

PRESIDENT MEETS SPORTPERSONS WHO BROUGHT GLORY TO THE COUNTRY IN VARIOUS NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS



New Delhi, (KCN): A group of sportspersons met the President of India, Smt Droupadi Murmu at Rashtrapati Bhavan today (December 8, 2023). They are at Rashtrapati Bhavan under the programme ‘The President with People’. The aim of meeting was to establish a deeper connect with the sportspersons and

acknowledge their valuable contributions. During the interaction with the sportspersons, the President said that they have brought glory to the nation through their exemplary performances at the international stage. Their dedication, passion and unwavering commitment to excellence have not only showcased their

individual prowess but have collectively elevated the name of India in the world of sports. She said that at the recently held Asian Games and Para Asian Games, their extraordinary efforts resulted in a staggering 107 and 111 medals, respectively. This remarkable achievement not only

speaks volumes about their talent but also exemplifies their indomitable spirit. The President said that their journey is not just about personal victories; it is about giving wings to the dreams of all Indians. She urged them to always remember that they are not just athletes; they are

ambassadors of our culture, values, and the spirit of a billion people. She said that in a few months, the world will turn its attention to the Paris Olympics and Paralympics in 2024, and eyes of all Indians will be fixed on our sportspersons. We count on their skill, dedication, and sportsmanship to bring joy and pride to our nat

RBI Keeps Repo Rate Unchanged At 6.5%

Mumbai(KCN): The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Friday maintained its benchmark repo rate at 6.5%, keeping its focus on anchoring inflation and boosting growth. The RBI also continued with its policy stance of “withdrawal of accommodation” to ensure inflation is in step with its target of 6% (+/- 2), while supporting of economic expansion. In other words, the central bank will be focussed on curbing money supply in the economy to control inflationary pressure. Monetary policy will remain actively “disinflationary”, RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das said after a two-day meeting of the bank’s six-member monetary policy committee. He said that the central bank’s



successive policy rate hikes, a reference to increases in interest rates, “seems to be working”. The risks of high food prices continue to key be variables to watch that can alter the course of inflation. The global economy remains fragile due to elevated debt levels, lingering geopolitical tensions and extreme weather conditions, Das said, adding, “Long-awaited normality still eludes the global economy.”

Das has consistently warned of risks to food prices. India is vulnerable to food price shocks from extreme weather events and global factors despite a recent moderation in prices, he had said on November 22. This is the RBI governor’s second warning in a month about the risks from food inflation. In a speech delivered in Japan on November 8, Das had said the RBI saw risks from “recurring and overlapping” food price shocks.

Odisha To Host Masters23'

Bhubaneswar(KCN): In yet another notable stride for Odisha’s thriving sports landscape, the silver city of Cuttack is poised to host the Odisha Masters 2023 for a second consecutive year. Scheduled to transpire from the 12th to the 17th of December, the prestigious badminton tournament will unfold at the Jawaharlal Nehru Indoor Stadium in Cuttack. Recognized as one of Asia’s premier competitions, the event boasts a substantial prize pool of USD \$100,000 and is also categorized as a BWF Tour Super 100 event. Badminton fans are in for yet another thrilling competition as last year’s champion in Men’s Singles, Kiran George and last year’s Women’s singles champion, Unnati Hooda will return to retain their title. Gayatri

Gopichand and Tressa Jolly, the duo that won the Women’s Doubles last year, will also be in action again. Speaking ahead of the tournament, Sports Secretary R Vineel Krishna expressed his pleasure at hosting yet another edition of the marquee competition in Odisha and reiterated the importance of it towards the growth and development of badminton in Odisha. “We are looking forward to hosting yet another edition of the Odisha Masters in Cuttack. Badminton is a priority for us, and we have undertaken numerous measures towards the promotion of the game. While infrastructure is crucial, competition is equally important,” the Sports Secretary said. Krishna further added, “With excellent Badminton players from around the world

descending upon Odisha for the competition, it will serve as an inspiration for our own budding badminton athletes to strive for the highest level of the game.” The Odisha Masters 2023 is another milestone for Odisha, which has consistently showcased its willingness and ability to host international sporting events. Furthering their commitment to the development of Badminton, the Badminton High-Performance Centre at the Kalinga Sports Complex in Bhubaneswar is currently under construction and set to be inaugurated soon. Additionally, the 90 multi-purpose indoor stadiums set up across Odisha will be promoting this sport at grassroots.

CM Naveen Inaugurates Pabitra Mohan Pradhan Government Hospital In Talcher

Bhubaneswar(KCN): Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik today inaugurated the 330-bedded Pabitra Mohan Pradhan Government Hospital in Talcher through video conferencing. The Odisha Chief Minister thanked Prime Minister Narendra Modi for the cooperation of the Central Government in establishing this hospital. On this occasion, the Chief Minister said that revered leader Pabitra Mohan Pradhan, born in Talcher, has contributed significantly to the development of the state since the freedom struggle. Paying homage to the late leader on this occasion, the Chief Minister said that the hospital will be converted into a medical college in the coming days. He said that the hospital



would provide good healthcare to the people by exemplifying the mantra that every life is precious. Participating in the program, Union Coal Minister Pralhad Joshi said that this hospital will be very useful for providing healthcare services to Talcher and its people. Coal India has contributed a lot to this

hospital and Coal India will give all possible support to convert this hospital into a medical college in the coming days. Joshi expressed his gratitude to the Odisha government, especially Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, for providing all the support and cooperation for this hospital and said that

MCL will provide Rs.628 crore for the management of this hospital for the next five years. Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan attended the program and said that today will be a glorious and memorable day. At the same time, he thanked the Chief Minister and requested him to establish the

medical college soon. State Health and Family Welfare Minister Shri Niranjan Pujari attended the program and said that the state government is committed to providing quality healthcare to the people of the state. The direction of the Chief Minister is giving us more motivation in this direction, he said. Among others, Dhenkanal MP Mahesh Sahu, Talcher MLA Brajakishore Pradhan and the Coal India Chairman attended the event. 5T and Nabin Odisha Chairman V.K. Pandian was present in the program. State Health and Family Welfare Secretary Smt. Shalini Pandit delivered the welcome speech and CMD Mahanadi Coal Field gave the vote of thanks.

Mahua Moitra: From Investment Banker To Expelled Lok Sabha MP

New Delhi(KCN): Trinamool MP Mahua Moitra was today expelled from the Lok Sabha after a discussion on the report of the Parliament’s ethics committee in the ‘cash for query’ case. The House held her guilty of sharing her Parliament account credentials and accepting gifts from businessman Darshan Hiranandani in exchange for asking questions critical of the Narendra Modi government in Parliament. “This House accepts the conclusions of the committee that Mahua Moitra’s conduct was immoral and indecent as an MP. So, it is not appropriate for her to continue as an MP,” speaker Om Birla said. Ms Moitra, who was not



allowed to speak during the heated debate over the matter inside the Lok Sabha, read out her statement outside the House. “The (parliamentary ethics) committee broke every rule... Tomorrow, the CBI will be sent to my home to harass me,” Ms Moitra claimed. The 49-year-old, who is known for her fiery

speeches in the Parliament, was an investment banker before she joined politics. She left her position as vice-president at JPMorgan Chase in London in 2009 and joined the Indian Youth Congress - the youth wing of the Congress party. Ms Moitra was said to be one of the trusted aides

of the party’s former chief Rahul Gandhi in the ‘Aam Admi ke sipahi’ project. After a brief stint at the Congress, she joined the Trinamool Congress in 2010 and was offered a ticket from Karimpur in 2016 West Bengal assembly election despite much criticism from some party workers describing her as too “urbane”. Ms Moitra, however, took on the challenge and successfully won the election. Ms Moitra, who is seen by many as the urban version of feisty Bengal Chief Minister Mamata

Banerjee, was given a Lok Sabha ticket in 2019 from Krisnanagar - a seat she won against her rival Kalyan Chaubey from the Bharatiya Janata Party. She was appointed the Goa in-charge for the 2022 Goa assembly elections. Hours after her expulsion today, Ms Banerjee dubbed the move as a “betrayal” of the country’s parliamentary democracy. “It is a shame for parliamentary democracy. We condemn the way Mahua Moitra was expelled; the party stands with her. They (the BJP) can’t defeat us in the election, so they have resorted to vendetta politics. It is a sad day and the betrayal of Indian parliamentary democracy,” she told reporters.

ZPM's Lalduhoma Takes Oath As New Chief Minister Of Mizoram

New Delhi(KCN): Zoram People’s Movement (ZPM) leader Lalduhoma was today sworn-in as the new chief minister of Mizoram. Several other ZPM leaders will also took oath as ministers during the ceremony at the Raj Bhavan complex in Aizawl. On Tuesday, the ZPM Legislature Party elected Lalduhoma as its leader and K Sapdanga as the deputy leader. ZPM media cell general secretary Eddy Zosangliana said that the Val Upa Council, an advisory body of the party, met Lalduhoma on Wednesday to decide the formation of the council of ministers. Lalrinpuui is the lone



woman minister in the 12-member council of ministry. Seven of the 12 ministers are first time winners. The other ministers who took oath on Friday include, K. Sapdanga, Vanlalhlana, C. Lalsawivunga, Lalthansanga, Dr. Vanlalathlana, P.C. Vanlalruata, Lalrinpuui, all cabinet ministers rank F. Rodingliana, B. Lalthanzova, Prof. Lalnilawma and

Lalnghinglova Hmar, all ministers of state rank. The ZPM, which was registered as a political party only in 2019, emerged victorious in the assembly elections bagging 27 seats, increasing its tally from 8 in the 2018 polls. It dethroned the Mizo National Front (MNF) headed by outgoing chief minister Zoramthanga.

