

## Ropeway project at Nandankanan Zoo to be operational within month: Chief Secy

**Bhubaneswar(KCN):** An under-construction ropeway project at Nandankanan Zoological Park in Bhubaneswar will be operational soon and at best within a month, said Chief Secretary Suresh Chandra Mohapatra while reviewing a number of development works that are underway in the zoo, today. Provisions are being made for at least 3,000 visitors to take a ride of the ropeway in a day. It is expected that a large number of visitors coming from and outside the State will throng the zoo this year. Keeping in mind an increased footfall, the development works



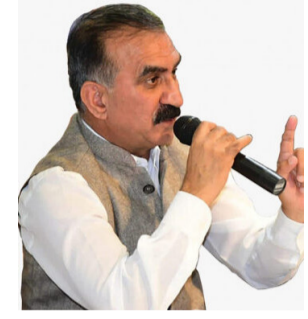
have been targeted to be completed soon. The ropeway will enable riders to travel to and from Botanical Garden and Nandankanan Zoo. Mohapatra ordered the officials concerned to expedite the works meant for visitors. The

Chief Secretary initially visited Chudanga reserve forest and Krushnanagar proposed forest. Expansion of Nandankanan Zoo is to be carried out on an area spreading over 604 hectares of the forest coming under Chudanga

and Krushnanagar. Lion, tiger, bear and a few herbivore animal safaris are to be developed in the forest area. The project includes vehicular provision for movement inside the safari and a veterinary hospital as well. Mohapatra also

ordered early completion of the safari project, a source said. Kiakani Lake in Nandankanan is to be restored at a cost of Rs 9 crore, where a boating facility is being developed. Later, the Chief Secretary also reviewed different ongoing development works at Botanical Garden, including an entry gate, an access road, toilets and a pavement, the source added. Notably, during his visit, Chief Secretary Mohapatra advised Nandankanan Zoo director Manoj V Nair to prepare a master plan for the proposed expansion, modernisation and restoration works.

## Sukhwinder Singh Sukhu to be next Himachal CM



**Shimla(KCN):** Four-time legislator Sukhwinder Singh Sukhu, 58, also the head of the Congress' election committee, will be the next Chief Minister of Himachal Pradesh, while Mukesh Agnihotri will be his deputy. Their oath of office will be held in the state capital on Sunday at 11 a.m. with the induction of Council of Ministers later as per the discretion of the Chief Minister. Sukhu, who is known for his proximity with the Gandhi family, was named leader of the Congress Legislature Party (CLP) after two days of hectic politicking by AICC in-charge for state Rajiv Shukla after his appointment was approved by Mallikarjun

Earlier, the CLP attended by 40 Congress members on Friday evening, authorised Kharge to appoint the CLP leader. Shukla made the announcement after the CLP meeting, the second one on the second day. Party observers — Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel, former Haryana Chief Minister Bupinder Hooda and Shukla — on Friday met Governor Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar to hand over list of MLAs showing the strength to form the government. Sukhu began his career in student politics and rose to the position of party state unit chief from 2013 to 2019.

## Achyuta Samanta Hails Odisha CM for Extending Financial Assistance to Ifu Malik

**Bhubaneswar,(KCN):** Lok Sabha MP from Kandhamal Dr Achyuta Samanta has expressed thanks and deepest gratitude to the Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik on behalf of the people of his constituency for extending financial assistance to MBBS student Ifu Malik from Kandhamal district. Ifu, who cracked the NEET exam and secured admission at a medical college in Koraput, faced financial hurdles to pursue his studies. The State Government decided to step in and bear his entire education

expenses. Dr Samanta said the warm gesture bears testimony to the Chief Minister's affirmation that the "Odisha Mo Parivar". Ifu met Dr Samanta early on Saturday after meeting the CM. During the meeting, Dr Samanta blessed him with a bright future and announced to support his miscellaneous expenses.

The KISS Foundation already deposited an amount of Rs 60,000 in his account. His expenses will be borne by the Foundation till the completion of his medical programme. Dr Samanta also announced that both the brothers of Ifu will be offered employment at KISS which will further boost his morale and help him complete his medical education with confidence. Ifu expressed his deepest regards to Dr Samanta and KISS Foundation for the support extended to him and his brothers.



## Center Boosts Millet Products

**New Delhi:** Anita Peaveen, Secretary, FPI chaired a roundtable interaction with Resident Commissioners recently with to apprise the Ministry's plan of action for the proposed Mega Food Event to States and discuss possible areas of collaborations. During the keynote address, she informed the RCs that the mega event would be organized in October 2023 and is being envisaged on a much larger scale than the event earlier organised by the Ministry. This event would be providing a platform for the States and UTs to showcase State specific opportunities, interact with global and domestic



business leaders, suppliers, purchasers, and technology providers for collaborations, and generate investment & sourcing interests across the value chain of food processing and food retail sectors. All States were requested to share feedback and

suggestions to make the event a grand success. They were also requested to participate actively in the event, as well as support the Ministry in creating awareness, ensuring participation of senior policy makers, agri-food companies, FPOs, SHGs and all relevant stakeholders in

the mega food event. The participants were also informed that as part of 'International Year of Millets', a series of activities are being planned by the Ministry to create awareness about the many benefits of millets and millet based value-added products.

All participating RCs assured support to MoFPI in activities planned throughout the year 2023 and during the Mega Food Event 2023. Some of the suggestions / feedback included requirements of focused campaigning of the mega food event as well as benefits of millets domestically & in international expos, organising district level summits in addition to planned summits and expos in State Capitals which would help in onboarding micro entrepreneurs, FPOs, SHGs; showcasing of traditional aspects, possible association with tourism industry for promotion of the mega event etc

## "Ceiling on Rates of Surgeries and Room Rent in Hospitals be revised urgently"



**Kolkata:** An interesting Interactive session on Health Care and Health Insurance was organized by city-based NGO Concern for Calcutta together with Calcutta Citizens' Initiative Friday at Saturday Club. Dr. Purnendu Roy a well known surgeon for Gall bladder surgery by laparoscopic and founder of Genesis Hospital deliberated on ways and means to bring about a balance in life of people suffering from life-style

diseases such as Diabetics and hypertension. "India is diabetics capital of the globe and people are suffering because of stress and anxiety and in the process losing the balance of life". Shaonli Kar, vice president of HDFC-ERGO emphasised the need for medical insurance for combating medical emergency and she highlighted various user-friendly policies offered by HDFC-ERGO with cashless treatment

facility without formality of TPA. Social Activist Narayan Jain, President, Calcutta Citizens Initiative pointed out that PSU Insurers like New India Assurance, National Insurance, United India Insurance and Oriental Insurance Co. have an agreement with a number of Third Party Administrators(TPA). The drawback is that such TPAs have agreement Preferred Provider Network (PPN)

agreement and the rates of Surgeries are negotiated by these TPAs with the Hospitals. Dr Roy said that such rates are very unrealistic and have not been revised for last 15 years though the cost of treatment has gone upwards at a pace of around 14% per year. Jain demanded that limit of 1% of sum assured for Room Rent in case of PSUs is quite insufficient and be revised to at least 2 per cent of sum assured. KS Adhikari President

Concern for Calcutta in his welcome note highlighted the need for happy and healthy life for all. Past president BG Roy moderated the programme very well and introduced the guest speakers. Sohanraj Singhvi, Arnab Sen, Ramesh Mahajan, Joeeta Basu, Heena Gorsia asked questions which Dr Purnendu Roy, Shaonli Kar and Pooja Mohta answered with great clarity. Rajendra Khandelwal, Consul of Niger, Olivia Dunlop (Director Genesis Hospital), Saikat Chaudhury, OP Jhunjhunwala, Soma Roy, Udit Mahajan, Mahesh Shah, Bibhas Maity, K.C. Tewary, Pawan Paharia, Rajendra Bardia, KN Gupta & others actively participated. Ashok Purohit, Secretary of Concern for Calcutta thanked all.

## Wheel Chairs Donated to Waltair Railway Division by Rotary International



**Vizag (KCN) :** Waltair Division received 250 brand new modern lightweight Wheel chairs from Catherine Jones, the President of Rotary International at a glittering and well attended function at the lawns of Radisson Blue hotel, Visakhapatnam. The Event was "Operation Imagine", a mega service project by Rotary International. The Rotary International President Catherine Jones handed over 250

Wheel Chairs to Anup Satpathy, DRM, Waltair. These chairs will be distributed all over the Waltair Divn at Rly stations, hospitals etc and all old and worn-out ?? will be phased out. This was possible due to the determined persuasive efforts of our Sr Dcm, Akhilesh Tripathy and his team over the last few weeks. The total value

of the chairs is around Rs 27.5 Lakhs as each chair costs more than Rs 11000/. We sincerely thank Rotary International for this noble gesture and hope to extend and continue our cooperation in the service of the nation and society.





