore. "But some political parties are trying to defame the government under the guise of farmers. They will never succeed," he said.

Lok Sabha Election Dates May Be Announced On Thursday or Friday: Sources

New Delhi(KCN): The Election Commission of India will visit Jammu and Kashmir from Monday to Wednesday to assess when polls can be held in the Union Territory and the dates for the Lok Sabha elections are likely to be revealed immediately after that, sources have told NDTV. The announcement may be made on Thursday or Friday.

The Commission's visit to Jammu and Kashmir comes after the Supreme Court had directed it to hold Assembly elections in the Union Territory (UT) by September. The Centre had then asked the panel to assess whether the Assembly elections in the UT could be held simultaneously with the Lok Sabha elections. "Once the assessment is complete and the visit ends on



Wednesday, the commission may announce the dates for the Lok Sabha elections on Thursday or Friday,"

a source said. The model code of conduct will come into effect as soon as the elections are

announced and parties have been making promises and inaugurating projects on a war footing before that happens. As far as the polls in Jammu and Kashmir are concerned, the commission has been given a full briefing by the security establishment and the entire panel, including Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar and Election

Commissioner Arun Goel, will visit the Union Territory. The last Assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir were held in 2014 and the state was bifurcated after Article 370, which gave it special status, was abrogated in 2019. The Union Territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh came into existence after that. During a hearing on a bunch of petitions

challenging the scrapping of Article 370, the Supreme Court had, in December last year, directed the Election Commission to hold elections in Jammu and Kashmir by September 30. Upholding the Union government's decision to abrogate Article 370, the court had directed it to take steps to restore the statehood of Jammu and Kashmir at the earliest.

LAccMI Exp Shuttle Service launched

Bhubaneswar(KCN): A crucial link between IIM Sambalpur and NIT Rourkela via Jharsuguda Airport was established Friday as the state Transport department launched the LAccMI Express shuttle service, signifying a crucial milestone in the transport sector, as per a release issued by the department.

Two LAccMI Express shuttles will effectively bridge the gap between the major educational institutions and vital healthcare facilities such as Veer Surendra Sai

Institute of Medical Sciences and Research (VIMSAR). The service route encompasses prominent establishments including Sambalpur University, VIMSAR, Veer Surendra Sai University of Technology (VSSUT), Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Sambalpur, and National Institute of Technology (NIT) Rourkela, providing seamless access to Jharsuguda Airport.

The LAccMI Express shuttle service provides a convenient and



efficient transportation option, spanning a

distance of 212 km. Departing from IIM Sambalpur at 9 am, the

bus arrives at NIT Rourkela by 1:45 pm. The return journey from

NIT Rourkela to IIM Sambalpur begins at 2 pm and concludes at

6:22 pm, the release said. Departing from NIT Rourkela at 8:45 pm, the shuttle reaches IIM Sambalpur at 1:11 am. The return journey from IIM Sambalpur to NIT Rourkela starts at 1:45 pm and ends at 6:11 pm. These timings ensure timely and reliable service for passengers, the release mentioned. It also claimed that these timings have been meticulously planned to align with the flight schedules at Jharsuguda Airport, facilitating hassle-free

travel for passengers. Fares for LAccMI Express shuttle service have been set at a nominal rate to ensure accessibility for all, said an official. Female passengers will be charged at a rate of Re 1 per km, whereas their male counterparts will incur a charge of `2 per km, he added. The introduction of this service will facilitate seamless travel experience, promoting regional development, and improving access to essential services.

40K Jobs In PCPIR



Bhubaneswar(KCN): The Petroleum, Chemicals and Petrochemicals Investment Region (PCPIR) set up at Paradip has attracted investments worth Rs 73,518 crore resulting in employment of about 40,000 people. This was informed by Union Minister of State Petroleum & Natural Gas, Rameswar Teli in Rajya Sabha today. In a written reply to a question of BJD MP Sasmit Patra, the Union Minister said the Government has notified the PCPIR Policy, 2007 to attract investment in Petroleum, Chemicals & Petrochemicals and for generation of employment in specifically delineated investment regions for this purpose.

