

## Peaceful conclusion to Durga Puja festivities as idols immersed

**Cuttack/Bhubaneswar, Oct 14(KCN):** As the five-day Durga Puja celebrations concluded peacefully across Odisha, the idol immersion took place under tight security in the twin cities of Cuttack and Bhubaneswar on Monday.

Cuttack, a major hub for Durga Puja festivities, saw all routes leading to Devi Gada on the left embankment of the Kathajodi River bustling with activity as the immersion proceeded smoothly without any incidents.

This year, Bhubaneswar hosted 187 puja pandals, while Cuttack featured 170, said sources.

The clay idols of Maa Durga, accompanied by beautifully adorned tableaux, were paraded in grand processions to temporary ponds for immersion, all under the watchful eye of a significant police presence.

Notably, procession participants in both cities chose to forgo vehicles for live music or DJs, adhering to an agreement with local authorities to

maintain the mantra "No Liquor and No DJ" during the immersion. This decision encouraged organizers to embrace traditional music and dance, enhancing the festive atmosphere.

In Cuttack, over 20 idols are set to be immersed at Devigada, with lorries transporting the idols from various puja pandals to the Kathajodi River, accompanied by lively music and dance.

To address the low water levels, three temporary ponds have been created along the riverbank, with pump sets on standby if needed.

Meanwhile, the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation has set up five large temporary ponds to facilitate a smooth immersion process—two near the Kuakhai River, two near the Daya River, and one close to the Sai Temple in Hanspal. Additionally, stringent security measures have been implemented by the Bhubaneswar-Cuttack Commissionerate Police, along with a traffic advisory to manage congestion.



## Odisha to bid emotional farewell to Goddess Durga

# India withdraws High Commissioner from Canada, citing lack of faith in Trudeau Government

**New Delhi, October 14(KCN):** India has withdrawn its High Commissioner to Canada, Sanjay Kumar Verma, along with other diplomats, following rising tensions between the two nations. The Indian Ministry of

fostering an atmosphere of extremism and violence. "We have no faith in the current Canadian Government's commitment to ensure their security," the release said, emphasizing that India's decision was prompted by what it

This withdrawal follows months of diplomatic strain, particularly after Trudeau's allegations in September 2023 about Indian involvement in a domestic matter. India



External Affairs (MEA) summoned Canada's Charge d'Affaires Stewart Wheeler and expressed strong disapproval over what it described as the "baseless targeting" of Indian diplomats in Canada. In a statement, the MEA conveyed that Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's government has endangered the safety of Indian officials by

considers hostile actions by Canada. The Indian government rejected recent diplomatic communications from Canada, which implied that Indian diplomats were involved in a Canadian investigation. India's MEA called these allegations "preposterous" and linked them to Trudeau's political agenda, accusing his administration of

aspersions cast on him. The statement further accused Trudeau's government of having a history of hostility towards India, referencing past incidents of interference in Indian politics. The diplomatic rift between the two countries continues to deepen, with India reserving the right to take further steps in response to Canada's actions.

# Odisha govt contemplating to amend RERA to simplify land transactions



**Bhubaneswar, October 14(KCN):** The Odisha government is considering amending the Real Estate (Regulation and Development) Act (RERA) to streamline land purchase and sale processes, said Suresh Pujari, Revenue and Disaster Management Minister, here on Monday.

Pujari emphasized that there is a need to make land transactions more accessible, particularly during emergencies such as medical treatments or educational expenses. He said "RERA currently restricts landowners from selling their land under urgent requirements like a daughter's marriage or

medical needs. Therefore, the Revenue Department will consult with the Urban Development Department to identify necessary amendments," Pujari acknowledged the complaints about the challenges faced by people during the land registration process and highlighted the previous outsourcing of the e-registration system. He noted that low wages paid by the outsourcing agency have led some employees to engage in unethical practices. Pujari warned that the government would take strict action against middlemen and brokers, barring them from office premises if caught exploiting citizens.

## Sick Can Get Bail Under Stringent Anti-Money Laundering Law: Chief Justice

**New Delhi, (KCN):** The maxim that bail is norm and jail exception and even stringent laws have a humane face, was reinforced again today by Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud, who allowed bail for an ailing man arrested under the rigorous anti-money laundering law. "However stringent PMLA is, as judges we have to operate in the four corners of the law. Law tells us that someone who is sick and infirm be granted bail," Justice Chandrachud said. "That he could be treated at a government hospital is no answer to what the statute says. Sick or infirm means you can be granted bail," he added, while presiding over a three-judge bench hearing the interim bail petition of 67-year-old Amar Sadhuram Mulchandani, former chairperson of Seva Vikas Co-operative Bank, who was arrested in July last year. The Prevention of Money Laundering Act



or PMLA is non-bailable since unlike other laws, the accused here has to prove that he is not guilty. An accused gets bail only when the court is satisfied that there are reasonable grounds for believing that he is not guilty of the offense, and not likely to commit any offense while on bail. Even so, the public prosecutor has to be given an opportunity to oppose bail. This provision --- listed under Section 45 of the law - was upheld earlier by the Supreme Court.

The bench today said the "Proviso to Section 45 (1) of PMLA specifically contemplates that a person who 'is sick or infirm' may be released on bail if the special court so directs".

Earlier several people, including Aam Aadmi Party's Arvind Kejriwal, Manish Sisodia and Bharat Rashtia Samithi's K Kavita had got bail, though after spending months in jail. AAP's Satyendar Jain had also got interim bail last year on health grounds.

# Odisha govt forms task force to address distress migration

**Bhubaneswar, Oct 14(KCN):** The Odisha government has formed a high-level task force to brainstorm and recommend holistic measures to address the problem of distress migrations in the state. The task force will be headed by Deputy Chief Minister Kanak Vardhan Singh Deo. Other members are Deputy Chief Minister Pravati Parida, Panchayati Raj Minister Rabinarayan Naik, Chief Secretary Manoj Ahuja, Development Commissioner Anu Garg and secretaries of concerned departments. This high-level task

force will discuss in detail the problems of migrant workers and prevent distress migrations and decide the course of action to solve the problems, said an official. It will also recommend steps to be taken up by various government agencies to check distress migration and also to mitigate the sufferings of the migrant labourers of Odisha, the official said. The secretariat of the task force shall be located in Panchayati Raj and Drinking Water Department. It shall meet at least once in six months to review the

progress. The task force may co-opt a few expert members of national/international repute working in this field. It may also co-opt academicians, development practitioners, UN agency representatives, etc. Such members shall be intimated to attend the meetings on a need basis. The task force will examine the nature of migration region-wise and recommend specific interventions needed, the official said. It will also deliberate upon the regional variation, seasonality as



well as the magnitude of the migration and recommend strategies to reduce distress migration and will deliberate upon the existing activities/interventions being

made by different departments to reduce distress migration and the effectiveness of the same by studying the existing legal/policy provisions to tackle the problem.

