

'Haath Se Haath Jodo' Abhiyaan: Odisha Congress gears Up to save its Own Vote Bank



Bhubaneswar(KCN): With an aim to save its own vote bank, the Congress party in Odisha has planned to launch the mega outreach programme titled 'Haath Se Haath Jodo' Abhiyaan. The party will begin the mega programme from the Republic Day

next year. A complete roadmap has been prepared today at the party regional headquarters in Bhubaneswar. Congress Odisha-in-charge A Chella Kumar along with PCC president Sarat Pattanayak and other senior leaders, MLAs have held a brainstorm-

ing session on Sunday. The grand-old party is gearing up to reach out to everyone in the State with the State and Central governments' failure on all fronts. The mass outreach programme will be organised from grassroots level to national level.

The Congress party had recently announced the massive campaign 'Haath Se Haath Jodo Abhiyaan' for two months. Notably, the party had lost its deposits in recently concluded Dhamnagar and Padampur by-elections.

BJP has Dhamnagar model to counter BJD:

Dharmendra Pradhan
BHUBANESWAR (KCN): The recent bypolls ending on an equal footing with both BJD and BJP gaining bragging rights, the turf for the next Assembly election has been



thrown open. The ruling party and the prime Opposition have already gone on an overdrive, trumpeting their new-found models to outdo each other in the upcoming polls.
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Tech the way for youths of Swabhiman Anchal

BHUBANESWAR(KCN): Till five years back, computer education was an alien concept for the people of Malkangiri's erstwhile cut-off region where even the basic amenities were a distant dream. Things have changed since Gurupriya bridge opened in 2018 which mainstreamed the cut-off region, now Swabhiman Anchal. People's access to health and social security has become easier and youths who were earlier soft targets of Maoists, are now being diverted towards education and skilling.

Taking a step forward, the district administration and Border Security Force (BSF) have now started extending computer education to youths in the area. BSF has set up a computer skill development centre at its operating base at Jantapai in collaboration with the district administration. Twenty youths of Jantapai and nearby areas have enrolled for computer training at the centre which has five computers. Two BSF personnel are imparting both theory and practical classes to the youths. Collector Vishal Singh said basic computer knowledge is an absolute requirement for students and youths in the current times. "The initiative has been taken on a pilot basis and in the coming days more such centres will be established to further reach out to the locals in the remotest parts of the district,"

he said, adding that this is the first such collaboration between the administration and BSF. BSF officers added that computer education will open up new avenues of education and employment for the Swabhiman Anchal youths. They will be able to fill up forms of various educational institutions, and courses and know about job offers once they become acquainted with the use of computers and the internet. "Under the guidance of the BSF, the youths will gain expertise in computer skills and they will be able to get jobs like data entry operators, typists, and others," an officer added.



Students of schools having computer labs can also visit the centre to enhance their computer skills. Although upper primary and high schools in the Swabhiman Anchal have computer labs, the internet has remained patchy.

"We have got an overwhelming response from the youths and students of Swabhiman Anchal. Every day, training is being provided to them between 3 pm and 6 pm. As the response is very encouraging, the centre remains open even on Sundays," said the BSF officer.

TRAINING ON
Basic operating software - microsoft word, excel, powerpoint
Training tenure - 3 months
Number of youths undergoing training - 20

States equally responsible for border security: Amit Shah

KOLKATA(KCN): At the Eastern Zonal Council meeting on Saturday, Union home minister Amit Shah sought the state governments of West Bengal, Bihar, Odisha, Jharkhand and Sikkim to equally share the responsibility with the



Border Security Force (BSF) in protecting the international borders of the country in the region. Chief Ministers of West Bengal and Jharkhand Mamata Banerjee and Hemant Soren, respectively, Bihar's deputy
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Ukraine races to restore power after Russian missiles batter grid

Kyiv (Ukraine)(KCN): Ukraine worked Saturday to restore electricity and water supplies after Russia's latest wave of attacks pitched multiple cities into darkness and forced people to endure sub-zero temperatures without heating or running water. The volley of missiles unleashed Friday came as President Vladimir Putin held extensive meetings with the military top brass overseeing Russia's invasion of Ukraine, where Moscow has stepped up bombardments.

ongoing problems with heat and water supplies, and "large-scale outages" in many regions. "The main thing today is energy," he said in his nightly address. "There

derground stations, but Mayor Vitali Klitschko said Saturday the service had resumed. Water supply had also been restored and 75 percent of the city's

had left Ukraine's second city without electricity. Ukraine's national energy provider Ukrenergo had imposed emergency blackouts in response to the strikes, warning the extent of the damage in the north, south and centre of the country meant it could take longer to restore supplies than after previous attacks. The country's energy system "continues to recover", it said on Saturday.

'Barbaric' attacks In Russia, Putin sought proposals from his military commanders on how to proceed with the Ukraine offensive, according to the Kremlin.
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is still a lot of work to do to stabilise the system." In the capital Kyiv, the metro had stopped running so that people wrapped in winter coats could take shelter at un-

population had their heating supply back. In the eastern city of Kharkiv, power had also been fully returned, regional governor Oleg Sinegubov said on Saturday, after the strikes

Our govt removed all obstacles thwarting North East India's development: PM

SHILLONG(KCN): Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday said that his government during its eight-year tenure has removed all obstacles that came in the way of development of the North East region. Addressing a public meeting on the occasion of the golden jubilee of the North East Council (NEC) here, he also said that improved air connectivity provided to the region has been helping export of agricultural produce, benefiting farmers. Ahead of the FIFA World Cup final in Qatar, Modi also said that the NDA "government has shown the red card to many obstacles that came in the way of development for the North East."

"Obstacles such as corruption, discrimination, violence and vote bank politics were removed," the PM said in his 26-minute speech. "Earlier, attempts were made to divide NE. Now, we are removing these divisions," Modi said at the meeting.

He also inaugurated, dedicated and laid the foundation stone for multiple projects. Among the projects inaugurated, one is the sprawling campus of the IIM-Shillong at the New Shillong Township. The Prime Minister, who arrived here in the morn-

ing, earlier attended the golden jubilee celebrations of the NEC at the State Convention Centre, along with Union Home Minister Amit Shah and several other union ministers and dignitaries. Modi, on the occasion, released 'Golden Footprints', a commemorative volume chronicling NEC's



contribution towards the development of the north-east over the last 50 years, according to an official statement. A short film on NEC's journey of 50 years was

also screened on the occasion, the statement said. Congress has a mountain to climb ahead of elections in Nagaland, Meghalaya, Tripura. In that closed-door meeting, Modi hailed the contribution of NEC to the development of the region. Describing the eight states of the region as 'Asht

Lakshmi' (eight forms of the goddess of wealth), he said that the government should work on eight foundation pillars for the development of NE. The eight 'foundation pillars' are peace, power, tourism, 5G connectivity, culture, natural farming, sports and potential. "The Northeast is our gateway to South-East Asia and can become a centre for the development of the entire region. And to realise this potential of the region, work is going on the projects like Indian-Myanmar-Thailand trilateral highway and Agartala-Akhaura rail project,"

according to an official statement. Many peace agreements have been signed, interstate boundary agreements have been done and there has been a marked reduction in instances of extremism, he said.

In the last eight years, the number of airports in the region has jumped from nine to 16, and that of flights has increased from about 900 before 2014 to around 1900, he said adding that many NE states have come on the railway map and efforts are being done to expand the waterways also. The length of national highways has increased by 50 per cent since 2014 in the region. Modi also talked about the potential of the region in the hydropower and tourism sectors. The North Eastern Council is the nodal agency for the economic and social development of the North Eastern Region which consists of the eight States of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura. The North Eastern Council was constituted in 1971 by an Act of Parliament. However, it was formally inaugurated on November 7, 1972.