State Clears JSL Project

Bhubaneswar(KCN): Continuing its effort to make Odisha an industrial hub, State Level Single Window Clearance Authority (SLSWCA) led by Chief Secretary Pradeep Kumar Jena today approved 19 projects worth Rs 4,804.35 crore with an employment potential for 17,553 persons. Steel Major, Jindal Stainless Limited's proposal in establishing a stainless-steel service center unit in JSL Stainless Steel Park, Jajpur, with an Rs 150 crore has been approved by the State Government. The SLSWCA approved

the proposal of Welspun Living Limited to invest Rs 200 crore to establish a textile facility in Kendrapada, which will create 2,000 jobs in the apparel & textiles sector. Tata Steel Downstream Products Limited proposed to set up a 10,00,000 MT Steel Service Center in Kalinga Nagar, Jajpur with a cost of Rs 735 crore. It promises 335 potential jobs. In the steel (ferroalloys) sector, Indian Metals and Ferro Alloys Limited committed to invest Rs 977.43 crore in Jajpur to produce 2,20,000 MT Ferro Chrome and 20 MW WHRB Power. It will

create 1,190 jobs. Similarly, the SLSWCA has approved the proposal of Crackers India Alloys Ltd to invest Rs 101.50 crore in setting up a 52,800 MT steel casting mill & rolling mill with ancillary facilities in Barbil, Keonjhar. Envirocare Infrassolution Pvt Ltd's proposal to invest Rs 100 crore in Sundergarh for establishment of a mild steel strips and pipes manufacturing unit got the State's nod. The proposal of Rungta Paints Private Limited to set up a manufacturing unit in Dhenkanal for paints, allied products & intermediate was also



approved by the Authority. The company promised to invest Rs 991 crore and to create 700 jobs in the paint (Chemical) industry. Modulus Oleochem and Surfactants Private Limited's comprehensive Chemical Manufacturing unit in

Baliapal Industrial Estate, Balasore, with a cost of Rs 313.51 crore also got approval from the government. Transnova Express India Private Limited plans to invest Rs 120.39 crore in a Chemical Hub in Khordha.

The paint giant Berger proposed setting up foot in Odisha, two of its ancillary companies, namely, Grow Max India Private Limited with investment of Rs 54.55 crore. The second one namely, Anupam Products Ltd sets up an Rs 51 crore Manufacturing unit for Empty Metal Tin Containers in Khordha. Rajshree Polypack Limited and Kesav Plasttech (P) Ltd contribute to the Plastics industry with manufacturing units in Khordha and Rengali Industrial Area, Sambalpur,

respectively. The two projects will bring a combined investment of Rs 102.25 crores and are expected to generate 554 jobs. Dhansar Group initiates a Private Freight Terminal (PFT) under PM- Gati Shakti Multi Modal Terminal scheme in Sundergarh, with a cost of Rs 190 crore and the potential to generate 160 jobs in infrastructure. Kaibalya Logistics Private Limited's proposal to invest Rs 110 crore in a Multi-Modal Inland Container Depot (ICD) in Mahakalapada Block of

district Kendrapara also got SLSWCA's nod. Among other approved proposals, Ashirbad Food Processing Private Limited (Rs 56.35 crore), Summa Real Media Private Limited (Rs 226.57 crore), Vaswani Steel Pvt Ltd (Rs 237.80 crore), and GAIA Neo Energy Private Limited (Rs 87 crore). These projects spanning across diverse sectors from Apparel & Textiles to Infrastructure reflects Odisha's Multifaced growth strategy and steps towards industrial development.

BJD MP Raises Concern In Rajya Sabha Over Coastal Highway Project In Odisha

Bhubaneswar(KCN): Biju Janata Dal (BJD) MP Manas Ranjan Mangaraj today urged the Centre to come up with a Detailed Project Report (DPR) highlighting the status of implementation of the coastal highway project in Odisha.



During the Zero Hour in the Rajya Sabha, the BJD MP raised concerns over the inordinate delay in the completion of the coastal highway project in Odisha. "Odisha has a coastline of about 480 km which makes the infrastructural development of the coastal districts all the more important for the economy of the region. The Central government announced a coastal highway project spanning 346 km in 2015

connecting 7 coastal districts of Odisha. The project would have proved to be an important development in terms of promotion of trade, tourism, communication and industry. However there have been undefined delays in the development of the project," MP Manas Mangaraj said. "It comprised two parts- one connecting Rameshwar

to Ratanpur and the other one connecting Ratanpur to Digha. It was to be developed under 4 packages. Initially, the first 2 packages were cancelled without any defined reason on the part of the central government. After the clearance of these 2 packages, the project was stalled due to the unavailability of environmental clearance from the Environment

Ministry. However, the clearance for the same has been provided since August 2023. But there has been no headway made in the project yet by the Central government," the BJD MP apprised the Upper House of the Parliament. The BJD MP further urged the Central government to come up with a Detailed Project Report (DPR) highlighting the status of implementation of the project. The central government needs to work towards completion of the coastal highway project as soon as possible because eight years have already passed since the announcement of the same and no significant development has been made as of now," the Parliamentarian concluded.

Nabarangpur Leaders Meet 5T Chairman, Thank Him For Massive Development Work



Bhubaneswar(KCN): Several leaders from Nabarangpur district today met 5T, Nabin Odisha Chairman VK Pandian at Naveen Niwas and

congratulated him on his new role. They thanked Mr Pandian for his efforts to carry out the Hon'ble CM's vision. They also discussed the massive

development work underway in Nabarangpur and the projects taken up after he visited the district on 17-18 March 2023. ST Chairman thanked

the leaders for the goodwill and called upon them to work unitedly to see the vision of the Hon'ble CM for an empowered Odisha realised soon.

Odisha STF Nabs Another Accused In Mule Bank Account Racket

Bhubaneswar(KCN): The Special Task Force (STF) of the Odisha Crime Branch has arrested one more accused from Murshidabad in West Bengal in connection with the inter-state fake SIM card/mule bank account racket. According to STF, accused Samim Islam of Gudhia, police station limit of Murshidabad

district in West Bengal, was arrested on December 4. He was produced before the Additional Chief Judicial Magistrate, Lalbag, and was brought to Bhubaneswar on a three-day transit remand to be produced before the SDJM court. Islam was one of the key members of the racket, having links mainly in West Bengal and Bihar the STF said. Earlier,

the STF arrested three scammers—Sk Hapizul, and Sk Jahangir, both of Balasore district and Sk Jamiruddin of Rampura—under the Mohanpur Police Station in West Medinipur. The scammers were running mule bank accounts and sold these bank accounts, along with their connected mobile numbers, to various cyber, cyber-financial, and

extortion scammers and other criminals based in Kolkata and other parts of India. This racket operates mainly in the tri-junction area of Odisha, Jharkhand, and West Bengal, especially in the districts of Balasore, Mayurbhanj, East Midnapore, West Midnapore, East Singhbhum, West Singhbhum, and Saraikela.



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India's Plastic Peril: Unveiling the Hidden Climate Crisis and the Road to Redemption



Plastic pollution has long been recognized as an environmental villain, clogging oceans and endangering wildlife. However, there's a silent accomplice to its crimes that often goes unnoticed—the insidious impact of plastic pollution on climate change. Plastic production and disposal processes contribute significantly to greenhouse gas emissions, exacerbating the climate crisis. From extraction to manufacturing and eventual degradation, plastic leaves a carbon footprint that echoes far beyond its immediate visual impact. The life cycle of plastic begins with the extraction of fossil fuels, primarily oil and

gas. These raw materials are then transformed into the polymers that constitute various plastic products. The extraction and manufacturing phases release substantial amounts of greenhouse gases, including carbon dioxide and methane. While the permanence of plastic is often touted as an advantage for product durability, it becomes a drawback when it comes to disposal. Plastic takes hundreds to thousands of years to decompose, releasing greenhouse gases throughout this lengthy process. Microplastics, a pervasive byproduct, further contribute to the carbon emissions quandary. Ocean plastic, a visible manifestation of pollution, has deeper implications for climate change. As plastics break down into smaller particles, they absorb sunlight, increasing sea surface temperatures. This warming effect disrupts marine ecosystems, impacting

biodiversity and altering the ocean's ability to absorb carbon dioxide—a key player in regulating global climate. Plastic disposed of in landfills generates leachate—a toxic liquid that seeps into the soil and water. The decomposition of plastic in landfills produces methane, a potent greenhouse gas. The combination of leachate and methane emission intensifies the climate impact of plastic waste. Addressing the plastic-climate nexus requires a multifaceted approach. Adopting sustainable alternatives, reducing single-use plastic, and implementing efficient waste management systems are essential steps. Additionally, innovations in plastic recycling and the development of biodegradable alternatives can contribute to curbing the carbon emissions associated with plastic. While systemic changes are imperative, individual choices also play a

crucial role. Consumer awareness, responsible consumption, and supporting eco-friendly initiatives contribute to reducing



the demand for plastic. Governments, industries, and communities must collaborate to enforce regulations, invest in sustainable practices, and propel the transition to a plastic-conscious world. India is on the brink of a plastic catastrophe, with staggering projections of mismanaged waste and environmental consequences. In 2023, the country is

expected to grapple with a daunting 7,300,752 tonnes of plastic waste, releasing a troubling 3,30,764 tonnes of microplastics

Maharashtra led the plastic waste generation in the fiscal year 2020, contributing 443,724 metric tons, while

emphasizes the need for comprehensive action from governments, corporations, and individuals.

