

Odisha seeks Norway support

Bhubaneswar(KCN): With the Odisha Government moving ahead to scale up Sea Food Exports to Rs.20,000 Crores in next five years, experts see lot of opportunities in Norwegian collaboration to explore Sea Food processing, Marine Cage Culture and Recirculatory Aquaculture Technology in the State for mutual development.

An interactive seminar was organized in Mayfair Hotel and Resorts here on 22 March on the occasion of State visit of the Ambassador of Norway to India, Nils Ragnar Kamsvag and other delegates.

Gagan Kumar Dhal, Agriculture Production Commissioner, Bishnupada Sethi, Secretary, F & ARD Department, B KUPadhyaya, Director of Fisheries, and Ajay Dash, President, Sea Food Exporters Association of India (Odisha Region) were present on the occasion along with Exporters, Progressive Fish Farmers, leading Traders and other leaders of Industries including representatives from Utkal Chamber of Commerce and Industries as well as officials from Government.

In his address, the

Agriculture Production Commissioner (APC) Mr.Dhal spoke about the technological developments made by Norway in Aquacul-

going to be organized from 15th to 18th of August. This mega event is not restricted to exports, but more about green technology in the aquacul-

looked forward to exchange of ideas and visit to Norway for firsthand experience on the best practices in that Country by a delegation from

sensation hinted about the historic and economic importance of Odisha and Norway and called for mutual dialogue in the domain of organic

Ms. Bhatia also spoke of significant developments made by Norway in the field of Cage Culture, Sea Food Processing, Land based RACs,



ture sector and emphasized on partnership with Norwegian enterprisers.

Ambassador of Norway to India said that Norway has a distinct history of Sea Food Export which dates back to 1875. The Ambassador discussed about technology developed for deep sea fishing and called for more consumption of calorie from Sea Food, which he said, is still used very minimally.

He hinted about AQUANOR which is the biggest Sea Food Fair in Norway and in 2017, this event is

He invited the Exporters and Industry leaders to participate in the event.

Mr. Sethi, Secretary, F & ARD Department welcomed His Excellency and his delegation to Odisha and said that Norway was an example for the world in many ways.

So far as Happiness Index is concerned, Norway ranks No.1 in the World and so far as Sea Food Exports is concerned, it is the second biggest Exporter in terms of value.

Mr. Sethi also

Odisha.

He discussed about the role of NICCI (Norway India Chamber of Commerce and Industry), an independent Association promoting business relations between Norway and India.

Director of Fisheries Dr.Upadhyaya welcomed the dignitaries and highlighted the resource potential in aquaculture and marine sector of Odisha.

Prof. Kamalesh Mishra, Vice President, Sea Food Exporters Association of India (OR) in his pre-

shrimp culture, cage culture and exchange of ideas between Norway and Odisha.

Prof. Mishra in his presentation pointed out that technology in aquaculture has contributed a lot to the development of this sector in Norway and hoped for technology transfer.

On behalf of Norwegian delegation, Ms. Arti Bhatia Kumar, Market Advisor gave a presentation and she highlighted the vision of Norway to go global and fulfill all noble goals set by United Nations.

Ocean farming, Electric Fishing Vessels as well as Joint Working Group (JWG) in the field of Marine Sector. She also hinted about mutual collaboration in the field of Aquaculture.

In interaction session, the Sea Food Exporters and Norwegian delegates exchanged views on issues of bilateral trade interest keeping in view the typical climatic disparities of Norway and Odisha. It was also discussed to take this initiative forward on mutual interest.

Pakistan raises Kashmir rhetoric on National Day

NEW DELHI(KCN): Pakistan on its national day on Thursday upped its Kashmir rhetoric with its High Commissioner in Delhi Abdul Basit commenting on the aspirations of the denizens of the Valley. This has not gone down well with the Indian establishment that termed the statement beyond the diplomatic niceties.

In response to Basit's statement, Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) Gopal Baglay said: "They (Basit's statement on Kashmir) are not in keeping with diplomatic niceties and are tantamount to interference in our internal

neighbourhood as well as Pakistan's relations with other countries.

