

BSKY Nabin Card Launched

Bhubaneswar(KCN): In a major decision to woo rural middle class voters, ahead of Lok Sabha and Odisha Assembly elections, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik today launched the Biju Swasthya Kalyan Yojana (BSKY) Nabin Card here. All rural families of Odisha (except regular government employees and income tax payees), who are presently not covered under BSKY, will be eligible to receive the BSKY Nabin Card, Patnaik said. This will entitle them to cashless care of Rs 5 lakh per annum (upto 10 lakh for women members of the family), in empanelled private hospitals both inside and outside the state, for identified critical illnesses, he said. Stating ‘Sustha Odisha, Sukhi Odisha’ (Healthy Odisha, Happy Odisha) has been the driving



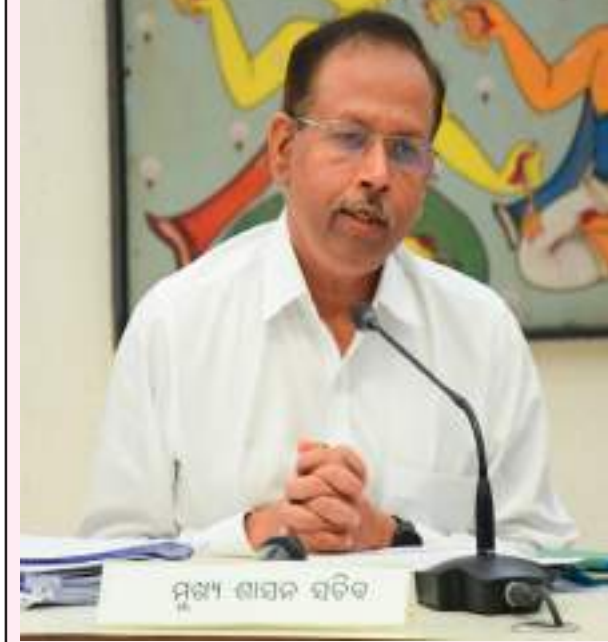
force behind all interventions in the health sector in Odisha, the Chief Minister said, “It has been my dream to provide universal health coverage to the people of Odisha, where healthcare is a right; accessible and affordable by all.” To take this vision forward, the BSKY was launched five years ago bringing about a revolution in providing health assurance to the people of Odisha.

In the first phase of BSKY, all services in public health facilities were made free of cost for all persons, irrespective of income or residence. In the second phase, BSKY provides cashless health care in private health facilities for all ration card holders, he stated. Under BSKY, every month, over 45 lakh persons receive free health care at public health facilities in the State, while 1.3 lakh

persons receive cashless care. This amounts to Rs 260 crore each month in empanelled private hospitals. In the past five years, BSKY has provided nearly 21 lakh patients with cashless healthcare of about Rs 4,500 crore, in private hospitals alone, the Chief Minister pointed out. It has thus become a unique model for universal health coverage, leveraging the

strengths of both the public and private sectors to provide comprehensive health assurance to the people of Odisha, he added. Launching the BSKY Nabin Card, Shri Patnaik said, “We are now launching the third phase of BSKY, where all left out families of rural areas of our state will be assured of cashless care in private hospitals, for critical ailments.” With this third phase of expansion, it is estimated that over 1.10 crore families, covering nearly 90% of the population of the state, will be provided health assurance under BSKY. This will ensure that no family in Odisha is left vulnerable due to lack of financial resources to meet high expenditure for critical illnesses; thus fulfilling the promise of universal health coverage for the people of Odisha, he added.

Jena Gets 6 Months Extension



Bhubaneswar(KCN): Odisha Government today extended the services of Pradeep Kumar Jena, Chief Secretary for a period of another six months. In pursuance of letter of Department of Personnel & Training, Ministry of Personnel, P G & Pensions, Government of India,

the service of Shri Pradeep Kumar Jena IAS (RR-1989), Chief Secretary, Odisha is hereby extended for a period of six months from January 1, 2024 to June 30, 2024,” read a notification issued by the General Administration and Public Grievance Department. 1989 Batch IAS, Shri

Jena took charge as Chief Secretary of Odisha on March 1, 2023. He took over as Suresh Chandra Mohapatra has superannuated from the Service. While he has worked in several developmental departments, Shri Jena, known for his No-Nonsense approach is working out the Road Map for accelerating development process in the State. Shri Jena was to superannuate on 31 December. With six months of extension he will be serving the State Government till 30 June, 2024. Shri Jena, who is in the good books of Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, will continue oversee the Government Affairs during upcoming crucial Assembly and Lok Sabha polls in the State.

Navajyoti Patnaik writes to Chief Minister for New RDC Office, Municipal Corporation in Balasore and Sub-Division at Jaleswar.



Jaleswar, (KCN): Congress leader Navajyoti Patnaik has penned a letter to the Chief Minister, urging comprehensive development for northern Odisha and Balasore. Balasore grapples with a lack of infrastructure across all sectors. The letter meticulously presents data to outline the requisites for development in Balasore. Navajyoti Patnaik underscores the necessity of establishing a Revenue Divisional Commissioner (RDC)

Office in Balasore District to ensure effective regional representation in administrative affairs. Despite the creation of three revenue zones by the Odisha government, the representation for northern Odisha has been overlooked. The letter emphasizes that Balasore Municipality has long been neglected without any upgrades. Consequently, the people of Balasore are deprived of developmental benefits. While several municipalities in the

state have been elevated to municipal corporation status, Balasore has been absent from this progress. Municipal corporations in Bhubaneswar and Cuttack in the coastal area, Sambalpur and Rourkela in western Odisha, and Berhampur in southern Odisha are enjoying developmental benefits, leaving the people of Balasore at a disadvantage. Navajyoti Patnaik highlights the demand for a Sub-Division Office in Jaleswar of Balasore District to bolster local administrative infrastructure. Unfortunately, the Odisha government has been negligent in addressing this need. Patnaik expresses optimism that these important issues will be discussed in the upcoming cabinet minister-level meeting. With this, Navajyoti Patnaik extends his heartfelt New Year wishes to all in advance.

Bhubaneswar(KCN) : Ahead of New Year 2024, State Government today promoted 19 IPS Officers of Odisha cadre to various ranks. The General Administration and Public Grievances Department has issued notifications to this effect.As per the notification, senior IPS officer of 1999 batch, Ghanashyam Upadhyay, who is now on central deputation, has been allowed to avail promotion to the grade of ADG police with effect from January 1, 2024. Shri Upadhyay is given Pro-forma Promotion. At least five IPS officers



of the 2006 batch were promoted to the rank of Inspector General (IG) of Police.While Anup Kumar Sahoo DIG Intelligence is given promotion to IGP Rank, Amrita Dash, Anirudh Kumar Singh, Anoop Krishna and Sudha Singh were given Pro-forma Promotion as they

are serving in the Organizations of Government of India. Similarly, six 2010 batch IPS Officers were given promotion to the grade of Deputy Inspector General (DIG) of Police. The new DIGs are—Mitrabhanu Mahapatra, Sarah Sharma, Kanwar Vishal Singh, Ashis Kumar

Singh, Parul Gupta and K Siva Subramani. At present Ashis Kumar, Parul Gupta and K Siva Subraman are on Central deputation, so they are given Pro-forma Promotion.Moreover, four other Odisha cadre IPS officers of 2015 batch Rahul Jain, Sarvana Vivek M, Kusalkar Nitin Dagdu and Pratyush Diwaker were promoted to Level-12 Pay Scale. Three 2011 batch IPS officers Pinak Mishra, Banoth Jugal Kishore Kumar, Battula Gangadhar have been given promotion to Level 13 of Pay Matrix, the notification said.

Odisha man killed by lender for not repaying Rs 10,000

Berhampur(KCN): A 33-year-old man was allegedly killed in Odisha’s Ganjam district for ‘not repaying’ Rs 10,000 borrowed from the accused, police said Friday. The accused, identified as Prasant Kumar Swain (21), a resident of Pattapur, allegedly beat fellow villager Surya Kant Sahu to death with an iron rod near a liquor outlet in the area Thursday night over non-repayment of the borrowed sum, a police officer said. Locals found the body lying in a pool of blood Friday morning and informed the police, who sent it for post mortem examination. The accused, who had fled the spot after allegedly committing the murder, was later arrested. According to the police, Sahu had borrowed Rs 10,000 from the accused a few days ago but failed to repay it within the pre-decided date, resulting in a heated argument between the two persons. In a fit of rage, the accused beat Sahu up with an iron rod and he died on the spot, the officer said. Later, the deceased’s brother Nityananand Sahu lodged a complaint with Pattapur police station. During the investigation, police identified the accused and arrested him, Ganjam Superintendent of Police Jagmohan Meena said. The police seized the iron rod used in the crime and the mobile phone of the deceased from the accused.