To deal with the complex nature of the problem the task force has been assigned to recommend specific measures required to be taken by various departments in terms

of creating infrastructure as well as opportunities for livelihood within the state through skilling, credit availability, linking the family with anti-poverty programs etc. It will also recommend additional targeted interventions/schemes required to be taken up by the State Government and will suggest the institutional framework required to be put in place at state, district, block level to tackle the issue in holistic and sustainable manner. In order to address the issues effectively the

Task Force will deliberate upon the need to develop partnerships with expert agencies, civil society, and technical organizations for improving the effectiveness of the interventions proposed and

Apart from these, the task force will discuss and recommend the necessary coordination with the Government of India and various state governments to ensure availability of resources for all these measures and to resolve the problems of migrant workers in a comprehensive manner.



# America Hosts Fifth Odisha AI Conference : Worldwide IT Gurus Participate

**California, (KCN) ;** IT Experts from across the Globe participated in the Fifth Edition of The Odisha Artificial Intelligence Conference 2024 held recently. Hosted by California based voluntary organisation Odisha AI, the 32 hours long convention was in hybrid mode on both online and offline platforms. The convention having theme entitled "Gen AI Now, What's Next ? " witnessed the presence of hundreds of IT professionals, Information scientists, research scholars, budding innovators and AI enthusiasts both at physical and virtual venues. The much sought after IT Fiesta was declared open by Col Prof. Aditya Parida from Sweden, when Japan woke up with the first Sunlight of the day. The curtain fell on the marathon summit, while American Samoa was bidding goodbye to the setting sun of the day. The physical locations of the conclave at California, Stockholm, London, Abudhabi, Tokyo, Johannesburg, Bengaluru, Chennai, Berhampur and

Bhubaneswar experienced unusual interest, unexpected enthusiasm and unprecedented excitement among the participating young community members. The spectacular AI meet commenced with the insightful Audio Visual presentation by the talented team from Japan led by Anup Sahoo. This was followed by a brilliant talk on Angel Investing 101 delivered by Noted Investor Raj Mrutiny from the Bay Area of California. The Conference broadly deliberated on the latest advancements, eventual challenges and prospective opportunities in the field of AI. The unique feature of the Mega Event was the diverse lineup of speakers such as leading scientists, noted entrepreneurs and top notch policy makers. The major attraction of the conference was the power point presentation on the future perspectives of Generative AI by the chief scientist of Google Jeff Dean. Jeff deliberated on key trends such as the development of multimodal models that can seamlessly process



diverse data types, including texts, code, images and videos. He emphasised on the transformative potential of AI models capable of reliably completing complex multistep tasks. Shedding light on the history of bringing two reputed science research institutes like NISER and IISER to Odisha, Prof. Dr Chitta Baral appealed to youngsters to keep pushing for the digital advancement of the state. Dwelling on his critical innovation "InterConnect", Intel Senior Fellow and Co-GM of memory and IO scientist Dr. Debendra

Das Sharma elaborated on the crucial role of interconnects in achieving power efficient performance and ultimate success in AI era through properly navigating the environment of exponentially increasing demand of compute. Former President of Odisha Society Of Americas Kuku Das advised the community members to use AI in a positive and constructive manner for the betterment of the society. An AI wizard and MP from Jajpur Dr Rabindra Narayan Behera complemented the organisers for their sincere commitments

towards popularisation of AI and pledged his firm support towards the noble initiative. NIST, Berhampur Dr. Sukanta Kumar Mohapatra, Deputy VC of G.E.I.T. A.V.N.L.

Sharma, Prof. Banshidhar Majhi and Founder of Sarvam AI Dr. Pratyush Panda shared their expertise and visions regarding utilisation of AI to address social issues including the AI solutions

in the space of Indic languages. Prof Jay Lee focussed on the fast changing landscape of Industrial AI. Presenting their viewpoints during the occasion Editor Sambad Tanaya Patnaik, Sailendra Panigrahi, Rashmita Panda, Dr. Priyadarshan Patra, Dr. Raj Dabre, Sukanta Sahu, Debendra Nath Rout, Om Mohapatra and Sunil Sabat highlighted the importance of evolution and collaboration of AI for a bright future. The Conference concluded with a clarion call by the core team of organisers to the participating members to act unitedly for ensuring the use of AI for the overall welfare of mankind and society. The entire arrangements of the Odisha AI

Conference-2024 was smoothly conducted and successfully executed with the active and able supervision of the members of the core committee consisting of Convenor Research scientist at Google DeepMind Dr. Swaroop Mishra, Founder Anjan Kumar Panda, Col. Prof Aditya Parida, Soumendra Kumar Sahoo, Kumarika Mohanty Panda, Subhendu Biswal and Santosh Panda alongwith a support team of volunteers led by Ravindra Jena. The conference was attended by AI Chapter heads from Odisha, community leaders, prominent social influencers, functionaries at Ground Zero and activists from nook and corner of the World.

## Parity in Other allowances and promotion policy for Gramin Bank.



**Bhubaneswar, (KCN)** Parity in other allowances and immediate implementation of promotion policy for Gramin Bank officers and employees is the main demanded of Gramin Bank. Unfortunately inspite of the Hon'ble Court order and Central Government circular many Gramin Bank have not yet implemented the other

allowances as par with nationalized bank and not implemented the Mitra Committee report for new promotion policy said Dr. Ramachandra Khuntia Ex-MP, National Vice President of INTUC in the state level Conference Rajasthan Baroda's Gramin Bank Officers and Employees joint Conferences held on 13.10.2021 at Churu Rajasthan. Although Gramin Bank is playing

an important role in develop the rural economy of the country Modi government is totally neglecting the policy of Central Government. Shri Pankash Soni the General Secretary of All India Gramin Bank Officers congress, Shri Ramkumar Kaswan, Shri Rajendra Bhadu, Shri Ramnivas Dhaka, Shri Sanjay Barwad, Shri Nitesh Nehra spoke in the meeting.

Branch President Shri Jagdish Raj Srimali while addressing the conference criticized the policy of Central Government. Shri Pankash Soni the General Secretary of All India Gramin Bank Officers congress, Shri Ramkumar Kaswan, Shri Rajendra Bhadu, Shri Ramnivas Dhaka, Shri Sanjay Barwad, Shri Nitesh Nehra spoke in the meeting.

## “I am no more in BJD, I am independent”, says Amar Satpathy



**Bhubaneswar, (KCN):** Senior BJD leader and former minister Amar Prasad Satpathy on Monday said he is no more in Biju Janata Dal (BJD) amid internal tensions in the party that ruled Odisha for the last 24 years.

“I am no more in BJD, I am independent. I have not renewed my BJD membership and kept myself away from party programmes,” the former Barchana MLA said replying party spokesperson Lenin Mohanty’s statement who advised the senior leader to keep himself distant from making statements against party leadership. Satpathy also said that he is not in active politics for last few months

and national parties active in Odisha are in contact with him.

Internal conflicts have surfaced within the BJD as senior leaders have begun holding party president and former Odisha chief minister Naveen Patnaik accountable for the party’s crushing defeat to the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in the 2024 Assembly election held earlier this year.

Amar Prasad Satpathy on Saturday directly blamed Patnaik for the party’s electoral setback, urging him to take responsibility for the failure.

Commenting on his statement, Mohanty said, “Amar Satpathy should resign from BJD if he feels suffocated”.