Basit in his National Day speech at the Pakistan embassy contended that the solution to the Jammu and Kashmir issue needs to take the aspirations of the Kashmiris into account and wished that one day the struggle will prove successful.

"As far as the Jammu and Kashmir issue is concerned, it should be resolved as per the aspirations of Kashmiris and hopefully it will be. We hope that we will resolve the issue but as per the aspirations of Kashmiris," Basit said.



affairs."

The MEA Spokesperson tersely advised Pakistan to "effectively address the challenge of terrorism emanating from the country" that has adversely affected peace and stability in the entire

"And, I hope the struggle of the Kashmiris will, god willing, prove successful," he said, without elaborating what he meant by being successful.

The year 2016 has been annus *See page -7*

Ray meets PM

Delhi(KCN): While congratulating the Prime Minister Narendra Modi over landslide victory of BJP in both Uttar

Pradesh and Uttarakhand, where Modi Wave swept the key states of the country, Former Union Minister and BJP Lawmaker Dilip Ray pressed for fulfillment of various demands of Odisha.

Mr.Ray met the Prime Minister Mr.Modi here and said two promises

made to the people of the State in general and Rourkela in particular needs his attention.

Mr.Modi has promised to upgrade Ispat General Hospital (IGH), Rourkela to a Super Speciality Hospital cum Medical College and River Over Bridge at Brahmani River and

Development of Biramitrapur-Barkote National Highway.

Mr.Ray said he is following up the matter with Dharmendra Pradhan, Union Min-

ister Petroleum and Natural Gas, Jual Oram, Union Minister Tribal Affairs, as well as with Union Minister for Steel and Union Minister Road Transport and Highways. However there is hardly any headway with no sign of commencement of the projects in a timeline manner.

Saffron Lawmaker pointed out that strength of Senior Doctors in IGH is dwindling and now it has gone down to 99. The inability of Junior Doctors, due to lesser expertise and experience has forced the patients to shift to specialized centres in any eventuality with risk to life, at additional cost.

It was decided that few branches at IGH to *See Page-7*

Naveen urges for dredging

Bhubaneswar(KCN): Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik today urged the Union Minister Shipping, Road Transport & Highways, Nitin Gadkari to direct the Paradip Port Trust (PPT) to take up dredging of the Mahanadi river mouth and the navigational channel for smooth navigation of fishing vessels.

"I would request you to issue appropriate instructions to PPT to take up dredging of the river mouth and the navigational channel urgently for smooth and safe navigation of fishing vessels," Mr.Patnaik wrote to the Union Minister.

Stating that Paradip fishing harbour is a major fish landing centre in the east coast, Mr.Patnaik said about 640 mechanised fishing vessels and 100 FRP

boats operated there.Besides, about 30,000 people were engaged directly and indirectly in Paradip.

up dredging of the navigational channel during 1997-98 but since then no maintenance dredging has

It is reported that the depth available at the river mouth is less than one meter though the fishing vessels require a minimum depth of 4 meters for smooth and safe navigation. The fishermen have been demanding for dredging of the river mouth for reduction in accidents which are showing an increasing trend, he said.

The Central Institute of Coastal Engineering for Fishery, Bengaluru, has reported that due to the beach nourishment work taken up by the port trust for protection of the sea wall, the siltation at Mahanadi river mouth has been aggravated and no remedial measures have been taken to arrest the movement of sand towards the river mouth and navigation channel, Chief Minister said.



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The Harbour was developed under the centrally sponsored scheme of the Ministry of Agriculture & Cooperation in 1996. The PPT has been managing and marinating the harbour before 2011."The port authorities had taken

been carried out," Mr.Patnaik said.

Presently, Mr. Patnaik said that the fishing harbour was being managed by a management society having suitable representations from the fishermen and other stakeholders.

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Ollywood actors Sambit Acharya and Pinky Priyadarshini are busy in shooting of "Lehichi Naa Tora" Odia Film Now -a- days.