Dense fog engulfs many parts of Odisha

Bhubaneswar(KCN): Dense fog engulfed many parts of Odisha Friday, according to the India Meteorological Department (IMD). Rourkela experienced ‘very dense’ fog with visibility level getting reduced to 40 metres while dense fog was witnessed at Nayagarh, Phulbani, Koraput and

Cuttack with visibility reduced to within 100 metres, an IMD bulletin said.State capital city Bhubaneswar, Angul, Dhenkanal, Khurda, and Bhawanipatna in Kalahandi district witnessed moderate fog (with visibility 200 to 400 meters) and shallow and light fog occurred in Paradip and Sambalpur, the IMD

centre in Bhubaneswar said. Three places in Odisha recorded minimum temperature 10 degrees Celsius. Koraput was the coldest place in the state in the last 24 hours with a night temperature of 8 degrees Celsius while G Udaygiri and Daringbadi in Kandhamal district recorded 9 degrees Celsius, it said.The

IMD has issued a yellow warning (be aware) of dense fog Saturday at one or two places in the districts of Puri, Khurda, Nayagarh, Ganjam, Gajapati, Jagatsinghpur, Cuttack, Sundargarh, Deogarh, Jharsuguda, Sambalpur, Kandhamal, Kalahandi, Rayagada, Koraput and Malkangiri.

Odisha records five new Covid cases

Bhubaneswar(KCN): Five persons tested positive for COVID-19 in Odisha in the past 24 hours taking the total number of cases in the state reported this month so far to 13, a health department official said Friday. About 500 samples were tested out of which five were found to be positive since Thursday. All the patients have reported mild symptoms and are in home isolation, state public heath director Niranjana Mishra said. “We have not imposed any restrictions on the people. However, the people, especially the elderly and those having comorbidities should be cautious and take precautionary measures like wearing masks and use sanitisers while stepping out of their homes,” he said. Mishra also advised the people who have cold and cough to isolate themselves at their homes and wear masks. Three persons were found corona-positive Thursday.

Next steps after examining ruling, discussion with legal team: MEA on eight Indians in Qatar

New Delhi(KCN): India Friday said its next steps in the case relating to eight former Indian Navy personnel will be decided after examining the ruling of a Qatari court and discussions with the legal team handling the matter. Qatar’s Court of Appeals has commuted the death sentences handed out to the Navy veterans by another court earlier.



“The interests of Indians and their family members is our foremost concern,” Ministry External Affairs

spokesperson Arindam Bagchi said at a media briefing. “We will be discussing the next possible steps with the legal team and

the family members,” he added. Bagchi said he would not like to say anything more as the matter is sensitive. The Indian nationals, who were working with Doha-based Al Dahra Global Technologies, were taken into custody in August 2022 in a case of

alleged espionage. While the charges against them were not made public by Qatari authorities, they were sentenced to death by the Gulf country’s Court of First Instance in October this year. The private firm provided training and other services to Qatar’s armed forces and security agencies. India had moved the Court of Appeal in Qatar against the death sentence last month.

Inclement weather: Steel City remains cut off by air

Rourkela(KCN): As bad weather continues to play spoilsport dashing the denizens' hope of direct flight connectivity to Kolkata, Rourkela remains cut off by air. Sundargarh district has been experiencing extreme foggy weather conditions for the last several days. According to a source in Alliance Air, the visibility factor led to cancellation of flights from Rourkela Airport to Bhubaneswar and Kolkata. Rourkela Airport was supposed to start direct flights to

Kolkata from December 26. However, bad weather has prevented the flight's take off giving a harrowing time to those who had booked tickets. The source informed that the visibility remained below 3,500 feet Thursday and it is dangerous for the plane to land in such weather conditions. Meanwhile, this was bad news for the 37 persons from Rourkela and 36 from Kolkata who had booked the tickets. Similarly, 57

persons had booked tickets to Rourkela and 54 to Bhubaneswar through the lone service provider Alliance Air. The visual flight rules (VFR) is the answer to this problem. "With VFR trained staff the plane can land with the visibility of just 1,500 feet," said Bimal Bisi, president of Sachetan Nagarika Mancha, who is waging almost a lone battle for the smoothening of the flight connectivity. Instrument landing system (ILS) remains a



costly affair at this moment and there are other issues that are preventing the installation of the equipment here. Meanwhile, four staffers of Airport Authority of India (AAI) underwent one-day training for VFR

recently. In all probability, they would be in a position to handle it from January 2. Meanwhile, Jual Oram, Sundargarh MP and Member of Parliamentary Standing Committee for Defence, has

written to Jyotiraditya Scindia, Union Minister for Civil Aviation, regarding issues faced by the Rourkela Airport. In his letter, Oram has mentioned about the flight condition at the airport and sought actions in this regard. "The airport land belongs to the state government who has leased it to Rourkela Steel Plant. This is a major roadblock in the development of the aerodrome as the AAI is unable to undertake any developmental

work here." Oram has further requested that the land should be immediately transferred to AAI and some "RSP quarters be given to the agency for its staff." Besides, he has also requested to start direct ATR flights to Delhi from this airport so that it would benefit the people and also the Smart City's development. He has stressed that the airport should have a night landing system

so that planes from other areas can fly in during night time, which will benefit the city immensely. The airport is in urgent need of the ILS, he said in his letter. While the MP is busy in pursuing the development of the airport, passengers continue to be tormented owing to the erratic flight connectivity. The Kolkata flight will be tri-weekly and will operate on alternate days of the week starting from Tuesday.

Odisha boat capsizes: Bodies of four missing persons found

Bhubaneswar(KCN): Odisha Disaster Rapid Action Force and fire services teams Friday found the bodies of the four persons who had gone missing after their boat capsized in a river in Odisha's Koraput district, police said. Five persons including

two women and three girls had gone missing after their boat capsized in Patali river in Nandapur Wednesday night, they added. While the body of a woman was recovered Thursday, the bodies of the remaining four were found Friday,

Nandapur SDPO Sanjay Kumar Mahapatra said. The deceased were identified as Lal Mani Sisa (50), Sasirekha Arlab (35), Nabina Arlab (14), Puspanjali Arlab (5) and Kranti Sisa (8), all residents of Tansing village. They were returning to

their village in the boat after attending a family function at Badela village when it capsized, Mahapatra said. Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik has condoled the death of the five persons and announced an ex gratia of Rs 4 lakh each for the next of kin of the deceased.

Red dump recovered near Andhra border

Koraput/ Jeypore (KCN): Koraput Police has seized a huge cache of explosives as it busted a Maoist hideout during a combing operation at Gumudaput jungle under Machhkund police limits in Koraput district, police said Thursday. The combing operation was being carried out in the jungle comprising the jawans of a joint team of district police, District Voluntary Force (DVF) and Special Operations Group (SOG) personnel. The seized explosives concealed by the Red rebels include 15 guns, 17 tiffin bombs (eight tiffin bombs weighing around 7 kg and nine more weighing 3 kg), two detonators, codex wires of 50 metre length, one steel box, two empty tiffin boxes and other



explosives. Police suspect that the explosives may have been stored there by the members of AOBZC and were intended to be used against innocent civilians and security forces to carry out their subversive, anti-national activities and to establish Maoist presence again in this area. This was stated here by Koraput SP Abhinav

Sonkar in a press release issued in Koraput, Thursday. The combing operation was undertaken after intelligence inputs alerted about Maoist movement in Gumudaput and Kodaput jungles bordering Malkangiri district and neighbouring Andhra Pradesh under Machhkund police limits. The team carried out an intensive search

in the bordering jungle and busted the major Maoist dump in Gumudaput forest near Machhkund village. This led to the recovery and seizure of a huge cache of ammunition and other Maoist articles, the press release mentioned. Meanwhile, further combing and search operations are underway in this area, a senior police official said.

Odisha govt to roll out customised vehicles for patrolling in Similipal



Bhubaneswar(KCN): The Odisha government will roll out 14 customised four-wheelers for patrolling in Similipal Tiger Reserve (STR) in Mayurbhanj district, an official said Thursday. Forest and Environment Minister Pradip Kumar Amat will flag off the vehicles Friday, Principal Chief

Conservator of Forests (PCCF) (wildlife) Susanta Nanda said in a statement. Nanda said the customised vehicles will assist in the movement of frontline staffers, transportation of camp equipment and provisions for the staffers as well as carrying out patrolling at night during which wild animals pose

a risk to the lives of frontline staffers. The vehicles will also protect the patrolling parties from poachers as two frontline staffers were killed by them in the recent past. Nanda said the vehicles have been modified with support from state PSU Odisha Mining Corporation (OMC). The four-wheel drive

vehicles have been modified to suit the working environment inside the forests and carry out duty in all conditions, he said, adding it will help frontline staffers traverse steep ghat roads as well as muddy dirt roads during monsoons. The PCCF said the vehicles have been fitted with winches, which would be helpful in rescue operations, especially during monsoons, and remote-controlled movable searchlights to see all directions at night. The vehicles will be deployed in the sensitive areas for use by the Similipal Special Tiger Protection Force (STPF), Joint Task Force (JTF), and other frontline staffers on protection duty, he added.