Golden jubilee celebration



Kalinganagar (Sapan Kar): The Golden jubilee celebration of Budharaj Government High school Danagadi was observed with much pomp under the collaboration of Old student's associations and the school on 17th of this month in the school premises. It was inaugurated by Er. Pritiranjana Ghadai (Minister rural development and Skill Development, Vocational Education Gov. Of Odisha, In a meeting Mr Sameer ranjan Das Hon'ble

minister (mass education), and Mr. Ramani Ranjan Singh (Hon'ble deputy Speaker of Odisha legislative Assembly) spoke something on education and advised the students how to become self sufficient. The 50 years school history was discussed. The meeting was presided by Lokanath Dhir President of Old student associations and Azar Ahemad thanks to the guests. (Reporting by Sapan Kumar Kar)

Husband killed wife and buried, relatives alleged



Barbil((KCN):There was a chaos in news that Ram Singh Munda of Bhagalpur village Munda Sahi under Joda police station of Keonjhar district in Odisha has killed his wife and buried her. According to reports, Ram Singh dug a hole and buried her after telling the local ward member that his second wife Budhuni had committed suicide in a jackfruit tree near his house. He did not even informed the police

about it. But the missing of Budhuni raised suspicions among her relatives when they did not find Budhuni. They complained to the police. The police investigated the matter and removed the body from the grave in the presence of the Magistrate and sent it for autopsy. According to the investigation report, we would reach the truth, said Joda police

Vocational Education In Schools

New Delhi(KCN): Secretary, Department of School Education and Literacy, Sanjay Kumar, pointed out that India needs to catch up with other countries in terms of skilling

and academic streams, etc. By providing credits for academic, extra-curricular and experiential learning, NCrF will help dropouts from the formal education system



the workforce through formal vocational training during the student years. NEP 2020 has identified such issues and has suggested remedial measures, he added. Shri Kumar pointed out that as per NEP, 2020 Vocational Education needs to be integrated into all schools and higher education institutions in a phased manner over the next decade. Trades and Courses shall be chosen based on skills gap analysis and mapping of local opportunities to make it demand driven. Concerted efforts from all stakeholders will be required to de-stigmatize Vocational Education and make it aspirational. The National Credit Framework, currently under finalization by the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship will also eliminate traditional hierarchies and silos between different areas of learning. It will help in removing complex separations between arts and sciences, between curricular and extra-curricular activities, between vo-

ational and academic streams, etc. By providing credits for academic, extra-curricular and experiential learning, NCrF will help dropouts from the formal education system to get reintegrated by aligning their practical experience with the appropriate Framework level. The consultations were also addressed by Dhuwarakha Sirram Chief of Generation Unlimited (YuWaah), Youth Development and Partnerships and Mr. Terry Durian, Chief of Education, UNICEF. Various ideas related to reimagining, reinventing vocational education modules etc. were discussed at length. Importance of life skills – both vertical and horizontal, aspirational disconnect and information asymmetry in uptake of vocational education school, giving a gender perspective to vocational education, etc were also focus of these discussions. In the light of newly launched National Education Policy, 2020 the aim should be to empower students with skills such as cloud computing, artificial intelligence, machine learning, data analytics, robotic process automation, cybersecurity, etc. so that vocational graduates could compete in the global economy. The need to establish virtual labs, so that all students have equal access to high-quality practical and hands-on experience, was also stressed upon. The Conference also benefitted from the feedback from students who have taken vocational courses like Multi-Skilling course and Information Technology course.

Blood donation camp organised by Rotary club in association with SN Mohanty and company



Barbil(KCN): A blood donation camp was organised by Rotary club ,Barbil in association with S.N.Mohanty and company at Gujarati Seva Sansthan hall, Barbil on date 17th December .A total of 92 persons donated blood during a camp held .Red cross Society, District Government Hospital, Keonjhar assisted in all activities of the camp. Rotary club has been organising blood donation camp and including this is 7th one said Rtn Ashok

Thacker. The Blood Donation Camp was Inaugurated by Chair, Service Project. Rtn Divya Thacker, in presence of President Manoj Kr Manek, Secretary Rtn Sunil Jha, Rtn Hirak Mazumdar, Rtn Geeta Thacker and Rtn Mukesh Thacker, President Rtn Dharmendra Agarwal, Vice President Rtn Manjinder Singh, Rtn Basant Swami, Rtn Anil Newetia, were coordinated the Programme.

JSPL's Barbil Tensa and Kasia unit conferred National HR award for excellency

Barbil(KCN):Jindal Steel and Power Ltd, Barbil bagged

In the individual category, Sri Sarat Kishore Panda (Brittle, Anxious, Non-linear and



prestigious National HR Award for HR excellence held during 11th HR Conclave held at India Habitat Centre, New Delhi, organised by Delhi Management Association and Thomas Assessments on 14th

through a stringent selection criteria. At the first level of evaluation, scores of applicants from all across the country were tabulated by an esteemed screening jury, who then identified the finalists based on highest points scored. received the Award for Best Talent Management and Employee Life Cycle Management, Sri Panda was well praised for his presentation about the concept of VUCA (Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity and Incomprehensiveness) in effective HR practices and real challenges faced by organisations, business leaders and HR Department during Covid-19. It is to mention that award is awarded to Barbil Pellet Plant and Tensa & Kasia Iron Mines units of JSPL

Orissa HC asks chief secy to look into WODC HQ plea

CUTTACK(KCN): The Orissa High Court has directed the chief secretary to treat a writ petition filed by one Hari Priya Patel seeking relocation of Western Odisha Development Council (WODC)'s headquarters from Bhubaneswar to the western region of the state, as a representation. While issuing the order, the division bench of Chief Justice S Muralidhar and Justice MS Raman expected chief secretary Suresh Chandra Mahapatra to pass a reasoned order not later than March 1 after hearing on the petition/representation on a date within the next six weeks, intimating the petitioner 10 days in advance and eliciting the view of the chairperson. "The order shall be communicated to the petitioner not later than March 8, 2023," the bench specified in its order on December 13. WODC was formed in 1998 to look after interests of the western region of the state. It comprises of 10 districts - Bargarh, Balangir, Boudh,

Deogarh, Jharsuguda, Kalahandi, Nuapada, Sambalpur, Sundargarh and Athamallik sub-division of Angul district. The WODC headquarters has since been located in Bhubaneswar. The bench issued the direction after it was informed by the state counsel that in two identical petitions the court had passed orders directing the state government to consider representations of the petitioners seeking similar reliefs. While one order was passed on August 3, 2021, the other was issued on January 7, 2022. The fresh direction comes at a time when there has been over the years demand for locating the WODC headquarters to the western region, but the council has failed to take an unanimous decision. In fact, the WODC in its last council meeting in May this year had decided to maintain status quo for the next three years, which means the headquarter will remain in Bhubaneswar at least till 2025.

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Money laundering: Actor Nora Fatehi appears before ED in case against conman Sukesh

NEW DELHI: Actor Nora Fatehi on Friday appeared before the Enforcement Directorate (ED) here for recording her statement in connection with an on-going money laundering probe against alleged conman Sukesh Chandrashekhar and associates, official sources said.

Fatehi, 30, has been questioned by the federal agency in the past. Sources said the actor, known for her dance numbers in Bollywood films, will be questioned about Chandrashekhar and her statement will be recorded under the sections of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA). The ED, in her earlier charge sheets filed in this case, had named actor Jacqueline Fernandez as an accused while Fatehi's statement was included in the same prosecution



complaint. The agency has alleged that Chandrashekhar, 32, used illegal money to purchase gifts for

Fernandez which he had extorted by cheating high-profile people including former Fortis Healthcare promoter Shivinder Mohan Singh's wife Aditi Singh to the tune of about Rs 200 crore. He was arrested by the ED. In February, the ED filed its first supplementary prosecution complaint against Pinky Irani, an alleged aide of Chandrashekhar who

introduced him to Bollywood actresses like Nikita Tamboli, Chahat Khanna, Sophia Singh, and Arusha Patil, in Tihar Prison.

It had been alleged in the charge sheet that Pinky Irani used to choose costly gifts for Fernandez and later used to drop it at her house after the payments were made by Sukesh Chandrashekhar. Sukesh has spent around Rs 20 crore on different models and Bollywood celebrities. A few had refused to take the gifts from him. In September this year, a team of the Economic Offences Wing took actresses Nikki Tamboli and Sofia Singh to the Tihar's central jail number one to "recreate" their meetings with the 'conman' as part of the ongoing probe.

The probe has also revealed that Chandrashekhar had fully-functional office inside the prison with a television, sofa, carpet and other amenities. On October 19, Delhi Lieutenant-Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena granted permission to the EOW to investigate 82 prison officials for their alleged involvement in the extortion racket.

