

# Poverty to be fully eradicated from India in next 10-15 years: Rajnath Singh

**Bhawanipatna(KCN):** Defence Minister Rajnath Singh Wednesday claimed that poverty would be completely eradicated from India in the next 10-15 years and this is ‘Modi ki guarantee’. Singh said this while addressing the BJP’s ‘Vijay Sankalp’ rally at Bhawanipatna in the district headquarters town of Kalahandi. “Though Congress leaders beginning from Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru to Indira Gandhi and Manmohan Singh all have promised to end poverty, all of them have failed. However, our Prime Minister Narendra Modi has started the process to end poverty,” he said. Noting that about 25 crore people have been lifted from below the poverty line during the nine years rule of Modi, the Defence minister said



that this was not the claim made by the BJP, but the report of Niti Aayog. However, things have undergone a massive change during the nine-year rule of the Modi government at the Centre, he said. While lauding the vocabulary skill of BJP’s Kalahandi Lok Sabha candidate Malavika Devi, Singh appealed to the people of Kalahandi to vote for the lotus symbol for proper highlighting of the local issues at the national level. Quoting former Prime

Minister Rajiv Gandhi on the expenditure of public money, Singh said: “Only 15 paise was reaching the beneficiary in the ground level if the Centre sent Rs 1 for the poor people. However, Modi’s Jandhan account and direct bank transfer procedure ended the corruption and the people are getting the money sent by the Centre.” Appealing the people to install a BJP government in Odisha, Singh said that the BJP government will implement the Ayushman Bharat health scheme as soon as a saffron government is formed in Odisha. He said cutting across caste, creed and religion, all the people at the age of 70 years or above would be covered under the Ayushman Bharat scheme. “Bring BJP government in Odisha, the state will implement Ayushman Bharat immediately,” he

said. The Defence minister also claimed that during the Modi regime, terrorism has almost come to an end due to timely and strong action against terrorists. He, however, said that there is a few sporadic cases of terrorism and it will completely vanish from Indian soil under the leadership of Modi. Claiming that the BJP does what it says, Singh said the Modi government has abolished Article 370, ended the triple talaq practice and installed Sri Ram Lala’s statue at Ayodhya as promised earlier. He appealed to people to vote for BJP candidates contesting in Lok Sabha and Odisha Assembly polls. Lok Sabha and Assembly elections would be held simultaneously in Odisha.

**Congress ‘Shehzada’ should explain why stopped talking about ‘Ambani-Adani’: Modi**

**Hyderabad (KCN):** Prime Minister Narendra Modi Wednesday for the first time during the Lok Sabha elections accused the Congress of having a nexus with “Ambani and Adani”, and asked if the party has received “tempo loads of black money” from the two businessmen for its leader Rahul Gandhi to stop “abusing” them. In what appeared to be changing the narrative on the issue that was until now used by the Congress to attack Modi and his government at the Centre, the Prime Minister also demanded that the party should explain to people why it has stopped raising the ‘Ambani-Adani’ issue as its ‘Shehzada’ used to do for the past five years and asked if it has struck a ‘sauda’ (deal). “Since his Rafale issue got grounded, he started chanting about ‘five industrialists’”. Then he started saying Ambani-Adani. But ever since elections have been announced, these people

## Congress ‘Shehzada’ should explain why stopped talking about ‘Ambani-Adani’: Modi



(Congress) have stopped abusing Ambani-Adani. “I want to ask from Telangana soil, let the Shehzada announce, how much has been lifted from Ambani-Adani. Has tempo loads of money reached the Congress? What deal has been arrived at, that abusing Ambani-Adani has stopped overnight?” he said while addressing an election rally at Vemulawada in Telangana. “Certainly something is fishy. For five years, (they) abused Adani-Ambani and it stopped overnight. It means you have received some tempo loads of ‘chori ka

maal’ (loot)...Kaale dhan ki kitni boriya bharkar ke rupaye maare hai (how many sacks of black money you have taken) You have to answer the nation,” the Prime Minister said. The Congress has been accusing the Prime Minister of favouring the top five industrialists in the country, including Gautam Adani and Mukesh Ambani. The Congress launched a fierce counterattack against Modi for his Adani-Ambani jibe with Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra charging that the BJP has a nexus with industrialists and the entire BJP machinery is engaged in spreading “lies” about Rahul Gandhi.

## BJP has plans to break BJD after elections: Pandian

**Bhubaneswar(KCN):** BJD leader and Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik’s close aide Kartik Pandian Wednesday alleged that the opposition BJP is not fighting elections in Odisha to win polls but to increase its seat number with an intention to break the Biju Janata Dal after elections. This was stated by the bureaucrat turned politician while meeting a group of television channel journalists at Gopalpur in Ganjam district Wednesday. “They (BJP) had a slogan of securing 120 Assembly seats in 2014 but failed. I do not know their target for 2019. But, for 2024, they have been fighting elections to win 50/60 seats and aim to break BJD after the elections. This is their poll strategy,” Pandian told journalists. Claiming that the BJP was not fighting elections to form government in

Odisha, Pandian said: “I openly say that this (breaking BJD) is their internal strategy as they have done in Maharashtra, Karnataka and Madhya Pradesh.”



Asserting that the BJP’s plan will not succeed, Pandian said many people from the national level are coming for campaigning in the state, but the people of Odisha have no trust on them. “Naveen Babu is the trust of the people,” he said. “You have seen in 2014, 2019 and also in 2024, entire army of leaders from across the country come for campaigning. But, the people will not trust

them. The people will bless Nabeen babu in a big way,” Pandian said replying to a question on the BJP national leaders making queue for campaigning in the state during the twin polls for the Lok Sabha and Odisha Assembly. Asked whether he was confident of Patnaik becoming the chief minister of Odisha for the sixth consecutive time, Padian said: “I have a strong conviction that Naveen babu will win the elections with flying colours. Had I not such conviction, I would not have said that Naveen babu will be sworn in as CM June 9 with blessings of Maha Prabu Jagannath,” he said. Pandian said that they (BJP) have no candidates in 60 of the 147 Assembly segments

in Odisha. They waited for the release of BJD’s candidate list so that they could pick up candidates from among the leaders dropped or rejected by the regional party. “This is the reality of BJP in Odisha,” he said. Pandian also came down heavily on Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan and Bhubaneswar MP Aparajita Sarangi and accused them of attempting to stop the Shree Mandir Parikrama Project (Jagannath temple heritage corridor project). Replying to a question on BJP raising the Odia Asmita (pride) issue during elections, Pandian said, the central government has not given a single rupee for the promotion of Odia language. Though the BJP has 8 MPs in Lok Sabha, all of them remained completely silent while the Centre was providing money for the promotion of other languages and not for Odia language.

## Two Rubella cases detected in Odisha’s Nabarangpur district

**Nabarangpur(KCN):** Two children in Odisha’s Nabarangpur district have been found to be infected with Rubella virus, a health official said Wednesday. The cases have been detected in Nandahandi and Tentulikhunti blocks of the tribal-dominated district, said Malaya Tripathy, chief district medical officer in-charge, Nabarangpur. Five samples have been sent for testing to the ICMR laboratory, of which two were found



to be Rubella while another of measles, he said. Health Services Director Bijay Mohapatra said two blocks of Nabarangpur

district have been affected by Rubella. “So far, 18 persons have been found with fever and rashes in the body, a symptom of Rubella

virus. We have conducted tests for Scrub typhus, leptospirosis, but the results are negative. Now, we have sent the samples to ICMR for Rubella tests,” the director said. However, there is no need to panic as the situation is under control. Rapid response teams from the health department and another team of ICMR already sent to the spot keeping a close watch on the situation, Mohapatra added.

## Gold worth Rs 2.79 crore seized at Bhubaneswar airport

**Bhubaneswar(KCN):** The Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) has seized smuggled gold worth Rs 2.79 crore from four

passengers at Biju Patnaik International Airport (BPIA) in Bhubaneswar, a statement said Wednesday.

Acting on a tip-off, DRI officers identified four passengers arriving from Dubai and on searching them, found 3.77 kilogram of

smuggled gold in their possession May 6, it said. They were arrested and further investigation is underway, it added.

## SHGB: The bank having largest network in Haryana earned Rs. 338 crores Net Profit

**Chandigarh (JAG MOHAN THAKEN), May 8:** Sarva Haryana Gramin Bank (SHGB), a joint venture of Central government and Punjab National Bank is serving the people at the grassroots level with the largest branch network in Haryana. Referring service with modern technology, Mr. Sanjeev Kumar Dhupar, the Chairman of the bank said that Sarva Haryana Gramin Bank, like all other public sector banks and private sector banks, is using modern technology to provide all the facilities like ATM, mobile banking, internet banking, RTGS, NEFT,

IMPS etc. to the rural & urban residents through 684 branches and 951 BC banking outlets so that they our customers can transfer funds, pay bills etc. without visiting the branch. The Chairman, Dhupar was releasing the audited figures of March 2024. Addressing the press, the Chairman of the Bank, Mr. Sanjeev Kumar Dhupar happily informed that the bank has achieved all the targets in key parameters like deposits, loans, NPA and profit. Highlighting the key figures of the bank, the Chairman Mr. Sanjeev Kumar Dhupar informed that the total business of



the bank as on 31.03.2024 has increased from Rs 33531 crore to Rs 37340 crore, which shows an annual growth of 11.00%. Deposits have increased from Rs 20555 crore to Rs 22703

crore with a growth of 10.45%. Similarly, loans and advances have increased from Rs 12976 crore to Rs 14637 crore with a growth of 12.8%. Gross NPA of the bank has come down to 3.25% of the advances from

4.29% of last year and net NPA is zero. Operating profit of the bank has increased by 6.80% from Rs. 569 crores to Rs. 608 crores and net profit has increased from Rs. 276 crores to Rs. 338 crores.