India's plastic consumption is projected to reach 64 million tonnes by 2033, requiring a shift to circular economy principles. However, challenges persist, with 4,953 registered units and 823 unregistered facilities working with plastic across the country. The informal sector, managing 42–86% of waste, faces limitations in disposal methods, contributing to environmental damage. While the Indian government claims a 60% plastic recycling rate, data suggests a stark reality—only 12% is recycled, and 68% remains unaccounted for. Legislation to restrict plastic use has been enacted, yet the plastic production surge during the pandemic exacerbates the problem. Amidst the crisis, Biodegradable Future

offers a ray of hope. Their additives enhance the biodegradability of plastic goods without compromising physical characteristics or hindering recycling. This innovative solution provides a cost-effective alternative, addressing the reluctance of businesses to shift away from plastic. India stands at a pivotal moment, grappling with the consequences of excessive plastic production and inadequate waste management. The journey towards a plastic-pollution-free future necessitates collective efforts from governments, corporations, and individuals. As we confront this crisis, embracing sustainable practices and innovative solutions is not just an option—it is an imperative for the well-being of our planet and future generations.

The author is a journalist and columnist

Book Festivals of Odisha: Looking back and forward



Doing a Literature Festival or a Book Fair has now become a business or political circus. But it was not there when I entered to the field of Book Publishing over three decades back. I did the first ever National Book Fair at the Exhibition Ground, Bhubaneswar way back in 1992. I was also the part of the first ever 'Pustak Parikrama' (Books on Wheels) in Bihar the same year. How I became a part of the first ever Books on Wheels show is an interesting story. Shri Anand Swaroop was Chairman of National Book Trust in 1990 when I joined. He was a dreamer. He was the person behind National Policy on Education, National Centre for Children's Literature and many others. His dream was, books should reach villages, say each door steps. NBT bought several Book Vans during his tenure. His able deputy was Arvind Kumar, the then Director. So, the first ever Books on Wheels was planned. It was at two parts of the country, south and north. If I correctly recollect, the south one began at Chennai and the north one at Varanasi. The north one covered UP and Bihar and the South one Tamilnadu and Andhra Pradesh. Jharkhand, Uttarakhand and Telengana were not separate provinces at that time.

Prof Manas mahapatra

Bur willing manpower was not available as normally happens in Government Organisations. In one of the staff meetings, Arvind Kumar requested all to volunteer. Out of the 200+ employees of NBT he got only one, that is me. He was not very happy with me, but he appreciated my action and deputed me to lead a team for the exhibition in Bihar. Inspired by the Bihar experience, I proposed a similar exhibition in Odisha. The Odisha Publishers and Booksellers Association led by Shri Pitamber Mishra whole stood by me. The other partner was Odisha Sahitya Akademi of which Shri Rajkishore Mishra was then Secretary. We had a dilemma, if to begin it from Puri or some other part of Odisha. Since I worked in Koraput district and is from Puri, everybody expected that I will like to begin from any of these. But I had a different take. During my tenure in NCERT, I used to visit Sambalpur and Bolangir very often. I had a nostalgic touch, I did a few months schooling in my class 2 at Sambalpur. 'How shall it be if we begin at Bargarh?' I asked all. They were all surprised. Bargarh had no reputation as a market for books at that time. There was a Gandhi Pathagar, a block called Atabira where my friend and brother Aswini Kumar Mishra was BDO, a place called Larambha where my favourite actor and the first super hero of Odia films Sarat Pujari was Principal in a College.. and Bargarh had a renowned author Dayalal Joshi, these were the only that I had in mind. But all approved my plan to go ahead. Our mobile van

reached Cuttack with two drivers Dharam Pal and Pandey on one fine morning. It was not possible for the vehicle to enter to Balubazar. We parked our van near Sunshine Field. All the publishers came there with their book bundles. We took the books and went to Bhubaneswar to pick up books from the publishers there at Odisha Sahitya Akademi campus. Our van left Bhubaneswar at 8 pm. We had to go to Bargarh. Next day was the inauguration of our Book Exhibition. We crossed Chowdwar, and reached Nachuni, where we planned to have our dinner in a dhaba. Apart from the two drivers, we had Chinmaya Vivek, the young poet as pilot, two clerk cum counter sales people, a cleaner and me. 'But I can't see in the night', Pandey, one of the drivers said. What to do.... I asked Dharam Pal. 'Sir, you sit in front seat don't sleep. Pandey and I will sip pegs of whisky at times or take tea at places. Let us see if by tomorrow morning we can reach Sambalpur.' Dharam Pal said to give me hope.. Sambalpur was about 350 kms and the van was fitted with glasses. The journey was adventurous. We took tea at Redhalkol. Next morning at 8 am we reached Sambalpur. Dharam Pal had to catch the train from there to return to Delhi. We reached Baragarh at 9.30 am. Shri Hota, then President of Gandhi Smriti Pathagar and Lecturer in a local college was eagerly waiting. There were no mobiles then, nor PCOs. He did not tell Sarat Pujari to come and inaugurate as he was not sure

if we can reach there in time. Bargarh did not have a hotel that time, but a decent Marwari Dharamshala. Our only hope was Dayalal Joshi. We met him and he gladly accepted our invitation to inaugurate the exhibition at 5 pm. We sold books worth over 55 thousand INR in that Book Exhibition, the highest those days in India in such an exhibition of 4 days. Rest is part of History. This is the journey of Indian Publishing and how the first ever Mobile Book Exhibition in Odisha at Bargarh, then a sub division of Odisha took place. But alas, the new generation of Book Fair Organisers at Bargarh are possibly not aware of their glorious past in the history of Indian Book Industry! People have also forgotten that I did four National Book Festivals in Odisha at Bhubaneswar, Rourkela, Brahmapur and Puri besides ten more in the North Eastern Region and twenty World Book Fairs. I was the only Odia who was Adviser to National Book Development Council, Singapore and Director, Art and Culture of North Eastern Region. That's now history. If I tell the truth, people feel that I am beating my own drum. But, how long can I remain silent? I have been in a festival of memories for the last two years.

Visiting Professor of Development Communication
Former Director, I & PR and Culture, North Eastern Council Ministry of DoNER, Govt. of India
Former Director, Book Publishing Courses & Editor, NCCL National Book Trust, Ministry of HRD, Govt. of India



The public sector banks have overall highest contribution in CSR activities. Private sector banks and foreign banks are still lagging in this area. Bank of India (BOI) has supported the noble cause under CSR category for contributing its bit in restoring Environment Sustainability & Ecological Balance. (BOI) has always aimed at providing superior, proactive banking service to niche market globally, while providing cost effective and responsive services. Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has been an inherited & inbuilt element of our fundamentals, right from the day the Bank was founded. It is a Bank that has well developed Corporate Social Responsibility initiatives in its place. Bank of India believes that it is its foremost duty to contribute towards impacting the lives of various stakeholders like customers, employees, shareholders, communities and

BOI for meaningful impact with CSR work

Vinod Chandrashekhar Dixit

environment in a positive manner through all aspects of its operations, thereby serving the interest of the society at large. The Bank intends to be in step with the new thought of measuring performance on the basis of economic impact, social impact, and environmental impact in the task of inclusive growth, through Banking

development, sanitation, providing drinking water, improving It was the dream of our eminent Statesmen that every individual Indian should be free from hunger, malnutrition, and should have basic necessities and be entitled to affordable education, healthcare facilities, equal opportunities in an

2% of average profit during last 3 financial years is not applicable to Bank of India, it being established under Banking companies Act 1970 and not under Companies Act. However Bank of India is committed to assist under CSR for enrichment of environment and society on a sustainable basis.



operations, towards the larger canvas of Nation building. BOI has been running the various Projects for imparting financial literacy and skill development for self employment The Bank is engaged in the CSR activities mostly in the area of Swachhta Bharat Abhiyan, Rural Development, Environment sustainability, Educational program such as Beti Bachao Beti Padhao Abhiyan, Extending health care to poor/under privileged, socio economic

enabling environment thereby resulting in reduction of social and economic disparity. Towards this larger goal, Corporates as major players in the economic development are also required to share this Social Responsibility, and Bank of India contributes its share to this worthy cause. Assistance under Corporate Social Responsibility has gained much importance after inclusion of new provisions in Companies Act, 2013. The provisions of spending

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Why South Delhi address is special in national capital