Neeraj Pandey: Khakee: The Bihar Chapter gives peek into culture and history of the state

For many creators, it is often a random spark of an idea that unlocks an entire world of new possibilities from which to tell the untold. For filmmaker Neeraj Pandey, this spark happened as a result of a conversa-

'eliminating' some of the most notorious criminals in Bihar. Speaking to us about how it all started, Neeraj credits the meeting with Amit, who wrote Bihar Diaries: The Story of How Bihar's Most Dangerous

potential to be a seven-hour narrative. Monika Shergill (Vice President of Content at Netflix) was excited to collaborate with us, and here we are on this call discussing it." Monika, who is also in the con-

"Bihar is a complex, yet dynamic state, and policing is not easy. What attracted me was how Neeraj told Khakee: The Bihar Chapter through a policeman's perspective." Seconding it, Neeraj guarantees

Sacred Games. Monika feels that the new series stands out because it is a character-driven crime drama that immerses audiences in the social fabric of Bihar. "The series spans a few years, and it shows the

Khakee: The Bihar Chapter, the duo says. "The journey has been well-chronicled. This series is a combination of both the material in the book and all the research that did not make it into it," Neeraj states.



tion with IPS officer Amit Lodha, and as he ruminated on it, voila! A new Netflix web series was the result: Khakee: The Bihar Chapter. Known for telling compelling stories based on real-life incidents, Neeraj Pandey has proved his mettle with films like A Wednesday, Special 26, MS Dhoni: The Untold Story, and Aiyaary. After making a mark with his Special OPS franchise, Neeraj now returns to OTT with Khakee: The Bihar Chapter, which is based on the life of an IPS officer named Amit Lodha, who is known for

Criminal was Caught, for kickstarting the process. "I was intrigued by the life of an IITian who chose IPS over IAS. The story of someone who is born and brought up in Rajasthan and gets into Bihar for his first posting. It was a fascinating fish-out-of-water story for us. I realised that this could be made into a story that audiences would relish," Neeraj shares. Brimming with excitement, the filmmaker talks about how the project germinated from an idea. "We realised that the story had the

versation with us, steps in to add that she, in fact, chased him because she wanted his voice on their streaming service. "I have been an admirer of Neeraj's craft and his way of storytelling. I wanted him to make a series for us, and coincidentally, he was also tossing around this (Khakee) story. So, yes, he was chased... in a nice way," says Monika, with a smile. Discussing the importance of having a unique selling proposition and an X factor to ensure that such genre-based content stands out, Monika affirms,

that the world of Bihar will be a treat for the audiences as the series gives a "fantastic peek into the culture and history of the state". "That's where director Bhav Dhulia and scriptwriter Uma Shankar, who are natives of Bihar, bring in their expertise. Even some of our cast members belong to the region. Also, shooting in real locations helped maintain the authenticity," Neeraj adds. Khakee: The Bihar Chapter is the latest entrant in the crime slate of Netflix, which already has titles like Jamtara, Indian Predator, and

growth of a determined cop who is new to the locality and a criminal who did not start off being one. Their journeys are narrated in parallel, and their eventual goals are to eliminate each other. The meeting of these two proves to be a powerful combination that we rarely see," Monika says. With true crime stories being the flavor du jour of OTT, in many cases, we have observed a lack of documentation being a detriment in bringing these stories from India to life. Fortunately, that wasn't the case for

When asked about the possibility of turning this into a cop franchise perhaps—one that steps in and out of several regions in the country—Monika says, "We hope to tell an infinite number of brilliant stories told in the way Khakee is told. For now, I would like the audience to watch this and let us know how it is appreciated. And yes, we are already working with Neeraj on other projects." At a time when all film content seems to be aiming for pan-Indian appeal, Neeraj too says that Khakee: The Bihar Chapter is a universal story crafted to cut across boundaries. "When it comes to viewing content, the world is becoming smaller, and stories are becoming language and culture-agnostic. That way, Khakee: The Bihar Chapter is a series that can be viewed by anyone, regardless of their age," he says. As we wrap up the conversation, Neeraj, who seems to thrive in the crime-drama genre, expresses his interest in doing something lighthearted. "I think I have a decent sense of humour, and if a story requires that particular tone, then why not?"

Tax Treatment of Unexplained Expenditure

As per section 69C, in any financial year if an assessee has incurred any expenditure and no explanation is offered about the source of such expenditure or part thereof



or if any explanation offered is not satisfactory in the opinion of the A.O., the amount covered by such expenditure or part thereof, may be deemed to be the income of the assessee for such

financial year. It may be noted that any unexplained expenditure which is deemed to be the income of the assessee shall not be allowed as a deduction under any head of income. It is taxed effectively at higher rate of 75 per cent plus education and Health cess under section 115BBE.

1. Pre-conditions for invoking section 69C:

Section 69C is attracted in the

following circumstances:

a) An expenditure has been found to have been incurred by an assessee in any financial year, and

b) The assessee fails to explain the source of such expenditure or any part thereof, to the satisfaction of the A.O.

In CIT v. Bhagwati Developers (P) Ltd. [2003] 261 ITR 658 (Cal.), it has been held that section 69C deals with unexplained expenditure. If from documents it appears that there was expenditure, unless its source is satisfactorily explained, it would also be deemed to be the income of the assessee for such financial year. The question of addition depends on the satisfactory explanation of the source. It cannot be negated simply because the expenditure was actually incurred. On the failure to explain the source of the expenditure, it is liable to be added to the income of the assessee.

Letter to Editor

Awareness on Grey water reuse needed

Water is widely recognised as a vital resource for humans. It is a resource that must be preserved for future generations, and recycling grey water is the best way to do so. Grey water is wastewater from domestic bathrooms, laundries, and kitchen outlets. Grey water is commonly contaminated with a variety of insoluble and soluble substances, including detergent, dirt, lint, human hair, saliva, skin, and other impurities. Whether the contaminant is organic or inorganic, particulate or microbial, surfactant or detergent, appropriate grey water recycling systems can assist in achieving the desired water quality. According to statistics, in our country grey water contributes between 30 and 50 percent of the wastewater discharged to the sewer. As a result, one can significantly reduce the load on the infrastructure by recycling it. Grey water filtration systems can be installed in every household and commercial establishment to reduce the strain on public sewerage systems. It improves municipal system efficiency and public health also. The amount of water that was previously used can be cut in half by using a grey water recycling system. Advantages of Grey water are many to mention few: Incorporating a grey water recycling system will cut water bill in half. A grey water recycling system uses thermal energy to warm new cold water that is approaching. This means that its use reduces the amount of energy used by up to 50% to 60%. Depending on where one lives, untreated sewage entering conduits can be avoided by using a grey water recycling system. A few urban communities are working hard to meet the sewage system's demands. As a result, untreated wastewater has been observed to settle in areas where it is not required. More Conscious Water Consumption Changes and advancements made by utilising a grey water system can benefit both human beings and the environment. Recycled grey water contains supplements that are supposed to help your plants grow. So, in order to water these plants, make use of recycled grey water. Greywater treatment plants can help to protect aquatic systems while also reducing human reliance on traditional water sources. Therefore state and central government should create awareness of the benefits of grey water reuse, so that everyone especially in urban areas inclined toward incorporating a grey water recycling system into their homes.

Vijaykumar H K
Raichur, Karnataka
Environmentalist

2. Under what circumstances the A.O. can make an

addition for unexplained expenditure for marriage expenses: Marriage expenses is an important item, in respect of which addition can be made u/s 69C in many cases. The general rule for ascertaining the marriage expenses and the addition to be made should be based upon normal and moderate standards. There should be a definite and tangible basis for making such estimate as such an estimate by the fact-finding authorities must be satisfactory and desirable and cannot be on fictional basis, capricious or arbitrary.

In Yadu Hari Dalmia v. CIT [1980] 126 ITR 48 (Del.) is relevant, it was held that in India, it is customary that the expenses incurred on various rites and rituals in different marriage functions are met not only by one person but by members of paternal and maternal relations of both the bride and the bridegroom. In case where there is direct and clear evidence to show that the assessee himself has incurred some expenditure on a particular item which he has not recorded in his books or which exceeds the amount recorded and the assessee fails to furnish any explanation for the same or the explanation furnished by him is not satisfactory to the A.O., section 69C can be invoked. Even where there is no such direct evidence, it is possible for the authority to make a fair and honest estimate based on certain relevant materials, but the estimate should be based on detailed enquiries, surveys or investigation.

The High Court further held that where additions were made on the ground that the expenses on the marriage of the assessee as shown in the books of the HUF to which he belonged were low, even though the estimate of expenditure was reasonable and conservative and there was no particular reason to assume that the unaccounted expenditure was met out of the assessee's undisclosed income and not by the assessee's father or by the HUF itself, the addition was not sustainable. The addition was deleted on giving the assessee a benefit of doubt as there was no reason to assume that the extra expenditure came out of the assessee's funds and not from those of his family.

Assessing Officer could not make additions to assessee's income u/s 69C in respect of expenditure incurred on marriage of assessee's daughter simply on ground that since assessee came from affluent family and had big statue, said expenditure incurred was to be more - **Ashok Kumar Gupta v. ITO 86 taxmann.com 118 (Delhi Tribunal).**

Delhi High Court in the case of Madan Lal v. CIT [1984] 149 ITR 533 (Delhi) held that it is quite possible for a marriage to be performed with very small expenditure even

Narayan Jain

if the assessee is a wealthy man. It depends on the nature of the marriage and the manner in which it is performed. It therefore becomes material to find out what were the functions held in connection with the marriage. Basically, the exact expenditure or even a proper estimate of expenditure would only be in the knowledge of the assessee. If the assessee chooses to give evasive answers, then the ITO can draw an adverse inference regarding the suppression of material facts. He can also take into account what might be the reasonable expenditure on a marriage of that type.