CRAR of the bank is 14.87%. Mr. Dhupar informed that the bank has opened 4 new branches in the year 2023-24 and 4 new branches will also be opened in the year 2024-25. The Chairman also shared the target for next financial year i.e. 2024-25. He informed that the total target of the bank’s business for the financial year 2024-25 has been kept at Rs. 45000 crores, in which the expansion of deposits has been kept at Rs. 26500 crores and the expansion of loans has been kept at Rs. 18500 crores. During the current financial year 2024-25, the main focus

of the bank will be on increasing loans for micro, small & medium Enterprises and retail sectors along with agricultural term loans that includes launching of several schemes like special schemes for business purposes, exemption in documentation fees for loans under CGTMSE, GST Express loan Scheme, Business Development Scheme, special schemes for business purposes to promote MSME advances, E-renewal scheme for KCC and launching of personal loan schemes for self-employment.

Giving credit for all these achievements to Bank’s officers & employees working in the branches and field, he said that Bank’s staff is performing excellently in every field with full enthusiasm and zeal. In the most important area of recovery of the bank, they have worked very hard on NPA Reduction and recovery in irregular accounts and the pleasant results are before everyone. On this occasion, all the General Managers of the Bank, R.S. Salaria, Vimal Kumar Sharma, Mithilesh Kumar Jha and Rohit Nijhawan were present.





## A Moments

By Jasaswini Pattanaik  
Dotted with a series of moments .  
The peaks are soaked in joy ,  
The troughs ,coated with laments .  
A poet's weaves these moments  
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Cuttack  
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## WAITING FOR SOMETHING

Mahapatra

Waiting for something  
a lovely dream  
a tiny flower  
a lost friend

I know  
how intimate is silence  
lost in soliloquy  
waiting for something that  
waiting knows.



Visiting Professor of Development  
Communication  
Former Director, I & PR and Culture,  
North Eastern Council Ministry of DoNER,  
Govt. of India  
Former Director, Book Publishing Courses  
& Editor, NCCL National Book Trust,  
Ministry of HRD, Govt. of India

## Quotation of the Day



## Time that governs the earth

Mr.RadhaShyam Jena



time for material achievements and social position by fair or unfair means. As per the social custom, he gets married. His attraction for material attachment influences him to earn more wealth. His attachment is also multiplied because of his children. His attachment encourages him to concentrate to his son and wife. By degrees, youth passes and old age comes to snatch all of his ego, arrogance, anger. The loved ones

Jagat Guru AbhiramParamhansa is reverent for his teachings to protect his devotees. Most of his devotees are economically poor but spiritually rich. All respect Him for his sacrifice towards the spiritual development of his devotees. All of his literary works are in the form of bhajan or spiritual songs. He has propagated his idea, thought and preaching through stories and dialogues.



One of the devotional songs i.e. "PASHAND DALAN" means the trampling of extorter or atheist. The tramp does not mean a violent method. He has tried his best to change the cruel nature of a person through his preaching i.e. Almighty or Time, the most powerful. Time is the most powerful instrument that devours the entire universe. It is nothing but the death governs the earth. A man is generated from the womb of his mother in the form of a worm. He gradually grows into a complete human form. While living in the womb of his mother he has to face much pain and lastly after 10 months 10 days, he comes out of the mother's womb. He has to spend time unconsciously in the society. Gradually he becomes a child and develops his social relationship during his childhood amongst the various children. The childhood passes smoothly and thereafter he grows towards a young man. Anger, arrogance and ego makes him blind for his social recognition and starts claiming admiration from the society. To maintain the status, he earns wealth and fame. He spends

start ignoring him in his old age. Nobody takes care of his health, food and suffering and all think of his death or all wait for his departure from this world. The son whom he loves more ultimately ignites his pyre or buries him in the burial ground. This is how our society behaves with the old man or old woman. One should be conscious and alert always that wealth and position are nothing but temporary in nature. Through such method of preaching, Jagat Guru AbhiramParamhansa has tried his best to make his devotees conscious about the law of the nature i.e. time devours all social status, wealth and mundane pleasure. Therefore, human beings being the conscious animals should submit their thoughts and actions to the Almighty under whose instruction, the time takes the decision and prescribes the result for his action.

Advocate Supreme Court  
209, New Lawyers' Chamber  
BhagwanDass Road,  
New Delhi-110001  
Mob. No.9811575947  
Email id:  
rs.jena@yahoo.co.in

These days one of the major recreational activity for people is watching television. The box that shows lies and lives of others mesmerizes us . We are happy with the virtual world where we just witness whatever the television program producers want us to see . Like the way watching TV will not give you the actual experience of a beautiful place , similarly ,just having a perfect Shakespeare quote for every situation will not help you with the life situations . You need to go out and experience life to be able to perceive life in all its splendour. Many cities of Canada were preparing for the solar eclipse event since the beginning of this year . April 8th was the day . In the afternoon the solar eclipse was supposed to cross through North America , passing over Mexico, the United States and Canada where the moon would align perfectly between earth and the Sun . However since morning that day , it was cloudy in my city(Toronto) . For the first time ever , I felt I should have control over the clouds . If I say "go away" , they should move away from the my part of the sky . On any fine day , I usually love clouds as they bring rain and poetry to me . But that day , my feelings towards the clouds were so different

that I just wanted them to clear up the sky for me . We drove to Hamilton , a nearby city which is around seventy kilometres away from Toronto to try our luck with the spectacular and rare celestial event . Also the city of Hamilton was on the path of totality which meant the moon will cover hundred percent of the Sun, though only for one and a half minutes . People outside the path of totality would be able to observe a partial solar eclipse , during which the Sun would not be hidden in totality. All the way to Hamilton, the sky was covered with clouds . We thought we may not be able to witness the once-in-a-life time event as the Mother Nature was not on our side . It was cloudy till 2:45 pm , we were at the confederation park , Hamilton along with thousand others. The Sun was partially eclipsed by the moon but due to clouds all over , the visibility was very limited. Suddenly it seemed like everyone's prayers were answered. All of a sudden the half eclipsed Sun showed up shattering all the clouds . It was like a magic . Later I felt it was more magical than the total eclipse itself . Minute by minute , the total eclipse was approaching as if the moon was enjoying the proximity with the sun . At 3:18pm , it was total solar

Monalisa Dash Dwibedy  
eclipse , total darkness which swept across the city . It was a truly unforgettable experience. The Moon was in total embrace of sun and ring when the tiny beads of sunlight shined through some places . Moon continued to move away from the path of sunlight and the broad daylight was your own journey , rather we find time to compare & compete with others . How stupid is that ! Few days later, I read in the news that people proposed a very vital piece of information for you . On Aug. 2, 2027, the Moon's umbra will touch 12 European, African, and Middle Eastern countries and

it was dark like dawn . No words to describe the feelings . For ninety seconds it was soul stirring as the darkness prevailed and the stars were clearly visible in the sky . The birds were very confused as they were turning their directions every moment .Photos won't be able to do justice for this moment. We watched the event with ISO certified solar eclipse glasses . After the ninety second of total solar eclipse, as the moon started to graze past the Sun, we could view the perfect eclipse diamond

back after an hour , signalling the end of the thrilling experience. Witnessing cosmic events like the solar eclipse will make you realize your own place in this universe. I felt so small as my egos were mostly washed away . How miniature we are in this vast cosmos? We are alive on a rock floating in void which is spinning around itself and orbiting around a fireball . There is another rock orbiting the rock that we inhabit. Still you do not believe in miracles . In our short trip in this planet we do not focus on enjoying

their partners with the view of eclipse diamond ring and many couples got married on the eclipse day . What a beautiful day to celebrate the bliss of life ! If you missed this Great North American Eclipse because of clouds, personal commitments, or travel problems, you may be wondering when your next chance will be. And if, on the other hand, you experienced it under a clear sky, you are probably ready for the next one. If you want to witness the longest solar eclipse of your lifetime then here is

territories. The prized destination will be Egypt. That day , you can look overhead as the Moon will completely cover the Sun for 6 minutes 22 seconds. This duration won't be surpassed until June 3, 2114. My chosen spot for 2027 is Karnak, the great temple complex in the city of Luxor. That is one of the most visited historic sites in Egypt. See you at Luxor ! (The writer is an IT Consultant living in Toronto , views are personal) WhatsApp/Mob: +1 647 762 4119





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## Aditi Rao Hydari: 'Been told I'm fragile like glass'

Actor Aditi Rao Hydari is one of the few actors in Indian film industry who has worked with numerous maestros. She has been a Mani Ratnam heroine as well as a Sanjay Leela Bhansali heroine, both depicting a side to her that had never been explored. In SLB's 'Heeramandi', she plays Bibbo Jaan, a sweet woman whose purpose in life is beyond the walls of Heeramandi. In an exclusive chat with IndiaToday.in, Aditi spoke about being perceived as a 'delicate darling' and her looks being used as an excuse to perhaps not cast her sometimes.

