

After five-year delay, Lake Neutral project in Bhubaneswar to take off soon

BHUBANESWAR(KCN): After already being delayed for over five years, the much-vaunted Lake Neutral project at Satya Nagar is all set to take off this year.

Officials of the Bhubaneswar Smart City Limited (BSCL) said tender for the project on the South side of the natural drainage No 10 Satya Nagar has been finalised and the work has been awarded to a Kolkata-based private firm with six months deadline. The project will be executed at an investment of Rs 15 crore.

BSCL CEO Sanjay Kumar Singh has asked the agency and officials to ensure completion of the work within the set deadline, said an official and added that



tender for work on the North side of the channel towards Maharishi College will also be finalised soon.

The components of the projects include a

1.5 mtr wide four-lane carriageway with 3 mtr wide median, a 2.5 mtr footpath for pedestrians, a 2.5 mtr wide cycle track, an 8 mtr wide public realm with

recreational space, a 5 mtr wide native plantations area along with trees, roadside gardens and public plazas and retaining wall of the storm-water drain.

Notably, development of the Lake Zone was one of the key smart city projects in Bhubaneswar Town Center District (BTCD) area which BSCL had envisaged for revival of drainage channel No 10, a major storm water drainage channel in the city.

BDA City Centre, erstwhile Nicco park, has also been developed along the drainage channel in Acharya Vihar road on an area of 24 acres. In 2017, the BSCL had planned to develop the Lake Ne

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Investigation Begins On Chullah Vandalization

Puri(KCN): Investigation on Monday began into the van-

They also held discussions with the Collector, SP and

had been vandalized by unidentified people on Saturday

temple on Sunday to probe into the incident.



Manas was tortured after he failed to recover file from Sarmistha's computer: CB

BHUBANESWAR(KCN): The accused cameraman Manas Swain murder case tortured him after he reportedly failed to recover a file from his former employer Sarmistha Rout's computer, the Crime Branch investigation has revealed. Manas had visited Palashpur village in Bhadrak district on February 6 to record videos of a wedding. He was going to Digachhia on a two-wheeler with



one of his associates and a local on February 7 morning when five accused - Sarmistha, Jhuna Bhoi, Ranjan Nayak, Bhagyadhar Nayak and Bibek Nayak waylaid him.

Manas, a native of Nayagarh district, told them that he can recover a deleted file from Sarmistha's computer.

They took the cameraman to the office of Sarmistha, editor of

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Polls done and dusted, Naveen likely to effect ministry reshuffle soon

BHUBANESWAR(KCN): With panchayat and urban local body (ULB) elections over, the focus has now shifted to a possible reshuffle in the Naveen Patnaik ministry within the next

the local elections. As Covid seems to have subsided and political activities resuming, speculation is rife about a reshuffle very soon.

Sources said that the Chief Minister will

manance of the party in the areas of several heavyweights have emerged as a cause of concern for the party. The party lost the post of chairperson in Junagarh and Dharamgarh notified

sides, another heavy-weight of the party Rural Development Minister Sushant Singh and Minister of State for Sports and Youth Services Tushar Kanti Behera are also under scanner for the below par performance of BJD in their respective areas.

There have also been several incidents during the last two years including the Pari murder case and Mahanga double murder of BJP leaders which put the government in a spot. Though the Opposition demanded dismissal of Agriculture Minister Arun Sahu and Law Minister Pratap Jena for their alleged involvement in the respective cases, these were ignored by the party supremo.

Sources said that scam in the purchase of masks and medical consumables during the pandemic and the death of ACF Soumya Ranjan Mohapatra will also be taken note of during the reshuffle.



month. It is for the first time that there has been no Cabinet reshuffle for nearly three years though there have been occasions during which names of different ministers cropped up for their alleged involvement in corruption and other cases putting the government in very embarrassing situation.

Changes in the Cabinet was held up for nearly three years because of Covid-19 pandemic and then

start reviewing performance of different departments next week basing on implementation of 5T and 'Mo Sarkar' initiatives. The performance of Health and Family Welfare, Food Supply and Consumer Welfare, Agriculture, Panchayati Raj, Drinking Water and Urban Development departments will be under scanner during the review.

Though the ruling BJD has swept the panchayat and ULB elections, perfor-

area councils (NACs) in Kalahandi district. This has put the spotlight back on Minister of State for Home Dibya Shankar Mishra who was under the target of the Opposition in the Mamita Meher murder case. Similarly, the BJD has also lost the chairperson post to BJP in the Balimena NAC which comes under the constituency of Minister of State for Textiles, Handlooms and Handicrafts Padmini Dian. Be-

BJP received highest corporate donations of Rs 720 crore in 2019-20: ADR

NEW DELHI(KCN): Corporate and business houses donated Rs 921.95 crore to national parties in the financial year 2019-20, with the BJP receiving the highest share of Rs 720.407 crore, according to a report.

Donations from corporates to the national parties increased by 109 per cent between FY 2017-18 and 2018-19, said an analysis by the

India Trinamool Congress (AITC) and the Communist Party of India-Marxist (CPM).

According to the report, out of the five national parties, the BJP received the maximum donations of Rs 720.407 crore from 2,025 corporate donors during FY 2019-20, followed by the INC which received a total contribution of Rs 133.04 crore from 154 donors, and



Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR), an NGO working for bringing in transparency in electoral politics.

The analysis was done on the basis of details given by the parties to the Election Commission of India of donors who have made donations above Rs 20,000 in a financial year. The five parties whose donations were analysed include the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), the Indian National Congress (INC), the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP), the All

the NCP with Rs 57.086 crore from 36 corporate donors.

The CPM declared no income from corporate donations for 2019-20, it said.

The report said Prudent Electoral Trust was the top donor to the BJP and the Congress in 2019-20.

The Trust donated 38 times in a single year to the two parties each, amounting to a total of Rs 247.75 crore. CONTINUED ON: P-7

CARI a Workshop to upgrade & update Ayurvedic Doctors

Kolkata (KCN): Central Ayurveda Research Institute, Kolkata, under Ministry of Ayush, Govt. of India organised a One Day Workshop on Agnikarma and Viddhakarma- a special



therapy of Ayurveda in collaboration with National Ayurveda Students Youth Association - NASYA, West Bengal. The programme was organized as part of Azadi ka Amrut Mahotsav@75 - India.

The programme inaugurated by Dr. PVV Prasad, Director, CARI Kolkata. Dr. Sanjiv Samanta, Ex Principal, JB Roy State Ayurvedic Medical College and Hospital, Kolkata was Guest of Honor.

About 80 Ayurvedic Doctors from different part of West Bengal as well as from Odisha, Madhya Pradesh participated in this program. Expert Physician from Pune, Dr. Chandrakanta Deshmukh conducted technical and practical demonstrations of treatment Methodology.

Agnikarma is a special therapy termed as 'heat therapy' and Viddhakarma termed as blood-letting therapy are a significant therapies as emergency treatment as pain reliever of different chronic disease such as joint pain, back

Salma' became first transgender advocate of Odisha



Barbil (KCN): Push yourself, because no one else is going to do it for you. Ways come if you want. Success is inevitable

if one tries to show one's strong will. Salma, one transgender has proved this. Salma is the first lawyer in

The Neelam Foundation on World Autism Day

Rourkela (KCN): As April 2nd marks

privileged to be at Ashadeep Residen-



the world autism awareness day, noting the prevalence and high rate of autism in children in all sections of the world and consequential developmental challenges, The Neelam Foundation stepped forward to foster support and inspire people to spread kindness. This felt

tial School for MR children, Chend. We should highlight the need to help improve the quality of life of those with autism, so that they can lead meaningful lives as an integral part of society, was said by Pratima Sahoo, the chairperson of TNF. The children felt more

pain, frozen shoulder, cervical spondylolysis, etc. Agnikarma is also applied for the removal of wart, corn, etc.

The purpose of this workshop was hands on training and skill development of Ayurvedic doctors & implementation of the therapies in the remote area where a speciality medical fa-



cility are not available. The main aim of this workshop was to encourage the young doctors to apply these special therapies for treatment of different diseases.

Agnikarma and Viddhakarma- special therapies of Ayurveda and its importance endorsed by the Ministry of AYUSH, Government of India.

Dr. Tushar Kanti Mandal coordinated the programme. Dr. Sumit Sur, Dr. Biswajit Ghosh, Dr. Arnab Ghosh and other members from NASYA were present.

Earlier, Two day National Workshop on "Research Methodology And IPR" was organised by CARI on 15-16 March 2022 to sensitise on modern research technology & develop skills amongst ayurvedic research scholars and doctors. Workshop initiated path for incorporation of modern research methodology.