OTM workers and public of Choudwar expressing gratitude to Chief Minister Shri Naveen Patnaik for revival of OTM at Naveen Niwas



Chief Minister Shri Naveen Patnaik interacting with Mr. Ifu Mallick, a student from kandhamal who joined SLNMedical college koraput at Naveen Niwas

## 4-yr UG courses must for Honours degree: UGC's new draft norms

**Bhubaneswar(KCN):** The University Grants Commission (UGC) has prepared a new draft norms wherein the students will be able to get an undergraduate (UG) 'Honours' degree after completing four years instead of three. The new draft norms prepared in accordance with the National Education Policy is likely to be notified on Monday. With implementation of the new norms, the students will be able to get UG degree in 3 years on completion of 120 credits (measured through the number of academic hours) and UG Honours degree in 4 years on completion of 160 credits. According to reports, if the students wish to go for a research specialisation, they will have to undertake a research project in their four-year course. This will get them an Honours degree with research specialisation. The students who have already enrolled and are pursuing a three-year UG programme as per the existing Choice Based Credit System (CBCS) are eligible to pursue a



four-year undergraduate programme (FYUP). The university may provide bridge courses (including online) to enable them to transition to the extended programme. The FYUP will also have multiple entry and exit options for students. If students leave the programme before 3 years, they will be allowed to rejoin within 3 years of their exit and will have to complete the UG degree within a stipulated period of 7 years. The FYUP consists of major stream courses, minor stream courses, courses from other disciplines, language courses and skill courses. The course work during the first 3 semesters of the FYUP would consist of a set of courses such as language education (two languages – Regional language and

English language), understanding India, Environmental Science/ Education, Digital and technological solutions, Mathematical and Computational Thinking and Analysis, Health & wellness, Yoga education, and sports and fitness. The courses will be common for all students. Students can decide to continue with their chosen major or change their major at the end of the 2nd semester. Also, they will have option to go for a UG either with single or double majors. A student has to secure minimum 50 per cent credits from the major discipline for the 3-year/4-year UG degree. Currently, students get Honours degree after completing 3 years of U n d e r g r a d u a t e programmes offered by universities in the country.

## Move To Ease Land Lease

**Bhubaneswar(KCN):** Chief Secretary Suresh Chandra Mahapatra Friday directed the Departments of General Administration and Public Grievances and Housing and Urban Development to prepare proposals for decentralization of specific powers to enable a large number of people in the twin cities of Cuttack and Bhubaneswar for ever. Mr. Mohapatra at a high level meeting suggested decentralizing this power to the Development Authority and State Housing Board considering various

aspects related to transfer of ownership of land and existing regulations. In this way, land leaseholders for non-commercial private residences can easily and conveniently get conversion services to freehold, he said. The proposal was asked to be submitted to the government for approval within a week. In the meeting, the issues related to the contract with the people who got houses in Chandrama Housing Complex were

discussed in detail. Considering the various aspects of the problem,



the Chief Secretary Mr. Mohapatra decided to resolve them as quickly as possible, and ordered the problem be

solved within a month. Notably, so far 37 housing schemes have been leased to BDA and 44 housing schemes to Odisha State Housing Board from the Department of P u b l i c Administration and Public Grievances. Similarly, through the Department of Revenue and Disaster Management and the Department of Urban Development, government land has

been leased to the CDA for housing schemes. Notably, if this power is decentralized to the Development Authority, about 50,000 families will benefit. Apart from this, the free-hold system is also running for those who have leased land for non-commercial private residence directly from the Public Administration and Grievance Department. Mr. Mohapatra also directed the department to make this process more simple and accessible

## Expedite Rail Land Acquire; Vaishnaw

**Bhubaneswar(KCN):** The Odisha Government has to expedite the land acquisition process for early commissioning of the much-delayed Talcher-Bimlagarh new railway line project. Railways Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw told this in Rajya Sabha while replying to a question of BJD Member Prashanta Nanda. The railway took up the work of Talcher-Bimlagarh (150 km) new line project in



2003-04. The anticipated cost of the project is Rs 1288 crore, he said. So far, the work has been completed in Talcher-Sunakhani (around 20

km) section. Further, work has been taken up between Sunakhani to Khamar (30.50 km) section, the Minister said. However, work is held up due to legal issues. Land acquisition in the balance section from Khamar to Bimlagarh has been taken up. Out of 1002.61 acre of private land, 524.81 acres of land has been acquired. Similarly, out of 422.38 acres of government land, 251.10 acres of land has been

alienated and all the forest land has been diverted, he said. Now, the Odisha Government has to expedite the acquisition of balance land, he added. Sources said the delay in land acquisition and multiple legal disputes have led to an unprecedented cost overrun and are seriously affecting the project viability. Of 9.7 km track length between Sunakhani and Samal, 75 per cent work

is complete. However, progress has come to a halt now due to two pending court cases, the source said. Similarly, 85 per cent work on the 6.53 km stretch between Samal and Parabil is over but facing the same fate due to three court cases. Though 47 per cent work on the 14.20 km stretch between Parabil and Khamar has been completed, it is not making any progress due to four pending cases, officials said.

## 2 sisters rescued after being cheated by youth on pretext of marriage in Odisha's Jajpur

**Jajpur(KCN):** In a bizarre case of love and deceit through social media, police today rescued two sisters from a locked house after they were tricked by a youth on the pretext of marriage in Sundureimuha area of Jajpur district in Odisha here today. While the main accused Ranjit Sahu (23) is absconding, police have detained three persons including his mother Ranjulata Sahu and two elder brothers Chandan and Ranjan for interrogation. As per reports, the sister duo (aged 23 and 19)

belonged to Khaprakhol in Balangir district but were doing tailoring work in a company in Tamil Nadu for the last two years. They had got in touch with Ranjit, a resident of Bania Sahi in Abdalpur area under Jajpur Sadar limits, on social media platform Instagram and since the last three months were interacting with him. After winning their trust over regular likes and posts, Ranjit had managed to win their trust. He then lured the two of them into false assurance of marriage and a better life, and

asked them to come to Jajpur. As the two sisters belonged to a humble background and were drawn towards Ranjit's luring prospects, they fell for his words. They took a train and came all the way from Tamil Nadu to Jajpur last month but Ranjit used to keep them locked up in a rented house. Sources said the two of them were kept confined to the house for the last one month. On Saturday, they somehow managed to escape. Villagers on getting to know about the incident, informed police who reached the spot and



rescued the victims. One of the victims alleged that Ranjit's family members too were involved and accused them of assaulting her sister as well. "I fell in love with Ranjit on Instagram and came. He had promised to marry me and assured me of my sister's marriage in his circle as well. His family members too assured us that they will ensure my sister is settled after our marriage. Last month, his family said Ranjit has consumed poison and slashed his wrist and asked me to come soon.

But after we reached, they started torturing and beating us. Today we somehow managed to escape after they attacked my sister with a blade," said one of the victims. Ranjit's mother has however denied the allegations. "We were serious about getting the elder sister married to our son. The younger one was supposed to go back home. We did not torture them at all. All this happened because the couple fought over some petty issue and now we are being framed," she claimed.

The house owner, on the other hand, said Ranjit and his family had a bad reputation and were known to be habitual offenders. "I had given the house on rent six months back because I knew Ranjit's father who is a plumber. But I never knew he would be so characterless. Previously too he had cheated a girl in a similar manner and we had reported the matter to police. All family members are like him. They are known for such acts and have not even paid the rent. I have taken the keys back," he told mediapersons.

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## Sriram Raghavan announces war drama 'Ikkis' with Dharmendra and Amitabh Bachchan's grandson Agastya Nanda

On the occasion of Dharmendra's birthday, ace filmmaker Sriram Raghavan announced his collaboration with the legendary actor. Sriram is coming up with a war drama titled 'Ikkis', which will be headlined by none other than Dharmendra. Surprisingly, Dharmendra will share screen space with megastar Amitabh Bachchan's grandson Agastya Nanda in the film. 'Ikkis' is touted to be a war drama based on the life of Second Lieutenant Arun Khetarpal. He was awarded Param Vir Chakra posthumously



and lived an exemplary life. Being made under Dinesh Vijan's Maddock Films, 'Ikkis' will go on floors in 2023. Apart from 'Ikkis', Agastya will also be seen in filmmaker Zoya Akhtar's 'The Archies', which is a fresh take on the iconic gang of The Archies and promises to match the youthful energy, hope and excitement of the 60s. It also stars Mihir Ahuja, Dot, Khushi Kapoor, Suhana Khan, Yuvraj Menda, Agastya Nanda and Vedang Raina. It is backed by Tiger Baby, Graphic India and Archie Comics and will release next year.

