

Mantra For Agniveer

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi today addressed the first batch of Agniveers of the three Services, who have commenced their basic training, via video conferencing. Prime Minister congratulated the Agniveers on being the pioneers of this path-breaking Agnipath Scheme. He highlighted that this transformative policy will be a game changer in strengthening our Armed Forces and making them future ready for the challenges that lie

ahead. Prime Minister affirmed that the young Agniveers will make the Armed Forces more youthful and tech savvy. Hailing the potential of Agniveers, he said that their spirit is reflective of the bravery of the armed forces which has always kept the flag of the nation flying high. He said that the experience which they will acquire through this opportunity will be a source of pride for life. Prime Minister said that New India is filled with renewed vigour, and efforts are underway to



modernise our armed forces as well as make them Aatmanirbhar. He said that in the 21st century, the way wars are fought is changing. Discussing the new

fronts of contactless warfare and challenges of cyber warfare, he said technologically-advanced soldiers will play a key role in

our armed forces. He added the current generation of youth especially have this potential, and so the Agniveers will play a leading role in our

armed forces in the times to come. Prime Minister also spoke about how the scheme will further empower women. He expressed happiness at

how women Agniveers are adding pride to the Naval forces, and said that he looks forward to seeing women Agniveers in all three forces. Prime Minister also recalled how women are leading armed forces on various fronts, citing examples of woman soldier posted in Siachen and women driving modern fighter planes. Prime Minister said that getting posted in different regions will give them an opportunity to get diverse experiences and that they should try to learn different

languages and also about different cultures and ways of living. He said that teamwork and honing of leadership skills will add a new dimension to their personality. He exhorted Agniveers to remain curious about learning new things while simultaneously working on bettering their skills in the fields of their choice. Hailing the potential of youth and Agniveers, Prime Minister concluded by saying that they are the ones who are going to provide leadership to the nation in the 21st century.

Rain Likely In Odisha On Jan 17, 18

Bhubaneswar(KCN): Rain is likely in several places of Odisha on January 17 and 18, predicted Bhubaneswar Meteorological Centre of the IMD. As per forecast, light rain is very likely to occur at one or two places over the districts of Sundargarh, Keonjhar, Mayurbhanj, Balasore, Jajpur, Bhadrak, Kendrapada, Jagatsinghpur, Cuttack and Dhenkanal on January 17. Similarly, light rain is very likely to occur at one or two places over the districts of Keonjhar, Mayurbhanj, Balasore, Jajpur, Bhadrak, Kendrapada and Jagatsinghpur on January 18. There will be no large change in Minimum Temperature (Night Temperature) over the districts of Odisha during next 5 days. The weathermen forecast dense fog at one or two places over the districts of Ganjam, Puri, Jagatsinghpur, Khordha, Cuttack, Angul, Dhenkanal between tonight and tomorrow morning. Shallow to moderate fog is very likely to occur at a few places over the districts of Balasore, Bhadrak, Jajpur, Kendrapara, Cuttack, Jagatsinghpur, Puri, Khordha, Nayagarh, Ganjam, Gajapati, Angul, Dhenkanal and Kandhamal during next 24 hours.

Covid-19 Vaccination: Covishield 2nd, Precaution Doses To Be Available In Odisha

Bhubaneswar(KCN): In view of resurgence of Covid-19 cases due to Omicron sub-variants, Odisha Government will recommence the vaccination drive from January 19. As per the decision, Covishield vaccine will be available for beneficiaries, who have not received their 2nd and precaution doses, for free in all government hospitals, informed Odisha Health & Family Welfare Department today. In December last year, the state government had sought necessary guidance and support for re-commencing the precaution dose vaccination following demand from citizens amid surge in Covid



cases in countries like China, US, Japan, Brazil and South Korea. Odisha utilised all Covid-19 vaccines supplied from the Centre by November 28. According to State H&FW Department, as many as 3.25 crore people in Odisha were eligible for precaution dose. Till date, only 1.31 crore citizens have been vaccinated with the precaution dose while the remaining 1.93 crore (59 per cent)

are yet to be vaccinated with the same. So far, 8.14 crore doses of Covid-19 vaccines have been administered to beneficiaries in Odisha, of which 3,52,64,700 (97%) have taken the first dose and 3,30,07,668 (91%) have been vaccinated with the second dose. Only 1,31,81,696 (40%) beneficiaries have received the precaution dose against Covid-19 in the state.

Odisha Shocker: Woman Allegedly Kills 2-Yr Old Step Son, Hangs Herself In Cuttack

Cuttack(KCN): In a shocking incident, a woman allegedly ended her life by hanging herself after killing her minor step-son in Odisha's Cuttack district here today. The incident was reported from Srirampur locality under Madhupatna police limits. The deceased was identified as Shilpi Khuntia and her two-year-old step-son Shivan. Family dispute is suspected to have led to the crime. As per reports, Shilpi was the second wife of Santosh Khuntia. Shivan was Santosh's son from his first marriage. While Santosh was an



engineer, Shilpi was account admin of Fastfix Automotive and earlier a lecturer at Satyasai Engineering College, Balasore. She had studied civil engineering from Synergy Institute of Engineering and Technology. Sources said Shilpi and her husband were going through marital

discord for a while. On Monday, Shilpi was found hanging while Shivan was found with his throat slit. While the exact cause of death is yet to be established, preliminary investigation suggests that conflict in the marital life of the deceased triggered her to take the extreme step. The couple was

reportedly not getting along well. Earlier, a case too had been filed with the police after the duo had a fight but the matter had been resolved with a compromise. While families from both sides alleged that the other party was responsible for the crime, Shilpi's Facebook profile, which a display picture reading "I quit. Because that was the only option. Until...", hints that she was under extreme mental duress. Police meanwhile has seized both the bodies for postmortem. A case has been registered and further investigation ins underway.

Odisha: Statewide Bus Strike Put On Hold

Bhubaneswar(KCN): The Odisha Bus Owners' Association has decided to postpone its planned statewide bus strike from January 17 (Tuesday). The association had earlier announced to hold statewide strike seeking fulfillment of its 10-point charter of demands. "We have decided to postpone our planned



strike from tomorrow after fruitful discussions with the state government," said Odisha Bus Owners' Association secretary Debendra Sahu.

The state government has fulfilled three of our demands in the first phase and it has assured us to fulfill the remaining by March 31, Sahu added. "The state government has

sought some time to fulfill the rest of our demands. We have accepted the state government's proposal but we will resort to agitation if it fails to fulfill our demands by March 31," Sahu said. According to Sahu, the state government has assured the bus owners' association to raise the duration of its scrapping policy to 20 years from the existing

15 years. Similarly, the state government has agreed to permit the association to run sleeper coaches in daytime, he added. "We have decided to postpone the statewide bus strike till March 31 as per the request of the state government," said Odisha Bus Owners' Association spokesperson Debashish Nayak.

Odisha Man Bangs 2-Year-Old Daughter To Death; Held

Deogarh(KCN): In a barbaric incident, a man allegedly killed his two-year-old daughter by banging her on the ground at Lambadura village under Laimura police station in Deogarh district of Odisha today.

According to sources, Kisan used to pick up quarrels with his wife Shakuntala and beat her up in an inebriated condition. Unable to bear the torture, Shakuntala had left Kisan and she along with her daughter was

staying with her parents at their native Kulakuta village under Bonai police limits for last one month. Kisan reportedly brought Shakuntala and their daughter to his village a few days ago on the pretext of applying for an

Aadhaar card for the kid and enrolling her to the Anganwadi centre. Kisan allegedly thrashed Shakuntala in a drunken state on the occasion of Makar Sankranti on January 14 (Saturday). Protesting the incident, Shakuntala once again

fled to her parents' house yesterday, sources said. A heavily drunk Kisan reportedly banged the child on the ground while she was asleep in the morning hours of today. The child died on the spot, sources added.

Paradip: 13 Fishermen On Two Trawlers Go Missing In Sea

Jagatsinghpur(KCN): As many as 13 fishermen on two trawlers went missing in sea off Paradip coast in Odisha's Jagatsinghpur district. Five days later, their whereabouts were known today. As per reports, they were about 20 km



away from the coast and safe. The Fisheries Department had written to the Coast Guard and Marine Police to locate and rescue them. According to reports, the fishermen had gone around 88 nautical miles away from Paradip on the two trawlers for fishing activity. As they didn't return to the harbour within the expected time, the owners of the trawlers tried to contact them, but in vain. The trawler owners later informed the department about the mishap. A search operation was launched to trace the missing fishermen.