Speaking about how she felt almost liberated playing Bibbo Jaan, Aditi said, "I am perceived in a particular way because

of the way I look or the way I am or the parts I have played, usually the fragile, feminine, petite girl. Often people say, 'oh, she will just blow away.' Or 'oh she is like glass, if you touch, she will break.' Today, I own it and I am what I am. It is not a burden for me, but if it is for you, then you need to figure it out. Secondly, my vulnerability is my strength."

Aditi then elaborated on why she feels Bhansali manages to show women with their flaws, strength and vulnerabilities alike: "I also feel it is also about directors who bring that out in an actor. To have a vision and say that there are different kinds of strengths. I'm so happy that I lived this life of Bibbo Jaan because it was literally like 'here is a girl who



is so kind, so feminine, and artistic.' She sings and dances. She is celebrated for her beauty, but beneath that, she has this simmering purpose, courage and fearlessness. I feel that fearless belief is so inspiring, and they are not mutually exclusive. You can be both. I relate to it."

Aditi also spoke about

'silly' things actresses hear for any project they are offered, like 'you are too beautiful'. Responding to it, she shared, "That's so silly. It is somebody's insecurity that is speaking because it is such a silly thing to say about somebody. A person is how they look, but there is more to the person. There

questioned why many in the industry fail to look at an artist as an artist: "I have 100 per cent been told that you are too beautiful for this role. But I am a person. I am a sum total of many things." Aditi quipped, "Also, why is this a problem? You don't tell somebody that 'you act too well'. It doesn't make sense. But that is also being heard now, oh 'that girl is too good an actor, she will outshine the others.' It has not been told to me, but I have heard this as well. It just doesn't make sense. It means your intentions aren't pure."

'Heeramandi' is currently streaming on Netflix. It also features Manisha Koirala, Sonakshi Sinha, Sanjeeda Shaikh, Richa Chadha and Sharmin Segal in pivotal roles.

## Sara Ali Khan's Christmas Album From London Features Mom Amrita Singh And Dad Saif

It was indeed a merry Christmas for Sara Ali Khan, who celebrated with her mom Amrita Singh and dad Saif Ali Khan in London (separately). Amrita Singh is in London, accompanying daughter Sara, while Saif is holidaying there with wife Kareena Kapoor and sons Taimur and Jeh. Sara posted pictures from her festivities in London and she wrote, "Missed my baby brother (or not so baby). Thank you Santa for this Merry merry Christmas. Ibrahim Ali Khan, I wish you was here. To have pecan pie and celebrate and spread Christmas joy and cheer...And then eat black cod individually with the OG two who to us are extremely dear but for now these pics I shear



(share)."

Sara Ali Khan, who was missing brother Ibrahim big time, shared a picture collage comprising photos of Saif and Amrita. No caption needed. In another Instagram story, the actress wrote, "That's a wrap," adding, "Missing brother Jaan."

Sara Ali Khan has a super busy schedule ahead. She will next be seen in Ae Watan Mere Watan. Her line-up of films also includes Metro... In Dino and Murder Mubarak. Her last project was Zara Hatke Zara Bachke. Sara Ali Khan also had a cameo appearance in

Rocky Aur Rani Kii Prem Kahaani song Heart Throb. She has featured in films such as Kedarnath (her debut movie), Simmba, Love Aaj Kal. She also featured in the Coolie No 1 remake. Sara was also seen in Atrangi Re.

## Suriya Gets Injured On Sets Of Kanguva, Film Shoot Halted



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

The latest report stated that a rope camera lost

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

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

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

'Kanguva' stars Suriya in six roles, leading an ensemble cast that includes Disha Patani and Bobby Deol, alongside Natarajan S u b r a m a n i a m, Jagapathi Babu, Yogi Babu, Redin Kingsley, Kovai Sarala, Anandaraj. Ravi Raghavendra, K. S. Ravikumar, and B. S. Avinash. The film will mark the Tamil debut of Disha and Bobby.

It is scheduled to be released theatrically in early 2024 in standard, 3D and IMAX formats. The official release date of the film is yet to be announced.

## 'Amar Singh Chamkila' not a work of fiction, it's true, authentic: Imtiaz Ali

Filmmaker Imtiaz Ali, speaking exclusively to IndiaToday.in, revealed that his upcoming film, 'Amar Singh Chamkila' is not a work of fiction. The film, which features Diljit Dosanjh and Parineeti Chopra, is a biopic on the life of legendary Punjabi singer, Amar Singh Chamkila. He also opened up about the reason behind doing this biographical drama. In his interview, Imtiaz explained that he stayed authentic and true to the story and how much of the film is based on the fiction. He said, "As far as I know, it's completely authentic and true. I have not taken any shortcuts. I have not made any scenes out of my imagination. I have tried to be very authentic for my own sake because I feel that I always make films by imagination, but how would this film be different from the others for me? Also, as a filmmaker, when you go out looking for the truth, you end up knowing more dramatic things."

The 'Jab We Met' director also revealed that he never thought of making a biopic. Explaining further, he



said, "I have never made a biopic before. But I would often hear about Amar Singh Chamkila through my friends, especially from my production head Rajesh Sharma. He would always say that I should make a film on the singer. In fact, he was the first person who told me about Chamkila." He continued, "Then, I started listening to his music and found many things interesting about him. Finally, six years back, around the release of 'Love Aaj Kal 2', a gentleman called Harpreet, had the rights to the film Chamkila, which was very difficult to get. For some reason, he felt that he should approach me to direct this film."

"I did ask him 'why did you come to me to make this film?'. I am not even from Punjab, and he said 'Aap ki film mein Punjab bahut his khoobsurati se dekha ya jata hain' (In your films, Punjab is portrayed beautifully). It took five years because I did not have much knowledge about Chamkila. Then, Covid happened, and I was visiting Punjab with Chamkila at back of my mind. I started listening to the stories of the singer and it got interesting. I had my own view and story to tell through Chamkila and that's when I decided to make the film," he added. Amar Singh Chamkila, with his raw and unabashed lyrics, challenged societal norms and became a voice for the marginalised. His music transcended geographical boundaries and resonated with audiences across generations. His songs, often addressing taboo subjects with unfiltered honesty, remain relevant even today. By immortalising Chamkila's legacy on celluloid, Imtiaz Ali aims to introduce his artistry to a wider audience and pay homage to his contribution to Punjabi music. 'Amar Singh Chamkila' will premiere on Netflix on April 12.



# Natural farming for sustainable agriculture



Introduction

Over the past decades, India has become food secure by using high-yielding varieties of seeds, fertilizers to nourish soils, pesticides to protect from pests, and herbicides to protect from weeds. However, this has been accompanied by environmental damage through the overuse of agrochemicals. Moreover, the use of costly agricultural inputs like chemical fertilizers, pesticides, seeds, increased cost of cultivation, climate change etc. have led to increased farmer indebtedness and thereby aggravated India's farm crisis. Besides this, indiscriminate use of synthetic fertilizers, pesticides, and herbicides has led to soil and environmental pollution besides impacting human health adversely.

To overcome these life-threatening issues, natural farming has been popularized in recent years as an alternative to chemical-based farming systems all around the world. Natural Farming builds on natural or ecological processes that exist in and around farms. The most critical aspect of natural farming is to let nature play a dominant role to the maximum extent possible. Natural farming depends on the dynamic and balanced interactions of sunlight, water, soil, animals, plants, and microorganisms in natural ecosystems. In natural farming, the laws of nature are applied to agricultural practices.

What is natural farming?

The plant in the forest grows continuously, and a cycle of "life-death-decomposition-life" continues. Everything that comes out of the soil again goes back to the soil in one form or another. Therefore, learning from "Mother Nature" and her forests suggests that crops can grow solely in a natural way,

without any external intervention, and this forms the basic concept of natural farming. Natural farming is an ecologically sustainable and economically viable method, which refers to the practice of agriculture based on locally available resources and the rich traditional knowledge of the farmers. Natural Farming imitates the way of nature. This method works along with the natural biodiversity of each farmed area encouraging the complexity of living organisms (both plants and animals) that shape each ecosystem to thrive along with agricultural crops. Therefore, natural farming is also considered an 'agroecology-based diversified farming system', which integrates crops, trees, and livestock with functional biodiversity. The major goal of natural farming is to reduce externally purchased inputs. It is largely based on the exclusion of all synthetic chemical inputs (fertilizers, pesticides, and herbicides). In other words, in natural farming, the focus is on the use of bio inputs prepared from the farm and local ecosystems instead of purchasing any product from outside. Thus, commercial-level farming can be done on almost zero/minimum budget only by using locally available and farm-based resources.