Vivek Shukla



South Delhi can boast of the fact that some of the most prominent Industrialists, businessmen, powerful bureaucrats of the country live there. It has the best residential areas, hotels, gardens and hospitals of the country too. Delhi's major symbol Qutub Minar is also there. In a city where address matters more than anything else, your social status goes up if you live in South Delhi. If you live in any posh area in that part of the capital, then you can consider yourself lucky and special. And when it comes to marriage, South Delhi residents more often than not marry within South Delhi. They avoid finding grooms and brides outside South Delhi. Noted author and astrologer Dr. JP Sharma 'TriKha' has to study the horoscopes of

prospective bride and grooms in hordes during the wedding season since long. Says Dr. JP Sharma, "South Delhi residents always look for their would be 'bride' and 'groom' in South Delhi. Due to their South Delhi syndrome, they even give matrimonial advertisements with mention of South Delhi. Just scan through the matrimonial advertisements that generally appear in Sunday editions of newspapers, you would come across advertisements with mention of 'boy/ girl father or family owns house/ kothi/ floor in south Delhi'. What is important that during our study, we did not find even a single advertisement in which the advertiser had mention of his/her West, North, East Delhi or NCR connections? Of course, there are umpteen numbers of posh areas outside south Delhi too. "Well, South Delhiwallas are not interested in you if are not from their world. They don't want to spend their energy in finding

match outside south Delhi," feels Dr. JP Sharma 'TriKha.' Just look some of the recent matrimonial advertisements that have published in recent days in major newspapers published from capital. - Punjabi Khatri well settled family of South Delhi is looking for match for their 1984 born/ 5 '2' daughter. Running independent family business. Caste no bar. - Khatri, 33, 173CMS, Director, lives in South Delhi, father is an industrialist. Looking for a compatible match. - Punjabi Brahmin, 190/ 5.11'. LLB. MBA, CA Final, Lawyer, South Delhi. Seeks well qualified girl. Can you find what is similar in these three matrimonial advertisements that were published in the Delhi edition of well-known newspaper on October 29, 2023? If you could not, we will tell you what makes these ads similar even though one is for a groom, the other two are for bride. Well, the South Delhi factor unifies these



advertisements. If you scan through the matrimonial advertisements that are published in Delhi based English and Hindi newspapers, you would find plethora of such advertisements where the advertiser has ensured that 'South Delhi' is incorporated in the matrimonial advertisements. This is a clear cut announcement from them that they would only welcome

proposals from South Delhi residents. This is also a subtle message that others may excuse them. Their proposals would be rejected. They somehow believe that with mention of South Delhi in advertisements, it would make them special and different from the rest. Moreover, South Delhi residents would respond to them. "It is an undisputed fact that South Delhi wallas only look for groom and

bridge of their kids inside the notional 'four walls' of their south Delhi. They only want to establish ties with those who live within south Delhi," says Dr. JP Sharma 'TriKha'. It is almost unthinkable for any South Delhiwalla to think of marrying outside 'their Delhi'. They feel comfortable with South Delhiwallas only when it comes to marriage. Yes, over the last couple of years, they (South Delhiwallas) have started considering Gurugram as their own to some extent. Hence, they consider marriage proposal from Gurugram residents too. It goes without saying that Gurugram is an upmarket area South of Delhi if not in South Delhi. It is full of IT companies. Thousands of expatriates live there. Says social scientist Aroon Kumar Delhiwallas are rank class conscious people. For them, address matters greatly. They think that your class changes when you live in South Delhi even if it is some Central government employees' residential area. It is not easy to change that mind set. Over the years, many posh areas have come up in places other than South Delhi and NCR. Yet, living in South Delhi still gives another kind of high to Delhiwallas. Of course, this is another kind of apartheid that is going on due to mindset of South Delhi people. Who would challenge this blatant apartheid in the marriage market? JP Sharma 'TriKha' is not sure whether South Delhi residents would consider others as their own while looking for a match of their kids in the near future. According to him, "Some youngsters are breaking the rule and moving out of South Delhi though. However, they are very few."

Interestingly, people of all castes and religions in South Delhi have similar thinking when it comes to finding a match. They don't want to cross the limits of South Delhi. It is a fact that cannot be disputed. Notwithstanding huge parking issues and massive commercialisation, the

temptation to live in South Delhi remains among very large number of Delhiwallas. They are convinced that south Delhi address gives them huge edge socially. "If you live in any residential colony near or beyond Ring Road in south Delhi, then you would be considered as a special person. I was staying in IPEX in East Delhi before Moving to South Delhi. When, I purchased a floor in Safderjung Enclave, my friends told me 'you have arrived. Now your class has changed'. That was something I was not expecting," reveals S. Ajay, a well-known film maker. He says that South Delhi people are very unsocial people. They think big that they don't know their next door neighbour. Finally, Dr. JP Sharma says that it is almost impossible for you to find an example when someone from South Delhi is getting married in East Delhi. For South Delhiwallas, East Delhi is like a third world country. Ends.

The Author is a Delhi based columnist and former Editor

IN THE MIDST OF LEGAL CONUNDRUM: PLATFORM WORKERS IN INDIA



The last decade has witnessed the rise of online platforms using digital technologies, including algorithms, artificial intelligence, to meet the demand and supply of labours which has gained globally. The disruptive nature of the online platforms, rapid growth and their focus on intensive use of labours, brought them under the ambit of policy and regulations amidst of debates of taxation, unfair competition and the workers conditions. The number of digital labour platforms globally have increased multi-fold during the last decade according to ILO(2021). The numbers are more staggering in the Group of Twenty (G20) countries, where the digital platforms grew from 128 to 611 only in a decade representing 79% of the such platforms operating throughout the world. Amongst the G20 group India which comprises of 10% of the digital platforms needs to be highlighted as the new frontier of platform revolution given the advent of

urbanisation, usage of smartphones and application of technology. According to NITI Aayog (2022), approximately 6.8 million platform workers in 2019-20 engaged in web- and location-based platforms, constituting 1.3% of the total workforce in India. It is further projected that the size of this workforce will grow by 4.1% of the total Indian workforce by 2029-30. Even though it is clear that about the rise in employment growth of these platform workers but there are questions about the standard employment relationships and legal protection for these workers which needs to be answered. In this piece we strive to look into the pertinent questions of What is the legal employment status of this ever-growing workforce in India? Are they independent contractors or employees of the platform? Legal Autonomy for Platform Workers The autonomy for platform workers varies across the digital platforms as this economy is heterogeneous in

various sectors. However, on a broad categorisation platform work can be categorised as 'crowd work' or 'app-based work' or 'location-based work' pertaining to delivery, driving and so on. In India the concentration of workers in the digital platforms is on the rise and this is going to reduce the workers in medium-skill occupations. Moreover, the visibility of the location-based platform workers plying on the road though more are characterised as low-skilled work. In the legal context, in "platform", employment contract lays down the workers rights, entitlements and the benefits which are extended to them. The legal construction of the who is an employee or a contract worker and the nature of work are as per the law. The contract becomes the instrument that draws out the relationship which does or does not align with how both the employee and the "platform(the company)" - work. We looked into some of the famous cases in common law jurisdiction where the court looked beyond the service contract and interpreted the nature of the work. In this landmark case Uber and Others v.

Aslam and Others(2021), Uber drivers were held to be 'dependant contractors' of the company by the Supreme Court of UK. Subsequently, in Klooger v Foodara Australia Pty Ltd (2018), in this case a terminated food delivery employee of Foodara through applying the principle of work control and supervision test was held to the employee. Moreover, glancing through the common law jurisdiction, it is seen that employment status is determined through the degree of autonomy and control of workers by their employees. In India, the Supreme court has devised the twin test of 'control and supervision', in Dhyanagadhara Chemical Works Ltd v State of Saurashtra (1957). This test establishes not only the relationship between employer-employee but also exercise control and the manner in which the work needs to be done. This test was opined in the case of contractual employees. Another, aspects which needs to be borne is the high level of informality of the workforce in India, which makes it difficult to look the platform workers only through the lens of standard employment. The enactment of parallel

laws for the formal and informal sectors of workforce makes the point. The formal sector in which the employer-employee relationship is clearly defined, is governed by labour laws as Minimum Wages Act, 1948; Industrial Disputes Act, 1947; Factories Act, 1948; and Industrial Employment (Standing Orders) Act, 1946. However, many home-based, small scale industrial/production units, leaves out millions of informal workers without providing a adequate employment security or social security. Most of the workers are look for the recourse from the State for regulation of minimum wage or social security schemes under the Unorganised Workers' Social Security (UWSS) Act, 2008. Also, looking at expansion of labour laws by the Supreme Court of India it is hesitant to apply the automatic absorption of contract worker in the absence of explicit notification. The Legal Conundrum In India, the informal urban sphere of labour are leveraging the ever-growing platform economy and proving employment opportunities to the unorganised workers. But these also points

towards the 'precarious working conditions' in the platform work. The question 'How is platform work precarious' is yet to find a legal response. For instance, the NITI Aayog report (2022) addresses the health risks, road safety, physical assault, theft, occupational safety and limited bargaining power and isolated work arrangements of the platform workers. The report however could have provided a direction through the Code on Social Security CSS, 2020 and the policy path for platform workers in India. The legal framework itself leads to the legal conundrum in how platform and gig workers are defined under the Code on Social Security (2020) from the unorganised sector workers. A close look at the legal definition of wage worker under the UWSS Act, 2008 and now the Social Security Code, explains there is coincidence in the nature of platform work and the definition of wage worker. Similarly, it coincides with the definition of contractual labour under the CLRA Act, 1970. The Indian labour courts echo this confusion, as the definitional consistency across different sections of

laws that applied to different types of workers could overlook the sector/industry-specific heterogeneity among different classes of workers. We find that there are complaints registered by the on-location platform workers but the labour courts are not sure on how to deal with these complaints in the absence of a clear employment relation and a legal definition. This legal picture is the legal vacuum which has created a legal uncertainty thus instilling legal complexities to determine the legal employment status of the platform workers.

To address this Firstly the court should start treating platform/gig economy as single entities having two distinct user groups; and Secondly given the lower safety nets for platform workers, the courts must not only attempt to harmonise the employment determination tests but also the fundamental rights etched in the Constitution of platform workers.

Jitamanu Sahoo & Arnab Dash are advocates practicing at the High Court of Orissa and Delhi.

Letter to Editor

Sir Team India's young spinner Ravi Bishnoi has reached No.1-rank in the T20 format .The 23-year-old India spinner has climbed the pinnacle of the ICC rankings by his mesmerising spin and taking so many wickets and that too in quick succession in the recently held India- Australian T20 series . Following his series-winning haul of nine wickets from five games against Australia at an average of 18.22, Bishnoi, with 699 points has displaced Rashid Khan as the No. 1 bowler in the world. Bishnoi, who was placed seventh, climbed up six places to reach the ranking summit. His stunning show against the Aussies who fell flat to his "stinging spin" attack and has caught the attention of cricketers and cricket lovers. The ranking is sure to give him a shot in the arm during the selection process as the BCCI is in the process of selecting the best for the upcoming T20 world Cup. No doubt his grit and mettle plus his skills has already got him a position in the squad that has flown to South Africa for the T20 series. The young player should come out with his best and let us hope he rises to the occasion and make his team and the nation proud.