Speaking to reporters in Bhubaneswar, Satpathy on Saturday said, “We had imposed faith on our leader Naveen Patnaik, expecting him to shoulder the full responsibility. All the credit for continuous victories of the party was going to him; now, he must also accept the responsibility for its defeat”.

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# Impact of Social Media on our Mental Health



Social media has become an integral part of our lives. We use it to stay connected with friends and family, to share our thoughts and experiences, and to learn about the world around us. But what is the impact of social media on our mental health? There is some evidence to suggest that social media can have a negative impact on mental health. For example, studies have shown that people who use social media more often are more likely to experience symptoms of depression, anxiety, and loneliness. Additionally, social media can lead to unrealistic expectations about life, which can make people feel inadequate or unhappy with their own lives. However, it is important to note that not all research on social media and mental health has found negative results. Some studies have shown that social media can actually have a positive impact on mental health, by providing a platform for social support and connecting people with others who share their interests. Ultimately, the relationship between social media and mental

health is complex. There are both potential negative and positive effects, and the impact of social media on an individual's mental health will likely depend on a variety of factors, such as their personality, their use of social media, and their overall mental health. From an ethical and humanitarian perspective, it is important to be mindful of the potential negative effects of social media on mental health. We should be aware of the risks of unrealistic expectations, social comparison, and cyberbullying, and we should take steps to mitigate these risks. For example, we can be selective about the content we consume on social media, and we can limit our time spent on social media. We should also be aware of the potential positive effects of social media on mental health. Social media can be a powerful tool for social support, and it can help us connect with others who share our interests. We can use social media to build relationships, to find resources, and to express ourselves. **Generation of Reels!** One of the biggest concerns is that reels promote unrealistic beauty standards. Users are constantly bombarded with images of perfect bodies, flawless skin, and glamorous lifestyles. This can lead to feelings of inadequacy and low self-esteem, especially in young people who are

still developing their sense of self. **Reels and Body Image** One of the most common concerns about Reels is that they can lead to negative body image issues. This is because Reels often feature heavily edited and filtered videos, which can create unrealistic expectations about what it means to be beautiful. A study by the University of Pittsburgh found that young women who used Reels were more likely to have body image concerns than those who did not use the platform. The study also found that Reels use was associated with increased levels of anxiety and depression. **Reels and Comparison** Another concern about Reels is that they can lead to feelings of comparison. This is

because Reels often feature videos of people who seem to be living perfect lives. This can make it difficult for people to see their own lives as being good enough. A study by the University of California, Los Angeles found that young people who used Reels were more likely to feel envious of others than those who did not use the platform. The study also found that Reels use was associated with increased levels of social anxiety. **Reels and Addiction** Finally, there is also a concern that Reels can be addictive. This is because Reels are designed to be highly engaging and to keep users hooked. As a result, it can be easy to spend hours scrolling through Reels without even realizing it. A study found that young people who used

Reels were more likely to be addicted to social media than those who did not use the platform. The study also found that Reels use was associated with increased levels of stress and anxiety. The key is to use social media in a healthy way. We should be mindful of our own mental health, and we should take steps to protect ourselves from the potential negative effects of social media. We should also be aware of the potential positive effects of social media, and we should use it to connect with others and to build healthy relationships. Here are some tips for using social media in a healthy way: Be selective about the content you consume. Don't follow people or accounts that make you feel bad about yourself. Be aware of the algorithms. Social media

platforms are designed to keep you engaged, so they may show you content that is designed to trigger negative emotions. Be aware of this and take steps to avoid it. Limit your time spent on social media. Aim for 30 minutes or less per day. Take breaks from social media. Put your phone away and spend time with people in real life. Step away from social media for periods of time, especially if you are feeling anxious or depressed. Talk to someone. If you are struggling with your mental health, talk to a trusted friend, family member, or mental health professional. Remember that you are not alone. There are millions of people who feel the same way you do about social media. Find a community of supportive people who will lift you up, and don't

be afraid to reach out for help if you need it. Focus on the positive. When you're feeling down, try to focus on the positive aspects of your life. Think about things you're grateful for, or activities that make you happy. Be mindful of your thoughts and feelings. If you start to feel down or anxious after using social media, take a break. Try to be social without social media! Spend time with friends and family. This is the most obvious way to stay social, but it's also one of the most important. Make time for the people you care about, and don't rely on social media to stay in touch. Join a club or group. There are clubs and groups for just about everything, so you're sure to find one that interests you. This is a great way to meet new people and make friends. Volunteer your time. Volunteering is a great way to give back to your community and meet new people at the same time. There are many different volunteer opportunities available, so you can find something that fits your interests and schedule. Attend events. There are always events happening in your community, so get out there and explore! This is a great way to meet new people and have fun. Start a conversation with someone you see regularly. If you see someone you recognize at the grocery store, the

library, or the park, don't be afraid to strike up a conversation. You never know where it might lead. Be proactive. Don't wait for people to come to you. Be the one to reach out and make plans. Invite friends over for dinner, go to a concert, or take a hike together. Be positive. When you're out and about, be friendly and approachable. Smile at people, make eye contact, and say hello. People are more likely to want to talk to you if you're positive and friendly. Lastly, Be kind to yourself and to others. Social media can be a breeding ground for negativity, but it doesn't have to be. Choose to spread kindness and positivity, and you'll make the world a better place. Your worth is not determined by the number of likes you get on a post or the number of followers you have. You are beautiful, valuable, and worthy of love, regardless of what social media says. We all humans are beautiful. We come in all shapes, sizes, colors, and abilities. We have different backgrounds, experiences, and beliefs. But we are all human, and we all deserve to be treated with respect. Don't let social media make you feel like you're not good enough. Remember that you are beautiful, valuable, and worthy of love.

Retired Principal  
Educational columnist  
street kour Chand MHR  
Malout Punjab

## Ravana: burn my evils with effigy, but not my virtues."

Dr. Manmohan Prakash



I am Ravana, born into the lineage of Brahma, in a family of sages and a Brahmin household. I acknowledge that I had many flaws which I should have avoided, such as my pride in my knowledge, penance, strength, and powers. I was overly confident in my physical prowess, excessively ambitious, and extremely selfish, which dulled my sense of judgment. I was always focused on the end result and continually ignored the sanctity of the means. In pursuit of my personal desires, I

sacrificed the fame and honor of my lineage, my family, and even my beloved sons. I seized the golden city and the Pushpak Vimana from my brother. At the root of my penance and meditation was always a desire for personal gain and pride. In my arrogance over knowledge and power, I even made the mistake of imprisoning the nine planets. I became an enemy of mankind, sages, and sacred rituals like yajnas because I feared that another human might become as powerful as me and dare to challenge me. Yes, I enjoyed hearing praises of my valor and courage, and it pained me to hear anyone else praised in my presence. Yes, I admit that at the behest of my sister Shurpanakha, I tried to behold the beauty of