Veteran actor Dharmendra who is celebrating his 87th birthday today has delivered remarkable performances in films like 'Sholay', 'Pratiggya', 'The Burning Train' and many more. He will be next seen in Karan Johar's upcoming romantic comedy film 'Rocky aur Rani ki Prem Kahani' alongside Ranveer Singh, Alia Bhatt, Jaya Bachchan, and Shabana Azmi. The film is all set to hit the theatres on April 28, 2023. Apart from that, he also has director Anil Sharma's next 'Apne 2' opposite Sunny Deol, Bobby Deol, and Karan Deol.

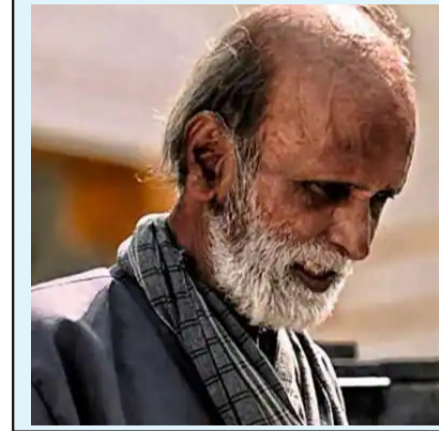
## Armaan Malik romances Sharmin Segal in 'Ghalib Hona Hai' song from album 'Sukoon'

Sanjay Leela Bhansali has always emphasized his undying love for music. Having a penchant for Ghazals, Classical tunes and folk music, the album 'Sukoon'



is nothing but perfection. As we celebrate this soulful album, the National Award-Winning Music director brings in another surprise for his audience. With Ghalib Hona Hai, a video from his album 'Sukoon', audiences get to witness Armaan Malik along with Sharmin Segal in a completely different avatar and one cannot help but fall in love with his voice.

## KGF actor Krishna G Rao dies at a Bangalore hospital, Raveena Tandon mourns demise



Popular and veteran Kannada actor Krishna G Rao, who played the blind man in Yash's KGF Chapter 1 breathed his last in Bangalore. According to reports, he suffered age-related illness. Rao was admitted to Vinayaka Hospital near Sita Circle, Bangalore. Reportedly, he was treated in the ICU due to a lung infection.

Fans and celebrities including

Raveena Tandon, who was a part of KGF Chapter 2 took to social media and extended condolences to his family. She wrote: "Condolences to his family and the entire family of #kgf. #KGFChapter2." He was 70.

Krishna G Rao worked in many movies and played a vital role in KGF recently. He did several films and featured in cameos. He also worked as

an assistant director, reportedly. Krishna's last film happens to be Nano Narayanappa which is slated to release soon. Its trailer was unveiled recently and it featured the actor playing a role of a character with ten heads, much like the character Raavan from Ramayan. KGF makers also mourned his demise and extended condolences on social media.

## I do want to find a companion, it is important to find someone who aligns mentally and emotionally with you: Nyrra M Banerji

Nyrra M Banerji, who is currently seen in the show Pishachini, shares that she is single and is wanting to meet someone special. The actress in a chat shared how she is hoping to find a companion but it is not an easy task, she says. "I am single and work keeps me busy, so I haven't really met anyone. Also, in today's times, it is important that your thoughts align mentally, emotionally with someone. Many times it happens that you may connect with a person on the outer level, but emotionally and mentally you might be very different. It is not easy to find someone who is on the same wavelength as you about



all the things. When that happens, maybe I will take the plunge," she adds.

Nyrra's show Pishachini will go off air on TV after December 23. It will move to the

channel's OTT platform. be available for online audiences. She says, "It was supposed to be a finite show. This is not a new genre for me and I enjoyed doing the

stunts. In Divya Drishti, I was fighting a pishachini and in this show, I am playing one. I am glad that the show has struck a chord with the online viewers and it will continue on the channel's online platform. I am not disappointed that the TV journey is getting over because we will still be shooting for it." Talking about the kind of roles that excite her, Nyrra shares, "I want to do diverse roles. And the fantasy-fiction genre gives me an opportunity to do many things in a show. I enjoy playing a pishachini. It has been a great journey connecting with the entire team and working like a family on the sets."

## Vicky Kaushal shares an entertaining video with his fans



Vicky Kaushal recently treated his fans on Instagram with an entertaining video where he is seen singing a Punjabi song and showing off his moves. The actor also mentioned in the caption that his wife Katrina Kaif begged him not to put up such

videos. Dressed in a grey hoodie, cap and cool shades, Vicky looked dapper as ever. He wrote, "My wife begs me not to put up such videos, but I can't help it. Hopefully one day she'll say... 'KYAA BAATHAI!!!'"

As soon as he shared the video, likes and comments

poured in from all sides. While a fan wrote, "Oh I live for these videos!!!", another one added, "And what about us who keep telling and admiring you 'kya baat hai'!!!" One fan also commented, "We all are waiting for one person's comment." Katrina and

Vicky will soon be celebrating their first wedding anniversary. The couple got hitched on December 9 last year in an intimate but lavish wedding ceremony in Rajasthan with only their close friends and family in attendance. Ever since then, the lovebirds have been painting the town red with their love story. Meanwhile, on the work front, Vicky is awaiting the release of his upcoming film, 'Govinda Naam Mera', co-starring Kiara Advani and Bhumi Pednekar. It is slated to release on December 16. Apart from this, Vicky is also a part of Meghna Gulzar's 'Sam Bahadur' which also stars Sanya Malhotra and Fatima Sana Shaikh. He also has Lakman Utekar's untitled next with Sara Ali Khan.

## Bigg Boss 16: Sreejita De reenters as WILD CARD, mocks Tina Datta by looking in camera while hugging Shalin Bhanot!



Television actress Sreejita De, who was the first evicted contestant from 'Bigg Boss 16', made a fiery comeback into the show as a wild card entrant. As she was announced as the wild card entrant, several housemates except Tina Datta was seen cheering for Sreejita, who said that Tina has a black heart. She even said that she will expose Tina and make sure she is out of the show. When she entered the show, she tightly hugged Shalin Bhanot, said "wait" and then looked into the camera as she hugged him, which is noticed by every housemate. Tina has often looked into the camera as she hugged Shalin in the show. Mimicking Tina, Sreejita hilariously said: "Zoom in the camera."

Nimrit, Shiv and Soundrya catch the drift and start clapping at Sreejita. Priyanka said: "Ab aayega maza." Tina is seen crying inconsolably in the bedroom.

## Only bolder & better, Aishwarya Sakhua speaks on behalf of her peers and it is savage!

'Saas Bina Sasural' actress, Aishwarya Sakhua who became a household name as Toasty, is also a lifestyle influencer & is an advocate of healthy living & animal welfare. The actress is unabashedly herself on her social media & shares relatable content. She'd previously creatively spoken about how she was stereotyped to play a villain or didn't get a role because she was too tall. The actress has always had a knack for putting across her points in a fun way without offending anyone. This time she does it again. Aishwarya's new video on 'Things actors are sick and tired of hearing' is definitely what every actor might relate to. In the video she's asked questions like, 'Iss baar budget kam hai, aap adjust kar lo,' 'Toh, Aaaj Kal kuch nahi kar rahe?,' 'Oh I'm a big fan, aapke last show ka naam kya tha?' & some other direct blows.



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## Pramukh Swami Maharaj words remove impurities, bring joy and inspire greatness



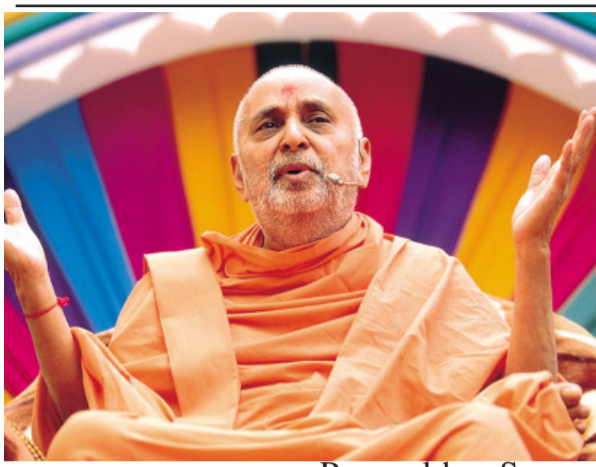
Pramukh Swami Maharaj - the great saint dedicated his entire life for his cause had worked tirelessly to nurture BAPS Swaminarayan Sanstha by serving others without any expectations. He had no desire for credit or recognition because in his heart was the feeling of servitude. The centenary festival of Brahmaswarup Pramukh Swami Maharaj, who had lived his entire life by his words will be celebrated from December 15, 2022

to January 15, 2023 in Ahmedabad. Lakhs of followers of the Bochasanwasi Akshar Purushottam Swaminarayan Sanstha (BAPS) from different countries are expected to attend the month-long 'Pramukh Swami Maharaj Shatabdi Mahotsav' or 'Pramukh Swami Maharaj Centenary Festival'—the grand finale of the centenary events that is being hosted on a 600-acre site called 'Pramukh Swami Nagar' along the Sardar Patel Ring Road near Ognaj Circle on the outskirts of Ahmedabad. The BAPS is a spiritual, volunteer-driven organization

dedicated to improving society through individual growth by fostering the Hindu ideals of faith, unity, and selfless service. Its worldwide network of 3,800 centers supports these character-building activities.