In the case of Smt. Shanti Devi Jalan v. CIT [1983] 139 ITR 288 (Cal.) the estimated addition on account of unexplained marriage expenses was upheld as the estimate was reasonable and based on sufficient materials.

The Delhi High Court in the case of CIT v. C.L. Verma [1995] 78 Taxman 231 (Del.) held that the deletion by the Tribunal of the addition made on account of unexplained expenditure has been upheld on the basis of the evidence collected during the course of penalty proceedings.

3. Where the supplier of goods has confessed that he was engaged in providing accommodation entries with respect to Supply of goods or services. Can AO disallow entire purchases in case the assessee having transaction with such supplier? What are the other judicial pronouncements on bogus purchases: Different pronouncements on bogus purchases are as under:

1) decisions in favour of Assessee :

The fact that the supplier admitted to issuing bogus bills does not necessarily mean that he had issued accommodation bills to the assessee. There is subtle but very important difference in issuing bogus bills and issuing accommodation bills to a particular party. The difference becomes very important when a supplier in his affidavit admits supply of goods. As far as sales are concerned there is no doubt about the genuineness of such sales. It is also a fact that suppliers were paying VAT and were filing their returns of income. In response to the notices issued by the AO u/s 133(6) of the Act, the supplier admitted the genuineness of the transaction. Accordingly, the purchases cannot be treated as bogus- **Shantivijay Jewels Limited v. DCIT ITA No 1045/Mum/2016 order dated 13.04.2018; ACG Arts & Properties (P.) Ltd. v. DCIT [2018] 93 taxmann.com 486 (Mumbai - Trib.). ACIT v. Carat Lane Trading (P.) Ltd. [2018] 89 taxmann.com 434 (Chennai - Trib.)**

The fact that sec. 133(6) notices could not be served upon the alleged vendors and

they were not physically available at the given addresses does not falsify the claim of the assessee that the purchases are genuine if the assessee has produced other evidence and made payments through banking channels - **Prabhat Gupta v. ITO ITA No 277/M/2017 & 797/M/2017 order dated 21.12.2017; Earthmoving Equipment Service Corporation v. DCIT [2017] 84 taxmann.com 51 (Mumbai - Trib.).**

If the AO has not rejected the books of account and has only doubted the genuineness of the suppliers but not the genuineness of the purchases and if the payments are made by account payee cheques, sec. 69C is not attracted. Sec. 69C cannot be applied where all purchases and sales transactions are part of regular books of account. The basic pre-condition for invoking sec. 69C is that the expenditure incurred by the assessee should be out of books of account. Where in order to prove genuineness of purchases, assessee had furnished copies of purchase bills, delivery challans, confirmation of ledger accounts of suppliers, sales tax returns and sales tax challans of suppliers and their income tax returns, merely returning of notices u/s 133(6) sent to those suppliers could not be sufficient to make additions u/s 69C - **Fancy wear v. ITO [2017] 87 taxmann.com 183 (Mumbai - Trib.)/[2017] 167 ITD 621 (Mumbai - Trib.).**

Where adding the entire amount of bogus purchases would give a completely distorted figure, the estimate of a reasonable gross profit rate and restricting the addition to that extent was held justified - **PCIT v. Jagdish H Patel [2017] 84 taxmann.com 259 (Gujarat); PCIT v. Subarna Rice Mill [2018] 96 taxmann.com 286 (Cal) - SLP dismissed by Supreme Court for low tax effect - [2020] 114 taxmann.com 572 (SC), Devi Construction Company v. Deputy CIT, Circle-2, Pune [2020] 118 taxmann.com 361 (Pune - Trib.).**

In Favour of revenue-

a) **Soman Sun Citi v. JCIT ITA No 2960/Mum/2016 Order dated 23.10.2017.**
b) **Ratanagiri Stainless (P) Ltd. v. ITO [2017] 80 taxmann.com 265 (Mum Trib); Ashok V. Viradia v. ITO [2017] 87 taxmann.com 156 (Mumbai - Trib.).**
c) **Navin Shantilal Mehta v. ITO [2018] 90 taxmann.com 16 (Mumbai - Trib.);**
d) **PBA Infrastructure Ltd. v. ACIT [2017] 86 taxmann.com 198 (Mumbai - Trib.).**

(Contd.)

(Narayan Jain is former Secretary General of AIFTP and author of the books "How to Handle Income Tax Problems" and "Income Tax Pleading & Practice" with CA DilipLoyalka).

Demoneytisation @ 6years

Pratap Chandra Sahu

Government of India blocked suddenly all the 500 rupee notes & 1000 rupee note on 8th November 2016 at 8p.m.

It was come into force on basing the ordinance " specified bank notes cessation of laibilitize ordinance 2016" government of India declared demoneytisation which was historical. Today six years passed away. Several applications filed opposing demoneytisation on honourable supreme court & other subordinate courts of various states. Honourable prime minister of india delevered a speech on demoneytisation then. He said demoneytisation would block black money ,duplicate notes & corruption. But people did not know what is demoneytisation? Honourable prime minister of requested the public to co-operate him. Government of India induced new 2000 rupee note,& 500 rupee note. When the aim of de- moneytisation did not fulfil it was diverted in the name of cash-less transaction. Many middle class families lost lakhs of rupees not encashing their old 500 rupee note & 1000 rupee note. Because the time was very short. According to the report of Reserve bank of india near about 30.88 lakh crores of rupees available with the people in

the year 2022. It was 71.84 % excess in comparison to the year 2016. Economical growth ,g.d.p. & cash transaction rate increased. This means digital money transaction system increased. So de-moneytisation system failed. Government hoped who would have black money ,they would not deposit in the bank in fear of caught by the police. Government hoped that amount of black money might be 5lakh crores of rupees as the government of india made affidavit before the supreme court of India. But the reserve bank of India 's report said that the demoneytisation rupees deposited was 15.30 lakh crores rupees ,which was 98.5% of the total black money it was expected. The amount of old(de-moneytisation) rupees 10720 crores was not deposited in the bank as the report says. What we think due to demoneytisation black money holders would suffer but it was proved wrong. They were benefited. According to the report of "transperancy international corruption eradication committee's index 2020 ,out of 180 countries ,the accreditation of India was 86

i.e in the list of eradication of corruption ,the serail number of India was after 85. According to the investigation of international consortium of investigatives journalists 2016 flashing panama papers and pandora papers ,it was known that many indians kept their black money in the swiss bank ,avoiding paying income tax to the government. It was known that the de- moneytisation programme could not success. Corruption increased due to bank fraud and the richest persons did not repay their loans to the banks. The amount of cheating money to the banks was 4.92 lakh crores rupees ,which was 4.5% of the total loans of the bank. The richest persons did not repay their loans crores of rupees to the banks. There was no action taken against them. But it seemed to writeoff their loans. The aim of de-moneytisation was to block corruption,terrorists activities ,but it could not success. The number of tax payers and the amount from 7.9 lakh crores to 10.37 lakh crores rupees. Lakhs of persons lost their job in corona. Before implementing a policy ,should consult the experts then worked out.

Nabarangapur

Fiscal Policy relook urged

Bhubaneswar: The good news is that Odisha's economy is projected to register higher growth of about 8% in 2022-23 as well as in 2023-24. One of the high growth states in the country has outperformed the other states and even the nation. While the global economy is projected to grow 3.2% this year, the Reserve Bank of India has projected India's growth at around 7.2%. However, Odisha has been eyeing for a bigger growth rate in the coming years.

The state's economy has seen a rebound in the year 2021-22 despite the second wave of Covid-19, and real GSDP has grown at a rate of 10.1% as per advanced estimate which is much higher than the national growth rate of 8.8%. Capital outlay to GSDP ratio has increased from 3.8% in 2019-20 to 4% in 2022-23.

Capital outlay has been in tandem with the developmental needs of the state. About 63% of total outlay has been allocated for developmental sectors such as major and medium irrigation, flood control, transport infrastructure, etc.

However, the economic analysts are skeptical about the projected growth as a number of issues concerning the states in general and specific issues pertaining to the economy and finances of the state remain unresolved. Unless the Centre revisits its Centre-State policy, it will be a daunting task for the state administration to maintain its high growth trajectory.