A PCPIR is a combination of production units, public utilities, logistics, environmental protection mechanisms, residential areas and administrative services. Each PCPIR would have a refinery/petrochemical feedstock company as an anchor tenant, he said. The anchor tenant for the development of PCPIR in Kendrapara and Jagatsinghpur districts of Odisha is Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL) which owns and operates Paradip refinery of 15 Million Metric Tonnes Per Annum (MMTPA) capacity. In order to promote plastic based industries, IOCL has partnered with Odisha Industrial Infrastructure Development Corporation (IDCO) as

supporting equity partner in "Paradeep Plastic Park Limited" wherein one 680 Kiloton per Annum (KTA) Polypropylene (PP) plant and one 357 KTA Mono Ethylene Glycol (MEG) plant have already been commissioned, Shri Teli said. As per information compiled by the Department of Chemicals & Petrochemicals, so far Investments worth Rs. 73,518 crore have been made in Odisha PCPIR resulting in employment of about 40,000 people, he added. The planned Paradip petrochemical complex would be one of India's four proposed PCPIRs. Spread over 284 sq km of land spread over Jagatsinghpur and Kendrapara districts, the

Paradip PCPIR will be anchored by IOC's Paradip refinery and petrochemical units that, together, would supply the chemical complex all necessary feedstock, including monoethylene glycol, petcoke-based synthetic ethanol, and paraxylene-purified terephthalic acid (PX-PTA), according to reports. In its latest 2021-22 annual report to investors, IOC said it expects to commission the PX-PTA plant at Paradip by January 2024. Once completed, the new PX-PTA plant will have a PX production capacity of 800,000 tpy, which will be used as feedstock for an adjacent 1.2-million tpy PTA plant to be built as part of the project (OGJ Online, Sept. 18, 2020).

Four flight trials of 'ABHYAS' conducted successfully at Odisha's Chandipur by DRDO




Balasore(KCN): Four flight trials of high-speed expendable aerial target 'ABHYAS' were successfully carried out by the DRDO from the Integrated Test Range at Odisha's Chandipur between January 30 and February 2, official sources said. The trials were conducted with four different mission objectives in a revised robust configuration using a single booster designed by Advanced Systems Laboratory, Hyderabad to provide reduced launch

acceleration, they said. The objectives such as the safe release of the booster, launcher clearance and attaining the required end of launch velocity were achieved. During the flight trials, various parameters such as required endurance, speed, manoeuvrability, altitude and range were successfully validated. Designed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation's Aeronautical Development Establishment (ADE),

ABHYAS offers a realistic threat scenario for the practice of weapon systems, the sources said. It is designed for autonomous flying with the help of an auto pilot indigenously made by the ADE. It has radar cross-section, visual and infrared augmentation system required for weapon practice. ABHYAS has a laptop-based ground control system with which the aircraft can be integrated and pre-flight checks, data recording during the

flight, replay after the flight and post-flight analysis can be carried out. It requires minimum logistics and is cost-effective compared to imported equivalents, they said. The systems tested recently were realised through production agencies Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) and Larsen & Toubro (L&T) Defence. With identified production agencies, ABHYAS is ready for production. The system has export potential and can be offered to friendly countries, they added. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh has congratulated the DRDO, the armed forces and the defence industry for the successful flight trial of ABHYAS. DRDO chairman Samir V Kamat appreciated the efforts of the teams associated in the design, development and testing of the system.



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Odisha Government Announces Ground Breaking Subsidy Scheme at Global Stainless-Steel Expo

Bhubaneswar: The Odisha Government has unveiled an ambitious Special Subsidy Scheme to boost the stainless-steel Industry within the state. This momentous announcement was made during the inauguration of the Global Stainless-Steel Expo 2023 (GSSE 2023) in Mumbai, further solidifying Odisha's commitment to becoming the 'Stainless Steel destination' for the world. The GSSE 2023 event, was inaugurated by esteemed dignitaries including Shri. Hemant Sharma, Principal Secretary, Industries, Government of Odisha; Mr. Abhyuday Jindal, Managing Director, Jindal Stainless Ltd.; Dr. Aruna

Sharma, GSSE Steering Committee Member and Former Secretary, Ministry of Steel; and Ms. Anitha Raghunath, Director, Virgo Communications and Exhibitions.