Essentially, natural farming is to grow crops without fertilizer, pesticides, herbicides, tillage, weeding or even pruning. Rather, natural farming is simply farming with nature. It's not that the farmer isn't working; it's that the farmer isn't interfering with the crops regarding chemical substances or even tampering with the growth, leaving most of the things to nature.

The History Behind Natural Farming

Natural farming is an ecological farming approach established by Masanobu Fukuoka (1913–2008), a Japanese farmer and philosopher. He introduced this term in his 1975 book 'The One-Straw Revolution'. The title referred not to a lack of effort, but to the avoidance of manufactured inputs and equipment. Fukuoka suggested that farmers could benefit by closely

observing local conditions. Natural farming is a closed system, one that demands no human-supplied inputs and mimics nature. Fukuoka's argument was to simply harness the energy of the local environment to grow nutrient-rich foods. Fukuoka himself successfully raised rice, winter grain, and citrus crops without ploughing his fields for more than thirty years. According to him, a farmer should carefully watch the cycles of nature and then work with those patterns, rather than try to conquer and tame them. There are many working models of natural farming all over the world.

How to perform natural farming?

According to natural farming principles, plants get 98% of their supply of nutrients from the air, water, and sunlight. And the remaining 2% can be fulfilled by good quality soil with plenty of friendly microorganisms (just like in forests and natural systems). Therefore, farm biodiversity, integration of symbiotic farm components, and protection of soil by cover cropping etc. play important roles in natural farming.

Some of the key features of natural farming are:

- No cultural operations: Natural farming is to be performed just the way it would be performed in any natural ecosystem.
- Minimum tillage: Tillage should be kept at its minimum since ploughing the soil alters the natural environment of the soil and promotes the development of weeds.
- No weeding: Weeds can be suppressed by spreading straw over freshly sown land and growing ground cover. Natural farming considers that nature has a balancing ability, which suppresses the growth of one species over the other by allelopathic interactions. In natural farming, weeds are also considered mulch layers.
- No external inputs: No agrochemicals or organic materials from external sources is to be applied.
- No fertilizers: Since the continuous application of fertilizers deteriorates soil health and declines inherent soil fertility status, no external sources of chemical/organic fertilizers

## Dr. Prava Kiran Dash

are to be applied in natural farming.

- No pesticides and No herbicides: Because chemical pesticides/herbicides contain many harmful or toxic chemicals, which are injurious to the food, soil, human, and environmental health, no plant protection chemicals are to be applied.
- Bio-cultures and biopesticides: Natural inputs including cow dung, cow urine, jaggery, lime, neem, datura etc. are the common materials used for agricultural management in natural farming. Farm-made bio-cultures named 'Jivamrut', 'Bijamrut' etc. are to be added to the soil instead of any fertilizers to improve the microflora of the soil. Jivamrut and Bijamrut are derived from cow dung and cow urine (gomutra) of Indigenous cow breeds. Natural, farm-made pesticides like Dashparni Ark and Neem Astra can be used to control pests and diseases.
- Bijamrut for seed preparation: The ingredients for 'Bijamrut' are water (20 litres), dried cowdung (5 kg), cowurine (5 litres), lime (100 grams) and compost soil (200 grams). All the ingredients should be mixed well in a bucket and left for 24 hours. Stirring should be done twice during this time in a clockwise direction only. After this, Bijamrut will be ready and can be mixed with the seeds uniformly followed by drying in the shade.
- Jivamrut for enhancing soil microbial activity: The required ingredients for the preparation of Jivamrut are cowdung (10 kgs), cow urine (5 to 10 litres), jaggery (1 to 2 kgs) pulses like arhar, mung, biri (1 to 2 kgs), compost (handful) and water (200 litres). All these ingredients are to be mixed well and allowed to ferment for 2 to 3 days being covered with cloth or a jute sack. Stirring should be done twice during this time in a clockwise direction only. This mixture should be used within 7 days. The Jivamrut can be put in the irrigation channel to reach the plant roots with the irrigation water. It is not manure, but it will act to increase the action of the

manures like cowdung, compost, etc. After the application of Jivamrut or Bijamrut, the cowdung is covered with a layer of leaf/grass/straw mulch.

- On-farm biomass recycling and biomass mulching: Covering the soils with organic mulch (which creates humus and encourages the growth of friendly microorganisms) is a key principle of natural farming. The decomposition of organic matter by microbes and earthworms is encouraged right on the soil surface itself to enrich the organic carbon status of the soil. Multi-cropping (crop diversification) is encouraged over single-crop methods. With the help of crop diversification, natural farming aims at restoring and rebuilding natural cycles in the soil. Green manuring and incorporation of legumes in crop rotation are key components of natural farming.

Is natural farming the same as organic farming?

Natural farming and organic farming, both come under agroecological practices and are terms used interchangeably in India. Similarities and dissimilarities between natural and organic farming are as follows:

- Similarities: Natural and organic both are chemical-free and poison-free farming methods. Both systems discourage farmers from using any chemical fertilizers, pesticides, or herbicides on plants and in all agricultural practices. Both farming methods encourage farmers to use local breeds of seeds, and native (indigenous) varieties of vegetables, grains, pulses, and other crops. Both organic and natural farming methods promote nonchemical and homemade pest control methods.
- Dissimilarities:
  - Inputs: In organic farming, organic fertilizers and manures like compost, vermicompost etc. are used and added to farmlands from external sources. In organic farming, farmers might use external agricultural inputs such as rock phosphate, biopesticides, and biofertilizers. But in natural

farming, neither chemical nor organic fertilizers are added to the soil. In natural farming, it is believed that even these external applications are not required as the farm itself can generate much of the inputs required.

- Cultural operations: Organic farming still requires basic agronomic practices like ploughing, tilling, mixing of manures, weeding, etc. to be performed. In natural farming, there is no ploughing, no tilling, and no weeding of soil is done.
- Cost: Organic farming is still expensive due to the requirement of bulk manures, and expensive organic ingredients, which also have ecological impacts on surrounding environments, whereas natural agriculture is an extremely low-cost farming method completely molding with local biodiversity. Hence, natural farming is a better alternative.

What are the benefits of natural farming? Natural farming, if performed effectively, can confer the following benefits:

- Restoring soil health: Natural farming is beneficial for the restoration of soil fertility, improving soil microbial biodiversity, reducing soil pollution, and promoting overall soil health in the long run. Cover cropping and mulching help halt soil erosion. Better soil health leads to higher crop production in the long run.
- Protecting the health of food growers and consumers: As no agrochemicals (insecticides, pesticides, herbicides etc.) are used, there is reduced risk to the health of the farmers. Moreover, the food products of natural farming are full of vitality and are safe for human health. Natural farming is the ultimate way to provide safe, healthy, and nutritious food for consumers.
- Protection of environmental health and restoration of the ecosystem: The soil of naturally cultivated farms can store carbon keeping it from contributing to the worsening problem of global warming, and thereby natural farming helps mitigate and/or reduce greenhouse gas emissions,

restoring environmental health, avoiding water pollution (by reduced use of agrochemicals in soils), and promoting farmland ecosystems. The integration of livestock in the farming system plays an important role in natural farming.

- More benefits to farmers and reduced risk: Provided a farmer has cow dung and cow urine, there are no other input or energy costs. There is no other cost other than the hard work of the farmer. Seed or planting materials for many crops are also available to the farmers very cheaply or free of cost through some government schemes. The farmer also saves the seeds for the next crop from the produce from his field, so that he does not even have to buy the seeds.

The reduction of dependency on purchased inputs helps the smallholder farmers to reduce their cost of cultivation, and thereby agricultural systems are more profitable. Mulching being a major practice in natural farming helps improve water use efficiency. Labour costs are also low as there is no ploughing or other labour-intensive activity involved. On the other hand, food grains grown from natural farming are sold at a higher price. Thus, the net benefit to farmers is higher in natural farming. Because the financial investment in natural farming is almost nil, there are fewer risks in natural farming.

- Economic benefits to consumers and government: Consumers get food products at cheaper prices as the overall cost of cultivation in natural farming is low. Also, by arresting the growing need for fertilizers, natural farming reduces the subsidy burden on the government. Moreover, natural farming provides scope for raising employment and rural development as it can be performed with the least possible training and resources.
- Sustainability and resilience: Natural farming is the best way to support the rejuvenation of farmlands. Overall, natural farming is a viable practice, which is both economically sound and environmentally sustainable. The changes in soil structure with the help of organic carbon, no/low tillage, and plant diversity are helpful for the plants to

survive against weather extremes such as droughts and floods, and wind damage during cyclones.

- Way forward
- Natural farming, which is also termed as Prakriti Krishi, cow-based natural farming, shashwat kheti, chemical-free agriculture etc., that does not involve any external chemical or organic fertilizers helps avoid injudicious, indiscriminate, and excessive use of agrochemicals, and thereby protects soil, human health, and the environment from the harmful and toxic chemicals. Natural farming involves no tillage, no weeding, no pesticide, no fertilizer. No doubt, natural farming is a new dimension for sustainability and enhances farmers' income.