M PRADYU KANNUR Geeth Thalikavu Kannur 670001.

Mahavira's values of non-violence & peace is necessary: Jagdeep Dhankhar

New Delhi, (KCN): Vice President Shri Jagdeep Dhankhar said that Lord Mahavir's message of non-violence, diversity, coexistence and peace is most needed today. War, terrorism and violence are humanly unforgivable crimes. No religion considers inhuman acts like terrorism and violence as forgivable. In the complex circumstances that the country and the world are currently facing, the teachings of Lord Mahavir are most effective for creating a peaceful society. Shri Dhankhar expressed the above remarks in the presence of Shri Devendra Brahmachariji, founder of Jan Arogyam Foundation, in his office in Parliament House. On this occasion, Minister of State for Social Justice and Empowerment Shri Ramdas Athawale, famous journalist, writer and social worker Shri Lalit Garg,



representative of Jain community of Kolkata Shri Manoj Jain Ishika and Shri Arsh Kaushik of Haridwar were present. While discussing the 2550th Nirvana Mahotsav of Lord Mahavir, Shri Dhankhar said that by taking inspiration from the life and philosophy of Mahavir, we can give a new direction to the society. Praising the efforts of non-violence

and egalitarian development of Shri Devendra Brahmachariji, he said that only a saint like Shri Devendra Brahmachariji can free the society from violence and fear by providing true guidance. Founder of Jan Arogyam Foundation, Shri Devendra Brahmachariji said that in the complex environment of communal violence, bitterness and hatred,

efforts are being made to establish peace and tranquility in the country and the world through the life philosophy of Mahavir. There is a need to spread Mahavir and his philosophy of life in the world today. Through this, we can get relief from problems like war, Naxalism and terrorism. Shri Devendra Brahmachariji, while inviting Shri Dhankhar for the grand event of

Maha-Mahavirotsav to be organized in Mumbai in February 2024 during the 2550th Nirvana year of Lord Mahavir, said that today Mahavir is expected to be established among the common people and not as a Jain.

On this occasion, Minister of State for Social Justice and Empowerment Shri Ramdas Athawale said that the objective of Maha-Mahavirotsav is to create communal harmony and mutual brotherhood in the society. This is also a special undertaking of the practice of non-violence. He expressed the need to organize the 2550th Nirvana Mahotsav of Lord Mahavir at the national level. Journalist, writer and social worker Shri Lalit Garg greeted Shri Dhankhar by covering him with a shawl and presented a bouquet to Shri Manoj Jain.

CM holds Praja Darbar at Jyothiba Phule Bhavan

Hyderabad, Dec 8 (KCN): Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy initiated steps to address the grievances of people on the next day of assuming the CM office. CM Revanth Reddy held Praja Darbar at the official residence of Chief Minister, Jyothiba Phule Bhavan on Friday. The Chief Minister gave priority to differently abled by enquiring about their plights and received applications from them. CM Revanth enquired thoroughly about the problems being faced by people who came to Praja Darbar in large numbers and their pleas on various issues for government help. The Chief Minister said that immediate measures would be taken to address the people's grievances. State Ministers Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy and Danasari Anasuya (Sitakka) were also present at Praja Darbar. When the Chief Minister left for the Secretariat to attend an emergency meeting, Minister



Sitakka received grievance applications. The State Government made elaborate arrangements for the conduct of Praja Darbar. CMO Special Chief Secretary Seshadri, DGP Ravi Gupta, Metro water works (Jalamandali) MD Dana Kishore, GHMC Commissioner Ronald Rose, Hyderabad Collector Anudeep, Musharraf and other officials coordinated the conduct of Praja Darbar. 15 desks have been opened for grievance registration. A special mechanism has been developed to register the petitions online and issue a unique Grievance Number (ID generated) to each petition. A

printed acknowledgment will be given to the applicants along with SMS acknowledgement. 320 seats were arranged for people to sit inside the Praja Darbar. Queue lines were also set up outside. A roof arrangement was also made on queue lines to make the people sit comfortably without getting affected by sun. Safe drinking water and other facilities were also provided to those who were waiting at the entrance and in the Praja Darbar hall. The first day of CM's Praja Darbar received an extremely good response as people came from not only Hyderabad but also from all districts.

XIM varsity celebrates its foundation day!



Bhubaneswar, (KCN): Xavier Institute of Management, XIM University, Bhubaneswar celebrated its Foundation Day Ceremony on the 8th of December 2023, at the Old Campus, Bhubaneswar. The University continuously focuses on providing good quality education that meets the needs of society and enables the building of sustainable communities globally. It was laudable to recognize the crucial role played by all stakeholders in contributing to the excellence and growth of the first Jesuit University

in the country. The University fraternity and invited guests had an opportunity to listen to the talk delivered by Ms. Suneeta Reddy, Managing Director, Apollo Hospitals Enterprise Ltd. She shared valuable insights into the healthcare industry, leadership, and her experiences in managing a major healthcare institution. She said that Belief is power and Purpose is the way of life! Today, Innovation, Team spirit and agility are the mantras for success. The presence of key officials of XIM

University namely, Fr. Jerome Cutinha, S.J., Chairman of the Board of Governors, Shri. Rajive Kaul, Chairman Emeritus, Fr. Antony R Uvari, S.J., Vice Chancellor, Fr. S. Antony Raj, S.J., Registrar, and Fr. V. Arockia Das, S.J., Chief Finance Officer as well as prominent board members and distinguished faculty added prestige to the occasion. During the ceremony, Ms. Suneeta Reddy was conferred the Honorary Doctoral Degree in Business Management by the University. The event commenced with the

welcome note by Shri. Rajive Kaul. The employees were felicitated with long service medals, which is a commendable practice, highlighting the university's appreciation for dedication and loyalty

among its workforces. The concluding vote of thanks by Fr. S. Antony Raj, S.J. acknowledged the collective efforts of the university community in fostering a sense of unity, pride, and shared achievement.

NITI Aayog to organize a workshop on 'Viksit Bharat@2047'

Hyderabad, Dec 8 (KCN): NITI Aayog, Government of India, in collaboration with the Raj Bhavans of all States and Union Territories, is organizing a workshop on "Viksit Bharat@2047" at 10 a.m. on December 11, 2023. according to a press communiqué from the Raj Bhavan issued here on Friday. The workshop will be graced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi who will deliver a virtual address and share his vision and aspirations for Viksit Bharat@ 2047. The workshop will bring together Vice Chancellors, Heads of Universities and Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs), and faculty members for a comprehensive discussion on the vision of Viksit Bharat by 2047. The discussions will delve into the concept of Viksit Bharat@ 2047, its various dimensions, and the necessary steps and actions to involve as many students as possible to get their input in preparation and finalization of the vision document of Viksit Bharat@ 2047. All Vice Chancellors and Heads of HEIs have been requested to attend the workshop at 10 a.m. on 11.12.2023, along with ten faculty members from each institution across the State of Telangana and make it a grand success, the press communiqué added.

SAINIK SCHOOL - OMC BIJU MARATHON WILL BE HELD ON 17 DEC 2023 AND OBA MEET ON 24 DEC 2023.

Bhubaneswar, (KCN): On 08 Dec 2023 Principal Sainik School Bhubaneswar informed to Media that the 6th Biju Marathon of Sainik School - OMC will be held in joint venture on 17 Dec 2023. In this mega sports event more than 1000 participants consisting of 600 SSB Cadets, students from Sahodaya and Govt. Schools, old boys of the organising School and their family members are likely to participate with great enthusiasm. The participant would be assembled at 0530 Hrs on 17 Dec 2023 at the starting point, Gandhi Mini Stadium of Sainik School.

Colonel Balu Bharath, SM, Principal Sainik School Bhubaneswar, Shri Hardaman Singh, President OBA, Shri MS Padhi, IAS (Retd), Vice President, Cdr Dinesh Swain, Secretary are likely to flag off the Mini

Marathon at 0600 Hrs sharp in the presence of the entire Sainik School fraternity. The route of the Marathon would be from Gandhi Stadium, Sainik School, Sainik School Main Gate, turn right towards Mancheswar, turn left on reaching Railway Colony Road, towards OMFED Chhak, turn left towards NALCO - Kalinga Hospital Chhak, further move towards Sainik School and it would terminate at Gandhi Stadium. The total distance of the Marathon is of 6 kms. The different categories of the Marathon are for the Students studying from Class VI to VII, Class IX to XII, Girl Students, OBEANS and Category for OBEAN family members. Shri DK Singh, I.A.S, Chairman OMC has kindly consented to grace the event as the Chief Guest for the closing function and distribute the prizes.

Old Boys Meet: The 53rd Annual Meet of the Old Boys' Association of Sainik School Bhubaneswar would be held on 24th Dec 2023. A large number of OBA, members, who are in active Services in the Indian Armed Forces, Civil Services, Corporate Sectors in India and abroad are likely to join with their families.

The Pass out batch of 1998 are going to celebrate their Silver Jubilee Year on this day and 1974 pass out batch are going to celebrate their Golden Jubilee Year on 14th Jan 2024. Besides, a health camp, a blood donation camp, a basketball match between the Sainik School Cadets & OBEANS, and Cultural Programmes by the Cadets and Orchestra would also be organised. All the Old boys of the School have been requested by OBA President and Secretary to join the meet and make it a grand success.