In recent years Odisha's Own Tax Revenue (OTR) as a percentage of Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) has declined, especially since the introduction of the Goods and Services Tax (GST). The period of GST compensation has ended on 30 June, 2022. The decisions of the Government of India to reduce the tax rates of the Union Taxes and contraction of economy during 2020-21 have resulted in contraction of the divisible pool, resulting in reduction in the devolution of Central Share Tax to the State to the tune of 2.18% of GSDP from 2015-16 to 2020-21.

Now the state has little space to enhance its tax revenue in order to fill the resources gap due to cessation of GST compensation to the states from July 2022 onwards. It has been estimated that the shortfall in own revenue for Odisha will be around Rs.65,000 crore in next Five Years. If central policy is not revised Odisha will not be able to maintain the level of spending in priority sectors, analysts feel.

About the Covid-19 period, Prime Minister

312 track maintenance Railways staff died on duty in last four years

NEW DELHI: Over 300 Railway Track Maintenance (RTM) personnel have lost their lives on duty after being by trains in the last four years over the Indian Railways. The highest



number of RTM staff had died on duty from different railway sections in Uttar Pradesh from 2018 to December 5 in 2022.

The Railways informed the Rajya Sabha (RS) that a total of 312 track maintenance staff had died in the last four years on duty in different parts of the country.

Union Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw on Friday in a written reply said that ex-gratia compensations were paid to the families of Railway track maintenance staff who lost their lives while performing bonafide official duties after being hit by trains.

"We are conducting regular counselling of track maintenance staff for 'personal safety

Narendra Modi is on record expressing that the collective efforts of all the states in the spirit of "Cooperative Federalism" were the force that helped India to emerge from the pandemic. Both the state and the centre worked in tandem during the pandemic period.

According to economic advisors in planning, designing and finalizing the criteria for allocation for Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSS) the states should have a greater say. And most importantly, the Union Government is needed to provide advance indication about the allocation, so that the state may prepare



the Annual Budget on a realistic basis. Sadly, this exercise is absent and there is irregular flow of funds in some schemes and in some others the actual central assistance is substantially lower than approved for the financial year. The state is asked to bear the balance on a 100% basis. Of late this is happening and Odisha is facing a tough time, officials claim. So, in practice, the state has to bear much higher than its 40% share.

Economists advise that the Government of India needs to evolve a single window system for communication of annual allocation and sharing pattern of CSS to the states and ensuring release of central assistance as per commitment.

One of the major concerns of the state administration is that the geo-climatic conditions of Odisha make it vulnerable to multiple and frequent natural disasters. During 1900 to 2022, the state has experienced di-

asters like flood, cyclone, and drought every year. These natural calamities pose a serious challenge to the economy of the State. Odisha has recently requested that "Natural Calamity" should be made one of the criteria for according "Special Category Status" to Odisha, so that it will avail facilities similar to North Eastern and Himalayan states.

Many states are facing major natural calamities and those vulnerable to such disasters are needed to be declared as "Special Focus State" and granted benefit of SPS for a specific period. This will help reconstruction of infrastructure and restoration of livelihood.

Article 270 of the Constitution of India provides for sharing of proceeds of All Union Taxes between the Union and States. However, the cess and surcharge levied by the Government of India as per Article 271 of the Constitution of India, which do not form a part of 'Divisible Pool'.

The share of cess and surcharge in Gross Tax Revenue of the Union Government increased from 7.5% on 2000-01 to around 20% in 2022-23. This has resulted in reduction of the devolution of Central share from 7.18% of States' GSDP in 2015-16 to 5.07% during 2020-21 and 5.98% during 2021-22.

This policy needs a revisit and at least flagship centrally sponsored Schemes like PMGSY, PMKSY, JJM need 100% funding, so that the state will be in a comfortable funding scenario to implement these major programs.

Another major concern area is Capital Expenditure (CAPEX). One of the most important initiatives taken by the Union Government is to boost CAPEX in states with the introduction of the Scheme of Financial Assistance to States for Capital Investment from 2020-21.

Financial analysts opine that the CAPEX guidelines are complicated and laced with many conditions, for which large chunks of funds allocated in CAPEX are remaining unutilized. Simplification of procedures is the need of the hour and once simplified, both the state and centre will reap benefits. In fact, complicated guidelines have defeated the objective of the grand scheme to enhance growth through CAPEX.

These are some of the major economic issues ailing one of the high growth states, which is trying hard to propel growth through the Agriculture, Mining, Service and other sectors. However, unless the Union Government revisits its policies, the momentum of growth will face hurdles.

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Salah Hammouri, 37, was escorted onto a flight to France by police early on Sunday morning, according to Israel's interior ministry. A lifelong resident of Jerusalem, he was stripped of his residency rights after officials accused him of being a member of a terrorist organisation, a BBC report said.

The Times of Israel reported that Salah Hammouri was still active in a terror group years after he was released from jail for a plot to kill a prominent rabbi. Hammouri, who holds French citizenship, had been held since March in administrative detention — an Israeli tool that allows authori-

ties to hold suspects for months at a time without charging them and without allowing them to see the evidence against them. He has denied all the allegations against him, the report said. Hammouri, who has

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lived in Jerusalem his entire life, has been held on suspicion of participation in terror activities due to his affiliation with the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) terror group, but has not been charged or con-

Direct tax collection Up

New Delhi: The figures of Direct Tax collections for the Financial Year 2022-23, as on 17 December show that net collections are at Rs.11,35,754 Crore as compared to Rs.9,47,959 Crore in the corresponding period of the preceding Financial Year i.e FY 2021-22, representing an increase of 19.81 Percent. The Net Direct Tax collection of Rs. 11,35,754 crore (as on 17.12.2022) includes Corporation Tax (CIT) at Rs. 6,06,679 crore (net of refund) and Personal Income Tax (PIT) including Securities Transaction Tax (STT) at Rs. 5,26,477 crore (net of refund).

The Gross Collection of Direct Taxes (before adjusting for refunds) for the FY 2022-23 stands at Rs.13,63,649 Cr compared to Rs.10,83,150 Cr in the corresponding period of the preceding financial year, registering a



growth of 25.90 Percent over collections of F.Y. 2021-22.

The Gross collection of Rs. 13,63,649 crore includes Corporation Tax (CIT) at Rs. 7,25,036 crore and Personal Income Tax (PIT) including Securities Transaction Tax (STT) at Rs. 6,35,920 crore. Minor head wise collection comprises Advance Tax of Rs. 5,21,302 crore; Tax Deducted at Source of Rs. 6,44,761 crore; Self-Assessment Tax of Rs. 1,40,105 crore; Regular Assessment Tax of Rs. 46,244 crore; and Tax under other minor heads of Rs. 11,237 crore. The cumulative Advance Tax collections for the first, second and third quarter of 2022-23 stand at Rs.5,21,302 Cr as on 17 December against Advance Tax collections of Rs. 4,62,038 crore for the corresponding period of the immediately preceding Financial Year i.e. 2021-22, showing a growth of 12.83 Percent.

The Advance Tax collection of Rs. 5,21,302 crore as on 17.12.2022 includes Corporation Tax (CIT) at Rs. 3,97,364 crore and Personal Income Tax (PIT) at Rs. 1,23,936 crore. There has been a remarkable increase in the speed of processing of income tax returns filed during the current fiscal, with almost 96.5 Percent of the duly verified ITRs having been processed till 17.12.2022. This has resulted in faster issue of refunds with almost a 109 Percent increase in the number of refunds issued in the current financial year. Refunds amounting to Rs.2,27,896 Cr have been issued in the FY 2022-23 till 17.12.2022, as against refunds of Rs.1,35,191 crore issued during the corresponding period in the preceding Financial Year 2021-22, showing a growth of over 68.57 Percent.

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other NGOs — a designation Addameer along with the UN and several Israeli human rights groups have all strongly rejected. Hammouri has denied the charges against him. The rights groups have



condemned the move to deport him. According to The Guardian, a statement from the Hammouri campaign called the deportation a "war crime" and said it constituted a breach of international law. "Wherever a Palestinian goes, he takes with him these principles and the cause of his people: his homeland carried with him to wherever he ends up," Hammouri said in a statement. The French foreign ministry also expressed disappointment at the decision, and said it condemned "the Israeli authorities' decision, against the law, to expel Salah Hammouri to France".



All India Federation of Tax Practitioners has elected Pankaj Ghiya of Jaipur as President and Calcutta based Tax Advocate Narayan Jain as National Deputy President for 2023 in its National Convention. Vivek Agarwal was appointed Vice President from East Zone.

Mayurbhanj Maharaja Remembered

Bhubaneswar: The State of Odisha remembered and recalled Mayurbhanj King, Maharaja Sriram Chandra Bhanja Deo on his 152nd birth day.