In his inaugural address, Managing Director, Jindal Stainless, Mr Abhyuday Jindal said, "It won't be an exaggeration to say that stainless steel is omnipresent, and even for a big event like the G20, stainless steel adorned the roads. Be it the art installations in Lutyens Delhi or the security barriers, stainless steel made its presence felt. It was a historic moment to witness stainless steel reach the moon when the Chandrayaan-3 made a



soft landing on the lunar surface recently." He also touched upon the industrial park in-the-making in Odisha by his company, and said it is the first-ever stainless steel Industrial park in India with the vision to strengthen the industry.

A special report on stainless steel titled 'India's Amritkal' by SteelMint was unveiled at the event. According to the report, the stainless-steel industry struggled to regain equilibrium due to

the lingering impact of weakened global and domestic demand. This demand contraction reverberated throughout global melt-shop production, with the first quarter of CY23

witnessing a 5% year-on-year decline to 13.66 million tonnes (mnt). China led this dip with 8.27 mnt. The report also underlined that the Indian Stainless-Steel industry quickly recovered by FY23, reaching about 3.5 mnt. Looking forward, SteelMint's forecasts are intriguing, estimating demand to rise to 4.5 mnt by FY25.

Shri Hemant Sharma, Principal Secretary, Industries, Government of Odisha (Orissa), is making significant contributions to the stainless-steel sector and the minerals sector.

Being the largest producer of iron ore and bauxite in India is indeed a noteworthy achievement.

Odisha's status as the largest producer of iron ore and bauxite showcases its rich mineral resources. This positions the state as a critical player in the raw materials supply chain for various industries, including steel and aluminium.

He announced Jindal Stainless steel Plant is a massive 1.2 MTPA stainless steel plant and proposed plant expansion to 3.2 MTPA by Jindal Stainless Limited (JSL) in Odisha is a game-changer. This

investment represents a substantial commitment to the stainless-steel sector in the state and will likely contribute to its growth and prominence in the industry.

"The demand for stainless steel in India is expected to grow at an average of 9 to 10 per cent per annum over the next few financial years, doubling the growth rate of 4.5 per cent in the last five financial years," said Ms. Anitha Raghunath, Director of Virgo Communications and Exhibitions, the organizer of the GSSE Expo.

RELIANCE BRANDS LIMITED INKS A JV WITH PLASTIC LEGNO SPA

Mumbai: RELIANCE BRANDS LIMITED (RBL) and Plastic Legno SPA have signed a joint venture arrangement through which RBL will acquire a 40% stake in Plastic Legno SPA's toy manufacturing business in India. This investment by RBL serves a dual purpose, bringing in vertical integration for RBL's toy business and helping diversify the supply chain with a long-term strategic interest in building toy manufacturing in India.

Plastic Legno SPA is owned by the Sunino group that boasts of more than 25 years of toy production experience in Europe. The group started its India business in 2009 out of a need to develop a strong production hub that would cater to global markets, but more importantly to the fast evolving and growing Indian market.

"Keeping with our

honourable Prime Minister's vision of Atmanirbhar India, this collaboration with Plastic Legno's deep experience in world-class toy manufacturing coupled with our strong footing in the global toy retail industry would open new doors and unparalleled opportunities for toys manufactured in India. It is imperative for RBL to build design to shelf capability for a strategic advantage over the competition and to be an accelerator in building a robust toy manufacturing ecosystem in India not only for domestic consumption but also for global markets," said the spokesperson of Reliance Brands Limited.

RBL has a strong play in the Toy industry with its portfolio of Hamleys, the British toy retailer and homegrown toy brand – Rowan, making RBL one of the leading toy distributors. Hamleys currently has a global

footprint across 15 countries with 213 doors and is India's largest chain of toy stores.

"We are very privileged to have RBL as a partner in this Joint Venture. We are confident that Plastic Legno's experience in Toys production and Hamley's commercial outreach, will complement one another to enable the JV Company to achieve greater heights and successes. We have important development plans to implement, always in the spirit of creating a cultural background in this specific sector in India. We are ready for the challenges of the future, but when there is a group like RBL alongside, we are sure that together we can do a great development," said Paolo Sunino, Co-owner, Sunino Group.