Bigg Boss 10: Who will win the show? Cast your votes

Bigg Boss 10 will come to an end on January 29 with Salman Khan announcing the winner of the show.

From the beginning of the season, Manveer Gurjar attracted all the lime-light with his rough and tough personality. But, he managed to get into action only after teaming up with fellow commoner

Manu Punjabi herself with dignity on the show and unlike many other contestants, she never stooped to win. Despite having ugly fights with Lopamudra, Priyanka Jagga, and Swami Om, she never let her confidence go. But she disappointed her fans when it came to performing physical tasks. The fitness freak left many tasks in between and was even heard saying that she does not have that passion for performing the tasks wholeheartedly. But her popularity worked in her favour and she managed to survive despite being nominated many times. The star host of the show, Salman Khan too supported her, which didn't go down well with other contestants who found Salman biased.

Manu Punjabi entertained the audience from the very first day. His mimicry

Lopamudra Raut became everyone's favourite inside the house because of her habit of taking a stand against the wrong. Salman Khan too praised her for standing up against all the wrongs that were happening inside the house. She was the first one to warn Swami Om to watch his words. Her strong will power and confidence made her the winner of many tasks. But the beauty queen lost the track in last few weeks. Her shrieking voice and her crude comments left a negative impact on her dignified personality. Even Manu and Manveer who always looked her in a good light developed a dislike turned against her. Things got worse after she questioned the decisions of Bigg Boss.

In tax clarity bid to foreign entities

NEW DELHI(K-CN) : In a bid to bring clarity in tax rules for foreign entities in India and their transactions, the Central government on Friday said the General Anti-Avoidance Rule (GAAR) aimed at plugging taxation loopholes, yet recognising genuine players, will be applicable from 2017-18.

"Stakeholders and industry associations had requested for clarification on implementation of GAAR provisions and a working group was constituted by the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) to examine the issues raised," an official statement said.

"Accordingly, CBDT has issued the clarifications on implementation of GAAR provisions today," it added.

Among the provisions, if the jurisdiction of a foreign portfolio investor is finalised based on non-tax commercial considerations and the main purpose of the arrangement is not to obtain tax benefit, these rules will not apply.

They will also not interplay with the right of the taxpayer to select the method of implementing a transaction. Further, grandfathering (or the application of old rules on certain transactions) will be available in investments made prior to April 1 this year.



nouncing the winner of the show. The commoners, Manu and Manveer, have been giving a tough competition to celebs Bani and Lopamudra. Manveer's humongous fan following is no news whereas Bani's supporters have already declared her a winner of the show.

However, Manu Punjabi and Lopamudra are still trying to catch up on the votes by keeping themselves available for the cameras all day long. With only a few hours left for the voting lines to close, we ask our readers to cast their votes for their favourite contestant.

More from the world of Entertainment

traced all the lime-light with his rough and tough personality. But, he managed to get into action only after teaming up with fellow commoner Manu Punjabi. He emerged as the only contestant who never indulged in back-biting. The short-tempered man surprisingly never lost his temper with infamous Swami Om. He also became a topic of discussion for his link-up with Nitibha Kaul. Manveer has managed his journey by staying true to his friends and his beliefs.

Also read | Bigg Boss 10: Manveer Gurjar is a potential winner of the show. Here's why Bani J carried

found Salman biased. skills brought a smile on many faces and his friendship with Mona Lisa became a topic of discussion not only inside the house but also in the outside world. His popularity got affected after he had to make an unceremonious exit because of his mother's demise. He returned to the house as a changed man and was seen back-biting about his dear friend Manveer many times. His changed attitude didn't go down well with the audience and with Salman Khan. Though he tried to get back on track in the last few days but his scuffles with Manveer has portrayed him in a bad light. Lopamudra-rout-1

habit of taking a stand against the wrong. Salman Khan too praised her for standing up against all the wrongs that were happening inside the house. She was the first one to warn Swami Om to watch his words. Her strong will power and confidence made her the winner of many tasks. But the beauty queen lost the track in last few weeks. Her shrieking voice and her crude comments left a negative impact on her dignified personality. Even Manu and Manveer who always looked her in a good light developed a dislike turned against her. Things got worse after she questioned the decisions of Bigg Boss.