- There is a need to develop the value chain of natural farm products, introduction of the natural farming curriculum in universities, and develop farmer-friendly alternative certification systems for natural farm produce. There is also a need to upskill agriculture extension workers on sustainable agricultural practices.

- There is a need to focus on promoting natural farming in rainfed areas beyond the Gangetic basin since rainfed regions use only a third of the fertilizers per hectare compared to the areas where irrigation is prevalent.

- More research needs to be conducted to bridge the knowledge gaps by comparing relative yields and the performance of different agroecological practices. There needs to be a national action plan to promote natural farming. The expensive and complex process of certification for organic produce (which smaller farmers cannot afford) needs to be simplified. Overall, natural farming needs to be encouraged through training programs, input support, certification, value addition, and innovations.

**Junior Scientist (Soil Science)**  
**Regional Research and Technology Transfer Station (RRTTS), Mahisapat, Dhenkanal, Odisha University of Agriculture and Technology (OUAT)**  
**Corresponding email: dashprava111@gmail.com**

# Hard work vs Luck



In the era when science seems to be reaching and proving its heights of development, almost all spheres of life seem to be influenced and governed by it, even in this many people can be seen saying and believing that miracles do happen. We can find people around us who believe in the miracles of Tantriks or Babas. But apart from this, 'Miracle' is finding place in a different way on another front.

Miracles through science. However, even in the past, science was behind the miracles that happened. The problem was that science was kept behind the scenes in those miracles. Actually, it is necessary to work hard to make a place in the world of science. Then many miracles can be done. On the other hand, the question also needs to be answered as to what extent the knowledge and miracles of science have benefitted humanity. The current example is artificial intelligence, with which reports of trouble have started coming. There is confusion about whether this human product with artificial intelligence can make or break the fortunes of a

person with natural intelligence. what is Do we work hard because of our luck or good luck or is it our luck or does continuous hard work create our luck? In this context, the words of a famous football player come to mind. When asked if the goals he scored were a result of luck, he said, "Absolutely, the more I practice, the luckier I become." If we get wealth, fame, job, high position, i.e. any kind of success, it is associated with good luck. Every child is like a little soul. We are born in this world with different kinds of possibilities. They are full of energy. As they develop, different types of family environment, financial situation and education

develop their ideas. Their home is the first real school of their life. It has also been seen that in many cases hard work remains in vain and how many fortunes are changed by family, political, religious or other types of arrangements. Timely awareness, cleverness and agility lead to success. It can be assumed that just by working hard it is not enough, it is more important to work smart and alert. In such a situation, the style of working hard is very important. Life's circumstances are the greatest teachers. She teaches a lot. It depends on how seriously we learn. Even successful people have 24 hours. Their

fate does not give them even a moment more. Whatever they do, they do it within this time limit. That means they make good use of their time. They learn to do this from their parents and the parents teach them what they have learned. Keep adding positive experiences of your life to that learning. Those who for some reason are unable to do so, blame their luck. In fact, they are unable to control the pulse of time. They might have internalized this because of their circumstances and family situations. If some person, situation, event, sermon or motivational book changes their perspective, they can get back on the path to

success. Life gives opportunities to everyone. The question is whether those opportunities were identified and accepted and the desired efforts were made. Worked as hard as was necessary. Then there was imprudence, delay or mistake in recognizing the opportunity and the opportunity slipped out of our hands. It is also necessary to analyze this. Nowadays, this trend is also gaining momentum that the future winners in every field should get the child born at the auspicious time prescribed by the family or by a famous astrologer, so that the new born is also born with excellent and wonderful luck. Now most of the working

mothers do not want to endure the pain before childbirth. They try to take medicines from the hospital, then the child enters the world through operation. Due to this, the parents also feel worldly safe. In the Indian environment, those who suggest concrete solutions for making fortune play a very active role. It is also interesting that there are many expensive ways to make a fortune. When a person gets frustrated after working hard as per his wish and does not get the desired results, then he becomes fatalistic and starts following these paths out of compulsion. He does not compare his efforts with the hard work and tricks of others, hence

there is an unpleasant taste of frustration and disappointment in his life. Khichdi keeps cooking 1 Politics has been seen to play a very active role in maintaining fortunes. Politics controls the fate of voters in our country. They are being given a morsel of food and the fate of the rulers is being spoiled. In this, hard work and efficient management of political skills play a serious role. The path of hard work is difficult, but it is the solution to every difficulty. There is no substitute for hard work. If you work hard, you may not be able to change your destiny, but you can make and change your life.

**Educational Columnist Malout, Punjab**





**Indian Coast Guard (ICG) and Jindal Steel & Power (JSP) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for the supply of indigenous marine grade steel to enhance the indigenous content in shipbuilding, in New Delhi**

## BSP Chief's Action Against Nephew Sparks Mayawati-Akhilesh Yadav Slugfest

**New Delhi(KCN):** The decades-old rivalry between the Samajwadi Party and Bahujan Samaj Party, on the backburner for long, has flared up again after Mayawati's disciplinary measures against "political heir" Akash Anand. The 29-year-old has been divested of all posts and responsibilities, including that of "successor" and subjected to a very public snub. "I declared Shri Akash Anand as the National Coordinator and successor, but in the larger interest of the party and the movement, he is being separated from both these

important responsibilities until he attains full maturity," Mayawati tweeted yesterday. But as media focus turned to the BSP chief, who has kept a low profile for long, Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav lashed out. The BSP, he indicted, has lost the plot and the party's "internal" changes are too little too late. "The BSP is not seen winning even a single seat, because its traditional supporters are voting for India Alliance this time to save the constitution and reservation," read a rough

translation of a long post on X in Hindi by Mr Yadav. "The BSP is taking this as a failure of its organisation. That is why its top leadership is making such a big change... but the game has gone out of BSP's hands... When the party has not won even a single seat in the last three phases despite being in its area of influence, then there is no hope for the remaining four," Mr Yadav wrote. There was also an appeal for voters. "In such a situation, we appeal to all voters that you don't waste your vote and vote for candidates of India Alliance who are

fighting to save the Constitution," he added. Ms Mayawati lost no time in retaliating in a series of posts on X, formerly Twitter. "It would be better if the extremely anti-Dalit SP does not comment or worry about what is going on in the BSP organization. Instead, the SP leadership should only worry about the condition of their own family and the candidates of the Yadav community who have been fielded in the elections because the condition of all of them is very bad," read one of her tweets.

## Author credit to Dr. Laxman Sahoo

**Cuttack (KCN):** Dr. Laxman Sahoo, Principal of Cuttack Mahanadi Vihar Women's Degree College and a distinguished researcher and columnist in various prominent daily newspapers, has been honored as a regular writer by daily newspaper Pragatibadi. In the creative evening of Pragmatic literature festival organized by Pragmatics, His Excellency Governor of Chhattisgarh Mr. Vishva Bhusan Harichandan, Hindi poet and critic Professor Jitendra Srivastava,



Educationist Professor Dhaneshwar Sahu, Sculptor Padmashri Vinod Maharana were present and Dr. Laxman Sahoo was honored with flowers, wreaths and letters. For this, Dr. Sahoo expressed his gratitude to the Chairman Shashwat Bala, Director Monalisa

Bala, Executive Editor Virupaksha Tripathi and Vanirada Berg.

Dr. Laxman Sahoo is well known as a successful author and columnist but he is also a successful novelist. His stories have been widely published in the Sunday literary pages of various newspapers and

magazines. His short story "God is coming" has been translated into Bengali language and has won the second place in Bengali short story book and has brought fame to Odisha. While researching on ancient to modern literature, his written stories, poems, discussion articles and features on current affairs are being published in various magazines and daily newspapers. His book 'Srastha Srushti Drasta' of Odiya language literature has gained great popularity among

# India Supports A Homeland For Palestinians Eventually: S Jaishankar

**New Delhi(KCN):** Referring to the conflict in the Middle East and the Israel-Palestine issue, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Wednesday said that eventually, India supports a homeland for the Palestinians and is public about its stand. While speaking at Gargi College on Vishwa Bandhu Bharat, S Jaishankar said, "So you have a very tense, very complicated situation involving Israel, involving the Palestinians, involving many of the Arab countries, the Gulf monarchies, involving Iran. There was an exchange of the

Iranians and the Israelis a few days ago, they fired on each other." "Now, look at how a Vishwa Bandhu would approach this situation. We were very clear when Israel was, on October 7, when the terrorists attacked Israel that this was terrorism. We took a clear stance on it. When Israel responded, we also took a position that, whenever any military response takes place, it is very important that civilian lives are protected. And if you are displacing civilians, so they are no longer in their homes, you have to

give some kind of humanitarian corridor out there. We also have, when Israel and Iran started firing at each other," S Jaishankar said. In his address at Gargi College EAM Jaishankar also shared that, on the Prime Minister's instructions, he personally contacted the foreign ministers of the involved parties, expressing regional concerns and urging restraint. "I personally called up the two foreign ministers there on the Prime Minister's instructions and basically told them saying, look, the whole region is worried. I mean, we urge you,



don't go forward on this. And today, actually while we are doing all of this, and by the way, in terms of the Middle East, we support eventually a homeland for the Palestinians and we are very public about that as well," said S Jaishankar.