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The Qosh Tepa Canal: its Impact on Afghanistan and Central Asia.

Tamilakhon Khaydarova



The Amu Darya River, as a key water source in Central Asia in providing for agriculture and drinking purposes, plays a crucial role in maintaining the ecosystem of the region.

Large-scale project like Qosh Tepa Canal is significant from the geopolitical perspective as it will help to ensure management of water resources and minimize any negative implications. It is important to highlight all the concerns about the absence of water sharing agreements, the potential conflicts among countries that are located on the Amu Darya River basin and the view that Afghan people have full rights to use the river water resources.

The challenges associated with the construction, its impact on both Afghanistan and Central Asian region, the need to evaluate the situation to find a solution that will benefit both the parties, while being harmless for the overall environmental sustainability should be taken into consideration.

Amu Darya One of the largest rivers in Central Asia, with a rich history and high geopolitical and geographical significance for country-users is Amu Darya. The river is formed by the confluence of the Vakhsh and Panj (Pyandzh) rivers (at which point it becomes known as the Amu Darya) and flows west-northwest. In its upper course the Amu Darya forms part of Afghanistan's northern border with Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and Turkmenistan. It then flows across the desert of eastern Turkmenistan and in its lower course forms part of the boundary between Uzbekistan to the northeast and Turkmenistan to the southwest. River has been home to various cultures, empires and civilizations for many centuries and was

earlier known as Oxus or Jayhun. However, the Amu Darya River also faces challenges related to environmental and geopolitical factors. Over the past decades, the water level in the Aral Sea has been declining due to water withdrawal from the Amu Darya for agriculture. This has led to serious environmental problems such as the destruction of fisheries and decreased water quality. And for now, a new element of the problem directly affecting Central Asia is the construction of the Qosh Tepa Canal, which began in early 2022.

Impact on Afghanistan.

The Qosh Tepa project in Afghanistan might have some positive aspects, such as improving to some degree the country's economy, might contribute to increasing the overall employment rates and reducing the percentage of poverty. The economic growth. The Taliban expects the project to turn 550,000 hectares of desert into much-needed farmland. An increased percentage of water reserves for irrigation will help expand agricultural activities, producing higher yields. In other words, the implementation of this project is valuable for Afghanistan because it will help them become more self-sufficient and less independent of the assistance of neighboring countries. Job opportunities. The construction and operation of the canal will create additional employment opportunities for Afghanistan's population. In addition, the expansion of agricultural activities after canal construction will also contribute to additional work opportunities in the agricultural sector for an even larger population.

Poverty reduction. Increasing agricultural productivity, facilitated by the Qosh Tepa Canal, will have a significant positive impact on poverty reduction. By virtue of fertility gained through the canal, farmers will be able to cultivate more land, increase yields and earn higher incomes.

Still, despite numerous benefits, Qosh Tepa also poses some challenges and risks.

Environmental Concerns. There is a high probability that the canal construction will have negative consequences in that there may be a shortage of water for Central Asian republics and Afghanistan itself even in the short run, affecting ecosystem, agricultural and industrial sectors and water consumption by population.

Relations with Central Asian region. The construction of the Qosh Tepa Canal in the Amu Darya River basin was a unilateral and uncoordinated decision on the part of Afghanistan, and of course did not cause a positive reaction from the Central Asian states. Although international law states that no one can cancel or limit any state in the use of transboundary water resources, it is worth noting that in order to maintain friendly relations between states when using transboundary water resources, it is necessary to take into account the opinions of states that also have the right to use them.

Impact on Central Asian region. For arid Afghanistan, the construction of the Qosh Tepa canal on the Amu Darya River could be a salvation, but at the same time a threat to water shortages in Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, with the most disastrous effects on Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, located downstream, writes CabarAsia.[3] The division of water resources, geopolitical implications and competition for resources are causing concern and anxiety among Central Asian countries.

Sharing of water resources. Without water sharing agreements, the Qosh Tepa Canal requires a significant volume of water from the Amu Darya River, which negatively affects the availability of water for downstream countries and the ability to meet the needs of all recipients. According to the assessment of the chief specialist of Scientific-Information Center of the Interstate Commission for Water

Coordination of Central Asia (SIC ICWC), Anatoly Sorkin, the construction of the Qosh Tepa canal will lead to the withdrawal of 4-4.5 km³ of water annually and will reduce the total volume of water in the Amu Darya River by 12-13% (from 33 to 28.5 km³). After completion of the canal construction, within some years the average level of water intake in Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan in the middle and lower reaches of the stream will decrease from 80% to 65%.[4] In this case, it is worth noting that the level of water intake in Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan may have significant changes for agriculture and the economy of the countries, leading to the need to reduce irrigated land areas and deterioration of conditions in this type of production. These consequences may increase the likelihood of competition for greater access to resources.

Geopolitical consequences. Issues about resource sharing, especially without usage agreements, could cause tension and misunderstandings between Afghanistan and Central Asian countries. Water resources are of strategic importance to these countries, and disputes in this area could exacerbate existing geopolitical tensions.

Possible Solutions. When addressing this problem, it is worth first of all to comprehensively study the positive and negative aspects for Afghanistan itself and the regions of Central Asia. The optimal solution should be beneficial for both parties, and also should not be negative when considering the consequences on a global scale.

A thorough environmental and social impact assessment of the project must be carried out. This includes studying the impact on ecosystems, watersheds and local communities. The development and implementation of measures to minimize negative impacts and compensate for possible damage should be an

important part of the project.

Additionally, it is important to take into account the economic side of the project. A cost-benefit analysis needs to be carried out to ensure that the construction and operation of the Qosh Tepa Canal will be cost-effective and sustainable in the long term.

It is necessary to promote right thinking and education among the population, including youth and adults. This could include encouraging water conservation and initiatives proposed by youth. Educational programs, campaigns and events should raise awareness of the importance of conserving and efficiently using water resources, as well as the impact on the environment.

Further, it is important to ensure broad participation not only from countries bordering Afghanistan, but also from other states. The water problem is of global importance and the cooperation of all stakeholders is necessary to achieve a sustainable solution. International forums, negotiations and agreements should facilitate coordination and joint efforts in solving the problem.

Regional Cooperation and Diplomatic Efforts. Regional cooperation and diplomatic efforts play a critical role in addressing problems and finding solutions to the Qosh Tepa Canal problem. It is vital to emphasize the importance of cooperation between participating countries to avoid potential conflicts and ensure equitable distribution of water resources. However, not all Central Asian states that have a common border with Afghanistan are taking action regarding the construction of the canal, and do not give their official position.

The most active participant in resolving this issue is Uzbekistan. The President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev on December 20, 2022 emphasized the importance of conducting a dialogue with the interim government of Afghanistan on the

basis of international law and the interests of the countries sharing the water resources of the Amu Darya. Also in March 2023, the delegation of Uzbekistan, headed by A. Kamilov, the special representative of the President of the Republic on foreign policy, visited Afghanistan to discuss the construction of the canal.[5]

On September 15, at the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea Council of Heads of State, the President of Uzbekistan noted that a new participant in the water use process had appeared in the region, and therefore it was proposed to form a joint working group to study all aspects of the construction of the canal and its impact on the water regime of the Amu Darya, as well as consider the issue of involving representatives of Afghanistan in the regional dialogue on the sharing of water resources.

Regarding existing international framework, one that can guide this cooperation is the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Non-navigational Uses of International Watercourses. This convention provides a legal framework for the management and use of transboundary water courses, emphasizing the principles of fair and reasonable use, cooperation and the prevention of significant harm. Participating countries can use this convention as a basis for negotiations and agreements regarding the Qosh Tepa Canal and the sharing of water resources.

Beyond the international framework, the role of international organizations and stakeholders is critical in promoting dialogue and cooperation between Afghanistan and Central Asian countries. Organizations such as the United Nations, the World Bank and regional organizations such as the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea (IFAS) can provide a platform for discussion, technical assistance and support for sustainable water management practices. These

organizations can help facilitate negotiations, provide expertise in water management, and contribute to the development of joint projects and initiatives.

