

## Mohan Majhi launches CM-KISAN Yojana on occasion of Nuakhai



**Bhubaneswar(KCN):** Odisha Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi Sunday launched the CM-KISAN Yojana in Sambalpur and distributed Rs 925 crore to nearly 46 lakh farmers on the occasion of Nuakhai, a harvest festival.

The BJP government had earlier announced implementation of the CM-KISAN Yojana replacing the Kalia scheme of the previous BJD government. Under the scheme, the government will provide Rs 4,000 annually to nearly 46 lakh small and marginal farmers in two instalments to be released on the day of Nuakhai and Akshaya Tritiya.

Addressing the public gathering, Majhi said a total of 46 lakh farmers including landless agriculture households will be benefited from the scheme.

As the Centre is providing Rs 6,000 to each farmer under PM-KISAN scheme in three instalments every year, the farmers of Odisha will now get Rs 10,000 annually in their bank accounts, he said.

As the preparations for the Rabi crop begin from Nuakhai, the first instalment has been disbursed during the day. The farmers can utilize the fund for procuring farming equipment, seeds, fertilizers and pesticides well in advance, he said.

Majhi said the previous BJD government had announced providing a bonus of Rs 100 to the paddy farmers in 2014 at Sohela in western Odisha. However, it failed to implement it before ending its tenure in 2024. "We have promised to procure paddy with a MSP of Rs 3,100 and now we are going to give a Rs 800 bonus for a quintal of paddy. We had promised to reopen the Ratna Bhandar (treasury) of Lord Jagannath and with his blessings, we have reopened the treasury of the Lord," the chief minister said.

Majhi further said that the Odisha government has submitted a proposal to the Centre for setting up an AIIMS in Sambalpur, which would

happen in the coming days.

On the occasion, Majhi launched the CM-KISAN portal and Krushak Odisha Unified Portal in presence of Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan, Revenue Minister Suresh Pujari and local MLA Jaynarayan Mishra.

Deputy Chief Ministers KV Singh Deo and Pravati Parida participated in the meeting through virtual mode.

All required agriculture-related information will be made available through the unified portal and it will remain in operation round the year so that the farmers can register their complaints at any time, he said.



## Odisha to get its second AIIMS in Sambalpur: CM Mohan Majhi

**Sambalpur(KCN):** Odisha Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi announced Sunday that the state will get its second AIIMS in Sambalpur.

During the launch of the CM-Kisan Yojana at GM University auditorium in Sambalpur, the Chief Minister addressed the gathering and informed that Sambalpur is set to receive an AIIMS,

making it the second such institution in the state.

He added that the state government has already submitted the request for a second AIIMS in Odisha to the central government.

In addition, the Chief Minister introduced the Krushi Vidya Nidhi Yojana, a new scheme aimed at providing scholarships for higher technical education to the children of CM-Kisan Yojana beneficiaries. The CM-Kisan Yojana, launched during the Nuakhai festival, facilitated the distribution of Rs 925 crore to approximately 46 lakh farmers.

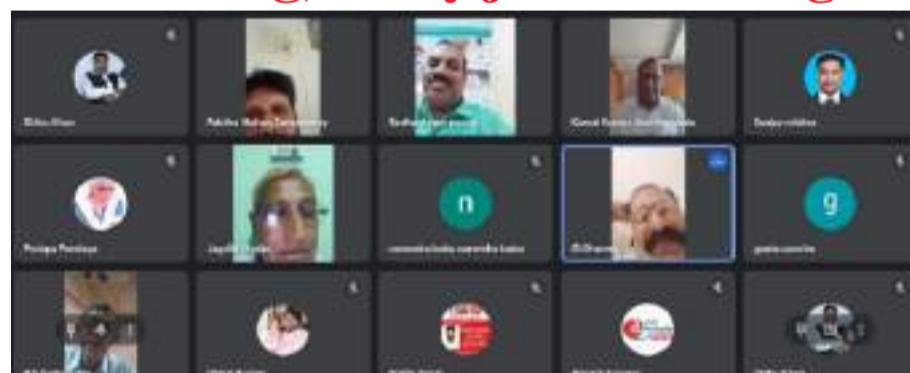
## IMD issues red warning for heavy rainfall in these Odisha districts



concentrated into a depression. It is about 310 km east of Kalingapatnam (Andhra Pradesh), 260 km east-southeast of Gopalpur (Odisha), 290 km south-southeast of Paradip (Odisha) and 410 km south of Digha (West Bengal). It is very likely to move nearly northwestwards

towards north Odisha-West Bengal coasts and intensify into a deep depression during next 24 hours. Thereafter, it is very likely to move west-northwestwards across north-Odisha-Gangetic West Bengal, Jharkhand and adjoining north Chhattisgarh during subsequent two days.

## All India Media Conference (AIMC) on 21st and 22nd September in Delhi Strategy made in 9th online meeting, many journalist organizations of the country will participate



confirmed to participate. The 9th online Google Meet held on 15th September was chaired by Pushpa Pandeya and moderated by Secretary General of National media Confederation (NMC) Shibu Khan. During this time, on the direction of Pushpa Pandya, chief National coordinator of the Conference Dr. Pabitra Mohan Samantray and dynamic senior journalist Shibu Khan of Uttar Pradesh are also continuously playing a

very important role, under which since the first week of last August, by holding online meetings through the Google Meet platform on every Sunday, journalists & members from all over the country have been participating. In this series, today on Sunday, 08 September 2024, an online meeting was organized on the

Google Meet platform from 12:00 pm to 01:30 pm, in which Pushpa Pandeya along with Dr. Pabitra Mohan Samantray, Dr. Kamal Jhunjhunwala, B.S.

present, in all the states of India including the capital, the small and middle class journalism world is facing many types of problems. Small and middle class journalists are being exploited and humiliated at many places. Small and medium newspapers have been forced to stop their publication. This step of Madam Pushpa Pandya along with her team of journalists will definitely prove to be a milestone

## Odisha: Greetings pour in on 'Nuakhai' festival

**Sambalpur(KCN):** President Droupadi Murmu, Odisha Governor Raghubar Das, Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi and Union Home Ministers Amit Shah Sunday greeted the people on the occasion of 'Nuakhai', an agrarian festival mostly celebrated in the western parts of Odisha.

Nuakhai is an agrarian festival where the first crop of the field is offered to the goddess in the western districts of Odisha and people seek the blessings of elders in each household.

Murmu, who hails from Odisha, extended her heartfelt greetings of Nuakhai to all Indians, especially the people of Odisha.