## Sam Pitroda Quits After Landing Congress In New Mess Over Racist Comments

**New Delhi(KCN):** Sam Pitroda, veteran Congressman and the party's overseas unit chief, stepped down from the post this evening amid a huge political row over his controversial remarks that came amid the massive seven-phase election. Calling his comments racist, leaders of the BJP, including Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has accused the Congress of pursuing divisive practices. The announcement about Mr Pitroda came in a terse post on X from the party's communications-in-charge Jairam Ramesh. "Mr. Sam Pitroda has decided to step down as Chairman of the Indian Overseas Congress of his own accord. The Congress President has



accepted his decision," the post read. In an exclusive interview with The Statesman, Mr Pitroda had described India as a "diverse country... where people on East look like Chinese, people on West look like Arab, people on North look like maybe White and people in South look like Africa". The Congress, still firefighting over Mr Pitroda's earlier comment on inheritance

tax, found itself in the middle of a fresh row that posed a challenge to allies like MK Stalin's DMK. The party had immediately distanced itself from Mr Pitroda's remark. "The analogies drawn by Mr. Sam Pitroda in a podcast to illustrate India's diversity are most unfortunate and unacceptable. The Indian National Congress completely dissociates itself from these

analogies," read a post from the party's communications in-charge Jairam Ramesh. Out-of-turn comments by Mr Pitroda have proved a challenge for the Congress amid the election. Earlier this month, his comment on the inheritance tax in the United States as an example of "...new policies so concentration of wealth can be prevented". The Congress, he had said, always helps people at the bottom of the economic pyramid. It had drawn a fierce attack from the BJP. PM Modi had remarked that if elected, the Congress would redistribute the personal wealth of people among "infiltrators" and won't even spare the mangalsutras of women.

## People Are Breathing In Cancer-Causing Chemicals In Their Cars, Study Finds

**New Delhi, (KCN):** People are breathing in cancer-causing chemicals when they're in their car, a new research has found. For the study, published in Environmental Science & Technology, researchers analysed the cabin air of 101 electric, gas and hybrid cars with a model year between 2015 and 2022. They found that 99% of cars contained a flame retardant called TCIPP, which is under investigation by the US National Toxicology Program as a potential carcinogen. Most cars also had two more flame retardants, TDCIPP and TCEP, which are considered carcinogenic. These flame retardants are linked to neurological and reproductive harms as well, scientists said. "Considering the average driver spends about an hour in the car every day, this is a significant public health issue," said Rebecca Hoehn, lead researcher and toxicology scientist at Duke



University, according to People. "It's particularly concerning for drivers with longer commutes as well as child passengers, who breathe more air pound for pound than adults," she added. The study found that the levels of toxic flame retardants were highest in the summer as heat increases the release of chemicals from the car materials. The researchers said that the source of the cancer-causing compounds in the cabin air is seat foam. Car manufacturers add the chemicals to seat foam and other materials

to meet an "outdated" flammability standard with no proven fire-safety benefit, they explained. Patrick Morrison, director of health, safety and medicine for the International Association of Fire Fighters, said, "Firefighters are concerned that flame retardants contribute to their very high cancer rates. Filling products with these harmful chemicals does little to prevent fires for most uses and instead makes the blazes smokier and more toxic for victims, and especially for first

responders". "I urge NHTSA (US National Highway Traffic Safety Administration) to update their flammability standard to be met without flame retardant chemicals inside vehicles," he added. In the study, researchers also insisted that these toxic flame retardants serve no real benefit inside vehicles. Lydia Jahl, study author and senior scientist at the Green Science Policy Institute said people might be able to reduce their exposure to the toxic flame retardants by opening car windows and parking in the shade or in garages. "But what's really needed is reducing the amount of flame retardants being added to cars in the first place. Commuting to work shouldn't come with a cancer risk, and children shouldn't breathe in chemicals that can harm their brains on their way to school," she added.



# Saffron Star Speakers On Move

**Bhubaneswar(KCN):** With the nearing of first phase polling day, the BJP is leaving no stone unturned for campaigning in favour of its candidates. The saffron party has lined up its star campaigners starting from PM Narendra Modi to Home Minister Amit Shah and a train of national level leaders. The Prime Minister has already held rallies in Berhampur and Nabarangpur Lok Sabha seats and is

scheduled for more campaigning before the first round of polls in Odisha on May 13. Shri Modi is all set to hold a roadshow in Bhubaneswar on May 10 and possibly address an election rally in Bolangir on May 11. Addressing a press conference here, Odisha BJP vice-president Golak Mohapatra informed that Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai will arrive in the state on



May 8 on a two-day visit and address public meetings in Nabarangpur and Koraput. Assam CM Himanta Biswa Sarma is also slated to address public meetings in different parts of the

State, he said. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and Union Minister Nitin Gadkari are also scheduled to address public meetings, highlighting issues such as highway projects and the need

for a 'double-engine' Government in Odisha. "Gadkari ji will explain reasons why a double-engine government is needed in Odisha which lacks basic development due to non-

cooperation of BJD, there have been hindrances in the development of highways," said Mohapatra. Furthermore, the BJP has enlisted actress-turned-politician Hema Malini as one of its star campaigners, expected to join the campaign trail in Berhampur. At his Berhampur and Nabarangpur poll rallies, PM has clearly explained how the BJD government has failed to provide basic

amenities, including drinking water to its people in Odisha. Hence, the Prime Minister asserted that there is a need for a BJP's double-engine Government to speed up developmental works here, the BJP leader added. While the BJP rallies its national leaders and ministers for campaigning in Odisha, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik and 5T Chairman V K Pandian have been actively touring the State and

campaigning for party candidates. Shri Pandian held roadshows in different parts of the State and attracting large number of women and youth, said a party spokesperson. The Congress is lagging behind in the campaigning. So far, Rahul Gandhi has addressed only a single rally in Cuttack district. Though Gandhi was scheduled to address a public meeting in Rayagada, but, he cancelled the tour at the last moment.

## Poverty haunts Nagada villages



**Jajpur(KCN):** Nagada villages in forested areas under Chingudipal panchayat in this district shot into the limelight in 2016 after 19 children died due to malnutrition. Since then approximately eight years have elapsed, but the woes continue for the inhabitants of these villages including children. Sources said that due to scarcity of food many kids from these villages migrate to other cities to earn a living. The residents of Nagada villages are mostly tribals from the primitive Juang community. The Odisha government had launched several schemes for development of infrastructure, poverty

alleviation and healthcare facilities for the villages after the tragedy. It had sanctioned Rs 23 crore for construction of roads, setting up of drinking water facilities and power supply to the villages. However, poverty still continues to haunt the villagers. Sources said that this year, 28 tribals, mostly minor boys and girls left for Balasore and Bhubaneswar to work as daily wagers. They took the help of middlemen to get jobs. Bata Padhan, the father of one of the kids, confirmed the development. He said that the minor girls and boys migrated to other places after they were promised salaries of Rs 7,000 per month.

However, now they are being paid less than the amount agreed upon and are being forced to work for 12-14 hours a day. A minor boy who managed to come back to his village narrated his ordeal. "We were forced to work for more than 12 hours a day without a break and at times sans food. When we asked for our wages, we were only paid Rs 3,000 for two months. I had a chance to run away and come back to my village," he stated. Despite Sukinda Valley being rich in minerals, majority of the people living in the locality lead a life of poverty. This is because the companies extracting minerals rarely employ locals and tribals. They deprive the

natives of the area by bringing in people from outside, locals alleged. Hence the residents of Nagada villages languish in poverty, sources pointed out. "Every five years we vote for our representative to the state government, but nothing really changes for us," said a villager on condition of anonymity. District officials said that the state government has spent close to Rs 100 crore for various development works in the area. In reality, however, no transformation has come in the life of the Juang community. To compound their troubles, they have lost their traditional occupation of collecting minor forest produce for a living as trees have been felled indiscriminately. Even though they get their monthly quota of free rice from the state government, it is of not much use to them. Efforts to talk to Sukinda BDO Abhishek Swain proved unsuccessful as he did not respond to calls from this correspondent.

## UCCC serves energy drinks to traffic cops




**Bhubaneswar(KCN):** In a gesture of appreciation, the Utkal Cine Chamber of Commerce (UCCC) offered electrolyte drinks to the traffic cops in the City Tuesday for sincerely discharging their duties in the scorching summer.