Odisha to bring glory to Odisha. He acknowledged the need for transgender and knew the discrimination in the society. He continued his efforts to create a different identity. Being a residents of remote place Bhuianroida under Kids block of Keonjhar district, she did his graduation from Prabhas Manjari Law College, Keonjhar in 2021 and is now a lawyer at Barbil Court. He was able to get an Aadhaar

card for the Transgender Act, which came into force in 2019, which helped him to become a lawyer, she added. Inspired by Mira Parida is her source of inspirational which motivated him to move forward, she said. He is hopeful to become police inspector soon as the result yet to come. "she told. His intuition would change the mind of other transgender, one advocate Pradip Dhal remarks.

The Neelam Foundation on World Autism Day

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Utkal Divas Celebrated by Anandam Foundation

Bhubaneswar(KCN): Anandam Foundation celebrated the Utkal Divas in collaboration with P.J. College on 1st April 2022 to commemorate the Statehood Day of Odisha. Advocate Bansidhar Parida (Chairman, AIMS Junior College, Cuttack) was the Chief Guest of the programme. He shared his views on the glorious history and culture of Odisha (Utkal & Kaling).

Prof. Ashish Behura (Vice Principal, P.J. College) and Dr. Madhusmita Pati (Prof. Odia Dept, P.J. College) were the honourable guests of the programme.

It started with 'Vedic Mantra chanting' and 'Vande Utkal Janani' patriotic song lead by Pratima Priyadarshini Parida.

Shri Manoj Das (General Secretary, Anandam Foundation) told that now is the time to awaken Odisha to create a new history in the world. His book named "Trishanku" (a collection of poems) was also inaugurated during the programme. He also gave vote of thanks at the end of the programme.

Around 120 people attended the programme including the students, Professors & Anandam Foundation Karyakartas. The whole program was moderated by Shri Tapan Sahoo.

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Utkal Divas Celebration with Underprivileged Kids at Ahmedabad, Gujarat

Ahmedabad(KCN): If we make the world better for "KIDS", we make it better for "EVERYONE". Spread Happiness Foundation, a leading expatriate voluntary organization based in Pune, has taken another step forward in bringing smile in the face of children. The organization visited "Visamo Kids" in Ahmedabad, Gujarat, to celebrate Utkal divas with unprivileged kids. Visamo kids Foundation has created a facility that can house 100+ kids with the mission to transform the lives of less privileged yet high-potential kids. The event, chaired by

Anand Kumar Mohapatra, General Secretary of Spread Happiness Foundation, focused on proper care of children during the pandemic and the necessary steps to protect the kids. Esteemed Chief Guest, Mr Kashinath Mishra shared his experience about life and motivated the young minds to establish themselves as good human beings in the society. He inspired the kids by saying, "Try not to become a man of success—but rather a man of value". Local members of SHF namely Isha Mishra, Riya

Chowdhury, Dr Angel Kanda, Madhu-ujyotshna Tripathy, Somit Ranjan Das and Ashutosh Tripathy played pivotal role in carrying out various fun events with the kids. Dr Angel Kanda also guided the children about Oral health and hygiene. Winding up the programme, Mr Anand, on behalf of the organization, distributed "A bag of Happiness" to the children and staff of Visamo Kids. Spread happiness foundation is looking forward to organize more such events in days to come.

Compensation to the family of journalist who lost his life in Covid

Rourkela(KCN): The state government has

Rourkela's Additional District Magis-

Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik has declared journalists as frontline corona warriors in view of Covid-19. It also announced a compensation package of Rs 15 lakh for the families of journalists who lost their lives in Corona. Based on this, with the approval of the Information and Public Relations Department of the Government of Odisha, the amount of sympathy has been given to Advait's family. Rourkela District Information and Public Relations Officer Seema Fatima Ekka and other officials were present at the moment.



provided an assistance of Rs 15 lakh to the family of Advait Prasad Biswal, a journalist from Rourkela, who lost his life in the Covid epidemic. The certificate of the amount sent online to Siddharth Biswal, son of late Advait Prasad Biswal, was handed over by

trate and Municipal Corporation Commissioner Dr. Shubhanakar Mohapatra on Monday. Advait Prasad had corona while working as a journalist of a weekly magazine in Rourkela. He died during treatment at the Covid Hospital on 30 April 2021.

Poll Dates for Co-ops

Bhubaneswar(KCN): Odisha Government on Monday announced the dates for first-phase election of members to committees of Primary Co-operative Societies. According to a notification issued by the Department of Co-Operation, the election of members to the committees of these societies will be held on June 19 and 22. Odisha has over 6,400 primary, 127 central and 19 apex cooperative societies. Elections to these societies were last held in 2015. While the tenure of 1,926 primary cooperative societies had ended in January 2020, the State Government postponed it to address their poor financial conditions. The state has over 2,700 Primary Agriculture Cooperative Societies (PACS) and Large Area Multi-Purpose Cooperative Societies (LAMPS), which are affiliated with 17 central cooperative banks. Elections have also been due to weavers, fishermen and milkmen societies and their apex bodies Boyanika, Fishfed and Omfed. Notably, the government had indicated its readiness to fulfil the Constitutional mandate in November last when Orissa High Court directed the State Cooperative Election Commission to conduct elections to the Sundargarh District Central Cooperative Bank and primary societies affiliated to it within a reasonable time

Health Checkup Camp Organized

Kolkata(KCN): For the benefit of public a day long Health Check Up Camp was organized by the Vivekananda Yoga Anusandhana Samsthana, Kolkata. Twenty two patients in each attended for the General Health Check up and Skin Care. At the same time fifty seven have attended the Eye Check up session and received free spectacles. Programme was supported by the doctors and volunteers of Bastuhara Sahayata Samiti, Kolkata. On behalf of VYASA Dr Abhijit Ghosh, Mr R.K Jha, Ms. Dipali Sarkar and others were managed the programme.

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Signing 'Indian 2' has been a step up in my career, says Kajal Aggarwal



CHENNAI (KCN): Actress Kajal Aggarwal, who teams up with actor-filmmaker Kamal Haasan for the first time in the upcoming Tamil film "Indian 2", says signing the project has been a step up in

her over a decade-long career.

Last seen on screen in Telugu film "Kavacham", Kajal has already begun prepping for her role in "Indian 2".

"I'm really thrilled to be part of

the project. I'm quite excited about my role and the skills I will get to learn on the job. I see signing 'Indian 2' as a step up in my career," Kajal told IANS along the sidelines of the launch of beverage brand 7Up's

new campaign, 7Up Ponneram.

Ponneram translates to golden times in English. Kajal said her career's golden times started when she signed S.S. Rajamouli's "Magadheera".

"My golden times started when I signed 'Magadheera'. I have seen many ups and downs in my profession but it was only after I did 'Magadheera' did my career catapult to the next league. It earned me a lot of recognition which I enjoy even today," she said.

Talking about what excited her most about the association with 7Up, Kajal said: "It's a brand a lot of us can easily identify and relate with. I like the fact that it's a very clear beverage. It's also a drink that lets you take a step back and chill. I treat success or failure by taking a step back and I believe it gives you a lot of clarity."

On the career front, Kajal is keenly looking forward to the release of "Paris Paris", the Tamil remake of Kangana Ranaut's "Queen".

"Paris Paris" will be Kajal's first release of 2019.

"When I was offered the 'Queen' remake, I saw it as a story that can be explored in many languages. It's a simple story of a simple girl that I could connect with on many levels. I'm sure there are a lot of girls across different parts of Tamil Nadu who will relate to this story and I'd be glad if this film empowers them," she added.

From 2.0 to Raazi, top 10 Indian movies based on worldwide gross

2018 has been an eventful year for Indian cinema. From Sanju to Sarkar, the industry faced a row

of controversies. Yet some movies shined amid the storm.

declared as 'double blockbuster' film. The movie showed the different phases of the controversial

ing Rs 293 crore. 4. Race 3: 'Our business is our business, none of your business' line

and the government freebie schemes.. A few scenes were deleted from the movie too. The matter was

ceived hilarious reactions on social media as well. Later, Aamir Khan apologised for failing to entertain

but it leaves you with a thought to ponder. 9. Rangasthalam:

With the right mix of content for a commercial flick, Rangasthalam made it big in the box office by collecting Rs 151 crore. The story is about how a young man with hearing impairment and his brother decide to dethrone their village's president who's been ruling the village for 30 years.

10. Raazi:

An adaptation of Harinder Sikka's 'Calling Sehmat' novel, Raazi is based on the true story of an Indian spy, who gets married into a Pakistani family of military officials to spy on Pakistan during the Indo-Pak war of 1971. It's easily Alia Bhatt's career best. The movie minted Rs 121 crore in the box office against the budget of Rs 30 crore.