WOSCA' steps forward to people good sanitation as practice

Barbil(KCN): Amongst multiple factors affecting people's health, sanitation plays a



crucial role.

While several government initiatives and schemes have been launched to promote better sanitation and health, sometimes the facilities are not easily accessible in the

IIT Kharagpur Develops a Technology to Bypass Signature Verification through Electromagnetic Fault Injection

Kolkata(KCN): Researchers and engineers of Secured Embedded Architecture Lab (SEAL) of IIT Kharagpur, has succeeded to overcome the signature checking on a Raspberry Pi3 device using a glitch attack involving electromagnetic fault injection. An unprotected memory-access operation in optee_os in Trusted Firmware Open Portable Trusted Execution Environment (OP-TEE) before 3.20 allows a physically proximate adversary to bypass signature verification and install malicious trusted applications via electromagnetic fault injections.

OP-TEE is an open source Trusted Execution Environment (TEE) implementing the Arm Trust Zone technology. OP-TEE has been ported to many Arm devices and platforms used for solutions used in Internet of Things (IoT).

Various software companies have different levels of countermeasures against fault injection attacks. However, the team from SEAL IIT Kharagpur, comprising of PhD students Nimish Mishra, Anirban Chakraborty, and Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar Awardee Professor Debdeep Mukhopadhyay, Department of Computer Science and Engineering, succeeded in defeating these countermeasures by narrowing down the attack to individual assembly instructions, allowing them to target the victim device very precisely.

This bypasses the integrity checks of the "trusted" system in order to run code with the same privilege as that of security-sensitive code (like password manager, biometric manager) runs. This causes the malicious code to steal encryption keys stored securely inside the "trusted" software, leaking private

remote urban terrains .WOSCA is the foundation of a thriving, progressive society steps forward to aware people towards good sanitation. WOSCA is working with and for communities to foster healthy lifestyles and improve access to good health in rural and urban slums as well. In view of improvement of sanitation programme WOSCA launched a sanitation drive in association with Government primary Health care centre in ward No 1 ,Nalda area under Barbil Municipality of Keonjhar district in Odisha. Councillor Ananda Sandil ,Dr Himansu Jha of Health care centre and all members of Arogya Samity devoted for cleaning of Nalda area beginning from Hirakud colony to Odia colony. Along with cleaning in the area they visit doors of residents to make them aware on good sanitation and to make a practice of good health and hygiene.

data of the user.

Professor Mukhopadhyay remarked, "As the IoT devices are getting more and more ubiquitous and hence physically accessible by adversaries they can offer attack surfaces which can be of catastrophic consequences if not identified and mitigated". Through a side channel attack of electromagnetic pulse injection, the researchers have successfully been able to clear registers making the register value all zeroes. Due to the fact that OP-TEE's TEE SUCCESS value is specified as "0x00000000", their attack was able to successfully fool the signature checking into believing it has a valid signature. The OP-TEE project has already investigated various sorts of software mitigation patterns.

Following responsible disclosure of the vulnerability, SEAL researchers worked closely with the product's vendor to implement the mitigation and countermeasure for the attack. The SEAL team found the mitigation patches to have sufficient level of security against proposed attack vectors. The attack has been awarded a Common Vulnerabilities and Exposures Number (CVE-2022-47549) with a score of 6.4/10 (Medium severity rating) on the NIST NVD database (which is a collection of all attacks published in a year).

Raspberry Pi is a series of small single-board computers (SBCs) developed in the United Kingdom by the Raspberry Pi Foundation in association with Broadcom. It is widely used in many areas of critical public infrastructure, such as for weather monitoring, smart homes, smart power grids etc, because of its low cost, modularity and open design.

Chairman, DVC Felicitated

Kolkata(KCN): Shri Sector" in the Leadership Conclave 2023, a special ini-



awarded for his exemplary role in the category "Transformational Leadership in Power Business

initiative by News18 Bangla Network, organised at the city five-star hotel, Kolkata on January

13, 2023. The award was presented to Shri Singh

& Child Development & Social Welfare, Govt. of West Bengal. The conclave provided an exclusive platform to honour the best entrepreneurs, business leaders, professionals and pioneer organisation from all across Bengal who steered forth the recovery of economy post pandemic, reshaped their venture and innovated along the way. It is indeed a moment of great pride and immense pleasure for the entire team of DVC for being felicitated with an honour of this stature.

SE Rly GM visit different stations, disappointing Barbil Vikas Parishad

Barbil(KCN): Archana Joshi, General Manager, South Eastern Railway inspected

different station under CKP railway division .In this context during her visit Bolani Vikas Parishad led by Shibasis Nanda handed over a memorandum mentioning Bolani ore Mines is a major Mines of SAIL as well as of Rourkela Steel Plant since 1961 and contribution to the growth of the economy is possible because of the sacrifice of the local people .But unfortunately no public rail transport is available for the people approximate Fifty thousand despite their long demand. They used to go to Barbil to avail train for other destinations which is 15kms away from Bolani. They too alleged that the revenue earned by the Bolani station per year Rs . One Thousand(1000) crore on an average. It is due to all the sacrifice made by the local people including sacrificing the land for Mines as well as the Railway line. They confronted all bear hazards of pollution and

related health problems. All those sacrifices are endless . It is painful on their part to wait



2023, 01, 13:35 Barbil, Odisha

for a small demand like a passenger station is quite harassing, they added. On the other hand Barbil Vikas Parishad could not meet on her return from Bolani .As per schedule, She had to inspect Barbil railway station and loading point. But unfortunately, she did not stay at Barbil and went away ignoring Barbil station. Members of Vikas Parishad waited her to handover memorandum on different issues get disappointed. Ashok Thakar said ,the negligence of Railway for Barbil can well understand from the attitude of GM Joshi.

Students Share Experiences Regarding Interaction with PM Centering 'Pariksha pe Charcha'

Kolkata(KCN): Raghunath Mondal of Charmajdia, C B Nagar, Nadia is currently pursuing Geography Honours at Kirori Mal College, University of Delhi. But he is one of the fortunate ones who got the opportunity of interacting with the Prime Minister Narendra Modi on January 20, 2020 centering the students' meet with the Prime Minister titled 'Pariksha pe Charcha'. Mondal disclosed his utmost pleasure regarding that interaction, which he said would never forget in his life. He said it was an overwhelming experience to see the Prime Minister listening to the problems of the students attentively and as a down-to-earth person. Shri Modi also attended to all the queries of the students related to the Board examination, especially, the usual fear of the students regarding public examinations and answered to every

question of the students. Mondal said, Prime Minister's advice regarding how to cope up with exam phobia and how to answer the questions in a proper way helped him a lot to excel in his Board examination. The same experience went with Abhimunna Ghosh of Komarpur, Ketugram, Burdwan East also. He was also overwhelmed with his interaction with the Prime Minister along with a

host of other students, who were privileged to talk to the Prime Minister in the 'Pariksha pe Charcha' programme. Both the students are intrinsically following the advice of Shri Modi in pursuing higher studies and remembering each and every word the Prime Minister uttered to boost their intelligence, vitality to study more and last but not the least to cope up with the exam phobia.

Rourkela Steel Plant service contract orders reach Rs 500 crore annually

ROURKELA(KCN): Service contractor orders of Rourkela Steel Plant (RSP) is likely to reach all time high of Rs 500 crore annually. A substantial portion of the orders remain within the local economy through city-based service contractors.

On the contrary, the ancillary industries in Micro, Small & Medium Enterprise (MSME) sector in and around Rourkela are not able to get adequate supply orders largely due to their lagging behind in technological upgradation to meet quality criteria and capability to produce prescribed items. RSP sources claimed the plant's Contract Cell Works (CCW) department has set all time high record for placing service contract orders to the tune of Rs 454.82 crore in the first three quarters of 2022-23 till December, 2022.

Sources said it is likely to surpass the value of orders for service contracts by end of 2022-23 and a majority of the service contract works are done by the local service contractors to strengthen the local economy. However, manufacturing ancillary industries are lagging behind in absence of adequate procurement from RSP. Industries procuring secondary steel to produce various products are also reportedly left in the lurch owing to lack of support from RSP.

