

relief of commuters who rely on these services for their daily transportation needs. In view of the strike threat by the private bus owners, the minister convened a meeting with the bus owners' associations at Berhampur to discuss their demands.



# Punjab Congress alleges AAP of ‘Crushing Democracy’ in Panchayat Polls

**Chandigarh (JAG MOHAN THAKEN), October 6:** Punjab congress has alleged Aam Aadmi Party and Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann of ‘Crushing Democracy’ in Panchayat Polls through Brazen Abuse of State Machinery. In a blistering condemnation, Leader of the Opposition Partap Singh Bajwa on Sunday launched a fierce attack on Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann and the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) for systematically dismantling democratic processes in the Panchayat elections by exploiting state power and resorting to outright coercion. Bajwa accused the CM of turning a blind eye to AAP’s orchestrated manipulation, exposing his government’s desperation to cling to power by any means necessary. Bajwa, a senior Congress leader, in a statement issued to media on Sunday, described the Panchayat election process as nothing short of a sham, blaming AAP leaders for issuing orders

to Block Development and Panchayat Officers to cancel the nominations of opposition candidates on fabricated grounds. “This is a calculated and sinister plot directed from the top. AAP MLAs and their cronies have hijacked the election machinery, ensuring their candidates sail through while opposition candidates are held up for hours or disqualified on spurious technicalities. This is not an election—this is an autocratic takeover of our villages,” Bajwa fumed. He specifically targeted CM Bhagwant Mann, accusing him of being a puppet controlled by Delhi, entirely complicit in the systematic destruction of democracy at the grassroots. “Bhagwant Mann has become nothing more than a weak figurehead, allowing his political masters in Delhi to dictate every move. His government is handpicking Sarpanches and fixing elections through intimidation, all while he conveniently looks the other way,” Bajwa charged. The Congress leader

minced no words in denouncing the sheer lawlessness unleashed by AAP across Punjab. “AAP’s goons, led by MLAs and local leaders, have turned these elections into a battleground where muscle power reigns supreme. Videos circulating on social media and reports in the press clearly show AAP leaders strong-arming voters and opposition candidates alike. Bhagwant Mann’s silence on these atrocities is nothing but a tacit endorsement of their thuggery,” he remarked. Bajwa went further, warning that AAP’s desperation to seize control has created a powder keg in the state, where violence is now inevitable. “This government is so terrified of losing power that it is willing to plunge our villages into chaos and bloodshed. Bhagwant Mann is at the helm of a sinking ship, steering Punjab towards anarchy just to cling to his crumbling authority,” Bajwa said. Taking a swipe at the Chief Minister, Bajwa

pointed to Mann’s hollow rhetoric on consensus building. “Bhagwant Mann loves to preach about electing Sarpanches unanimously, yet he couldn’t even unite his own village of Satauj. If the people of his village have no respect for him, what does that say about his leadership across Punjab? His reign is built on illusions, empty speeches, and misplaced priorities,” Bajwa mocked. The LoP called on the Punjab State Election Commission to step in and prevent the further erosion of democratic norms under Mann’s rule. “It is high time the Election Commission intervenes to ensure that these elections are conducted fairly, without the shadow of AAP’s gangster-like tactics hanging over every village. Punjab’s democracy is under siege, and Bhagwant Mann’s incompetence is the root cause of this descent into authoritarianism.” Concluding his fiery statement, Bajwa declared that CM Bhagwant Mann’s tenure has done more harm to

Punjab’s democratic institutions than any other government in recent history. “Bhagwant Mann is no leader—he’s a liability to Punjab. Under his watch, democracy has been trampled, local governance crippled, and the state has been reduced to a playground for his Delhi overlords. The people of Punjab will not forgive this betrayal,” Bajwa stated, vowing to hold both the CM and AAP accountable for their unforgivable actions. The Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD), on Sunday, has also appealed to all party workers and leaders who had been prevented from

filing their nomination papers to reach the party office Monday with necessary documents and evidence of wrongdoing by Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leaders and government officials so that the party could take recourse to legal steps to secure justice for them. The SAD leader, Dr Daljit Cheema, in a statement, said the party had received complaints of large-scale rejection of nomination papers of candidates from opposition parties for the post of Sarpanches and Panches from different parts of the State. “We have been approaching the State Election

Commission with our complaints but they have not been addressed. According a legal team has been constituted to look into the complaints and secure justice for the victims”. He said the legal team would be led by the party’s legal wing President Arshdeep Singh Kler besides competent lawyers from Punjab and Haryana High Court. He said the team would meet the aggrieved parties at SAD head office here on Monday from 11 am onwards. The SAD leader said after preparing their cases legally, a SAD delegation would first

meet the State Election Commission & demand a high level inquiry into large scale violence, attacking on candidates standing in lines at nomination centers, tearing of nomination papers of opposition candidates by goons of ruling AAP party, large scale rejection of nominations on flimsy grounds under pressure from ruling party Ministers and legislators and gross misuse of power and murder of democracy by the ruling AAP. “If needed the party will subsequently also file a detailed petition in the High Court to ensure justice to all”.

## Antique idols theft: 3 siblings, mother held



**Jagatsinghpur(KCN):** Police arrested four members of a family – three siblings and their mother – for their involvement in a series of antique idol thefts and seized a large number of brass idols and items from their possession, informed Jagatsinghpur SP Bhawani Shankar Udgata at a press conference held at the district police office Sunday. The three arrested brothers have been identified as Sarada Prasad Acharya, 38, Barada Prasad Acharya alias Raja, 29, and Annada Prasad Acharya

alias Bindha, 25. According to information received, the police were under pressure due to frequent thefts of antique idols and brass articles from various temples in Jagatsinghpur and other districts. Acting on a tip-off, police first arrested Sarada from Salajang Malitota under Jagatsinghpur police station and after further investigation, the mystery surrounding the thefts began to unravel. The involvement of Sarada’s two younger brothers in the temple thefts has also come to light. The two younger brothers used to reside in

another house at Chadheigaon near Malitota. It has also been revealed through the investigation that their mother, who lived with Sarada in Malitota, was involved in hiding the stolen items. Both Sarada and his mother were arrested by the Jagatsinghpur police and were presented in court Sunday. Meanwhile, Barada and Annada were arrested by the Baliaanta police under the Cuttack Bhubaneswar Commissionerate Police in connection with case number 432/24. Following the arrest of all three brothers and their

mother, a large number of brass idols and items were seized. These included brass idols of Mahavir, Ram-Sita, Jagannath, bells, lamps, stands, and various temple utensils, along with household items like gas cylinders, stoves, and kitchenware. Additionally, weapons such as swords, axes, cleavers, and chains were also seized. During the press conference, the SP stated that efforts would be intensified to prevent thefts, dacoity, looting, and other crimes in the future. District-wide operations would be strengthened, and all efforts would be made to restore public trust in law enforcement. Present at the press conference were Additional SP Amarendra Panda, Jagatsinghpur SDPO Rashmirekha Sahu, Jagatsinghpur IIC Gokul Ranjan Dash, along with Additional IIC Tapan Kumar Nahak and Investigating Officer ASI Biswajit Bardhan.

## Show-cause notice to 6 contractors for delay in road construction work

**Chhatrapur(KCN):** The Additional Chief Engineer of the Rural Works Division Ganjam-1, based in Berhampur, has issued show-cause notices to six contractors over an inordinate delay in the road construction. The contractors have been asked to explain why actions under contract clause 2(B)(i) along with fines should not be enforced. Several road construction projects being carried out by the contractors under the Rural Development department in Ganjam district are incomplete. In fact, work on many of these projects has not even begun despite the contract periods having



ended. Some contractors stopped the work midway and are no longer to be found. Despite repeated issuance of show-cause notices from the department, no effective results have been seen. This issue has been observed in projects under both Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) and the Mukhya Mantri Sadak Yojana (MMSY). According to available

information, the road construction work from RD road to Kaurijhar via Tentulipalli was to be completed by October 9, but only 24.52 per cent of the work has been done so far. Similarly, the road construction from Mangala Thakurani Temple to Gopakuda near NH16 was supposed to be finished by August 6, but only 21.57 per cent of the work has been completed. Moreover, the Badapalli to

Mareinuagaon road was to be completed by August 19, but only 39.20 per cent of the work has been finished till date. The Balukeshwarpur to Batagaon road project was contracted to be completed by August 9, but only 30.8 per cent of the work has been done. The Biripur to Kendubadi via PunijamaBrahmadevi road project is targeted to be completed by January 26, 2025, but only 30.8 per cent of the work has been finished so far. The Kumbhiura Khani road project is to be completed by December 5 as per the contract, but as of now, only 29.18 per cent of the road work has been done.