It's been a great year for Indian cinema which took us on a journey of emotions, from laughter to tears, sometimes of joy. Though a lot of films didn't make it to this list, good films silently made it into the hearts of the audience.

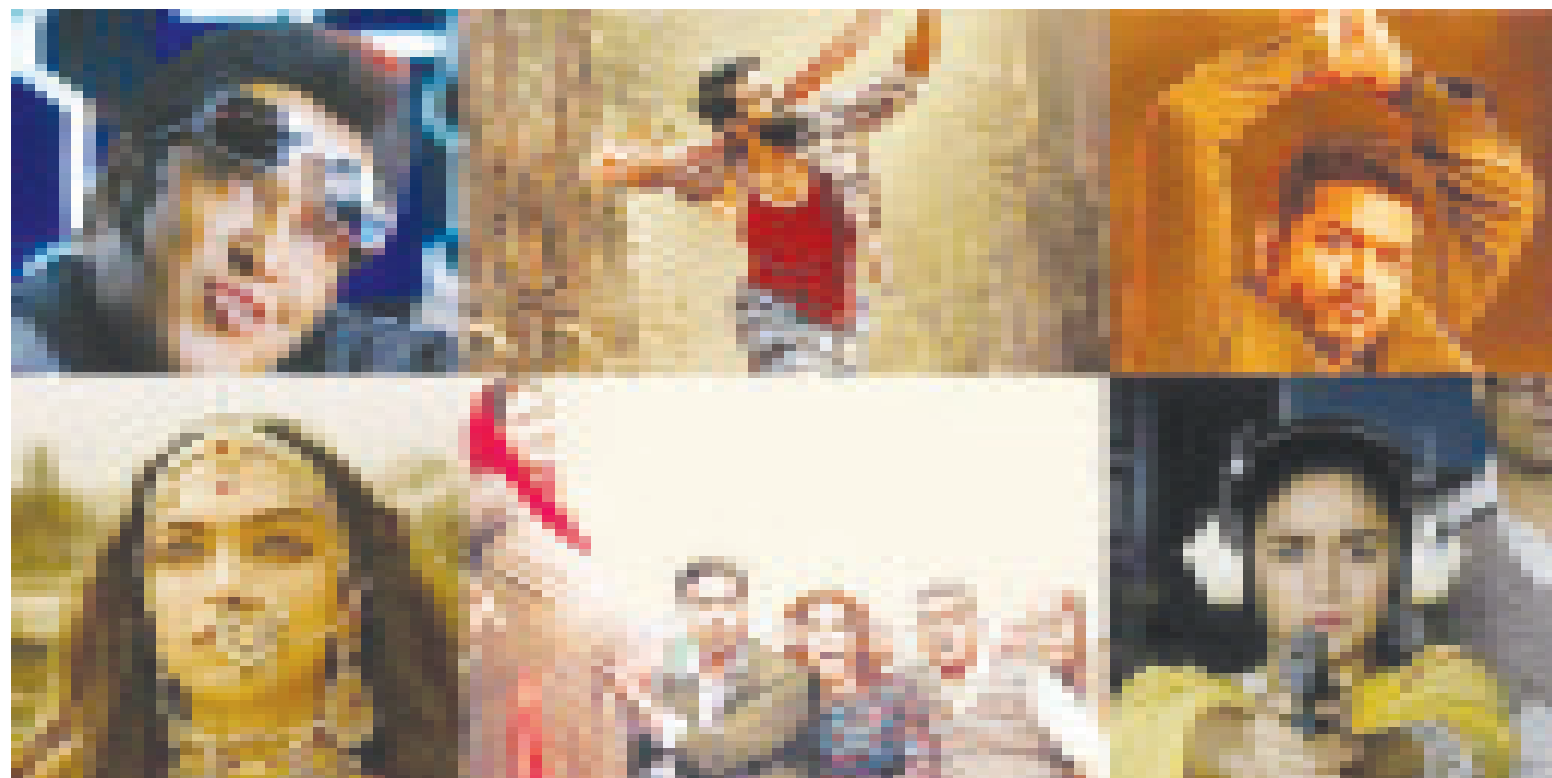
Just 'normal' to exclude women in decision making process: Adil Hussain

MUMBAI (KCN): Actor Adil Hussain has offered support to the growing group of female artistes who are asking the reason for women's absence from the Bollywood delegation of producers and actors that recently met Prime Minister Narendra Modi to discuss issues faced by the film industry.

On Tuesday, an 18-member panel, including Akshay Kumar, Karan Johar, Ajay Devgn, Siddharth Roy Kapur, Ritesh Sidhwani and CBFC chief Prasoon

Joshi, met Modi to discuss how to take the entertainment industry to the next stage.

The meeting of the delegation came under fire on Wednesday for its exclusion of female representation with some activists and filmmakers pointing out that it was 2018 and asking, "Where are the women?" Adil took to Twitter to criticise the panel that met the prime minister, saying it has become the habit to exclude women from the decision making process.



of controversies. Yet some movies shined amid the storm.

According to IMDb, here's the list of ten movies that performed well in the box office last year.

1. 2.0:

It won't be an exaggeration to call 2.0 as India's 'Superhero' movie. True to that, Kollywood and Bollywood superheroes Rajinikanth and Akshay Kumar played the lead roles in the movie. The movie has so far earned over Rs 700 crore worldwide already and is still running successfully in theatres. Directed by Shankar, who's known to make magnificent movies, 2.0 comes with a social message for people on why one should reduce the use of mobile phones. Also, it is the first Tamil film to enter the 700 crore club. If you haven't watched the film yet, book your tickets right away!

2. Sanju:

Sanjay Dutt's biopic 'Sanju' minted Rs 340 crore at the box office and was

actor Sanjay Dutt, which really didn't go well with some organisations. RSS openly criticised the movie in their mouth-piece 'Panchjanya.' However, the movie became a huge hit in no time. It's definitely Ranbir Kapoor's best work ever. The movie was a comeback for both the reel and real Sanjus.

3. Padmaavat:

Initially scheduled to be released in 2017, the movie was caught in a row of controversies and finally got released early this year in January. Set in medieval Rajasthan, the story revolves around the life of Queen Padmavathi, which drew the flak from right-wing groups. Unlike the claims by the religious fanatics, the movie actually portrayed queen Padmavati in the best light. However, the film's team was asked to remove a few scenes from the movie before its release. Despite the fuss, the movie became a blockbuster at the box office, earn-

ing Rs 293 crore. 4. Race 3: 'Our business is our business, none of your business' line from the movie took the internet by storm and hundreds of memes were made on it. Based on relationship and royalties, this is the first film in the series that Salman Khan was a part of. Race 3 was critically panned and failed to do the expected business. But in spite of being a flop, it managed to mint Rs 166 crore in the box office.

5. Sarkar:

Sarkar's plot is about a successful businessman from the USA coming to India to cast his vote on election day. To his shock, he finds out that his vote has already been cast by someone else. So he decides to take up a political battle against the miscreants and how he survives the race makes the rest of the story. Directed by AR Murugadoss, the movie got into a huge row and was criticised by the ruling Tamil Nadu government for allegedly misrepresenting AIADMK's late leader J Jayalalithaa

later settled in Madras HC. It was much hyped that actor Vijay may begin his political career after this movie. Sarkar was well received by the Tamil audience and it made Rs 151 crore in the box office. 6. Baaghi 2:

This Tiger Shroff-Disha Patani starrer failed to impress audience due to its poor storyline line. Despite that, the movie minted Rs 161 crore in the box office and became a blockbuster. The story is about an army man trying to save his ex-lover's kidnapped daughter. The Baaghi series will have a third part 'Baaghi 3,' which will be out on March 6, 2020.

7. Thugs of Hindostan:

The film set in the 18th century earned Rs 130 crore in the box office against the 275 crore budget ending up a huge disaster at the box office despite having strong star cast including Aamir Khan, Amitabh Bachchan, Katrina Kaif. The film re-

150th Birth Anniversary of Sri Aurobindo addressed by Deputy Chairman Rajya Sabha

Significance of Sri Aurobindo's 150th Birth Anniversary
Namaskar,

1. I feel greatly honoured and privileged to be here amidst you all today. I thank Sri Aurobindo Society who have given me the opportunity to reflect on one of the most remarkable man of India. Sri Aurobindo's influence on the national political and cultural scene was tremendous not only in his times but also after his death. C.R.Das, the noted freedom fighter, once rightly prophesized "...long after he is dead and gone, he will be looked upon as the poet of patriotism, as the prophet of nationalism and the lover of humanity. Long after he is dead and gone, his words will be echoed and reechoed not only in India, but across distant seas and lands." Today we all know how true his words were as Sri Aurobindo's thoughts continue to inspire and touch the lives of millions even now. He was a towering personality who is considered a national as well as a global icon.