Pramukh Swami Maharaj was the spiritual guru of the sect. He was born on December 7, 1921, became chief of the sect in 1950 and died on August 13, 2016. In childhood, the guru got the name Pramukh Swami, which means president saint. Maharaj means king. He was formally ordained a saint at 18, renouncing worldly pursuits, and became

### Vinod Chandrashekhar Dixit



president of the sect in 1950. He was made spiritual head of the sect in 1971, becoming the fifth man to hold the title. He was also the driving force behind monthlong BAPS festivals held across the United States, events that helped recruit new devotees.

People from all walks of life will visit and offer their heartfelt tributes to

corporal needs of all.

His was the simple life of a celibate, ignoring fame and recognition. His greatness lay in his ability to relate to the common man. He understood the problems people face in their everyday lives and empathized with their pain. His success was not measured by the awards he received nor by the recognition he accumulated. Rather, it is measured by the number of lives he transformed.

A 30-foot high statue of Pramukh Swami Maharaj on a 15-foot high pedestal is encircled by 24 recesses, with

depictions of his life and work, it said. Other key attractions include a 67-foot high massive replica of New Delhi's Swaminarayan Akshardham, an open-air theatre, children's cultural land or BalNagri spread over 17 acres and a glow garden.

He was named as one of the 20 most influential people in the world by Guinness World Records in 2000. Pramukh Swami Maharaj has also been recognized by the British Parliament, Canadian Parliament, and the United Nations for his work in promoting religious harmony and giving back to local

communities. He inspired religious activities in BAPS mandirs and satsang centers throughout the world in addition to the Swaminarayan Akshardhams in New Delhi and Gandhinagar.

Swami inspired millions with his powerful motto: In the good of others lies our own. There is no doubt that this legacy of his selfless service will continue to benefit humanity for a long time to come and the deeds of Pramukh Swami would set an example in the history of this time.

**B-15 Jyoti-Kalash Society, Jodhpur Tekra Satellite Ahmedabad**

### Editor To Letter

Dear Editor,

#### Pure Biodegradable plastics needed

Compostable carry bags do not compost in all circumstances as per study. "However, in order to compost these products, a separate composting facility with specific environmental conditions must be built in accordance with widely accepted international standards such as IS/ISO and ASTM. The conditions required for the decomposition of compostable bags do not exist in the municipal landfills. Compostable plastic packaging is not a blanket solution, but rather one for "specific, targeted applications. Most compostable plastics are more "expensive as compared to conventional plastics. As of now, raw material for "compostable plastics is not available in sufficient quantities in India. Further, there should be a clear identification of these products to distinguish from other conventional plastic products. Recycling of conventional plastic products "gets adversely affected if conventional plastics and compostable plastics are "mixed. In another technology, plastic carry bags that are oxo degradable and biodegradable are manufactured by adding a small amount of 'catalyst or pro-degradant additive' to conventional grades of polyethylene/polypropylene and using the same process as conventional carry bags. The degradation of these bags is evaluated in accordance with international ASTM standards. According to the industry, the base polymer degrades into lower molecular weight under favourable environmental conditions of heat, oxygen, and sunlight. It is claimed that low molecular weight degraded plastics will degrade biologically, releasing carbon dioxide, water, and biomass. These claims have not been supported by scientific evidence. The final Report of the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council, Brussels, raised concerns about the potential toxic effects of oxidising additives, in addition to the resulting microplastics, in both land and marine environments. More scientific research is needed to validate the claimed oxo- and biodegradability of these plastics.

**Vijaykumar H K Raichur, Karnataka Environmentalist.**

## WINNERS, LOSERS AND THE MEGA BATTLE 2024



**M.R. LALU**

Amid his celebrated Bharat Jodo Yatra, Rahul Gandhi stayed away from campaigning in Himachal Pradesh and he ensured his presence be minimal in Gujarat. As the results are out, the emerging scene is interesting. The BJP, as expected, has swept the home state of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. This time the party, under his leadership made a humongous victory by breaking all its past records but the number that the Congress party managed to gain in its casket seems to be a shrieking reality about its future prospects. Another interesting aspect of the result is that Rahul Gandhi did not put his legs in Himachal Pradesh but his party won with a comfortable margin and is all set to form the government. The state has, as usual, changed its mind by changing the government. The BJP

has to wait another five years for its next turn. Though Rahul Gandhi's presence in the Modi turf was minimal, his critics would go at him hammer and tongs narrating his inefficiency to translate the party machinery into election victories. For Himachal Pradesh, he would not be eulogised for the victory but his detractors would probably giggle it out by saying his absence could propel the party's triumph. To be precise, the estrangement that the family high command would face in the party is certain.

Rahul's absence from the electioneering is narrated as a strategy that the Congress thought to deliberately come up with. If that is to be believed, it should be seen as an effort to shield its leader from the potential damage that the party's failures would cause. Rahul Gandhi, capturing media headlines through his yatra, is ought to gain a distinct reputation as a catalyst who would surface as a consensual candidate against Narendra

Modi in the battle 2024. The BJP's victory in the state of Gujarat is unprecedented also its decrement defeat in Himachal Pradesh. While the Modi factor played a pivotal role in its Gujarat victory, the entry of the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) into the fray had contributed to increase its tally. The AAP dented the roots of the Congress by splitting its vote share and its false narratives seem to have turned out to be a boon for the BJP.

The failure of Congress in the state of Gujarat is not only the failure of its defective electioneering but also its failure in understanding Modi's persona in his home turf. Defamatory vocabularies shot against him by the Congress had always helped him change the scenario. From the 99 seats it won in 2017 the BJP's gigantic leap to 156 this time is an indication of the indomitable power that Narendra Modi would fight the national elections with. The party not only managed to increase its seats but there has also been a 4

percent increase in its vote share. Narendra Modi, with his three enormous road shows and 30 campaign meetings shattered the hopes of all his opponents. But the factor that should worry both BJP and Congress is the inroads that the AAP could make in Gujarat's spectrum of politics. Gujarat was a different space for the AAP to replicate a Punjab victory. In the long run, the AAP's steady stride in the state would threaten the BJP too. The Congress on the other hand had a huge fall from its 40 percent vote share of 2017 to a trifling 27 percent this time.

The state government in Gujarat was severely criticised for the Morbi tragedy and the results were expected to be reflective of the horror that the heartbreaking incident brought to the state; especially an incident of such magnitude occurred when the state was gearing up for the assembly elections. Predictions spoke of a probable backlash, exposing a deceptive Gujarat Model of development. But the voters proved such assumptions wrong. Though totally vanquished in Gujarat,

the Congress victory in Himachal Pradesh would give it a breath of hope. Priyanka Gandhi, the party General Secretary is sure to be lauded for the victory. She led the party's campaign in the hill state and the victory, no doubt, would be seen as an outcome of her strategising the campaign. Besides being a door to door campaigner, she had been a crowd puller holding the "Vijay Ashirwad Rallies" and many other small rallies. Will this victory put her in a better position in her party? Himachal Pradesh is her first electoral success and her defeat in Uttar Pradesh heading the campaign charge was her biggest nightmare. Totally decimated from the Gujarat scenario, the Congress should now focus on the facts that it failed to take notice of and try to mend the party's dishevelled electoral reputation.

Gaining more confidence from the Gujarat victory, Modi and his party would prepare for the mega battle 2024. The preparedness in the opposition camp seems to be too delicate to counter the dominance of Modi. Rahul Gandhi's fresh

narratives and his political manoeuvres were justified as an ideological barricading against the BJP's saffron agenda. Identifying the RSS as his principal enemy, he gestured his intentions further. The bigger battle that he is promulgating loudly against the RSS is evidently highlighting his limited scope and an act of political escapism from the challenges that Narendra Modi is placing in the present context.

With Himachal Pradesh proving its trend of not repeating the same party, the Congress high command should hugely be thankful to the local leadership which kept the pot boiling on the ground. And the Priyanka factor being pronounced as an ethical element playing a significant role in the Congress victory, the party cadres would have their eyebrows twitched again in contempt of Rahul Gandhi's efficiency.