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# Beauty of Tears

Vijay Garg



No one should stop the laughter from laughing for long, no one should stop the cryer from crying for long. And if no one wakes up the sleeping person for a long time or no one tells the awakened person to sleep, then the world will be different. Actually, this laughing and crying is the philosophy of our life. There is such a blessing of nature, due to which man becomes human. It is crying itself, which in a way is the boon of our life, that is, when we first step into the world, we come crying. Then if we cry, our family members are happy and the cry of a newborn baby is not heard then the family becomes worried and they try to make him cry by any means. The thing to understand is that if our inflow is due to crying, then how can its place in life not be precious? Whether we want it or not, crying and tears are our destiny, an inevitable part of our nature. No matter how much we try to escape from this, we cannot escape from it and that is

why those who are wise and truly enjoy life. This is also called Maya in other words which is the ultimate truth of life. This is. Who can escape from this? As far as crying is concerned, the beauty of humanity is hidden in it. When a man sheds his natural form, he gets peace. It is crying that makes man human and makes him a little different from other creatures. It is our tears which are the identity of our compassion. When we read a painful story, for example in Maupassant's novel 'A Woman's Life', something like this happens. When we see the tear marking, our tears start flowing. The truth is that in life, in our family there is only sadness around, it would not be wrong to say this. And we have to find happiness in that. When we are happy, a smile appears on our face and when we smile more and are happier, we start laughing. This also has great importance in life. Perhaps this is why it has been said that laughing in the river of sorrow is like the twinkling of stars in the darkness. Thus, there is a pendulum between living our lives and laughing, where the path finds positivity. To put it plainly, this breath is the beginning and also the end

of our life. When a living being leaves his body, he himself is in pain and after his death the entire family and loved ones shed tears. There are very few such accomplished men who make their death a message to the world, from which the society and the world receive a message. The thing to think about is what a play of nature it is that when a newborn baby is born, he comes into the world crying. It is much more difficult to laugh than to shed tears and cry. This is why happiness has the highest position, there is no comparison to it. But crying or shedding tears is not a joke. Only one who is truly human can shed honest tears, because behind it lies the restoration of a pure heart. Tears come to the eyes naturally only of those who are sensitive, who are completely human. That's why tears have great importance in life and it is said to save them. If we talk about songs, poetry, stories, then in various arts tears and happiness are included and by feeling these, man becomes more human. If we imagine that there will be no tears, no crying or no laughing in life, then what life will be like, only by imagining it we can understand that that life will become just like a robot. In

fact, now efforts are being made to make even robots equipped with artificial sensory expressions. Therefore we do not need to hide our tears. Just as we display our happiness, our laughter, we should not hide our tears and we should not try to hide it, because if we have it, it is our heritage. Who knows how many tales and how many stories there are or it can be said that perhaps there will be very few such creations which essentially contain such scenes, after reading which a person's eyes do not become moist or a smile does not come on the lips. The value of a poet's work is that someone should sigh and feel sad after reading his work. This situation is a symbol of the higher status of that literature. Similarly, if someone makes us laugh, his respect in the society increases. Because laughing is not child's play. In fact, the people who wake us up and put us to sleep, make us laugh and wipe our tears, are our real well-wishers, whether they are our own or strangers.

Retired Principal  
Educational  
Columnist Gali Kor  
Chand Wali Mandi  
Harji Ram Wali  
Malout Punjab

# Pitrapaksh: A Scientific Tradition for Empowering Sanatanis Spiritually, socially and familially

Dr. Manmohan Prakash



In Sanatan culture, Pitrapaksh (Shraddha) is a significant religious, cultural, scientific, and psychological tradition, which can be understood through the following points:-

1. Pitrapaksh is a festival to remember family members who have merged with the divine and to pray for the peace of their souls. It is an opportunity to express gratitude for the contributions and sacrifices made by ancestors for the family.
2. This tradition introduces the current family members to their family's history and inspires them to preserve it.
3. The act of performing Shraddha for the peace of ancestors' souls

provides psychological peace and assurance to the person performing the rituals, fostering the belief that their ancestors' blessings are with the family.

4. During Pitrapaksh, worshipping sacred rivers, Peepal trees, and Tulsi plants fosters a sense of gratitude toward nature and promotes the importance of maintaining natural balance.
5. By inviting Brahmins and others for a pure, balanced, and sattvic meal during Pitrapaksh, the importance of consuming nutritious and balanced food is emphasized.
6. This festival strengthens love and unity within the family and society, inspiring respect for one's roots and traditions.
7. Pitrapaksh generally occurs after the rainy season, when agricultural work is typically finished, and the arrival of autumn begins. It highlights the significance of transitional periods and advises awareness of

the changing seasons.

8. According to Indian religious beliefs, a unique spiritual energy flows through the universe during Pitrapaksh. This energy can be harnessed by communicating with ancestors' souls and expressing gratitude toward them.
9. It is a day to satisfy and honor the souls of ancestors, seek forgiveness, and express respect, receiving their blessings in return. These blessings undoubtedly bring happiness, prosperity, and peace in life.
10. Performing Shraddha brings spiritual peace, increases inner strength, and adds positivity to life.
11. This festival is also a way of maintaining the traditions, culture, and values of Sanatan Dharma, and it encourages Sanatani discipline in life.
12. Such events in Sanatan culture inspire the fulfillment of social and familial moral responsibilities.

13. This festival promotes the spirit of charity in society, helping the poor and needy.
14. Serving food during Shraddha is a way to relinquish ego and undergo a process of self-purification.
15. The need of the hour is to include feeding not only Brahmins but also the poor, needy, and hungry as part of this tradition. This change could be a step toward fulfilling social responsibilities and turning Pitrapaksh into an important occasion for community service. Many families have already started paying attention to this aspect. Thus, celebrating Pitrapaksh with enthusiasm and duty is an excellent opportunity to demonstrate dedication and respect toward the scientific Sanatan rites and culture, expressing faith and support. Every Sanatani should celebrate this festival with devotion and according to their ability.

# A Study of a daughter, from the Seerah of Hazrat Fatima R.A.

Asia Jan

Allah SWT created a daughter as a parental favor. Allah Ta'ala's blessings are daughters. Arab civilization mistreated girls before the arrival of Islam. A father who had a daughter used to experience guilt after she was born. In the past, Arab societies buried females alive to free themselves of the stigma. Islam arrived and granted rights to women, sisters, daughters, wives, and especially to young girls who were abused during a time of darkness and harsh treatment of girls by society. The Muslim community nowadays is deeply engrossed in the autobiographies of alleged superstars, yet they show no interest in or concern for the families of the Holy Prophet PBUH, his companions, or any other significant Muslim figures. It is a sad and incomprehensible truth that Muslims throughout the world are not aware with the great figures in Islamic history who might serve as role models for tailoring their own lifestyles.

models who, instead of promoting a modest and pure lifestyle, actually live and teach the opposite. Muslim women should take up and emulate Syeda Fatima R.A.'s lifestyle, since she was praised by God for her moral character.

Muslim decline can be attributed, in part, to their having abandoned genuine role models and goals in favor of false and flawed ones. By portraying Syeda Fatima R.A.'s persona as a daughter, this article aims to treat cancer by making Muslim girls aware of the significance of their role in light of Syeda Fatima R.A.'s Seerat. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) raised four daughters and believed that daughter-rearing was a holy act in Islam. The Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was quite fond of his daughters, especially Syeda Fatima R.A. According to reports, she was born when the Holy Prophet PBUH was 41 years old, during the second year of prophethood. Fatima was her name given by the Holy Prophet PBUH. For women everywhere, Hazrat Fatima R.A. serves as an inspiration. So that women of all eras may emulate her and become wonderful daughters, mothers, wives, and counselors, Allah Almighty created her as

the model of a perfect woman. She became enraged and tried to safeguard and shield her father from the bad intents of the Islamic adversaries who had tortured or plotted against the Holy Prophet PBUH. The adversaries of Islam, including Abu Jahal, Uqba Bin Abee Moeet, and others, decided to stop the Holy Prophet PBUH during his prayer in the vicinity of the Kaaba. Uqba Bin Abee Moeet began laughing and making fun of their despicable behavior after throwing the animal tripe upon the back of the Holy Prophet PBUH. After hearing about the tragedy from someone, Hazrat Fatima R.A., who was still fairly little, hurried to the scene to assist her father in clearing the dirt. Once, the opponents of Islam and the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) planned a surprise attack on the Prophet to subject him to severe torment. When Syeda Fatima R.A., a young child at the time, learned of their heinous deed, she told her father. The courageous father reassures her that she should not worry at all since Allah SWT would shield him from their malicious purpose. Hazrat Fatima R.A. lived during very difficult times when all the tribes boycotted her loving Father and those who had adopted Islam. During this time, the