Aurobindo's nationalism/ Against dominion status

2. There is no doubt that there were many great leaders on the Indian political horizon in the early 20th century, yet Sri Aurobindo's exceptional intellect and fiery spirit made him stand out. His passionate and militant patriotism inspired many a youth in those times. His idea of complete freedom was a manifestation of his indomitable spirit. In this he stood apart many of the contemporary great leaders of his times. He believed that unless unqualified Swaraj was granted to the Indians, expansion of Legislative Councils and appointment of Indians to Executive Councils was meaningless. In fact, he was the first Indian political leader to use the word "Independence" instead of "Swaraj". He was convinced that without political freedom, no real socio-economic and administrative reform was possible in India. To quote him, "*Political freedom is the life-breath of a nation; to attempt social reform, educational reform, industrial expansion and moral improvement of the race without aiming first and foremost at political freedom is the very height of ignorance and futility*". It would not be an exaggeration if I say that the nature of freedom has not been explored more profoundly and passionately by anyone other than Sri Aurobindo.

3. To him, India was not just a piece of land, not merely a collection of people. It was a conscious Spiritual Being, a Divine Power, a Shakti, Devi and Goddess. India is Mother India, a living form of the Divine Mother. He said that India must be free from foreign control, only then she could develop and manifest the greatness of her soul.

Real purpose of independence:

4. I find Sri Aurobindo's idea of political freedom quite intriguing and unique. He valued independence not in itself but as an opportunity for India to perform her mission. Sri Aurobindo strongly believed that India had a bigger role to play in Asia and the world. He did not want India to be like other nations with an opulent industry and commerce and immense military strength, practicing power politics successfully, dominating a large part of the world without her spiritual heritage.

Spiritual nationalism:

5. Equally fascinating was his idea of spiritual nationalism. For him "*nationalism is not a mere political programme. It is a religion that has come from God; Nationalism is a creed which you shall have to live....if you are going to be nationalist, if you are going to assent*

to this religion of nationalism, you must do it in the religious spirit. You must remember that you are the instrument of God". He elevated the demand for national freedom to a religious faith so that the masses could be awakened.

Passive resistance:

6. Sri Aurobindo advocated passive resistance as the only efficacious method to fight foreign rule. He proposed that there should be complete boycott of government schools, courts of law, administration and foreign goods. He proved himself one of those radical leaders of the early 20th century who wanted to involve the masses in the struggle. Awakening political consciousness of the masses was for him an essential condition of Swaraj. There is not an iota of doubt that his political thoughts made a strong mark amongst the masses especially the youth and in the few years of his active politics he changed the course of thinking of the entire country.

Not completely against violence:

7. Two great souls of Indian soil - Gandhiji and Aurobindo, are considered national and global icons. While Gandhiji expounded a non-violent approach and advocated a complete allegiance to *ahimsa* to fight political tyranny, Aurobindo did not turn non-violence into an unwavering, absolute doctrine. To him violence was undesirable but not prohibited. This in no way meant that he advocated non violent means of action. He opined that the choice of violent or non-violent means of resistance depended on expediency and nature of the oppression. He did not condemn violence as criminal or unjustifiable in all circumstance. He said "*Liberty is the life-breath of nation; and when the life is attacked, when it is sought to suppress all chance of breathing by violent pressure, any and every means of self-preservation becomes right and justifiable*".

8. Thus, in the face of oppression, Passive Resistance could become aggressive resistance, including retaliation. He maintained that the end was the freedom of the nation and in the choice of means for the realization of this supreme end, ethical considerations were irrelevant. Unlike Gandhi who considered *ahimsa* as an ethical principle that was grounded in the selflessness, use of violence in furtherance of the Boycott was, according to Aurobindo, "purely a matter of policy and expediency....the moral question does not arise". From the very beginning Sri Aurobindo objected to the label Extremist and described himself and other Extremists as Nationalists.

Undaunting:

9. Sri Aurobindo was courage personified. When many great leaders fighting against the British Raj were satisfied with dominion status, he had the courage to declare openly for complete and absolute independence. He wrote "*there are some who fear to use the word 'freedom' but I have always used the word because it has been the Mantra of my life to aspire towards the freedom of my nation*". In his distinctive boldness he made fiery speeches right from his student days. He also did not hesitate in criticizing the British government or the policies of the Indian National Congress. It was because of bold speeches and writings that he earned the hostility of the British government and was described by Viceroy Lord Minto as the "most dangerous man in India". In a series of articles he wrote against the weaknesses of method of gradual and steady reform adopted by Congress for liberation from British rule. His style of expression caused such a furore that Justice Ranade had to ask the magazine to modify its tone. We all agree that his view of the future of British imperialism and Indian nationalism was remarkably incisive and perceptive but it was much ahead of his time. His writings

Harivansh

on Indian nationalism have an enduring value.

His views on the west:

10. Though he was a patriot and a staunch critic of the imperialist government Sri Aurobindo was not against everything western. Early on he distinguished between the Eastern and Western civilization saying that while India focuses on the spiritual and the eternal. However, in later years he admitted that "the west has had no less than the East its spiritual seekings ...while the East also has had its materialistic tendencies, its material splendours, its similar or identical dealings with life and matter and the world in which we live." Romain Rolland, thus, rightly regarded him as the highest synthesis of the genius of the East and the West and the 'Prince among the Indian thinkers'.

Not a blind acceptance of the past:

11. Although Sri Aurobindo was the 'Messiah of Indian culture and civilization' as Tagore rightly called him, he was not for a blind acceptance and revival of the past. All that was great in the past cannot be repeated, for he realized that there are new needs and other vistas before us. "Our

**Shri Harivansh Narayan Singh
Deputy Chairman Rajya Sabha
addressed to
celebrate 150th
Birth Anniversary of Sri
Aurobindo organised by Sri
Aurobindo Society in Kolkata on
26th March 2022**



sense of greatness of our past must not be made a fatally hypnotizing lure to inertia; it shall be rather an inspiration to renewed and greater achievement", he said. He is not averse to taking from the West whatever fills our need and respond to Indian spirit provided we do not abandon, in the process our fundamental view of God, man and nature.

An unusual trajectory:

12. The twists and turn of Sri Aurobindo's life is quite interesting. Despite his anglicized upbringing he was fiery patriot who got himself intentionally disqualified in the final round of ICS examination to serve his motherland. In just four years of militant political activity he had earned an unrivalled position as a political leader. You will not get any example of a leader who quit active politics to embrace spiritualism.

Philosopher:

13. Sri Aurobindo was undoubtedly one of the greatest philosopher of the 20th century. Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan described him as 'the most accomplished of modern Indian thinkers'. Although Sri Aurobindo covers a lot of common ground with Vivekananda, Tilak and Gandhi, but his distinction lies in his impressive philosophical perspective coupled with a creative synthesis of the traditional ethos of Hinduism and modernity. I am in awe of the subjects Sri Aurobindo dealt with during his lifetime. The complete works of Sri Aurobindo brought by the Aurobindo Ashram in 36 volumes on The Life Divine, The Synthesis of Yoga, The Secret of the Vedas, The Human Cycle, The Ideal of Human Unity, The Renaissance of India, Future Poetry and the magnificent epic, Savitri, etc are a testimony in this regard.

14. His unique philosophy of Integral Yoga aims at the transformation of the entire being including Physical, Vital, Mental, Psychic, and Spiritual. The aim of this yoga is not an escape from life or a shunning of worldly existence, but a radical change in our life even while living amidst it.

Conclusion:

15. Besides his political philosophy it was his rustic simplicity that endeared Aurobindo to the masses. With his dhoti, piran and urani he looked enigmatic. It is a divine

coincidence and nothing else that the birthday of India's first evolutionary yogi coincides with India's independence day i.e. 15th August.

16. I am very happy that this illustrious leader's legacy is being cherished and carried forward in its true spirit by the Aurobindo Society, founded by none other than the Mother, who was not only a close associate of Sri Aurobindo but also a spiritual guru herself. Addressed as 'Mother' by Sri Aurobindo himself, she is credited to have shouldered the complete responsibilities of running the Aurobindo Ashram since its establishment and instituting Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education, the international township - Auroville and the Aurobindo Society.

17. I am delighted to know that the Society which seeks to bring a dynamic spirituality into material life and all its activities, does not confine itself to spiritual lectures but also on action based programmes in the field integral education, palliative care, mental health, rural development, sustainable development, etc.