However, RSP sources said a list of 264 imported parts, machines, spares were shared recently with local MSME's/industries to explore the possibility of their replacement

with locally and indigenously developed parts and machines. RSP has also identified around 4,000 items for exclusive procurement through Odisha-based MSME industries. The plant also adheres to the principle of procuring 25 per cent of other items from MSME industries.



Rourkela Chamber of Commerce & Industries (RCCI) president Subrata Patnaik said local ancillary industries are not getting adequate procurement orders from RSP. It would be beneficial for the local economy if RSP sincerely and on priority places adequate procurement orders with local industries and the local MSME units also enhance their capabilities.

Sources said Purvodaya Scheme - "Ispati Ilakon ka Vikas - SAIL Ke Saath" launched in January 2020 by Ministry of Steel has virtually derailed at Rourkela. Former RCCI President Pravin Garg said the Purvodaya scheme provides cash discount and allows supply of steel materials to registered buyers on priority basis. But after providing steel materials to local registered buyers, RSP has stopped entertaining them.

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'Bol Radha Bol' producer Nitin Manmohan dies at 62



MUMBAI: Film producer Nitin Manmohan, known for movies such as 'Bol Radha Bol' and 'Laadla', died on Thursday at a hospital here, his daughter Prachi said.

He was 62. The filmmaker was undergoing treatment at Kokilaben Dhirubhai Ambani Hospital in Navi Mumbai after he had a cardiac arrest on December 3.

Nitin Manmohan was battling several health complications and passed away around 10 am today following status epilepticus (abnormal brain signals), his daughter said.

"He had a cardiac arrest on December 3 and since then he has been on a ventilator. When he was brought to the hospital, the doctors revived him. No oxygen and blood supply in the brain

and other parts of the body led to some damage and caused status epilepticus. Slowly, his condition started deteriorating. He left us today at around 10-10.20 am," Prachi told PTI.

Nitin Manmohan is the son of the late actor Manmohan, who featured in films such as 'Brahmachari', 'Gumnaam' and 'Naya Zamana'. Besides his daughter, the producer is survived by his wife.

Tollywood : Driven by success

When Mrunal Thakur's name was announced as the leading lady in Sita Ramam, many were surprised with her casting. (Photo By Arrangement) 2022 has been a tough year for leading ladies in Tollywood. Top actresses like Rashmika Mandanna, Pooja Hegde, etc., had a bad year as their films weren't successful. However, we also saw some brilliant performances. In a year when most films were rejected by audiences, there was little to celebrate. But if there was any glimmer of sunshine it was the rise of a few actresses

Mrunal Thakur

When Mrunal Thakur's name was announced as the leading lady in Sita Ramam, many were surprised with her casting. But the audience couldn't stop raving about her stellar performance of Sita post the film's release in August. Mrunal won instant applause for bringing gravitas to her character. When asked Mrunal to comment on the success, she says that she couldn't have gotten a better birthday gift than the film's super success. "It was Sita who chose Mrunal and not the other way," Mrunal smiles, adding that she was overwhelmed with the love and appreciation that was poured. "Characters like Sita come your way once in a decade, and I couldn't have asked for a better debut in Tollywood."

Anupama Parameswaran

Interestingly, Anupama Parameswaran has had three releases this year! She started off the year with Rowdy Boys. But it was Karthikeya 2 that saw her showcase her acting chops! Having done a few roles, Anupama shares that her role in Karthikeya 2 made her realise how she had evolved as an actor and a person.

"I loved the journey of Karthikeya 2 so much that when the shooting was over, I felt very disappointed," shares Anupama, adding that the success of the film gave her new enthusiasm. The actress adds that she believes in going hatke films that challenge her to do better. "The costumes I sport, my hairdo, and the body language in the film resembles the real me. So I thoroughly enjoyed playing the part." Anupama likes to be part of content-driven films, and as such she had to let go a few offers for Karthikeya 2. Her transformation from being a chubby girl to sporting a lean look was appreciated. "I have

audience," thanks Meenakshi, recalling on a lighter note that she shot both her films during Covid.

"I think in every actor's journey there's one film that will change their journey forever. That's what happened to me with HIT 2. It has introduced me to a new set of audiences who applauded my performance. My career dynamics have changed with HIT 2," Meenakshi acknowledges, adding the film was such a big hit that people will start taking notice of her subsequent films too.

What's even more exciting according to her was that her one and half year journey has started post Covid. "I am doing five films and have seen so much in a short span of journey," she asserts.

Samantha

In the year, Samantha has been in the news for her personal reasons rather than filmy. But she did not let her personal life affect her work. The actress has shown great character to bounce back and find success at the box office. She has

had two releases this year — Kaathuvaakula Rendu Kaadhala (in Tamil) and Yashoda (Telugu-Tamil). The latter became a super hit and further strengthened her ability to shoulder films. With her ability to pull off female-centric films, Sam has been in a phase of her career where she can choose!

Sam was diagnosed with Myositis and is undergoing treatment on one side, but she continues to surprise the audience with her genre of films. While Yashoda was a film that was about surrogacy, her upcoming film Shakuntalam is a costume drama, and Khushi is a contemporary love story. She wows the audience with her uncanny knack to transform into the character she plays.



realised that mental well-being reflects on our physical health," she replies, adding, "I am game to experiment with roles in various languages because it'll give you the opportunity to play diverse roles," says Anupama who also starred in 18 Pages which was released a few days ago.

Meenakshi Chaudhary

A pageant winner, Meenakshi Chaudhary was new to films and debuted in Tollywood this year with Ravi Teja-starrer Khiladi. While she was able to make some noise with the film, it was HIT 2, released earlier this month, that made the audience take notice of her work. The actress states that she is still discovering and learning the ropes of the industry. "Yes, it's been a great year for me; all thanks to the Telugu

A traditional art to explore our rich tradition and heritage



National puppet fair and puppet show at Jorasanko Thakurbari: Kolkata between December 16-18, 2022. These old traditional audiovisual story telling and communication tools are slowly losing their existence to our modern life style and dominance of social media. However, they still represent one of our greatest national heritage, age old traditions as well our glorious history preserved through meticulous artwork, dedicated training and monumental performance connecting old and modern India through a common string of pride, heritage and traditions. This puppet show was one of its kind. Indeed it was very different and the theme that was all throughout unique. The concept, the blending of light and

sound brought out the impact of the show. The orchestra with the sound effects with the different movement of the puppet made the whole coordination very impressive. The puppets were also very different and with modern ideas. Another day puppet show was with live characters and was beyond imagination. The costume, the movements, the posture for the real humans who created the impressions of live puppets was a very novel idea. The presentation was equally exclusive, and the audience thoroughly enjoyed. The crowd had variety of age group and it was evident that they were from different sections of the society and professions. However, the show could capture the attention and there was silence all over and end to end excitement. The shows gained lot of accolades, and all look forward to such exemplary shows every year and more frequently. The puppetry fair was

a monumental display of the inner expressions of the artists in representing various facets of our society, social customs and religious practices, traditions and folk tales through the use of puppetry. Various forms of puppetry was displayed on this platform including stick, thread, rod and hand puppetry, shadow puppetry as well full



body puppetry (where an actor acts as a puppet to tell a story interacting with other artists), and last but not the least story telling puppetry. The piece presented by globally acclaimed story teller Priyanka Chatterjee with his team using puppetry, classical music, light and shade with a

Saikat Kumar Basu

formidable folklore in Hindu/Urdu was a spectacular performance that left the audience captivated. If used properly these art forms can serve as outstanding tools for education, awareness and sensitivity campaigns for ecological and environmental

conservation as well as effective science communication tools to reach the mass both in rural as well as urban platforms. The use of traditional tools such as puppetry has immense potential even to this day of over active social media platforms to deliver awareness about science, health,

hygiene, superstitions, religious and caste based social discrimination, gender equality, education and well being of neglected girl child, agriculture and forestry, positive socio-political and socio-religious messages to the public, constructive political awareness and activism as well in teaching about our social values and responsibilities, morality, ethics, and bringing greater good to the contemporary citizen by transforming into educated, sensitive and responsible citizens with empathy for nature as well our society.