Diplomatic efforts should be aimed at promoting dialogue, transparency and confidence-building among participating countries. Regular consultations and diplomatic exchanges can create opportunities for open discussions, exchange of information and search for mutually beneficial solutions. It is essential to develop a sense of shared responsibility and common goals in managing the region's water resources. By emphasizing the importance of cooperation, using international frameworks, and engaging international organizations and stakeholders, participating countries can work together towards sustainable and equitable management of water resources in the region.

Conclusion.

It seems the construction of the Qosh Tepa Canal might hold significance for the population of several provinces of Afghanistan, who are currently facing water shortage difficulties due to undeveloped water infrastructure. This project aims to provide a water supply for agriculture, industries and the local population. At the same time intake of water from Amu Darya may cause negative ecological consequences for Central Asian Republics and Afghanistan itself.

However, it is important to acknowledge that building the Qosh Tepa Canal may give rise to geopolitical complexities within the region. The canal passes through countries territories necessitating agreement and cooperation among them for implementation. Given divisions, borders and conflicts in the region achieving this may be challenging. Nevertheless, if all parties involved display a willingness to find common ground through compromise and dialogue the

construction of the Qosh Tepa Canal could serve as a model of regional cooperation and diplomatic efforts that transcend political differences while fostering peace and stability.

To minimize the impact of the Qosh Tepa Canal, on both the Central Asian Region and Afghanistan and its inhabitants it is crucial to prioritize water management practices while actively involving all stakeholders. In order to ensure water management, it is crucial to create and execute strategies that consider the requirements of various sectors, like ecosystem, agriculture, industry and the general public. These strategies should encompass initiatives aimed at preserving water enhancing its efficiency and ensuring agreed distribution, among all users.

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Tashkent, Uzbekistan. Born on 28th March 2007, she is known for her unwavering passion for education, leadership and global affairs. Her academic journey has been marked by a consistent display of exceptional achievements and exemplary qualities. Her writing skills have received international recognition, highlighted by a reduced scholarship to the prestigious Harvard Undergraduate International Relations Scholars Program twice, as well as winning the competitive Immerse Education Essay Competitions, securing impressive scholarships against a low acceptance rate. On top of that she is an active participant of numerous Model UN conferences. She graduated with honors from School of Music and Arts #18, named after P. Tchaikovsky Tashkent, Uzbekistan. Her passion for the arts has nurtured her creativity, discipline, and unique perspective. Also, has a keen interest in the culture, music and dance of India.



Gita Jayanti is one of the most important festivals to those who admire the great spiritual essence of the Bhagavad Gita. It is an occasion, a reminder on the importance of the holy text in a world that sinks in the perils of Adharma on a daily basis. This year the Gita Jayanti was commemorated on 22 December. The Bhagavad Gita is believed to have been revealed by Lord Krishna to a confused Arjuna in the battle of Kurukshetra. The Gita discourse is known as the nectar, the essence of all life giving teachings that are available on planet earth. Unsurprisingly, its importance is growing extensively and a large number of people from across the world come in touch with it and studies take place on its values and importance. The significance of its

messages delves deeper into the complexities of human life and more students irrespective of their social collaborations prefer to read it considering its invaluable guiding spirit. The intellectual exuberance and spiritual solace that a person receives from it is deeper than the study of any other literature. This is chiefly because the Gita refers to everything that concerns human life and offers ample solutions through hundreds of its verses. Before we delve into the assertions of the holy book, it is essential for the seeker to know the background of this divine discourse. To understand Gita, a sincere spiritual preparedness is required. A driving curiosity or call it an irresistible intellectual necessity. Warrior prince Arjuna came across a situation that ultimately propelled this curiosity to happen in him. The questions that he raised to Lord Krishna were genuine and the answers at some point kept

intensifying his predicament. But Lord Krishna, with his meticulous diplomatic approach, decided to help the man of the battle, who people thought would bring victory in order to restore Dharma. But his collapse was irreversible and the effect of such chicken-heartedness was going to be disheartening. A string of intellectual discourses between Arjuna and Lord Krishna finally took place, leading the conversation to ultimately spin through the complexities of life one by one and their solutions literally gaining all time relevance. The dilemma, the perspiration that Arjuna faced was thoroughly examined by Lord Krishna and thus it is believed that the Bhagavad Gita came into being. Now, the predicament of Arjuna is invariably a situation that each one of us would pass through. To understand the principle that the Gita offers or to essentially trickle the meaning of it into our minds, we need to be driven by the same

inquisitiveness, an urge to know life here and beyond and the factors that bind its effect and wellbeing. This acts as the propeller and to satisfy this requirement is the most important thing. This curiosity is the passkey, the channel through which the knowledge of life enters and the Bhagavad Gita offers a practical lesson, the lesson of karma. To simply put, Lord Krishna says, it is impossible to avoid Karma; the effect of our Karmas is bound to come. Whatever the nature of Karma that we perform, its result is bound to be generated. So the ultimate view is that it is unnecessary to keep worrying about the result. What matters is the depth of attention with which the Karma is performed. The Gita tells us to keep our mind fresh, pure and strong. Lord Krishna frequently reminds a heartbroken Arjuna in the battlefield to perceive this reality, that every human situation is bound to bring a challenge. But to train the mind to

become freer, purer and nobler is the ultimate task and this needs attention. The Bhagavad Gita's impact was profound. Deeply destroying common but insensible notions, it is wisdom manifest in diverse forms with excellent applicability for diverse situations. India's independence struggle tells us a volume of stories of valor and sacrifice. Many of our freedom fighters were greatly influenced by the ideals of the Bhagavad Gita. In 1905, as the Swadeshi Movement started in Bengal, thousands of people took to streets in protest against colonial oppression and the philosophy that inspired them was the Bhagavad Gita. It is reported that each one of them had a copy of the holy text as they vowed to boycott the British goods. Mahatma Gandhi confesses in his autobiography that he had never come across the glory of the Gita as he could not read it either in Sanskrit or Gujarati. This was when he was approached by his theosophist friends

thinking that Gandhi being an Indian must have had a deep knowledge in the spiritual text of the Hindus. He landed on the philosophical terrain that the Gita offers through Edwin Arnold's masterpiece translation of the Bhagavad Gita 'The Song Celestial'. This was the book his theosophist friends brought to him for better understanding and learning. Gandhi had tremendously been influenced by the Gita later on and his life was mostly a testimony of his deeper understanding of the Dharmic values that the Gita inculcates. Gandhi's deep impression on the Gita was mostly about its practicability. The Mahatma believed that the Gita was as much accessible to a common man as to a knowledgeable person. The Bhagavad Gita was recognized as a perennial philosophy that deals with the essential life pattern of a man guiding him on the ultimate purpose of his existence. The spiritual depth that the Gita offers was well understood by

Indians as well as people in the west. The British advent in India helped this great spiritual work to get translated in foreign languages. It became popular in the west mainly after it was first translated to English in 1785 by Charles Wilkins under the patronage of Governor-General Warren Hastings. In 1823 it got translated into German. These western translations and interpretations of the Gita discourse made the text globally popular. At present, translations of the Gita are available in almost all main global languages. In India, the Gita Press printed and published it in millions and the book is widely circulated. The Bhagavad Gita has been gaining more diplomatic acceptance since 2014. Narendra Modi frequently chooses the Bhagavad Gita to be a perfect gift to his foreign counterparts. This is mainly due to his spiritual inclination and belief in the life-giving messages of the Gita. J Robert Oppenheimer, American Physicist, learned Sanskrit in

1933 and read the Bhagavad Gita in the original form. While witnessing the explosion of the Trinity Nuclear Test, Oppenheimer says, he thought of a verse from the Bhagavad Gita that described the glory of the Lord, the verse that Sanjay narrated to the blind king Dhritrashtra. While translating his divine vision on the effulgence of the universal form of the Lord to the old king, Sanjay tells that the splendor of the divine light of the Lord was more powerful and brighter than the light of a thousand suns blazing forth in the sky together. The Gita's unequivocal expression on the greatness of human life needs to go deeper into our conscience. The world needs a philosophy that it can believe and lean on and the Gita offers all essential values we need.