18. Today as we celebrate 150th birth anniversary of Sri Aurobindo and 75th year of India's independence, it is an excellent opportunity to assess India's situation not only in terms of GDP and economic growth but also in the deeper aspects of its innercapacities. I hope that Sri Aurobindo's anniversary will be the occasion not only for an assessment and appreciation of what Sri Aurobindo himself stood for but for a deeper and wider spiritual introspection covering India and indeed the entire human race.

19. Friends, Sri Aurobindo believed that great and new creation has to come from the youth and they must be the builders of the new world. He said "*It is the young who can build the new world — not those who accept the competitive individualism, the capitalism or materialistic communism of the west as India's future nor who enslaved to old religions formulas and cannot believe in the acceptance and transformation of life by the spirit, but all who are free in the mind and heart to accept the completer truth and a greater ideal*".

20. As a country with the largest ever adolescent and youth population, I implore the youths of this country to draw inspiration from Sri Aurobindo and make India the spiritual hub of the world. Hon'ble Prime Minister, Shri Modi ji has also highlighted that the youth should also be encouraged towards the concept of greatness as embodied in the philosophy of Nar to Narayan to create a MahaManavas propounded by Sri Aurobindo. He has also stated that Sri Aurobindo's philosophy of Revolution and Evolution should be emphasized as part of the commemoration of the 150th birth anniversary of Sri Aurobindo.

21. It gives me immense pleasure to see that Sri Aurobindo Society has been making continuous efforts to inspire the youth of India and the world with the spiritual teachings of Sri Aurobindo. There can be no greater tribute to this 'Prophet of Nationalism' than an India which has dedicated itself to modernization without losing in the process the spiritual legacy of the pasts. I wish the Society all the best and once again thank you for giving me this opportunity to interact with you all.

22. Just like I began, I would like to conclude my address by quoting the words of C R Das mentioned on the commemorative plaque for Sri Aurobindo Memorial Court Room "*he will be looked upon as the poet of patriotism, the prophet of nationalism and the lover of humanity. His words will be echoed and re-echoed not only in India but across the distant seas and lands*".

My best wishes to all of you.

Thank You.

Jai Hind!

Deputy Chairman, Rajya Sabha

Odisha Tops Forest Fire

Country's highest number of forest fire incidents has been reported in Odisha during the last session, from November 2020 to June 2021. This was informed by Union Minister of State (MoS) for Environment, Forest and Climate Change Ashwini Kumar Choubey in Lok Sabha on Monday.

A total of 345,989 forest fires were recorded by the Forest Survey of India (FSI) across the country during the eight months. Odisha reported 51,968 forest fires during the period while Madhya Pradesh was in second position

with 47,795 forest fires, followed by Chhattisgarh with 38,106, Maharashtra with 34,025, Jharkhand with 21,713, Uttarakhand with 21,487, Andhra Pradesh with 19,328, Telangana with 18,237, Mizoram with 12,846, Assam with 10,718 and Manipur with 10,457 in those months, the Union Minister said.

The number of incidences of forest fire in the country varies from year to year and occur during fire season from November to May, every year due to various natural and anthropogenic reasons including accumulation of inflammable materials such as dry leaves, twigs, pine needles etc., he said. Choubey said most of the forest fires in the country are ground fires in which ground vegetation, etc. get burnt. The Forest Survey of India (FSI) sends forest fire alerts to all registered users on this alert system.

The Ministry in collaboration with the World Bank has conducted a study on Situation Analysis of Forest Fire and released a study report titled "Strengthening Forest Fire Management in India" which contains various recommendations regarding forest fire prevention, detection, suppression, post-fire management, engaging with communities and coordination with other agencies.

As per the report Nation-wide estimates of CO2 released have ranged from 6.34 million tons CO2 per year to 123.84 million tons CO2 per year. However,

data regarding the Carbon released into the atmosphere due to forest fires is not maintained at the level of this Ministry, he pointed out.

The responsibility of forest fire prevention and management lies primarily with the respective States and Union Territories. The Ministry supports the efforts of the States and UTs in prevention and control of forest fire by providing financial assistance for various forest fire prevention and management measures under the Centrally Sponsored Forest Fire Prevention and Management Scheme.

A sum of about Rs 125 crore has been released to the States in the last three years (2018-19 to 2020-21) under this scheme, informed the Union Minister. FSI has pursued States and UTs to increase the number of registered users of its alert system. Now, the number of such registered users has increased to around 1.30 lakh.

Similarly, the FSI also generates and disseminates "Weekly Early-Warning Alerts" of forest fires to concerned States and UTs. It has also initiated an innovative "Large Forest Fire Monitoring" programme in January 2019 which aims at improving tactical as well as strategic response to large forest fires by the respective States and UTs.

In addition to the above initiatives by FSI, the Government of India has constituted a national level committee that oversees the issues arising out of forest fires. The committee has advised all states to take several measures including constituting State-level Monitoring Committee on Forest Fire, preparing State Action Plan on Forest Fire, and Fire Risk Zone mapping.

40 chulhas in grand kitchen of Srimandir found vandalised

PURI: In an unprecedented incident, was then cleaned and closed for the day. rested at the earliest. Following the inci-



unidentified miscreants damaged at least 40 chulhas (earthen stoves) used for cooking Mahaprasad in the grand kitchen of Sri Jagannath temple here on Saturday night.

President of Suar Mahasuar Nijog (association of cooks) Narayan Mahasuar said the incident seemed to have taken place late in the night after completion of rituals. The dinner was cooked for the Trinity after Sandhya Dhoopa and taken for offering to the deities. The kitchen

"On Sunday morning when the kitchen was opened, we found at least 40 stoves were



vandalised. The incident was immediately brought to the notice of Srimandir authorities," he informed. Narayan demanded a thorough probe into the incident and culprits ar-

dent, Puri Collector Samarth Verma and temple administrator AK Jena along with police rushed to the Srimandir kitchen to take stock of the situation. Repair work was carried out following which some stoves started functioning and the morning bhog was prepared for the deities and devotees. Sources said there are around 240 earthen stoves in the temple kitchen where Mahaprasad is cooked for lakhs of devotees every day. The kitchen of Sri

Jagannath temple is considered the largest in the world. Jena said investigation will be conducted into incident and action taken against those responsible for damaging the stoves. Meanwhile, the incident has raised eyebrows in Puri town with residents accusing the temple security of laxity. Ajit Samal, a local, said Srimandir is under surveillance round-the-clock by police and the temple's own security personnel besides CCTV cameras. "How can anybody enter the kitchen and damage the stoves?" he questioned. Jena said the Srimandir authorities have questioned four servitors in this connection. No formal complaint has been filed in Lion's Gate police station till reports last came in.

Rule for Dy Mayor Poll

Bhubaneswar: Ahead of the crucial election for the post of Deputy Mayor in three Municipal Corporations, the State Government has implemented new Rule for the poll.

The Housing & Urban Development Department has issued two separate notifications on Monday to implement the new Rule for the post of Deputy Mayor and Vice-Chairperson.

The Rule allowed for appointment of agents by every party and the election officer will allow the authorised agents to verify the votes cast by the elected members of their respective parties as is being done during the Rajya Sabha elections.

In furtherance of the provisions of the Odisha Municipal Corporation (Division of City into Wards, Reservation of Seats and Conduct of Election) Rules,

2003, the Government have been



pleased to decide that every political party, whose member as an elector casts a vote for the purpose of election to the office of the Deputy Mayor of a Municipal Corporation, may appoint one authorised agent and the president or the general secretary of the State level political party or State unit of the national political party, as per the notification. The political parties will have to submit the same in writing to the Election Officer,

duly appointed by the State Election Com-

mission, with full details of the authorised agent proposed to be so engaged for the said election prior to the scheduled date of election.

"When an elector being a member of a political party, records his vote on a ballot paper and before such elector inserts that ballot paper into the ballot box, allow the authorised agent of that political party to verify as to whom such elector has cast his vote," it said. Similar provision has

been added under the Odisha Municipal

(Delimitation Wards, Reservation of Seats and Conduct of Election) Rules, 1994, for the purpose of election to the office of the Vice-Chairperson of a Municipality or NAC. The indirect election for the post of Vice-Chairperson will be conducted on 7 April and Deputy Mayor on 8 April, respectively. Earlier, the State Government had implemented similar Rules for the election to the post of Zilla Parishad President and Vice President.

Vladimir Putin should face war crimes trial for Bucha killings: US President Joe Biden

WASHINGTON: President Joe Biden on Monday called for a war crimes trial against Russia President Vladimir Putin and said he'd seek more sanctions after reported atrocities in Ukraine.

"You saw what happened in Bucha," Biden said. He added that Putin "is a war criminal."