Governor, West Bengal Inaugurates ICSI Centre for Corporate Governance, Research and Training (CCGRT) in City

Kolkata, (KCN): The Institute of Company Secretaries of India set up its third Centre for Corporate Governance, Research and Training (CCGRT) in New Town, Kolkata to facilitate research, training and consultancy to the corporate sector. Dr. C.V. Ananda Bose, Governor, West Bengal inaugurated this state-of-the-art Facility, spread across an area of 1.5 Acre in New Town, Kolkata, on Wednesday (December 6, 2023). Congratulating the Institute on this landmark occasion, Dr Bose said, "I commend the Institute for developing this

Research Facility. It speaks volumes about the foresightedness and futuristic approach of the ICSI. Company Secretaries, the Corporate Warriors of the Nation, have been undertaking an array of responsibilities while guiding and handholding the Corporate Boards of India Inc." The Governor also awarded the meritorious students, FCS, as well as the members of the Institute who successfully completed their Post Membership Qualification. Located in the Smart Green City of Kolkata, the ICSI CCGRT has an Educational Block of 27494 sq. ft. area and a

Hostel Block of 21708 sq. ft. area. The Educational Wing houses classrooms, a library, two Moot Courts, a Conference Room, and an Auditorium with a capacity of 300 people. The Hostel Wing has 24 rooms, a Yoga/Meditation Centre. Besides this, the world-class centre has a Badminton Court and an open-air theatre laden with beautiful lawns. The ICSI also organised the Convocation Ceremony for the members of the Eastern Region for the year 2023, in the newly inaugurated CS Deepak Kumar Khaitan Auditorium at the ICSI CCGRT Facility.

Kolkata, (KCN): Union Minister of Railways, Communications and Electronics & Information Technology (IT), Shri Ashwini Vaishnaw, in a press conference today explained how the development of manufacturing sector in India has changed the export basket of India, courtesy the pioneering 'Make in India' concept of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi transforming India from exporter of primary goods to exporter of finished products including mobile phones and high precision instruments. This is the mark of economic development of a country wherein it

clearly indicates India's transformation from marginal economy to a developed one, the Minister stated.

Shri Vaishnaw said, there is a major inflection point which has happened in the country's economy, as after independence, manufacturing in the country was consistently either down or in trouble for the last 40-50 years. India has now reached such a situation when it is ready for 1 trillion dollar exports and the foundation behind this is manufacturing.

According to the Minister, Indian exports have reached 762 billion-dollar-453 billion-dollar-export of goods, 309 billion-dollar - export of



services.

The formal employment which earlier used to be around 6 lakhs per month (around 70 lakh per year), has today come up to an average of 14-15 lakh per month (around 1 crore 80 lakh per year), Shri Vaishnaw pointed out. He said, If we talk about conditions of 10-12-15 years back, the maximum export would have been of petroleum,

later the name would have come of rice. In this way four or five names would come up.

Export of mobile phones in the previous year was 11 billion dollars (about Rs.90,000 crores). Whereas this year the manufacturing of mobile phones is going to be around 50 billion dollars (about Rs.4,00,000 crores), the Minister stated. Exports will exceed 15 billion dollars (Rs.1,25,000 crores), he said.

Shri Vaishnaw remarked that TDK, which is Japan's very good company, has declared that it will manufacture mobile phone batteries in India. The casing used for mobile phones is being manufactured

today by Tata and its manufacturing is very precise.

Responding to a question of Shri Kausik Mitra, CPRO, Eastern Railway & Metro Railway, Kolkata, Shri Vaishnaw informed that in the mobile manufacturing sector, India is among the top two countries in the world. Mobile phones manufactured in India are getting exported to more than 25 countries in the world including European countries, he stated. Apple phones manufactured in India have also been exported in different countries. India is among the top three countries in the world in the field of mobile export, the Minister pointed out at the end.

Sargi Phula Enthrals Students

Sundargarh(KCN): Sargi Phula, an annual children's festival, is being organized by the state government to identify and promote talent among the school students belonging to the tribal category of Odisha. North Odisha zone-level "Sargi Phula" program was launched at Sanskriti Bhawan in Sundargarh district on Thursday. It was inaugurated by Shri Sharada Prasad Nayak, Minister of Labor and Employees' State Insurance. The program is being organised by the Department of Scheduled Tribes,

Scheduled Castes, Minority Communities and Backward Classes Welfare. A total of 638 students from 15 districts participated in the three-day zone-level event held in Sundargarh. "Tribal communities are the pride of the state. There are many unique talents in this category of students. Special opportunities are being given to showcase their talent through the Sargi Phool programme. Organizing such an event will help in developing creative talent in children as well as competitive



attitude, communication skills and leadership," said Minister Shri Nayak. State Director Tribal Affairs and SCSTRTI, Indramani Tripathy graced the occasion as

Honorable Guest. Various creative programs and competitions are being organized by the students at Eklavya Model Residential School at Bhawanipur

under Sundargarh Sadar block. On Thursday, competitions were held among the children such as lectures, quizzes, solo music and drawing. It will

continue till November 9. "This is the first time this year that a zone-level Sargi Phula programme is being organised. Students who have passed out from the district level programme have participated in it. Later, they will get a chance to showcase their talent at state-level events. The main objective of this state-level programme is to provide an opportunity to the dreams, talents and skills of our tribal children like Sargi Phula. Chairman of

Sundargarh Special Development Council Vinay Toppo, MLA of Sundargarh Kusum Tete, MLA of Talasara Bhavani Shankar Bhoi, MLA of Rajgangpur C S Rajen Ekka, Chairperson of Sundargarh Zilla Parishad Kunti Pradhan, Sundargarh District Collector Parag Harshad Gavali were present on the occasion. At the end, Additional Collector Rabinarayan Sahu proposed the vote of thanks. The students participated in a cultural program organised on the occasion and showcased their talents.

The District Mineral Institute has prepared a video series to inform the students studying in various government high schools of Sundargarh district about various interesting careers. There are interviews of people from different walks of life who have achieved success in it. The video CD was unveiled on the sidelines of the Sargi Phool event. The video will be broadcast in 315 schools at a time through the virtual class system being run in the district. As a result, it will be useful for more than 15,000 children.

Mukta Soft In 23 More ULBs

Bhubaneswar(KCN): After the success of Mukta Soft Application in two municipal areas of the state, it will be implemented in 23 more municipal bodies. Sharda Prasad Panda, Joint Secretary, Housing and Urban Development has written a letter to the civic bodies concerned in this regard. Mukta Soft Application is being implemented to make the implementation of Mukhyamantri Karma Tatpar Abhijana (MUKTA) more transparent and punctual. It was first implemented in Dhenkanal and Jatni municipal bodies on an experimental basis. After the success of the application here, it is now set to be implemented in 23 more municipal bodies. These municipal corporations include Bhubaneswar, Cuttack, Berhampur, Rourkela and Sambalpur



Municipal Corporations, Puri, Baripada, Kotpad, Jaipur, Keonjhar, Kesinga, Jharsuguda, Jajpur, Paradip, Chhatrapur, Hinjilikatu, Athagarh, Padmapur, Balangir, Phulbani, Boudhgarh, Bhadrak and Balasore. The Mukta Soft Application allows the payment of the project charges being executed under the scheme immediately. It may be mentioned that while the State Government is implementing the Mukta

Yojana to provide work to the hands of the urban people, priority is being given to women self-help groups and slum development organizations. Therefore, more emphasis is being laid on how they can get their dues immediately after completing the project work. In the middle of the current financial year, especially by November 20, the details of the Mukta project have been asked to be uploaded in the Mukta Soft

Application. In particular, the projects which have been sanctioned and the work has not started and the projects which have already been implemented and the dues have not been paid by this week have been asked to be uploaded. Apart from this, financial transactions of the project have also been asked to be uploaded on it. This will enable timely monitoring, evaluation and funding of the project. City Mission Managers of the 23 municipal bodies concerned will act as nodal officers for the immediate implementation of the Mukta Soft Scheme and the 'Help Desk' at SUDA Department will monitor the project work on a daily basis. However, it has been clearly stated that all valid projects should be uploaded by December 10 and 60 per cent of these projects by December 20.

Pradhan Plea On PM-USHA



Bhubaneswar(KCN): Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan wrote a letter to Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik for implementation of the Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Pradhan Mantri Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan (PM-USHA) in Odisha. In his letter, Shri Pradhan said the PM-USHA scheme, which was launched in June this year, has been approved till 31st March, 2026 with a total outlay of Rs 12,926.10 crores in continuation of the Scheme of Rashtriya Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA). The PM-USHA Scheme is an

important step of Central Government towards implementation the vision of National Education Policy, 2020 to attain higher levels of access, equity, and excellence in the States / UTs higher education system by prioritizing the unserved and underserved areas, to be identified by States / UTs as Focus Districts on the basis of low GER, population of SC/ST, Left-wing affected areas etc., he said. The scheme will aim at creating new institutions and also transforming existing institutions in the States and UTs, Pradhan stated.