Honda Motorcycle and Scooter India registers 3, 53,188 unit sales

Gurugram: Noting a positive upward movement during the month, Honda Motorcycle and Scooter India today announced its sales numbers for May 2022.

The company's total sales for the month stood at 3,53,188 with 3,20,844 domestic sales and 32,344 exports compared to the subdued market performance for same period last year amidst multiple lockdowns owing to impact from second wave of pandemic.

Commenting on the sales performance in May'22, Mr. Atsushi Ogata, Managing Director, President & CEO, Honda Motorcycle & Scooter India said, "The market is gaining back strength as disturbances in terms of supply side are subsiding coupled with rise in physical presence at office and educational institutions. The sales figures this month remain incomparable from May'21 as frequent lockdowns during this period last year. Growth in domestic as well as international trade continues to complement each other as we approach an early monsoon."

TVS Motor Company registers sales of 302,982 units

Hosur: TVS Motor Company sales was at 302,982 units in May 2022. The year-on-year growth is not comparable due to the low base of sales in May 2021 because of the localised lockdown imposed by the Government of India during that period.

Two-Wheeler Total two-wheelers sales grew from 154,416 units in May 2021 to 287,058 units in May 2022. Domestic two-wheeler sales grew from 52,084 units in May 2021 to 191,482 units in May 2022.

Motorcycle sales grew from 125,188 units in May 2021 to 148,560 units in May 2022. Scooter sales of the Company grew from 19,627 units in May 2021 to 100,665 units in May 2022.

The shortage in the supply of semiconductors has impacted the production and sales of

premium two-wheelers. We are working aggressively with alternate sources and taking every effort to improve supplies at the earliest. Some improvement has been seen this month. We are optimistic that volumes will revive to normal levels once the semiconductor supplies improve.

The Company's total exports registered sales of 110,245 units in May 2022 as against 114,674 units in May 2021. Two-wheeler exports recorded sales of 95,576 units in May 2022 as against 102,332 units in May 2021.

Three-wheeler of the Company grew by 28% from 12,473 units in May 2021 to 15,924 units in May 2022.

The domestic two-wheeler sales include TVS iQube Electric sales of 2,637 units in May 2022.

Spice Money to enable farmers to withdraw PM-KISAN subsidy through its 1 million Adhikari Network

New Delhi: The Government of India has disbursed PM KISAN subsidy, directly to the farmers' bank accounts benefiting over 10 crore farmers and families who have received a grant of Rs 2,000 each. Spice Money, India's leading rural fintech with 1 million strong Adhikari network covering 18,500 plus pincodes, is assisting the farmers and farmer families residing in the heartlands of the country, to withdraw this subsidy through AePS at their doorstep Adhikari

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 India branch network can provide general Banking products like Current Accounts, Savings Accounts, Working Capital facilities and other related services to the MSME Customers of SIDBI."

Also, speaking on the tie-up arrangement, Shri Vivek Kumar Malhotra, CGM, SIDBI reiterated SIDBI's commitment towards timely financing for MSMEs across all sectors.

CONSTRUCTION WORK FOR SUB-WAY NEAR NIDHIPANDA BRIDGE STARTED



BHUBANESWAR, (KCN): Railway Minister Kept his promise and was sanctioned fund of rupees 14.7 Crores in September 2023. The construction work for Sub-way near Nidhipanda Railway Bridge started today. Sri Ashwini Vaishnav, Hon'ble Minister for Railways during his visit to Balasore on 21st June, 2023 had met the villagers who had a long pending demand for construction of a subway near Nidhipanda Bridge (Br. No. 259).

The Railway Minister discussed the issue with local villagers and assured them to resolve the matter. The 'Designing team' of Railway has immediately prepared the design for Subway which was approved by the competent authority. A fund of Rs. 14.7 crores has been sanctioned in September 2023 by the

Railway Board for construction of Subway near Nidhipanda Bridge of Balasore.