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Guaranteeing Quality Education Since 60s



Quality education at school level is important for adding productivity to nation's human capital and thus, contributing to its social and economic progress. Odisha is one among the front runner states in India for provisioning of quality in school education. The NITI Aayog Report 2019 rightly ranks Odisha 7th among 20 selected major states in India. School Education Quality Index. In this index ranking, Odisha has left behind many leading states such as, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Telangana, Punjab and few other. Thanks to the government schools for preserving the quality in education for decades. For their quality services over decades, the government schools have established and restored faith among the people. The Annual Statistics on Education Report (ASER) 2022 says that about 93 percent of school going children in the age group of 6-14 are getting the education services provided by the government. However, in the neighbouring state Andhra Pradesh, this ratio is 70 percent, in Kerala 64 percent, Punjab 58 percent and in Hararyana, the ratio is 51 percent according to the ASER report. It is important to not that

the dependence on government school education is not for income or affordability factor. Odisha today, is one among the progressive states. The annual average growth of per capita income in the state during 2011-12 and 2021-22 stands at 5.4 per cent compared to the national average growth rate of 3.8 per cent. In 2021-22, the per capita income of the state stands at Rs.91,645 compared to the national per capita income of Rs.91,481. The state has surpassed the per capita income of many states such as West Bengal, Chhattisgarh, Rajasthan, and a few others. The strength of quality dates back to 1950s when a very few schools in rural hinterlands were the only hope for millions waited for receiving education. The quality is the outcome of discipline and culture inherent in rural society. Kabata Bandha high school situated in the village Kabata Bandha in the district of Jajpur is one among those few. It was set up in 1967 with a limited human resource and physical infrastructure facilities. With its quality services, it has made a significant contribution in transforming the life of the people in the village and its neighbouring areas. Various learnings provided by the schools have now seen to be covered in India's public policy. A Role in Rural Transformation During 1960s, above 60 percent of the population in India were living below the poverty line and the poverty situation in rural sector was above 70

percent. Odisha was among the poorest states among all with the poverty ratio higher than the national average. With this macro statistics, it is not surprising to say that above half of the population in the village Kabata Bandha were poor and half-nourished. In the last couple of decades, a major economic transformation happened in the village and its neighbouring areas and, the credit goes to Kabata Bandha high school. The village has successfully defeated the disease of poverty. Today, it stands as one of largest per-capita income among all the villages in the state. The transformation is the result of spread of education. Above 80 percent of the villagers are educated at elementary level. Education has helped spreading awareness about the functioning of various government schemes run by the state and union government. People in the village are immensely helped by the PMAwas Yojana. Above 90 percent of the Kuchha houses have been rebuilt to Pucca houses. Electrification has reached almost every house. There is a significant progress in supply of tapped drinking water to every kitchen, an effort made under Jal Jeevan Mission. The village has not faced the challenge of unemployment as majority of the households live on small scale businesses. At least a single person in a household is a part of skilled labour force and contributes to the overall household income.

MGNREGA has also helped somewhat in the time of severity in unemployment situation. B. Role in Public Policy Since 1960s, the school has endured many policies which created many disciplined, cultured and productive labour force. These practices are progressive and at present, many of those are used as prescriptions in few public policies in India. One of the important practices followed in the school was 'Education for All' without having any discrimination on the ground of social and economic condition of the family. Even with limited infrastructure and human resources, no one in the village has been denied in accessing education. Equal opportunity to all and focus to create meritorious students with additional efforts from the teachers has produced results in creating the mass skilled human capital for the nation. Second, compulsory attendance in various cultural programs such as, celebration of Ganesh Puja, Saraswati Puja, Republic Day, Independence Day, Teacher's Day and Children's Day, Annual Sports Day and many other, forms integral part of the education policy. Few other activities such as, funds collection from the students for these celebration and support from the richer students, teachers to the poorer ones in this collection are added flavour to the policies. Though these are not written policies but are working in smoothening and

functioning of the education system. These unwritten policies were meant to create cohesiveness and strengthening the participatory learning which is a significant section in the New Education Policy. Third and important point is Swachhata or practice of cleanliness in the school, is found in the government's present policy on "Swachh Bharat Mission". The school uses the traditional ways of checking the finger and toes' nails by a monitor in every morning prayer class. In few occasions, a group of dents along with the teachers used to go round the village to collect garbage and create awareness of practicing cleanliness. These are examples of some of the contribution from one village school set up during the post-independent India. There are quite a few old schools during this period who not only created a skilled labour force for the country but helped in preserving the rich culture and societal values. Today Odisha has successfully defeated the challenge of poverty and malnutrition and become a well-known face in the global world because of the rich contributions of these old and unfortunately, less acknowledged heritages. Remembering Kabata Bandha high school on the auspicious occasion of its Golden Jubilee celebration is a proud moment indeed.

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Rama is timeless and Universal



Born as the eldest son of Kausalya and Dasharatha, king of Ayodhya, Lord Rama is referred within Hinduism as Maryada Purushottama, literally the Perfect Man or Lord of Self-Control or Lord of Virtue. His life and journey is one of adherence to dharma despite harsh tests and obstacles and many pains of life and time. A lot of people are not aware of how Sri Rama died. The answer to this question is extremely fascinating as it holds several mysterious and enthralling stories. Some people also say that death is not a term used with Avatars of Vishnu. All Avatars appear to restore Dharma and then they return to Vaikunta. Disappearance of Sri Ram from earth happened when he entered voluntarily into the Sarayu River. This divine event is described as the death of Lord Rama. The story of the disappearance of Sri Ram is mentioned in many Hindu scriptures. This story of His death is from the Padma Purana. One day a sage came to Rama and asked him for a private audience. The Saint said that no one should enter the room in which they were having the conversation. Sri Ram directed Lakshman to guard the door of the room and said that if

anyone entered the room during the conversation he will be put to death. In some versions of Ramayana, it is said that this saint was none other than Kala Deva, or Time. He then walked into the Sarayu River and took the form of Ananta Sesha. Sri Ram who came to know about the death of Lakshman decided that it was time to end His Avatar. He then handed over His responsibilities to his sons and bid adieu to all. Lord Rama walked deep into the Sarayu River and disappeared. Soon in the same spot Srihari Vishnu appeared resting on Ananta Sesha and blessed his devotees. A not her mythological story of Lord Rama's death goes like this...one day, Rama was informed that it was time for him to die. He understood that those who take birth have to experience death. "Let Yama, come to me. It is time for me to return to Vaikuntha, my heavenly abode," he said. But Yama, the god of death, dared not enter Ayodhya as he was afraid of Hanuman who guarded the gates of Rama's palace. To allow Yama's entry, it was necessary to distract Hanuman. So Rama dropped his ring into a crack in the palace floor and requested Hanuman to fetch it. Hanuman reduced himself to the size of a beetle and entered the crack only to discover that it was no crack but the entrance to a tunnel that led to Nag Lok, the land of serpents. Hanuman met Vasuki, the king of serpents there and informed him of his mission. Vasuki took Hanuman to the centre of

Nag Lok where stood a mountain of rings! "There you will surely find Rama's ring," said Vasuki. Hanuman wondered how he would do that as it was like finding a needle in a haystack. But to his delight, the first ring that he picked up was Rama's ring. To his astonishment, even the second ring he picked up was Rama's ring. In fact all the rings that made up the mountain were identical. "What is the meaning of this?" he wondered. Vasuki smiled and said, "This world we live in goes through cycles of life and death. Each life cycle of the world is called a kalpa. Each kalpa has four yugas or quarters. In the second quarter or Treta Yuga, Rama takes birth in Ayodhya. Then one day his ring falls into the subterranean realm of serpents through a tunnel. A monkey follows it and Rama on earth dies. So it has been for hundreds of thousands of kalpas. All these rings testify to that fact." This cyclical view of life is the essence of Indic thought. But the period of colonial rule and later political developments led to distortions in our understanding of the Ramayana. That is why everyone wants to locate Rama in history and geography, and fight over dates and addresses - instead of looking at the larger picture. Rama is timeless and universal and so cannot be fettered to any period or place.

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Food Processing Industry can play critical role to ensure Food Security in challenging time

Kolkata(PARTHA ROY): Food processing industry across the planet Earth is playing major role to tackle food security issues & challenges at local, regional, national as well as global level. India has one of the largest food processing industry in the world with estimated output US \$535 Bn by 2025-26. Food Processing Industry in India has a prime role in linking Indian farmers to consumers in the domestic and international markets as well as to provide food security in challenging time. Food Processing Industry in India has over 2000 + years of history. Food processing industry represent evolution of human civilization.

Today, both Central as well as State & Union Territory Governments across India are facilitating wide scale and promotion of food processing industry as it not only promote food security, but also create sustainable employment in food industry and play important role in management of agricultural productions which include preservation.

Food Processing industry in India has several segments -Fruits & Vegetables, Poultry & Meat processing, Fisheries, Food retail, dairy industry, etc. Across India, under PMKSY the projects sanctioned & approved under various schemes as on date (30.09.2023) include, 41 Mega Food Parks, 371 Cold Chain projects, 68

Agro-Processing Clusters, 474 proposals under Creation/Expansion of Food Processing & Preservation Capacities (CEFPPC), 61 Creation of Backward and Forward Linkages Projects, 46 Operation Green projects, 186 Food Testing Laboratories projects.