Indian companies not using mobile

NEW DELHI(KC-N): Although strong in applicant tracking system and video interviewing, many companies in India are not using mobile recruiting tools that help make the talent acquisition process more efficient, says a survey.

According to the Korn Ferry Futurestep Survey, in India professionals are not taking advantage of tools, technology and business strategy as 4 out of 5 (81 per cent) talent acquisition leaders do not use mobile recruiting tools.

"Young people are searching for positions using their phones and they expect to be able to apply via their smartphones, however 81 per cent Indian talent acquisition leaders do not use mobile recruiting tools," said Sue Campbell, managing director, Asia, Korn Ferry Futurestep.

The survey further said that only 50 per cent of India respondents report that their recruitment team is aligned to their organisation's business objectives, and 19 per cent admit

they don't have a strategic workforce plan, which helps them map future talent needs to business strategy.

"It's critical that talent professionals work closely with the company's business and hiring managers to define and communicate the employer value proposition - why a candidate would choose their organisation over a competitor," Campbell said.

Regarding recruitment process outsourcing (RPO), it said that in India employers work with

RPO partners mainly for sourcing and screening candidates.

Relatively few organisations use other services that RPOs offer, such as employer branding, building talent communities, or creating metrics for reporting and decision making.

Only 10 per cent of respondents in India are using employer branding services from RPO partners. This is low when compared to global at 13 per cent and APAC at 16 per cent, the survey said.

Aadhaar For Bank AC

Bhubaneswar (KC-CN): In next few days all the Bank Accounts in the Country will be seeded with Aadhaar and Mobile, thanks to the overdrive of the Union Government.

Accordingly, the State Governments have been approached by the Government of India in the Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology (MeitY) to speed up the matter with regular monitoring.

Aruna Sundarajan, Secretary, MeitY has informed the State Government that by 31 March, 2017, all the Bank Accounts will be seeded with Aadhaar and Mobile.

As the Government of India has decided to promote digital transactions for faster and inclusive growth, so this massive move is taken up by the MeitY, as this Ministry has been given mandate to promote digital transaction in the Country.

Ms. Sundarajan has said that in order to un-

dertake digital transactions, Mobile and Aadhaar seeding of all the Bank Accounts along with enablement of Mobile Transactions, which is necessary.

While Union Gov-

seeded with Aadhaar and 65 Percent of Bank Accounts are connected with Mobile.

Under this backdrop, to seed 100 Percent bank Account with Aadhaar and Mobile

with Aadhaar and Mobile, Ministry of Human Resources Development (MH-RD) is also impressing upon the State Government for enrolling all beneficiaries under Mid Day Meal (MDM)

Scheme and Sarva Sikshya Abhiyan (SSA). Anil Swarup, Secretary School Education and Literacy under MHRD has requested the Odisha Government to facilitate Aadhaar Enrolment of all the individuals desirous to avail benefits of MDM and SSA.

However the MHRD has given deadline of 30 June, 2017 for Aadhaar Enrolment for MDM and SSA.

And for Rashtriya Madh-yamik Sikhya Abhiyan (RMSA), MHRD has given deadline for Aadhaar Applications.

Mr. Swarup said that in order to provide benefits of MDM, SSA and RMSA in a convenient and seamless manner, the State Government is needed to take up the matter on a priority basis.

He has urged the State Government to make arrangement for One Time Enrolment Drive in each school of the state in coordination with UIDAI.

And he has advised for a robust Management Information System (MIS), which needs to be connected to Aadhaar of each children. This will make the process transparent and efficient delivery system.