Nidhipanda bridge is an important bridge in Haldipada-Balasore section of Kharagpur – Bhadrak section. One of the spans of this bridge is being used by local people for commuting of both vehicular and pedestrian traffic. The area gets water logged during monsoon and the crossing under the bridge becomes unapproachable cutting connectivity to villages. In light of these issues, after Hon'ble Minister for Railways instructions, a survey was immediately conducted for provision of alternate, safe arrangement for vehicular traffic as well as pedestrians. A scheme was prepared whereby a subway of size 5m (W) X 5m (H) has been proposed at the

approach of the bridge at Kharagpur end. This subway will be used for passing of all kinds of vehicles including heavy vehicles.

In view of the above, the construction work has been started which will fulfill the demand of local people. Additionally, keeping in mind that the area is prone to waterlogging during monsoon, a second subway is proposed having dimensions of 4m(W)X 2.7m(H) which is about 1.6m above the bed level of the bridge and will act as an all-weather road even in times of heavy water discharges. With the intervention and close monitoring of Hon'ble Minister for Railways, the project and fund of Rs 14.7 crores was sanctioned in September 2023 and work is now started with close monitoring.

Ashwin stars as dominant India decimate England

New Delhi: R Ashwin's 36th five-wicket haul (5-77) in Tests led India's clinical bowling display on the third day of the fifth Test against England in Dharamsala, powering the hosts to a mammoth victory margin of an innings and 64 runs. The off-spinner became only the fourth bowler in history to achieve a fiver in the 100th Test and ended the game level with Muttiah Muralitharan for the most wickets in the landmark Test - 9. Joe Root (84) was the only England batter in the second innings to show resolve and he looked largely flawless at the crease, only to run out of partners at the other end. Tom Hartley promised to dig in for a bit with Root before the former was taken out by a Jasprit

Bumrah special to be trapped LBW. In the same over, India's vice-captain produced a similar nut to get Mark Wood LBW. Shoaib Bashir, though, dug in for a while to support Root's quest for a ton and the partnership stretched the game deep into the session. However, a cracker from Ravindra Jadeja cleaned up Bashir, leaving Root with no choice but to take the bowling on. In the process, he perished too long-on, to give India a crushing win. Much like in the first innings, England's batting once again came a cropper. After James Anderson's landmark 700th scalp in the morning session had hastened the end of India's innings, the onus was on England to put up a strong fight to sign off the tour. Unfortunately



for them, that wasn't to be. Ashwin sliced through the top-order with his guile, forcing England's batters to play with indecision. Jonny Bairstow (39 off 31) threatened to provide some entertainment but as was the case in the first innings, his fun was cut short by Kuldeep Yadav as soon as the wrist spinner was brought on. When Stokes fell to Ashwin at the stroke of lunch, it was a dismissal that summed up England's fortunes in the series. If Ashwin sealed the game on day three, the victory was set up by Kuldeep's brilliance (5-72) on day one. While England's decision to bat under seamer-friendly conditions was a brave one, it was soon evident that it was the right call. After the morning session, the pitch started to play true, allowing batters to play their shots.

However, there was just a bit of hold in there for spinners if they were willing to be accurate. and Kuldeep was just that. It also helped that he had a bag of tricks to which England had no answer to. Right through the series, the 29-year-old had dented the visitors with his repertoire and Dharamsala was no different. Zak Crawley (79) showed that runs were there to be made but his dismissal also showed how good Kuldeep was in the first innings. The visitors lost six wickets in just 37 balls and on a good batting surface, that was unpardonable. Ashwin duly mopped up in the lower order to end with a four-fer in the first innings, and that momentum was carried on by the veteran in the second innings when he

bowled close to his best in the series. India's batters didn't make the mistake of their counterparts and feasted on the surface by piling on the runs. Yashvir Jaiswal smashed a fifty, going past 700 runs in the series as well but couldn't kick on. However, the momentum he gave set up Rohit Sharma (103) and Shubman Gill (110) to notch up their respective second tons of the series. Their 171-run stand flattened England as runs came at a brisk pace with boundaries. Both took the spinners to the cleaners and Stokes' unorthodox plans with the field sets also didn't work. Rohit feasted on anything short and wide on either side of the wicket while Shubman Gill's footwork against