**(Freelance Journalist / Author of the book (India @75-A Contemporary Approach) Pathanamthitta Kerala State**



The Minister of State for Science & Technology and Earth Sciences (I/C), Prime Minister's Office, Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr. Jitendra Singh releasing the publication at a programme of Central Electronics Limited (CEL), in New Delhi

## Prashant Kishor Shreds Nitish Kumar, Blames 'Mahagathbandhan' For Poll Loss

**East Champaran, Bihar:** BJP's victory in the recently held Kurhani by-election in Bihar was a reflection of people's anger against Chief Minister Nitish Kumar and his 'Mahagathbandhan' government, political strategist-turned-politician Prashant Kishor claimed. Prashant Kishor, who is on a 3,500 km-long padayatra in the state, also said that he had found out during interactions with people that they were fed up with the "rampant corruption" in Bihar. Talking to reporters at Ghodasahan area in Motihari (East



Champaran), Mr Kishor on Friday said, "People are not happy with the performance of the 'Mahagathbandhan' government. I have been interacting with people over the last several days, and I can say with full confidence that they are fed up with rampant corruption in the state. The Kurhani bypoll result is a

reflection of people's anger against Nitish Kumar." The BJP on Wednesday wrested the Kurhani assembly seat from the ruling multi-party coalition. "Angry protesters greeted Nitish Kumar when he launched his poll campaign in Kurhani two days before the December 5 polls. As Nitish Kumar reached the venue, protestors created ruckus, shouted slogans against him and flung the chairs... People's anger against the CM can be seen everywhere. The Chief Minister cannot walk without security guards even in a small village in the state," Mr Kishor claimed.

## International Human Rights Day Russia steps up bombardment of cities across Ukraine, pours more troops into war



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**New Delhi:** International Human Rights Day is observed on December 10 - annually. The main aim behind celebrating this day is to improve the physical, social, cultural and spiritual well being and welfare of the vulnerable group of people globally.

It is an inalienable right which everyone is inherently entitled to as a human being regardless of race, colour, religion, sex, language, political or other opinions, national or social origin, property, birth or belong from other status.

The 75th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights will be celebrated on 10 December 2023. Ahead of this milestone, starting on this year's Human Rights Day on 10 December 2022, we will launch a year-long campaign to showcase the Human Rights by focusing on its legacy, relevance and activism.

However, the promise of the Human Rights of dignity and equality in rights, has been under a sustained assault in recent years. As the world faces challenges new and ongoing - pandemics, conflicts, exploding inequalities, morally bankrupt global financial system, racism, climate change - the values, and rights enshrined in the Human Rights provide guideposts for our collective actions that do not leave anyone behind.

**Kyiv:** Russia hurled its military might against Ukrainian cities and towns and poured more troops into the war, seeking to slice the country in two in a potentially pivotal battle for control of the eastern industrial heartland of coal mines and factories.

The fighting on April 19 unfolded along a boomerang-shaped front hundreds of miles long in what is known as the Donbas. If successful, it would give President Vladimir Putin a victory following the failed attempt by Moscow's forces to storm the capital, Kyiv, and heavier-than-expected casualties.

In Mariupol, the now-devastated port city in the Donbas,



Ukrainian troops said the Russian military dropped heavy bombs to flatten what was left of a sprawling steel plant and hit a hospital where hundreds were staying. The eastern cities of Kharkiv and Kramatorsk came under deadly attack. Russia also said it struck areas

around Zaporizhzhia and Dnipro west of the Donbas with missiles. Russian Defence Ministry spokesman Maj. Gen. Igor Konashenkov said Moscow's forces bombed numerous Ukrainian military sites, including troop concentrations and

missile-warhead storage depots, in or near several cities or villages. Those claims could not be independently verified. Both sides have described the assault that began April 18 as a new phase of the war. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy

said the Russian military was throwing everything it has into the battle, with most of its combat-ready forces now concentrated in Ukraine and just across the border in Russia.

They have driven almost everyone and everything that is capable of fighting us against Ukraine, he said in his nightly video address to the nation. Despite claims that they are hitting only military sites, the Russians continue to target residential areas and kill civilians, he said.

The Russian army in this war is writing itself into world history forever as the most barbaric and inhuman army in the world, Zelenskyy said.

## Russia-Ukraine war: Diplomacy must prevail as only viable option, says India at UNSC

**New York:** India on Tuesday (April 19, 2022) stressed on the importance of the United Nations Guiding Principles of Humanitarian Assistance and reiterated its call for immediate cessation of violence and hostilities in Ukraine.

Speaking at the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) meeting on Ukraine's humanitarian situation, India's Deputy Permanent Representative to the UN, R Ravindra said: "Humanitarian action must always be guided by the principles of humanitarian assistance, i.e., humanity, neutrality, impartiality, and independence. These measures should never be politicized."

He further said that India continues to remain deeply concerned at the worsening situation and reiterates its call for an immediate cessation of violence and hostilities. "We have emphasized right from



the beginning of the conflict the need to pursue the path of diplomacy and dialogue. When innocent human lives are at stake, diplomacy must prevail as the only viable option," the country's Deputy Permanent Representative said at UNSC. Furthermore, India supported calls urging for guarantees of safe passage to deliver essential humanitarian and medical supplies including through the establishment of permanent humanitarian corridors. "We hope the

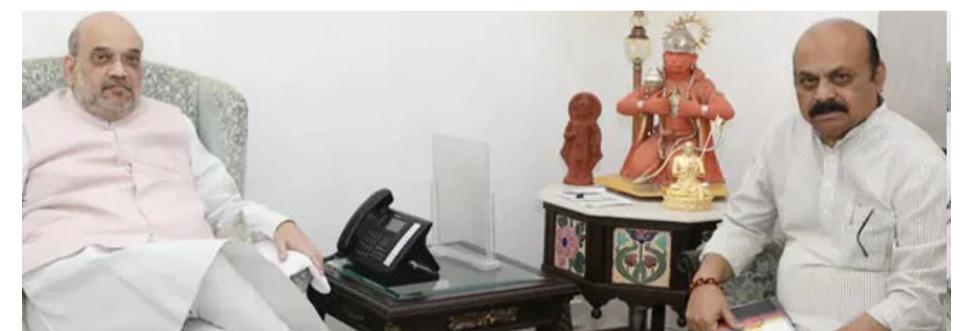
international community will continue to respond positively to the evolving humanitarian requirements," R Ravindra said. India has been sending humanitarian supplies to Ukraine and its neighbours, which include medicines and other essential relief materials. "We are providing more medical supplies to Ukraine in the coming days ahead," Ravindra said.

The impact of the situation is being felt beyond the region with increasing food and

energy costs, especially for many developing countries. It is in our collective interest to work constructively, both inside the United Nations and outside, towards seeking an early resolution to the issue. India also noted the findings of Secretary-General's Antonio Guterres's Global Crisis Response Group Task Team issued last week and welcomed their recommendation for exempting purchases of food by World Food Programme (WFP) for humanitarian assistance

from food export restrictions with immediate effect. India also said that the energy security is equally a serious concern and needs to be addressed through cooperative efforts. Speaking about the safe return of about 22,500 Indians from Ukraine, India's Deputy Permanent Representative to the UN noted that the country India has ensured the safe return of about 22,500 citizens from Ukraine. "We initiated Operation Ganga involving 90 flights. We have also assisted nationals from 18 other countries in that protest. We are deeply appreciative of the facilitation rendered by the authorities of Ukraine and its neighbouring countries in ensuring their safe return," he said. India continued to emphasize to all member states of the UN that the global order is anchored on international law, UN Charter and respect for territorial integrity and sovereignty of states.

## Karnataka Chief Minister Speaks To Amit Shah Ahead Of Key Meet Over Border Row With Maharashtra



**Bengaluru:** Karnataka Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai today said he has given details about the state's stand and facts regarding the raging border dispute with Maharashtra to Union Home Minister Amit Shah, who is likely to call a meeting of Chief Ministers of both states next week. He also indicated that the state government is likely to convene an all-party meeting soon to discuss the issue. The Chief Minister's statement came following a delegation of parliamentarians of the Maharashtra Vikas Aghadi (opposition coalition in Maharashtra) meeting Amit Shah on Friday regarding the border dispute with

Karnataka. "I have asked a delegation of our MPs to meet (Amit Shah) on Monday. I have also spoken to Amit Shah. He said that he will send information and in two to three days he will be calling me and the Maharashtra Chief Minister. Most probably, that meeting will take place on December 14 or 15," Mr Bommai said. Speaking to reporters in Bengaluru, the Chief Minister said he has already informed Amit Shah about Karnataka's stand and facts regarding the dispute, along with details. "On Monday, our MPs will be sharing all the details, and as soon as he (Amit Shah) calls, I will also go and reiterate Karnataka's stand before him," he added.