India ranks 1st in Milk production and the total milk production in the country during 2021-22 is 221.06 MT. In the year 2021-22, the milk production has registered an annual growth rate of 5.29%. In 2021-22, the total egg production in the country is 129.60 Bn which have increased by 6.19% as compared to the previous year. The fish production in 2021-22 is 16.24 MT



comprising of marine fish production of 4.12 MT and 12.12 MT from Aquaculture. Further, national fish production for 2022-23 is expected to reach 17.4 MT. Production of plantation crops is estimated to increase from 15.76 MT in 2021-22 to 16.05 MT in 2022-23, which is an

increase of about 1.78%. India achieved an all-time high exports of seafood both in terms of volume and value by shipping 1.73 Mn MT of seafood worth US\$ 8.09 billion during FY 2022-23. The export of other cereals recorded a growth of 13.64% in

nine months of the current fiscal. India export of other Cereals (Excluding Rice, Wheat Maize and Millet) to the world was worth \$404.30 Mn during the April - October 2023 as per provisional data provided by DGCIS. Total meat production in India is 9.29 MT for year 2021-22 with an annual growth rate of 5.62%. The total five major meat producing States are Maharashtra (12.25%), Uttar Pradesh (12.14%), West Bengal (11.63%), Andhra Pradesh (11.04%), and Telangana (10.82%). The estimated production of rice is 135.75 MT, Wheat is 110.55 MT, and Nutri/Coarse cereals is 57.31 MT for the year 2022-23.

India's exports of foodgrains have registered a steady growth in last few years which is reflected in the increase in India's share in world foodgrain exports from 3.38% in 2010 to 7.79% in 2022 as per UN COMTRADE statistics. Top agricultural products exported from India include Marine products, rice, spices, amongst others. Non-Basmati Rice has emerged as India's top export item among the many agricultural and processed food product exports under APEDA basket, with the export of \$4,663 Mn in nine months of 2022-23. West Bengal Food Processing Conclave was organised by Indian Chamber of Commerce (ICC) 21st December 2023 in Kolkata with

focus on technological upgradation and awareness of various financial schemes available in the state's agricultural sector. West Bengal has very big agricultural sector with wide range of crops. Government of West Bengal in collaboration with private sector is pushing for large scale development of food processing industry in the state. Effort of West Bengal Government is to promote food processing industry spread across the state so that local agricultural products are processed properly to increase their self-life so that local products can be promoted to potential customers in different far away markets.

1,000 Crore Plan, Scholarships: Siddaramaiah's Minority Outreach

Bengaluru(KCN): Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Friday directed officials concerned to formulate a ₹ 1,000 crore action plan for the development of minority colonies. The Chief Minister issued the direction while reviewing the progress of Minority Welfare and Housing Departments today. He instructed that the areas with sizeable minority populations be identified, and allocation of grants be made, during the preparation of the action plan. Siddaramaiah said in the wake of the suspension of the scholarship given by the central government to the minority students, the state government has decided to bear the cost and disburse the scholarship to 6.4 lakh students. Pointing out that ₹ 60 crore has been allocated in the budget, he said instruction

has been given to officials to arrange an additional 40 crores by redistributing the funds available in the Minority Welfare department. A huge number of applications have been received online for various schemes meant for minorities and it has been decided to provide more grants for the same next year, he added. Noting that construction of 1.31 lakh houses out of 3 lakh houses has been completed so far in the current year under various schemes, the Chief Minister, who also reviewed the Housing department, directed officials to complete work on 1.6 lakh houses by March. Housing, Minority Welfare and Haj Minister B.Z. Zameer Ahmed Khan and other officials were present at the meeting.



he Union Minister for Home Affairs and Cooperation, Shri Amit Shah at the signing of a memorandum of settlement with ULFA, in New Delhi

What Delhi High Court Said On Allowing Sexual Assault Survivor To Testify Virtually



New Delhi(KCN): Allowing a sexual-offence survivor to testify through "two-way video-conferencing" is not against an accused's right to a fair trial, but refusing her such a facility would deny her access to justice, the Delhi High Court has said while upholding a trial court decision not to seek before it the physical presence of a gang-rape survivor who is a foreign national. Justice Swarna Kanta Sharma said "two-way video-conferencing" ensures the participation of all -- the accused, the victim, the prosecutor, the defence counsel as well as the judge -- and follows all principles of the criminal justice system. Its use cannot be held to be denying a fair trial to the accused, the judge added.

"It can be safely held that allowing the recording of evidence of the prosecutrix through two-way video-conferencing would not amount to denying the petitioners' right to a fair trial. However, denying the same may amount to denial of a fair right of access to justice to the victim," the court said in a recent order. The court was hearing a petition filed by two gang-rape accused who challenged the trial court order dismissing their plea to call the survivor, a US citizen who was 23 years old at the time of the alleged incident in 2019, physically to the court for her examination and cross-examination. Justice Sharma said in cases like the present one, the court has to keep in mind the psychological impact of

incidents of sexual assault on the survivor. The court observed that asking the survivor to repeatedly travel back to a country where the assault occurred can inflict further emotional trauma as it noted that there are rules that provide the option for a virtual examination of vulnerable witnesses, including witnesses of sexual assault, rather than recording their evidence in person. "The impact of sexual assault is universally devastating, but for a victim who is a foreign citizen seeking justice in another country, the emotional toll can be particularly acute. The act of recounting the traumatic experience in a foreign courtroom can be a distressing and traumatising process, and the courts must

acknowledge and address such challenges," the judge said.

The court also rejected the accused's contention that hailing from a developed country, the prosecutrix could not be considered a "vulnerable witness" under the relevant rules to get the benefit of virtual proceedings. The court held that the vulnerability is not in relation to financial or educational background or being from a developed country, but in relation to the mental and physical trauma that makes the survivor vulnerable to the atmosphere and presence of the accused. "In instances where a woman experiences a traumatic event on a foreign soil, such as in India in the present case, the court must remain aware of the potential re-traumatisation that may result from requiring the survivor's physical presence on such foreign land for the purpose of trial," it said. "The trauma of testifying in a sexual assault case of a foreign citizen in another country, in this court's opinion, is a sufficiently critical factor to justify the use of the video-conferencing facility instead of face-to-face confrontation.

Nitish Kumar "Prime Minister Of Ideas" Of INDIA Block: JDU Leader KC Tyagi

New Delhi(KCN): Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar was unanimously re-elected as President of Janata Dal (United) at a meeting of the party's national executive in Delhi on Friday afternoon. The Bihar Chief Minister was re-appointed minutes after aide Lalan Singh stepped down. Addressing the media after the meeting, JD(U) leader KC Tyagi said, "After the resignation of Rajiv Ranjan (Lalan) Singh, CM Nitish Kumar has been elected as the new national president of the party..." Tyagi further called the Bihar CM the 'prime minister of ideas' of the Opposition bloc INDIA-an alliance forged for putting up a united front against the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party in the 2024 Lok Sabha polls under the Indian National Developmental Inclusive Alliance umbrella. "(Bihar CM) Nitish Kumar is the convenor and Prime Minister of the ideas of the INDIA alliance. He has given so much priority to the issue of social justice," Tyagi said. Earlier, Bihar Minister Vijay Kumar Choudhary confirmed the offer of



resignation from Lalan Singh saying "There is a national executive meeting of JD(U) going on. If they accept our proposal, then Nitish Kumar will be the party president. Lalan Singh told CM Nitish Kumar that he will be busy with elections, so he wants to hand over the post of party president to him and Nitish Kumar accepted it..." Speaking on the same, Bihar Deputy CM Tejashwi Yadav said that it is a good thing that CM Nitish has become chief of his party. "If he (Nitish Kumar) has become the president of his party (JD(U)) then it is the decision of their party. He has been the President of JD(U)

earlier as well. He is a senior leader of his party so it is a good thing if he has become the President of JD(U)" Earlier in the day, some members of JDU were seen raising slogans "Desh ka Pradhan Mantri kaisa ho? Nitish Kumar jaisa ho" outside the Constitution Club in Delhi where the national executive meeting was held. The meeting comes just days after the critical INDIA alliance meeting in Delhi. The JDU which is part of the alliance will now be getting into hectic parleys with the Congress on the alliance combination for the state. Many JDU leaders are making a pitch for Nitish

to lead the INDIA bloc, even as Mamata Banerjee and Arvind Kejriwal publicly announced Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge as prospective PM Candidate. At the national executive meeting venue, posters featuring Bihar CM Nitish Kumar read 'Pradesh ne pehchana, ab desh bhi pehchanega' (The state of Bihar recognised him, now the nation will) have also been put up. However, on the question of the invitation for the consecration ceremony of Ram Temple in Ayodhya on January 22, 2024, Janata Dal (United) leader KC Tyagi said that his party has not been invited yet for the ceremony.