Stating that Nuakhai is a major agrarian festival, Murmu on X said,



"Nuakhai festival is an occasion to express gratitude to the farmers of the country. May this festival bring happiness and prosperity in everyone's life."

Majhi wished for the prosperity and happiness of all people on this auspicious day and prayed for the welfare of the world.

The Odisha CM arrived in Sambalpur on a two-visit. After offering prayers at Maa Samaleswari temple, he is scheduled to launch the CM Kisan Yojana in western Odisha Sunday.

cultural, spiritual and social lifestyle. This festival gives a strong message to everyone to live together. On this occasion, I pray to Maa Samleswari for the happiness and prosperity of everyone."

Leader of Opposition in Odisha Assembly Naveen Patnaik in a post on X wished people through a video message and said, "My Nuakhai greetings to all. May Maa Samleswari bless you all with good life, happiness and prosperity."

Special preparations have been made in the temple of presiding deities including Goddess Samaleswari in Sambalpur, Patneswari in Balangir, Sureshwari in Sonepur, Sekharbasini in Sundargarh and Manikeswari in Kalabandi for the festival.

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## AIP Slams National Conference for Hypocrisy, Releases Election Manifesto

**Srinagar (Aasif Malik):** Awami Ittihad Party (AIP), under the leadership of jailed leader Engineer Rashid, launched a fierce verbal offensive against the National Conference (NC) today, condemning it for hypocrisy and failing the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

In a highly charged press conference, AIP Chief Spokesman Inam Un Nabi, alongside prominent leaders such as Sheikh Ashiq, former J&K Chamber and Commerce leader, Gazanfar Ali, ex-DC Shopian, and Former High Court Bar Association General Secretary Advocate GN Shaheen, took aim at NC's so-called "double standards" and lack of genuine leadership. Inam Un Nabi denounced NC's Omar Abdullah, accusing him of living in a bubble of comfort while Engineer Rashid and countless

others suffer in jail. "Soon after the abrogation of Article 370, Omar Abdullah was in safe custody, treated with five-star luxuries, while true leaders like Engineer Rashid have been subjected to real hardship for the last five years," Inam declared. He accused Abdullah of distorting the truth and twisting facts to deceive the public. "It is outrageous that Abdullah accuses 'Kuch Shakhas' (some people) of plotting against him from jail—this is not just a lie, it's a blatant insult to all those Kashmiris languishing in jails across the country," he added.

Inam went on to expose the stark difference between Engineer Rashid's service as MLA for Langate and the deep-rooted corruption and misgovernance in N C - d o m i n a t e d constituencies, which he described as "black holes of development."

According to him, "Langate stood as a beacon of pro-people politics under Rashid, while NC constituencies were buried under incompetence and nepotism." Taking a strong swipe at Omar Abdullah's campaign antics, Inam condemned his theatrics as undignified, particularly his act of removing his cap to ask for votes. "This is a cheap political stunt from someone who has lost touch with the ground realities," he remarked.

AIP also unveiled its much-awaited manifesto during the press conference,



vowing to fight for the restoration of Article 370, secure job and land rights for J&K's people, and ensure the holistic development of all regions. The manifesto lays out plans to combat unemployment, drug addiction, and address the welfare of daily wage workers, while promising to turn Kashmir into a "jail-free" state.

Among its key pledges are the rehabilitation of divided families across borders, improving healthcare access, and

making education more inclusive. The party also stressed its commitment to reviewing the wrongful termination of government employees and fighting for the restoration of the University of Kashmir's autonomy.

The manifesto calls for the immediate and unconditional release of all prisoners, including those held under the draconian Public Safety Act (PSA) and Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA). It also promises to reintroduce the Darbar Move, which was scrapped by the current administration, and place a complete ban on the sale of liquor.

"The people of Jammu and Kashmir are awake now, and NC's days of fooling them are over," Inam asserted, expressing confidence that AIP will lead the charge against the anti-people politics of parties like NC.

Despite Engineer Rashid's imprisonment,

the AIP remains determined to contest the upcoming elections, vowing to bring about real change and represent the true voice of the people.

Meanwhile, AIP announced a fresh list of seven candidates from North Kashmir for the forthcoming assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir.

AIP's Political Affairs Committee (PAC) has recommended and approved the mandate of Er. Munir Khan for Uri Constituency, Mohammad Shafi Kankashi from Assembl

Y for Kupwara Constituency, Adil Nazir Khan for Gulmarg Constituency, Khursheed Ahmad Sheikh for Langate Constituency, Abdul Majid Banday for Handwara Constituency, Ashok Kumar Raina for Chamb (Jammu) Constituency.

Meanwhile Prominent Activist from Khansahib Er. Sheikh Jehangeer joined AIP and will be AIP candidate from Khansahib. Another candidate Mohammad Shafi Kankashi from Assembl

Y Constituency Khanyar joined AIP and withdraw his nomination in favour of AIP candidate Parvez Jamwal

## CM's response renews hope of Police Commissionerate in Rourkela

**Rourkela (KCN):** The possibility of Rourkela getting a Police Commissionerate system has become stronger as Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi, who holds the Home portfolio, has said in the Assembly that the government is actively considering the proposal.

The Chief Minister was replying to a question posed by Rourkela MLA Sarada Nayak Monday. Nayak also wanted to know the timeline of its implementation along with appointment of a police commissioner. Majhi said, "This proposal is under active consideration." The CM's answer in the House has rekindled the hope of a Commissionerate system in the Steel City – a long standing demand. However, this proposal and the subsequent promise by the successive governments is nothing new.

In the last 24 years of BJD rule, it had come up for discussion several



times but there was hardly any decision. Many are of the opinion that an opportunity was lost as the BJD government's tenure ended, though it remained as a matter of discussion only. The issue was being raked up by elected representatives but it continued to remain at discussion level only. There are many arguments that favour a Commissionerate system in Rourkela. First, the city has an independent administrative circle for which it has an additional district magistrate and an SP. Besides, the western

range DIG is stationed here. Also, it is an independent telecom circle. Similarly, many Central and state organisations regard it as an independent circle for better administration. Another important factor is that Rourkela is a sensitive bordering area.

Many of the retired officials argue in favour of a Police Commissionerate system in steel city. Suman Dutta, a former police official, said, "It had always been a proposal only but now it may be a reality."

Likewise, Bimal Bisi, former SEFI secretary, said, "There is no better news than this for Rourkela; we are waiting for it to happen." Former president of RCCI Subha Pattnaik said, "This is a long standing demand and I am hopeful that it will be fulfilled this time."