A special program was organized by the Information and Public Relation Department here at Jaydev Bhawan. Speakers spoke at length about Mayurbhanj Maharaja and his contribution for the State.

Director Information & Public Relations Indramani Tripathy graced the occasion, while lauding his efforts on education, agriculture and administration during his long rule.

Editor Odisha Review & Utkal Prasanga Kasturi Mahapatra spoke at length on contribution of Mayurbhanj Maharaja.

The Speakers at the occasion recalled Sriram Chandra's contribution to create Odisha as a separate province and work for the educational and social progress of the State.

Sriram Chandra Bhanja Deo was born to Maharaja Krishna Chandra Bhanja Deo on 17 December, 1870 and succeeded to the throne on 29 May 1882.



However, at that time the State was ruled under a British Commissioner till Maharaja came of age; he was formally installed as Maharaja on 15 August 1892.

The state affairs remained in the hands of his grandmother, the Dowager Maharani of Mayurbhanj, until he took charge some years later.

He worked for the overall development of Mayurbhanj Princely State and implemented a variety of benevolent measures to benefit the local populace. Many people called him as one of the "Makers of Modern Odisha."

Sriram Chandra made significant contributions to language, health, and administration. During his

BJYM Burns Bilawal Effigy

Bhubaneswar: BJP Yuva Morcha activist burnt the effigy of Pakistani Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari in protest against his 'insulting' statement on Prime Minister Narendra Modi in the United Nations General Assembly session recently.

An effigy of Bilawal Bhutto Zardari was burnt near Ram Mandir here.

The activists said that India's 135 crore citizens are proud of Shri Modi's leadership and his mantra of "Sabka Saath Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas, Sabka Prayas" is being hailed in the world fora.

But Pakistan's Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari's illogical, vulgar and shameful statements against India's popular Prime Minister Yashvi Narendra Modi has made the bad mentality of Pa-

reign, a narrow gauge railway was built between Rupsa and Baripada. This helped further to develop the trade and commerce of the state and added to the welfare of the people.

Maharaja Sriram Chandra Bhanja Deo was an Administrator Par-excellence. He spent Rs 6 lakh from the Royal Treasury to construct two major reservoirs at Haldiha. Similarly, he increased the number of primary schools in his royal jurisdiction from 44 to 400.

During his reign, the scientific operation of iron mines was started for the first time and Gorumahisani mines were leased to the Tatas. A 474 mile road was built in the State connecting all divisional towns with Baripada during his rule.

The Baripada Municipality was constituted by him in 1905. He also started an English High School with a boarding facility, a Government Press, a fully equipped hospital and a leper asylum in Baripada. The King was also a learned and knowledgeable patriot and great patron of the Odia language and presided over the first meeting of Utkal Samilani held on 3 December 1903 due to which he along with his father is widely acknowledged as the 'Maker of Modern Odisha'.

One of his major contribution for the State of Odisha is the Cuttack-based Sriram Chandra Bhanja Medical College & Hospital (SCB) was named after him in 1951 in recognition of the donation and efforts made by the ruler in his lifetime. A college in Mayurbhanj district founded by him has been named after him as Sriram Chandra Bhanja Degree College. It is no

denying the fact that he could be regarded as one of the greatest kings of history and the ever shining-jewel of Mayurbhanja, so also the State of Odisha.

Among others, Santosh Kumar Das, Additional Director, Sucheta Priyadarshini, Assistant Director, Odia Language, Literature and Culture Under Secretary Lakshmidhar Behera lauded Sriram Chandra Bhanja Deo for his immense contributions. Earlier garlanding ceremony was organized, which was attended by Veteran Lawmaker, Prafulla Samal, Ex Minister Pravin Chandra Bhanja Deo, Rajmata Rajyalaskhmi Bhanja Deo and Members of Mayurbhanj Cultural Organization.

kistan known in the world, State President of Yuva Morcha Irasis Acharya said.

The BJYM leader said Pakistan has become a haven for terrorists. Pakistan has been harbouring terrorism and terrorists for decades.

"While the whole world is praising the strong leadership of the Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the hateful and derogatory comments made by the Pakistani Foreign Minister at the United Nations have exposed his narrow-mindedness and intolerance," he said.

A delegation led by Mr. Acharya also met State Governor Prof Ganeshi Lal and submitted a memorandum over Mr. Zardari's abusive and shameful speech.

19K CR for MSME

New Delhi: The Government of India has provided funds to the tune of Rs 19,460.50 crore to MSMEs in Odisha under different Central Sector Schemes and Programs. As per data provided by Union MoS for MSME, Bhanu Pratap Singh Verma in Parliament recently, Rs 5,353.92 crore has been provided to 9.24 lakh State MSMEs under Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme (ECLGS) since inception

Similarly, as on 30 November, 2022, about 2.60 lakh MSME units of Odisha have received Rs 13,249.91 crore under Credit Guarantee Scheme (CGS) since its inception.

Further, another Rs 865.67 crore has been allocated to 33,926 MSME units in the State under Prime Minister's Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP).

Under PMEGP, women are entitled to higher rate of subsidy and lower personal contribution and 35% to 40% of the total margin

money subsidy is disbursed to women. Under CGS, women are given additional 10% of guarantee coverage and additional 10% concession in guarantee fee. The Government has

impact during and post Covid-19 pandemic in the country, including Odisha, said Mr. Verma.

About some major initiatives taken by the Centre, he said, Rs. 5 lakh crore collateral free

for procurement up to Rs. 200 crores, retail and wholesale traders included as MSMEs and non-tax benefits extended for 3 years in case of an upward change in status of MSMEs.

The Union Minister also said that Pradhan Mantri Aatmanirbhar Bharat Rojgar Yojana (PMABRY) has been launched as part of Atmanirbhar Bharat package 3.0 to incentivize employers for creation of new employment along with social security benefits and restoration of loss of employment during Covid-19 pandemic.

The scheme being implemented through Employees' Provident Fund Organization (EPFO), seeks to reduce the financial burden of the employers and encourages them to hire more workers.

As on 29 November, 2022, benefits have been provided to 60.12 lakh beneficiaries through 1.51 lakh establishments and benefits of Rs.7,857.82 crore have been credited under PMABRY across the country, he added.



taken a number of financial measures to support the MSME sector through programs, schemes and declaration under Aatmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan and Union Budget announcements, which inter alia include mitigating the negative

automatic loans has been earmarked under Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme (ECLGS) for business, including MSMEs.

Similarly, Rs. 50,000 crore earmarked for equity infusion through Self Reliant India Fund, there is no global tenders



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Automobile industry looks to sustain growth momentum in 2023

NEW DELHI: The Indian automobile industry is setting out on a journey with hopes for a sustained growth momentum in 2023 and further embracing clean technology amid the lurking speed breakers of rising interest rates and cost increases due to new emission and safety norms, having witnessed a strong comeback from the COVID-led downturn this year.

While the passenger vehicles (PV) segment is set for record sales in 2022 despite the lingering effects of supply chain constraints and semiconductor shortages, the two-wheeler space is yet to see sustained sales buoyancy after having suffered for most of the year.

According to industry estimates, PV sales can reach around 38 lakh units this year.

The three-wheelers and commercial vehicles segments have also witnessed good growth in 2022 compared to 2021, albeit on a low base of last year, which was affected by the second wave of



COVID-19 and manufacturers will be keen to carry forward the momentum to the new year.

As per industry observers, 2023 will also see acceleration in adoption of electric vehicles, which has already started taking root in 2022, especially in the two-wheelers segment.

For potential passenger vehicle buyers, 2023 may not ring in the best news as vehicle prices are set to increase next year as companies prepare to conform to stricter emission norms which kick in from April 1, 2023.

Many manufacturers like Maruti Suzuki, Tata Motors and Hyundai have already announced plans to increase prices from January next year.

Besides, rising interest rates and not so bright global economic situation and its impact on India in the days to come are some of the factors which are keeping the industry in a cautious mode.

"Increase in price always has a certain negative impact on sales. But we still do not know how much the prices will go up and what will happen to input cost and foreign exchange. These are uncertainties which will always be there," Maruti Suzuki India Chairman R C Bhargava told PTI.

He, however, stated that the domestic car industry has revived in the last few months and the semiconductor shortages are also going to abate in 2023.

"Putting it all together, our estimate would be that next year would probably be a reasonably good year for the industry. I think we should do at least as well if not better than 2022," Bhargava said.

The country's largest carmaker will keep bringing in cars, especially more SUV models, to cater to the customer demand, he noted.