The Chief Minister had last night said that the Maharashtra delegation meeting Amit Shah on the border dispute will not make any difference, and asserted that his government will not make any compromise on the issue. Noting that Maharashtra has tried this in the past too, he said, "The case is in the Supreme Court. Our legitimate case in the Supreme Court is strong." Responding to a question on Leader of Opposition in Karnataka Assembly Siddaramaiah demanding that the government convene an all-party meeting to discuss the border dispute, Mr Bommai today said he will be speaking to both Siddaramaiah and JD(S) leader HD Kumaraswamy.



Chief Minister Shri Naveen Patnaik at the inauguration ceremony of renovated Catholic Church at Bhubaneswar

## Odisha: Soon leasehold properties can be converted to freehold in twin cities

**Bhubaneswar(KCN):** The state government has initiated process for easy conversion of leasehold lands to freehold plots in cities like Bhubaneswar and Cuttack.

Chairing a high-level meeting here, Chief Secretary Suresh Chandra Mahapatra today advised the General Administration & Public Grievance and Housing & Urban Development departments to decentralize the power to convert leasehold lands to freehold plots in favour of the development authorities and State Housing Board.

"The two departments have been



directed by the Chief Secretary to place a proposal regarding the decentralization of land conversion power for the state government's approval within a week. The decentralization of power will be beneficial to the land holders to convert the leasehold plots to freehold easily," said an official.

The meeting also deliberated on various issues of people who

have been provided houses at Chandrama Housing Complex in the capital city here. The Chief Secretary directed the officials to resolve all these issues within a month, said the official.

It is worth mentioning here that the General Administration & Public Grievance department has leased out at least 1,105 acres of land at different places in the capital

city to the Bhubaneswar Development Authority (BDA) and Odisha State Housing Board for implementation of 37 and 44 housing schemes respectively.

Similarly, several acres of government land have been leased out to the Cuttack Development Authority (CDA) for housing schemes through the Revenue & Disaster Management and Housing and Urban Development departments. The decentralization of land conversion power towards the BDA and CDA is likely to benefit as many as 50,000 families in the twin cities.

## Odisha: Child artiste slated to play Lord Balaram's role in Bargarh Dhanu Yatra dies



**Bargarh(KCN):** In a tragic incident, a child artiste, who had been selected to essay the role of Lord Balaram in the upcoming Bargarh Dhanu Yatra, died in the western Odisha town today.

Shreyas Pujari (12),

the only son of Mahendra Pujari and Jayanti Pujari, fell unconscious while playing with his friends in the afternoon. Family members rushed him to a nearby hospital, where doctors declared him dead-on-arrival,

sources said. The incident took place soon after Shreyas returned home from his school (Saraswati Sishu Mandir) and had his lunch, sources added.

Shreyas had been selected to play the role of Lord Balaram, the

elder brother of Lord Krishna, in the world famous Bargarh Dhanu Yatra, scheduled to commence on December 27 this year.

"Shreyas had started doing rehearsal for the Dhanu Yatra some days ago. He was very much happy for his debut in the mega festival. His sudden demise has saddened the people of Bargarh town," said a local.

Notably, Bargarh Dhanu Yatra, considered as the largest open-air theatre in the world, could not be held for last two years due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The people of Bargarh have been organizing the annual festival since 1947-48, sources said.

## Pari murder case: Accused gets 10-day interim bail

**Cuttack(KCN):** Orissa High Court has granted 10-day interim bail to accused Saroj Sethy in the sensational Pari murder case.

The accused had prayed before the court to allow him on an interim bail on health ground.

As per the bail condition, the accused will undergo medical examination during the period of interim bail; he has been asked to appear before the police at nearby police station if required; he will not be allowed to meet anyone related to the case and he will surrender before the court after end of his 10-day interim bail.

Saroj Sethy, a resident of Jadupur village in Nayagarh district, is accused of killing a 5-year-old girl of his village after attempting to rape her at his home



in July 2020.

In a confessional video, the accused had revealed that he strangled Pari to death when he failed to rape her at his home.

The incident had occurred on July 14, 2020. According to reports, Saroj took Pari to a room when he was alone at his house. He removed her frock. When he was about to remove her leggings, the minor girl resisted and

started to scream. As she opposed the act, the accused killed her and dumped the body near a pond.

During course of investigation, the Arun Bothra-led Special Investigation Team (SIT) revealed that the accused had put the body inside a gunny bag and dumped it at a bush near a pond in the village and covered the gunny bag with coconut tree branches.



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# Snapdeal Calls Off IPO Plans As Tech Stocks Reel From Meltdown

**New Delhi:** E-commerce major Snapdeal has shelved its \$152-million IPO (initial public offer) plans amid a rout in tech stocks in the prevailing unfavourable market conditions. Snapdeal told NDTV that the company is withdrawing the IPO papers which were filed a year ago with the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI). Softbank-backed Snapdeal may reconsider its IPO plans depending on the company's need for capital and market conditions.

It has been a roller-coaster ride in the past few months for new-age tech companies. The stocks of most of these companies have nosedived as recession fears gripped the market amid the Russia-Ukraine war. A series of rate hikes by the Fed Reserve to rein in inflation further dampened investor sentiment. Large-scale tech layoffs further accentuated the concerns. Snapdeal's rival in India, Amazon, for example, is likely to show the door to staff from various departments. Amazon employs more than 1.6

million globally. On the other hand, Walmart-promoted Flipkart India had reported that its loss widened to over ₹7,800 crore for the financial year 2021-2022, news agency PTI reported. Snapdeal To Shelve \$152 Million IPO (Public Issue) Amid Tech Stocks Meltdown Snapdeal To Shelve \$152 Million IPO (Public Issue) Amid Tech Stocks Meltdown The Indian e-commerce market is ever-expanding and many firms are eyeing a larger piece of this multi-billion-dollar market.



Founded by Kunal Bahl and Rohit Bansal in 2010, Snapdeal was an early bird in the e-commerce space but the fierce competition saw cash-rich Amazon and Flipkart surge ahead. Snapdeal is the fifth tech company in India which has deferred its IPO plans. Earlier, startups like Pharmeasy, boAt, Droom, and Appameya Engineering had deferred their plans for coming out with a public offer in difficult market conditions. TPG and Prosus-funded PharmEasy had

filed papers for a \$760-million IPO. Wireless earphone manufacturer boAt Lifestyle called off IPO plans in October this year. These new-age companies decided to defer their IPO plans amid a hammering of new-age stocks in the market. These include Paytm Nykaa and Zomato, the poster boys in the start-up universe. As these stocks find themselves at the receiving end of investor fury, investors have lost substantial wealth.

## RELIANCE BRANDS LIMITED INKS A JV WITH PLASTIC LEGNO SPA

**Mumbai:** RELIANCE BRANDS LIMITED (RBL) and Plastic Legno SPA have signed a joint venture arrangement through which RBL will acquire a 40% stake in Plastic Legno SPA's toy manufacturing business in India. This investment by RBL serves a dual purpose, bringing in vertical integration for RBL's toy business and helping diversify the supply chain with a long-term strategic interest in building toy manufacturing in India. Plastic Legno SPA is owned by the Sunino group that boasts of more than 25 years of toy production experience in Europe. The group started its India business in 2009 out of a need to develop a strong production hub that would cater to global markets, but more importantly to the fast evolving and growing Indian market.

honourable Prime Minister's vision of Atmanirbhar India, this collaboration with Plastic Legno's deep experience in world-class toy manufacturing coupled with our strong footing in the global toy retail industry would open new doors and unparallel vertical integration for RBL's toy business and helping diversify the supply chain with a long-term strategic interest in building toy manufacturing in India. Plastic Legno SPA is owned by the Sunino group that boasts of more than 25 years of toy production experience in Europe. The group started its India business in 2009 out of a need to develop a strong production hub that would cater to global markets, but more importantly to the fast evolving and growing Indian market.

toy distributors. Hamleys currently has a global footprint across 15 countries with 213 doors and is India's largest chain of toy stores. "We are very privileged to have RBL as a partner in this Joint Venture. We are confident that Plastic Legno's experience in Toys production and Hamley's commercial outreach, will complement one another to enable the JV Company to achieve greater heights and successes. We have important development plans to implement, always in the spirit of creating a cultural background in this specific sector in India. We are ready for the challenges of the future, but when there is a group like RBL alongside, we are sure that together we can do a great development," said Paolo Sunino, Co-owner, Sunino Group.

## Honda Motorcycle and Scooter India registers 3,53,188 unit sales in May '22

**Gurugram:** Noting a positive upward movement during the month, Honda Motorcycle and Scooter India today announced its sales numbers for May 2022.