spin was a delight to watch. England did not remove the set batters in succession through Stokes' magic ball - his first of the series - to remove the Indian captain. Anderson then removed Gill but India refused to put their foot off the pedal. The visitors then had to contend with fifties from Devdutt Padikkal (65) and Sarfaraz Khan (56). The duo came out with a counterpunching mentality at a time when England were hoping to make further inroads with the ball reversing. Both had their moments of fortune but also displayed tremendous bravado through teasing spells. Even Kuldeep (30) himself was involved in a 49-run stand with Bumrah (20) as India's batters

blunted England's venomless bowling attack to the core. Bashir (5-173) ended with a fifer and while he did bowl well in parts, the inexperience showed. England's moments to remember in the game were Anderson's milestone and Stokes' ripper to Sharma. Across the series, the visitors' bowling attack got found out and so did their muddled batting approach. On a sporting Dharamsala surface, India were just too hot to handle. Brief scores: England 218 and 195 (Joe Root 84; Ashwin 5-77) lost to India 477 (Shubman Gill 110, Rohit Sharma 103, Devdutt Padikkal 65; Shoaib Bashir 5-173) by an innings and 64 runs

Hamilton Masakadza resigns as ZC's Director of Cricket

NEWDELHI: Hamilton Masakadza has resigned from his role as Zimbabwe's Director of Cricket, citing "failure to qualify for the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2024 as the main reason for his decision to step down" according to a release by the cricket board.

Masakadza had taken up the role soon after retiring from all forms of cricket in October 2019. He will continue to remain involved in Zimbabwe Cricket in different capacities, the board further said.

"This decision has come about after careful consideration of the successes and failures of our cricket and my responsibilities," Masakadza wrote in his resignation letter. "As much as there has been a lot of progress in my tenure, the fact remains



that we are the only Full Member nation not participating at the next T20 World Cup after our shock loss to Uganda. "This was indeed one of the lowest points of my career and I take full responsibility as Director of Cricket. This decision was a very difficult one to make and I remain fully committed

to Zimbabwe Cricket and would very much be interested in serving in a different capacity as the organisation looks forward to hosting the Men's Under-19 World Cup in 2026 and the Men's 50-over World Cup in 2027."

ZC Managing Director Givemore Makoni said: "Hamilton's status as a

cricket legend is not in doubt and we are indebted to him for his immense contributions to the sport, on and off the field.

"After calling time on his playing career, he gave his all trying to ensure ZC has the foundations in place to identify, develop and prepare the next generation of

players. "As he leaves his current role, as an organisation we take great satisfaction in knowing that, despite some crucial results not going our way, Zimbabwe teams and our cricket in general have made significant progress under his watch. I hope the game will continue benefiting from his knowledge and expertise."

During Masakadza's four-year tenure, Zimbabwe qualified for the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2022 in Australia and reached the Super 12s. He was also instrumental in ZC introducing new tournaments like the National Premier League and the Zim Afro T10 league for men as well as two women's provincial competitions, the Fifty50 Challenge and the Women's T20 Cup.



NEW DELHI: As Deepthi Sharma returned to the top of her bowling mark - over no. 18.3 in the Delhi Capitals' chase - the two giant screens at diagonally opposite ends of the Arun Jaitley Stadium animatedly flashed 'hattrick ball'. Both Annabel Sutherland and Arundhati Reddy had just perished trying to swipe across the line and be the hero when the Capitals needed the last 15 runs off 12 balls. Moments later, the on-air commentator gushed, "up and over she goes" as the new batter, Shikha Pandey, skipped

down the track to smack it straight over the bowler's head and into the ropes. The hat-trick has been averted, or so thought both the parties. And also, Deepthi.

It wasn't until the next ball, and a sharp return catch off her own bowling which gave Deepthi her fourth wicket of the night, that the commentators had caught on. Meg Lanning, who had single-handedly led Delhi's chase with a 46-ball 60, was her first victim, trapped LBW on the final

ball of the 14th over - the third of Deepti's four of the night. Blissfully unaware yet, the bowler and her UPW teammates were still only high-fiving for getting another strike closer to bagging those two crucial points. Deepti's seminal milestone spread across two overs and, perhaps, therefore, slipped through the cracks, but her never-give-up spirit inspired Warriorz's campaign, saving 1-run victory from the jaws of a certain defeat on Friday.