As per the Scheme Guidelines, States / UTs are required to sign an MoU for on-boarding the Scheme for its implementation in respective States / UTs. The MoU contains clauses regarding proper planning, implementation and monitoring of the Scheme. The Union Minister said commitment on planning and drafting the proposals by the State by aligning it with reforms such as Multiple entry-exit, Academic Bank of Credits, National Higher Education Qualifications Framework (NHEQF), Indian knowledge

systems etc. will lead to better integration between the policies and schemes of the Government for improving higher education in the country. He appreciated the State for showing active participation in the previous phases of RUSA and has been successful in using the support under the Scheme to improve the higher education scenario in the State. However, an MoU under new phase of Scheme i.e. PM-USHA, is yet to be signed by the State, he expressed concern. He informed that the process of submission of proposals for grants-in-aid under the PM-USHA Scheme has already started through a dedicated Portal for this purpose launched on 21st October, 2023. Shri Pradhan sought cooperation and continued support from the CM in implementing the PM-USHA Scheme in the State of Odisha. He requested CM to look into the issue for early submission of the MoU so that Odisha State does not miss out on the benefits of the Scheme.



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KISS Model of Holistic Education for Tribal Children Earns Praise in Lok Sabha

Bhubaneswar, (KCN): Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences (K I S S) , Bhubaneswar, home to 80,000 tribal children that provides holistic education, boarding, h e a l t h c a r e , vocational and sports empowerment at a fully free residential school from Kindergarten to Post-graduation and beyond, has been lauded and appreciated by Members of Parliament during the discussion on the Central Universities

(Amendment) Bill 2023 in Lok Sabha on 7 December 2023. Brahmapur MP Chandrashekar Sahu of Biju Janata Dal cited the model of KISS while underlining the initiatives of the State Government. Former Minister and current MP from Saran in Bihar, Rajiv Pratap Rudy, once again appreciated the work of DR. Achyuta Samanta, Founder, KIIT & KISS, and congratulated him for his phenomenal work in empowering tribal children as he recounted his visit to



KISS. Leader of opposition, Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury also quoted the work of KISS and praised it as a pioneering concept.

In his reply, Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan acknowledged the example cited by other Members of

Parliament, while lauding the KISS model. The KISS model is an excellent approach to educating tribal

children and has empowered the tribal communities. About 80,000 members have reaped the benefits directly and over 8

million indirectly. "Such recognition helps me to continue with great enthusiasm. The KISS model has been appreciated across party lines and something happening in Telangana, Odisha is being cited. This is a moment of pride for KISS, Odisha, and all of India. A small effort of mine has become such a huge revolution that it is now being quoted, cited as an example, and followed by all, that too on the floor of the house - truly an honor for me. I am humbled and dedicate

recognition to the students and staff of KISS and KIIT and our stakeholders and well-wishers," said Dr. Achyuta Samanta. Earlier too, Virendra Kumar, a senior MP from Madhya Pradesh and currently the Union Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment and Om Birla, Speaker, Lok Sabha have recognised and wholeheartedly appreciated the initiative of Dr. Achyuta Samanta that is empowering tribals through holistic education.

Tata Steel reports highest ever consolidated EBITDA at Rs 63,830 crores

Mumbai, : Tata Steel today announced its Financial Results for the quarter and financial year ended March 31, 2022. The Company's consolidated reported profit after tax (PAT) for the March 2022 quarter rose to Rs 9,835 cr as compared to Rs 7,162 cr of the corresponding quarter of the last fiscal. For the full year ended March 31, 2022, the Company's PAT rose to Rs 41,749 cr, significantly higher than Rs 8,190 cr reported in the last financial year. The consolidated Turnover for FY22 stood at Rs 243,959 cr as compared to Rs 156,477 cr of the previous fiscal.

Consolidated turnover for the fourth quarter ended March 31, 2022 stood at Rs 69,324 cr as compared to Rs 50,028 cr in the corresponding quarter of the last financial year.

The Board of Directors recommends a dividend of Rs. 51 per fully paid equity share and Rs 12.75 per partly paid equity shares. A 10:1 stock split is also recommended.

T. V. Narendran, Chief Executive Officer & Managing Director, said: "Tata Steel has again demonstrated its ability to deliver stellar results despite heightened complexity in the face of COVID as well as

geopolitical tensions. Our Indian business showed broad based growth across our chosen segments due to our sustained focus on customer relationships, our distribution network and our portfolio of brands supported by our agile business model. Our European operations delivered robust performance as the transformation programme undertaken helped to leverage the strong business environment. We have pursued several initiatives to de-risk the business particularly across procurement and supply chain and continue to invest in

technology and digitisation to drive productivity and improve our resilience."

"Kalinga nagar expansion is progressing well and will drive cost savings as well as product mix enrichment. The acquisition of Neelachal Ispat Nigam Limited will be closed in IQFY23 and we will scale it up rapidly to drive expansion of our high value retail business. I am happy to share that Tata Steel has been recognised as Steel sustainability champion for the fifth year in a row by the WorldSteel," he added.

The 6 MnTPA Pellet plant at Kalinganagar

will be commissioned in 3QFY23 followed by the Cold Roll Mill complex and the 5 MnTPA expansion. Tata Steel India achieved highest ever annual crude steel production of 19.06 million tons, with a growth of 13% YoY. Highest ever deliveries of 18.27 mn tons despite COVID 2nd wave related disruption early in financial year. Broad based improvement in sales volume was witnessed across segments. Automotive was up 27% YoY, Branded Products and Retail was up 11% YoY while Industrial products & projects was up 11% YoY.

Echnozion to be held during 19-21st January 2024 ; Theme released

W a r a n g a l (KCN): Technozion, the technical festival of NIT Warangal will be organised during 19th - 21st January 2024. Technozion is South India's largest science and technical fests. The theme of this edition is "Ingenious" and is released this evening. "Ingenious, which itself means something original and inventive," said Dean Student Welfare, Prof. D. Srinivasacharya.



Narayana Nethralaya and Acer India Team up to build India's first PC & tablet-based software therapy for children

Bengaluru Narayana Nethralaya in collaboration with Acer India today launched the PC + tablet based software, "VisioNova" designed for children suffering from Cortical Visual Impairment (CVI). This initiative by Narayana Nethralaya and Acer India aims at breaking down barriers and providing the patients with better access to treatment.

Acer VisioNova, a path-breaking innovation was conceptualized as a mobile alternative to on-site therapy for CVI children that will offer them the standard of care. Narayana Nethralaya as a part of its 'Buds to Blossoms'

initiative provides dedicated therapy programs to help children develop and improve motor, cognitive and visual abilities that significantly improve their quality of life.

Cortical Visual Impairment is a condition of bilateral visual loss caused due to injury of visual areas in the brain without significant eye or anterior visual pathway impairment. CVI is currently an emerging cause amongst children across India. With 161 children in every 100,000 born with CVI, India has declared it to be a high priority issue and classified it as one of 30 conditions that all babies

must receive mandatory screenings. These children with CVI have great difficulty in performing visually guided activities and these therapies rely on machines that are bulky, expensive and require the child to be in the hospital for the entire duration of six-to-nine-month therapeutic process. In order to address this, Acer provided PC and 100+ tablets under CSR to kick-off this noble cause. Acer has also further intent to supply around 2000 tablets for patients where patients can pay the hospital a small, refundable deposit and receive the tablet for use from the comforts of

their home and still continue treatments even with COVID disruptions.

The tablet will offer CVI patients exercises that can benefit and help them develop and improve their deficient skills and visual abilities that significantly improve the quality of life. Also, since a number of specialised therapies that are deployed require expensive equipments that need the child to be present at the center for the entire duration of the treatment, this tablet will allow remote therapy under the mentorship of Narayana Nethralaya' CVI experts, making this treatment accessible to the outreach.

On the occasion of this

launch, Mr. Harish Kohli, President & Managing Director, Acer India said, "It is a matter of pride for us to join this innovative collaboration with Narayana Nethralaya where technology helps break barriers to improve lives. Acer VisioNova engineered the overall solution, comprising both the software and the hardware. At Acer, we always believe in closing the gap between people and technology and to meaningfully improve clinical outcomes and reduce the systemic cost of healthcare, VisioNova will help patients with timely access to care when they need it.

Kolkata (PARTHA ROY): 6th Cementing India , a Conference on Cement industry was organised by Indian Chamber of Commerce (ICC) in Kolkata on 8th December 2023 to deliberate on sustainable development and transformation of Cement industry in India to nearly Decarbonised Green industry to meet India's Climate Action Commitments.

The 6th Cementing India Conference by ICC deliberated on Decarbonisation & reimagining the net-zero transition and as well as other challenges being faced by India's Cement industry when United Nations' Climate Action meet COP28 is being held at UAE to deliberate on Global Challenges on Sustainable Environmental friendly development on the planet Earth.

Governments need to create "Green" fund to subsidise the Cement industry in India to quicken the transition of the industry to net-zero emission level.

Cement industry contribute in bigway in carbon emission so urgent need for Decarbonisation. Government funding of research and technology development for modernization of various processes in Cement industry will go a long way and quicken transition of Cement industry from Carbon intensive production methods to low carbon/Decarbonised production systems. It will facilitate small players in Cement industry to shift to low carbon/Decarbonised production systems.