Holy Prophet PBUH's uncle established the blockade of Shi'b Abi Talib, a tiny valley, to protect Muslims from the oppressions of the Makkans. The people who supported Islam were forced to deal with the blockage for over three years. Not long afterward, Hazrat Fatima R.A. had to deal with the terrible deaths of Her Mother, Hazrat Khadijah R.A., and the honorable protector of His Father, Abu Talib. Her health suffered severely as a result of all these awful events in her early life, yet she never wavered in her support of her adored, wonderful Father (PBUH) or in her ability to be patient and determined. Various publications have detailed numerous incidents that demonstrate her love, concern, and defense of her father. She followed the Holy Prophet to the battlefield when she had to face the enemies of Islam. She told her father after making an effort to investigate enemy plans and track their activities. She also provides water to the Islamic warriors on the battlefield, tends to their wounds, and tends to the injured. Another quality that makes Syeda Fatima R.A. stand out is her humility. She was extremely mindful of her posture and elegance. She did all in her power to live true to the principles of Islam in every situation. Despite

having little, she never complained to her husband or father about anything during her life. When she was unwell, the Holy Prophet PBUH paid her a visit at home with a few friends. Upon hearing that she had arrived at the door, she informed him that she did not have enough garments to meet them. The Holy Prophet PBUH gave her his shoulder cloth to cover herself before heading inside to see to her needs. She informed her father that she couldn't offer guests anything from her house. The excellent news that she is the lady of all Muslim ladies in Janat was given to her by her beloved father during this difficult time. Their practice of giving away all they have to the poor people who come to her for assistance is the reason they don't have enough material possessions. Her life of hardship and scarcity serves as an example for all Muslim women to be grateful in whatever circumstance. She used to dress simply because she thought it was necessary for the human body to be clothed and not a luxury to spend a lot of money on. Because of the qualities that made her so special to her father, the Holy Prophet PBUH gets up from his seat to greet her, kisses her forehead, and extends an invitation for her to sit on his lap in her honor. She kept quiet and wept in

the loving remembrance of her beloved father following the departure of the Holy Prophet PBUH. Not even a grin after her father did anybody recognize him. Allama Muhammad Iqbal praised Syeda Fatima in a Manqabat as: Maryam is honorable for one reason that she is the mother of Jesus, Look at Zahra, her honor comes from three relationships; She is the daughter of the Great personality known as Rahmat al-lil Alameen Who is the Imam of all (the prophets) in the past and all (the leaders) in the future He, who revived a dead society back to life, And brought a new system of law She is the wife of the one who was crowned with Hal Ata He is the chosen one, solver of all problems, the lion of God He was a king but lived in a hut, All he owned was a sword and a coat of chain Her son was the center of Love and devotion He was the chief of the army of Love He was a burning light in the gathering in the HARAM, He was the protector of the best of the communities He kicked the throne and the crown aside, Only because he did not want to see the fire of killing and hatred

And the other son (of hers) is the leader of the pious He gave strength to all the revolutionaries of the world Hussain becomes passion to the ode of humanity Hussain gives rise of freedom to the truthful people The character of sons is built by their mothers The true spirit of truthfulness and honesty come from the mothers Crop/harvest for the farm of approbation/consent is Butool For mothers she is a perfect guiding example Her heart was so overwhelmed by the needs of the poor, That she sold her own chadar to a Jew Both angels and Jinn are in her obedience, (Because) she was obedient to the will of her husband She was raised with SABR and submission Her lips would be reading Qur'an while her hands would be moving the hand mill She wept for the fear of Almighty Allah She shed tears during her prayers to Him Jibreel would pick up her tears from the earth So that he may spread dewdrops in Jannah I am bound by the law of Islam, I am beholden to the sayings of the Prophet Otherwise, I would have gone round and round her gravesite, And I would have

done sajdah on her grave A Muslim daughter can learn valuable lessons from Syeda Fatima R.A daughter with a compassionate and protective nature toward her father and other family members would make an excellent personality trait. To her family, a daughter need to show love. A girl has duties to her family and her father, including obedience. The well-being and reputation of her family should be a daughter's top priorities. When it comes to marriage affairs in particular, a daughter's duty is to obey her father. Once married, a daughter's responsibility is to maintain her husband's house. A courageous daughter does not harbor resentment toward her spouse while living a life devoid of riches. A daughter ought to be required to support her father and spouse in all situations and under all conditions. Our society may become peaceful and stable if the daughters of Muslim society can genuinely comprehend the noble personality of Hazrat Fatima R.A. and make an effort to emulate her magnificent character.

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# Revisiting India's Educational Legacy: Colonial Roots and Post-Independence Visions



At Independence, India inherited a formal but fragmented modern education system shaped by decades of colonial rule. This colonial influence restructured Indigenous knowledge systems, sidelining them in favour of a more exclusionary, hierarchical model of education. The "modern education" introduced by the British, organized around secular subjects such as science, mathematics, history, and geography, was designed to cater to the colonial economy's needs, explicitly producing clerks and administrators for government jobs. The emergence of textbook-centric education led to a rigid, standardized system that often-valued rote learning. While the colonial system sought to secularize education by removing religious

instruction from the core curriculum, it did little to incorporate the rich and diverse knowledge systems rooted in the socio-cultural practices of India's communities. Indigenous forms of learning, often linked to craft, farming, or religious teachings, were largely excluded, with only remnants surviving under the guise of "moral education." This approach to education, which aligned closely with the colonial state's needs, had lasting impacts. It reinforced social hierarchies and created a divide between intellectual and manual labour, which disproportionately affected people engaged in agricultural and craft-based vocations. Education became a pathway for securing white-collar jobs, reinforcing the idea that those who worked with their minds were superior to those who worked with their hands. This hierarchy also echoed the social stratifications of caste and class, making the education system increasingly exclusionary. At Independence, the

newly formed Indian state sought to build on this colonial infrastructure with a new vision. The Nehruvian education model was centred on scientific and technical knowledge, aligning with the broader modernization and national development project. Nehru believed that by promoting the basic sciences and technical skills, India could foster a new era of progress. The Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) and other prestigious technical institutions were born from this vision. The Nehruvian vision of education centred on progress through scientific and technical knowledge, was not without critics. Thinkers like Mahatma Gandhi and Rabindranath Tagore challenged the alienating nature of the colonial education system, which prioritized intellectual labour over manual work. Gandhi's Nai Talim, or Basic Education, aimed to integrate academic learning with manual labour, seeking to dismantle this intellectual-manual divide. Tagore, similarly, advocated for an education system

rooted in India's indigenous cultural and environmental contexts, emphasizing creativity and self-expression over rote learning. However, despite their intellectual appeal, Gandhi's and Tagore's alternative visions struggled to gain mainstream acceptance. The newly independent Indian state, focused on addressing poverty and economic development, embraced the Nehruvian model and relegated these alternative ideas to the margins. Gandhi's Nai Talim was viewed as impractical, particularly for its reliance on local handicrafts to fund teachers' salaries. Moreover, Gandhi's and Tagore's models were criticized for failing to address entrenched caste hierarchies, undermining their efforts to challenge social inequities. By the 1970s, disillusionment with the Nehruvian consensus and its inability to tackle mass illiteracy and poverty led to a reevaluation of educational policies. This opened space for alternative educational

models, drawing from Gandhi's and Tagore's philosophies and global learner-centred pedagogies. These schools rejected textbook-driven learning, incorporating arts, crafts, and the everyday labour of rural and Indigenous communities into their curricula. While these alternative institutions aimed to break down educational hierarchies, they faced significant challenges, particularly in integrating with the formal education system. Sustainability was also an issue, with many schools relying on private funding and struggling to meet their funders' expectations. Despite these obstacles, these schools played a crucial role in fostering an inclusive, cooperative learning environment for marginalized communities. The case of Eklavya, a pioneering alternative education institution in Madhya Pradesh, highlights the challenges of scaling up innovative curricula within the formal school system. Eklavya sought to revolutionize science

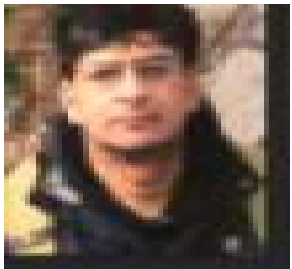
education in government schools by encouraging students to engage in hands-on experiments and observation. This approach profoundly influenced science curricula in institutions like Delhi University, the Tata Institute of Social Sciences, and Azim Premji University. However, Eklavya's innovative program was eventually wound down when the state government withdrew its support, underscoring the precariousness of alternative education initiatives that rely heavily on state backing. The experiences of students from marginalized backgrounds within both formal and alternative education systems reveal deep inequalities. Many first-generation learners, particularly from Dalit and Adivasi communities, faced humiliation and violence within formal schools. They lacked the social and cultural capital to navigate the education system and were often forced to enter the workforce much earlier

than their more privileged peers. These narratives of struggle highlight the disconnect between the ideals of alternative education, which aimed to provide a safe, encouraging environment for learners, and the realities of marginalization and exclusion that many students faced. By the 1990s, the education landscape in India had shifted once again. The neoliberal turn in Indian politics led to a withdrawal of the state from its welfare responsibilities, including education. Private coaching centres, low-cost private schools, and English language training centres increased, catering to the growing demand for education that would provide access to the burgeoning job market. The passage of the Right to Education Act in 2009 marked a significant legal shift. Still, the emergence of a highly competitive, credential-oriented education system continued to marginalize alternative educational visions.