Industry body Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers (SIAM) Director General Rajesh Menon said the passenger vehicle industry adopted the second phase of fuel efficiency regulations this year from April 2022 and is gearing up to meet the stringent second phase of BS VI emission norms from April 2023.

Discussions are also underway to implement various new safety regulations for passenger vehicles in 2023, he said.

"Implementation of these new regulations could raise the cost of the vehicles and this coupled with global recessionary trends are of concern going forward in the year 2023," Menon pointed out.

Besides, with rising inflation, the RBI was compelled to increase the repo rates a couple of times this year and this increase in interest rate can impact the demand trends for all vehicle segments, he cautioned.

Though the overall numbers from January to November 2022 have shown appreciable growth for all segments including passenger vehicles, this has been achieved in the backdrop of a low base in 2021, which was affected by the second wave

of COVID-19, Menon stated.

Mahindra & Mahindra (M&M) Executive Director (Auto and Farm Sectors) Rajesh Jejurikar, however, remained confident about the industry maintaining the current sales momentum.

"At M&M, all models will comply with BS-VI.2 norms as per timelines set by the government and the price/cost difference may not be as steep as it was for the BS-IV to BS-VI transition," he asserted.

While acknowledging that the semiconductor shortage continues to be dynamic and rising input costs and interest rates are some other challenges that the industry is managing, he remained optimistic about sales momentum continuing next year.

"Apart from these headwinds, we look forward to an action-packed 2023 on the back of huge demand from customers," Jejurikar said.

Tata Motors Managing Director - Passenger Vehicle and Electric Vehicles Shailesh Chandra

pointed out that it would be worthwhile to see the impact of macroeconomic factors like inflationary pressure on the industry.

"I would say that the growth is going to be high this year but next year on a very high base, with the interplay of so many tailwinds and headwinds, it would be still growth, but to what extent that growth would be on the high base, that will be seen," he noted.

Kia India Chief Sales Officer Myung-sik Sohn said stricter emission norms are a positive for the industry's collective efforts of trying to minimise pollution from vehicles.

However, they will surely have an impact on vehicle prices.

"You will see a hike in prices across all OEMs, but looking at the high demand for cars currently, we expect little impact on sales momentum," he noted. Automotive dealer's body Federation of Automobile Dealers Associations (FADA) noted that the PV segment still continues to hold a strong order book for several models which is expected to continue for a few months.

"The OEMs (original equipment manufacturers) need to continue with the creation of excitement through new launches, product upgrades etc. We expect the production soon to be back to normal and we can bring down the long waiting period to normal," FADA President Manish Raj Singhania stated.

The long waiting period and flexible consumer behaviour during the festive season have helped the industry to see movement in the segment, but once the demand and supply balance is restored, the slow-moving models will be a challenge for the industry, Singhania said.

Commenting on the sales growth outlook, ICRA Vice President and Sector Head Corporate Ratings Rohan Kanwar Gupta said the rating agency expects the industry demand to remain steady and volumes to grow by 6-9 per cent in FY2024.

"The capex outlay for OEMs is estimated to remain heightened (an estimated outlay of Rs 650 billion over FY2023-FY2025, with the OEMs also budgeting for a substantial outlay towards new product development, including development of capabilities/platforms for electric vehicles," he added.

Elaborating on the luxury car segment, Mercedes-Benz India's outgoing Managing Director and CEO Martin Schwenk said, "We have to see how the overall economic climate is there. Overall, confidence is there that 2023 should be a good year. The world is dynamic but at the moment, we are starting with a positive momentum into next year."

As for the two-wheeler segment, Menon said while an increase in interest rate can impact the demand trends for all vehicle segments, the government has also hiked the long-term insurance premium, which specifically impacts the two-wheeler segment.

"Two-wheeler demand has remained weak over the past few years, with consumer sentiments impacted by factors such as income uncertainty during the pandemic period and a persistent hike in two-wheeler prices led by both regulatory changes and inflationary pressures," ICRA's Gupta said.

has been reduced to Rs 1,700/tonne from the previous Rs 4,900/tonne. Before the previous revision, this amount was Rs 10,200 per tonne.

The government has also cut the rate on export of diesel to Rs 5 per litre from Rs 8 per litre. Before the previous revision, this rate was Rs 10.5 per litre. The new levy also includes Rs 1.5 per litre as road infrastructure cess, like in every case.

On July 1, India imposed the windfall tax on crude oil producers and levies on exports of gasoline, diesel and aviation fuel after private refiners sought overseas markets to gain from robust refining margins, instead of selling at lower-than-market rates in the country

GST council meet: Harish seeks exemption on several products



HYDERABAD: Welcoming the proposals to revise tax invoice rules, finance minister T. Harish Rao on Saturday asked Union finance minister Nirmala Sitaraman to consider exempting GST on several products.

Rao and senior officials were participating in the 48th GST Council meeting via video conference.

Rao brought several issues to the finance minister's notice stating that 46,000 reservoirs provide water to 25 lakh acres of land in Telangana state.

The government takes up maintenance of the reservoirs every year. He asked

Ukraine races to restore power after Russian missiles batter grid

Continued from page-1

The Kremlin released footage Friday of Putin presiding over a round-table meeting with Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu and Chief of General Staff Valery Gerasimov among other top brass.

After a series of humiliating battlefield defeats, Russia has since October pursued an aerial campaign against what Moscow says are military-linked facilities.

But France and the European Union have said the suffering inflicted on freezing civilians constitutes war crimes, with the bloc's foreign policy chief calling the bombings "barbaric".

Russia's defence ministry said Saturday the strikes had targeted Ukraine's military and energy facilities, while also disrupting "the transfer of weapons and ammunition of foreign production".

"All assigned targets were hit," the ministry said in its daily briefing.

Russia fired 74 -- mainly cruise -- missiles Friday, 60 of which were shot down by anti-aircraft defences, according to the Ukrainian army.

Ukraine's military command said in a statement Saturday: "The enemy continues to focus its efforts on conducting offensive actions in the Bakhmut and Avdiivka directions", referring to two cities in the eastern Donetsk region.

Russian troops were also trying to regain lost ground around Lymanskyi, in the south, the statement added.

Zelensky said the strikes hit power and water supplies in Kyiv and 14 regions.

Regional officials said their air defence forces had shot down 37 out of 40 missiles.

In the central city of Kryvyi Rig, where Zelensky was born, Friday's air strikes hit a residential building.

The missiles killed a 64-year-old woman and a young couple with a son, governor Valentyn Reznichenko said Saturday, wounding 13 others.

In the south, fresh Russian shelling in Kherson, recently recaptured by Ukraine, killed a 36-year-old man and injured a 70-year-old woman, governor Yaroslav Yanushevich said Saturday morning.

A separate strike hit a geriatric centre in the village of Stepanivka just north of Kherson, he added later, but there were no casualties reported.

Kherson has been subjected to persistent Russian shelling since Moscow's forces retreated in November, and power was cut in the city earlier this week.

Protracted war

Moscow has said the strikes on Ukrainian infrastructure are a response to an explosion on the Kerch bridge connecting the Russian mainland to the Crimean peninsula, annexed from Ukraine in 2014.

Ukrainian defence officials said this week that their forces had downed over a dozen Iranian-made attack drones launched at Kyiv, a sign that Western-supplied systems are having an impact.

The country's military leaders have also warned Moscow is preparing for a major winter offensive, including a fresh attempt to take Kyiv.

Russia meanwhile on Saturday accused Moldova of "political censorship" after it suspended the broadcasting licence of six television channels over accusations of misinformation.

Moldova -- which sits on Ukraine's southwestern border -- said on Friday the decision was made because of the "lack of correct information" in their coverage of national events and Russia's military campaign in Ukraine.

Moscow also responded to the EU's decision Friday to impose further sanctions, adding restrictions on the export of drone engines to Russia or countries like Iran looking to supply Moscow with weapons.

The new package of "illegitimate unilateral restrictive measures" would not achieve its goal, Russia's foreign ministry said Saturday.

the Union minister to exempt GST on repairs works of water reservoirs.

"Milling and transport services play a key role in the smooth supply of the Public Distribution System (PDS). The Centre has imposed GST on these services which pose a financial burden to the state government. We categorically opposed imposing 18 per cent GST on beedi leaves. We want this

to be withdrawn," Rao said.

GST officials assured to resolve the issues.

BJP has Dhamnagar model to counter BJD: Dharmendra Pradhan

Continued from page-1

With the BJD asserting replication of the Padampur model across the state during the next Assembly election, the BJP has propped the Dhamnagar and Gujarat models to give the regional party a tough fight.

Talking to mediapersons before a party meeting of state and district functionaries here, Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan said the lessons learnt from the back-to-back fight in the two by-elections will put the party in good stead during the next round of battle with the BJD in 2024.