Biden's comments to reporters came after Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskyy visited Bucha, one of the towns surrounding Kyiv where Ukrainian officials say the bodies of civilians have been found. Zelenskyy called the Russian actions "genocide" and called for the West to apply tougher sanctions against Russia. Biden, however, stopped short of calling the actions genocide.

The bodies of 410 civilians have been removed from Kyiv-area towns that were recently retaken from Russian forces, Ukraine's prosecutor-general, Iryna Venediktova, said. Associated Press journalists saw the bodies of at least 21 people in various spots around Bucha, northwest of the capital.

"We have to continue to provide Ukraine with the weapons they need to continue the fight. And we have to gather all the detail so this can be an actual -- have a war crimes trial," Biden said.

Biden lashed out at Putin as "brutal."

"What's happening in Bucha is outrageous and everyone sees it," Biden added.

White House officials said talks about ramping up new sanctions against Russia intensified after reports of alleged atrocities emerged. Biden said Monday

were massacred in suburbs of Kyiv that were held by Russian troops, focusing on what it calls "false information" about Russian forces.

The Investigative Committee claims Ukrainian authorities made the allegations "with the aim of discrediting Russian troops" and that those

tries are working together to investigate possible violations and abuses, after the passage of a resolution by the United Nations Human Rights Council to establish a commission of inquiry. There is another probe by the International Criminal Court, an independent body based



that he would continue to add sanctions but did not detail what sectors the U.S. may target next.

After unveiling an avalanche of sanctions in the first weeks of the war, administration officials in recent days have put more focus on closing loopholes that Russia might try to use to avoid sanctions.

European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, the European Commission president, tweeted Monday that he European Union will send investigators to Ukraine to help the local prosecutor general "document war crimes."

A Russian law enforcement agency says it has launched its own investigation into allegations that Ukrainian civilians

involved should be investigated over possible breaches of a new Russian law banning what the government deems to be false information about its forces.

Biden noted that he faced pushback last month when he described Putin as a war criminal for the unfolding onslaught in Ukraine after hospitals and maternity wards were bombed. In his remarks on Monday, Biden made clear that label still applied.

"This guy is brutal and what's happening to Bucha is outrageous, and everyone's seen it," Biden said.

Investigations into Putin's actions had begun before the new allegations of atrocities outside Kyiv.

The U.S. and more than 40 other coun-

in the Netherlands. Meanwhile, Biden's chief envoy to the United Nations, Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield, announced Monday that the U.S. plans to seek a suspension of Russia from its seat on the U.N.'s top human rights body in the wake of more indications Russian forces may have committed war crimes in Ukraine. That would require a decision by the U.N. General Assembly.

Russia and the other four permanent members of the U.N. Security Council - Britain, China, France and the United States - all currently have seats on the 47-member-state rights council, which is based in Geneva. The United States rejoined the council this year.

Concern for Accident Rise

Bhubaneswar: Commerce & Transport Minister Padmanabh Behera on Monday said that road accidents are a serious cause of concern for all. "In the last decade more than 45000 people have lost their lives due to road accidents in the state. The government is committed to reduce

gating a road crash with a holistic approach covering all possible causes. Principal Secretary Commerce & Transport, Bishnupada Sethi said, "In our State annually more than 5,000 people are killed in accidents. The behaviour of road drivers has to change. Road safety is a high priority area

gation will help not only in finding the culprit but also in preventing further accidents," he added. Transport Commissioner, Arun Bothra said that the program was planned as it is very important to analyze road safety data to understand why crashes occur, which factors influence risks, and what

organisation has been working pan India for twenty-one years for Capacity Building of Stakeholders, Road Safety Awareness, Advocacy, and Community Liaison. On this occasion, the upgraded website of State Transport Authority, Odisha was inaugurated by the Minister. The revamped website is



the fatalities," he said inaugurating a State Level Crash Investigation Training programme here with an objective to offer a scientific understanding of the accident investigation processes and its relevance. The programme is first of its kind state level programme in Odisha where officers of Police & Transport department will be trained how to provide authentic data of an accident which in turn facilitate the designing of policy-level interventions for the reduction of road traffic accidents. Talking about the training programme he said that this training programme will certainly enhance the skills of police & transport department officers for investi-

for our Government and we are taking a lot of initiatives for the reduction of road accidents in the state." Emphasising the importance of the licensing system, DGP Sunil Kumar Bansal laid emphasis on making the process of obtaining a driving license further stringent and robust. He said the trained and skilled investigators can provide important insights to both Enforcement and Road Owning Agencies in improving road safety scenarios in the state. "Like a surgeon needs to be trained about the surgery process, similarly officers need to be trained how to conduct investigations in a scientific manner. A proper crash investi-

determines crash severity, and based on this understanding, to arrive at reliable conclusions on how to prevent them most effectively and efficiently. Twin City Police Commissioner Saumendra Kumar Priyadarshi said, "We cannot reduce accidents in the state through enforcement only. We all understand that more work and efforts are needed in the field of road safety. We have to have a synergy in the mission of saving lives." The capacity building programme is being organised by the State Transport Authority in association with Odisha Police. Muskan for Road Safety NGO is the knowledge partner for training. The

one stop solution for transport related queries. It is user friendly, easy to navigate and informative. Some of the best performers in Road Safety in Odisha were felicitated on this occasion. The training will be conducted at all the police range headquarters across Odisha and Police Commissionerate, Cuttack - Bhubaneswar. In the first phase, the training will be conducted at Berhampur, Rourkela and Police Commissionerate, Bhubaneswar. A total of 70 participants- 50 from the police department and 20 from the Transport Department will participate in the program at each place.

Road clear for Amarda Air

New Delhi: Hurdles have been cleared to operationalize the Amarda Road Airstrip near Rasagobindapur in Mayurbhanj district of Odisha under the RCS-UDAN scheme. The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has recommended and submitted the proposal to Ministry of Defence (MoD) for grant of 'No Objection' to Government of Odisha for use of Amarda Airstrip in Mayurbhanj district and working permission to develop civil enclave at Amarda Airstrip. This was informed by Union Minister of State (MoS) for Civil Aviation, VK Singh in Rajya Sabha on Monday. Mr. Singh said the State Government has sought permission of MoD to use Amarda airstrip for operations under UDAN. Subsequently, the Ministry of Civil Aviation also requested MoD on 07.03.2022 to consider the request of the Government of Odisha for granting permission to develop a civil enclave at Amarda airstrip, he said.



The Amarda (Rasgovindpur) airstrip belonging to DRDO is included in the UDAN scheme document. Bhubaneswar to Amarda (Rasgovindpur) and vice-versa route was offered as State sponsored route under bidding round UDAN 4.1. The Airports Authority of India (AAI), the implementing agency, has received one bid on the route, informed the Union MoS. An airport, which is included in the awarded routes of UDAN, requires upgradation/development for commencement of RCS operations. The Amarda Road Airstrip is developed under the "Revival of unserved and underserved airports" scheme. In February, State Chief Secretary Suresh Chandra Mahapatra had written a letter to Defence Secretary Ajay Kumar seeking NoC from the DRDO for commencement of commercial flight operation from the airstrip. The airstrip, one operationalize, will facilitate tourism connectivity to important places like Simlipal National Park, Kuldiha Sanctuary as well as Chandipur and Talsari Sea beach, facilitate economic growth through trade, provide jobs, increase revenues from taxes and foster the community relationship with neighbouring states and communities.

Bharat Kissan Union sets new unit in West Bengal

KOLKATA (KCN): The Bhartiya Kisan Union (Charuni), one of the farmers' bodies which organized the farmers' protest in New Delhi officially expanded its organization in West Bengal following the appointment of an official West Bengal State Core Committee in presence of the president of the national organization Mr. Gurnam Singh Charuni. Bhartiya Kisan Union (Charuni) has expressed that it stands for the fight for rights of the farmers of West Bengal. The farmer's body has also written to the West Bengal Government seeking an appointment to meet and discuss the current farmers' issues of the state. The Bhartiya Kisan Union (Charuni) wants the Government of West Bengal to establish 'mandis' following the Haryana or Punjab model. The organization published a Press Release after appointing a State Core Committee, which read, "...The farmers of West Bengal just need a law by which Government of West Bengal will be forced to buy all their crops with 50% profit over the total costing. This will enrich a huge population of West Bengal

and naturally this will enrich the economy of the state and also destroy the middleman politics which will help the Government to keep control over the price in the market. If the Government of West Bengal buys all crops from the farmers of West Bengal with 50% profit over their total costing, West Bengal will be considered as one of richest states of India just within a few years. With the experience of the farmers movement in Delhi We have understood that if the demands are proper and the fight is real and no dirty vote politics is allowed to creep in, any Government will be forced to bow down in front of the power of the people and that's why We want to spread this fight all over India so that India becomes a real democracy, a country led by people's power". The Bhartiya Kisan Union (Charuni) stands against corporate control in the farming sector and labels itself as a non-partisan farmers' representative organization which acts as a pressure group outside the electoral political system.