Lord Ram's wife. But upon seeing her divine form, I could not help but be enchanted by her, as Devi Sita's beauty was beyond words. Yes, I confess that I committed the sin of abducting a married woman, Lord Ram's wife, to avenge my sister's insult. I desired to make her my queen. I tried to intimidate, threaten, and torture Sita to accept this, but humanity must understand one thing: despite being all-powerful, I never forced myself upon her, nor did I resort to rape, as many men do today. I never attempted to kill her or disfigure her with acid. Unlike today's humans, I never attacked anyone from behind? I never promoted superstition or unscientific practices. I knew that Vibhishan's daughter Trijata was



helping Devi Sita and sharing information from within the kingdom, but I never tried to remove her. I knew that Lord Hanuman was requesting me to perform the rituals for Lord Ram's victory, yet I did not refuse my priestly duties. There were many other virtues and qualities in

me that were worthy of emulation by humanity. I was proud of the unity, strength, and expertise in arms and skills of my family members, and their respect and dedication toward me. I had unwavering faith in my deity, Lord Shiva. I was a great scholar of astrology, tantra, Vedas, scriptures, and several arts. It was

with this knowledge that I deliberately had the courage to wage war with Lord Ram, knowing that he was supreme in valor, virtues, powers, and knowledge of all weapons, in order to bring moksha to my lineage. In my view, today's humanity has surpassed even Ravana demonic tendencies. Rape, heinous acts, murder, abduction, and torturing innocent girls, young women, married women, mentally ill, and elderly women are common and increasing. We can easily observe that people feel no shame or guilt in committing crimes against their religion, society, and nation. I, Ravana, find it ironic that during Dussehra, today's humans focus more on outdoing my evils rather than

adopting the virtues of Lord Ram and reducing my demonic tendencies. They are busy finding new ways to commit crimes. They care neither for their families nor for the dignity of their country. Instead, they are only concerned with increasing the height of my effigy year after year. They think it is a matter of pride to burn a 95-foot effigy (Dehradun, 2021), a 125-foot effigy (Ambala, 2022), a 171-foot effigy (Panchkula, 2023), a 210-foot effigy (Panchkula, 2018), a 211-foot effigy (Delhi's Ramila Ground, 2024), or a 221-foot effigy (Dhanas, 2019). It seems that with the rise of criminal and demonic tendencies, humans no longer care about my original height of 18 feet (as per Valmiki Ramayana), and by 1970, the effigy was limited to 12 feet. Therefore, I, Ravana,

urge humanity to burn my effigy on Dussehra, but also take an oath to burn the evils I harbored, and not repeat the mistakes I made. They should resolve to adopt the virtues of Lord Ram in their lives. Humanity must reflect on whether any person today is as knowledgeable as I was, as powerful, as devoted to their deity, or as committed to their family and clan? Do they have the patience, courage, and patriotism that I had? Hence, I, Ravana, appeal to today's humans to burn my evils, not my virtues. Instead of focusing on increasing the height of my effigy, they should focus on eliminating criminal and demonic tendencies from society. Only then will the celebration of Dussehra and the burning of my effigy be meaningful.

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# NHRC Demands Action on Freebies, Ineligible Welfare Beneficiaries



The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has expressed concern over unregulated freebies and the provision of welfare benefits to ineligible beneficiaries. In a significant development, the NHRC has requested an Action Taken Report (ATR) from the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment Secretary, reflecting the growing attention to the misuse of welfare schemes and the potential impact of populist measures on human rights and social equity.

This action by the NHRC comes in response to a petition filed by Supreme Court lawyer and human rights activist Radhakanta Tripathy. The petition sheds light on the enduring failure of the Union and State governments to eradicate poverty despite the introduction of numerous

poverty alleviation schemes. A vital element of the petition focuses on how the rampant distribution of freebies in various states contributes to malpractices, discrimination, and the violation of human rights. Freebies, as highlighted in the petition, are goods and services provided free of cost to targeted populations. While they are often justified to offer immediate relief to vulnerable groups, the petitioner emphasizes that the underlying intent behind such distribution is often political. Freebies serve as a tool to lure voters by offering populist promises ranging from televisions, bicycles, and free electricity to subsidized water and household goods.

Critics of this practice argue that these short-term measures cultivate a culture of dependency and entitlement among beneficiaries. Such dependency diminishes the motivation to contribute productively to society and places an increasing burden on state resources and fiscal health. According to

Tripathy, the misuse of government welfare schemes to distribute freebies leads to resource misallocation, compromises quality, and perpetuates inefficiency in the system. The petitioner highlights several key disadvantages associated with the unchecked distribution of freebies. First, it creates a negative pattern of dependency, where recipients come to expect more handouts in the future. This undermines personal initiative and discourages hard work, negatively impacting economic productivity. Moreover, it diverts resources that could otherwise be allocated to more sustainable development programs, causing a misalignment in policy priorities. Tripathy also notes that the quality of services and goods provided through such schemes often needs to improve due to the need to cater to a broad beneficiary base within limited fiscal constraints. Moreover, reliance on freebies, especially when used for electoral gain, opens the door to corruption and malpractice. Anticipating

further giveaways leads to a vicious cycle of entitlement, resentment when benefits are withheld, and dependency on political promises rather than systemic support. The NHRC, recognizing the potential human rights implications of the unchecked distribution of freebies, has decided to take up the matter with the government. In its order, the Commission directed the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment to examine the issues raised by Adv. Tripathy and take appropriate action. The NHRC acknowledged the need for a detailed analysis of the issue of poverty in the country and called for the Ministry to develop long-term solutions for addressing citizens' conditions. In addition to addressing the misuse of welfare schemes, the NHRC is concerned about the broader issue of social security. This concern led the Commission to remind the Secretary of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment

regarding implementing the Social Security Code, 2020. In another Petition, Adv. Tripathy referred to the Social Security Code, which was introduced in September 2020, designed to consolidate and streamline the provision of social security benefits across sectors. It aimed to cover all workers, including those in unorganized and informal sectors, through welfare programs such as Provident Fund Schemes, the Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC), and provisions for occupational diseases and accidents. Despite the ambitious goals of the Code, its implementation could have been better at best. Tripathy's petition argues that the failure to enforce the Social Security Code has left many vulnerable populations without the safety net they were promised, particularly in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Code was supposed to establish a National Social Security Board and similar boards at the state level, tasked with

overseeing the provision of benefits to workers and ensuring that they receive adequate protection. However, according to the petitioner, these mechanisms have yet to be operationalized effectively, leaving a significant gap in the social safety net. Considering the lack of action on the part of the Ministry, the NHRC has issued multiple reminders, urging the government to expedite the submission of the Action Taken Report. The NHRC warned that failure to comply with its directives may lead to coercive measures under Section 13 of the Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993. This could include summoning the concerned authorities for a personal appearance before the Commission to explain the delays in implementing the Social Security Code and addressing the issues raised by Advocate Tripathy. To this end, the recommendations presented by human rights activist Radhakanta Tripathy offer a roadmap for reform, particularly in

linking welfare benefits to Aadhaar and reconsidering the criteria for identifying vulnerable groups. Moreover, the NHRC's focus on the Social Security Code highlights the importance of implementing robust, legally binding measures to ensure that all citizens, especially those in the informal sector, receive the protection and benefits to which they are entitled. The outcome of this case will likely set a precedent for regulating freebies and providing welfare in India, marking a step toward more transparent, equitable, and accountable governance. Human rights activist Tripathy has proposed several suggestions to mitigate the negative consequences of the current freebie culture, which the NHRC is reviewing. One notable recommendation is the mandatory linkage of welfare benefits with beneficiaries' Aadhaar cards. This would help ensure that only those eligible for the benefits receive them, thereby reducing the scope for corruption, ineligible beneficiaries, and multiple

claims on welfare resources. Furthermore, the petitioner emphasizes that the classification of beneficiaries, particularly those classified as Economically Weaker Sections (EWS), should be re-evaluated based on social behaviour and expenditures. Adv. Tripathy points out that individuals involved in the purchase and consumption of narcotics, liquor, and other non-essential commodities should not qualify for welfare benefits meant for genuinely vulnerable populations. The timely legal action taken by Adv. Tripathy emphasizes the urgency of safeguarding welfare schemes from political exploitation. The NHRC's intervention underlines the imperative of balancing essential support for the vulnerable with sustainable development and equitable economic resource allocation.