The company's total sales for the month stood at 3,53,188 with 3,20,844 domestic sales and 32,344 exports compared to the subdued market performance for same period last year amidst multiple lockdowns owing to impact from second wave of pandemic.

Commenting on the sales performance in May '22, Mr. Atsushi Ogata, Managing Director, President & CEO, Honda Motorcycle & Scooter India said, "The market is gaining back strength as disturbances in terms of supply side are subsiding coupled with rise in physical presence at office and educational institutions. The sales figures this month remain incomparable from May '21 as frequent lockdowns in wake of second wave marred the performance during this period last year. Growth in domestic as well as international trade continues to complement each other as we approach an early monsoon."

## TVS Motor Company registers sales of 302,982 units in May 2022

**Hosur:** TVS Motor Company sales was at 302,982 units in May 2022. The year-on-year growth is not comparable due to the low base of sales in May 2021 because of the localised lockdown imposed by the Government of India during that period.

Two-Wheeler Total two-wheelers sales grew from 154,416 units in May 2021 to 287,058 units in May 2022. Domestic two-wheeler sales grew from 52,084 units in May 2021 to 191,482 units in May 2022.

Motorcycle sales grew from 125,188 units in May 2021 to 148,560 units in May 2022. Scooter sales of the Company grew from 19,627 units in May 2021 to 100,665 units in May 2022.

The shortage in the supply of semiconductors has impacted the production and sales of

premium two-wheelers. We are working aggressively with alternate sources and taking every effort to improve supplies at the earliest. Some improvement has been seen this month. We are optimistic that volumes will revive to normal levels once the semiconductor supplies improve.

The Company's total exports registered sales of 110,245 units in May 2022 as against 114,674 units in May 2021. Two-wheeler exports recorded sales of 95,576 units in May 2022 as against 102,332 units in May 2021.

Three-wheeler of the Company grew by 28% from 12,473 units in May 2021 to 15,924 units in May 2022.

The domestic two-wheeler sales include TVS iQube Electric sales of 2,637 units in May 2022.

## Union Bank of India signs MOU with SIDBI for Co-Financing arrangement of MSMEs

**Mumbai:** Union Bank of India today signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) for a Co-Financing arrangement for MSMEs. The MoU was signed by Shri Lal Singh, Chief General Manager, Union Bank of India and Shri Vivek Kumar Malhotra, Chief General Manager, SIDBI. SIDBI is country's principal financial institution engaged in the Promotion, Financing and Development of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME).

Under the MoU, Union Bank of India would consider Joint financing/Co-Financing with SIDBI to Projects/Units in the MSME. This MoU would help the

Banks to increase their customer base, while helping the MSMEs to meet their funding requirements. The key highlights of the arrangement include joint identification of viable projects and term loan and working capital financing to MSMEs. Initially the arrangement would be at specific centers and once the arrangement stabilizes at these centers, more locations would be covered.

Speaking on the occasion, Shri Lal Singh, CGM (MSME), Union Bank of India, said "MSME is one of the key sectors of our Indian Economy contributing to GDP, Exports, Manufacturing Output, Employment, Women Empowerment etc. MSME is one of the focused areas of the

Bank and at Union Bank of India, we aim to become Bank of 1st choice for MSMEs. This tie-up with SIDBI aids in realizing the Bank's vision to have increased credit flow to the MSME sector and extend operational convenience to the MSME clientele. Under partnership, Union Bank of India through its Pan India branch network can provide general Banking products like Current Accounts, Savings Accounts, Working Capital facilities and other related services to the MSME Customers of SIDBI."

Also, speaking on the tie-up arrangement, Shri Vivek Kumar Malhotra, CGM, SIDBI reiterated SIDBI's commitment towards timely financing for MSMEs across all sectors.

## Spice Money to enable farmers to withdraw PM-KISAN subsidy through its 1 million Adhikari Network

**New Delhi:** The Government of India has disbursed PM KISAN subsidy, directly to the farmers' bank accounts benefiting over 10 crore farmers and families who have received a grant of Rs 2,000 each. Spice Money, India's leading rural fintech with 1 million strong Adhikari network covering 18,500 plus pincodes, is assisting the farmers and farmer families residing in the heartlands of the country, to withdraw this subsidy through AePS at their doorstep Adhikari outlet.

The PM Kisan Scheme, a central sector scheme with 100% funding from the Government of India, became operational on December 1, 2018. Under this scheme, income support of ₹6000

per year, divided into three installments, is directly transferred to the bank accounts of landholding farmer families, consisting of the husband, wife, and minor children.

Speaking on this, Sanjeev Kumar, Co-Founder & CEO, Spice Money, said, "At Spice Money, we have been striving to solve the problem of access to banking & financial services in rural India. As the 11th installment of the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi is rolled out, our 1 million Adhikaris operating across 18,500 pin codes, will be an enabler in ensuring easy access and withdrawal of this subsidy to the rightful 10 crore beneficiaries of this scheme. Farmers and farmer

families will no longer have to travel large distances to bank branches or just let the money lie idle in their accounts in times of need. Our Adhikaris, trusted banking partners in their communities, will be there at the villages to help farmers withdraw their money, with the help of AePS, thereby providing much-needed safe and secure access to the subsidy amount."

Spice Money has been spearheading the efforts towards bridging the financial services gap in rural India by providing banking and financial services to the remotest corners of the country, across 700 districts and 5,000 blocks, thereby revolutionising the way Bharat banks.

## Aditya Birla Group formally launches TMRW - a Digital First 'House of Brands' venture in the Fashion & Lifestyle space

**Mumbai:** Aditya Birla Group today announced the formal launch of its new 'House of Brands' entity - TMRW. This move is in line with the group's strategy to launch and back new-age digital ventures. TMRW, an Aditya Birla Group venture, will create India's largest portfolio of disruptor brands in the fashion & lifestyle space and enable the next phase of direct to consumer (D2C) growth in India, which is poised to be a \$100bn market by 2025. Over the next 3 years, TMRW will acquire as well as incubate 30+ innovative, customer-obsessed brands. The venture will also enable multiple founders to operate within a synergistic 'house of brands' platform that share a common vision and shared capabilities. Aditya Birla Group has appointed ex Facebook & Bain executive, Prashanth Aluru, as the CEO & Co-Founder to lead the build out of this new venture. Prashanth

will set-up a nimble and agile founding team with the right skill sets and capabilities. Prashanth comes with extensive experience in Digital & Technology across strategy, growth and investing. He also brings to the fore rich entrepreneurial experience in helping build and scale new age ventures in Digital & E-Commerce. Ashish Dikshit, MD of ABFRL said, "The formal launch of our D2C business, TMRW, is a key milestone for the company. This venture has the potential to become a significant growth engine by tapping into the new wave of entrepreneurial energy in India. Our aspiration is to build a portfolio of 30+ brands in the next 3 years. With the launch of this venture, we intend to double down on our ongoing program of strategically attracting new pools of capital that are seeking investment in high-growth businesses. We are confident that this

foray will successfully meet the aspirations of digitally native consumers and also create long-term value for investors and other stakeholders." Prashanth Aluru, CEO and Co-Founder, TMRW said, "I am excited to embark on this journey to build TMRW - a long-term enduring platform that will be home to the leading disruptor brands that provide the new age digitally savvy consumer what she is looking for across Fashion & Lifestyle. With the backing of the Aditya Birla Group and the right profile of long-term investors we will bring in, we are confident of powering the growth of several brands that shape the next phase of digital commerce growth till 2030 and beyond. With a new age Digital first DNA, at TMRW, we will jointly create an ecosystem of the most-loved disruptor brands partnering closely with highly competent founders."

## Vedanta Aluminium Commissions India's Largest Fleet of Electric Lithium-Ion Forklifts

**New Delhi:** Vedanta Aluminium, India's largest producer of aluminium, has commissioned India's largest electric fleet of 27 forklifts, powered by lithium-ion batteries. Done in partnership with GEAR (Gemini Equipment and Rentals Private Limited) India, this

sets the ball rolling on Vedanta Aluminium's plans to decarbonize its industrial vehicle fleet. All 27 forklifts arrived last month and are being operationalised at the company's aluminium smelter at Jharsuguda, in Odisha, which is the world's largest single-location aluminium

smelter, ex-China. Further, as testimony to its endeavours towards increasing gender diversity in core manufacturing operations, Vedanta Aluminium is recruiting and training women to operate these top-of-the-line forklifts. The company has previously hired transgender employees as

forklift operators in its aluminium operations at BALCO in Chhattisgarh. These electric forklifts make use of the cutting-edge 'Smart Fleet Management' system to help ensure the highest levels of safety at site. The Smart Fleet Management system uses IOT (Internet of Things) technology to

integrate the data collected by intelligent terminals and provide Vedanta Aluminium insights on a real-time basis with respect to forklift speed, access to operate, collision avoidance, optimization analysis for operational efficiency and equipment maintenance, among others.