## Odisha: Sarpanch's kin booked for hurling casteist slurs at PEO

**Keonjhar (KCN):** Nandipada police Saturday registered an FIR against the elder brother-in-law of Pandalo Gram Panchayat sarpanch, under this block in Keonjhar district, for allegedly threatening the Panchayat Executive Officer (PEO), a woman belonging to a Scheduled Tribe (ST), and using casteist slurs. Police said Sasmita Ojha serves as the sarpanch of Pandalo Gram Panchayat where Urmila Murmu works as the PEO.

As per Murmu's allegations, Ojha never showed up at the Panchayat office ever



since she was elected, and, instead, conducted all official work from her house. Murmu said when she was returning from Ojha's house, where she had gone for some official work September 4, 2024, the latter's elder brother-in-law, Nikunja

FIR. She said Nikunja, along with one Surendra Raut, barged into her house and repeated the threats and abuses. Following this, Murmu, along with other members of the Hatadihi PEO association, made a written complaint to the Block Development Officer (BDO), Soumyashree Panigrahi, and also warned to go on a 'pendown' strike if the accused was not arrested immediately. Panigrahi thereafter asked the Nandipada police station to file an FIR and initiate action, September 6.



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# Benami Transactions (Prohibition) Act Part 4



Adv. Narayan Jain &amp; CA Dilip Loyalka

(Contd from 2nd September 2024)

15. Actions by department: In order to create a credible deterrence a "Whole of Government Approach" will be adopted through co-ordinated efforts and by leveraging technology. It has also been decided that appropriate red flag indicators would be used for identifying shell companies, and a data base of such companies and their Directors would be built by pulling in information from various agencies. The data base will also capture Aadhar number of individual Directors in the companies. It is learnt that a Task Force has been set-up under the Co-chairmanship of the Revenue Secretary and Corporate Affairs Secretary with members from various regulatory Ministries and Enforcement Agencies to monitor the actions taken against deviant shell companies by various agencies. The department has formed a special unit called

Benami Properties Unit (BPU) to identify and probe such assets.

16. Whether provisions of Benami Transactions (Prohibition) Amendment Act, 2016 apply retrospectively: It has been held that Benami Transactions (Prohibition) Act, 1988 prior to its amendment in 2016, amending the Benami Property Transactions Act, 1988 enacted with effect from 1-11-2016, i.e. the date determined by the Central Government, cannot have retrospective effect - Union of India v. Ganpati Dealcom Pvt. Ltd. [2022] 141 taxmann.com 389/289 Taxman. 17. Also refer ACIT (Initiating Officer) v. Neopride Pharmaceuticals Ltd [2023] 454 ITR 580 (SC); Banamali Das v. DCIT [2023] 147 taxmann.com 278 (Gauhati); Assistant Commissioner of Income-tax v. Nexus Feeds Ltd. [2023] 147 taxmann.com 176 (SC); Golla Jagadishwar Narendar v. Union of India [2023] 148 taxmann.com 263 (Telangana); NeoPride

Pharmaceuticals Ltd v. Adjudicating Authority [2023] 454 ITR 571; Niharika Jain v. UOI [2019] 107 taxmann.com 272 (Rajasthan).

However, Delhi High Court in the case of Anis Ur Rehman v. Mohd Tahir [2019] 101 taxmann.com 319 (Delhi) has held that the clarification provided in the Amended Act 2016 for expressions HUF, fiduciary capacity and trustee in section 2(9) may be considered as clarificatory and the meaning thereof can be applied to the Benami Transactions (Prohibition) Act, 1988 prior to its amendment in 2016. Similar view has been expressed in the case of Manoj Arora v. Mamta Arora [2018] 96 taxmann.com 241 (Delhi) in the context of sec. 2(9)(A)(b) of the Benami Transactions (Prohibition) Amendment Act, 2016. Provisions of the Act providing for confiscation of properties found to be 'Benami' could be applied in respect of transactions carried out prior to 1-11-2016 - Tulsiram v. ACIT [2019] 112 taxmann.com 129 (Chhattisgarh).

17. Whether provisional attachment notice issued by an officer, who is not authorized to initiate proceedings under the Act, is valid: Where an officer, who is not empowered by the Act to initiate proceedings, cannot issue a provisional

attachment notice as such his act is beyond jurisdiction - Cascade Energy Pte Ltd. v. UOI [2018] 90 taxmann.com 28 (Madras).

18. Important amendments made by the Finance (No.2) Act, 2019 in Prohibition of Benami Property Transactions Act, 1988: These amendments are summarised hereunder:

a) Amendment of section 23 to provide that the prior approval of Approving Authority shall not be required where the Initiating Officer has already initiated proceedings by issuing notice u/s 24(1).

19. Onus to establish that a transaction is

a period of 45 days from the date of order.

e) Amendment of section 47 to provide for rectification of any mistake apparent on the face of the record by the Appellate Tribunal or any authority within a period of one year from the end of the month in which such order was passed.

f) Insertion of section 54A to provide for to provide for levy of penalty of Rs.25,000 for failure to comply with the summons issued or to furnish information u/s 19 or section 21 respectively of the PBPT Act.

g) Insertion of section 54B to provide for proof of entries in records/documents in any proceedings for the prosecution either by production of the records or other documents in the custody of the authority containing such entries or by the production of copy of the entries certified by the authority having custody of the record or other documents under its signature stating that it is a true copy of the original entries and that such original entries are contained in the records or other documents in its custody.

h) Insertion of section 55 to provide for no prosecution shall be instituted against any person in respect of any offence without the previous sanction of the competent authority.

20. Adjudicating Authority: The Finance Act, 2021 has substituted section 7 to prescribe that the competent authority authorized u/s 5(1) of the Smugglers and Foreign Exchange Manipulator (Forfeiture of Property) Act, 1976 shall be the Adjudicating Authority to exercise jurisdiction, powers and authority conferred by or under the PBPT Act, 1988.

21. Whether proceedings under Benami transactions can be initiated after 10 years of acquisition of property: In the case of Kalyan Buildmart (P.) Ltd. v. Initiating Officer [2021] 131 taxmann.com 99 (Rajasthan) [06-10-2021] it was held that the proceedings initiated after 10 years of the purchase of the property are highly belated. Ordinarily, any proceeding relating to benami transactions ought to be taken up immediately or at least within reasonable period of limitation of 3 years as generally provided under the Limitation Act, 1963.

benami: Apex Court in the case of Fair Communication & Consultants v. Surendra Kardile [2020] 113 taxmann.com 377 (SC)

held that onus of establishing that a transaction is benami is upon one who asserts it.