Tholpavakoothu is a

form of shadow puppetry that is practiced in Kerala, Tamil Nadu, India. It is performed using leather puppets and is performed in temples or in villages in specially built theatres. Thanks to Sudip Gupta, Director, Doll theatre for conducting an outstanding workshop on shadow puppetry at Jorasanko Thakurbari, Kolkata on December 17th. It was a great fun, in making shadow puppets. The workshop participants had the greatest pleasure to meet Padmashree Ramachandra Pulaver and his son Rajiv Pulaver. Ramachandra Pulavar belongs to the 13th generation of puppeteers belonging

to the Tholpavakoothu tradition of shadow puppetry from Kerala. The participants had the chance to explore their outstanding skills and entrepreneurship and enjoy the mesmerizing beauty of amazing shadow puppets. The Puppetry workshop was very interesting. They started the show with a story, the history of puppetry and indeed it was something which many of us were new and hence found very interesting and unique. During the workshop it was explained how the puppet show came into India and how it was been carried through ages. Different types of puppets and background of these puppets were covered. Once again the audience represented different age groups and professions; but all were very keen and looked forward to this unique workshop. The materials were presented and show how puppets can be made. Also a screen was made to represent the puppets and the

shadow show. While the workshop started and we were asked to break into groups of three, it was very interesting and irrespective of age we all went back to our childhood keen to use all the material and different items to make the puppets. The instructors demonstrated the process and giving innovative ideas how to proceed, how to use the materials and successfully finish the puppets with the strings and the stocks and making the designs and cutouts with different tools. Finally the participants successfully created their own puppets. It was an unique memorable experience, one of its kind and participants cherished their experience. Certificate of participation was provided by the organizers and handed by Padmashree Tamchandra Pulavar at the successful completion of the workshop.

Kolkata, West Bengal India

Latter To Editor

Appalling find outs from NASA

Dear Editor,
According to a NASA analysis, the Earth's average surface temperature in 2022 was the fifth warmest year compared to last six decades. According to researchers from NASA's; global temperatures in 2022 were about 1 degrees Celsius higher than the average for the baseline period continuing the planet's long-term warming trend. This warming trend is alarming. The effects of our changing climate are already being felt: Cyclones are becoming more powerful, forest fires are getting worse, droughts are wreaking havoc, and sea levels are rising especially in Asia. Since the start of modern recordkeeping in 1880 by NASA, the last nine years have been the warmest on record. The simple reason for the warming trend is that human activities continue to pump enormous amounts of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere. Following a brief decline in 2020 caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, human-caused greenhouse gas emissions have increased as per reports. Scientists from NASA and other countries recently found that carbon dioxide emissions in 2022 were the highest ever recorded. Using the Earth Surface Mineral Dust Source Investigation instrument, which was launched by NASA it is discovered that a few methane super-emitters, another potent greenhouse gas was released to atmosphere heavily.

Scientists warns that if global warming continues the rainfall and tropical storm intensity will surely increase, along with the severity of droughts and the impact of storm. Therefore stringent actions needed around the globe to reduce greenhouse gas emissions for top notch future.

VijayKumar H K
Raichur, Karnataka
Environmentalist

No 'One size fits all' strategy for funding start-ups

By Ritwik Mukherjee



When it comes to start-ups, the great debate over profitability Vs growth seems to be continuing. The debate, interestingly, continues both from the startup owners' point of views and from the investors' perspectives as well. If deliberations at an interactive session organised by the Bengal National Chamber of Commerce & Industries (BNCCI) in Kolkata are anything to go by, it is not a question of choice, it is a question of balance. Hence, growth is necessary not only in starting years but in ongoing also. Whereas, profitability differs from sector to sector, which makes the growth rate and profitability outlooks in terms of the number of years different from sector to sector. To be successful and remain in business, both profitability and growth are important and necessary for a company to survive

and remain attractive to investors and analysts. Profitability is, of course, critical to a company's existence, but growth is crucial to long-term survival. The speakers at the panel discussion on 'Start Up Focus- Profitability or Growth' included some of the best brains like Prof Santanu Ray, Manjit Nayak, Director of STPI, Digbijoy Chakraborty, CEO, Sunetch Venture and Somenath Chatterjee, CEO PKS Capital Advisory LLP. Mind you that for India, start-ups have always been significant drivers of economic and business activity. The biggest driver to their success has been the policy environment created in the country. With some of the government's recent announcements, startups have got that big push which leads to endless possibilities for growth for India. India has the fastest growing startup

ecosystem with investments in technology peaking the scale. The good thing is that the funding opportunities to startups have been enhanced through the Fund of Funds Scheme with an overlay of Rs 10,000 crore and the recently launched Startup India Seed Fund Scheme with an outlay of Rs 945 crore. The aspiring entrepreneurs must cash in on this and take the startup ecosystem to the next level. But what the

investors look at while coughing up their money for start-ups- growth or profitability? Experts are of the view that both profitability and growth are important in today's parlance. Without growth the future profitability would not come. Companies need to be on the growth trajectory. But its equally important for the start ups to look at the operating profits. A growing company may not be earning any profits yet, but may nevertheless provide

a great investment opportunity. Some other times, a lack of profitability can be a huge red flag that something is wrong with the firm. Determining and focusing on profitability at the beginning, or start-up, of a company, is essential. On the other hand, growth of market and sales is the means to achieving that initial profitability. Identifying growth opportunities should become the next important item on any company's goal list

after a company moves beyond the start-up phase. Therefore the decision to lay more thrust on growth of profitability varies and should vary from time to time and from start-up to start-up. There is no 'one size fits all' strategy for funding start-ups. Earlier in the day there was a similar session on Valuation of Start-up- Investor's Perspective. The panel had eminent members from the Venture Capital, Private Equity and Bank. It was moderated by Somenath Chatterjee, Investment Banker. The panel discussed about what all the investors look at for investing in start ups. The panel had an interactive session with the audience where there start-ups and student of the innovation cell of colleges. There were also pitch session done by some of the start-up to the investors.

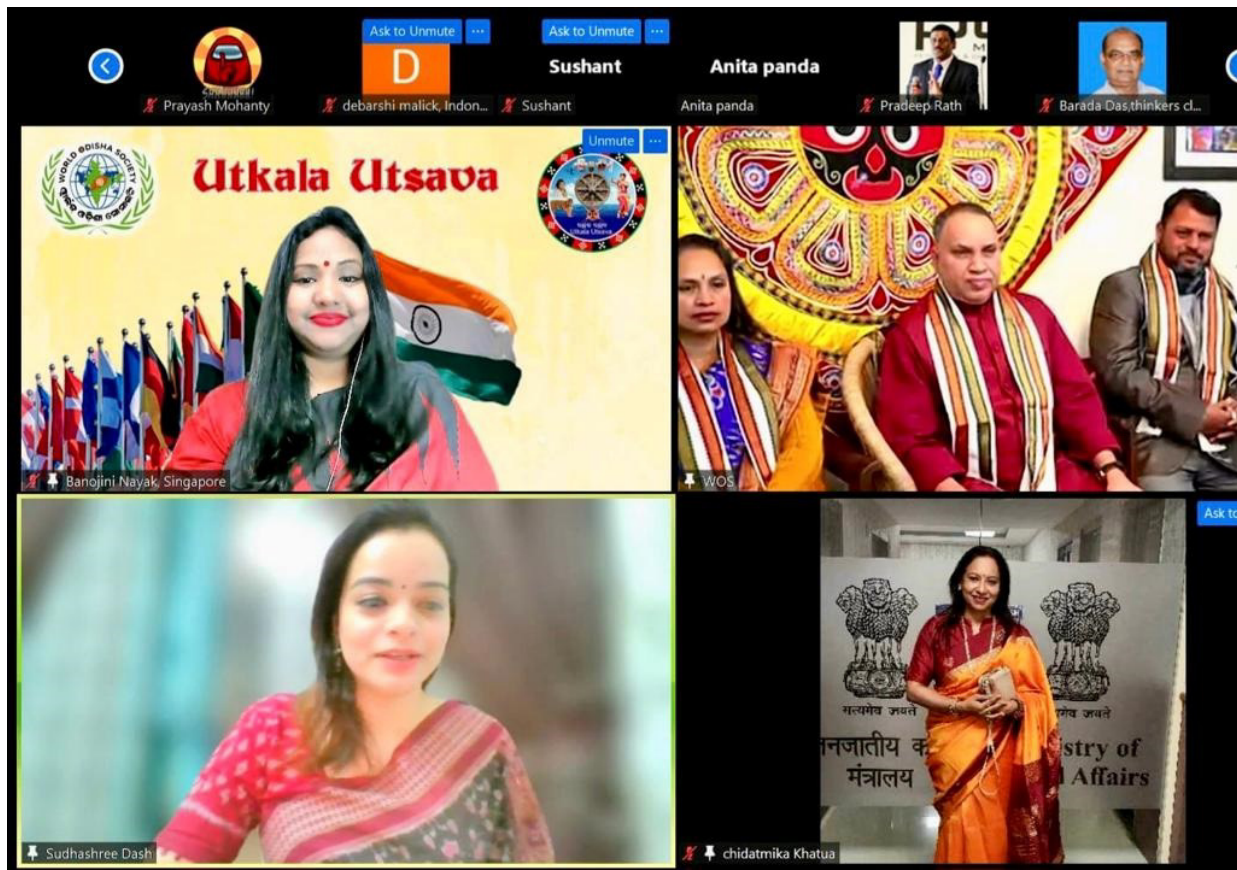
World Odisha Society calls for Global Odia Unity WOS Celebrates Second Foundation Day