"We have Dhamnagar model (to replicate). Both Dhamnagar and Padampur bypolls have taught BJP how to face 2024 general elections. As the main Opposition in the state, people want BJP to bring the state government's failure to the fore," Pradhan said.

He said corruption, inefficiency of the BJD government will be the main issues for the BJP. Also taking a jibe at the BJD, BJP MP from Bhubaneswar Aparajita Sarangi said, "When it comes to good governance, Gujarat is the best model. The Padampur model of BJD is the model of corruption and there is nothing to boast about." The meeting chaired by BJP state unit president Samir Mohanty took stock of the two bypolls and discussed strategy how to counter the money power of the BJD in the next Assembly and Lok Sabha elections.

"Many important issues were discussed. Apart from the recently held bypolls in Padampur and Dhamnagar, the meeting discussed the all-round failure of the state government, its anti-farmer policy and growing unemployment in the state," said party general secretary Prithiviraj Harichandan after the meeting.

He said the party has decided to launch a series of agitational programmes to expose corruption and failure of the government. These agitations will continue till the next elections. A committee has been constituted to prepare a list of programme and finalise dates for holding agitation on different issues.

BJP national general secretary and Odisha election-in-charge Sunil Bansal suggested measures to be taken on a time bound manner to strengthen party organisation from booth level. Party's national general secretary and Odisha in-charge D Purandeswari said India taking the presidency of the G20 and three events scheduled to take place in Odisha, the party should grab the opportunity to further its prospects in the state.

States equally responsible for border security: Amit Shah

Continued from page-1

chief minister Tejaswi Yajav and two Cabinet ministers from Odisha and Sikkim attended the meeting at Nabanna, in Howrah.

Union home secretary Ajay Bhalla and BSF chief Pankaj Kumar Singh were also present among other Central agency officials at the meet. According to sources, Shah underlined that the states have as much responsibility as the BSF in securing the border as the Centre takes a serious look into the matter. The Union home minister made the assertion when some of the states, including Bengal, blamed the BSF for border crimes like smuggling. He also proposed an inter-state committee with representatives from Bengal, Bihar and Jharkhand for smooth water sharing from dams.

Shah later held a separate meeting with Banerjee over 15 minutes at her request in her chamber, which has triggered fresh speculation about a bonhomie between them.

West Bengal's Leader of the Opposition Suwendu Adhikari, later claimed that Mr Shah discussed with Ms Banerjee the requirements of land for building 72 BSF border outposts in the state, for which the Trinamul Congress government is not providing land. Sources, however, revealed that the TMC chief raised the Central agencies' coercive steps only against her party leaders in various cases.

During his two-day tour to the state, Mr Shah met the state BJP leadership on Friday evening and took reports on the party's organisational strength at the booth level in comparison to that of the TMC. He also directed them to strengthen the BJP's presence at the booths ahead of the panchayat elections.

FIFA WC final: France in trouble after Messi, Di Maria double Argentina's lead

Argentina took a 2-0 lead against France at half-time in the World Cup final after

from Messi. Messi now has 12 World Cup goals — the same as Brazil

Coach Lionel Scaloni lined up his in a 4-3-3 formation. Meanwhile, France



goals by Lionel Messi and Angel Di Maria. A win here today will give La albiceleste their third World Cup title and Messi, his first world cup crown. Argentina drew the first blood courtesy of Messi who scored in the 23rd minute via a penalty kick following a foul on Di Maria. Thirteen minutes later Di Maria finished off a flowing team move involving a deft flick

great Pelé — and is the first player to score in the group stage and every round of the knockout stage in a single edition of the tournament. He is currently the top scorer in this year's tournament with 6 goals. Argentina received a boost in the form of veteran playmaker Angel Di Maria who started the game after suffering an injury in the opening game against Saudi Arabia.

midfielder Adrien Rabiot returned to the starting XI in place of Youssouf Fofana and centre-back Dayot Upamecano replaced Ibrahim Konate. Deschamps lined up the defending champions in a 4-3-3 with the in-form Antoine Griezmann completing the midfield trio alongside Tchouameni and Rabiot. Skipper Hugo Lloris looks to become the only cap-

tain to win back-to-back World Cups after leading the Les Blues to glory in 2018.

Argentina won the competition in 1978 and 1986, while France won it in 1998 and as recently as 2018.

Starting Lineups: Argentina (4-3-3): Emiliano Martínez; Nahuel Molina, Cristian Romero, Nicolás Otamendi, Nicolas Tagliafico; Angel Di Maria, Rodrigo De Paul, Enzo Fernández, Alexis Mac Allister; Julián Álvarez, Lionel Messi.

France (4-3-3): Hugo Lloris; Jules Koundé, Raphael Varane, Dayot Upamecano, Theo Hernandez; Aurélien Tchouameni, Antoine Griezmann, Adrien Rabiot; Ousmane Dembélé, Kylian Mbappé, Olivier Giroud.

Raid on Kanugolu's office opens up can of worms in Congress

HYDERABAD(KCN): When the Congress "war room" — office of party strategist Sunil Kanugolu — was raided by the police on Tuesday night (December 13), several senior Congress leaders rushed to his rescue. TPCC working president T Jayaprakash Reddy staged a sit-in protest at the police commissionerate.

Since he was stuck in Delhi due to an ongoing Parliament session, Nalgonda MP and former TPCC president N Uttam Kumar Reddy telephoned Hyderabad Commissioner of Police CV Anand. However, to their embarrassment, they found out that the very office of Congress political strategist is running a hate campaign against some of them. In the latest meeting of the senior Congress leaders expressing dissent over appointment to TPCC panels, they discussed how they were being persecuted within the party fora. Their grouse is that Kanugolu's MindShare office is allegedly running a hate campaign against Revanth's dissidents including former TPCC chief N Uttam Kumar Reddy. Their contention is that most of Revanth's opponents were being subjected to harsh criticism for questioning his working style and not holding meetings.

"When the Congress social media office was raided by police, I called up the Hyderabad

Commissioner CV Anand. He (Commissioner) said that they have taken action as per law for vulgar posts. He also said that a campaign had been launched against me. It was very strange," Uttam said.

Uttam also alleged that Teenmar Mallanna was targeting senior leaders in Congress by terming them "coverts". "We all know who runs such campaigns by giving large sums of money to social media handlers. Surprisingly, he calls every original leader a covert and claims that the one who switched four different parties will save the Congress," the Nalgonda MP said.

MALLU RAVI REBUTS CHARGE OF 'ORIGINALS' Hyderabad: Countering the "original Congress" leaders, TPCC senior vice-president Dr Mallu Ravi said that only 12 leaders were accommodated in the State party committees. He said that there former Telugu Desam Party leaders had not been taken in the Political Affairs Committee (PAC) or as district presidents. Out of the leaders who joined from TDP, only two were in the Political Executive Committee (PEC), five were vice-presidents, and five more were accommodated as general secretaries, he added. In the newly released party panels list SC, ST, BC and minorities together accounted for 68% and OCs 32%, he claimed.



Nadal, Swiatek named International Tennis Federation world champions for 2022

PARIS: Rafael Nadal and Iga Swiatek were Thursday named world champions by the International Ten-

nis Federation (ITF) after a season in which they claimed two Grand Slam titles apiece. Nadal swept to the Australian Open and then backed it up with a 14th French Open, taking his majors total to a men's record of 22.

Swiatek, who inherited the world number one spot in March following the shock retirement of Ashleigh Barty, claimed a second French Open and then captured the US Open.

Wimbledon but was forced to quit before facing Nick Kyrgios due to an abdominal strain. Rajeev Ram of the United States and Great Britain's Joe Salisbury are first-time winners of the men's doubles world champion award after claiming their third Grand Slam title together at the US Open and then taking the ATP Finals title for



nis Federation (ITF) after a season in which they claimed two Grand Slam titles apiece. Nadal swept to the Australian Open and then backed it up with a 14th French Open, taking his majors total to a men's record of 22.

Swiatek, who inherited the world number one spot in March following the shock retirement of Ashleigh Barty, claimed a second French Open and then captured the US Open. "I'm very happy to be named ITF World Champion for the fifth time," said 36-year-old Nadal. "When I first won the award in 2008, I would not have ex-

pected to still be playing at such a high level 14 years later." Nadal also made the semi-finals at

Wimbledon but was forced to quit before facing Nick Kyrgios due to an abdominal strain. Rajeev Ram of the United States and Great Britain's Joe Salisbury are first-time winners of the men's doubles world champion award after claiming their third Grand Slam title together at the US Open and then taking the ATP Finals title for

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