22. Whether a company can be treated as Benamidar of its shareholder where it has purchased the property in its own name:

Purchase of property by a company in its own name with share capital money cannot be said to be a benami transaction on the basis that it is a purchase of property in company's name with consideration provided by others (shareholders) since share capital contributions received by a company from its shareholders are company's own funds and assets; hence company cannot be treated as benamidar of its shareholders in respect of property held in its name.

The benami transaction would require one transaction made by one person in the name of another person where the funds are owned and paid by the first person to the seller while seller gets registered sale deed executed in favour of the second person i.e. from account of 'A', the amount is paid to 'C' who sells the property to 'B' and a registered sale deed is executed in favour of 'B'. Purchase of property by a company in its own name would not come within the purview of benami transaction because the funds of the company are its own assets. If promoters of the company namely, the

shareholders, their relatives or individuals who invest in the company by way of giving land or by way of gift or in any other manner, then such amounts/monies received, would be part of the net worth of the company and the company would be entitled to invest in any sector for which it has been formed. The transactions of the company are independent transactions which are only for the purpose of benefit of the company alone. It is a different aspect altogether that on account of benefit accruing to the company, the shareholders would also receive benefit and they may be beneficiaries to a certain extent. This would however not make shareholders as beneficial owners in terms of the definition as provided under Section 2(12) of the Benami Act, 1988.

'Company' as defined under the Companies Act, 1956 and incorporated thereunder, therefore, cannot be treated as benamidar as defined under the Benami Act, 1988- Kalyan Buildmart (P.) Ltd. v. Initiating Officer [2021] 131 taxmann.com 99 (Rajasthan) [06-10-2021].

**(Adv. Narayan Jain & CA Dilip Loyalka are the authors of famous book "How to Handle Income Tax Problems". Email npjainadv@gmail.com)**

## Let us embrace our humanity and love ourselves

By: Surjit Singh Flora



conducive to flourishing. Lack of self-love makes us forget our objectives, aspirations, and joyful, healthy days. Charles Bukowski said, "If you have the ability to love, love yourself first." Some believe self-love is ridiculous. This idea has permeated society: that self-lovers cannot love others. It seems mythical. Loving oneself is right because if you don't love yourself, you can't love others. Loving oneself and God allows one to love others.

Meditating for just 15 minutes each day can bring numerous benefits to your overall well-being. This text highlights the positive effects of releasing calming and happy hormones into the system. It emphasizes how these hormones can increase resilience and help individuals manage stressful situations in a calmer or more efficient manner. Day by day

they will start loving themselves.

It is important to embark on an inner journey towards self-forgiveness. We all make mistakes, no matter who we are or what we've done. It's just a part of being human. It's important to remember that we all have our flaws and imperfections. Instead of being too critical of ourselves, it's crucial to embrace our humanity and practice self-forgiveness. It is important to balance your current abilities with a dedication to personal growth and learning from future mistakes. This will allow you to develop as an individual and attain greater spiritual maturity.

Indulge in some self-care if you have the opportunity. Indulge in a soothing bath experience by adding some delightful scents and lighting candles. Take the time to fully immerse yourself in the warm water, allowing the fragrances to envelop you and

promoting deep relaxation. You deserve to be treated with care and indulgence, as a way of acknowledging your worth and importance.

It's important to acknowledge and appreciate your own strengths as part of practicing self-love. Compose a comprehensive inventory of your strengths and attributes as an individual. There's no need to be modest here, acknowledge your unique talents and qualities. Make sure to keep that list open for adding more answers as they come to mind.

Eliminate negativity from your life. Whether this comes in the form of individuals who consistently leave you feeling diminished or drained after spending time with them, or those who openly disregard your worth. These individuals are detrimental and

should not be included in the life of someone who cherishes a peaceful existence surrounded by caring and encouraging individuals.

I gained insights from various viewpoints. I criticized myself because I saw myself as an insignificant being. I despised myself for constantly comparing myself to others and feeling inferior. I never took into account my talent, my appearance, or my other positive attributes. Now I understand, and I feel absolutely amazing.

Sometimes it might be difficult to offer love to oneself because we have so many other things going through our heads that have the potential to bring us down rather quickly. On the other hand, if you have the appropriate resources and routines, you will be well on your way to liking yourself in no time at all! There is no more delay.

The reality is that every single person is capable of making that choice in an instant. In all honesty, loving oneself is not all that difficult. The challenging aspect is gaining a knowledge of the true significance of self-love and the repercussions of it, including how it can either make or destroy you.

I think it took me thirty years of my life to finally comprehend it. Hey!

Nevertheless, I have worked it out. I eventually came to the realization that I have the ability to choose to love myself even when I make significant errors, even when I am not flawless, even if I am unable to rescue the world, and even when I sometimes do harm to the people I care about. Despite the fact that other people are trying to persuade me that I do not deserve to be loved, I have come to the realization that I still have the ability to choose to love myself.

In addition, it is not difficult to make the decision to love oneself again and over again, regardless of

the circumstances. The most challenging aspect is ensuring that you do not forget to do it on a consistent basis since it is the most essential thing you can ever do.

As your self-esteem strengthens, you may notice a gradual decrease in any addictions you may have. It seems that you have used addictions as a way to fill an empty void or to escape from a lack of self-love.

However, as you learn to love yourself more, the need for these addictions diminishes. I decided to give up smoking, drinking, and recreation all substances once I reached a point of true self-awareness and self-acceptance.

The act of loving oneself encompasses more than just attending to one's physical well-being. The topic encompasses a wide range of subjects. One strategy for maintaining peace of mind is to avoid allowing others to have

an impact on your emotional state. Another approach is to focus on your own affairs and refrain from getting involved in the affairs of others. When it comes to prioritization, it is important to focus on oneself before others. Additionally, it is crucial to maintain a non-judgmental attitude in all situations. Lastly, it is essential to keep moving forward and continue to explore various aspects.

To tell you the truth, acquiring this knowledge is the most potent magic you can imagine, and it has the potential to alter your life in ways that you could never have anticipated. On the other hand, let's save that tale for another day.