Bhubaneswar/New Delhi, Dt: 16 .01.: World Odisha Society(WOS) gave a clarion call to World over Odia Diaspora to unite. WOS appeals Odias staying in various Indian States outside Odisha and in different countries of the World numbering around one and half crore to unitedly vouch for the all round advancement of their Mother State Odisha. Attending Second Foundation Day Ceremony entitled "Utkala Utsava" virtually hundreds of prominent Non Resident Odias community leaders from Australia to America and U.A.E. to Europe took vow to build a brand new progressed and flourished Odisha by the year 2036, when Odisha will be celebrating 100 years of her formation. The Mega Event was celebrated with pomp, splendour and much fanfare.

Attending 'Utkala Utsava' as Chief Guest Padmavibhushan Awardee Sudarshan Sahu described the art, taste, fragrance, facets and essence of Odisha as unique and outstanding. Shri Sahu exudes confidence that World Odisha Society can play a pivotal and proactive role to construct Modern Odisha. Addressing the gathering as distinguished guest Germany based renowned writer Dr. Rajendra Narayan Das expressed his deep concerns over the poor state of affairs in core sectors like education, health and culture in Odisha. Mentioning that the civilisation revisits in every twenty

elicited during the Festival for their exceptional and exemplary achievements. Some couples have also been honoured during the celebration. They include Prafulla and Sulochana Das, Pradeep and Bahniprava Rath, Ajay Kumar and KunKun Das, Nibedita Giri and Bhubanananda Pradhan Asit Kumar and Priyatma Kar, Umakanta and Sukanti Jena, Acharya Abhimanyu and Biswadeepa Sahu. Other celebrated personalities who have also been felicitated include Ravi Narayn Behera, Pabitra Maharatha, Ankit Maurya, Lakhan Sharma, Basanti Parida, Priya Ranjan Mohanty, Alok Panda and Nandan Dwibedi.

Highlight of Utkala Utsava was presentation of a colourful cultural extravaganza. Noted singer Anindita Das, Celebrated Vocalist Bibekananda Rout, Cultural General Secretary of WOS Kaveri Behera, Cuisine Joint General Secretary Pushpanjali Barik, Guruma Mamta Pradhan, WOS's Auditor Sudhir Dash and Ms. Kavita enthralled the audiences with their scintillating numbers. Spectacular Dance performance by the artistes of Silpika classical and Creative school under the guidance of Basudeb Nath was the major attraction of the Festival. The whole programme was co-ordinated and conducted by Sudhasree Dash from Dubai and Banojini Nayak from Bhubaneswar in a smooth and seamless manner.



five years Dr Das advised to be practical and pragmatic in adopting the emerging trend as per the expectation of current time. Lauding the accomplishment of WOS in connecting Odias belonging to every nook and corner of the Globe, Honourable Guest Director of Satyajit Ray Film and Tv Institute in Kolkata Himansu Khatua sought the blessings of Lord Jagannath for the further progress of the Society. Delivering his speech Guest of Honour Additional Press Secretary of President Bijay Nayak stressed on the need to feel proud for being Odias as a race. Shri Nayak informed that Kujibar Patra published in Odia by Sadhu Sundar Das was the first publication in the country. Participating in the online meeting as Guest of Honour Mayor of Bhubaneswar Sulochana Das sought the help and co-operation of Non Resident Odias to develop the capital city as a World Class metropolis.

Delivering welcome address Chairman of World Odisha Society Kishore Dwibedi, reiterated World Odisha society's commitment to ensure the evolution of Odisha as a top ranking developed state of India. The Founder of WOS Dr Arundhati Debi declared that WOS is fully determined to establish the New and prosperous Odisha.

Speaking on the occasion from Australia the Vice Chairman of WOS Dr Nalini Pati mentioned that preparation of a database of Odias all over the planet has been the high priority in Society's agenda. President of Abu Dhabi Odia Samaj Pradeep Kumar Rath appealed for combined initiatives to establish the speciality of Odisha in International arena. President of Gulf Odia Samaj Ajay Kumar Das and General Secretary of UAE Odisha Samaj Pritish Dash Stressed on strengthening the base of WOS. President of Tanzania Odia Samaj Bijay Sahu announced the joining of his Organisation in WOS. Observing that the Language is the parameter of prosperity WOS's Mother tongue Promotion General Secretary Pabitra Maharatha emphasised on the promotion, propagation and popularisation of Odia Language throughout the world.

Participating in the deliberation other dignitaries like Asit Kumar Kar, Sudhir Dash, Umakant Jena, Hrushikesh Patra, Nibedita Giri, Ravi Mahapatra, Ramkrushna Dash, Krupanidhi Biswal, Ravi Narayan Behera and Debasish Srichandan wished God Speed and further rise of WOS.

Guinness Book of world Record holders Keshab Swain, Shashanka Sekahr Dash, Aman Chhatra, Binita Jena, Jayaram Rana, Sachin Behera, Sandhya Rani Behera, Smruti Sudha, Arun Mahanta, Rajesh Kumar Meher and Suraj Kumar Meher were fe-

Prominent personalities present include Chairman of Reception Committee Brahma Mishra, Vice Chairman Manoj Nayak, Convenor of Celebration committee Akshaya Mohanty, Debarshi Mallick from Indonesia, Chiranjeev Swain from Singapore, Badri Mahapatra, Barada Prasanna Das, Hrushikesh Rath, Dr. Anita Panda, WOS's Women's Wing General Secretary Chidatmika Khatua, Vice President Dr Pravati Panigrahi from Australia, Sashadhar Das, Pravati Nayak, Dr Sarojini Pani, Vikash Sahoo, Jayant Gantayat, WOS's Spiritual General Secretary Dr. Jayashri Nanda from U.K., Joint General Secretary Dr. Sagar Ranjan Tripathy, Satyabrata Mohanty, Dr. Bijay Kumar Maharana, WOS's India Chapter Joint General Secretary Lili Jenamani, Santosh Rout and Saritdeep Satpathy. Nandan Dwibedi handled the digital control room ably.

Crucial BJP national meet in Delhi, plans for Telangana on the cards

HYDERABAD: The two-day Bharatiya Janata Party's national executive meeting in New Delhi starting on Monday is expected to be significant for Telangana with the state heading for polls later this year. With speculation rife in the run up to this meeting about possible changes in the state leadership, the meeting is expected to provide clarity on the continuation of Bandi Sanjay Kumar as the state BJP president, and also discuss its plans for preparing the BJP for the state elections.

It is expected that Sanjay will be formally given a second term as the state party president as the BJP is learnt to be reluctant to change

leadership as it gears up for the polls. The message from the party



would be that any differences that are within, must be sorted out by the leaders who should

Unnao rape case: Delhi HC grants interim bail to Kuldeep Sengar to attend daughter's wedding

NEW DELHI: The Delhi High Court on Monday granted interim bail to expelled BJP leader Kuldeep Singh Sengar, who is serving life term for raping a minor girl in Uttar Pradesh's Unnao in 2017, to enable him to attend the wedding of his daughter. A bench of Justices Mukta Gupta and Poonam A Bamba suspended the sentence from January 27 to February 10 and asked Sengar to furnish two sureties of Rs 1 lakh each and report to the SHO concerned on a daily basis during this period.