From Paged-7 horribilis for the Indo-Pak ties. India has been time and again conveying its concerns regarding intensified series of infiltration and terrorist attacks from across the Line of Control (LOC) and International Border (IB). Foreign Secretary S. Jaishankar met with Pakistan's Foreign Secretary in

Sebi makes annual accounts public; income surplus up 75 percent in financial year 2016

NEW DELHI(KC-

NCN): The total income



Markets regulator Sebi today made public its first annual accounts statement, along with the observations made by Comptroller & Auditor General (CAG), showing 75 per cent jump in income surplus to Rs 356.19 crore last fiscal.

The surplus rose from Rs 203.50 crore in the financial year ended March 31, 2015 to Rs 356.19 crore in 2015-16.

jumped to Rs 601.67 crore last fiscal from Rs 513.17 crore in 2014-15.

Finance Ministry calls banks to discuss new facility to drain surplus cash: Sources CAG, which examined Sebi's records, said the income is overstated by Rs 1.66 crore being excess booking of income on accrual basis in 2015-16, representing fees realisable by Sebi from FPIs, which ac-

tually pertains to registration and renewal fees for the periods commencing in/after April 2016.

"This is in contravention of the declared accounting policy on revenue recognition which states that registration/renewal fees received from all intermediaries are accounted in the first year of registration/renewal. This has resulted in overstatement of 'income-fees/subscriptions' and sundry debtors by Rs 1.66 crore," it noted.

Sebi has advanced a sum of Rs 222.83 crore to the National Institute of Securities Markets (NISM) -- a public trust established by it -- in 2013-14 to 2015-16 towards cost of building a campus at Patalganga on lease

basis.

The interest earned on these advances amounting to Rs 2.17 crore has not been accounted for by the regulator in its books, resulting in understatement of 'interest earned', 'capital advances to NISM' and 'surplus' by Rs 2.17 core, CAG said.

Besides, CAG noted that internal audit as well as control system in Sebi is adequate. The physical verification of the fixed assets is complete for the years up to 2014-15. Also, the regulator is regular in payment of statutory dues.

The physical verification of inventory like books and publication, stock of paper, stationery and other consumables has been carried out for the year 2015-16.

Non performing assets resolution mechanisms need more teeth, says RBI Deputy Governor

MUMBAI(KCN): RBI Deputy Governor S S Mundra today said there is a need to further strengthen existing stressed asset resolutions mechanisms like oversight committees and joint lenders forums (JLF).

"I think we need to provide more strength to the processes, and that is where there are discussions going on (like) whether the institution of oversight committee can be further enlarged or strengthened. Similarly, whole working of the JLF mechanism," he told reporters here. Mundra was replying to a specific question on the perceived inefficacy of the existing asset resolution mechanisms in dealing with the Non Performing Assets (NPA) problem.

Refusing to give a timeline by when the RBI will come out with the modifications, Mundra said there have been discussions on the asset resolution between the central bank, gov-

ernment and other stakeholders.

Elaborating on the JLF mechanism, he pointed out that a few things are crucial like all the bankers coming together and deciding on the future course of action, the call on valuation has to be transparent and adequate provisions have to be made if they decide to take a haircut.

"We will have to employ all kinds of tools that are available and all kinds of possibilities which are there," the Deputy Governor said. Asked about the lack of progress on already implemented strategic debt restructuring (SDR) cases where the banks have not been able to find buyers, Mundra said the banks are still hopeful and there is still some time with them.

The Reserve Bank had last month said that the pace of generation of new NPAs has slowed down, but expressed concern on the resolution, leading to

speculation whether it is considering introduction of newer mechanisms beyond the existing ones.

Mundra said the March 2017 deadline of tidying over the bad assets problem is in course with the banks meeting quarterly targets.

He also denied notions of milestones for the resolution after the asset quality review (AQR) not being spelled out, saying they stress on adequate provisioning as per the quality of the asset.

Mundra reiterated that the AQR (asset quality review) was a one time exercise.

"We would like the banking system to remain well capitalised at all point of time and their asset book should reflect the actual position," he said. Commenting on the meeting with the Government and other stakeholders held earlier this month, Mundra said various possibilities including resolving top-50 or top-20 bor-

rowers keep getting discussed.