The current education landscape in India is thus marked by a tension between alternative, learner-centred models and the increasingly utilitarian demands of the job market. As education becomes more closely tied to social and economic mobility, particularly for marginalized families, the challenge lies in integrating alternative pedagogies with the broader goals of upward mobility and financial security. An ideal education system should balance learner-centred pedagogies with practical skills for the job market. Integrating creativity, critical thinking, and vocational training can foster holistic development while ensuring social and economic mobility, particularly for marginalized communities. Collaboration between public, private, and civil society sectors is essential for sustainability.

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

# Agro-technology: The future of modern sustainable agriculture under the looming threats of Climate Change



Agro-technology, or agricultural technology, refers to the application of advanced techniques, tools, and innovations in farming to increase the efficiency, productivity, and sustainability of agricultural practices. It encompasses a wide range of technologies, including machinery, biotechnology, information technology, and data-driven approaches that help farmers optimize their yields, reduce resource usage, and enhance the overall quality of agricultural products. **Key aspects of agro-technology include:** Precision Agriculture: Using GPS, sensors, drones, and satellite imagery to monitor crop conditions, soil health, and weather patterns, allowing

farmers to apply water, fertilizers, and pesticides more accurately and efficiently. Biotechnology: Genetic modification and breeding techniques to produce crops that are more resistant to pests, diseases, droughts, and other environmental stressors. Smart Farming Equipment: Autonomous tractors, irrigation systems, and harvesting machines that reduce labor and improve productivity. Data Analytics and AI: Using big data and artificial intelligence to make informed decisions on planting times, crop selection, and market trends. Vertical and Urban Farming: Growing crops in controlled environments within cities or indoor vertical farms to maximize space, reduce water usage, and grow food year-round. **Importance of Agro-Technology:** Increased Efficiency: By automating and optimizing farming

practices, agro-technology helps farmers produce more food with fewer inputs like water, fertilizers, and labor. Sustainability: Many agro-technologies promote eco-friendly practices by minimizing waste, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and conserving natural resources. Food Security: As the global population grows, agro-technology is crucial for ensuring that food production can keep pace with demand, especially in regions facing challenges like climate change and limited arable land. **Climate Resilience:** Advanced techniques help farmers adapt to changing climate conditions, mitigating the impact of droughts, floods, and unpredictable weather. Economic Benefits: By improving crop yields and reducing costs, agro-technology increases profitability for farmers, leading to stronger agricultural economies. Agro-technology, food security, and food safety

are interlinked areas that are crucial in addressing the challenges posed by climate variability. As climate change continues to affect agricultural production, these fields become essential to ensure a sustainable, safe, and adequate food supply. Here's why each of these aspects is important under climate variables: **1. Agro-technology** Agro-technology refers to the application of modern technology in agriculture to enhance productivity, sustainability, and efficiency. Under climate change, agro-technology plays a critical role in adapting farming systems to new environmental conditions. Innovation for resilience: Technologies like precision agriculture, drought-resistant seeds, and improved irrigation systems help farmers adapt to erratic rainfall patterns, heatwaves, and other climate-induced stresses.

**Sustainable practices:** Agro-tech promotes sustainable farming by reducing the use of resources like water and energy, minimizing greenhouse gas emissions, and supporting soil health. For example, technologies like sensor-based irrigation systems optimize water use. **Climate-smart agriculture:** By integrating advanced technologies, farmers can adopt climate-smart agriculture practices, such as better forecasting, automated monitoring, and data-driven decisions, to boost yields and reduce the risk of crop failure. **2. Food Security** Food security, defined as having consistent access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food, is heavily threatened by climate change. Changes in temperature, precipitation patterns, and the frequency of extreme weather events can disrupt agricultural production, leading to food shortages and price spikes. Adaptation strategies:

Agro-technologies provide critical adaptation strategies for maintaining food production despite changing climate conditions. This includes crop diversification, early-warning systems for climate events, and improved supply chains. Increased productivity: To ensure food security for a growing global population, productivity needs to be maintained or even increased under challenging climate conditions. Agro-tech innovations like vertical farming, genetically modified crops, and mechanization are key to achieving this. Resilience to disruptions: Climate-induced shocks (e.g., floods, droughts) can destabilize food systems. By incorporating resilient technologies and practices, farmers and food producers can withstand these shocks, ensuring a stable food supply. **3. Food Safety** Climate change also influences food safety

by altering the environmental conditions that affect foodborne pathogens, pesticide residues, and other contaminants. It can lead to increased risks of contamination during food production, processing, and distribution. Impact on pathogens and toxins: Warmer temperatures and humidity favor the growth of harmful pathogens like bacteria and fungi, which can contaminate crops, livestock, and stored food. Agro-technology can help monitor and mitigate these risks through enhanced detection systems and improved storage technologies. Chemical safety: The changing climate may increase the use of pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizers, which could lead to higher chemical residues in food. Technologies that enable more precise application of these inputs can reduce contamination risks. Supply chain traceability: Climate variability can disrupt food supply chains, making it harder to

maintain food safety standards. Advanced tracking technologies (e.g., blockchain, RFID) ensure the traceability of food products, reducing the risk of contamination across the supply chain. Conclusion Agro-technology is critical for safeguarding food security and safety in the face of climate change. Through innovation, adaptation, and sustainable practices, modern agriculture can mitigate the risks associated with climate variability, ensuring the availability, accessibility, and safety of food for future generations. Agro-technology plays a vital role in modern agriculture by improving productivity, sustainability, and resilience, making it essential for addressing global food security challenges and environmental concerns.

**Apt 6--409  
43 Street South,  
Lethbridge, Alberta,  
Canada, T1J4B3  
Email:  
saikatbasu@alumni.uleth.ca  
The Author is a  
Canada based indian  
Agro Scientists**





Durga Pratima at Puja Mandap, Ariadaha Kolkata. Photo - Arindam Bhattacharya

# ICAR-CIFRIempowering women fishers of Sundarbans

**Basanti, (KCN):** The ICAR-Central Inland Fisheries Research Institute (CIFRI), in partnership with the Kultali Milan Tirtha Society, organized an Input Distribution and Awareness Programme in Kultali, Sundarbans, under its STCprogramme. The initiative is aimed at promoting sustainable livelihoods for marginalized Scheduled Caste (SC) women. At the event, 100 women beneficiaries were each provided with 6kg of fingerlings and 100kg of fish feed to support sustainable fish farming in the region. Dr. B.K. Das, Director of ICAR-CIFRI, reiterated his



commitment to empowering underprivileged communities through such initiatives. He also announced plans to

develop a village in the Sundarbans into a "modern village," with improved infrastructure and enhanced livelihood opportunities, particularly

focusing on women's empowerment. Mr. Lokman Molla, Founder and President of Kultali Milan Tirtha Society, expressed his

gratitude to CIFRI, remarking, "This is a commendable initiative by CIFRI. Their support will have a lasting impact on these women, fostering sustainable development in this region." The programme is seen as a crucial step towards uplifting fisherwomen in the Sundarbans, providing them with the resources to improve their economic condition through sustainable fish farming. CIFRI's initiative is expected to drive long-term socio-economic development in this remote and vulnerable region, contributing to a brighter future for its communities.