Long before Deepti the offspinner sent down that game-changing over, it was Deepti the batter that had influenced the proceedings with a fighting, if not the most fluent, half-century knock. Coming into this must-win contest for UPW on the back of a 36-ball 53-the-fifty coming off a last-ball six - Deepti earned herself a promotion to no. 3 and held the UPW innings together amidst yet another middle-order collapse around her for a second successive night at the Kotla.

Bangladesh prepare for the 'unknown' ahead of T20 WC

DHAKA: Bangladesh head coach Chandika Hathurusingha said on Friday that they are trying to prepare as well as they can for the forthcoming T20 World Cup as there are lot of unknown factors. The decision to put some more grass on the surface in the Sylhet International Cricket Stadium in the ongoing three-match T20I series against Sri Lanka is largely due to the unpredictability factor especially in the United States. Bangladesh are scheduled to take on Sri Lanka in Dallas on June 7 and South Africa on June 10 while the next two games of the group phase will be played in West Indies. "What we are looking at is the combination for World Cup, how the individuals fit in and

understanding the game plan and be comfortable. The other thing I mentioned is that we want to play on good wickets because we don't know what we get in America and we play two very important games in America and nobody has any clue because there is not much data behind it," Hathurusingha told reporters ahead of the series deciding third game at the SICS on Friday.

"What I understand is that New York has a drop-in wicket prepared on Adelaide and they are going to drop in there hopefully expectation is something similar to what Australian pitches are. There's little feedback from NSW Cricket about Dallas. Washington Freedom played there. I spoke to their GM when I was in Australia. Our recollection from St



Vincent is the last Test we played there," he said.

"So we are preparing as well as we can for these unknown factors," he said adding that playing in good wickets is also helping their bowling unit shift their mindset considering they are now learning to bowl with a different approach.

"One thing we realized is that we are playing in a different kind of pitches now and in this series there is more grass and more carry and we want to play on wickets that are conducive to high scoring to get us to understand what is acceptable and what areas we need to improve in bowling because it's a

mindset shift as well because when you are bowling on certain wickets 150 as a winning score. You expect to bowl in a certain way and if you bowl in these sort of pitches you are going at eight runs an over it is very good. 160 you saw the other day was not a par score and even 200 after losing four

wickets in power play we nearly got there and we really need to understand those factors as well so I am pretty pleased with the way our bowling unit is shaping up," he said.

Ahead of the final T20I, Hathurusingha said that he is pleased with the way his charges came back after the defeat in the opening game. "You are talking about the last game I thought we almost played a perfect game. Pleasing thing for me is how we quickly learnt from the first game," he said.

He also added that both Soumya Sarkar and Litton Das admitted that they have made mistakes in the opening game but came back strongly in the following game with a 63-run stand. "Both of them put their hands up after the first game that their approach was wrong and they will work

on it and played good cricket. I am old enough to understand that people can make mistakes. Look at the start we got, 63 [in Powerplay]. T20 is amazing. As long as they are playing for the team and contributing for the team, that's what we want." Chandika pointed out that he is impressed with Jaker Ali and Mahmudullah while Shoriful Islam is also becoming a leading bowler for them with each passing game. "He (Mahmudullah) brings a lot of experience. He played the BPL with a lot of maturity. He is playing with a lot of freedom which I said in a previous interview. When I saw him in the World Cup, he is so much at-ease with his game and himself. He is playing beautifully now. "It is very refreshing to

see what he (Jaker) can do. I only saw him in this BPL. He is very calm which is really nice to see. It is one quality you need from someone who bats at No 5, 6 or 7. Most of the times you have to do certain things with limited time. It was really pleasing to see what he can do. It gave us a lot of confidence as a team. "W know that he (Shoriful) had a very good BPL and I think he came up with the same confidence to bowl in these matches as well. What happened was in the first game due to dew the ball didn't swing as it did in the BPL and he had to adjust very quickly for the second game so that was very pleasing to see the way he bowled in the second game. Every game he is growing into a leading bowler for us with Taskin and Fizz. There is another one we can bank on."