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# 'Walking With M': A Documentary on Sri M's Epic Journey of Unity Premieres in Kolkata

Kolkata (ABHIJIT SETH):

Sagar Pictures Entertainment, in association with the Manav Ekta Mission, recently premiered the world-winning documentary 'Walking With M' in Kolkata at the Priya Cinema Hall. This highly anticipated event not only featured the screening of the documentary but also an interactive session with the film's protagonist, Sri Mumtaz Ali, and director Akash Sagar Chopra, offering attendees a unique opportunity to delve deeper into the making of this extraordinary film. Directed by Akash Sagar Chopra, 'Walking With M' is a cinematic masterpiece that captures the monumental journey of Padma Bhushan Awardee and best-selling author Sri Mumtaz Ali. Over seven

years in the making, the documentary was crafted from over 1,800 hours of archival footage, carefully condensed into a 1 hour 37-minute feature. It chronicles Sri M's epic 7,500-kilometer odyssey across India, traversing

11 states from Kanyakumari to Kashmir, in what is now known as the Walk of Hope 2015-2016. This walk, spanning 15 months, has earned its place in history as the longest peace march ever recorded in India. At its heart, 'Walking With M' is a testament to the resilience and unity of humanity. It follows Sri M, also known as Mumtaz Ali, a renowned Indian spiritual author and educationist, on his quest to bridge the divides

within a diverse nation. The Walk of Hope, or Asha Yatra, saw 80 dedicated travellers' journey alongside Sri M, endeavouring to unite India's varied cultural and social landscapes under the banner of peace and understanding. Reflecting on the walk, Sri M remarked, "Covering over 7,500km from Kanyakumari to Kashmir, we traversed through diverse villages, towns, and cities where we learnt a lot. More than what we could share, we ourselves discovered the true essence of Bharat—which we realized is truly united at its heart." His words capture the spirit of the documentary, which seeks to offer viewers a chance to partake in this transformative journey and experience the unseen movement that

shaped global history. Director Akash Sagar Chopra added, "Our attempt with this documentary is to give everyone an opportunity to be part of this transformative 7,500km journey and witness an unseen movement of global history while exploring the diverse,



beautiful, and ever-changing landscape of India." 'Walking With M' has garnered international acclaim, with successful screenings across eight European countries, captivating audiences at various community film festivals. The film has received numerous accolades, including the Best Documentary award at Film Fest International (Berlin FFI) 2023 and the Global Peace Award at The International Film Festival The Hague. It has also been recognized at several prestigious film festivals, including the Athens International

audiences nationwide. Sagar Pictures Entertainment is currently in discussions with distribution partners to bring the documentary to a global audience, ensuring that the spirit of Sri M's journey continues to resonate far and wide.

'Walking With M' is more than just a documentary; it is a celebration of the indomitable spirit of humanity, a reminder of the power of unity, and a call to action for all who seek to make a difference in a world that often feels divided. As Kolkata prepares to host the premiere, it offers an invitation to join in this incredible journey and witness the story of one man's unwavering quest to light a flame of hope and peace in a world yearning for change.

## Sensitivity is the basis of Poetry: Dr. Trikha



Chandigarh (JAG MOHAN THAKEN):

Director of Haryana Sahitya Akademi's Urdu Department, Dr. Chandra Trikha, said that 'sensitivity is the basis of poetry'. In poetry, the writers express their feelings, experiences, and observations in a sensitive manner. Dr. Trikha expressed his thoughts after launching Dr. Sarika Dhupar's book "Udgaar" at a literary event organized by Abhivakti Sanstha in the Microbiology Department of Panjab University. Dr. Sarika

Dhupar has recently received the "State Teachers Award" for her outstanding academic work.

Dr. Trikha appreciated Dr. Sarika's efforts and extended his best wishes for her future endeavours. He said that through poetry, a poet expresses the sensations within. If the reader finds their own emotions in the poetry, then the poet's writing is considered meaningful. Dr. Sarika Dhupar's poetry

collection "Udgaar" also meets this criterion. Earlier, Dr. Sarika Dhupar briefly discussed her poetry collection "Udgaar" and mentioned that it is her second publication, following "Abhisar". She acknowledged the significant support of her family in writing this collection. Dr. Sarika has uniquely interpreted the roles of Manthara and Kaikeyi from the Ramayana in her poetry, highlighting Manthara's dedication to her mistress Kaikeyi despite societal negativity. She

became emotional while expressing her heartfelt emotions and how she wove them into a poetic garland called "Udgaar".

Renowned writer and psychology professor, Prof. Gurdeep 'Gul' Dheer, also praised Dr. Sarika Dhupar's poetry collection "Udgaar", citing examples of how poets and writers express their emotions through their work. Vijay Kapoor, a well-known poet, writer, and actor, also appreciated the emotions conveyed in Dr. Sarika Dhupar's poetry collection "Udgaar".

Dr. Sarika Dhupar's mother, Dr. Manju Arya, shared her daughter's journey from childhood to the present, showcasing her talent to the audience. The event was attended by several educators and writers, including Dr. Hemant Verma.

Manila (KCN): The Philippines said Sunday it had arrested a pastor wanted in the United States for child sex trafficking, two weeks into a massive police manhunt for the self-proclaimed "Appointed Son of God".

Apollo Quiboloy, who has close relations with former president Rodrigo Duterte, is the founder of the Philippines-based Kingdom of Jesus Christ (KOJC) church that claims millions of members.

He was charged by the US Justice Department in 2021 with sex trafficking of girls and women between the ages of 12 and 25 to work as personal assistants, or "pastorals", who were allegedly required to have sex with him.

"Apollo Quiboloy has been arrested," Interior Secretary Benjamin Abalos said on his official Facebook page.

Quiboloy is also sought for cash smuggling and a scheme that brought church members to the US using fraudulently obtained visas.

They were then forced to



solicit donations for a bogus charity, raising funds that were instead used to finance church operations and the lavish lifestyles of its leaders, according to the FBI.

It is not known if the US has sought extradition for Quiboloy, aged at least 74 according to the US Federal Bureau of Investigation.

A US embassy spokesman referred media queries to the Philippine authorities.

The politically connected pastor has also been charged with human trafficking in a Philippine court.

- 'Concerted effort' - Brigadier-General Nicolas Torre, the regional police

imprisonment and interrogation.

Some 2,000 police were deployed at the KOJC headquarters in the southern city of Davao on August 24 to serve an arrest warrant against Quiboloy.

Duterte and his daughter -- incumbent Vice President Sara Duterte who has had a falling out with President Ferdinand Marcos -- had publicly criticised the police raid of the sect's 30-hectare (70-acre) property as they searched for Quiboloy.

Minutes after Quiboloy's arrest was announced, SMNI, a Philippine television station run by his sect, posted on its Facebook page pictures of members embracing uniformed police officers. "After all the pains and struggles, it is evident that the KOJC missionaries have embraced Pastor Apollo Quiboloy's teaching to love not only their neighbours but even their enemies," it said in a message accompanying the photos.