"These are initial phases of discussion, once we reach a definitive stage in that, then all the other things will come including the timelines," Mundra said. He was speaking after inaugurating private sector lender Bandhan Bank's 831st branch in the Nariman Point business district of the financial capital.

Mundra said coming to Nariman Point should be seen as a statement from the microlender-turned-universal bank, and urged Bandhan to maintain acumen both on "street as well as screen", in an apparent reference to the need to master digital technologies.

He said the bank has helped establish the creditworthiness of the poor through its long work and asked it to focus more on financial literacy along with the work on financial inclusion that it has been engaged in.



From Page - 1

be upgraded, however it did not materialize because of stringent tender conditions.

Now a Super speciality Clinic in the discipline of Cardiology, Oncology, Neurology and Nephrology on scheduled dates on a monthly basis with the assistance of Apollo Hospital, Hyderabad. But the same is not sufficient to fulfill the requirement of the Steel City.

In this connection, Mr. Ray also met Union Minister Labor & Employment Bandaru Dattatreya recently and he informed that a MoU is in draft stage between the Ministry of Steel and Labor for this project to come up with ESI Corporation and modalities are being worked out.

Regarding ROB at Brahmani, he informed that tender has been floated for rehabilitation and upgradation to four laning of Biramitrapur-Brahmani By Pass Package covering distance of 29.1 KM at an estimated cost of Rs.476.56 Crore.

While the project was sanctioned in 2012 and work was awarded to Gammon India and then cancelled. Now it is being delayed, said Mr. Ray. The Bridge is the lifeline for Steel City, Rourkela and timely completion of the project utmost need of the hour. So Mr. Ray urged the intervention of the Prime Minister Mr. Modi on both the projects and he promised to look into the matter in a positive manner.

Virat Kohli has elements of Ricky Ponting and myself in his captaincy: Steve Waugh

MELBOURNE(KCN): Former Australia skipper Steve Waugh today hailed Virat Kohli's leader-

The legendary cricketer applauded Kohli, who has been at the receiving end of constant verbal at-

amongst his troops and he's got positive body language. And they're all the traits that I liked in my

team that's really together'. Virat Kohli certainly does that. His players play for him, which is a great

only in the early stages of captaincy, Kohli has already enjoying an impressive record and Waugh labelled his combative



ship, saying he sees elements of himself and his successor Ricky Ponting in the Indian's leadership. "There's probably elements of Ricky and myself in his captaincy, but having said that he's his own man," Waugh said.

tacks from the visiting Australian team and media in the ongoing four-Test series, for his ability to make his side play as a unit.

"He's obviously a very aggressive captain, he encourages a lot of talk

sides," Waugh was quoted as saying by 'cricket.com.au'.

"I always believed the way you carry yourself is important, that you give off positive vibes to each other and the opposition sort of sense that 'this is a

sign for a captain.

"Ricky Ponting was a similar type of player; he'd roll his sleeves up, get stuck in, he'd go into bat pad if he needed to and led by example. And Virat Kohli certainly does that," he added. Though he is

style as "the new face of India".

"He's the new face of India, he can get in your face, he's aggressive, he's positive, and he leads in a certain way so the other guys know how he wants the team to play. "(But also) I'm glad he's got a bit of me in his captaincy," said Waugh.

Dinesh Chandimal lifts Sri Lanka against Bangladesh in Colombo Test

COLOMBO(KCN): Dinesh Chandimal rode his luck to score an unbeaten half-century for Sri Lanka against Bangladesh in Colombo Wednesday after the tourists made a dream start to their 100th Test match.

The home side reached 238-7 before bad light stopped the opening day's play, recovering from 70-4 on a turning pitch at the P. Sara Oval, owing mainly to Chandimal's patient 86 not out.

Chandimal shared a 66-run stand with Dhananjaya de Silva and then added 44 and 43 runs with Niroshan Dickwella and captain Rangana Herath to halt what had been a quick procession of wickets.

Chandimal, who faced 210 balls and hit four fours in his knock, was given out lbw on 38 off the bowling of left-arm spinner Shakib Al Hasan but the decision was overturned following a review.