Sengar, represented by senior advocates N Hariharan and P K Dubey and lawyer Kanhaiya Singhal, informed the court the wedding rituals and ceremonies will be held in Gorakhpur and Lucknow, and being the only male family member, he has to make the arrangements. Meanwhile, a similar plea by Sengar was listed before Justice Dinesh Kumar Sharma in a separate case in which he has been serving 10 years imprisonment for the death of Unnao rape victim's father in custody.

As advocate Mehmood Pracha, appearing for the complainant, submitted that he was not served with the application for interim release, the court asked Sengar's lawyer to supply the copy and listed it for hearing on January 19.

Sengar's lawyer apprised the single judge about the order passed by the division bench and said they are yet to get the order copy. Sengar had earlier informed the court that the wedding was scheduled for February 8.

The counsel for the CBI said a status report has been filed by the agency and it was found that two halls have been booked for the wedding ceremonies.

Sengar's appeal challenging the trial court's verdict in the Unnao rape case is already pending in the high court.

He has sought quashing of the December 16, 2019 judgement of the trial court which convicted him.

Sengar has also sought setting aside of the December 20, 2019 order sentencing him to imprisonment for the remainder of his life.

The trial court had convicted Sengar under various provisions, including section 376 (2) of the IPC which deals with the offence of rape committed by a public servant who takes advantage of his official position and commits rape on a woman in his custody as such public servant or in the custody of a public servant subordinate to him.

It had awarded him the maximum punishment of life term with a rider that the convict will remain in jail for the "remainder of his natural biological life" and also imposed on him

a fine of Rs 25 lakh. The girl was kidnapped and raped by Sengar in 2017 when she was a minor. On March 13, 2020, Sengar was sentenced to 10 years rigorous imprisonment and slapped a fine of Rs 10 lakh in the case of death of the rape victim's father in custody. The trial court had said "no leniency" can be shown for killing a family's "sole bread earner".

It had also awarded 10-year jail term to Sengar's brother Atul Singh Sengar and five others for their role in the custodial killing of the father of the rape victim. The father of the rape victim was arrested at the behest of Sengar in a case under Arms Act and had died in custody on April 9, 2018 owing police brutality.

The trial court, which did not hold the accused guilty of murder, awarded the maximum sentence for the offence of culpable homicide not amounting to murder to convicts under section 304 of the IPC after holding there was no intention to kill.

The case was transferred to Delhi from a trial court in Uttar Pradesh on the directions of the Supreme Court on August 1, 2019.

The apex court, taking cognisance of the rape survivor's letter written to the then Chief Justice of India Ranjan Gogoi, had on August 1, 2019 transferred all five cases registered in connection with the Unnao rape incident from a Lucknow court to the court in Delhi with directions to hold the trial on a daily basis and complete it within 45 days.

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come together with the sole purpose of ensuring a BJP victory in

Kishan Reddy, Sanjay, Dr K Laxman, G Vivek Venkatswamy national executive meeting later in the afternoon.

Also, a formal request for Prime Minister Narendra Modi to contest from Telangana in

the Lok Sabha elections next year from Mahbubnagar constituency is expected to be made by former MP AP Jithender Reddy.

The party had already conducted one round of survey in the constituency to evaluate initial response of the people to the idea of Modi contesting from there. The two-day meeting is expected to draw a road map ahead for Telangana, as well as other states - Nagaland, Tripura, Karnataka, Mizoram, Meghalaya, Rajasthan, Chattisgarh, and Madhya Pradesh, along with the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir where state elections are round the corner.

240th Foundation Day of The Asiatic Society celebrated

Kolkata (KCN, Partha Roy): The Asiatic Society celebrated its 240th Foundation Day on 15th January 2023 at iconic heritage Vidyasagar Hall in Kolkata.

Celebration program began by placing wreath at the tomb of Sir William Jones, Founder of the society, at South Park Street cemetery, followed by Flag hoisting ceremony at The Asiatic Society premises, which was followed by Foundation Day oration by Professor Chandrima Shaha, President of Indian National Science Academy, former Director and Professor of Eminence of National Institute of Immunology, New Delhi.

Professor Chandrima Shaha spoke on "Pandemics: Impact on creativity through the ages"

Professor Chandrima Shaha is first woman academic and scientist to deliver Foundation Day oration of The Asiatic Society in its accountable history.

Welcoming the august gathering, Dr. Satyabrata Chakraborty, General Secretary of The Asiatic Society spoke about uninterrupted

journey of The Asiatic Society since 1784 with accommodated and long sustained academic tradition as in case of any premier heritage institution of the world. The Asiatic Society is a national pride on its own merits and strength and is involved in promotion of research on classical knowledge in history, sci-



ence arts primarily in man and nature interface.

The Asiatic Society is continuing its legacy academic agenda mandate since its inauguration in 1784 by Sir William Jones till

date. The Asiatic Society started to explore Asian Civilizational culture in general and Indian civilizational cultural developments in particular.

Professor Chandrima Shaha spoke on evolution of pandemic since the beginning of human civilization development. Professor

Shaha mentioned evolution of microbes started much before evolution of homosapiens. Evolution of microbes including bacteria and viruses had touched human civilization development from pre-historic time including leading to extinction of various species from face of planet Earth.

Professor Shaha mentioned Smallpox was used as a tool of war. Smallpox devastated the AZTECS and Spain conquer a American civilization nearly 500 years ago.

Smallpox was known during Egyptian civilization and even caused death of elite rulers as well as royal family members.

Professor Chandrima Shaha mentioned smallpox triggered the greatest public health achievement - "Variolation --Vaccination--Eradication"

For India, accounts in the 18th century show that the practice of inoculation did existed including in Bengal.

Edward Jenner pioneered the development of vaccination technology. Edward Jenner's method of preventive care through vaccination saved billions of lives in modern times. Professor Chandrima Shaha concluded by

saying " We know so much, yet we do not know enough " .

Professor Swapan Kumar Pramanik President of The Asiatic Society in his Presidential address highlighted historical legacy of The Asiatic Society. Professor Pramanik mentioned even before setting foot in India Sir William Jones was contemplating to explore oriental civilizational heritage. Sir William Jones established The Asiatic Society to explore and research on oriental civilizational development.

Sir William Jones gave thrust on documentation and publication of research findings to record as well as spread awareness about multifaceted oriental cultural and civilizational development. Professor Pramanik mentioned Sir William Jones thought was " publish or perish " . Professor Pramanik mentioned about Raja Rajendralal Mitra first Indian President of The Asiatic Society who researched on multifaceted culture of Odisha and who published major scholarly work " The antiquities of Orissa " . Further, Professor Pramanik mentioned four major societies, namely Anthropological Survey of India, Botanical Survey of India, Zoological Society of India, and Indian Science Congress have originated from The Asiatic Society. The Asiatic Society also played role in establishment of Indian Museum in Kolkata which is one of the largest museum in Asia and museum development movement in India. The library of the society has rich collection of more than 1.5 lac books ,rare manuscripts , historical artifacts, documents, tablets etc. which are available for serious knowledge seekers to study. Professor Pramanik echoed the spirit of Processor Chandrima Shaha " We know so much, yet we do not know enough " .

FEST Presents Grand Show

Bhubaneswar: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik opened the 2nd edition of .FEST on Sunday for an evening of fun filled extravaganza. The first day of the festival of festivals witnessed a thrilling line up of curtain raiser music and dance performances; with some of the most popular celebrities gracing the event.

Bhubaneswar joined hands to make this ceremony a grand success, thanks to sincere efforts of Shri Singh.

The tone was set for the evening as the event got off to a great start with performances from Disha Patani, Guru Randhawa and Black Swan bringing electrifying magic to the stage.



One of the most anticipated events of the day was the international food festival showcasing global cuisines from 16 participating countries in FIH hockey Men's World Cup 2023.

With visitors both young and elderly delighting on popular cuisines from various states of India and relishing on delicacies from Odisha. As part of the cultural extravaganza, the Night Bazaar, Flea Market brightened up Bhubaneswar's winter nights and provided a remarkable stage for regional artists, start-ups, performers, makers, and creators to showcase their products. The Flea Market set up with an aim to promote the handloom and handicrafts of Odisha, turned out to be a spectacular crowd

puller with more than 120 plus home-grown products at display, making it a shopping fiesta for the visitors.