UCCC secretary N Gangadhar Reddy also sent a letter to Police Commissioner Sanjeeb Panda applauding the traffic police department for their dedicated service. "As the scorching summer sun beats down upon our City, we are

acutely aware of the challenging conditions under which our traffic police officers diligently carry out their duties. With temperatures soaring up to 43 degrees Celsius, the task of regulating traffic and ensuring public safety becomes exceptionally

demanding and physically taxing," the letter read. "Despite these adverse conditions, the unwavering commitment and professionalism exhibited by the traffic police force in managing the flow of vehicles, enforcing traffic regulations, and safeguarding the lives of citizens are truly commendable," it said. "The Utkal Cine Chamber of Commerce would like to express our gratitude by offering electrolyte drinks to the cops who manage the traffic. We believe that staying hydrated is essential for maintaining their health and well-being, especially during these sweltering summer months," Reddy said in the letter.



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# Prawaas 4.0 Accelerates Towards Multimodal Transport, Empowering Public Transport Initiatives'

**Bengaluru, (KCN):** The Bus and Car Operators Confederation of India (BOCI) today announced the much-anticipated 4th Edition of Prawaas 4.0, India's flagship Multimodal Transport Show, slated to be held from August 29-31 at the Bangalore International Exhibition Centre (BIEC). With the overarching theme of "Safe, Smart, and Sustainable Passenger Mobility," Prawaas 4.0 is dedicated to bringing together the entire spectrum of multimodal transport stakeholders. This includes manufacturers of buses and cars, fleet owners, as well as partners in metro and LEVs from all 36

States and Union Territories of India. Acknowledging the vital role of efficient public transport in realizing the vision of "Viksit Bharat" by the Honorable PM, Prawaas 4.0 advocates for increased utilization of public transport. Such a shift not only alleviates road congestion but also aligns with sustainability objectives. Karnataka State Bus Owners Association, Karnataka State Tourism Private Transport Owners Association, Karnataka State Travel Operators Association, Karnataka Tourist Motor Cab Maxi Owners Welfare Association, Bangalore



Tourist Taxi Owners Association are the proud Host Associations for Prawaas 4.0. Today's curtain raiser event provided a glimpse into the exciting array of activities planned for Prawaas 4.0. Esteemed dignitaries such as Shri Ramalinga Reddy, Honorable Minister for Transport and Muzrai, Government of Karnataka, graced the

occasion along with notable personalities including Shri Jagdeo Singh Khalsa, Chairman, BOCI; Shri Prasanna Patwardhan, President, BOCI; Shri Alah Baksh Afzal, General Secretary, BOCI; Shri Harsh Kotak, Treasurer, BOCI and Shri Jagdish

Patankar, Executive Chairman, MM Activ, the Event Curators. Prawaas 4.0 is a ground-breaking expedition towards multi-modal transport, where it will lead the charge in shaping the future of mobility. The conference will host insightful dialogues, the

exhibition will spotlight cutting-edge trends with a display of industry-driven innovations and technologies, and across a myriad of categories, the prestigious awards ceremony will recognize exceptional contributions and talents within the industry. Together, these

components form a comprehensive platform unveiling the roadmap to excellence in mobility. In this edition of Prawaas, significant emphasis will be placed on the School Bus segment, Tourism, Electric Vehicles (EV), and Metro systems. As we explore the future of mobility, Prawaas stands as a beacon, guiding the way forward towards sustainable, efficient, and inclusive transportation solutions. Tata Motors, redbus, Eberspaecher Suetrak, abhibus, VECV, Ashok Leyland, JBM, Repose, Bitla, Mahindra School Bus Division, Urjia Bus, MG Motor, Valeo,

Trans ACNR, Valeo Motherson and more corporates are likely to participate in the event. Prawaas 4.0 is poised to be an unparalleled convergence, bringing together over 100+ expert speakers, 200+ leading exhibitors, 1500+ industry delegates, and 6000+ bus and car operators, with an expected attendance of over 10,000 business visitors. Don't miss this extraordinary opportunity to engage, network, and drive innovation in the realm of passenger mobility. For more details, visit [www.prawaas.com](http://www.prawaas.com)

## ECoR GM INSPECTED BOUDH-CHAMPAPUR RAILWAY SECTION OF KHURDA ROAD-BALANGIR RAIL LINE PROJECT:

**Bhubaneswar, (KCN):** East Coast Railway General Manager (in-charge) Shri Mohes Kumar Behera inspected the Boudh-Champapur Railway Section of Khurda Road-Balangir Rail Line project, today. During the inspection Shri Behera taken stock of the progress of the construction work. Reviewing the progress, Shri Behera advised railway officials to take necessary steps for timely completion of the project and passenger amenities at the proposed Stations. Out of the total length of 301 Kms of this project, altogether, 152.805 kms rail



line work has already been commissioned. The Railways has been constructing this line from both the sides, i.e., from Khurda Road and Balangir for early completion of the

project. 105.8 Kms from Khurda Road to Daspalla and 47 Kms from Balangir to Sonepur have already been commissioned. Construction of rail line in Khurda Road-Balangir

project is going on in war footing basis. Railway line between Sonepur-Purunapani-Jharamunda a stretch of 22 KMs in Boudh District has been laid. Engine rolling and

testing has also been done in the above section, successfully. Apart from this, construction work between Jharamunda & Champapur is in full-swing.

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

**Bhubaneswar:** To serve the needs of premium households who want the next generational connectivity and entertainment experience, Bharti Airtel ("Airtel"), India's premier communications solutions provider, has once again raised the bar in the home broadband segment with the launch of three new all-in-one plans built for the evolving entertainment needs of today's connected homes.

Vir Inder Nath, CEO – Homes, Bharti Airtel had this to say: "Our new plans are built for India's emerging entertainment needs. Through these bundle offers we plan to offer our discerning customers great value, convenience and unlock a multi-faceted digital experience."

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

## EXCEPTIONAL EXPERIENCES AWAIT SINGAPORE AIRLINES CUSTOMERS

**Singapore:** Airlines (SIA) today unveiled its all-new flagship SilverKris and KrisFlyer Gold lounges at Singapore Changi Airport Terminal 3, following a S\$50 million re-design, upgrade, and expansion project. This will further enhance the on-ground customer experience at the Airline's main hub, and comes as the demand for international air travel from and through Singapore takes off once again.

The Private Room, the First Class section of the SilverKris Lounge, the Business Class section of the SilverKris Lounge, and the KrisFlyer Gold Lounge can collectively accommodate around 1,150 customers within

their 6,100 square-metres, translating to 30% more seats and space. This also doubles the capacity that was available during the pandemic while the upgrading works were going on. The Airline has created a sanctuary that has been thoughtfully designed to enhance the comfort and convenience of diverse groups of travellers, and meet their evolving needs in the coming years. Customers will be able to enjoy world-class products and services, as well as enticing food and beverage options, around the clock at the lounges before their flight.

Mr Goh Choon Phong, Chief Executive Officer, Singapore Airlines, said: "Extensive customer

engagement and research have gone into the design of the new SilverKris and KrisFlyer Gold lounges. Customers will enjoy thoughtfully curated product offerings and experience the signature Singapore Airlines hospitality, all within a comfortable and restful environment, ensuring that they are refreshed and ready for their journey.

"Opening these lounges at this time signals our commitment to SIA's premium brand and growth strategy. It reinforces our position as Changi Airport's anchor airline, and reflects our confidence in Singapore's future as a pre-eminent global air hub."

## WHEC recognizes Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham as excellence worldwide in Gender Equality

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

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

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

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

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



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## 'Swing at 80% instead of 100%' - Ponting's advice to Fraser-McGurk

**New Delhi:** For someone who tuned into the IPL game on Tuesday, it must have been hard to believe that Jake Fraser-McGurk wasn't a first-choice pick for an IPL side. That someone who came in the tournament as a replacement for Lungi Ngidi now has the IPL record of most number of fifties within 20 balls. He's only 22, holds the record for the fastest List A century off 29 balls and, contrary to popular expectation, is not a part of Australia's T20 World Cup squad. But he continues to flourish against the white ball in the middle and some of it might have to do with a piece of advice he recently received from his DC coach Ricky Ponting.

"What he's said to me that's really stuck with me," Fraser-McGurk told the Willow Talk podcast. "[Ponting said] I hit the ball a lot further when I



swing at 80 percent instead of 100 percent. "You just have to find the middle and it'll go for six'. I was like, 'OK that's good', because when I swing harder my head moves. "I did look at the footage of all the games I've been playing apart from the IPL and he's right, when I swing quite hard, my head is moving as I train on the ball.

"He is just someone who can pick up those little things that you're not going to notice...it absolutely blew my mind."

Fraser-McGurk also said that he was "not bothered" by the World Cup non-selection, arguing that he didn't feel like he had "earned" it yet and that his time would come.

"It didn't really bother

me a hell of a lot because I wasn't in this position to feel like I've earned that yet. World Cup cricket is a lot different to IPL cricket," Fraser-McGurk said. "To be here [in India] now, I don't even really have the words for it. I don't really understand how it's happened so quickly... but for it to happen so quickly, it's been nice. "You've got David

Warner, our best opener in three formats, you've got Travis Head, who is lighting it up over here and has lit it up the past 18 months, and Mitchell Marsh is the same, and he's also the captain... I can't really see myself batting at five or six because we're tired of there with Tim David, Cam Green, those sorts of guys. The way I think about it is that's fine. There's hopefully going to be more time for that."