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India's trade deficit rises 88 per cent in FY22: Government data

NEW DELHI: India's trade deficit rose 87.5 per cent to USD 192.41 billion in April 2022, an increase of 54.71 per cent over USD 394.44 billion in April 2020-21. In March 2022, it stood at USD 183.65 billion, an increase of 40.38 billion in March 2022, an increase of 14.53 per cent over USD 31.65 billion in March 2021. Petroleum exports stood at USD 33 billion, registering a growth of 4.28



192.41 billion in 2021-22 as against USD 102.63 billion in the previous year, the government data showed on Monday. While total exports during last fiscal year increased to a record high of USD 417.81 billion, imports too soared to USD 610.22 billion, leaving a trade gap of USD 192.41 billion.

"India's merchandise import in April 2021-March 2022 was USD 610.22 billion, an in-

crease of 28.55 per cent over USD 474.71 billion in April 2019-March 2020," said a release by Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

The trade deficit in March 2022 was USD 18.69 billion, while it was USD 192.41 billion during entire 2021-22.

For the first time, India's monthly merchandise exports exceeded USD 40 billion, reaching USD

USD 35.26 billion in the year-ago month, the release said.

It was up by 87.89 per cent over USD 21.49 billion in March 2020. The ministry said the country's merchandise import last month stood at USD 59.07 billion, an increase of 20.79 per cent over USD 48.90 billion in the year-ago period.

It was up 87.68 per cent over USD 31.47 billion in March 2020. During March 2022, the value of non-petro-

leum exports stood at USD 31.65 billion in the same month a year ago. Non-petroleum exports grew by 74 per cent from USD 18.97 billion in March 2020. Non-petroleum import stood at USD 40.66 billion during March 2022, showing a rise of 5.26 per cent over USD 38.63 billion in the year-ago month. It was up by 89.79 per cent from USD 21.42 billion in March 2020, showed the data from the ministry.

IOC, L&T, ReNew join hands for green hydrogen business

NEW DELHI: India's top oil firm IOC, engineering and construction giant Larsen & Toubro and renewable energy company ReNew Power on Monday came together to form a joint venture to develop a green hydrogen business. Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) and L&T have additionally signed a pact to form a joint venture with equity participation to manufacture and sell electrolyzers used in the production of green hydrogen.

"The tripartite venture is a synergistic alliance that brings together the strong credentials of L&T in designing, executing, and delivering EPC projects, IOC's established expertise in petroleum refining along with its presence across the energy spectrum, and the expertise of ReNew in offering and developing utility-scale renewable energy solutions," the firms said in a statement.

The joint ventures will look to manufacture zero-carbon emitting hydrogen, which is used from refineries to steel plants to even running automobiles, via electrolysis powered by renew-

ment said, adding "the country's refining sector consumes approx.

2 million tonnes of grey hydrogen every year, with IOC owning one of the largest shares of its refining output.

"To help decarbonize the Indian industry, the new green hydrogen policy provides for the waiver of inter-state transmission charges for a period of 25 years and a banking provision of up to 30 days, which will help reduce the cost of green hydrogen significantly.

This will, therefore, push the replacement of grey hydrogen with green.

Speaking about the joint venture, SN Subrahmanyam, CEO & MD, L&T, said, "the IOC-L&T-ReNew JV will focus on developing green hydrogen projects in a time-bound manner to supply green hydrogen at an industrial scale.

"While L&T will bring its strong EPC credentials to the table, IOC being India's premier oil refiner with extensive capabilities in chemical processes and refining has established deep R&D capabilities in many aspects of the green hydrogen value chain, and ReNew Power has in a short time established itself as a leading renewable energy supplier and has built itself a very strong reputation.

"We consider this partnership as a significant step in India's quest for alternative energy," he said.

"Addressing another gap in the Green Hydrogen manufacturing chain, IOC-L&T JV will focus on production and sale of Electrolyzer.

"Commenting on the occasion, Shrikant Madhav Vaidya, Chairman, IOC said, "to start with, this partnership will focus on green hydrogen projects at our Mathura and Panipat refineries.

Alongside, other green hydrogen projects in India will also be evaluated.

"While the usage of hydrogen in the mobility sector will take its due time, however, the refineries will be the pivot around which India's green hydrogen revolution will materialize in a substantial way, he said.

"The partnership forged today will thus catalyse the greening of India's energy basket.

"Sumant Sinha, Chairman and CEO of ReNew Power said, "In alignment with the government's broader strategic climate goals for 2030 and 2070 set by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, ReNew looks forward to working with L&T and IOC to build the green hydrogen business in India.

ReNew, as a leader in intelligent energy solutions and with advanced capability across renewable energy technologies, is well poised to complement the capabilities of our partners.

"The timing for these proposed JVs is excellent as they will help support the government of India's recently announced green hydrogen policy to boost India Inc's decarbonization journey.

BJP received highest corporate donations of Rs 720 crore in 2019-20: ADR

Continued from page-1

"The BJP declared receiving Rs 216.75 crore and Congress received Rs 31.00 crore from Prudent Electoral Trust. B G Shirke Construction Technology Pvt. Ltd. was the top donor to NCP in 2019-20," it said.

During the period from 2012-13 to 2019-20, the national parties received the maximum corporate donations of Rs 921.95 crore in 2019-20 (during which the 17th Lok Sabha elections were held), followed by Rs 881.26 crore in 2018-19 and Rs 573.18 crore in 2014-15 (during which the 16th Lok Sabha elections were held), the report said.

Corporate donations received in 2019-20 constituted 24.62 per cent of the total corporate donations made between 2012-13 and 2019-20.

Between 2012-13 and 2019-20, donations from corporate and business houses to the national parties increased by 1,024 per cent, the report noted.

The contributions from corporate/business houses were divided into 15 sectors/categories by ADR and do not form a part of the submission by parties to ECI.

The sectors include trusts and group of companies, manufacturing, power and oil, mining, construction, exports/imports, and real estate, among others.

"Out of the total of Rs 921.95 crore donated by the corporate/business houses to the five national parties in FY 2019-20, Rs 22.312 crore was received from the un-segregated category, which includes companies with no details available online or whose nature of work is unclear," the report said.

During 2019-20, electoral trusts were the biggest donors to the national parties, contributing a total amount of Rs 397.82 crore (about 43 per cent).

The manufacturing sector was the second highest overall contributor in 2019-20, contributing a total amount of Rs 146.388 crore, the report said.

During 2019-20, BJP, Congress, AITC and NCP received the maximum contributions from electoral trusts.

The BJP received the highest amount of Rs 323.32 crore, followed by INC (Rs 71.00 crore), AITC (Rs 2.00 crore) and NCP (Rs 1.50 crore).

Manas was tortured after he failed to recover file from Sarmistha's computer: CB

Continued from page-1

Bhubaneswar based web-channel Sampurna, near Sundarpada area of the City.

He and Ranjan attempted to recover the file but failed. They then asked Manas to hand them over a memory chip having the same content which was deleted from Sarmistha's computer. Retired Odisha Information Service (OIS) officer Niranjana Sethi also visited Sarmistha's office on February 7 and assaulted the cameraman.

He was later taken to Dayal Ashram, a shelter home for elderly persons in the City run by Sarmistha, and was brutally thrashed. The accused found him dead on February 8 morning.

The Crime Branch officers said Manas was in possession of a memory chip having some 'valuable' content related to the accused. So far, the agency's officers have found no trace of the missing memory card.

"We have not recovered any device of Manas. He was not staying in any particular location in Bhubaneswar and he kept on changing his places of stay for which it is a difficult task to recover any of his device. However, efforts are still on to trace his devices," said a senior Crime Branch officer. Meanwhile, Chandbali JMFC court on Sunday allowed the agency to take Sarmistha and her associate Jhuna on three-day police remand for further questioning them in connection with the case.

The agency had earlier taken Sarmistha, Jhuna, Niranjana and Ranjan Nayak on five-day remand starting March 29. Niranjana and Ranjan were sent to judicial custody on Sunday after the end of their police remand.

After five-year delay, Lake Neutral project in Bhubaneswar to take off soon

Continued from page-1

tral project on 38 acres land along channel no 10 at Janpath road for ecological restoration of the natural drain at an investment of Rs 63 crore.

Accordingly, the Egis India Consulting Engineers Private Limited was roped in by the smart city authorities as consulting partner for development of the project.