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

## Virendra Sharma's Commendable Journey- Punjab Village to British Parliament (Virendra Sharma's 50 Years of Public Service Lauded in International Conclave)

Dr. Ravi Chaturvedi



Eleanor Roosevelt, the esteemed wife of Franklin D. Roosevelt, the 32nd President of the United States, and a renowned diplomat and humanitarian, once aptly observed, "For our own success to be real, it must contribute to the success of others." This profound statement resonates deeply when reflecting on the significant contributions of Virendra Sharma throughout his remarkable tenure as the Member of Parliament for Ealing Southall, a position in which he distinguished himself across five consecutive elections. To commemorate the invaluable service of the long-serving and widely respected Labour Party MP, Virendra Sharma (2007-2024), a special event was recently held at the House of Commons, UK Parliament. The programme was spearheaded by Bob Blackman, MP for Harrow East, and conceived by Nachiket Joshi, Founder of the World Leadership Forum, alongside Cllr Anjana Patel, Deputy

Mayor of Harrow. The event was skillfully moderated by Khushboo Shah, a well-regarded professional in cultural and social event hosting in London. The event brought together prominent leaders from both India and the United Kingdom, fostering collaboration and mutual understanding in the realms of governance, business, and cultural exchange. The highlight of the evening was the recognition of Virendra Sharma's 50 years of exemplary public service. Distinguished speakers praised his tireless commitment and humility as MP for Ealing Southall, where his dedication led him to the House of Commons five times, supported by a loyal constituency. Born on April 5, 1947, in the village of Mandhali, Nawanshahr (now Shaheed Bhagat Singh Nagar district), Punjab, into a Brahmin family, Sharma's journey to the British Parliament is nothing short of inspirational. Seeking better opportunities, he moved to Hanwell, Ealing, London, from India in 1968 and, through a trade union scholarship, pursued studies at the prestigious London School of Economics. This education paved the way for his entry into British politics, where he was elected as a councillor for the London Borough

of Ealing in 1982, before ascending to the position of MP for Ealing Southall in 2007. His journey, from a small village in Punjab to the British Parliament, epitomizes the words of Martin Luther King Jr.: "If you can't fly then run, if you can't run then walk, if you can't walk then crawl, but whatever you do, you have to keep moving forward." The centerpiece of the conclave was the celebration of Virendra Sharma's 50 years of exemplary public service. Dignitaries reflected his distinguished career as the Member of Parliament for Ealing Southall, where he served with unwavering dedication for nearly two decades. His journey echoes the words of American author Stephen Covey: "Life is not about accumulation. It is about contribution." Indeed, Sharma's contributions to the Labour Party, the local community, and the broader British political landscape were lauded for their profound and lasting impact. The event was attended by a host of prominent dignitaries, including Seema Malhotra, Under-Secretary, Home Office; Shivani Raja, MP for Leicester East; Deirdre Costigan, MP for Ealing Southall; Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi, MP for Slough; Andy Slaughter, MP for Hammersmith and Chiswick; Peter



Virendra Sharma, ex Ealing Southall MP, celebrated on his multi-faceted contribution to society & community



Virendra Sharma, speaking at a podium for his long-term work for community



Virendra Sharma with guests and organizers at reception

Mason, Leader of Ealing Council; Bassam Mahfouz, Assembly Member for Ealing & Hillingdon; Deepak Choudhary, IPS, Minister Coordination at the Indian High Commission; and Umesh Patel, MP for Daman and Diu. Throughout the event, the achievements and accomplishments of the former parliamentarian resonated within the historic halls of the

House of Commons. Distinguished speakers highlighted his lifelong commitment to public service and his transformative contributions to British politics. His political career, spanning over five decades, began in the early 1970s, shortly after immigrating to the UK from India in 1968. He quickly became involved in local politics and his community,

championing social justice, equality, and immigrant rights. Sharma's early work as a local councillor in Ealing, where he represented Southall for over 25 years, addressed critical issues such as housing, education, and community cohesion. His advocacy for the South Asian community and other ethnic minorities continued into

his time in Parliament, where he championed immigration reform, healthcare, and education. Sharma's legacy of dedication and perseverance was celebrated as a powerful and inspiring example of leadership, reflecting his tireless work to uplift and empower marginalized communities. Nachiket Joshi, the torchbearer of this decade-long initiative, emphasized the importance of good governance while commending Virendra Sharma's exemplary leadership. In his remarks, Joshi noted, "Virendra Sharma's tireless commitment to public service is a shining example of integrity and dedication. His work has not only strengthened the community he serves but also elevated the standards of public office. His journey stands as an inspiration to leaders, reminding us that true progress comes from unwavering service to the people." Joshi, while praising Sharma's efforts in fostering strong ties between his ancestral and adopted countries, seemed to echo the words of Tony Robbins, the American author and motivational speaker, who once said, "Only those who have learned the power of sincere and selfless

contribution experience life's deepest joy: true fulfillment." In the concluding session, the Indian delegation, led by Joshi, was widely praised for their committed involvement, ensuring the conclave's success. The event's central theme — Women Empowerment and Sustainability — was explored in sessions held at both the House of Commons and the House of Lords. The grand finale, marked by dazzling cultural performances, highlighted the interconnectedness of global cultures, fostering a sense of unity, inspiration, and education among diverse communities. Joshi's own hard work and determination in bringing the event to fruition reflect the words of Jesse Owens, the American athlete who won four gold medals at the 1936 Berlin Olympics: "We all have dreams. But to make dreams come into reality, it takes an awful lot of determination, dedication, self-discipline, and effort."