# Kishan's 210, Kohli's 72nd ton hand India a mammoth win

**Dhaka:** Led by a swashbuckling 210, the fastest ODI double ton, by Ishan Kishan and Virat Kohli's international hundred No. 72, India romped home to a 227-run victory against Bangladesh in the third ODI. Having racked up a mammoth 409/8, India proceeded to defend it with ease as Bangladesh crumbled under a combination of clinical bowling coupled with scoreboard pressure. India, put in to bat first in the final ODI in Chattogram, had started on a sedate note with Mehidy Hasan trapping Shikhar Dhawan LBW in just the fifth over. Kishan, drafted into the playing eleven after Rohit Sharma's injury, joined hands with Kohli thereafter to steady the

innings. The duo managed to do that without getting bogged down too much. With Kohli not finding his rhythm until he hit the thirties. Kishan was the one setting the tone early. Cashing in on width outside off, cutting and driving for his first four boundaries, he quickly took on the role of enforcer in the 290-run stand. As Bangladesh corrected their lines to go straighter against Kishan, he began to pull and sweep successfully to add to the pressure on the bowlers. His fifty came up off just 49 balls, but not without a few close shaves. Kohli was put down on 5 by Litton Das, who once again saw another chance falling just beyond his reach off the same batter. As Kishan

switched gears, unafraid to hit with abandon, he gave a chance to deep midwicket where a diving Shakib Al Hasan, could not prevent the catch from being grassed despite a juggle. Kishan, now with a good measure of the pitch, was also finding his hitting zone against the unfavourable matchup of Mehidy Hasan's offspin, managing to loft and slog him straight down the ground. His rate of scoring increased post his fifty, with the second one coming off just 36 balls, bringing about his maiden ODI ton. Meanwhile, Kohli too had found his groove, lofting Shakib inside out over cover for a boundary, but he took the sensible path of playing second fiddle to a rampant Kishan. On an easy paced pitch,



Kohli also found strike rotation to be easy, even as Kishan threw his bat out at every ball after getting a hundred. His third fifty took another 18 balls, before the fourth took 23. Nothing that Bangladesh threw at Kishan would faze him, as he managed to be inventive with shots

increasingly as he went past various milestones. The double hundred, which came off his 126 balls, saw Kishan become the fourth Indian to scale the landmark. He became the youngest male batter to do so and also the quickest to get to the milestone in terms of balls faced, overtaking Chris Gayle's mark of 138 balls. As he continued in the same vein, more records were under threat but on 210, he was finally dismissed when he failed to clear long on. It ended a knock that contained 24 fours and 10 sixes in all, and that had powered India past the 300-mark in just the 36th over. Kohli, now emerged out of Kishan's shadows, targeted the cover region extensively and raced away to a 85-ball ton, his first in the ODI format since August 2019. It was a hundred that took him past Ricky Ponting's tally of 71 international hundreds. India's finish was hampered a little when they lost Shreyas Iyer, KL Rahul and Kohli himself in quick succession. However, Axar Patel and

Washington Sundar played useful hands lower down the order, putting on 46 that eventually helped India to the highest-ever ODI total in Bangladesh. It was a total that also made sure Bangladesh were kept on the backfoot right through the chase. The hosts never managed to come to the party, as India's spinners found their groove. Axar set the tone with a wicket in his first over, and was ably supported by the pacers as Mohammad Siraj and Umran Malik too got into the wickets column. The spine of Bangladesh's batting came apart swiftly, as Axar first had Mushfiquir Rahim bowled missing a sweep, which was soon followed by Shakib, the lone man to offer some resistance, chopping on to be dismissed for 43 against

Kuldeep Yadav. The result remained a formality after Bangladesh lost half their side with just 124 on the board in 23 overs. Shardul Thakur had a three-wicket haul coming his way as Bangladesh went in pursuit of quick runs. The victory, India's third highest in terms of runs, also ensured that it saved them the ignominy of a clean sweep by Bangladesh, who suffered their second biggest loss in ODIs. Brief Scores: India 409/8 in 50 overs (Ishan Kishan 210, Virat Kohli 113; Shakib Al Hasan 2-68) beat Bangladesh 182 in 34 overs (Shakib Al Hasan 43; Shardul Thakur 3-30, Axar Patel 2-22) by 227 runs.

## Unadkat recalled to Indian Test side for Bangladesh series

**New Delhi:** Jaydev Unadkat, the left-arm pacer, has been called up to the India squad for the Test series in Bangladesh. Unadkat, who bowled Saurashtra to the Vijay Hazare Trophy win recently, has been picked in place of Mohammed Shami who, as recently reported by Cricbuzz has been ruled out of the series due to a bowling arm stress. India is set to play two Tests in Bangladesh.



Should Unadkat get to play in either of the Tests in Bangladesh, he will be setting a record for the lengthiest gap between two Tests by an Indian cricketer, which is currently held by Parthiv Patel. The 31-year-old left-arm pacer played his only Test in 2010, against South Africa in Centurion. Since then, he has played seven ODIs and 10 Twenty20 Internationals but was never considered for the five-day game. Unadkat coming in place of Shami may not exactly be a like-for-like

replacement but sources in the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) have revealed to Cricbuzz that the veteran pacer has been picked on current form. He was the highest wicket-taker in the just-concluded Vijay Hazare Trophy in which he has had 19 scalps in 10 games. Unadkat, one of the most successful pacers in Indian domestic cricket, has picked 353 wickets in his 96-match career, which includes a record-breaking 2019-20 season of Ranji Trophy, in which he scalped 67

wickets en route helping his side, Saurashtra, to their maiden Ranji Trophy title. Besides, there is a line of thinking that the veteran pacer has been showing a lot of maturity in every format and he has been in the minds of the outgoing selection committee which apparently came close to picking him for the India team quite a few times. Unadkat, based out of Rajkot, will be joining the India squad in Dhaka by Sunday. The Indian team in Bangladesh has been plagued with injuries

with quite a few players, including skipper Rohit Sharma, coming on the list. It is still not clear if the skipper has been totally ruled out of the series. There is a hope that Rohit, who suffered a 'blow on his thumb' during the second ODI in Dhaka on December 7, will be available for the second Test (December 22-26). In the first Test (December 14-18), KL Rahul will be leading the side.

Abhimanyu Easwaran, who led the India A side in a two-match series which concluded on Friday, may be asked to be the back-up for Rohit in the first Test. Likely squad for 1st Test (December 14-18): KL Rahul (C), Shubman Gill, Abhimanyu Easwaran, Cheteshwar Pujara, Virat Kohli, Shreyas Iyer, Rishabh Pant (WK, VC), KS Bharat (WK), Saurabh Kumar, Ravichandran Ashwin, Axar Patel, Kuldeep Yadav, Shardul Thakur, Jaydev Unadkat, Mohd. Siraj and Umesh Yadav.

## 'Could've scored 300 also' - Kishan after registering fastest double ton

**New Delhi:** Only a couple of months ago, Ishan Kishan was on his haunches after missing his maiden international hundred by seven runs in Ranchi. Now he doesn't just have a hundred but a double hundred by his name - and the fastest ever in men's ODIs for that matter. Kishan got to his double hundred against Bangladesh in Chattogram off only 126 balls. That is 12 balls quicker than Chris Gayle who had hitherto held the record. And the India opener had 15 more overs in front of him when he got to the milestone. No wonder he was eyeing something even bigger.



"I'm blessed to hear my name alongside such legends. Still feel when I got out, 15 overs were left. Could've scored 300 also!" Kishan told the host broadcaster during the innings break in Chattogram, where India racked up a score of 409/8 after being asked to bat first. "The wicket was too good to bat on. My intent was very clear: if the ball is there, I'll go for it,"

Kishan further said about the pitch. Compared to Dhaka in the first two ODIs, this pitch in Chattogram offered true bounce to play the shots and little lateral movement. Kishan and Virat Kohli were involved in a grand 290-run stand for the second wicket, with the latter also bringing up his 72nd international hundred. Kishan said that batting with Kohli helped

him stay grounded and not throw it away, like he had done in Ranchi against South Africa. "Batting with Virat bhai... he has such a good sense of the game. He was spot on with which bowlers I needed to select (pick and target). He was calming me down when I was in my 90s. I wanted to bring it up with a six, but he said to get it in singles as it's my first." Kishan also revealed that a chat with his Mumbai Indians teammate Suryakumar Yadav boosted his confidence. "Had a chat with Surya bhai. He said when you bat before the game, you see the ball well.



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