Though the project plan was readied in September 2017 and the tender was invited in the subsequent months, the project was put on hold owing to various reasons including delay in land acquisition, environmental clearances, funding and other reasons.

The original plan also included separate storm water channel and sewage channel and water treatment plant. BSCL officials said tender for these works will also be invited in phases.

Investigation Begins On Chullah Vandalization

Continued from page-1

Administration (SJTA) Act.

The case has been booked under Sections 427 (Mischief causing damage to the amount of fifty rupees), 295 (Destroying, damaging or defiling a place of worship or sacred object with intent to insult the religion of any class of persons) and 295 A (Deliberate and malicious acts, intended to outrage religious feelings of any class by insulting its religion or religious beliefs), said Dr.Singh.

"We are laying top priority to this case. Evidence collection and analysis of CCTV footage have started. Anyone involved in this incident will be detained immediately and subsequent action will be taken as per law," he said adding, it would be premature to speculate about the motive behind this unruly incident.

"It would be premature to speculate. Our priority at the moment is identification of the persons involved in damage," the SP added.

District Magistrate, Samarth Verma said apart from an FIR at the police station, an internal inquiry is on. "Very soon the people involved in the vandalism will be identified."

Meanwhile, senior BJP leader Bijoy Mohapatra has blamed the State Government for the vandalism in the 'Roshaghara' or kitchen of Puri Jagannath temple.

Mr.Mohapatra has criticized the Sri Jagannath Temple Administration (SJTA) and Puri District Administration for the vandalism of as many as 43 earthen stoves in the temple kitchen.

Mr.Mohapatra alleged that despite the SJTA and the District Administration having knowledge about the disturbance between the sevayats in the Roshaghara two days back, no action was taken and such an incident happened.

The senior BJP leader has demanded that apart from action against those who have vandalized the earthen stoves, action should be taken against the SJTA and District Administration as well.

Quoting from the Supreme Court judgment order of November 2019, mr.Mohapatra said that the apex court had opined for the appointment of a single authority for security management in the temple premises.

He said that the State government was requested to appoint an officer of the rank of an Additional Superintendent of Police (ASP) who will be the Administrator of Security of the temple.

He suspected that there were no security personnel on duty on that day.

Union Education Minister and senior BJP leader Dharmendra Pradhan tweeted that the incident has pained him since Mahaprabhu is the centre of faith and belief of the people of Odisha and Hindus the world over.

Mr.Pradhan has also said that the State Government and the SJTA to take the incident seriously and take appropriate steps and remain alert so that such incidents are not repeated.



able energy.

The government in February, notified a green hydrogen policy aimed at boosting the production of green hydrogen and green ammonia to help the nation become a global hub for the environmentally friendly version of the element. For countries like India, with its ever-increasing oil and gas import bill, green hydrogen can also help provide crucial energy security by reducing the overall dependence on imported fossil fuels.

While nearly all hydrogen produced in India today is grey, it is estimated that demand for hydrogen will be 12 million tonnes by 2030 and around 40 per cent of the element produced in the country (around 5 million tonnes) will be green, as per the draft National Hydrogen Mission guidelines.

By 2050, nearly 80 per cent of India's hydrogen is projected to be 'green' - produced by renewable electricity and electrolysis.

Green hydrogen may become the most competitive route for hydrogen production by around 2030.

This may be driven by potential cost declines in key production technologies and in clean energy technologies such as solar PV and wind turbines.

"Today, hydrogen is mainly used in the refining, steel and fertilizer sectors, which will be the focus of the JVs' initial efforts," the state-

India eye wins against England to climb to top spot in FIH Pro League standings

BHUBANESWAR: Fairly well-placed after eight games, the Indian men's hockey team would look to annexe the top position in the standings when it takes on England in a double-leg FIH Pro League tie, starting here on Saturday.

The second match of the tie will be played on Sunday.

Tokyo Olympic bronze medallists India have so far played eight matches this season and are placed second in the standings, behind Germany (17 points), with 16 points.

The Indian team defeated South Africa 10-2, 10-2 before winning a game and losing one against France (5-0, 2-5) and Spain (5-4, 3-5). Recently against Argentina, the Indians lost 2-2 (1-3 in shoot-out) before registering a thrilling 4-3 win in the second match.

Going into tie against England, defence remains a major concern for the Indians as the

forward. "Our main focus is to make the team stronger match by match. We are learning a lot

circle," he said during a virtual pre-match press conference. On the

match-winner against Argentina in their previous game. Captain of the Olympic bronze-medal

The presence of four world-class dragflicking options -- Harmanpreet, skipper Amit

making his senior team debut, striking a brace in the second game against Argentina before providing the assist to Mandeep for the winner.

"He (Jugraj) is playing really well. He is a powerful, world-class dragflicker, it is a big benefit for the team. He is availing his chances. The presence of so many dragflickers makes it difficult for opponents to judge," Rohidas said.

In their last meeting, India defeated England 3-1 in the quarterfinals of the Tokyo Olympics last year.

On paper and in world rankings too, India hold an edge over England.

While the Indians are ranked fourth, the Englishmen occupy the seventh spot.

England, on the other

hand, are placed seventh in the Pro League standings with six points from two wins and as many defeats.

England started their Pro League campaign on a positive note beating Spain 6-1 and 3-2 before losing 1-3 and 0-2 to Argentina.

England are on a rebuilding phase under new captain Tom Sorsby and head coach Zak Jones, and are looking at the Pro League matches to gain valuable experience ahead of the Birmingham Commonwealth Games.

"It (Pro League) is really important... We have new players and we want to gain some experience. These games are vital in building the momentum as much as possible going into CWG," Jones said.



backline wilted under pressure in every match.

Conceding soft goals has been India's bane and vice-captain Harmanpreet Singh had no qualms in admitting that, saying the defenders need to improve their decision making going

about our weakness and strengths. We need to improve our finishing, create more penalty corners.

"The decision making need to improve. The defenders need to avoid conceding penalty corners and tackle outside the

contrary, India's forwardline has been impressive, scoring as many as 42 goals in the eight games. Mandeep Singh, in particular, has been at his best inside the opposition circle, scoring some important goals, including the last-minute

winning side, Manpreet Singh is the backbone of India's midfield alongside Hardik Singh, Vivek Sagar Prasad, Nilkanta Sharma and Sumit.

Rohidas, Varun Kumar and young Jugraj Singh -- hand India a clear edge over their opponents. Jugraj has been a revelation since

Boxer Monika stuns two-time World Championship medallist in 48 Kilogram category at Thailand Open

NEW DELHI: Boxer Monika (48kg) upstaged two-time World Championship medallist Josie Gabuco of the Philip-

She will now face Vietnam's Trinh Thi Diem Kieu, who received bye in the last round.

Competing in his first

Porntip Buapa 3-2 in the 57kg quarterfinals.

However, Renu (54kg) and Monika (63kg) lost their

nals against respective opponents from Kazakhstan.

Sumit (75kg), who received bye in the last opening round,



piners to enter the semifinals along with two other Indians at the Thailand Open here on Monday.

Ashish Kumar (81kg) and Manisha (57kg) are the two other Indian pugilists who also made their way into the last four with contrasting wins against their respective Thai opponents. The 26-year-old Monika, who hails from Rohtak, prevailed 4-1 over experienced campaigner Gubuco, who won gold and bronze medals at the World Championships in 2012 and 2008 respectively.

international tournament since the Tokyo Olympics, last edition's gold medallist Ashish notched a 5-0 win against local boxer Aphisit Khankhokkhruea in the 81kg quarterfinals.

The Indian will now clash win Indonesia's Maikhel Roberrd Muskita in the semifinals.

It was a good day in the ring for Manisha, who recently qualified for the upcoming World Championships as well as Asian Games, as she defeated two-time Youth Asian champion Thailand's

opening round clashes.



While Renu gave a tough fight to Italy's European U-22 champion Sirine Charaabi, it wasn't enough as the Indian lost 2-3 in the quarterfinal clash. Monika, on the other hand, went down in the quarterfinals, losing to Youth Olympic champion local boxer P a n p a t c h a r a Somnuek by RSC verdict (Referee Stops Contest) in the third round.

On the third day of the competition on Tuesday, Sumit and Gaurav Chauhan will play their quarter-fi-

will take on Timur Nurseitov while Gaurav (91kg) will fight against 2018 Youth Olympics champion Aibek Oralbay.

The tournament features 130 boxers -- 74 male and 56 females. Gold medal winners will earn USD 2000, while silver and bronze winners will pocket USD 1000 and USD 500 respectively.

The Indian contingent had won eight medals, including one gold, four silver and three bronze, in the last edition of the tournament, held in 2019.

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