The distinguishing feature of the .FEST has been Sebbe-Au-Ebbe (Then & Now), a photo exhibition that showcased the glorious urban/city history of Bhubaneswar, one of the 1st Planned cities of Independent India, along with the first of its kind uniquely curated experiential trails around the city of Bhubaneswar, additionally offering visitors to experience the Bhubaneswar Festival of Storytelling (BhuFesSto) specifically curated for the children along with elderly to keep alive the great saga of local literature, poetry & stories.

Providing the experience of a fortnight long festival of festivals, .FEST was first curated in 2018. The previous edition of .FEST witnessed a massive success with millions of Bhubaneswar locals & others from around the world including the best hockey players along with International and national media. This year, the visitors can experience trails around the city of Bhubaneswar, visitors can also experience the Bhubaneswar Festival of Storytelling (BhuFesSto) specifically curated for the children along with elderly to keep alive the great saga of local literature, poetry & stories.


Shri Singh, Vice Chairman BDA and Managing Director OMC has been instrumental in organizing a massive show of .FEST, which was having electrifying effect on the audience. BDA and OMC as well as Smart City

The cultural festival brings an experience like never-before for the people of Odisha with oodles of Fun, Food, Entertainment, Stories or Trails packed from 15th to 29th January 2023.

Chief Minister Shri Patnaik said "This is a moment of glory for Odisha, we are here experiencing an ecstatic evening of honor. The India and the world is present in Odisha, and let us celebrate with all our hearts and minds together. Bhubaneswar is immensely honored to host the FIH Men's Hockey World Cup tournament for the second consecutive time, where people from 16 nations and across the globe are coming here to enjoy every bit of our city".

Ashok Panda, Minister, Science & Technology, Usha Devi, Minister of Housing and Urban Development, Sulochana Das, BMC Mayor, Ananta Narayan Jena, MLA, Susanta Kumar Rout MLA graced the occasion. Pradeep Kumar Jena, Development Commissioner, Balwant Singh, Vice-Chairman, BDA, and Vijay Amruta Kulange, Commissioner, BMC joined the ceremony.

Shri Singh, Vice Chairman BDA and Managing Director OMC has been instrumental in organizing a massive show of .FEST, which was having electrifying effect on the audience. BDA and OMC as well as Smart City



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RSB Transmissions partners with EVR Motors Israel to electrify India's LCV market

PUNE: Pune-based Rs 3,000 crore engineering firm show that the light commercial vehicles sector would like to powertrains, he said. "EVR will design and co-develop with EVR will work together to develop various motors for



RSB Transmissions has entered the EV segment, especially the light commercial vehicle (LCV) segment, by partnering with EVR Motors, Israel. The latter are leading design innovators in the EV segment. The agreement was signed in the presence of RK Behera, chairman and SK Behera, vice chairman & MD, RSB Group. "The recent business developments in Asia

enjoy the same benefits that our TSRF technology brings to other EV segments like 2W, 3W & Buses," Opher Doron, CEO at EVR Motors, Israel, said in a statement. This agreement combines RSB's sector leading engineering and manufacturing with EVR's innovative motor design to lead the field in cost effective, low weight, high performance

RSB, electric motors for the LCV segment," Nishit Behera, executive director, business strategy at RSB Group, said. The motors will be based on EVR's Trapezoidal Stator Radial Flux Permanent Magnet (TS-RFPM) Motor, which are 30-50 per cent lighter and smaller compared to standard e-motors, he pointed out. As part of this agreement, RSB and

LCVs. EVR will also support the set-up of RSB's assembly line, while RSB will manufacture and sell the e-motors to automotive OEMs in India. With 14 manufacturing plants spread over right locations across India, RSB operates in two verticals, automotive and CMI (construction, mining & infrastructure) equipment and aggregates.

Paytm Payments Bank gets final RBI nod to operate as Bharat Bill Payment Operating Unit



NEW DELHI: Paytm Payments Bank on Monday said it has received final approval from the Reserve Bank of India to operate as a Bharat Bill Payment Operating Unit (BBPOU). Under Bharat Bill Payment System (BBPS), a BBPOU is allowed to facilitate bill payment services for electricity, phone, DTH, water, gas insurance, loan repayments, FASTag recharge, education fees, credit card bills and municipal taxes. BBPS is owned by the National Payments Corporation of India. So far, Paytm Payments Bank Ltd (PPBL) has been undertaking this activity under in-principle authorisation from RBI. "PPBL has got the final approval from RBI to operate as Bharat Bill Payment Operating Unit (BBPOU) under the Payment and Settlement Systems Act, 2007. As an entity

under Bharat Bill Payment System (BBPS), PPBL has got the final authorization to conduct bill payment and aggregation business as a BBPOU," the company said in a statement. Alibaba sells nearly half of its direct stake in Paytm at Rs 535.9 per share Under RBI's guidance, PPBL will display all agent institutions onboard on its website. "Our vision is to drive financial inclusion by offering users greater access to digital services. With this approval, we will further increase the adoption of digital payments by merchant billers and enable them with secure, fast and convenient transactions. Through the Paytm app, users can make convenient payments for their bills and benefit from automatic payment and reminder services," a Paytm Payments Bank spokesperson said.

Most builders expect housing prices to rise further in 2023: Survey

New Delhi: Around 58 per cent of developers expect housing prices to increase this year because of rise in input costs, while 32 per cent builders feel it will remain stable, according to a survey. According to the 'Real Estate Developers Sentiment Survey', by Realtors apex body CREDAI, real estate consultant Colliers India and property research firm Liases Foras, 43 per cent of developers expect residential demand to remain stable in 2023, while 31 per cent feel the demand would increase up to 25 per cent. As many as 341 real estate developers from various parts of the country participated in the joint survey conducted during the last two months.



"An overwhelming 58 per cent of the developers feel that housing prices are likely to rise in 2023 amidst volatile input costs, economic uncertainties and sustained inflation rates," the report said. However, the survey revealed that about 32 per cent of the developers believe that the prices will remain stable in 2023. Housing prices have been on the rise over the last few quarters, led by robust housing demand as well as rise in input costs, the report said. The survey report also showed that 43 per cent of developers saw a 10-20 per cent rise in project costs in 2022 amidst rising input costs. As per the survey, the developers want 'ease of doing business' from the government. "Homebuyers remain enthused about purchasing homes, despite rising interest rates," Colliers India CEO Ramesh Nair said. Real estate developers too are focusing on launching projects that are aligned as per the

needs of the homebuyers, Nair said, adding that builders are also focusing on completing their pending projects and bringing in demand-led supply. The survey findings showed that almost half (46 per cent) of the developers believe that a

probable recession will have a moderate impact on their business. As much as 31 per cent expect minor impact, while 15 per cent believe severe affect. CREDAI President Harsh Vardhan Patodia said, "The previous year provided the much-needed impetus and led to record-breaking sales in the last decade." More than 70 per cent of the respondents believe the demand for home ownership to either increase or remain stable in 2023. "With such sentiment, most of the developers in the community (87 per cent) are looking to expand their offerings and the year is likely to see a surge in new launches equal to the current supply under construction," Patodia said. Rising population, wealth growth, and rapid urbanisation are the key influencing factors driving the sector's growth, he added. "2022 witnessed the highest-ever sales and new launches across major cities in India. We have also seen a marginal increase in property prices. The market is likely to maintain the momentum that the sentiment survey reaffirms," said Pankaj Kapoor, Managing Director, Liases Foras.