The Conference was attended by Mr. Gajendra Pratap Singh, Joint. President - Corporate Affairs, Shree Cement Ltd; Mr. Vinit Kumar Tiwari, CEO, Star Cement; Mr. Niladri N Bhattacharjee, Partner, Grant Thornton Bharat LLP; Mr Madhusudan Rasiraju, Managing Director, IKN India; and Dr. Rajeev Singh, Director General, Indian Chamber of Commerce, along with other industry stalwarts, who deliberated on various

challenges Shri Rajeev Singh Director General of ICC, , in his inaugural address said, "Cement plays a vital role in building our economy. It has potential to contribute to tax generation and foreign direct investment. Nonetheless, cement is a primary source of carbon emissions. Countries are pledging to cut down emissions and the indigenous industry is actively taking steps for mitigative strategies. Reduction in CO2 emission is a huge process and the industry is reliant on using technologies in the practice. In recent years, it has seen an increase in green financing too. The industry is focusing on sustainability strategies and goals too." Shri Gajendra Pratap Singh of Sree Cement, said, "The industry is in full swing to become sustainable and achieve zero carbonisation. It is focusing on the country's climate and Green agenda along with technological innovation, which is key to achieve the goals. With the rise in CO2 emissions, sustainability has a very important role to play in days to come. As a leading player in the industry, Shree Cement has undertaken numerous measures towards achieving the industry's sustainability goals. We have started utilising synthetic gypsum instead of mineral gypsum. As a nation, we have progressed a lot but there is still room for improvement." Shri Vinit Kumar Tiwari of Star Cement said, "In response to rising global temperatures and its environmental impact, a greener and sustainable future has become a sounding call. Our country sits as a cornerstone for international collaboration in the global context.....The transition from fossil fuels to renewable energy within the sector has helped bolster decarbonisation goals." Shri Niladri Bhattacharjee said "The global cement industry is the third largest energy

consumer and second largest carbon emitter. Comparatively, India's average statistics are better than the global average. Nonetheless, there is room for improvement. The structure of the homegrown cement industry is such that large players will spearhead the adoption of changes. Customers will become sensible and demand greener commodities in the future. Therefore, we have a responsibility to carry out. While India aims to achieve Net Zero by 2050, the cement industry also has to play its part by coming up with different solutions such as waste recovery Modernisation of various relevant facets of Cement industry's to increase efficiency will facilitate decarbonisation.So, we still have a lot of space for improvement." Madhusudan Rasiraju of IKN India, said, "India has to invest in infrastructural spending to reach its goals. Apart from the cement industry, we need steel, water and other resources to be recycled and reused.....and also help reduce the use of fossil fuel-derived energy drastically." Earlier commenting on prospect of Cement industry, on 7th December 2023, India's top industrialist Shri Gautam Adani Chairman of Adani Group posted on his social media X handle " Ambuja & ACC are leading a sustainable revolution in the cement industry. Over 90% of our cement production is now blended cements recycling waste fly ash and slag. This significant shift not only enhances the environmental footprint of our cement but also marks a substantial step towards sustainability. Additionally, we are committed to powering 60% of our cement production with renewable energy sources by 2028. This ambitious goal will establish us as a frontrunner in the global arena of sustainable cement production.... #COP28 "

Some will celebrate the continuation of Teeger's tenure as captain, should it be confirmed. Others will be disgusted that he remains in the squad. Both sides of the argument will be driven by South Africans who have been fighting this fight for weeks. The ongoing altercation could spill over into contending protests at or near matches in the under-19 World Cup, which will be played in South Africa from January 13 to February 4. On Thursday an independent investigation cleared

Teeger said this in Johannesburg on October 22 after being presented with the Rising Star Award at the Jewish Achiever Awards function. His comments were published by Jewish Report four days later. Three weeks after Teeger spoke, the

infrastructure has been

Rarely are those who cast Hamas' actions as terrorism able to recognise Israel's reaction as disproportionate, brutal and inhumane. Neither do most who hold up

Hamas as heroes of a struggle that started in 1948, when the creation of the Israeli state forced Palestinians off their land, acknowledge that Israel should even exist. It is an intractable struggle that the world's best diplomatic and political minds have been unable to resolve. What chance did an 18-year-old schoolboy have of not getting it wrong, thereby angering much of South Africa's muslim community of around 1-million? What chance did he have of his words not being seized upon and amplified by the ethnonationalists firmly in Israel's corner among the 52,000, or so, jews in this country? A far smaller chance, on both counts, than if he hadn't made his impromptu but also unprompted remarks. But, you will hear it said, freedom of speech is protected in South Africa,

along with freedom of religion. That the first of those freedoms comes with responsibilities and consequences - including for 18-year-old schoolboys - is less often noted, and still less that freedom from religion - rather than of religion - in the public realm is a right every democracy should pursue.

On the face of it, Teeger is a worthy recipient of the prize he won. From July he has scored three half-centuries in seven one-day innings for South Africa's under-19 side and a South Africa Emerging players side. He is head boy at King Edward VII School in Johannesburg, an elite institution that has produced Quinton de Kock, Graeme Smith and Ali Bacher. But none of that has mattered since October 22. How could it when this has become about so much more than mere

cricket? On December 3, Business Day, South Africa's last remaining serious English-language daily newspaper, published a letter from Mandy Yachad, a rebel-era cricketer and religiously observant Jew. "As much as I was looking forward to attending the upcoming Test between South Africa and India at Newlands, and some of the T20s and ODIs, and while I will continue to support the Proteas (including those players who have shown support to Palestine and the Palestinian people), I will not be there (nor at any other match that falls under the auspices of the CSA)," Yachad wrote. Note that he expressed his displeasure not at what Teeger had said nor the furore that had been sparked - but at CSA's decision to investigate.

New Delhi: The Legends League Cricket match on Wednesday between Indian Capitals and Gujarat Giants took an unexpected turn as former teammates S Sreesanth and Gautam Gambhir engaged in an on-field spat. The controversy escalated when Sreesanth went live on Instagram, accusing Gambhir of using derogatory language, including calling him a 'fixer.'

inappropriate, even in the presence of umpires. Sreesanth accused Gambhir of deploying PR tactics to manipulate public perception, asserting that people were misinterpreting the incident. He urged viewers to trust his version of events, stating that he has no intention of engaging in a prolonged public relations battle. Sreesanth's accusations carry additional weight due to his past involvement in the IPL 2013 spot-fixing scandal. Although initially banned for life, the Supreme Court later reduced his ban to seven years, highlighting the legal battles Sreesanth faced before being exonerated.

New Delhi: Virat Kohli, the highest run-scorer of the ODI World Cup 2023, may not be the first choice for India's T20 XI in the upcoming T20 World Cup 2024. The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) officials engaged in a crucial five-hour-long meeting, signalling a potential shift in T20I leadership, according to Dainik Jagran's resources. Despite Kohli's outstanding performance in the ODI World Cup, reports suggest that his position in the T20 World Cup squad is not guaranteed.

as he generally opens for the Royal Challengers Bangalore in the IPL. With opening slots likely filled, the selectors contemplate Kishan for No.3. The likes of Suryakumar Yadav, Rinku Singh, Hardik Pandya, and Ravindra Jadeja are expected to complete the batting order.

The selectors plan to discuss Kohli's T20I future with him soon, recognizing the need for transparency. Kohli, who has not played a single T20I since the 2022 T20 World Cup, will be considered for selection based on his performance in IPL 2024. His decision to opt out of the white-ball leg of the South Africa tour adds an air of uncertainty to his T20 future.

New Delhi: The Indian team arrived in Durban, South Africa, on Wednesday but a few players are yet to join them. Ravindra Jadeja, who has been on a tour of Europe, has not reached South Africa yet. Along with him, a couple of other members of the contingent will also be flying in from Europe. Jadeja is the vice-captain for the three T20Is. Sources from the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) have revealed that star opener Shubman Gill will also join his teammates, flying in from the UK. Gill went on a holiday post the World Cup final on November 19. It is already known that

Deepak Chahar has not travelled with the side to South Africa due to a family issue back home. His father is believed to be ill, and it is still not clear when the pacer will be able to fly to South Africa. However, sources say he could reach there soon and no replacement for him has not been named. The Rajasthan and Chennai Super Kings pacer has been included in the One-Day team as well. It is understood that all of them have taken permission from the BCCI to join the team, as has a member of the support staff. All are expected to be in Durban well in time before the first match on December

10. A couple of selectors are also expected to fly to South Africa, SS Das and Salil Ankola. The BCCI has chosen to send two selectors because of two teams and a whole lot of matches, including T20Is, ODIs, Tests, and three India A games. Since arriving in Durban, the Indian team will have their first training session on Friday morning at the Kingsmead ground. The first fixture of the series is on December 10, a Twenty20 match. After two more T20Is at Gqeberha and Wanderers in Johannesburg on December 12 and 14, there will be three ODIs on December 17, 19, and 21 at Johannesburg, Gqeberha, and Paarl. The first Test, starts on Boxing Day at Centurion and the second and final Test is at Newlands in Cape Town from January 3. There will be three India A games in between - from December 11-14, December 20-22, and December 26-29.

New Delhi: A cracking 61-ball 99* from Colin Munro was the backbone of Brisbane Heat's 103-run win over Melbourne Stars in the opening game of the 2023-24 BBL season at The Gabba on Thursday (December 7). Munro's masterclass and useful cameos from the rest of the Heat batting line-up got them to an imposing score of 214 after being put into bat. Munro got going from the start as he took the Stars bowling apart in the powerplay to set the tone for the innings. Stars' bowling was off the mark

and the catching was all the more messy as the batters were let off the hook often. Apart from Munro not getting to the three-figure mark, everything went Heat's way in the game. Once the score of 214/3 was posted, Stars needed a performance to match the New Zealander and in skipper Glenn Maxwell, they had the man for the occasion. However, the all-rounder couldn't get going after the initial flurry that saw him hit four fours in a row against Spencer

Johnson. Hilton Cartwright's cameo was the only innings of some substance but it wasn't enough to prevent Stars from crashing to a heavy defeat. The Heat bowlers all shared the spoils with Mitchell Swepson being the pick of the bowlers with a three-fer.

Brief scores: Brisbane Heat 214/3 in 20 overs (Colin Munro 99*, Marnus Labuschagne 30) beat Melbourne Stars 111 in 15.1 overs (Hilton Cartwright 33, Mitchell Swepson 3-23, Xavier Bartlett 2-8) by 103 runs