# Satellite Data Shows Punjab Farm Fires Lowest In 3 Years

**NEWDELHI, (KCN):** Stubble burning in Punjab, shows data, has been lowest in the last three years. Data from NASA's Worldview satellite, which detects fire events around the world, corroborates the assertion made by the Punjab government that stubble burning, a major cause of air pollution, in the state this year has been a fraction of what

September 15 to October 6, 2024. For the same period last year, there were 845 fires. And in 2022, for the same period, the data says there were 630 fires. Significantly, on October 6, just yesterday, the Punjab government says that there were just three farm fires. NDTV decided to fact-check the Punjab government data using a series of sensors

a 70% reduction in stubble burning. The Punjab government is providing alternatives to farmers, as the biggest loss from stubble burning is borne by them. The government is actively working to manage the situation," said Mr Kang. Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann has reiterated his government's commitment to combating pollution by



it has been over the last two years. Stubble burning is a significant concern in Delhi and neighbouring states, as winter conditions trap pollutants, leading to hazardous air quality and thick smog. One will still have to wait for a few weeks to be sure that the air this year remains cleaner across large parts of the Indo-Gangetic plain, the initial indicators are encouraging and are backed by data. The Punjab government says, in data shared with NDTV today, that there have been 196 farm fires across the state between

deployed on NASA Worldview satellite and this is what they show. Here's a comparison of first six days in October with corresponding data for the same period last year. Amid growing concerns over stubble burning and pollution ahead of the winter season, AAP leader Malvinder Singh on Monday highlighted the Punjab government's efforts to tackle the issue, asserting that stubble burning has reduced by 70%. "The Bhagwant Mann government is working hard to reduce stubble burning. There has been

promoting the 'Crop Residue Management Loan Scheme', which helps farmers access machinery for disposing of stubble without burning it. On September 27, the Supreme Court had rapped the Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM) over its failure to curb air pollution in Delhi due to crop residue burning in the neighbouring states and said it needs to be more active in its approach. The top court had said efforts are needed to ensure that stubble-burning alternative equipment is used at the grassroots level.

# Kolkata's Durga Puja Showcases the Rich Heritage of Murshidabad

**Kolkata (ABHIJIT SETH):** This year's Durga Puja celebration at Motilal Nehru Road, Kolkata organized by the 80-year-old Maitri Sangha Durgotsav Club, has captivated the hearts of many with its breathtaking homage to the rich cultural heritage of Murshidabad. Durga Puja in Kolkata is one of the city's most grand and spectacular festivals, drawing millions of visitors each year with its vibrant atmosphere, dazzling Pandals, and diverse cultural experiences. Every neighbourhood in Kolkata participates in creating unique Pandal displays, each standing as a testament to the creativity, artistry, and dedication of local artisans. But this year, the celebration at Motilal Nehru Road stands out for its intricate connection to history and its powerful message promoting tourism to a historic part of Bengal. The Pandal this year takes the form of an awe-inspiring replica of the Kathgola Palace, an architectural marvel in Murshidabad, a district with deep historical and

cultural roots. Through this stunning structure, the organizers hope to draw attention to Murshidabad's historical significance, encouraging more people to visit this remarkable part of Bengal. The majestic Pandal was unveiled with the presence of distinguished guests, including Sidharth Dudhuria, Raja of Azimganj, and Pradip Kumar Chopra, President of the Murshidabad Heritage Development Society (MHDS) and Chairman of PS Group and iLEAD. Their presence added an extra layer of prestige to an already magnificent celebration. Murshidabad, once a centre of political and cultural power during the Mughal era, holds immense significance in Bengal's history. The theme chosen for the Pandal beautifully encapsulates this grandeur, transporting visitors to a time of regal splendour and cultural richness. The carefully constructed replica of the Kathgola Palace serves as a visual reminder of the district's architectural heritage,



allowing those who may never have seen it in person to appreciate its beauty. According to Pradip Kumar Chopra, the aim of this theme is not merely to showcase Murshidabad's historical significance, but also to inspire people to embrace a purpose-driven life, giving back to society through actions that promote cultural

appreciation and development. He stated, "Our primary objective is to inspire individuals to adopt a purpose-driven approach to life, where every aspect is guided by a desire to give back to society. Through our Murshidabad theme, we seek to convey a powerful message to the public, encouraging them to explore and appreciate the hidden

gems in their vicinity." This year's Durga Puja has therefore taken on a deeper mission—preserving and promoting the heritage of Murshidabad while fostering its local economy. Visitors not only witness a slice of history but also gain an understanding of how cultural awareness can contribute to community development. A key

highlight of this year's celebrations is the emphasis on Murshidabad's traditional cuisine. Visitors have the chance to experience the district's culinary delights at the 27 stalls set up around the Pandal. From local specialties like Murshidabadi biryani to traditional sweets, the food stalls offer an authentic taste of the

region. This initiative helps promote local food artisans and introduces their craft to a wider audience, providing them with an economic boost during the festive season. In addition, the Pandal is hosting a 3D virtual reality show, giving attendees an immersive experience of Murshidabad's history and cultural splendour. This interactive show takes visitors on a journey through the district's past, combining technology with tradition to create an educational and entertaining experience. This is the first time such a feature has been introduced at the Motilal Nehru Road celebrations, adding a modern twist to the traditional festival. The theme of Murshidabad not only celebrates the district's rich heritage but also aims to promote tourism in the region. By showcasing the beauty and cultural potential of Murshidabad, the organizers hope to attract more visitors to the district, which could have a significant positive impact on the local economy. More tourism

means more job opportunities and greater development for the region, especially for its artisans and local businesses. The Durga Puja celebration at Motilal Nehru Road stands out as more than just a religious or cultural event—it is a thoughtful initiative to promote sustainable tourism, local development, and cultural preservation. By highlighting Murshidabad's significance, the Maitri Sangha Durgotsav Club not only enhances the Durga Puja experience for visitors but also brings attention to an often-overlooked treasure of Bengal. This year's theme reminds us that festivals can be more than just celebratory events—they can be powerful platforms for education, preservation, and economic upliftment. The tribute to Murshidabad is not just a display of history but a call to action, encouraging people to explore, appreciate, and invest in the rich cultural resources of their own backyard.



# Poultry farmers, firms battle over compensation money

**Kendrapara(KCN):** With bird flu being rampant in this district, the conflict between farmers and firms that deal with poultry products has once more come to the forefront. The district administration has started culling birds in various farms under Derabish block. Five poultry farmers have also been quarantined after they showed signs of being affected by the disease, sources said Wednesday. So far over 8,000 birds have been culled in various farms. The administration is also carrying out awareness drives urging people not

to consume poultry meat and eggs. A Central team has also visited this district and taken stock of the situation. Farmers whose birds are culled are usually provided compensation by the state government. However, many firms who deal in poultry products and have offices here are asking the farmers to hand over the compensation money. This has come as a huge blow to the farmers. The relationship between farmers and companies that deal in the products has never been good. Farmers have always alleged that the



companies are eating into their profits leaving them with nothing to survive. Some of them said Wednesday that

representatives of some of the firms that deal with poultry products are threatening them with dire consequences unless they hand over

the compensation amount provided by the government. Sources pointed out that the farmers an average make a profit of rupees three

to rupees five per bird which is indeed a very nominal amount. They added that poultry meat is sold at prices between Rs 250- Rs 350 per

kilogram. And it is the companies that make the maximum profits. It should be stated that not just meat, these companies also sell other poultry products like eggs after procuring them from farmers at nominal rates. Such is their dominance that farmers cannot directly sell their products to customers. Hence despite the demand for chicken and eggs growing in the state, the farmers have not been able to reap the benefits. It is the companies that deal with poultry products who are eating both the cream and the pie. As

there are no proper administrative measures in place to shackle the companies, the farmers have nowhere to go. They suffer silently and sell their products at minimal prices and without getting properly paid for the hard work they put in. These farmers are the last independent link in the company-owned supply chain, a source informed. He added that unless some steps are implemented to protect their interests, more and more poultry farmers will be forced to look for other means of livelihood.

## Another rape in Rourkela



**Rourkela (KCN):** There seems to be no end in cases of crime against women, especially rape, in the Steel City. Another shocking incident surfaced Sunday when a POCSO case was registered at the Raghunathpalli police station here following a complaint by the family of a minor girl. In the complaint, it has been alleged that victim had been repeatedly raped by her 'paternal uncle'. The accused has been identified as Rajan Srivastav who works for a finance firm. He has

fled from the locality and police have formed three teams to nab him. Speaking about the case, SDPO Zone 3 Upasana Padhi said, "A case has been registered under the POCSO Act at the Raghunathpalli PS. Padhi also stated that the accused used to frequently visit the house of the victim as he was wellknown to entire family. The victim's family is shocked at the turn of events. "He used to visit our house regularly and was more like a family member," said a relative of the victim. Sources

meanwhile stated that the accused had been sexually molesting and raping the girl for the past two years. However, recently she mustered the courage to inform her family about the ordeal which she had been going through following which the complaint was lodged. This is the fifth case of rape and sexual assault reported from this city in the last 15 days. Two girls were forcibly taken in an auto-rickshaw September 21 by three boys to a lonely place near the Birsamunda Stadium. There the boys

allegedly gangraped one of the girls and sexually assaulted the other. However, the very next day, the three accused were arrested by personnel from the Plant Site police station. Two days later a school teacher was arrested under the POCSO Act for allegedly misbehaving with a Class IX girl student. The teacher was sacked by the school authorities after parents of students demonstrated in front of the school. The shocking ordeal of a girl gangraped by five youths after being forcibly taken away from a popular restaurant surfaced September 25. It later came to be known that among the five accused, four were known to the girl. The restaurant was later sealed by the police. A lecturer of the Government Autonomous College here was arrested Saturday following an order from Rourkela SP Nitesh Wadhawan. The teacher had allegedly sexually assaulted a girl student during a college trip to Puri.