Top 10 richest in India have Rs 27.52 lakh crore in wealth: Oxfam

NEW DELHI: The combined wealth of India's 100 richest has touched Rs 54.12 lakh crore. The inequality in wealth distribution has only been accentuated by the pandemic. India's poorest 50

of the wealthiest 10% owns more than 72%, the top 5% owns nearly 62%, and the top 1% the country still has the world's highest number of poor at 228.9 million, the total number of



wealth of the top 10 richest stands at Rs 27.52 lakh crore, a 32.8 per cent rise from 2021, according to Oxfam's latest report titled "Survival of the Richest: The India Story". The report says that inequality in India continues to rise with the top 1% of the population holding 40.6% of the total wealth of India in 2021 and the bottom 50% collectively holding just 3% of the total wealth, The Oxfam report says that the

per cent pay two-thirds of GST: Oxfam "Following the pandemic in 2019, the bottom 50% of the population has continued to see its wealth chipped away. By 2020, their income share was estimated to have fallen to only 13% of the national income and less than 3% of the total wealth. Its impact has been exceptionally poor diets, increase in debt and deaths," says the report released late Sunday night. According to the report, the top 10% own more than 80% owns nearly 40.6% of the total wealth in India. The report points to the irony that while Government-backed ONDC completes 4,000 successful transactions NEW DELHI: Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC), an initiative of the Commerce Ministry, has completed 4,000 successful transactions as part of beta testing, a top government official told TNIE. ONDC has on-boarded its first handloom weavers from Kancheeppuram, to sell their products through ONDC across India with support from the Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI). "In addition to products, ONDC is also working with the Kerala government to scale its pilot in open mobility across Kerala. Besides this, it is also working with developmental organisations like SIDBI and NABARD to on-board social sector organisations and farmers producers' organisations (FPOs)," the official said. He also informed that ONDC has on-boarded four social sector enterprises that are life to sell their products across India. The governments and state bodies of Kerala, Tamil Nadu, J&K and Madhya Pradesh have already signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with ONDC, while Karnataka and West Bengal have initial engagement.

Siraj thrives in the blaze of the wobble ball

New Delhi: It was the last edition of IPL when Mohammed Siraj once again felt the need to move the ball back into the right-handers. With only outswing left in his arsenal, he was getting predictable with his bowling and that reflected in how he endured his worst season in terms of economy and average, and even took home the unwanted record of conceding the most number of sixes in a season.

Fast forward to 2023 and it feels like an entirely different time in Siraj's career. He is almost single-handedly responsible for India's resurgence with the ball

in the PowerPlay overs, picking wickets with the new ball match after match. A lot of it is down to his refurbished confidence and his fine-tuning of the wobble ball. The delivery once again formed the basis of his figures of 4 for 32 in the third ODI against Sri Lanka.

"I used to get natural inswing but I lost it, so I developed outswing and worked on the wobble seam delivery," Siraj said after India's record win in Thiruvananthapuram. "It took a lot of time to be effective and for me to get confident about it. I practiced a lot in the nets and during the IPL. I got the confidence that

I can bowl it. I also spoke to Dale Steyn during the IPL when I wasn't getting good outswing, so wobble seam helped me then too.

"When I didn't have a good IPL, I thought that I should also work on my white-ball skills. So I did that and when I got through a couple of good matches, I got the confidence. Now I have stopped thinking about performance and that has helped me. My focus is on executing every ball. Whether I get wickets or not is secondary; my lines and lengths should be consistent."

So how does he bowl the wobble ball, which



has compensated for his lack of an inswinger? "The way I hold the ball, it naturally outswings. When I bowl scrambled seam, I tilt it a bit towards fine leg and

really hit the deck. I don't bowl a loopy delivery when I bowl the wobble ball.

"In the wobble seam, neither me nor the batter know which way the

ball will go. It goes straight sometimes and the other times, it moves sideways. Whatever success I got, I got it through wobble seam. It's very effective and

has proved to be successful for me and I trust it."

Siraj finished the three-match ODI series against Sri Lanka with nine wickets, the highest tally across both sides. What stands out is that the series was played on very good batting wickets. "This series went very well. My plan was to pick wickets with the new ball and put pressure on the middle order. I was trying to swing the ball and I didn't mind being hit for boundaries," Siraj said.

The only thing Siraj couldn't get in the evening was his maiden five-wicket haul in white-ball internationals. To help

him out, Mohammed Shami bowled a standalone over to let him swap ends, even Shreyas Iyer rolled his arms over but the milestone kept evading him. Nothing though compared to the final ball of his spell, which managed to trap Kasun Rajitha on the back pad and raise the umpire's finger, only for the DRS to put paid to all that.

The way Siraj is bowling this year, when a World Cup is set to be played at home, India will take all the four-wicket hauls they can from him. And as his captain Rohit Sharma said after the game, "the four wickets are all his and the fivers will come too."

Morne Morkel set to join NZ Women's coaching staff for T20 World Cup

New Delhi: New Zealand have roped in former Proteas pacer Morne Morkel to be a part of the backroom staff during the upcoming Women's T20 World Cup in South Africa, starting February 10. Morkel was recently a part of the Namibia coaching staff for the 2022 Men's T20 World Cup in Australia and will now join New Zealand women's side as 'tour coach', offering fast bowling and general coaching support during the marquee tournament. Currently the bowling coach of the Durban Super Giants in the inaugural SA20 league, Morkel will link up with the White Ferns squad ahead of the opening group game against Australia.



Morkel said given the rapid growth of the game, he is relishing the opportunity to experience coaching in the women's game. "The opportunity to join the White Ferns group and get involved in the women's game was a no-brainer for me," said Morkel. "The women's

game is growing so rapidly around the world, and this a great opportunity for me to build experience in the women's game and share my knowledge of international cricket to help this team get better. "I've been following the women's game and the White Ferns closely over the last couple of years, especially since moving to Australia and seeing their players who have played in the Women's Big Bash [League]. It's a talented group of players and they have a very exciting pace bowling attack which I'll be able to support Ben [Sawyer, head coach] with," he added. "I know a lot about the South African conditions

and have spent a lot of time working here in the past year, so that's some important knowledge that I'll be able to share with this group during the tournament."

Morkel played 86 Tests, 117 ODIs and 44 T20Is for South Africa between 2006 and 2018, taking 544 wickets. The pacer featured in eight World Cups for the country and also played in T20 leagues globally, including the IPL, T20 Blast and the Big Bash League. Sawyer welcomed Morkel and said his local knowledge of the conditions will make him a valuable asset for his group in the World Cup.

"Morne had an outstanding international

record as a player, and his first-hand experience in major international tournaments, coupled with his knowledge of the conditions in South Africa, will make him a huge asset," Sawyer said. "He was one of the best in the world as a player, so it will be a fantastic opportunity for our pace bowling group in particular to learn and develop alongside one of the very best." It's also a great nod for women's cricket and the White Ferns, that an individual with credentials such as Morne wants to be involved, and highlights NZC's commitment to developing the women's game. New Zealand are due to name the World Cup squad on Friday (January 20) before departing for South Africa on the following Monday (January 23).

After their opener against the reigning champions on February 11*, New Zealand will next take on hosts South Africa (February 13*), Bangladesh (February 17*) and Sri Lanka (February 19*) in their remaining group fixtures.

El Clasico: Barcelona THRASH Real Madrid in Super Copa final for 1st trophy without Lionel Messi

New Delhi: Barcelona's title drought with coach Xavi — and without Lionel Messi — is finally over. Barcelona beat Real Madrid 3-1 on Sunday to win the Spanish Super Cup at Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, and give its fans reasons to celebrate again after a revamping process that began following Messi's departure for Paris Saint-Germain and the arrival of former player Xavi as coach in 2021.

"We've been through some tough years, with financial difficulties, Messi's departure," Xavi said. "It was not easy to bring back a positive dynamic. This will help give us some tranquility.

We've been working hard from the beginning despite all the criticism, and we have to keep working."

Barcelona had not lifted a trophy since the 2021 Copa del Rey under former coach Ronald Koeman. That was Messi's 35th and final title with Barcelona before leaving amid the club's financial struggles.

Robert Lewandowski, Gavi and Pedri scored a goal each in the final at King Fahd Stadium to give Barcelona its first Super Cup trophy since 2018 — and its 14th overall — and the first since the tournament began being played in a

Final Four format in 2020 in a lucrative deal for the Spanish soccer federation. Gavi opened the scoring in the 33rd minute from close range after a pass by Lewandowski, who doubled the lead after an assist by Gavi in a breakaway just before the end of the first half. Gavi also set up Pedri's close-range goal in another breakaway in the 69th.

Karim Benzema scored for Madrid late in stoppage time. "We knew we couldn't miss this opportunity," Barcelona captain Sergio Busquets said. "We've been going through changes at the club and I

think this triumph will make us stronger and allow us to keep competing, keep growing and keep fighting for titles.

"It's clear that at Barça you always have to win," Busquets said. "We knew it was going to be like that after Xavi arrived, and now we finally have been able to do it." Madrid was trying to win their second consecutive Super Cup title in Saudi Arabia, and equal Barcelona's record of 13 Super Cup trophies. "It's a tough loss and we have to learn from it," Madrid coach Carlo Ancelotti said. "We will improve and bounce back from



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