## Jaga Kalia Charitable Foundation Launched in New Delhi

New Delhi, (KCN):

A newly formed Non-Government Organization (NGO) Jaga Kalia Charitable Foundation (JKCF), was officially launched in New Delhi on the auspicious occasion of Ganesh Chaturthi today. The inaugural ceremony at Shree Jagannath Temple in Hauz Khas Village was marked by pomp, splendour and fanfare. Many prominent Community leaders, Social Activists and Volunteers have gathered in the Temple premises to witness the launching session. Unusual enthusiasms and unprecedented excitements were visible among the members and well-wishers of the newly established Foundation during the function. Founder Director-cum-Chairman of the Organisation, former Senior Director of

National Informatics Centre and Advocate Umakant Jena, other two Founder Directors Gopal Satpathy and Raghunandan Deo unveiled the Logo of the Foundation and placed it at the Lotus Feet of the Lord of the Universe.

Addressing the Congregation, Chairman of World Human Rights Protection Organisation, Dr. Abhinna Hota expressed hope that the organization would uphold the philosophy and principles of the Jagannath cult, while promoting the rich culture and diverse heritage of Odisha. A special puja was conducted at the temple, seeking divine blessings for the well-being of the Foundation. In their good will messages Secretary of Jagannath Temple's Management Committee, Sree



Neelachal Seva Sangha Ravinder Nath Pradhan and Chairman of World Odisha Society Kishore Dwibedi heartily congratulated the Chairman Shri Jena, other office bearers and members of JKCF and wished the Foundation GOD Speed and all out success.

Delivering his speech Foundation's Founder Chairman, Umakant Jena appealed people with constructive and positive mindsets to join

the Foundation to carry forward its mission to enhance the quality of life and strive for holistic human development. Shri Jena informed that the Foundation has been registered as a Non Profit Organization under Section 8 of the Companies Act, 2013, with the Ministry of Corporate Affairs, Government of India.

Outlining the aims and objectives of the Organisation, Shri Jena explained that JKCF

shall work across a broad spectrum of areas for societal betterment and upliftment of the underprivileged. The key focus areas include:

Promotion of Education, Augmentation of Healthcare, Emphasising on Skill Development and Training, Protection of Environment, Women Empowerment, Promotion of Art and Culture, Development of Sports, Safeguarding Children's Rights and undertaking their Welfare, Old Age Care, Facilitating Legal Aid and Awareness, Rural Development, Supplying clean Drinking Water and ensuring Water Conservation, Providing Relief and initiating rehabilitation during disaster and championing various other social issues for

the benefit of society at large, Shri Jena added. The Jaga Kalia Charitable Foundation is all set to embark on a journey dedicated to social Justice and inclusive growth with an aim of fostering a better and ideal society, Shri Jena declared.

Distinguished dignitaries present during the launching ceremony include Rabindra Satpathy, CA, Tapaswini Deo, Prof. D.P. Mishra, Dr. L.P. Sharma, Dr. Arvind, Manoj Panigrahi, Anirudh Nayak, Pralay Bahali, Manoj Mohapatra, Sahashrashu Mohapatra, Chayan Rajput, Ananga Kar, Ratikant Raut, Mahadev Kumar Khanal, C.L. Ghimirey, Pradeep Rasaily and Ghanshyam Sharma.

# Senior BJD leader calls for introspection in party after two party MPs quit party to join BJP

## Bhubaneswar(KCN):

With two Rajya Sabha MPs of opposition Biju Janata Dal quitting the party within one month and joining the BJP, a leader of the regional outfit called for introspection in the party while others claimed that it will have no impact on the BJD.

The resignation of Mamata Mohanta and Sujit Kumar from the BJD and joining the BJP, has come as a major blow for the regional outfit which ruled Odisha for 24-years.

With the resignation of Mohanata and Kumar, BJD — which has no member in the Lok Sabha

for the first time since its inception in 1997 — now has seven MPs in the Rajya Sabha. Odisha has 10 Raya Sabha seats of which earlier 9 were with BJD and one BJP's Ashwini Vaishnav was elected to the Upper House of Parliament with the support of the BJD.

# Sad Letters of an Imaginary Woman Creates History! All Set to Debut at The Busan International Film Festival 2024

**Bhubaneswar(KCN)** : Nidhi Saxena's *Sad Letters of an Imaginary Woman* is all set to premiere at the prestigious 29th edition of the Busan International Film Festival (BIFF) this October! The film, premiering under the "A Window on Asian Cinema" section, has created history already. The director of the gripping film, Nidhi Saxena, became the first Indian female director to earn the distinguished honour of the Asian Cinema Fund in 2024 in the

Post-Production category for her debut film. *Sad Letters of an Imaginary Woman*, produced by Nila Madhab Panda, Vimalakthi Jayasundara, Ajender Singh, delves into themes of memory and identity. It follows a middle-aged woman, haunted by the ghosts of her past as she reaches out to her younger self through letters and phone calls. Confined with her elderly mother in their crumbling ancestral

Celebrating Multilingual Excellence: NIF Translation Fellowship Winners 2024-25 Announced

Wednesday: The New India Foundation (NIF) is pleased to announce the winners of Round 2 of the NIF Translation Fellowships in the 2024-25 cycle. Aimed at encouraging translations from important non-fiction works across 10 Indian languages (Assamese, Bangla, Gujarati, Hindi, Kannada, Marathi, Malayalam, Odia, Tamil, Urdu) to English, the NIF Translation Fellowships showcase the country's rich history of knowledge texts across diverse literary traditions.

Awarded for a period of 6 months with a stipend of 6 lakhs to each recipient, the Translation Fellowships bring historical Indian-language texts published after 1850 towards English publication. Editorial and financial support are also offered alongside the opportunity to work with the NIF's Trustees, and the Language Expert Committee consisting of distinguished bilingual scholars and writers. The NIF aims to expand upon its mission of supporting knowledge

**Dalmia Bharat Celebrates Empowerment of 18000 women on International Day of Rural Women**

**Bhubaneswar(KCN)**: Dalmia Bharat Group, India's leading conglomerate with businesses in cement and sugar, announces the success of 18000 empowerment of 18000 women on International Day of Rural Women. Through the establishment of Self-Help Groups (SHGs), these women are provided essential skill training and access to vital resources for sustainable livelihood development. In collaboration with various organisations like NRLM, NABARD, etc. Dalmia Bharat organizes various training initiatives like micro-enterprise development, handicraft production and others in both farming and non-farming sectors. All these activities are conducted in communities settled around their regions of operation across 12 states in India. These initiatives aim to upskill rural women to empower them, diversify their income sources and provide access to formal credit systems. Two notable initiatives in Odisha include Project Hastakala – upskilling women artisans and enterprise development via mushroom cultivation in communities surrounding its facilities in

Cuttack, Rajgpur, and Lanjiberna Mines. Dalmia Bharat has enabled over 10,000 women in Odisha to become financially independent earning a monthly income ranging from Rs.4000 to Rs8000, significantly improving their individual well-being and the ability to support their families. Commenting on the company's initiatives on International Day of Rural Women Mr. Ashok K. Gupta, CEO, Dalmia Bharat Foundation said, "Rural women in developing countries play a vital role in food security and economic development but face severe marginalization, including limited land ownership, higher illiteracy rates and unequal earnings compared to men. Dalmia Bharat is dedicated to uplifting marginalized rural women through holistic programs that bolster their income while managing household responsibilities. Our commitment aligns with UN Sustainable Goals, promoting self-reliance and gender equality for an inclusive and sustainable India, where empowered women drive community and national development."