How has the IPL experience been for him? "It's like an AFL grand final every game," he said. "It's just immense, the atmosphere is crazy. I think it's almost too loud where it doesn't even bother you when you play. I think I get more nervous playing a Shield game when there's 200 people there than I do playing an IPL game with 75,000 there in Ahmedabad."



**Kolkata:** The flight time between Lucknow and Kolkata is just about 100 minutes but Kolkata Knight Riders took just about 24 hours to reach their destination, in between taking a night halt in Varanasi. "Our manager and logistics team did a tremendous job," KKR CEO Venky Mysore said. The delay and detour were caused by squalls which stormed Kolkata on Monday evening preventing landing of flight at the Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose International Airport. As

a result of the disruption caused by the weather. The Knight Riders' flight, which took off in Lucknow around 5.45 pm on Monday evening, had to be diverted to Guwahati. At around 11 PM, the chartered flight left Guwahati for Kolkata only to be directed to Varanasi where it landed at around 1.15 am. After a night's halt in the holy city and a visit to Shri Kashi Vishwanath temple by a few players, the players reached Kolkata almost 24 hours later, at around 5 pm on

Tuesday.  
"The mood in the camp is fine and we have a game only on May 11, so the extra travel was not a major stress," said a team official. With 16 points from 11 games, the Knight Riders are almost assured of a berth in the play-offs.  
They next play Mumbai Indians before flying to Ahmedabad for an away game, against Gujarat Titans, on May 13. They round up their league engagements in Guwahati with a game against Rajasthan Royals on May 19.

## Champions League: Marco Reus relishes return to Wembley at end of his Dortmund career

**New Delhi:** Borussia Dortmund veteran Marco Reus said "nobody expected us to make it" after his team defeated Paris Saint-Germain on Tuesday to advance to the Champions League final at Wembley. Dortmund will return to the site of the 2013 Champions League final, where Jurgen Klopp's team lost to German rivals Bayern Munich. Dortmund won this year's semi-final second leg 1-0 at the Parc des Princes courtesy of a header by Mats Hummels, who also played for Dortmund in the 2013 final. BVB

advanced 2-0 on aggregate, having won the first leg with the same result.

The 34-year-old, who joined Dortmund in 2012 after spending a decade as a youth player, will leave after the season with two German Cups but neither Bundesliga nor Champions League titles. "Indescribable. After more than 10 years, I am in the final with Borussia again," said Reus, who came on as a substitute on Tuesday.

"Ousmane (Dembele) and Achraf (Hakimi) brought a tremendous amount of pace and we suffered a lot." "How we

won the game, no one will ask tomorrow. Shots against the post won't matter tomorrow. What counts is that Borussia Dortmund is in the final again. Nobody expected this. It's just incredible." Despite relying on some help from the goal frame, Dortmund's defensive duo of Hummels and Nico Schlotterbeck effectively contained PSG's star forward Kylian Mbappe. The showdown at Wembley on June 1 will mark Dortmund's third appearance in a Champions League final, having clinched the title in 1997.

# Missing for decades, Maradona's rediscovered Golden Ball trophy set to be auctioned in Paris

**New Delhi:** Diego Maradona's Golden Ball trophy from the 1986 World Cup has resurfaced. The award, which had been missing for decades, will be auctioned in Paris next month, the Aguttes house said Tuesday. Maradona, who died in 2020 at age 60, was awarded the trophy for his scintillating play at the tournament, where he captained Argentina in its 3-2 win over West Germany in the final in Mexico City. Before that, he scored the controversial "Hand of God" goal and the "Goal of the Century" in a 2-1 win over England in the quarterfinals.

The auction house said it expects the trophy "to fetch millions due to its uniqueness." Maradona received the award given to the tournament's best player - at a ceremony at the Lido cabaret on the Champs-Élysées in 1986. It subsequently disappeared, giving rise to rumors. Some say it was lost during a wild poker game, or sold to pay off debts, Aguttes said.

Others said Maradona had stored it in a safe in a Naples bank that was robbed by local gangsters in 1989, when he played in the Italian league. According to the story told by a



minutes later, he weaved through England's midfield and defense and then past goalkeeper Peter Shilton for what FIFA later declared the greatest goal in World Cup history.

"To say that this World Cup had it all would be an understatement ... it was also, and above all, the tournament where Diego Maradona really showed the world what he could do with his feet, and even with his hands," said François Thierry, a sports expert at Aguttes.

Bidders will be asked to deposit 150,000 euros (\$161,000) to participate in the June 6 auction.

# Samson vs Pant: Who's ahead in the World Cup race?

**New Delhi:** Rohit Sharma would have kept a close eye on the proceedings at the Arun Jaitley Stadium on Tuesday, for reasons beyond just the usual IPL math at the business end of the season. For the first time since sifting through half a dozen options for the upcoming T20 World Cup, both of India's selected wicketkeepers were in an unsaid shoot-out. Less than eight weeks ago, Sanju Samson was probably among the lowest rung of the pecking order for a World Cup berth - his tremendously underwhelming record of translating promise to performance at the international stage the primary reason. Perhaps even lower than his Rajasthan Royals teammate, and India's latest Test glovesman, Dhruv Jurel. India's continued investment in

Jitesh Sharma and Ishan Kishan, albeit alternatively, suggested the two had emerged as the front-runners in Rishabh Pant's absence. This was obviously contingent on two situations ahead of IPL 2024. Firstly, in what capacity would Pant return to competitive cricket after 451 days on the sidelines from a near-death experience, and secondly, if KL Rahul was willing to sacrifice his opener's slot and audition in the middle-order.

A fortnight from the start of IPL, Pant was passed fit as a keeper-batter and his progressively improving numbers on the field quickly made him a first-choice again. Jitesh flattered to deceive, while Rahul and an out-of-favour Kishan, in their current role, were deemed surplus to India's requirements. As such, Samson leapfrogged all

competition. But his maiden World Cup call-up - after nine years since international debut and four years of being exclusively attached to the second-string side only - aren't purely due Samson's rich returns. There's a lot more to those numbers that worked in Kerala wicketkeeper's favour, and may perhaps even see him pip Pant for a spot in India's starting XI. A persistent issue with Samson in the past years was consistency. Samson would more often than not kickstart every new season with a bang but his numbers would fizzle out over the course of the two months of IPL. However, this year, he's not just close to beating his previous best tally (in 2021) to make it his most successful year in the competition, he's also currently third in the race for the Orange Cap. Samson's maturity has



shone through, not just in a leader's capacity but also in batting; his rate of converting starts into knocks of 50+ stands at more than 45%, with five half-centuries in 11 matches so far. His average has seen a major upswing since 2020 and all this while also upping his strike-rate to a staggering 163.54. Pant is just on the periphery of the season's top-10 run-scorers, with a tally of 413 himself, which is equally impressive considering

he's played his 12 innings at no. 4 or lower while Samson has walked in to bat in PowerPlays in all but two of the 11 outings. But here's where Samson has steered clear of Pant. The southpaw's big-hitting prowess against spin was what made him an ideal fit in the middle-order but in IPL 2024, Pant has had underwhelming returns against the slower bowlers. His strike-rate against the ilk has dropped to about 115, while he's been troubled

by legspinners constantly, getting dismissed by them in five out of 10 times. Samson, on the other hand, is yet to lose his wicket to a spinner in IPL 2024.

At the backend, Samson has taken on pace with aplomb too. In fact, a noticeable shift in the RR captain's approach to batting, that head coach Kumar Sangakkara later addressed is a conscious effort, has been his ability to keep the intent going once set. Samson has made out of powerplays seven times this year, and only been dismissed thrice then. At the same time, he's upped the ante for his team as evidenced by his progressively spiking strike-rates through the three phases. Sangakkara, RR head coach and Director of Cricket, diplomatically side-stepped the question on the toss-up between Pant vs Samson, but did give a peek into what's

clicked for his team's captain this year in particular.

"The biggest thing about this season for him, he's having a lot of clarity about the way he should bat," said Sangakkara, who is in his fourth year in-charge at the Royals.

"There are certain stages of the game that he seems to lose a little bit of concentration, which we've addressed from past seasons. He's really bought into it. He's really bought into his role, not just as a batsman but also when he captains just as a batter. [He's] kind of changed his mindset about the importance of rest and recovery, rather than training all the time and being tired mentally and physically. So he's really enjoying that.

"And the rest is just his exceptional ability. He's a very special player and when he is fresh and focused, there's nothing that he really can't do."

think his qualities are exceptional. He is a very humble, grounded guy. Not much on social media, he likes his privacy. He really cares for the rest of the group. So those are great qualities to have apart from his from his talent and skill. So, I think, he'd be exceptional in that group going into the World Cup.

"Again, he's just exceptionally talented. High pace doesn't bother him, turn doesn't bother him. It's just the case of focusing and trusting the areas that he scores in and really keeping the intent going. It's not just about the sixes and fours, it's also about making sure a good ball goes for one or two. But again, you know, he can play any shot in the book. He's got great power to clear the boundaries. And you know, he's just exceptionally gifted against spin," the former Sri Lankan captain added.