He then top-edged another left-arm spinner Taijul Islam to fine leg on 46 but was given a benefit of the doubt by the third umpire as TV replays on whether Mehedi Hasan had caught him cleanly were in-

conclusive.

Coming into the side for Lahiru Kumara as Sri Lanka's only change from their 259-run win in the first Test in Galle, de Silva gave Chandimal good support before he was bowled by Taijul for 34.

Wicketkeeper Niroshan Dickwella chipped in with 34 after de Silva's departure before Herath joined Chandimal in his effort to give Sri Lanka innings a decent look.

Herath, unbeaten on 18 at the close of play, also had his share of luck as he had an lbw decision overturned off Shakib.

Bangladesh, sent into bowl first by

Mustafizur put the visitors in good heart in their milestone Test when he forced an edge from opener Dimuth Karunaratne, having cranked up the pressure by bowling three successive maidens.

Mehedi took a brilliant catch at gully as Karunaratne departed after making just seven runs.

Mehedi then struck in his third over, enticing Kusal Mendis out of his crease before Mushfiqur Rahim completed a stumping. Mendis was the man-of-the-match in the first Test in Galle after scoring 194 but he departed this time having scored just five.

Sri Lanka's



In Spanish team, Gerard Pique and Sergio Ramos back to being friends

MADRID(KCN): Sergio Ramos and Gerard Pique are calling a truce.

The veteran defenders from Real Madrid and Barcelona, who have exchanged blows through social media and television interviews recently because of their club rivalry, have declared peace while with Spain's national team.

"I not going to deny we are used to throwing small stones at each other, but it's never done with any kind of malice. It's all in the spirit of sport. It's all done in good health," Ramos said as he arrived at Spain's training camp this week ahead of Friday's World Cup qualifier against Israel in Gijon.

"It's all part of the rivalry that exists

between Barcelona and Real Madrid, and that's not going to change," Ramos added. "But it doesn't mean I won't go give him a hug when I see him here."

The 30-year-old central defenders have not shown any signs of animosity despite the recent quarrels off the field. They have been constantly chatting during the team's practice sessions this week, even joking with each other at times.

"It's like the things that happen on the field. When the game is over, you go and shake hands with your opponent," Ramos said. "The key for the success of the team is unity. I think that we have a wonderful group and we have to maintain that."

Spain coach Julen Lopetegui said the rivalry between the defenders' does not worry him.

"We joke about it," Lopetegui told Movistar TV. "We tell them that now they can start tweeting wearing the same jersey. They are fierce defenders of their clubs, but when they get here they are 100 percent part of the same team. They are part of a united group."

The most recent squabble between them began when the outspoken Pique hinted on social media that Madrid was being benefited by referees in the Spanish league. He posted stories mentioning mistakes that went against Barcelona and some that favored Madrid, including a goal by

Ramos that was not annulled even though he was offside.

Ramos said such

The Madrid defender then took aim at Pique's Barcelona by hinting that the

Ramos said the victory was historic "in all aspects."

"Sometimes you

Pique's teammate at Barcelona. "But they can say whatever they want, I'm not going to

sphere."

Busquets said that Ramos is higher in the hierarchy in the national team because he is the current captain, while Pique has a bigger leading role at Barcelona.

Ramos and Pique have been playing together for Spain since 2009, when the Barcelona player made his national team debut. Together they won the 2010 World Cup and the 2012 European Championship. Ramos also played in the 2006 World Cup and at Euro 2008.

The 2018 World Cup will likely be the last competition they play together because Pique has said he will retire from the national team after the tournament in Russia.



accusations were expected from someone like Pique, and that the Barcelona player should mind his own business.

Catalan club was helped by the officiating crew in the 6-1 victory over Paris Saint-Germain in the Champions League.

cross the line of respect because it was something achieved by your eternal rival," said Spain midfielder Sergio Busquets,

get into this war. I've been with Ramos and Pique for several years in the national team and it's always been a great atmo-