**TV & Radio Cricket Commentator C/O Manish Chaturvedi 50 Dubois Street, Stamford, CT-06905 USA**





Preparations for the immersions of the Durga idol . Photo - Arindam Bhattacharya

## Andal Parivar Ashram in Burdwan district of Bengal provides good education and upbringing to orphan children.

**New Delhi(Ahsan Ansari):** There are very few people like Sanjay Singha, a famous social worker of Burdwan district of Bengal, in this

child to his ashram with the help of the administration, where they are given a good education and a good upbringing. He tries to

way. There are currently 24 orphan children in the ashram, who are provided with good education, good upbringing, good food.

for two meals a day. We try to make such children capable by giving them good education and upbringing so that when they grow up they have



country and the world. Sanjay Singha runs an ashram named Andal Parivar for orphan children and the destitute. Where he tries to make hundreds of orphan children good human beings with a good education. When Sanjay Singha sees an elderly or an orphan child begging at the railway station of Bengal, Bihar, Jharkhand, then Sanjay Singha brings the orphan

make the children capable of whatever they have, if any child is interested in any sport, Sanjay Singha gives that opportunity to the children. Recently, a child from the ashram has got admission in Kolkata Cricket from Burdwan district. If the children of any very poor family nearby need help in education, the Andal family comes forward to help in every possible

Sanjay Sinha gets full support from the administrative officials for his excellent and noble work, recently some time ago journalist Ehasan Ansari from Delhi visited the ashram. Where in an interview given to journalist Ehasan, Sanjay Sinha said that it is our resolution that there should not be any orphan child in our society, no child should need to beg

everything to live a good life - home, family, respect, honour. We have to give a good human being to the orphan children in the society and create a beautiful society. During the interview, he said that in our ashram, God has chosen many noble people for this work, who come to our ashram as helpers for the orphan children and help them in every way.

## Procure each grain of paddy and lift it within 72 hours or be ready to face an agitation – SAD warns AAP govt

**Chandigarh (JAG MOHAN THAKEN), October 13** – The Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) on Sunday warned the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) government to procure each and every grain of paddy and lift it from the Mandis in the State within 72 hours or be ready to face a sustained agitation to ensure justice to the farmers.

This decision was taken at a meeting of the core committee which was presided over by party Working President Balwinder Singh Bhundar, states a party release. The core committee noted that farmers were suffering due to the utter failure of the government to either procure paddy coming into the Mandis or get the same lifted in coordination with the central government. It



noted that this state of affairs had not been ever witnessed in the history of the State and asked chief minister Bhagwant Mann to wake up from his slumber and ensure farmers did not suffer or else resign from his chair. Briefing newsmen about the decisions of the core committee, senior leader Dr Daljit Singh Cheema said the core committee expressed concern at the manner in which the

AAP government had murdered democracy in the ongoing Panchayat elections. He said there were hundreds of instances where opposition candidates were not allowed to file nomination papers by turning them away, snatching their papers or even using violence to keep them away from offices of Returning Officers. He said with the State Election

Commission (SEC) also succumbing to pressure from the government and not adjudicating on complaints filed before it, it was left to the high court to ensure justice was done. He thanked the high court for restoring nomination papers with regard to 321 petitions filed before it. Dr Cheema said following this the SEC was also forced to cancel elections in 24 villages in

Gidderbaha where papers of opposition candidates were rejected illegally. The core committee also took umbrage to the manner in which the Advocate General's office in Punjab was working against the interests of Punjabis by opposing the petitions of highhandedness filed by them. "This makes it clear that the AG Office is being used to crush the

democratic rights of the people instead of safeguarding them. The chief minister must clarify if he gave these instructions", the committee asked. Meanwhile in an important development, Dr Cheema disclosed that an eleven-member committee led by party Working President Balwinder Singh Bhundar would approach the Sri Akal

Takht Jathedar and apprise him of important developments vis a vis the complaint filed against the SAD president and other leaders before the Takht. "The SAD president and the concerned leaders have already submitted their clarifications with regard to the complaints filed against them to the Takht with utmost

## Opposition MPs Boycott Parliamentary Committee Meet On Waqf Bill

**New Delhi(KCN):** The Opposition MPs have boycotted the Joint Parliamentary meeting to discuss the Waqf amendment bill and wrote to the Speaker demanding that the Committee chairman Jagdambika Pal be removed. Alleging that the Committee is biased, they have sought time from the Speaker to discuss the issue. The Opposition members have alleged that a presentation on the bill by Anwar Manippadi, former Chairman of Karnataka State Minorities Commission and Karnataka Minorities Development Corporation, was not about the Bill. Mr Anwar, they alleged, was just using the occasion malign the Karnataka government and Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge. "We have boycotted

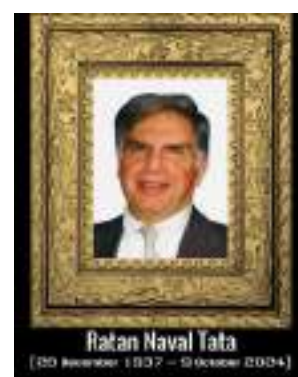
because the committee is not functioning with the principles and norms of the committee. In terms of ethics and principle, they are wrong," said Shiv Sena (UBT) MP Arvind Sawant. Besides Mr Sawant, Congress's Gaurav Gogoi and Imran Masood, AIMIM's Asaduddin Owaisi, Samajwadi Party's Mohibullah, DMK's A Raja and Aam Aadmi Party's Sanjay Singh, were seen storming out of the meeting. The meet headed by Mr Pal continued as the Opposition MPs met to discuss their next move. The Waqf (Amendment) Bill was introduced in the Lok Sabha on August 8 and amid massive objections from the Opposition, was referred to a Joint Parliamentary Committee. The committee -- which has to

submit its report to the Lok Sabha by the end of the first week of the next parliament session -- is now holding a series of informal discussions with various stakeholders. The Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2024, seeks to bring sweeping reforms, introducing digitisation, stricter audits, transparency, and legal mechanisms to reclaim illegally occupied Waqf properties. The current law, dating back to 1995, is seen to have many loopholes that allow corruption and mismanagement of Waqf properties. The proposed amendment has two key parts -- for the first time, provision for inclusion of women in Waqf boards; and ensuring that the land is verified before it is announced as Waqf property.

## ICC mourns passing away of legend of Indian industry Ratan Naval Tata

**Kolkata(PARTHA ROY):** Indian Chamber of Commerce (ICC) mourned passing away of doyen of Indian Industry Chairman Emeritus of Tata Group Shri Ratan Naval Tata on 9th October 2024 in Mumbai "Indian Chamber of Commerce deeply

regrets the passing away of Ratan Naval Tata, noted industrialist, philanthropist, and former Chairman of Tata Sons at the age of 86. A void like this would be difficult to fill. This Corporate Doyen leaves behind a legacy of Leadership, Philanthropy and Values. The mark he has created in Indian Industry would be difficult to match.



Over 1 million employees and a market

capitalisation of over \$400 billion gives an indication of the height reached by Tata Group under him, where he was Chairman from 1991 to 2012. And his philanthropic works were all in silent and benefitted innumerable Indians. We will never forget him." said, Dr Rajeev Singh, Director General, Indian Chamber of Commerce

### Niira Radia Explains Why Ratan Tata Chose Singur For Nano Factory

**New Delhi(KCN):** The decision to build Nano, the ? 1 lakh car, in Bengal's Singur, had taken Ratan Tata's team by surprise, as did the price point of the car, Niira Radia, former chairperson of now-shut V a i s h n a v i Communications -- which managed public relations for the Tata Group from 2000 to 2012 -- told NDTV in an exclusive interview today. Recalling Mr Tata and their decade-long association, Ms Radia described him as a dreamer and visionary who wanted to build a car that would keep the common man "out of rain".