Customized Vehicles For STR

Bhubaneswar(KCN): In another move to make Similipal Tiger Reserve (STR) a poaching free zone, State Wildlife Organization has launched customized vehicles for movement of frontline staff for patrolling in all corners of the tiger reserve. Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (Wildlife) & Chief Wildlife Warden Susanta Nanda said STR is famous for its tigers and elephants. It alone is the home of 90% tiger, 16% leopards and 25% elephants of Odisha. Similipal is the only home of an actively breeding population of unique melanistic tigers in the world. There are many species

of rare, endangered, threatened and vulnerable plants and animals. Mahaseer, Hornbill, Chowsingha, Mouse deer, Giant Squirrel, Flying squirrel, Ruddy mongoose, Mugger crocodile and Rufus tailed hare are examples of this unique biodiversity, he said.

Similipal is the 61h largest Tiger Reserve of the country in terms of geographical extent and is one of the densest in terms of forest cover. Many hills in Similipal like Meghaseni, Khairibiru, etc. reach beyond 1100 m. elevation.

Further, the STR has 1011.5 kms length of road network connecting 214 anti-poaching camps, 16



watchtowers, 19 check posts, monitoring and protection of wild tigers in Similipal Tiger Reserve is a daunting task due to presence of innumerable hills, perennial streams and inaccessible roads, the PCCF said.

Therefore, customized vehicles are a necessity for movement of frontline staff,

transportation of camp equipment, provisions for the staff as well as for carrying out patrolling at night during which the wild animals pose risk to life of the frontline staff, he said.

"This is more evident during the monsoons. Due to the stringent protection measures, the poachers attack the

frontline staff with their weapon which lead to martyrdom of two bravehearts of the Forest Department in the recent past, Shri Nanda stated.

Stating that Similipal has the potential to restock tiger population in the eastern region of the Central-India landscape in general

and the forests of Odisha, the PCCF Wildlife said effective protection of tiger reserve will foster a viable tiger population with long term survival.

The ongoing present tiger estimation by the state is encouraging with establishment of source population. So, the Government has

been pleased to allow 14 Bolero Campers for Similipal Tiger Reserve Foundation with support of Odisha Mining Corporation (OMC).

He said the Bolero Campers have been modified to suit the working environment inside the forests Similipal and efficiently carry out protection duty in all conditions.

The 4 WD (four-wheel drive) will enable the movement of frontline staff for traversing the steep ghat roads as well as muddy dirt roads during the monsoons.

The vehicles are fitted with winches which would be helpful in rescue operations especially during

monsoons, remote controlled movable search light has been fitted over the vehicles to see all directions at night, the vehicles have been painted with olive green colour to camouflage with the forest to evade easy detection by poachers, seats and along with hood has been provided in the back to accommodate maximum frontline staff for protection, etc. The vehicles will be deployed in the sensitive areas especially in the core area for use by Similipal Special Tiger Protection Force (STPF), Joint Task Force (JTF) and other Frontline staff for protection duty, Shri Nanda informed.

JSL (Kaliapani Chromite Mines) launches Comprehensive CSR program



Kalinganagar, (Sapan Kar) :- The Kaliapani Chromite Mines of Jindal Stainless Limited recently initiated an extensive CSR program in Kaliapani, Chingudipal, and Rasol GPs on Thursday, December 28, 2023. The

program commenced at 10:30 a.m. with the inauguration conducted by Mr. Narayan Chandra Dhir, General Secretary of Sukinda Regional Chromite Khadan Mazdoor Union, who honored the occasion by garlanding the portrait of

Gopbandhu at Gopbandhu Club, Chiriguniya. Following the inauguration, a meeting took place simultaneously with the opening of a sewing training center, graced by Mr. Vikas Kumar Patra, Sarpanch of

Kalaipani GP, Mr. Bharat Chandra Mahant, Vice President of Labor Union, Labor Leader Mr. Narayan Chandra Dhir, and Mrs. Anita Agarwal representing Jindal. Furthermore, it was announced that one assistant teacher each would be designated to Kaliapani UP School and Nato UP School. During this event, Mrs. Agarwal shared her joy and encouraged women to strive for self-reliance, while also revealing the company's intention to organize similar programs in the future. In the afternoon, the Jindal Foundation distributed jerseys, footballs, shoes, goalposts, and nets to the football players at the Kalrangi Puriajhar football ground under Rasol Gram Panchayat.

"Financial Literacy Should Be Taught In Schools": Nirmala Sitharaman

Chennai(KCN): Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Friday advocated the teaching of financial literacy in schools and colleges.

Teaching financial literacy was very important and it has to start early, she said. Presently, it was being imparted outside the curriculum, the Finance Minister said during an interaction with students at A M Jain College here, on the topic "Transforming India Into The New Decade. "You have institutions like the RBI, SEBI and also some national security depositories. Financial literacy lessons are online too, spread over a couple of weeks, if you want to take that. But it should be taught in schools and colleges as part of the curriculum," she said.

To a question, Ms Sitharaman replied that there's no harm in



importing raw material or intermediary products for a growing economy, if the aim was to emerge as a manufacturing hub.

"Ideally I would like to have the exports more than the imports because it gives earnings. But if imports is going to gradually improve your exports, why not. If imports are there, it's good sometimes," she said.

On defence production, Ms Sitharaman said apart from making budgetary provisions to encourage

indigenous manufacturing of defence equipment required for our armed forces, the Centre ensured that the products made by the MSMEs were certified by the Indian army in order to facilitate exports. Moreover, a mechanism to purchase products for 10 years was also in place, she added.

Quoting Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, Ms Sitharaman said the defence equipment exports which were ?

20,000 crore this year are likely to reach ? 24,000 crore target in three months.

Talks were on with the African countries, Russia and Sri Lanka for bilateral trade in Indian rupees, the Union Minister said in response to another question.

Denying that Artificial Intelligence (AI) would displace jobs, as believed, she said it would pave the way for emergence of skilled manpower to tackle the challenges in diverse fields.

"You need people with expertise in AI. To use AI you need to develop the tools with which you can exploit the capacity of AI. Obviously, it will be done by people like you students," Ms Sitharaman said.

Certain new domain expertise that emerge would generate so many types of people and skills, too, with which AI could be exploited, the Finance Minister said.



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AU Small Finance Bank Launches Business Cashback RuPay Credit Card

Jaipur/ Bhubaneswar, May 8th, 2023: AU Small Finance Bank has partnered with RuPay to introduce the Business Cashback RuPay credit card, an innovative solution tailored to meet the financial requirements of self-employed customers. This latest offering is aimed at providing a diverse range of benefits to small businesses. The Credit Card was launched in the esteemed presence of Mr. Dilip Asbe, CEO of National Payments Corporation of India and Mr. Sanjay Agarwal, MD & CEO of AU Small Finance Bank. AU Small Finance Bank's Business Cashback RuPay Credit Card simplifies financial

operations for businesses with benefits like upto 2% cashback, 48 days interest-free credit, and instant loans. It also offers fire insurance, burglary, and housebreaking coverage, making it a one-stop solution for businesses. "At AU Small Finance Bank, we understand that the small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) are the backbone of Indian economy and we have been serving this segment since the last 28 years. We are committed to providing innovative financial solutions that cater to the unique needs of this segment and Business Cashback RuPay credit card is a testament to our commitment to the



MSMEs. As the self-employed customer segment is at the heart of our bank, we are focused on adding value to these customers and promoting credit inclusion. Going forward, we shall work towards bringing

customized benefits to MSMEs through our other Credit Card variants too," said Mr. Sanjay Agarwal, MD & CEO of AU SFB. The credit card also provides lifestyle and travel benefits. Their Silver Spoon Dining

Program also offers cardholders up to 30% off at over 300 restaurants, 8 complimentary railway lounge access per annum, and 1%* fuel surcharge waiver. "I am delighted to attend the launch event and witness the introduction of AU Small Finance Bank's Business Cashback RuPay Credit Card. National Payments Corporation of India is committed to promoting innovation in the banking sector, and this credit card is a clear example of that. AU Small Finance Bank has consistently demonstrated their dedication to excellence and innovation in the banking industry. This credit card is a fantastic solution that empowers

self-employed individuals and promotes financial inclusion. I'm confident that this credit card will be a great success and benefit numerous businesses. Congratulations to AU SFB, keep up the great work," said Mr. Dilip Asbe, CEO, National Payments Corporation of India. AU Small Finance Bank is one of the leading providers of innovative and reliable financial solutions for self-employed individuals and businesses. With an unwavering commitment to excellence and credit inclusion, the bank continuously improves and deepens its services, offering a comprehensive range of benefits.