Project Hastakala is an 'earning with joy' skill

development programme where women are trained in the unique tie & dye batik products. This project is conducted in tribal areas of Jhagarpur & Katang panchayat in Odisha. After witnessing immense success at national exhibitions, Dalmia Bharat introduced the SADRI brand for promoting the handmade batik products like bedsheets, handkerchiefs, scarves etc. through multiple marketing platforms. Another successful initiative includes enterprise development through mushroom cultivation. Dalmia Bharat actively facilitates training programs and market linkage support for SHG women, equipping them to earn an additional monthly income of Rs. 5000 by establishing their own cultivation units.

International Day of Rural Women, observed annually on 15th October, celebrates the vital role of rural women in agriculture, food security, and rural development. It highlights the need to empower them, address inequalities, and aligns with global goals for gender equality and sustainable development.

The WHEC aims to reshape ideas and practices in higher



home, they desire to break free from the current state of their lives through a vanishing ritual. Director Nidhi Saxena, speaking about her

debut project, shared, "It is a great honour and very empowering to receive the honour of the Asian Cinema Fund,

especially since it marks a milestone for women in Indian cinema. I am glad that the critics are

resonating with the same, and are giving me the opportunity to spread my wings! I am very excited for *Sad Letters of an Imaginary Woman* to debut at the Busan International Film Festival. This film is very personal to me, like an important letter or an anxious phone call that I'm making to the world. There's a painting by Frida, 'The Two Fridas', a double self portrait of two Fridas sitting together hand in hand. She tries

to support herself through the loneliness that haunts her. My film is similar to that in a way."

Producer Nila Madhab Panda shared, "I am elated for the film to get an international platform! *Sad Letters to an Imaginary Woman* is a wonderful film that dives deep into complex themes and to see it presented on the big stage is a truly surreal feeling.

As a recipient of the Asian Cinema Fund and her film to be presented at the Busan International Film Festival, Nidhi Saxena's achievement highlights her talent and marks a significant moment for Indian cinema on the global stage. Her story is a testament to the growing influence of Indian women in the international film industry.

## MIC Electronics Ltd. Receives Completion Certificate from Western Railway

**Bhubaneswar** : MIC Electronics Limited, a global leader in the design, development, and manufacturing of LED video displays, has received Letter of Completion / Installation Certificate from Ratlam Division of Western Railway Zone for replacement of train display

board, Provision of new CGS Boards at NMH PF 02, Train Display Boards & GPS Clocks at 33 Nos. stations under MEA, replacement of Analog/GPS clocks.

The company also announced that it closed its QIP issue, and the board approved the issue and

allotment of 1,95,65,217 equity shares to eligible qualified institutional buyers at the issue price of ₹ 46 per shares. Amongst the QIBs, the company allotted shares to Antara India Evergreen Fund Ltd., Coeus Global Opportunities Fund, and Minerva Ventures Fund.

Recently the company had announced that it received a Letter of Acceptance from the Firozpur Division of the Northern Railway Zone for the provision of coach guidance display boards at major and important stations in the Firozpur (FZR) Division. The aggregate

## 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.

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

## EXCEPTIONAL EXPERIENCES AWAITS 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 \$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 thoughtful and 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,

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,



# Mark Wood out of action for rest of year due to elbow injury

**New Delhi:** Pacer Mark Wood will miss England's tours of Pakistan and New Zealand as he has been ruled out for the remainder of the year due to a bone-stress injury to his right elbow. According to an England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) release, the 34-year-old "had noticed increasing stiffness and discomfort in his elbow" during the two-match Test series against the West Indies. He also played in the first Test against Sri Lanka in which he suffered a right thigh injury. The ECB stated that Wood is recovering well from the thigh injury which had initially ruled him out of the rest of the summer. In an Instagram post, Wood revealed that he had gone for what he thought was a routine



elbow scan when the extent of the injury came to light.

"During what I thought was routine check on a previously troublesome elbow, I was shocked to learn I've got some bone stress in my right elbow," Wood said in his post.

"After the minor groin injury at Emirates Old Trafford, me and the medical team felt it was a good time to get my elbow looked at as it was a bit irritated. I'd put that down to the normal niggles every fast bowler gets and which I was

playing through. "I'm especially surprised because I've been playing Test cricket and kept my speeds up," he said. "I work incredibly hard on my fitness, putting in extra work with coaches and physios making this even more

disappointing. However, I guess this is, part of being a fast bowler", like Stokes says."

Wood said he is confident of being back in action early next year. "I will miss the rest of the year needing time to rest and build up, fully expecting to be back and firing in early 2025. I have been down this path before and will put in all the hard yards behind the scenes. I am very proud to represent my country and there is no better feeling." Olly Stone featured for England in the second Test against Sri Lanka at Lord's in Wood's absence while Josh Hull, the 20-year-old left-arm seamer, made his debut in The Oval Test. England will tour Pakistan in October for three Tests and will go to New Zealand in December for three more Tests.



Mohammad Amir got two early wickets

## Brij Bhushan takes 'cheating' dig at Vinesh Phogat, cites Olympic weight row

**New Delhi:** BJP leader Brij Bhushan Singh accused Olympic wrestler Vinesh Phogat of cheating to attend the games, claiming she didn't win a medal because God had punished her.

BJP targets Phogat, Punia after their Congress entry on Friday

Former BJP MP Brij Bhushan Singh, against whom wrestlers had levelled sexual harassment allegations, accused Olympic wrestler Vinesh Phogat of cheating to attend the games. He claimed that Phogat could not win a medal because God had punished her.

"I want to ask Vinesh Phogat whether a player can give trials in two weight categories in one day? Can the trials be paused for five hours after the weigh-in?... You did not win the wrestling; you went there by cheating. God has punished you for it," the former Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) president said.