That the car would be built in Bengal's Singur was a surprise announcement, Ms Radia told NDTV - "We were not told what would be the site. We were really surprised". Ratan Tata, she said, chose Bengal because he felt at the time that the state needed industrialisation. He chose Singur, because that was the seat of a legislator from the Opposition -- R a b i n d r a n a t h Bhattacharya of Trinamool Congress. "He always wanted to take everybody along with him," added Ms Radia, a close friend of the national icon who died

last week. Had the plan worked, it would have brought unprecedented development - the way it did in Gujarat's Sanand, where the project shifted after the Opposition by Mamata Banerjee, who rode to power in 2011 on the back of that campaign. "The whole road from Kolkata to Singur would have developed hugely. As it happened in Sanad.... a great fillip. Today Sanand is like Gurgaon," she said, pointing out that the opposition to the project at the time was purely political. "It was not about the Nano, Ratan, or the Tatas," Ms Radia said.

The left Front government had won the state assembly election 2006 on the promise of industrialization, development and jobs. The Nano project - announced by then Chief Minister Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee that May -- was seen as the vanguard of change. But of the 997 acres acquired by the state government, 347 acres became disputed. The farmers found a champion in Mamata Banerjee, who held a 26-day hunger strike drew attention across the country and ultimately changed the course of Bengal's future.

humility. Now we are in the process of seeking an appointment with the Jathedar in this regard. We will make an important appeal to him based upon certain information with us", Dr Cheema added. The core committee also condemned the murderous attack on journalist Ramesh Behal in Batala which the latter claimed was done at the behest of Batala legislator Sharry Kalsi. It demanded a case be registered against the MLA and other guilty persons even as it appealed to civil society to stand up for freedom of the press. The committee also paid glowing obituaries to former Takht Patna Sahib President Mahinder Singh Romana and Tata group Chairman Ratan Tata on the occasion.



## Odisha Chief Minister Mohan Majhi Performs Puja at Home During Dussehra in Keonjhar

**Keonjhar (KCN):** Odisha Chief Minister Mohan Majhi celebrated Dussehra by performing a special puja at his ancestral home in Raikela, Keonjhar. The Chief Minister, accompanied by his wife, was warmly welcomed by the local residents as he arrived in his native village.

The puja, conducted early in the morning, was attended by a large number of villagers who gathered to catch a glimpse of the Chief Minister and seek his blessings. The atmosphere was filled with festive fervor as traditional rituals were performed to mark the auspicious occasion of



Vijayadashami. Speaking on the occasion, Chief Minister Majhi expressed his gratitude to the people of Keonjhar for their unwavering support and love. He emphasized the importance of cultural and religious traditions in strengthening community

bonds and fostering a sense of unity among the people.

“Celebrating Dussehra at my home in Raikela is a deeply personal and spiritual experience for me. It allows me to reconnect with my roots and the people who have

always stood by me,” said Majhi. He also extended his best wishes to the people of Odisha, hoping for peace, prosperity, and happiness for all. The local administration ensured tight security arrangements to

facilitate the smooth conduct of the event. The Chief Minister’s visit to Keonjhar is part of his three-day tour of the district, during which he is expected to participate in various community events and interact with the local populace.

## Southwest monsoon withdraws from large parts of Odisha

**Bhubaneswar (KCN):** Southwest monsoon has withdrawn from 20 of the 30 districts of Odisha so far, the Bhubaneswar Meteorological Centre said Sunday.

It is expected to withdraw from the remaining districts over the next two days, weather scientist Umashankar Das of the Centre said. “The southwest monsoon has

completely withdrawn from Mayurbhanj, Keonjhar, Balasore, Bhadrak, Jagatsinghpur, Puri, Kendrapara, Cuttack, Khurda, Jajpur, Nayagarh, Boudh, Angul, Dhenkanal, Deogarh,

Subarnapur, Bargarh, Sambalpur, Jharsuguda and Sundargarh districts,” the Centre said



in a statement. It has also withdrawn from many parts of Bolangir, Kandhamal and Ganjam districts and some parts of Nuapada and Kalahandi districts, the statement said.

Conditions are likely to become favourable for further withdrawal of the southwest monsoon from

the remaining parts of the state over the next two days, it said.

The southwest monsoon had entered the state on June 8 this year, four days ahead of its schedule.

## Technical survey report of Jagannath temple’s Ratna Bhandar to be out soon: Minister



**Bhubaneswar (KCN):** The technical survey report of Ratna Bhandar in Puri’s Jagannath temple is likely to be released soon, Odisha Law Minister Prithviraj Harichandan said Sunday.

The Archaeological

Survey of India (ASI) had in September conducted the exercise, including the Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR) survey of the Ratna Bhandar (chambers of Lord Jagannath’s treasury). “The state government

will get the GPR survey report in the next three to four days... If any hidden storage of some valuables is found, we will take necessary action. Otherwise, the ASI will start the repair and restoration work of the Ratna Bhandar,”

Harichandan told reporters here. The Ratna Bhandar was opened after a gap of 46 years in July to take stock of the inventory of valuables and repair of the structure. Ornaments and other valuable items from the inner and outer chambers of the treasury have been stored in a temporary strongroom inside the temple for the repair work.

## Another elephant carcass spotted in Athmallik forest

**Angul, (KCN):** While an elephant’s suspicious death in the Dhanatopa forest Range under the Athmallik Forest Division in Angul district is yet to be probed another elephant carcass was spotted near the Sankhamal village under the Madhapur Forest Range on Sunday.

Though the forest officials are yet to ascertain the reason behind the elephant’s death, locals suspect that it might have been killed in the trap set to poach boars.

According to reports, the locals of the



Sankhamal village reported the forest official after they spotted an elder elephant carcass in the village forest. Acting on it, the range officials visited the spot,

recovered the carcass and initiated an investigation into it. Worth mentioning, an elephant was reportedly killed in the Dhanatopa forest almost four days

ago due to electrocution. However, neither the Athmallik DFO nor the Range officer has yet revealed anything on what led to the pachyderm’s death.

## 5 poachers held in Balangir for detusking elephant: Ivories recovered




**Balangir, (KCN):** Balangir forest Range officials held at least 5 poachers for allegedly

killing an elephant and detusking it for trading its ivories. The ivories which were

about to be trafficked out of state, were recovered from the accused. The Balangir Range

officials said that, a gang of wildlife poachers had set a trap to poach boars in the Asura Dunguri forest a few days ago. Meanwhile, a tusker was accidentally trapped in it and succumbed to grievous injuries. Following this, the poachers allegedly detusked the pachyderm for illegal trade. Following a tip off from the informers, the forest officials initiated an investigation in this connection, reached the poachers’ gang and recovered the ivories from their possession who were almost readying to strike a deal.