Tata Power leads EV charging space with a pan-India network; showcases wide-range of hi-tech EZ Charge solutions at Auto Expo 2023

Bhubaneswar: Tata Power, one of India's largest and fastest growing EV Charging solutions provider showcased its wide-range of hi-tech EV charging solutions at the ongoing Auto Expo 2023 in Greater Noida. A first-hand experience of the technology that is driving Tata Power's wide-spread EV charging network - EZ (read easy) Charge was provided to the visitors, including the award-winning and one of the most downloaded mobile apps for EV charging - Tata Power EZ Charge, which ensures a seamless user experience through features that will help commuters find the nearest charging station, know the real-time availability of charging points, and receive updates on charging status, amongst many others. Information about Tata Power's one of its kind Network Operations Center (NOC) located in Mumbai was also on display. This center aids in the effective operational management of charging stations across India. NOC is integrated with the online platform that supports Tata Power's EZ Charge services, has a real-time communication link with all on-board chargers, and aids in the early detection of tech-related issues. The NOC additionally supports quick problem solving, back-end system support, and proactive planning for charging infrastructure upkeep. Tata Power has also kicked off an ambitious nationwide plan of setting up approx. 25000 electric vehicle (EV) charging points across the country to support faster adoption of e-mobility over the next 5 years.

Muskaan Litfest for Child Authors showcases young literary talent

Bhubaneswar : Some of the leading social, cultural, corporate and literary organizations of the country came together for the first time to host a unique literature festival - `Muskaan Litfest for Child Authors' - under the Muskaan initiative of Kolkata-based non-for-profit trusts, Prabha Khaitan Foundation and Education for All Trust. The three-day event was held at the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA) premises in Delhi. Union Minister of State for Women and Child Development, Dr M u n j a p a r a M a h e n d r a b h a i

Kalubhai, interacted with 30 school-going young authors from all over the country. "Muskaan is a brilliant initiative of PKF to give a platform for the young talented writers to showcase their works and inspire future talents," the minister said. He also gave certificates to the young authors. Ruskin Bond, the most popular, loved and revered author among the children, in a message lauded Prabha Khaitan Foundation for its commendable efforts to promote the habit of reading among children through the Muskaan initiative. The three-

day Litfest (Jan 10-12) was organized in collaboration with IGNCA and in association with India International Centre and Sahitya Akademi as the knowledge partner. Shree Cement supported the event as a part of its corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiative. The festival was inaugurated in the presence of Priyank Kanoongo, Chairman, National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR). Also present on the occasion were Sachchidanand Joshi, member secretary, the executive and academic head of IGNCA; K N Shrivastava, Director of

IIC, and K Sreenivasarao, Secretary, Sahitya Akademi. "Literature is the mirror of society. It is important to provide child authors the right environment and upbringing to promote literature," Kanoongo said. He asserted that instead of social media, the children should take more interest in writing and literature. The evening was marked by a scintillating cultural programme 'Udaan' conceptualised by Shinjini Kulkarni, Ehsaas Woman of Prabha Khaitan Foundation. Huma Khalil Mirza, Ehsaas Woman of Delhi and Unnati Singh, Ehsaas

Woman of Indore, also chipped in and livened up the show. Teams of women achievers who work to create cultural capital and assets are a part of a Ehsaas Woman network in major cities of India under the aegis of Prabha Khaitan Foundation. Dancer and choreographer Avirup Sengupta, who works with specially-abled children through Prayas Foundation, presented an enthralling performance. The Foundation had flown in children from Kolkata for the special performance. The latest issue of PKF newsletter Prabha, based on the theme of children's literature, was formally released.

OYO halves stay prices for in Bhubaneshwar and Rourkela

Bhubaneshwar: Global hospitality technology platform OYO has offered a 50% discount on stay across all its hotels in Bhubaneshwar and Rourkela for Hockey World Cup. The scheme is valid for the entire duration of the tournament from January 13-29, 2023. Approximately 800YO hotels are covered under this scheme in these two cities. More than 1500 rooms will be available to accommodate the guests. Odisha is hosting the international event for the second consecutive time, the previous one having been held in Bhubaneshwar in 2018. Steel City Rourkela will be the fourth Indian city to organise the event. The matches will be held at two venues - Birsamundra Hockey Stadium in Rourkela and Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneswar. Divided into four groups of four teams each, a total of 16 teams this year are vying for the World Cup trophy. The host country, India, has been placed in Group D along with England, Spain, and Wales. Thousands of spectators from all around the world are expected to visit Bhubaneshwar and Rourkela for this mega hockey tournament. To avail this discount, guests can download the OYO App, click on the red 'Nearby' icon to discover a valid participating hotel, select the coupon code 'HockeyWC' and hit the Book Now button. They can also resolve their queries quickly with OYO's 24*7 chatbot - Yo! Chat. There are many hotels such as Hotel Swain Heritage, Hill Side Aqua, Aditya International, Prime Residency and Hotel Bhinna Sakhal in Bhubaneshwar and Hotel Priyamrit Sagar and The Prestige Tridev in Rourkela located in close proximity to the stadiums making it convenient for the guests to stay and enjoy scintillating hockey matches throughout the tournament.

TRENDS, INDIA'S LARGEST FASHION DESTINATION NOW OPENS INBADABAZAAR,BERHAMPUR

Berhampur / Bhubaneswar, India's largest and fastest growing apparel and accessories specialty chain of Reliance Retail, TRENDS, announced the launch of its third new Store in Berhampur Town of Odisha. Trends is truly democratizing fashion in India, by strengthening its reach & connect with consumers in India - right from Metros, mini metros, to Tier 1, 2 towns and beyond & is India's favorite fashion shopping destination. The Trends store at Bada Bazaar, Berhampur boasts of modern looks and ambience featuring an exciting range of good quality and fashion merchandise that is relevant to the consumers of the region and at prices that are affordable and seen as high value for money. Customers of this town can look forward to a uniquely special and superlative experience of shopping for trendy Women's Wear, Men's Wear, Kids Wear & Fashion Accessories, at delightful prices. This 7800 sq. ft store, which is the third Trends store in the Berhampur town has a special inaugural offer for its customers, besides great relevant fashion and amazing prices: - Shop for Rs.3999 and get Merchandise worth Rs 3999 absolutely free and not only that the customers will also get coupon worth Rs.4000 absolutely free on purchase of Rs.3999. So head to Trends new store now in Bada Bazaar, Berhampur, for the joy of a great fashion shopping experience!

Almonds Food for Fitness

Bhubaneswar : Engaging in exercise promotes a healthful lifestyle, but even when performed correctly, exercise causes fatigue and muscle damage. Recovery from exercise is important because it leads to muscle gain and improved fitness over time. A new study involving people who exercise occasionally (less than three times per week) demonstrated that snacking on almonds reduced feelings of fatigue and tension, increased leg and lower back strength during recovery, and decreased muscle damage during the first day of recovery. David C. Nieman, DrPH, FACSM, Professor and Principal Investigator, Human Performance Laboratory, Appalachian State University, led this novel research, supported with funding from the Almond Board of California. Dr. Nieman's team wanted to see if an almond snack compared to a high-carbohydrate cereal bar snack would improve inflammation and recovery in adults engaging in 90-minute exercise sessions. "What we found tells us definitively that almonds should be added to sports nutrition strategies to help people recover better from exercise," explained Dr. Nieman. "Almonds are food for fitness. Carbs get most of the attention when it comes to fueling for exercise, but almonds offer a nutrition package, including good unsaturated fats, the antioxidant vitamin E, and proanthocyanidins (class of polyphenols, which are protective compounds in plants) that help explain the beneficial outcomes in our study." One serving of almonds (28g) has 13 g of good unsaturated fat and only 1 g of saturated fat.

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and comfort across various road conditions. The company is further investing in R&D for creating a holistic e-mobility ecosystem and developing India's first EV ancillary cluster to accelerate the adoption and growth of green mobility in the country. The year 2023 is going to be the establishing year of EV mobility in the country." Making another move in strengthening its product portfolio in the electric motorcycle category, the company also unveiled the concept of its city electric motorcycle 'Rockefeller' at the expo. The concept motorcycle is designed keeping in mind the need of the riders for daily riding. The company is planning to launch the motorcycle by the end of FY'24.

Printed, Published & Owned by Arabinda Meikap & Printed at Mayur Offset Printers, D-1/11, Sec-A, Zone-D, Mancheswar Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010, Dist.- Khordha & Published at N-4, F/24, IRC Village, Nayapalli, Bhubaneswar, Dist.- Khordha, Pin 751015. Phone 0674-2390185/3555817. Fax No. : 0674-2550504. E-mail: kalingachronicle@gmail.com . editorpbkc@gmail.com **Editor: Dr. Pabitra Mohan Samantra**