His comments came a day after Congress named Phogat as the candidate for the Haryana Assembly election from Julian.

The BJP leader also alleged that Bajrang Punia participated in the Asian Games without completing the trials.

"Haryana is the crown of India in the field of sports. And they stopped the wrestling activities for almost 2.5 years. Is it not

true that Bajrang went to the Asian Games without trials? I want to ask those who are experts in wrestling," Bhushan told news agency ANI.

Phogat and Punia, who were at the forefront of the wrestlers' protest against Brij Bhushan last year, marked their political entry on Friday by joining the Congress. While Phogat was fielded for the polls, Punia was appointed as the working

chairman of the All India Kisan Congress.

Continuing his attacks against the wrestlers, Bhushan further asserted that he is "not guilty of disrespecting daughters" and said, "If anyone is guilty of disrespecting daughters, it is Bajrang and Vinesh. And the one who wrote the script, Bhupinder Hooda, is responsible for that". Bhushan also mentioned that he will join the

campaign for the BJP in Haryana if the party asks. On Friday, he said that any BJP candidate will defeat Phogat in Haryana.

Phogat, after joining the party, had said the BJP was supporting Singh while the Congress supported the protesting wrestlers when they "were being dragged on the roads" in Delhi.

Punia also echoed Phogat, saying that the Congress stood with them during their tough times.

"What the BJP IT Cell is saying today is that we just wanted to do politics. We had written to all women BJP MPs to stand with us but they didn't come. We are paying the price for raising our voices for women but now we know that the BJP stands with atrocities against women at Jantar Mantar and all other parties stand with us," he said. BJP leaders alleged that the wrestlers' protest was a 'conspiracy' by the Congress to target BJP.

## Rahmat banks on Noida familiarity, refined technique to challenge NZ

**New Delhi:** Despite facing New Zealand for the first time in Test cricket and the significant gap in experience between the two teams, Rahmat Shah is confident that Afghanistan will present a strong challenge for the opposition.

Playing in Noida, on the outskirts of Delhi, where Afghanistan has previously played six T20Is and five ODIs, offers the Asian team a sense of familiarity, said Rahmat, who also said the team will be keen to seize the limited opportunities in the longest format.

"This Test is important. We have got only one Test match against them," said Rahmat in a chat with Cricbuzz.

"We will try to give them a tough time. They have won the ICC Test Championship and we tried to have the best of preparations and we are looking forward to the challenge that is lying ahead.

"Our past experience in India will help us. We had our home ground in Noida and in Lucknow, and we have played a lot of matches here and done a lot of camps here. We are also accustomed with the



weather and pitch conditions of India, so we certainly have an edge," he said.

Rahmat, the 31-year-old No. 3 batter, stands out in Afghanistan's T20-heavy cricket scene. The leading run-scorer for his team in Tests and ODIs, Rahmat avoids reckless shots, focusing on preserving his wicket.

Rahmat discussed the technical tweaks he's made to his batting, focusing on better alignment and footwork to stabilise his wicket.

"I just tried to concentrate more and

practice more (to make some technical adjustments). Earlier my shoulder used to get open and I tried to make it sideways and tried to straighten my alignment. "When the fast bowler used to come I used to move towards off stump a bit more and as a result I used to fall down. I used to play my shot through my wrist but now I am trying to take my feet and just worked hard to get it (the new technique) into my batting template."

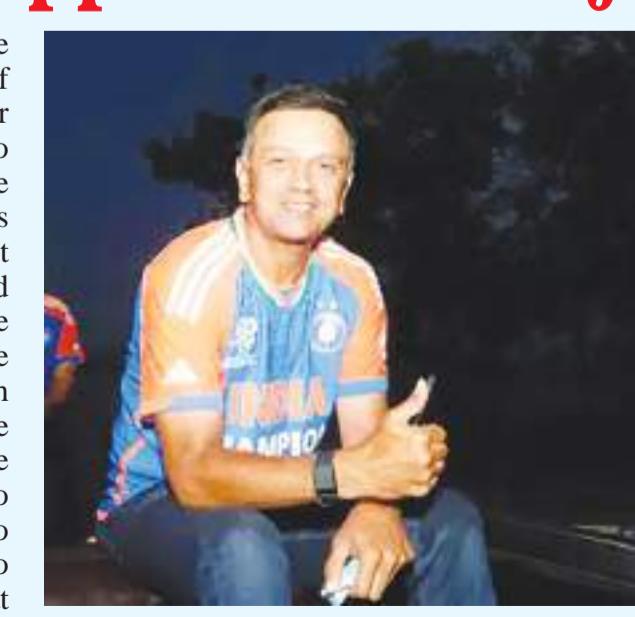
The one-off Test between Afghanistan and New Zealand in Noida begins on September 9.

## Rahul Dravid officially appointed as Rajasthan Royals head coach

**New Delhi:** Rahul Dravid was officially confirmed as the head coach of the Rajasthan Royals on Friday (September 6). Dravid recently saw out his term as the head coach of the senior men's Indian team and finished his tenure by winning the 2024 T20 World Cup in West Indies and the USA.

Dravid has been closely associated with the Royals franchise in both playing and coaching

capacities. He played and captained the team between 2011 and 2013 before transitioning to a mentor role for the 2014 season. Dravid also served as a mentor for the Delhi Daredevils before giving up his IPL positions after being named to coach the India A and U-19 teams. That path eventually led him to coach the senior men's Indian team from 2021. At the Royals, Dravid



will work in close synergy with Director of Cricket Kumar Sangakkara, who served as coach over the past four years. "Rahul is one of the greatest players to have played the game, but what he has achieved over the past decade as a coach is extraordinary. The characteristics that he possesses as a coach to nurture talent but also enable them to consistently perform at

the highest level, will allow the Rajasthan Royals to further challenge for the title," Sangakkara said.

"I've already had some meaningful conversations with him about his vision for this team, and he is looking forward to delivering the results for the Royals." Speaking about his return to the Royals, Dravid said: "I am pleased to be returning to the franchise I have

called 'home' for a number of years in the past," he said. "After the World Cup, I feel it's the ideal time for me to take on another challenge, and the Royals is the perfect place to do that."

"A lot of hard work and deliberations from Manoj, Jake, Kumar and the team has gone into the progression that the franchise has made over the past few years. It's an exciting opportunity for us to take this team to the next level given the kind of talent and resources we have at our disposal and I'm looking forward to getting started."

Dravid, who has already begun work at the franchise, will now be tasked with making decisions on the team's retentions once the rules are made public by BCCI and then assembling the squad he wants at the auction.