## JSWBPSL inaugurates new community centre



**Sambalpur(KCN):** In a significant milestone for community development, the CSR department of JSWBPSL inaugurated Wednesday a newly constructed community centre in Lapanga village, situated near Ramchandi temple in this district. This initiative underscores JSW Foundation's ongoing commitment to enhance the quality of life in peripheral areas through impactful CSR activities. The inauguration ceremony was held in presence of Vishal Raj, Head CSR of JSW Foundation, Sambalpur and Jharsuguda. Other distinguished guests who were present during the function were Durga Prasad Sahu, Pradeep Sahu, Byasadev Sahu, Sanjiv Panda and other members of the village committee.



The newly built community centre is designed to serve as a versatile venue for residents, offering a dedicated space for social and cultural activities. The centre aims to foster community engagement by providing an inclusive gathering spot where individuals and groups of all ages can meet and collaborate on various

initiatives, a release said. Raj highlighted the centre's role in nurturing a sense of belonging and social inclusion among community members. He emphasised that the new facility would act as a catalyst for collective endeavours and reaffirmed JSW Foundation's ongoing support for the development of the gram

panchayat and the local community. CSR department of JSWBPSL remains dedicated to its mission of supporting and enhancing the well-being of the communities in which it operates, with a focus on sustainable and meaningful development initiatives, the release added.



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# JSW MG Motor India Launches Windsor, India's 1st Intelligent CUV

**Bhubaneswar, (KCN):** JSW MG Motor India, today launched India's first Intelligent CUV-the MG Windsor, at the price of a manual compact SUV. The Windsor, combining the comfort of a sedan and the expanse of an SUV, will be offered with innovative aerodynamic design, spacious and opulent interiors, reassuring safety, smart connectivity, driving comfort, and many hi-tech features. It is built on 'Pure EV Platform' offering a luxurious business-class experience. With BaaS—a unique ownership program, MG Windsor is offered at INR 9.99 Lakhs + 3.5 Rs./km for battery\*. BaaS (Battery-as-a-Service) - Unique ownership program For the first time in India's passenger vehicle segment, JSW MG

Motor India is introducing an innovative ownership plan through Battery-as-a-Service (BaaS) offering, which makes owning a full-size capable electric CUV at the price of a manual engine-based compact SUV possible. This flexible ownership program eliminates the upfront cost of the battery, enabling customers to pay only for its usage. Essentially, buyers pay a nominal fee per kilometre driven, which is 40% of the fuel costs of conventional vehicles. This model significantly reduces the initial acquisition cost and lowers the per-kilometre expense, ensuring an economical and hassle-free ownership experience. In addition, the company is offering a first-of-its-kind lifetime battery warranty to the first



owner of MG Windsor. With the eHUB by MG app, the company is offering one year of free public charging, making it easier than ever for Windsor owners to power up anytime, anywhere. JSW MG Motor India is also introducing its 3-60 assured buyback plan for the Windsor which ensures that it will retain 60% of its value after 3 years/45,000kms\*\*. The Intelligent CUV

features an AeroGlide design language, which is futuristic and transcends the concept of traditional segmentation. The interiors are opulent and luxurious with spacious Aero Lounge seats that can be reclined to 1350, coupled with the expansive Infinity View Glass Roof, adding to the business class experience. Immersive entertainment and smart connectivity features are

powered by a massive 15.6" GRANDVIEW Touch Display in the central console. The Windsor comes with the powerful PMS Motor which is IP67 certified. Impressive performance is derived through a 38 kWh Li-ion battery pack and 4 driving modes (Eco+, Eco, Normal and Sport) that deliver 100KW (136ps) power and 200Nm of instant torque, offering a range

of 331 kms\*\*. It can be charged in 40 minutes at any DC fast charger. Speaking at the launch, Parth Jindal, Director, JSW MG Motor India, said, "The MG Windsor is the realization of the vision and promise behind JSW MG India and marks a significant milestone in this journey. The Windsor is the first car that has come out of the JV and the team has worked very hard in developing and bringing it to the Indian market. This vehicle embodies our commitment to delivering to our Indian customers the best of innovation the world has to offer. As a crossover utility vehicle, the Windsor merges the comfort of a sedan with the expanse of an SUV, making it an ideal car for the Indian household. With its advanced features, innovative

design, and disruptive pricing, the Windsor sets a new benchmark. I look forward to seeing the MG Windsor on our Indian roads, delighting our customers and helping them travel sustainably with comfort, style and power." Sharing his views on the occasion, Rajeev Chaba, CEO Emeritus, JSW MG Motor India said, "With its delightful features and easy to drive dynamics, MG Windsor will certainly invite newer sets of customers to try EVs. Enabling this, we have created a clear channel for smart and unique ownership through the BaaS program, complemented with additional benefits. With these initiatives, we are addressing the barrier of incremental upfront cost of owning an EV

and supporting easy and hassle-free ownership through the user-friendly eHUB by MG app that brings the EV ecosystem to the fingertips of customers. I am confident that the overall package of the Windsor will prove to be a catalyst in strengthening the EV segment further for prospective car buyers." MG Windsor is a vision to bring the luxury of business class lifestyle and travel to the lives of every Indian. It is an ideal vehicle for customers looking to beat the bustling urban roads and tighter spaces in smaller towns, in comfort and style. The Intelligent CUV is being offered in three variants: Excite, Exclusive, and Essence; and four colours: Starburst Black, Pearl White, Clay Beige, and Turquoise Green.

## SpiceJet and Axis Bank launch co-branded credit card

**GURUGRAM:**SpiceJet, the country's favourite airline and Axis Bank, India's third largest private sector bank, have partnered to launch the most rewarding co-branded credit card, powered by Visa that will offer a host of privileges and benefits to customers. The card comes in two variants – SpiceJet Axis Bank Voyage and Voyage Black, and is aimed at facilitating a superlative travel experience for flyers through SpiceClub, the first frequent flyer program by a low cost carrier in India. Through this collaboration, the two

brands hope to capitalize on the resurgent demand for travel following two years of stagnation caused by the pandemic. Further, with the shared goal of expanding their reach to Tier 2 & 3 cities and other synergies, the brands are committed to serving a much larger populace. SpiceJet Axis Bank Voyage & Voyage Black credit cards were officially launched at Indira Gandhi International airport in the presence of Ajay Singh, Chairman and MD, SpiceJet and Amitabh Chaudhry, MD & CEO, Axis Bank, where they unveiled a special

SpiceJet-Axis Bank credit card livery on a SpiceJet Boeing 737 MAX aircraft. The products are designed to enable customers use the rewards earned on their daily spends for booking flights and add-ons, thus encouraging both travel and digital payments embedded with benefits of SpiceJet's frequent flyer program, SpiceClub. Customers can earn benefits up to 7% on the Voyage Black credit card which is a Top-tier offering in the travel credit card segment. In addition, the redemption of earned points does not

have any limitations on blackout dates, festival demand, and are on first-come basis. Cardholders would get exclusive SpiceClub membership with direct entry in either Silver or Gold tiers, and special benefits like complimentary or discounted travel add-ons, priority check-in, SpiceMax upgrade, preferred seat selection, complimentary meal etc. Ajay Singh, Chairman and Managing Director, SpiceJet, said, "I am delighted to announce the launch of the SpiceJet-Axis Bank co-branded Credit Card. This card will make every customer journey an even

more rewarding one. We are the pioneers of the frequent flyer program for budget airlines in the country and this partnership with Axis Bank significantly strengthens the value offering of SpiceClub. Our association with Axis Bank – founded on the shared vision to offer unparalleled customer experience – is yet another innovative step towards creating a world class travel experience. I hope to see our customers enjoying the benefits of this rewarding collaboration as much as they love to fly with us."

## Sony announces the Next-Gen Smart BRAVIA 32W830K Google TV

**Bhubaneswar :** Sony India today announced the launch of BRAVIA 32W830K television with attractive picture quality and life like sound. The all-new 80 cm (32) HD ready Google TV lets you enjoy movies, games and shows from apps or broadcast in an instant with advanced voice controls and built-in Chromecast.