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# Aarka 2024 Ignites Innovation and Fun at KLH Global Business School

**Bhubaneswar(KCN):** KLH Global Business School, located at the Kondapur Campus, is well-known for its frequent organization of international week-long seminars, guest lectures, workshops, and summits. These events are all dedicated to the comprehensive development of its students. Consistent with its progressive mission, the university was excited to host Aarka 2024, a student-organized, two-day Management Fest. This highly anticipated inter-college festival was

expected to attract many students from different colleges, offering them a stage to exhibit their managerial prowess and athletic abilities. The fest was set to be an unforgettable celebration. The inauguration of the fest by Mr. Bharadwaj K, Vice President & Branch Business Head of HDFC Bank Limited, Hyderabad, served as a source of inspiration for the students. His engagement with the attendees went beyond simple dialogue, providing them with a

potent motivational boost. Dr. G. PardhaSaradhi Varma, Vice Chancellor of KL Deemed to be University, remarked, “Aarka is more than a competition; it is a festivity of student potential. We encourage our students to fully manage this event, thereby enhancing their leadership and collaborative skills. Ranging from management simulations to artistic endeavors, this inter-college festival united students from different backgrounds, offering a venue for them to display their skills and



fuel their competitive spirit.” The event's agenda was impressively diverse, with numerous activities designed to engage a wide array of interests. Cultural events included

a Meme Show by Meme Circus, a Dance Show by Dancing Feet, a Singing Show by Vocal Vibes, a Drama Show by The Dramatizers, a Ramp Walk by Eternal Grace, a Treasure Hunt by Clue

Crew, a Painting Competition by Color Carnival, alongside DJ sessions, Live Band performances, and the Mr. Aarka and Ms. Aarka contests, ensuring broad participation.

Participants were also able to indulge in Managerial Events such as Talent Avengers hosted by HR Club, Brand Buddies by Marketing Club, Movie Marathon by Film Club, The Titans by Young Managers, and a Treasure Hunt competition by Clue Crew. For those inclined towards creativity, there were events like Doodling, Poster Making, Post Card Making, and Product Photography. Additionally, the festival featured unique attractions like a pet show, a blood camp, and opportunities to meet well-known celebrities. The fest concluded with an award distribution

ceremony, marking a grand end to this remarkable event. Aarka 2024 invited attendees to dive into a realm of innovation, creativity, and enjoyment. Sharing the excitement, T. Sri Harshitha, 3rd year BBA student said, 'Attending Aarka 2024 at KLH Global was an eye-opener for me. It was more than just showing off our skills; it was about learning, growing, and connecting with others. The energy was amazing, and participating with other students really broadened my perspective. I gained so much—new insights, valuable leadership experience, and memories to last a lifetime.

## DSP Mutual Fund launches DSP S&P BSE Liquid Rate ETF Offers easy cash management with ample liquidity and low risk

Mumbai :DSP Mutual Fund announced the launch of DSP S&P BSE Liquid Rate ETF (DSP BLRETF), an open-ended scheme replicating/tracking S&P BSE Liquid Rate Index. The Fund offers investor easy cash management with ample liquidity and low risk. The scheme is suitable for investors who have money lying idle in margin account which doesn't yield any returns; instead, parking money in units of DSP BLR ETF may help them earn additional returns. The scheme invests in overnight instruments with 1D maturity.

DSP S&P BSE Liquid Rate Index generally has a lower volatile return profile due to investment in low-risk securities in overnight markets. Apart from better utilization of money lying idle and generating no return in broker's account, DSP BLR ETF can also be used as cash equivalent margin for trading (subject to NSE and BSE approval). A minimum of 95% and up to 100% of the scheme shall be invested in low-risk instruments like Tri-Party REPOs, Repo in Government Securities, Reverse Repos and any other

similar overnight instruments as may be provided by RBI and approved by SEBI. The New Fund Offer for DSP BLR ETF will open for subscription on March 15th, 2024, and will close on March 20th, 2024. “DSP S&P BSE Liquid Rate ETF is designed to always let investors' money remain in action and hence makes it a useful product for brokers with large retail clients, PMS providers, F&O brokers, Institutions who invest in direct equities HNIs and retail investors who trade on the stock exchange,” says Anil Ghelani, CFA, Head – Passive Investments & Products, DSP Mutual Fund.

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Utkal Alumina's Project URMI pioneering health and empowerment for adolescents, mothers, and children

**Bhubaneswar(KCN):** Utkal Alumina International Ltd (UAIL), an Aditya Birla Group company has recently launched Project URMI. It aims at providing better healthcare in the Kashiapur Block of Rayagada and Thuamul Rampur Block in Kalahandi. Project URMI will have over a three-year span, touching the lives of thousands. It targets over 5,000 villagers across 40 villages. Its approach includes baseline, midline, and end-line studies to evaluate the current health status of its target groups. The project includes forming adolescent groups and implementing customised health, hygiene, and life skills awareness. It specially impacts adolescent girls, mothers, and pregnant women. Within a span of six months, this Project has successfully established 40 Adolescent Clubs, fostering community engagement and support. It has ensured health registrations for 375 Antenatal Care (ANC) and 526 Postnatal Care (PNC), providing vital health services to mothers. So far, 902 adolescent girls and 582 infants have been brought under its fold, demonstrating its expanding reach within the community. A notable achievement of Project URMI is its focus on menstrual

hygiene, distributing over 100 sanitary napkins to promote healthy practices among adolescents. Additionally, the project has facilitated 247 institutional deliveries, reinforcing its commitment to improving maternal health outcomes in the region. In its efforts to address the nutritional needs of mothers and children, the project introduces innovative solutions and regularly organizes health check-up camps. These initiatives underscore the importance of routine health assessments and immunizations. Project URMI's ambitious targets include achieving 100 per cent institutional deliveries, complete immunization coverage, and universal menstrual hygiene practices. Highlighting the project's profound impact, Mr. Rabi Mishra, Unit Head of Utkal Alumina, said, “Project URMI is a beacon of hope and progress for our communities. Our dedicated efforts to improve health standards are not just about numbers but about transforming lives. We are committed to creating a healthier and more empowered future for adolescents, mothers, and children, believing that together, we can build a foundation of empowerment and well-being for generations to come. Through capacity-building initiatives, training of trainers, and

orientation programs for ASHA workers, Anganwadi workers, and health staff, Project URMI is strengthening the support system at the grassroots level. The project also aims to ensure 100 per cent access to benefits under the Janani Surakshya Yojana and achieve zero infant and maternal mortality in its targeted villages”, adds Mr Mishra. Lauding the efforts of UAIL, the Addl. BDO of Kashiapur Mrs Padmini Kahnar says “Project URMI is a shining example of Utkal Alumina's dedication to social responsibility and sustainable development, marking a significant step forward in enhancing the health and well-being of the communities it serves. So our support from all Anganwadi Staff, health workers to the company will always be there in all such noble initiatives, adds Mrs Kahnar. As a responsible corporate citizen, Utkal Aluminium International Ltd. is committed towards the socio-economic wellbeing and transforming the lives in the tribal hinterland. All UAIL's projects are carried out under the aegis of the Aditya Birla Centre for Community Initiatives and Rural Development, chaired by Mrs. Rajashree Birla. Utkal's engagement extends to 232 villages of 25 Gram Panchayats of Odisha.

## 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 the 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,