Now seamlessly integrate Google TV and bring together more than 700,000 movies, shows, live TV and more from apps and subscriptions and organize seamlessly. With BRAVIA 32W830K, browse content from across your apps, intelligently organized just for you. Customers can easily find something to watch with personalized recommendations and bookmark shows and movies by adding a watchlist from phone and watch it on TV to keep track of what to watch. Users can even add to their Watchlist from their phone or laptop with Google Search and find everything in one place. BRAVIA 32W830K supports Apple Home Kit and AirPlay that seamlessly integrates Apple devices like iPads and iPhones with the TV for effortless content streaming. Easily control your TV with Hands-free voice capabilities. The hands-free voice control is built into the TV, no need to reach for the remote every time to search for entertainment, get answers, or control the TV and smart home devices. Simply say, "OK Google" to issue a voice command.

bedrock of our business model. The company paid death claims, maturity and survival benefit payouts of over Rs. 1,877 Cr in FY22 and achieved an impressive claims settlement ratio of 98.7% for FY22, up from 98.5% in FY21. The company expeditiously settled 3,517 Covid related claims worth Rs. 117 Cr. within an average period of 9 working days. Mr. Vohra

further commented, "A death claim is the ultimate test of a Life Insurance product, and it is the 'dharma' of a Life Insurer to honour all such claims with speed and accuracy. We continue to be fully committed and financially stable at 235% solvency (against the regulatory requirement of 150%), to meet all customer claims that may arise in the times ahead."

## NTPC Coal Mining Projects Shine Bright with Star Rating Awards for Sustainable Mining Excellence

**New Delhi, (KCN):** NTPC's Dulanga Coal Mining Project in Odisha and Talaipalli Coal Mining Project in Chhattisgarh have received Star Rating Awards under the category of Opencast mines at the Annual Star Rating of Coal Mines Awards of Ministry of Coal. This achievement reflects their commitment towards best mining practices and environmental standards to promote sustainable mining. While Dulanga Coal Mining has been awarded Star Rating (3rd rank) under the category of Opencast mines for the year

2019-20, 2020-21 and 2021-22, Talaipalli Coal Mining Project has also been awarded Star Rating (Achievers Rank) under Opencast category for the year 2019-20. Shri Shivam Srivastava, Director (Fuel) and Shri Animesh Jain ,CEO, NML received the awards from Shri Pralhad Joshi, Hon'ble Minister of Coal, Mines and Parliamentary Affairs at the Annual Star Rating of Coal Mines award ceremony held on 20th December in Delhi. NTPC has conceptualized the

development of all its mines as a "Model Mine" by adopting the best technological practices, integration of digital tools for operational efficiency, striving towards "Zero Incident potential", promoting green footprints and setting benchmarks in the mining industry. It has also fostered sustainable development of the area in and around its mining projects through skill development of youth, womenfolk, health, education, infrastructure building and other need-based initiatives.

## Sunstone expands its presence in Bhubaneswar

**Bhubaneswar ::**Sunstone, one of India's leading higher education service providers with presence across 25 cities in 30+ institutions, expanded its network of campuses with the onboarding of Centurion University of Technology and Management, Odisha. Centurion University of Technology and Management (CUTM) is duly recognized as a pioneer in 'Skill Integrated Higher Education'. Its unique model lays specific emphasis on creating sustainable livelihoods on a national scale in challenging geographies

through education that results in employability and sparks entrepreneurship. This model has been recognized by multiple Governments (Central and State), International Organizations such as UNESCO and the World Bank as well as Policy Think-tanks such as the Niti Aayog. Centurion University has continually strived to be a best-in-class human resource development hub that builds employable, enterprising and society centric youth through industry relevant education, skill development, new

ventures, production, and technology development. The founders, faculty and staff are fully committed to its credo: Shaping Lives. Empowering Communities. With this addition, Sunstone advantage would now be available with B.Com, BCA, B.Tech, MBA-Maritime Management, BBA-Health Care Management, MBA-Health Care Management and MBA courses offered by Centurion University.

## RELIANCE NIPPON LIFE INSURANCE RECORDS STRONG GROWTH IN FY22

**Mumbai :** Reliance Nippon Life Insurance Company Limited, a JV between Reliance Capital and Nippon Life of Japan, announced its financial results for the year ended March 31, 2022. The key performance highlights as on March 31, 2022 include: Commenting on the company's strong performance in FY22, Mr. Ashish Vohra, ED &

CEO, Reliance Nippon Life Insurance said, "FY22 continued to pose its own set of challenges with the outbreak of the second, and then the third wave of the pandemic. We are grateful for the support we have received from our customers, employees, distributors, service providers and their families, that powered our journey of providing maximum value to each

one of our stakeholders." Mr. Vohra further highlighted that in a volatile economic environment of today, there is a heightened appreciation of Life Insurance for ensuring certainty of life coverage as well as financial investments. These guarantees are designed to drive durable long-term returns and to help customers fulfill their life goals and form the

## Experian launches new cloud-based decisioning solution –PowerCurve® Strategy Management

**MUMBAI:** Experian, the world's leading global information services company, has launched a new PowerCurve® Strategy Management solution, a powerful decisioning solution delivered as software-as-a-service via cloud. The solution is designed to help organisations leverage data and make faster, secure, and informed business decisions.

PowerCurve® is a unified platform that helps businesses understand and leverage their data across the entire customer life cycle – be it acquisition, retention or growth – to make fast, efficient decisions that support their strategic goals. With the new solution, businesses will be able to swiftly adapt their decision-based strategies at lower operational cost

while harnessing the power of cloud. Neeraj Dhawan, Managing Director, Experian India, says: "Financial institutions in India are looking for more agile and scalable decisioning solutions. To fulfil their needs, we have come up with a comprehensive suite of solutions to help businesses make better decisions and stay one step ahead."



## Our batters don't know how to score 180 runs - Najmul Hossain Shanto

**NewDelhi:**Bangladesh skipper Najmul Hossain Shanto on Sunday (October 6) admitted that their failure to utilise powerplay efficiently is hurting them in T20Is. India beat Bangladesh by seven wickets with 49 balls to spare in the opening game of the three-match T20I series at Gwalior. It was another failure in the powerplay for Bangladesh as they got only 39 runs in the first six overs after being asked to bat, and eventually finished with 127. India, on the other hand, scored 71 runs in the powerplay and raced to the target in 11.5 overs. Powerplay batting has been an issue for Bangladesh in the T20Is for quite a while, and their struggles continued, with the team also struggling with their opening combination for a long time. Litton Das (4) played a reckless shot to bring about his downfall in the first over while Parvez Hossain Emon, who returned to T20I cricket after a while, chopped one onto the stumps. Bangladesh's opening stand in this game was only 5 runs. Overall, the opening partnership has contributed only 69 runs in the last eight innings for Bangladesh, with a highest of 35, which has been the biggest worry for the team. "Powerplay is



definitely a worry. The approach we talked about (before the game), it will be successful if we make a good start with the bat," Najmul told reporters after the opening game at the Madhav Rao Scindia Cricket Stadium. "We have to keep the wickets in the first six overs, and score runs in those. Otherwise those coming in next, it becomes too challenging for them. We have struggled in the powerplay. Those batting in the power play must take more responsibility." According to Najmul skill-set and mentality are the main points of difference between the two teams but he added that their team is not as bad as it seemed after the opening game against India. "I wouldn't say we played badly. We are a better team than this. We haven't done well in this

format for a long time, but I don't believe we are such a bad team," said Najmul. "I don't want to talk about any individual player. I think the batting unit didn't do well today. There will be aggression in the way we approach our scoring, but sometimes we have to select the balls correctly. We will think about it, but we can't rush in changing our approach." "We have the ability, but we have room for improvement in our skills. We have been batting in this way for the last ten years. Sometimes we do well. We have to make some changes, perhaps where we practice back home. We play on 140-150 wickets at home. Our batters don't know how to score 180 runs. I won't blame just the wickets, but we have to consider skills and mentality," he said.

## Temba Bavuma out of final Ireland ODI

**Newdelhi,:**South Africa captain Temba Bavuma will miss the team's final ODI against Ireland after suffering a soft tissue injury on his left elbow. The 34-year-old sustained the injury during the second ODI after landing on his elbow while diving to make the crease at the non-striker's end. He didn't take the field in the

second innings. Bavuma will, however, fly out of the UAE on Tuesday with the rest of the squad and consult a specialist. He now faces a race against time to be fit for the Test series in and against Bangladesh starting on October 21. Reeza Hendricks has been called up as his

replacement and will arrive in Abu Dhabi before Monday's clash that will see captaincy duties handled by Rassie van der Dussen. South Africa, who have already sealed the ODI series 2-0, will also not have the services of all-rounder Wiaan Mulder, who has already returned home due to personal reasons.

# Shan Masood wants Pakistan to draw inspiration from 2022 England series

**NewDelhi:**It has been more than three years since Pakistan won a Test on home soil. They have neutered pitches to blunt the oppositions' strengths, tried to emulate the seam and bounce of the Australian pitches in Rawalpindi, and given extended runs to the players in the side. Monday brings a hope for Pakistan to reverse the downturn and their captain Shan Masood wants his team to draw inspiration from how close the team had gotten to the win when they played the last time in Multan - which was against England in December 2022. With just 65 runs to tick in the chase of 355, Pakistan were on their way to levelling the series as Saud Shakeel and Mohammad Nawaz added 80 runs for the sixth wicket. But, a

bumper barrage from Mark Wood at the stroke of Lunch accounted for both to leave Pakistan seven wickets down. That Pakistan had limited England to 281 in the first innings in Multan - thanks to Abrar Ahmed's magical spell on debut - after England had smashed 657 in the first innings of the series in Rawalpindi was another positive. Pakistan and Masood will hope that such individual performances spark the change of fortunes. "We should learn lessons and draw inspiration from our last Test series against England," Masood told the media when asked whether Sri Lanka's win over England in the last Test served as a template for Pakistan. "We were close in that series and there were

opportunities to win. However, we let them slip. It is a mistake that we have committed regularly, including under my captaincy. We need to focus on our strength, see how we can tackle England, and play good cricket for five days... It is all about clicking as a team and getting the start that can give us the momentum." It has been an abysmal start for Masood at the helm as Pakistan have lost all five Tests under his captaincy. Before the two Bangladesh Tests, the Pakistan Cricket Board put out a podcast featuring Masood and head coach Jason Gillespie in which the two spoke about the need to create Pakistan's identity that was in harmony with the resources. But, at the moment, that project looks far from completed.

**NewDelhi:** In the heart of Gwalior, Hardik Pandya sauntered onto the scene like a rockstar returning to his favourite stage. The Men in Blue were chasing down a modest 128 set by Bangladesh in the first T20I, but Pandya made sure to turn a routine stroll into an all-out swagger show. In the balmy evening air of Gwalior, Hardik Pandya strutted to the crease with the swagger of a man on a mission. The crowd at the newly minted Shrimant Madhavrao Scindia Stadium already had their fill of excitement, thanks to a top-notch performance from the Indian bowlers, but Pandya was about to take it up a notch. After a sizzling return to the T20I squad, the ice-cool all-rounder had every eye glued to his bat as India took on Bangladesh in the first of a three-match series. Pandya was back in blue after a brief hiatus. The target? A modest 128. But what was set to be a routine chase turned into a swagger-fest when Pandya walked out with all the calmness of a man picking out his morning outfit. With a cool 16-ball 39, Pandya had the crowd at the newly inaugurated



Shrimant Madhavrao Scindia Stadium on their feet, grooving to his every shot. It started with the ball in hand, where Pandya made a neat return to international cricket, picking up a wicket and conceding just 26 runs in his four overs. But it was the fireworks with the bat that truly lit up the Gwalior skies. His innings included five crisp boundaries and two towering sixes, but the moment that stole the show? That cheeky, ridiculous, no-look shot off Taskin Ahmed. Taskin charged in with a short one, and Pandya—cool as ice—simply flicked it over the wicketkeeper's head, barely acknowledging his

handiwork as it sped to the boundary. Twitter went berserk, fans dubbed it the "ultimate swag" moment, and Ravi Shastri, on commentary, couldn't contain his excitement, calling it "cheeky" while Tamim Iqbal hailed it as "special." Pandya, ever the nonchalant artist, didn't even bother looking back to admire the shot. That's Hardik—he doesn't need to watch where the ball goes; he already knows. With the game virtually wrapped up, he put the final nail in Bangladesh's coffin with a monstrous pull shot over mid-wicket, sealing the seven-wicket win with a jaw-dropping 49 balls to spare. The man is a paradox: equal parts flash and

finesse. One minute, he's thumping it over the ropes, and the next, he's striding back like he's just finished a casual net session. Parthiv Patel, who was analysing the game on Sports18, captured it best: "The way Hardik Pandya has batted today, there is a lot of swag about his batting. But he is someone who can bat at number three and construct the inning as well and if he wants to finish the inning, he can do that as well. So I think you need some players like that so that gives a lot of confidence to captain. He made it look really easy. It wasn't the easiest to get to back off. That was slow. It was slight, but a lot of confidence and you have to play a lot of

balls to come into this kind of game and Hardik Pandya showed that," Parthiv Patel said. But Pandya wasn't alone in this Indian masterclass. Debutant pacer Mayank Yadav, bowling with genuine heat, rattled the Bangladesh batting lineup, while mystery spinner Varun Chakaravathy made his comeback with a spell that had the visitors tied in knots. Their combined efforts bundled out Bangladesh for a mere 127, a target that never stood a chance once India's batters came to play. Captain Suryakumar Yadav added his own brand of flamboyance, and Sanju Samson chipped in with a quickfire cameo, but all eyes were on Pandya—the man who made a comeback look like a celebration. India now leads the series 1-0, with a host of young stars lighting up the stage and a veteran like Pandya showing them how to steal the spotlight. Gwalior witnessed more than a cricket match—it saw a rockstar in action, strumming his bat like a guitar and finishing with an encore that left everyone wanting more. Pandya's back, and the swagger is here to stay.

## Lebron, Bronny James create NBA history as 1st father-son duo to play together

**NewDelhi:**LeBron James and his son Bronny created NBA history as they became the 1st father-son duo to play a match together. LeBron and his son created the historic moment when they stepped out on court for the pre-season game between LA Lakers and Phoenix Suns. LeBron James and his son, Bronny, made NBA history on Sunday night by playing together for

the first time during a preseason game between the Los Angeles Lakers and the Phoenix Suns. This marked the first time a father and son have played simultaneously in an NBA game, let alone for the same team. The moment was made even more special as it coincided with Bronny's 20th birthday. Bronny James entered the game at the start of the

second quarter, joining his father on the court. The crowd at Acrisure Arena in Coachella Valley erupted in cheers when Bronny's name was announced. However, the initial minutes weren't without challenges—Bronny committed two turnovers, and LeBron followed with one of his own. LeBron then made a 3-pointer, and moments later set a screen for Bronny, though Bronny

missed his 3-point attempt. Bronny was substituted after playing just over four minutes, and LeBron followed shortly after. LeBron, beginning his 22nd season in the NBA at age 39, has long expressed a dream of sharing the court with one of his sons. This dream became a reality after the Lakers selected Bronny with the 55th pick in the 2024 NBA Draft. Bronny, who spent one season at

the University of Southern California before declaring for the draft, has had a remarkable journey, especially after recovering from a cardiac arrest over a year ago. Although he is expected to spend much of his rookie season developing with the South Bay Lakers in the G League, it's anticipated that he will play alongside his father in a regular-season game soon.



Pakistan may be unsure about their own style of play, but, for the next three Tests, their focus is on using England's aggressive game plan against them. Gillespie and Saud Shakeel, Pakistan vice-captain, have been vocal about it. Masood, however, was more diplomatic when asked how he planned to

approach England. "We know what style of cricket they will play and we need to plan how we can tackle it," he said. "We need to remain focused on what our strengths are. We have announced a side that gives us the best balance. We are clear in our mind about it and that is why we announced it a day

earlier." Pakistan have been eager to play Aamir Jamal who missed the series against Bangladesh because of a back injury. They named him in the 17 for those two Tests, but had to release him after it became known that he would not be able to recover in time. The fast bowling all-rounder has

had a terrific start to his Test career. He returned two six-fors on Pakistan's tour of Australia earlier and scored a sparkling 82, establishing his credentials as an all-rounder. Pakistan hope to rely on his searing pace to make the difference, as he can be effective with his short-pitch barrage and reverse the old ball. He is expected to be used as a third bowler behind Shaheen Afridi and Naseem Shah - also returning to the side after being left out for the second Bangladesh Test. The top seven remains the same. "Aamir Jamal has provided us an edge in the seam department and he has also shown his batting capabilities in Australia... We missed a batter in the Bangladesh series who

could provide us runs after number seven and he also has 18 wickets in three Tests. "We have tried to be consistent in our XI as these are the individuals who have won us the games in the past. We want to give consistent run to our batters. There were some positives in the Bangladesh series. Despite losing the toss in challenging conditions, our batters put good scores in the first innings. We made mistakes in the second innings and we put ourselves in losing situations because of our batting collapses. "You have to treat your fast bowlers differently considering their workloads and schedules. Shaheen, Naseem and Aamir Jamal may have to play white-ball cricket in Australia five days after this series.